

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 1 of 88

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Newsweek Bulletin](#)
- [3- NEC Track Meet Results](#)
- [4- SD SearchLight: Prison-based training program bolsters South Dakota workforce](#)
- [6- SD SearchLight: Fish populations affected by severe winter kill, restoration efforts underway](#)
- [7- SD SearchLight: Speedier permitting of energy projects gains bipartisan backing on U.S. Senate panel](#)
- [9- SD SearchLight: U.S. Supreme Court rejects pork producers' challenge of California law](#)
- [11- Weather Pages](#)
- [15- Daily Devotional](#)
- [16- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [17- Subscription Form](#)
- [18- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [19- News from the Associated Press](#)



## Groton Community Calendar

### Friday, May 12

School Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans.  
Senior Menu: Tuna salad on croissant, pea and cheese salad, mixed fruit.  
Elementary Track and Field Day, 12:30 p.m.

### Saturday, May 13

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

### Sunday, May 14

MOTHER'S DAY  
Graduation, 2 p.m.  
Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.  
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45

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

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

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

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

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

### Monday, May 15

School Lunch: Cook's choice for rest of year.  
Senior Menu: Sloppy joe on bun, oven roasted potatoes, mixed vegetables, ice cream sundae, whole wheat bread.

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

Girls Golf: NEC at Sisseton, 10 a.m.

NEC JH Track Meet at Sisseton, 10 a.m.

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

Baseball, Softball and T-Ball Uniform pickup at City Hall, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6 p.m.

## **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

© 2023 Groton Daily Independent

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 2 of 88

## The Bulletin

by Newsweek

JANUARY 24, 2023

### World in Brief

coal and gas-burning power plants, which generate most electricity in the U.S., to either eliminate virtually all emissions over the next 17 years or shut down.

- Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan returns to court for a hearing to decide whether he will be taken back into custody or be set free, a day after the Supreme Court ruled his arrest was "illegal."
- E. Jean Carroll's attorney said the writer is considering filing another defamation lawsuit against Donald Trump following his comments about Carroll during a CNN town hall.
- Israel reportedly launched new air strikes in the Gaza Strip, killing at least two Islamic Jihad commanders. Despite Egyptian efforts to broker a cease-fire, continued fighting has left about 30 Palestinians killed.
- In the ongoing war in Ukraine, NATO member states must face the "new reality" of long-term confrontation with Russia, Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas told Newsweek, by meeting and exceeding military spending goals.

### WHAT TO WATCH IN THE DAY AHEAD

- A two-day ReAwaken America tour begins at Trump National Doral Miami in Florida. The tour is a conservative conference that travels across the U.S. and features conservative speakers who are Donald Trump supporters. Former national security adviser Michael Flynn will be among the speakers, along with tour organizer Clay Clark.
- Import prices for April and preliminary consumer sentiment data for May are on the economic calendar, from 8:30 a.m. ET.
- President Pedro Sanchez of Spain is scheduled to meet with President Joe Biden at the White House. The presidents are expected to discuss shared defense goals, including support for Ukraine, and Spain's responsibilities for its upcoming six-month term holding the presidency of the Council of the European Union.
- President Joe Biden is expected to deliver the commencement address Saturday at Howard University in Washington, D.C.
- Donald Trump will be holding a campaign rally in Des Moines, Iowa, on Saturday. Trump is scheduled to begin delivering remarks at 8 p.m. ET.
- The Eurovision Song Contest ends Saturday with the Grand Final in Liverpool. Peacock will be streaming the event live starting at 3 p.m. ET.
- Don't forget to call your mom this weekend—Mother's Day is on Sunday.
- Thailand voters head to the polls on Sunday. The Pheu Thai Party currently has a big lead in opinion polls after nearly a decade of military-backed rule. Support for opposition Move Forward, which appeals to young voters, has surged in polls lately as the party's leaders call for changes to the economy and political structure.

- Daniel Penny, the man accused of placing Jordan Neely in a chokehold while on a New York City subway last week, is expected to turn himself in to authorities. Manhattan prosecutors plan to pursue manslaughter charges against Penny, which could send him to prison for 15 years.

- Elon Musk said he found a female CEO for Twitter who will take on the role in about six weeks. Comcast NBCUniversal executive Linda Yaccarino was in talks for the job, according to the Wall Street Journal.

- The E.P.A. has introduced legislation that will require

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 3 of 88

## Groton Area wins six events at NEC Track Meet

Five relay teams and one individual are Northeast Conference champions at the NEC Track Meet held Thursday in Groton. The boys 400m relay team, the boys and girls 1600m relay teams and sprint medley relay teams and Aspen Johnson in the triple jump all took first place.

The girls took third place overall in the team points while the boys placed fourth.

### Boy's Division

**Team Standings:** 1. Milbank 166, 2. Webster Area 131, 3. Aberdeen Roncalli 109, 4. Groton Area 74, 5. Deuel 72, 6. Hamlin 58, 7. Clark/Willow Lake 41, 8. Britton-Hecla 27, 9. Redfield 24, 9. Sisseton 24, 11. Tiospa Zina 6

**110m Hurdles Varsity - Prelims:** 6. Caden McInerney, 19.35

**110m Hurdles:** 7. Caden McInerney, 19.72

**100 Meters Varsity - Prelims:** 6. Korbin Kucker, 12.21; 7. Teylor Diegel, 12.24; 13. Jacob Zak, 12.53

**100 Meters:** 5. Korbin Kucker, 12.39; 6. Teylor Diegel, 12.40

**200 Meters:** 5. Lane Tietz, 24.37; 9. Korbin Kucker, 24.93; 19. Gage Sippel, 26.33

**400 Meters:** 9. Gage Sippel, 57.25; 16. Colby Dunker, 1:00.50; 22. Logan Warrington, 1:02.98

**800 Meters:** 10. Tristin McGannon, 2:23.08; 11. Jayden Schwan, 2:23.93; 16. Jacob Lewandowski, 2:29.37a

**1600 Meters:** 10. Jayden Schwan, 5:26.37; 11. Jacob Lewandowski, 5:37.16aSR; 13. Nicolas Fernandez, 6:32.48

**3200 Meters:** 8. Garrett Schultz, 15:03.29

**4x100 Relay:** 1. (Andrew Marzahn, Ryder Johnson, Teylor Diegel, Keegen Tracy), 45.87

**4x200 Relay:** 3. (Keegen Tracy, Ryder Johnson, Andrew Marzahn, Lane Tietz), 1:35.66

**4x400 Relay:** 1. (Keegen Tracy, Ryder Johnson, Andrew Marzahn, Cole Simon), 3:33.55

**4x800 Relay:** 2. (Blake Pauli, Cole Simon, Lane Tietz, Colby Dunker), 8:57.68

**SMR 1600m:** 1. (Korbin Kucker, Teylor Diegel, Keegen Tracy, Blake Pauli), 3:52.10

**Long Jump:** 6. Jacob Zak, 18-00.00; 15. Tristin McGannon, 15-03.50

**Triple Jump:** 5. Jacob Zak, 36-05.00; 10. Tristin McGannon, 32-08.25

**Discus:** 4. Logan Ringgenberg, 124-10; 8. Holden Sippel, 114-09; 11. Kaleb Antonsen, 98-07

**Shot Put:** 7. Holden Sippel, 41-04.50; 8. Logan Ringgenberg, 41-00.50; 11. Caleb Hanten, 38-06.75

### Girl's Division

**Team Standings:** 1. Milbank 180, 2. Clark/Willow Lake 114, 3. Groton Area 88, 4. Redfield 62, 5. Hamlin 56, 6. Webster Area 55, 6. Aberdeen Roncalli 55, 8. Deuel 47, 9. Britton-Hecla 30, 10. Sisseton 15

**100m Hurdles Varsity - Prelims:** 4. Talli Wright, 19.30; 13. Hannah Sandness, 21.38

**100m Hurdles:** 3. Talli Wright, 19.08

**300m Hurdles:** 4. Talli Wright, 53.39; 6. Mckenna Tietz, 54.58; 13. Hannah Sandness, 58.69

**100 Meters Varsity - Prelims:** Shaela McGannon, DNS

**200 Meters:** 4. Rylee Dunker, 28.62; 11. Mckenna Tietz, 30.18; 13. Talli Wright, 30.33

**400 Meters:** 6. Ashlynn Warrington, 1:06.58; 10. Elizabeth Fliehs, 1:09.54

**800 Meters:** 2. Taryn Traphagen, 2:37.25; 8. Elizabeth Fliehs, 2:54.02

**4x100 Relay:** 2. (Laila Roberts, Kennedy Hansen, Rylee Dunker, Kella Tracy), 53.58

**4x200 Relay:** 2. (Jerica Locke, Kennedy Hansen, Kella Tracy, Laila Roberts), 1:51.71

**4x400 Relay:** 1. (Laila Roberts, Kennedy Hansen, Jerica Locke, Kella Tracy), 4:19.94

**4x800 Relay:** 3. (Taryn Traphagen, Faith Traphagen, Ashlynn Warrington, Mckenna Tietz), 10:27.89

**SMR 1600m:** 1. (Jerica Locke, Rylee Dunker, Kella Tracy, Faith Traphagen), 4:42.85

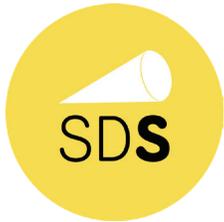
**High Jump:** 9. Emerlee Jones, 4-03.00

**Long Jump:** 4. Aspen Johnson, 14-06.00; 11. Anna Fjeldheim, 13-06.00; 16. Sydney Leicht, 12-11.50

**Triple Jump:** 1. Aspen Johnson, 32-10.75; 15. Emerlee Jones, 27-07.25

**Discus:** 18. Faith Fliehs, 69-09; 19. Emma Kutter, 67-00; 21. Ashley Johnson, 62-07

**Shot Put:** 7. Emma Kutter, 30-09.00; 16. Faith Fliehs, 27-04.50; 23. Ashley Johnson, 21-10.00



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Prison-based training program bolsters South Dakota workforce**

**Nearly 60 certificates issued so far in partnership among DOC,  
labor department, tech school**

**BY: JOHN HULT - MAY 11, 2023 12:50 PM**

There are nearly 3,500 people in the custody of South Dakota's prisons. Most of them will walk free.

In the space of a year and a half, the state has trained and certified 57 of them in precision machining, welding and construction technology – three high-demand fields in South Dakota.

The latest group of graduates, a group of six precision machinists trained at the women's prison in Pierre, shook hands with their warden, the Department of Corrections secretary and Gov. Kristi Noem on Monday afternoon. Another six men will be handed certificates in construction technology on Sunday.

The grant-funded program that got them there is boosting the state's skilled workforce, but it also serves as a model for future collaboration between the DOC, Department of Labor and the state's trade schools, according to Angela Smith, the DOC's associate director of education and programs.

The DOC and Labor Department hadn't worked together directly to train and funnel inmates into outside jobs until the collaboration launched in the spring of 2022. So far, the partnership has connected inmates to training from Lake Area Technical College for precision machining, Southeast Technical College for welding and Western Dakota Technical College for construction technology.

"I think cosmetology is a viable option for us," Smith said. "Lake Area offers a cosmetology program, so we've talked to them about that. And then Southeast Tech has mentioned wanting to expand into electrical and plumbing."

With additional grant funding, Smith said, there would be plenty of opportunities. Those opportunities will likely stay squarely within the realm of trades, Smith said, because "the trades have the needs, and the trades have the jobs."

The Labor Department's involvement helps move the certified inmates from the classroom to the job site through meetings before and after release, interview training and resume help.

"You have a whole bunch of people that are cheering you on, that are praying for you and praying for your success outside of these walls," Labor Department Workforce Development Director Kendra Ringst-meyer told the graduates. "Take what you learned from this experience and apply it to life."

#### **Apprenticeship, skills training a focus for Noem**

It's a model endorsed by Gov. Noem, who encouraged Monday's graduates in Pierre to build and lean into supportive relationships once they enter the workforce. Less than two weeks earlier, she announced a significant funding boost for on-the-job training programs in the workplace.

"If you focus on doing things for other people, you'll be healthier physically, mentally, spiritually," Noem said. "If you remember that your purpose in life is to find ways to do that, you'll find the benefits will come back in a big way."

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 5 of 88

After the press conference on the \$7.9 million apprenticeship cash infusion on April 25, Noem told South Dakota Searchlight that job training and connections with willing "second chance" employers are the clearest paths to a new life for inmates.

"Where we have the most opportunity is how we're training individuals that are currently in our system to have a more stable environment when they come out," Noem told South Dakota Searchlight after the April 25 event. "And that means working with an employer through work release and getting them mentors that can walk alongside them, so that when they are released they can go right to work."

Malloy Electric in Sioux Falls has taken advantage of both the DOC training program and the recently announced apprenticeship incentives. Chris Houwman, president and CEO of Malloy, said the precision machinist he hired from the first graduating class at the women's prison has already moved on to a project management role.

The machining skill was critical, but the graduate's ability to learn on her feet and earn the trust of her coworkers put her in a position to do more for the company.

"There's talent everywhere, and if you're willing to take the time to develop that talent, you're going to be successful," Houwman said. "You've got to be willing to look at alternative places that you maybe hadn't looked at before."

It's gratifying to help former inmates, Houwman said. Even before the machinist program launched, the company had hired former penitentiary inmates. Gainful employment helps improve an ex-inmate's chances of avoiding the unhealthy habits that might send them back to prison, but Houwman said the certification training boosts the odds even more.

"If we can continue to teach inmates to have a skill, a technical skill, the chances of them going back to prison drop dramatically," Houwman said.

Malloy is also working to pull together an apprenticeship program in precision machining, a move that the state will now offer up to \$15,000 for. Given how much demand there is across multiple job types for workers with that skill, Houwman said, it's worthwhile for the company to train people in-house.

"Currently, it's the most difficult position to fill, because a precision machinist is so versatile," Houwman said.

## Personal growth

Tina Lugo, one of Monday's graduates, said she hopes to jump right into the field once she's released over the summer.

Lugo hopes to land in Sioux Falls and start working toward a better life for herself and her 4-year-old daughter. She'd like to spend a few years in machining and work her way into a role working directly with people.

"I spent the last 15 to 20 years in customer service and hospitality and things like that, so hopefully maybe I'd be able to transition over to an HR position," Lugo said.

There aren't many opportunities to learn at the women's prison, she said, so she leapt at the chance to sign up for the machinist course. She met all the requirements: She had a high school diploma, was within a few months of release, and had a good record behind the walls.

Lugo described herself as "a big nerd" who was ready to tackle the classroom and hands-on learning involved in the machining certification program, although she was "a little intimidated" by trigonometry at first.

"I was actually one point off from testing out of the math portion, and I was like 'you gotta be kidding me,'" Lugo said. "But that worked out really well, because I understand algebra a lot better now."

Lugo gave a lot of credit to her instructor, Darrel Grohs of Lake Area Technical College. Grohs came out of retirement to help build the program after a Christmastime call from Diane Stiles, the school's vice president of academic affairs.

Grohs had been teaching for well over a decade at various tech schools at that point, but what he heard in the pitch for a position in the DOC partnership was an opportunity to offer guidance on a higher level.

"Being a man of faith, this was a path I'm supposed to walk," Grohs said. "That's kind of why I started

it, but the other part of it was OK, can I help somebody? Can I use what I have and the talent that I have for this to maybe help some of these ladies get on on a different path?"

For some, he said, the path will involve a move directly to the workforce. Others, like one of his first DOC students, will transfer their semester of credits to another course of study at one of the state's tech schools. Given that Lake Area doesn't disqualify students with a felony record, Grohs said, "now is the opportune time to make a choice to maybe get some further education."

It's all been fulfilling for Grohs, who saw most of the six graduates weep as Lugo talked about their shared accomplishment on Monday. Her voice cracked at times as she talked about how she'd enrolled in four different institutions of higher learning in her life, but hadn't earned a certificate until this year.

A few weeks ago in a mock job interview, she was asked about her greatest accomplishment. On paper, she answered, "I don't look like I have much," but she hopes she's had a positive impact on the lives of those around her.

"Now, with this, I'm able to put down on a piece of paper that yes, I do have something worth showing, something I can pass along to my little daughter and be proud of," Lugo said.

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

## Fish populations affected by severe winter kill, restoration efforts underway

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - MAY 11, 2023 10:58 AM

Winter kills had a larger-than-average impact on the state's fish populations in 2022-23, the state's fisheries program manager told the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission last week.

"It was, unfortunately, really prime conditions for winter kill across South Dakota," said Jake Davis. "All regions experienced some winter kill to some level on some of their systems."

During winter, a lack of dissolved oxygen in bodies of water can lead to a "winter kill."

The conditions that cause a winter kill begin to form when lakes and rivers freeze over. The ice and snow cover prevents the exchange of oxygen between the water and the atmosphere, preventing aquatic plants from producing oxygen. Decomposing plant and animal remains, meanwhile, continue to consume the limited amount of available oxygen.

The severity of a winter kill depends on factors like the duration and thickness of the ice and snow cover, the size and depth of the body of water, and the availability of alternative habitats for fish to seek refuge.

The shallow wetlands and creeks of South Dakota, with their limited capacity to hold dissolved oxygen under ice, were particularly affected during the winter of 2022-2023.

"We have a lot of systems that are quite shallow, and what that means, generally, is that capacity to store dissolved oxygen under the ice is a lot lower than a deeper system with higher volume," Davis said.

The combination of low water levels from the fall drought and the winter's heavy snowfall exacerbated the situation. However, Davis said that winter kill can have positive outcomes, especially in reducing populations of undesirable species like common carp and black bullhead, which are challenging to manage through human intervention.

Game, Fish and Parks relies on reports from both their staff and the public to identify winter kills. Staff regularly conduct winter checks, while conservation officers engage with landowners and monitor systems for signs of a kill. The damage assessment involves "test netting," where trap nets are set to determine the extent of the kill and tally the remaining fish. Such assessments guide stocking strategies for restocking fish in affected water systems.

Winter kill severity varied across South Dakota. In the west, severe kills were observed in four water bodies, while the central and southeastern regions recorded winter kills in 21 and 22 water bodies, re-

spectively. The situation in the northeast was still being assessed at the time of the briefing, as ice cover remained in that area.

"There were an awful lot of systems that didn't experience winter kill, too," Davis noted.

Game, Fish and Parks is restocking through their hatcheries and the trap-and-transfer method. Hatchery-raised walleye, largemouth bass, bluegill, and rainbow trout are commonly stocked into the state's water bodies. Adult fish from excess populations in certain fisheries can also be moved to other systems to improve angling opportunities and boost the reproductive potential of the transferred fish, Davis said.

"We have restocked most of these systems, or we're in the process of doing that," He said, pointing to GF&P fisheries staff having conducted dozens of restocking efforts across the state in recent weeks.

Davis assured the public that restocking efforts were well underway, with most affected systems already restocked. Numerous lakes and water bodies were not affected, he said, and offer excellent fishing opportunities.

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

## Speedier permitting of energy projects gains bipartisan backing on U.S. Senate panel

BY: JACOB FISCHLER - MAY 11, 2023 4:14 PM

Members of both parties on the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee voiced their support Thursday for reforming the federal process for approving energy projects, saying it should be prioritized to secure domestic energy supply and boost renewable energy.

There is bipartisan interest in revising the permitting process and members of both parties have offered competing proposals to accomplish it. Chairman Joe Manchin III, a centrist West Virginia Democrat who has authored a permitting bill, said at Thursday's hearing that members should be willing to compromise to ensure Congress can address the issue this year.

"Many ideas that are prioritized by some senators are strongly opposed by others," Manchin said. "We need to respect that in a civil manner. But we can't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Now is our time to do this."

Senators and witnesses representing industry and labor on Thursday gave a broad overview of what they want included — projects should be approved faster, with greater certainty and without sacrificing environmental standards, they largely agreed.

But they only hinted at the tradeoffs inherent in building a consensus behind a single legislative proposal, and gave little indication about where they would resolve differences of opinion.

### Speed v. accuracy

Proponents of reform, including Manchin, whose proposal has the support of Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and the Biden administration as a condition of his vote for the Democrats' energy, taxes and health care law last year, believe Congress could act this year on a rare area with bipartisan appeal.

"Everybody's talking about permitting reform for all of the right reasons," U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, an Alaska Republican and former chair of the Senate Energy panel, said. "This puts us at a good place to actually, hopefully, get something done."

The issue involves balancing timely decision-making with thorough environmental reviews. Environmental reviews for large energy, infrastructure and mining projects can take upwards of a decade to complete — and can then be challenged in court for years longer.

The burdensome process raises costs and discourages investments in projects that create jobs and provide critical resources, critics say.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 8 of 88

But environmental advocates often oppose efforts to overhaul the review process, saying it is necessary to ensure environmental standards are met and provides critical opportunities for communities to object to projects.

No environmental groups testified at Thursday's hearing.

U.S. Sen. Angus King, a Maine independent who caucuses with Democrats, said he approached the issue as an environmentalist, but still appreciated the need to speed environmental reviews.

Transitioning to cleaner sources of energy would require construction, he said. And building more electric vehicles, which require rare-earth minerals like lithium, nickel and cobalt, would require expanding mining efforts.

"In order to achieve our environmental goals, you have to build things," he said. "You cannot love EVs and hate lithium mines."

There are ways to maintain environmental standards, even while shortening review timelines, he said. A time limit on federal reviews and having a single agency in control of a project's review could accomplish those things, he said.

Jason Grumet, the CEO of the industry group Clean Power Association said there are three major issues all affected industries would like to see addressed in a permitting bill: imposing time limits, avoiding duplications of reviews by different agencies and having funding available. Various industries may have different views about how far to go on each of those issues, he said.

Rich Nolan, the CEO of the National Mining Association, and AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said they agreed with Grumet's analysis.

## Competing proposals

Manchin reintroduced a bill last week that the Senate rejected in a 47-47 bipartisan floor vote last year. The panel's ranking Republican, Wyoming's John Barrasso, and Shelley Moore Capito, a West Virginia Republican who is the ranking member on the Environment and Public Works panel, are the lead sponsors of separate Senate bills.

House Republicans passed their own proposal out of that chamber in March.

And Biden released his priorities for a permitting overhaul Wednesday. The White House list included prioritizing permits for clean-energy projects and establishing an interagency process to reduce duplication.

Barrasso, who is also a member of Senate Republican leadership, on Thursday laid out requirements a permitting bill would need to gain his support.

Any proposal must help the entire country and "apply equally to all energy sources," he said. It must contain enforceable timelines and limits on legal challenges. And it must be specifically bar the executive branch from using new authority to disadvantage oil and gas, he said.

## Manchin v. White House

In addition to its own priorities, the Biden administration continues to support Manchin's bill, White House Senior Advisor John Podesta said at the Bipartisan Policy Center think tank Wednesday.

"The president doesn't love everything in the bill, but we support it," Podesta said. "That's what compromise means, and it will take compromise by everybody to get this done."

But Manchin has not returned the White House's support in recent weeks.

On Thursday, Manchin, repeated the complaint he has made at length recently that the administration is focusing too much on the renewable energy elements of the Inflation Reduction Act — the name of the energy, health and taxes bill Manchin sponsored and Democrats passed on a party-line vote last year — at the expense of the "all-of-above" energy framework that was key to winning Manchin's support.

"The whole purpose of the IRA is energy security," he said Thursday. "This administration has been unable to use the word energy security, all they use is climate. And I have corrected him and I will continue to correct him. It's energy security."

Manchin, who has ties to the West Virginia coal industry and faces a difficult reelection contest in a heavily Republican state next year, said Wednesday he would block all Environmental Protection Agency nominees over a new EPA proposal to impose tougher regulations on fossil fuels.

"This piles on top of a broader regulatory agenda being rolled out designed to kill the fossil industry by a thousand cuts," he said in a written statement.

*Jacob covers federal policy as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.*

## U.S. Supreme Court rejects pork producers' challenge of California law

BY: CLARK KAUFFMAN - MAY 11, 2023 4:02 PM

The U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday rejected an Iowa organization's challenge to a law imposing restrictions on the sale of pork in California.

The decision marks a significant defeat for Iowa pork producers who have long argued that California's law, backed by animal-welfare advocates, would disrupt the agricultural industry by allowing states to dictate the conduct of producers in other states.

U.S. Rep. Randy Feenstra, a Republican from Hull, said he was outraged by the decision, which he called an "attack on rural America" that would have "devastating" consequences for Iowa hog farmers and rural communities. "Quite frankly," he said, "California liberals have no jurisdiction over how Iowa farmers raise our hens and hogs."

Last year, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig praised the Supreme Court's decision to hear the case, calling it "the first step in preserving the rights of our farmers, protecting the well-being of our livestock and ensuring consumers have access to affordable food."

On Thursday, Naig condemned the court's decision, saying it undermines the "American way of life" and efforts to produce "the safest, most abundant, and most affordable food supply in the world."

The court's decision stems from a lawsuit filed by the National Pork Producers Council and the American Farm Bureau Federation that sought to nullify a California law dealing with hog confinement.

The measure, approved by California voters in 2018, imposes restrictions on pork sold within that state with the intent of ensuring that breeding pigs have enough room to turn around freely, lie down, stand up, and fully extend their limbs. One element of the law defines as "cruel confinement" a breeding-pig enclosure that provides less than 24 square feet — the equivalent of a 6-foot by 4-foot area — of usable floor space per pig.

The law applies to all of the pork sold in California, regardless of where it was raised. But nearly one-third of the hogs raised in America come from Iowa, where pork producers said they'd be forced to spend up to \$350 million to meet California's standards.

A 5-4 majority of the Supreme Court rejected that argument.

"Companies that choose to sell products in various states must normally comply with laws of those various states," Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote for the majority. "While the Constitution addresses many weighty issues, the type of pork chops California merchants may sell is not on that list."

### Decision praised by animal welfare advocates

The court's decision affirms a July 2021 decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit, which sided with California and found that the law applied the same standards for in-state pork producers as those from out of state.

Gorsuch was joined by Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Amy Coney Barrett, Elena Kagan and Clarence Thomas. Chief Justice John Roberts argued the pork producers had "plausibly alleged a substantial burden on interstate commerce" and suggested the case should have been sent back to the appeals court for further review.

Tarah Heinzen, legal director for Food & Water Watch, praised the court's decision.

"Today's high court ruling is a rightful victory for sustainable, humane farming against giant corporations that prioritize cost-cutting and profit margins over the environment, food safety and animal welfare,"

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 10 of 88

Heinzen said. "It is also a critical victory for the rights of states that seek to do better on those issues than some of their neighbors, or the country at large."

Animal Wellness Action and the Center for a Humane Economy, led by Wayne Pacelle, who backed the California law known as Proposition 12, called the decision a win for "Americans who want to know that animals raised for food were not immobilized and otherwise tormented" in the pork-production process.

"Today's landmark ruling affirms the right of states to institute policies to promote anti-cruelty and food safety standards," Pacelle said. "The pork industry has for decades blocked any rules at the federal level to promote the humane treatment of farm animals and this was their attempt to gut state rules, too."

"We are very disappointed with the Supreme Court's opinion," said Scott Hays, president of the National Pork Producers Council, which is based in Urbandale. "Allowing state overreach will increase prices for consumers and drive small farms out of business, leading to more consolidation. We are still evaluating the court's full opinion to understand all the implications."

Trish Cook, president of the Iowa Pork Producers Association, expressed frustration with the court's decision.

"The health and safety of their pigs are a top priority for Iowa pig farmers," she said. "This ruling sets a bad precedent, enabling other states to regulate commerce outside their boundaries. Consumers, especially low-income ones who rely on affordable nutritious pork to feed their families, will ultimately suffer due to higher food prices."

Naig said while the ruling was focused on agricultural production, "it will certainly creep into other industries" and allow the largest states to "dictate the laws and regulations for consumers and businesses" throughout the nation.

"This sets the stage for a state-by-state patchwork of ever-changing and costly requirements that will increase the cost of production and drive higher costs for food and other consumer products," Naig said.

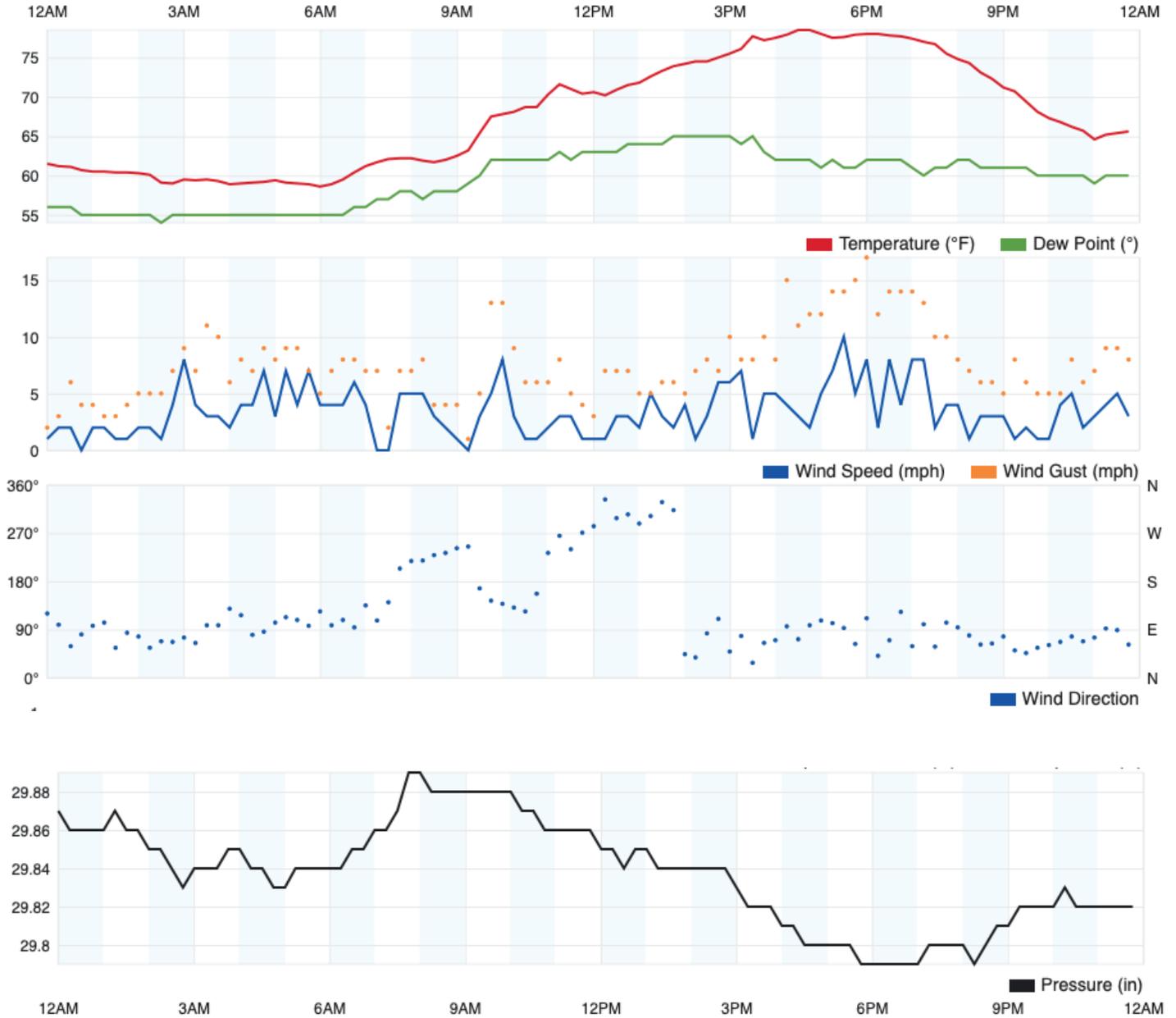
Although it has been five years since California voters approved Proposition 12, implementation of all of the law's provisions has been stayed by litigation and by efforts to draft a regulatory framework for enforcement.

*Deputy Editor Clark Kauffman of the Iowa Capital Dispatch has worked during the past 30 years as both an investigative reporter and editorial writer at two of Iowa's largest newspapers, the Des Moines Register and the Quad-City Times. He has won numerous state and national awards for reporting and editorial writing. His 2004 series on prosecutorial misconduct in Iowa was named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting. From October 2018 through November 2019, Kauffman was an assistant ombudsman for the Iowa Office of Ombudsman, an agency that investigates citizens' complaints of wrongdoing within state and local government agencies.*

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 11 of 88

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 12 of 88

Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
 30% → 70%	 50%	 70%	 40%			
Chance T-storms then Showers Likely	Chance T-storms	Showers Likely and Breezy	Chance Showers and Breezy	Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 73 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 63 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 69 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 72 °F

## Showers/Storms Becoming Dry

Today



H: 68 - 73°F  
L: 56 - 59°F

Strong to severe storms possible in central SD

Saturday



H: 61 - 65°F  
L: 47 - 50°F

Storms possible, not severe

Sunday



H: 63 - 70°F  
L: 45 - 48°F

Monday



H: 67 - 75°F  
L: 49 - 52°F

May 12, 2023 4:14 AM



Showers and storms are expected today. Some storms in central SD could become strong to severe as there is a marginal risk (1 of 5) for severe weather. Precipitation chances continue into the weekend with storms possible, but no severe weather expected. Things start to dry out Sunday and temperatures begin to warm into next work week.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 13 of 88

## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 79 °F at 4:27 PM

Low Temp: 59 °F at 5:56 AM

Wind: 17 mph at 5:33 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 14 hours, 50 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 90 in 1900

Record Low: 17 in 1946

Average High: 69

Average Low: 43

Average Precip in May.: 1.32

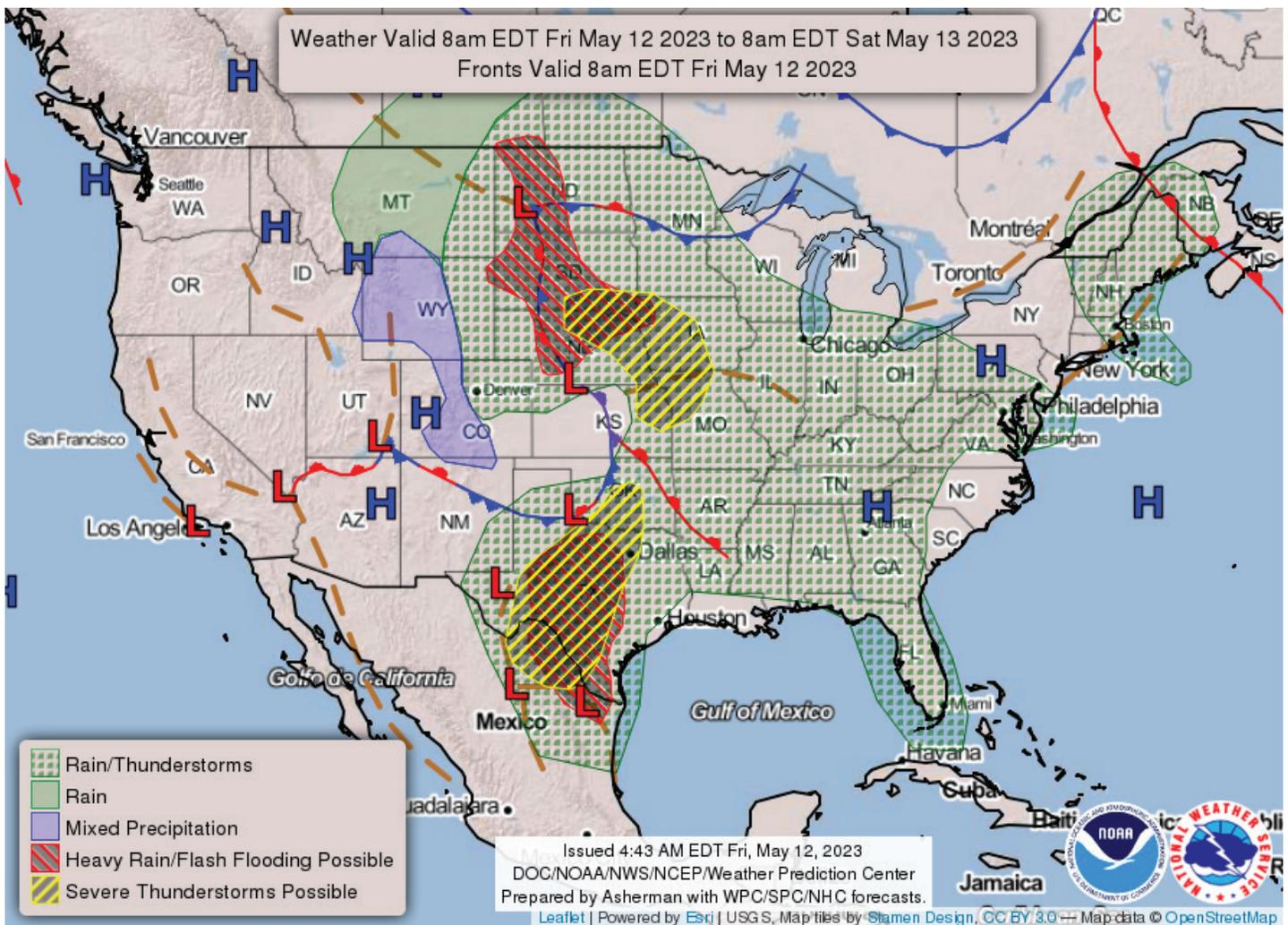
Precip to date in May.: 1.49

Average Precip to date: 5.29

Precip Year to Date: 7.21

Sunset Tonight: 8:53:52 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:02:25 AM



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 14 of 88

## Today in Weather History

May 12, 1984: An F3 tornado wiped out seven farms, crippled fifteen others, killed livestock and scattered several cars and machinery in its path. The tornado first touched down seven miles north and one mile east of Clark and moved southeast through the southwestern sections of Henry until it dissipated at Grover in Codrington County. The path of destruction began on a farm where two barns, a steel grain bin, and a pole barn were demolished, and machinery was damaged. As the tornado moved further southeast, it struck the southwest sections of Henry and split into two tornadoes that moved in two different directions. One went to the northeast that inflicted no damage and dissipated while the other went southeast that continued its destruction path to Grover. Small hail, accumulation to fifteen inches deep, was experienced at Henry and tornado damage included broken windows, numerous homes, and three trailer homes were demolished. Along the path, 80 power poles and several miles of power lines were lost, affecting the power to over 1,000 people. A small plane, southwest of Garden City, was wrapped around a pole.

1760: Ben Franklin was the first person to identify nor'easters. In a letter on this date to Alexander Small of London, Franklin described an experience that happened to him in November 1743 when storm clouds in Philadelphia blocked his view of an eclipse. Franklin assumed that the storm had blown in from the northeast because the surface winds at his location were from that direction. He was puzzled to find out later that his brother had viewed the eclipse with no problems and that the storm had arrived in Boston four hours later. The information caused Franklin to surmise correctly that the storm had moved from southwest to northeast.

1886: An estimated F4 tornado touched down in Vermilion County near Armstrong, Illinois, and passed between Alvin and Rossville before moving into Indiana. At least five houses were destroyed, two of which were entirely swept away. Three people were killed. Five other strong tornadoes occurred across Illinois that day: two near Mt. Carroll, one near Odell, one near Jacksonville, and one in Iroquois County.

1934 - A dust storm darkened skies from Oklahoma to the Atlantic coast. (David Ludlum)

1971 - Duststorms suddenly reduced visibilities to near zero on Interstate Highway 10 near Casa Grande AZ. Chain reaction accidents involving cars and trucks resulted, killing seven persons. (The Weather Channel)

1972 - In Texas, A cloudburst dumped sixteen inches of rain north of New Braunfels sending a thirty foot wall of water down Blueders Creek into the Comal and Guadalupe Rivers washing away people, houses and automobiles. The flood claimed 18 lives and caused more than twenty million dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)

1982 - A late season snowstorm struck the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies. The storm produced 46 inches of snow at Coal Creek Canyon, located near Boulder. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A heat wave persisted in central California. Afternoon highs of 100 degrees at Fresno CA and 102 degrees at Sacramento CA were records for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Unseasonably warm weather prevailed in the western U.S. Eight cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Pendleton OR with a high of 92 degrees and Phoenix AZ with a reading of 106 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Showers and thunderstorms associated with a low pressure system stalled over New York State drenched Portland ME with 4.50 inches of rain in 24 hours. Rains of 5 to 7 inches soaked the state of Maine over a four day period causing 1.3 million dollars damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from eastern Texas and the Central Gulf Coast States into Missouri and Illinois. Thunderstorms spawned six tornadoes, including one which injured four persons at Doloroso MS. Thunderstorms also produced hail three inches in diameter west of Vicksburg MS, and wind gusts to 83 mph in southern Illinois, north of Vevay Park and at the Coles County Airport. High winds and heavy rain caused 1.6 million dollars crop damage in Calhoun County IL, and in southeastern Louisiana, Saint Joseph was deluged with eight inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1997: A towering F1 tornado ripped its way through the middle of Miami, Biscayne Bay, and Miami Beach right after lunch Monday, smashing cars and windows, tossing trees skyward and scaring the dickens out of thousands of people.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 15 of 88

Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### SUCCESS AT WHAT PRICE?

A reporter was interviewing a farmer who was known for growing the best corn in his area. He was intrigued by the fact that the farmer was also known for sharing his seed corn freely with his neighbors. He was the opposite of being selfish.

“Why do you share your best seed corn with your neighbors?” asked the reporter.

After a moment’s thought, he replied, “The wind picks up the pollen from the ripening corn and swirls it from field to field. If my neighbors grow inferior corn, cross-pollination would degrade mine. If I am to grow good corn, I must help my neighbors do the same.”

Jesus said, “Give and it will be given unto you!” He was teaching us that if we want more, we must give more. That is God’s plan and it is His promise. Whatever we share with others, whether it is our time, our talents, or our treasures, will always be returned to us with “interest added.” There will be more time in our day, more opportunities to enjoy life, our talents will continue to grow, and our value to the Lord will increase as well.

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to give generously to others in the gracious way that You give to us. May we understand that everything belongs to You. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full - pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back. Luke 6:38



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

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 16 of 88

## 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

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 17 of 88

## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

### Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

- Black & White ..... \$48.99/year
- Colored ..... \$79.88/year
- Colored ..... \$42.60/6 months
- E-Weekly\* ..... \$31.95/year

\* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to [paperpaul@grotonsd.net](mailto:paperpaul@grotonsd.net)

## Groton Daily Independent

[www.397news.com](http://www.397news.com)

### Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- 1 Month ..... \$15.98
- 3 Months..... \$26.63
- 6 Months..... \$31.95
- 9 Months..... \$42.60
- 12 Months..... \$53.25

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Password \_\_\_\_\_

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

[paypal.me/paperpaul](https://paypal.me/paperpaul)



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 18 of 88



## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.09.23

4 37 46 48 51 19

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$99,000,000**

NEXT 15 Hrs 20 Mins  
DRAW: 59 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.10.23

9 13 14 17 26 2

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$2,850,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 20  
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.11.23

10 16 34 40 47 5

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

NEXT 14 Hrs 50 Mins  
DRAW: 59 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.10.23

3 6 9 10 13

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$55,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 20  
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.10.23

21 22 24 52 58 3

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

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 20  
DRAW: Mins 0 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.10.23

21 24 33 55 69 3

Power Play: 10x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$125,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 20  
DRAW: Mins 0 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### Hundreds of thousands to be evacuated as Bangladesh and Myanmar brace for severe cyclone

By JULHAS ALAM Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Authorities in Bangladesh and Myanmar prepared to evacuate hundreds of thousands of people Friday, warning them to stay away from coastal areas as a severe cyclone churned in the Bay of Bengal.

Cyclone Mocha is expected to hit land on Sunday with wind speeds of up to 160 kilometers (100 miles) per hour and gusts up to 175 kph (110 mph) between Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh and Kyaukpyu in Myanmar, India's Meteorological Department said.

Bangladesh, a delta nation with more than 160 million people, is prone to natural disasters such as floods and cyclones. The evacuation of nearly 500,000 people is expected to start Saturday with 576 cyclone shelters ready to provide refuge to those who are moved from their homes along the coast, said Bangladesh government administrator Muhammad Shaheen Imran.

The International Rescue Committee said in a statement the cyclone posed a threat to Rohingya refugees who fled from neighboring Myanmar and are living in camps in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

"Still reeling from a devastating fire in March that destroyed more than 2,600 shelters and critical infrastructure, over 850,000 refugees risk losing their homes and livelihoods," the statement said.

The committee said it was scaling up its emergency response by deploying mobile medical teams to offer services to vulnerable groups such as women, girls, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The IRC is a global humanitarian aid, relief and development nongovernmental organization.

"This is the first cyclone system in the north Indian Ocean this year," said Rajendra Kumar Jenamani, a senior scientist at the Indian Meteorological Department. "The cyclone is severe and will likely affect millions of fishers and coastal communities in Bangladesh and Myanmar."

In May 2008, Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar with a storm surge that devastated populated areas around the Irrawaddy River delta. At least 138,000 people died and tens of thousands of homes and other buildings were washed away.

Myanmar authorities warned of possible flash floods and landslides in coastal areas as residents stocked up on essential supplies, said Hla Tun, a director at the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology.

Roxy Mathew Koll, a climate scientist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune city, said cyclones in the Bay of Bengal are becoming more intense more quickly, in part because of climate change.

The state-run Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper reported that emergency response exercises were being conducted in various regions. It said thousands of people living along the western coast of Rakhine state where the storm is expected to pass are being evacuated.

In Bangladesh, control rooms in cyclone-prone areas were ready for emergency support. Three ports were put on alert, Imran said.

He said the government has allocated dry food, rice and cash and organized thousands of volunteers for relief work under the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society.

Cyclone Mocha is expected to hit coastal districts including Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Noakhali and Bhola in Bangladesh on Sunday.

India's Meteorological Department said the storm was centered more than 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) southwest of Cox's Bazar and 930 kilometers (580 miles) southwest of Sittwe in Myanmar on Friday and was moving northward at 9 kph (5 mph).

Fishermen and ships were advised not to venture into the southeastern Bay of Bengal and northern Andaman Sea, it said.

The department said it was expecting heavy to very heavy rainfall in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and parts of India's remote northeast.

Climate scientists say cyclones can now retain their energy for many days, such as Cyclone Amphan in eastern India in 2020 which continued to travel over land as a strong cyclone and caused extensive devastation. "As long as oceans are warm and winds are favorable, cyclones will retain their intensity for a longer period," Koll said.

Cyclones are among the most devastating natural disasters in the world, especially if they affect densely populated coastal regions in South Asia.

Associated Press climate writer Sibi Arasu in Bengaluru, India, contributed to this report.

Associated Press climate and environmental coverage receives support from several private foundations. See more about AP's climate initiative at <https://www.ap.org/press-releases/2022/ap-announces-sweeping-climate-journalism-initiative>. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **Palestinian militants fire more rockets, Israeli airstrikes hit Gaza despite cease-fire efforts**

By FARES AKRAM and ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Palestinian militants fired rockets toward Jerusalem on Friday, further escalating the most violent confrontation in months between Israel and militants in the Gaza Strip despite efforts to broker a cease-fire.

The burst of rocket fire from Gaza sent warning sirens wailing as far north as the contested capital of Jerusalem — about 48 miles (77 kilometers) from the Gaza border — breaking a 12-hour lull that had raised hopes that regional powers could soon broker a cease-fire.

There were no immediate reports of casualties on either side Friday. The fighting, which started on Tuesday, between Israel and Islamic Jihad — the second-largest militant group in Gaza after the territory's Hamas rulers — have killed 31 Palestinians in the strip, including women and children, and a 70-year-old man in central Israel.

A rocket slammed into an open field in the Israeli south Jerusalem settlement of Bat Ayin, said Josh Hasten, a spokesperson for the area. Dull thuds could be heard inside the city, home to major sites holy to Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

Videos showed Israelis jumping out of their cars and crouching beneath highway rails as the sirens sounded. Residents in nearby settlements reported hearing explosions and seeing black smoke rising from the hills after an apparent missile interception.

"The bombing of Jerusalem sends a message," Islamic Jihad said in a statement. "What is happening in Jerusalem is not separate from Gaza."

In response, the Israeli military said its warplanes struck four Islamic Jihad military posts and a mortar shell launcher across the Gaza Strip.

The office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he was conducting a security assessment. The Israeli military urged those within 40 kilometers (25 miles) of the Gaza border to remain close to bomb shelters and limit public gatherings until Saturday evening.

Sirens near Jerusalem took some residents back to the spring of 2021, when Hamas fired rockets toward the city, which helped set off a bloody 11-day Gaza war. At that time, the militant group cited a provocative far-right march through the Palestinian neighborhoods of Jerusalem as one of the reasons for its rocket barrage, along with the displacement of Palestinians from the city's east.

Israeli police said they will allow the same Jewish ultranationalist parade — meant to celebrate Israel's capture of east Jerusalem — to take place on Thursday.

Since Tuesday, Israeli strikes have killed five senior Islamic Jihad figures and hit at least 215 targets in Gaza, including rocket and mortar launch sites and militants preparing to use them. Islamic Jihad has retaliated with nearly 900 rockets fired toward densely populated parts of Israel.

Israeli bombs and shells have destroyed 47 housing units, and damaged 19 so badly they were uninhabitable, leaving 165 Palestinians homeless, Gaza's housing ministry reported. In addition, nearly 300

homes sustained some damage.

Palestinians on Friday surveyed the wreckage wrought by the fighting.

"The dream that we built for our children, for our sons, has ended," said Belal Bashir, a Palestinian living in Deir al-Balah in central Gaza, whose family home was reduced to a heap of rubble in an airstrike late Thursday. He, his young daughters and two-week-old son would have been killed in the thundering explosion if they hadn't ran outside when they heard shouting, he said.

"We were shocked that our house was targeted," he added as he pulled his children's dolls and blankets from a gaping bomb crater.

At least 31 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have been killed in the fighting, including seven children and four women, according to the U.N. humanitarian office. At least three of the children were killed by mis-fired Palestinian rockets, according to the Israeli military and the Palestinian Center for Rights. Over 90 Palestinians have been wounded, the Palestinian Health Ministry reported.

The civilians deaths have drawn condemnation from the Arab world and concern from the United States and Europe. In its past four wars against Hamas, Israel has repeatedly faced accusations of war crimes due to the high civilian death tolls and its use of heavy weapons against the crowded enclave. Israel, in turn, contends that Palestinian militant groups use civilians as human shields by fighting in their midst.

Hamas, the de facto civilian government with an army of some 30,000 in Gaza, has sought to maintain its truce with Israel while attempting to keep abysmal living conditions in the blockaded enclave from spiraling since a devastating 11-day war in 2021 that killed over 260 Palestinians. The group, which seized control of Gaza in 2007, has sat out this round of fighting — as it did a similar burst of violence last summer. In a sign of restraint, Israel has limited its airstrikes to Islamic Jihad targets.

Both sides had seemed on the brink of a cease-fire earlier this week. Hamas officials, on Friday, told local media that Egypt was ramping up its diplomatic efforts to stop the fighting. But the Israeli public broadcaster Kan reported that Israeli officials had pulled out of the talks in Egypt after Islamic Jihad unleashed rockets toward Jerusalem. Netanyahu's office declined to comment on the reports.

Meanwhile Islamic Jihad figures have sent mixed signals about the negotiations. Senior official Ihsan Attaya complained early Friday that the mediators "have been unable to provide us with any guarantees." A sticking point has been Islamic Jihad's demands that Israel cease its policy of targeted killings, Attaya said.

In Cairo, Islamic Jihad political bureau member Mohamad al-Hindi was trying to hash out the details of a possible truce. He told Palestinian media that he hoped both sides "would reach a cease-fire agreement and honor it today." But the continuing exchange of fire hours later seemed to undermine his optimism.

This week's battles began when Israel launched, on Tuesday, simultaneous airstrikes that killed three Islamic Jihad commanders along with some of their wives and children as they slept in their homes. Israel said it was retaliating for a barrage of rocket fire launched last week by Islamic Jihad following the death of one of its West Bank members, Khader Adnan, from an 87-day hunger strike while in Israeli custody.

The airstrikes and rockets have shifted the focus of long-running conflict back to Gaza after months of surging violence in the occupied West Bank under Israel's most right-wing government in history.

Israel has been carrying out near-nightly arrest raids in the West Bank that have killed 109 Palestinians so far this year — the highest such death toll in two decades. At least half of the dead are affiliated with militant groups, according to a tally by The Associated Press. At least 20 people have been killed in Palestinian attacks targeting Israelis during that time.

DeBre reported from Jerusalem

## Islamabad court grants former Prime Minister Imran Khan bail, reprieve from arrest in graft case

By MUNIR AHMED Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — A high court in Islamabad on Friday granted former Prime Minister Imran Khan protection from arrest in a graft case and ordered him freed on bail.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 22 of 88

The ruling came as the government and legions of Khan's supporters were on edge after days of violent confrontations sparked by the arrest of the former prime minister earlier this week. The government has vowed it will find a way to take Khan back into custody, a move that would likely cause a resurgence of riots and mob attacks.

Friday's ruling by the Islamabad High Court gave Khan protection from arrest on one of several corruption cases against him for a period of two weeks, a form of interim bail that usually is renewed in the Pakistan judicial system.

Khan, however, remained in the court after the decision as his lawyers petitioned the judges for similar protection in a number of other corruption charges, trying to close off a legal avenue for the government to arrest him again.

Khan's chief lawyer, Babar Awan, praised the ruling, and said Khan was now "a free man."

A short while later, the court said Khan could not be arrested for the time being in other pending corruption cases against him. The former premier was expected to walk out of the court shortly.

The government contends that Khan's release rewards and encourages mob violence. After he was arrested Tuesday, his supporters attacked military installations, burned vehicles, and ambulances and looted general stores in various parts of the country. The government responded with a crackdown, arresting nearly 3,000 people. The violence left at least 10 Khan supporters dead. Dozens of protesters and more than 200 police officers were injured.

The arrest Tuesday was a startling and controversial move: Agents from the National Accountability Bureau burst into the Islamabad High Court where Khan was attending a session on other charges — the same court where he appeared Friday — and dragged him away, putting him into an armored vehicle.

On Thursday, Pakistan's Supreme Court ruled that arrest unlawful, but asked the Islamabad High Court, a lower court, to reconsider its initial decision to uphold the arrest.

The controversy surrounding Khan — a figure who inspires both vehement loyalty and furious opposition — threatens to open a deeper vein of turmoil in a country that has seen multiple military takeovers and bouts of violence. The unrest has echoed that which followed the 2007 assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto during an election rally. Her supporters at the time, outraged by her killing, rampaged for days across Pakistan.

Khan, a former cricket star turned Islamist politician, was removed as prime minister last year by a no-confidence vote in Parliament and now leads the opposition. He faces more than 100 legal cases, most involving allegations that he incited violence and threatened police and government officials.

He also faces at least three graft cases, including accusations from the National Accountability Bureau that he accepted millions of dollars worth of property in exchange for providing benefits to a real estate tycoon. A new terrorism charge was filed against him on Thursday for allegedly inciting his followers to violence after his arrest.

Following the Supreme Court's release order Thursday, Khan spent the night at a government guest house in Islamabad, where he met with family members and friends.

Pakistan's president, Arif Alvi, also had a meeting with him. Alvi has been trying to defuse tension between Khan and Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's government to avoid an escalation.

Speaking at a special Cabinet meeting Friday to discuss the developments, Sharif criticized the Supreme Court ruling, saying there was a "genuine corruption case" against Khan, "but the judiciary has become a stone wall protecting him."

As Sharif's government contends with the political turmoil amid a worsening economic crisis, it is also dealing with militant attacks. According to Pakistan's military, two soldiers were killed and three were wounded Friday when insurgents attacked a security post in the town of Muslim Bagh in southwestern Baluchistan province. It said two insurgents were also killed in the exchange of fire.

**Marine veteran who fatally choked NYC subway rider Jordan Neely to surrender on manslaughter charge**

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 23 of 88

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A man who kept a chokehold around the neck of an agitated fellow passenger on a New York City subway, leading to the other rider's death, is expected to turn himself in to authorities Friday on a manslaughter charge that could send him to prison for 15 years.

Manhattan prosecutors announced Thursday they would bring the criminal charge against Daniel Penny, 24, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, in the May 1 death of 30-year-old Jordan Neely.

Neely's death, captured on video by a freelance journalist, has raised an uproar over many issues, including how those with mental illness are treated by the transit system and the city, as well as crime and vigilantism.

Penny's attorneys did not respond to a request for comment after the prosecutors made their announcement. They have previously said Penny acted in self-defense.

According to an onlooker, Neely, who is Black, had been screaming and begging for money aboard the train, but had not gotten physical with anyone.

Penny, who is white, was questioned by police in the aftermath, but was released without charges.

Friends of Neely said the former subway performer had been dealing with homelessness and mental illness in recent years. He had several arrests to his name, including a 2021 assault of a 67-year-old woman leaving a subway station.

A second-degree manslaughter charge in New York will require the jury to find that a person has engaged in reckless conduct that creates an unjustifiable risk of death, and then consciously disregards that risk.

The law also requires that conduct to be a gross deviation from how a reasonable person would act in a similar situation.

## **Kansas City declares itself a LGBTQ+ sanctuary city**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Officials in Missouri's largest city approved a resolution Thursday to declare it a sanctuary for people seeking or providing gender-affirming care, defying state lawmakers who voted a day earlier to ban such care for minors and restrict it for some adults.

Democratic Mayor Quinton Lucas praised the 12 to 1 vote, saying the city is committed to being a "welcoming, inclusive, and safe place for everyone, including our transgender and LGBTQ+ community."

Kansas City's new, sanctuary status sets it apart as a Democratic-leaning city in a state with a Republican governor and GOP-controlled Legislature. Similar actions have been taken in cities that oppose state actions to restrict rights for transgender people, as in Austin, Texas.

GOP Gov. Mike Parson is expected to sign into law the ban on gender-affirming care, joining at least 16 other states that have enacted similar laws restricting or banning such care for minors.

The resolution also comes as a judge considers a proposed emergency rule from Republican state Attorney General Andrew Bailey that would require adults and children to undergo more than a year of therapy — and fulfill other requirements before they could receive gender-affirming treatment.

A committee signed off Wednesday on the resolution, which says the city will not prosecute or fine any person or organization that seeks, provides, receives or helps someone to receive gender-affirming care such as as puberty blockers, hormones or surgery.

It also says that if the state passes a law or resolution that imposes criminal or civil punishments, fines, or professional sanctions in such cases, personnel in Missouri's largest city will make enforcing those requirements "their lowest priority."

Republican state lawmakers across the U.S. who've attacked gender-affirming care as part of a larger effort to roll back LGBTQ+ rights have argued that they're protecting children from decisions they may later regret. But gender-affirming care for minors has been available in the U.S. for more than a decade and is endorsed by major medical associations.

"This is an important first step in Kansas City's commitment to trans and nonbinary people," Merrique Jenson, founder of Transformations KC, said in a written statement after the vote. "I look forward to trans leaders and Kansas City working together to address the health disparities in our communities and ways

we can have sustainable funding & programming reaching all trans people.”

## **Eurovision Song Contest fetes Ukraine, but Zelenskyy barred from addressing ‘nonpolitical’ event**

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LIVERPOOL, England (AP) — This weekend’s Eurovision Song Contest will have Ukrainian flags, Ukrainian musicians and Ukrainian fans — but not the country’s wartime leader.

Organizers say they rejected a request from President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to make a video address to the final of the pan-continental music competition on Saturday. He was expected to urge the world to continue its support for Ukraine’s fight to repel Russian invasion.

The European Broadcasting Union, a grouping of national public broadcasters that runs Eurovision, said that letting Zelenskyy participate would breach “the nonpolitical nature of the event.”

Zelenskyy’s request “to address the audience at the Eurovision Song Contest, whilst made with laudable intentions, regrettably cannot be granted by the European Broadcasting Union management as it would be against the rules of the event,” the organization said.

Zelenskyy spokesman Sergii Nykyforov denied that the president had asked to speak to the event, which will be watched by an estimated 160 million people.

“The Office of the President of Ukraine did not address the organizers of the Eurovision Song Contest to offer (Zelenskyy’s) online performance during the finals or at any other stage of the contest,” he said on Facebook.

In the 15 months since Russia invaded, Zelenskyy has addressed dozens of global gatherings to promote his country’s cause. He has spoken to legislatures around the world by video — and a few times in person — and appealed to crowds at the Glastonbury music festival, the Grammy Awards and the Berlin Film Festival.

But he reportedly was denied permission to speak at the Academy Awards in March, and Ukraine says that FIFA, international soccer’s governing body, also refused Zelenskyy’s request to send a video message to the World Cup in November 2022.

Founded in 1956 to help heal a continent shattered by war, Eurovision strives to keep pop and politics separate. Overtly political lyrics, signs and symbols are banned.

But politics can’t be shut out entirely. Russia was banned from the contest after it invaded Ukraine in February 2022. Belarus had been kicked out the previous year over its government’s clampdown on dissent.

Last year’s contest was won by Ukraine, and the U.K. has stepped in to host on its behalf.

Acts from 26 countries will compete in Saturday’s live final at the Liverpool Arena, which will be co-hosted by Ukrainian singer Julia Sanina. It will feature a performance by last year’s Eurovision winner, Kalush Orchestra, and other Ukrainian performers, and images of Ukraine will be shown before each act performs.

“We believe that this is the best way to reflect and celebrate Ukraine’s Eurovision Song Contest win and show we are united by music during these hard times,” the broadcasting union said.

Tens of thousands of music fans from across Europe have flocked to Liverpool, which won a competition among U.K. cities to host the contest. The birthplace of The Beatles has thrown itself into the party spirit, with pubs and venues across the city holding Eurovision parties and a multinational fan zone featuring performances by Eurovision stars past and present.

Organizers say they have taken steps to ensure the phone and online voting isn’t disrupted by cyberattacks, working with the U.K. National Cyber Security Centre to bolster the event’s defenses.

Martin Green, the BBC’s managing director of the event, said that preparations were “in a really good place,” though he wouldn’t give details of security arrangements.

---

For more AP coverage of Eurovision, visit <https://apnews.com/hub/eurovision-song-contest>

## Trump's sexual assault verdict marks a rare moment of accountability. And women are noticing

By MARYCLAIRE DALE Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Cassandra Nuñez and her grandmother cast their first ballots in a U.S. presidential election in 2016. She was a first-year college student; her grandmother, a newly minted citizen. They both hoped to elect the first woman president over a man who bragged about grabbing and kissing women at will.

But Donald Trump became president, and it would be nearly seven years before a Trump accuser could press her claims at trial. This week, jurors in a New York civil case said they believed that Trump sexually assaulted writer E. Jean Carroll in a dressing room in the 1990s — making him the first U.S. president found liable by a jury in a sexual battery case. The panel awarded her \$5 million in damages.

"It's a victorious moment, but why did the people of the United States let this happen?" said Nuñez, now 25, of Los Angeles, noting the number of sexual misconduct accusations against Trump during the campaign and since his election. "It's kind of late."

The verdict — a rare moment of accountability for a former president and powerful men like him — comes as women across the U.S. ponder the cultural landscape amid sweeping threats to their hard-won progress, including Hillary Clinton's loss to Trump in 2016, the Supreme Court's repeal of abortion rights last year and the uneven success of the #MeToo movement.

Juliet Williams, a professor of gender studies at UCLA, called it an ambiguous time for women.

"It's very hard to feel at this moment that the accounting, the reckoning that we need has yet happened," she said. "I feel this is a small step in the right direction."

Some may find "yet another day contemplating the behavior of Donald Trump just feels like a colossal waste of attention," Williams said. But she believes it's important to address "the everyday abuses of power that have real consequences for victims."

With a string of investigations swirling around Trump, the sex-abuse case — a civil verdict, with no criminal prosecution possible — hit only so hard across a news-weary America. Nuñez followed the trial and discussed it with a few colleagues at her public relations job. For others, the news barely hit their radar, if they were aware of the decision at all, even as Trump campaigns for the presidency again.

"Trump's long list of scandals makes any single moment seem less surprising," said Kelly Dittmar, a scholar with the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University. "What might certainly derail other candidates or elected officials meets an eye roll among many Trump detractors — and only further mobilizes Trump supporters around the idea that this is a 'witch hunt' against him."

Carroll this week savored the outcome of the lawsuit she filed the day New York, like some other states, opened a one-year window for adults to file suit over old sexual assault claims. Advocates say it can take years for victims like the 79-year-old advice columnist to move past their sense of shame and go public. But it's often too late, as it was for her, to pursue criminal charges.

Trump dismissed the accusation as a way to boost sales of Carroll's 2019 book, "What Do We Need Men For?"

But Carroll, in the wake of the verdict, said the case was never about money. She said she only hoped to clear her name, one the jury — in awarding nearly \$3 million for defamation — agreed Trump had sullied.

Trump, in hours of deposition questioning, denied he knew Carroll despite photographic evidence, and he denigrated her as "not my type." He also mused that celebrities had gotten away with sexually abusing women for centuries, "unfortunately, or fortunately."

Trump doubled down on his insulting, often misogynistic rhetoric about women in a CNN Republican town hall Wednesday evening, mockingly calling Carroll a "wack job" in a comment that drew glee from the New Hampshire audience.

The day after his inauguration in January 2017, millions of people around the world took part in a Women's March to protest his rise to power. Many sported bright pink hats that were the brainchild of the Pussyhat Project — a cat-eared design meant as a wry clapback to Trump's infamous comments on women's genitals.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 26 of 88

"The Women's March demonstrated that we are watching," Williams said. "But in terms of the scope of sexualized violence, a \$5 million fine to somebody who commands immense resources and will certainly not show that this does any material harm to him, there's a grotesque imbalance with this outcome."

Los Angeles screenwriter Krista Suh, who helped launch the Pussyhat Project, is not sure Tuesday's verdict strikes a death knell for Trump's political career.

"He's very good at skirting the truth, and I'm just not sure this verdict pins him down, but it definitely helps," the 35-year-old said.

The crowd at the Women's March in Washington included an anonymous observer from Toronto: Andrea Constand, whose sexual abuse claims against actor Bill Cosby would soon go to trial.

In the years that followed, she would see Cosby convicted, sent to prison and then released when his conviction was overturned on appeal. Amid that setback, and the inability of victims like Carroll to pursue criminal cases, she believes the civil court process can alone be effective. Constand had received \$3.4 million from Cosby in a civil settlement in 2006, long before the criminal case was reopened, and she used the money to rebuild her life and career.

"If that's what it takes to get justice and you have no other option, then it is about the money, because the money helps you heal and move forward and accomplish things that you haven't been able to accomplish because you've been gripped by your trauma," she said.

Despite the jury's view that Trump is a sexual offender, millions of women would likely still vote for him given the chance in 2024, to maintain the country's social, economic or racial order, Williams said. More than half of white women voted for Trump in 2020.

"There are people that like Trump's brand of masculinity. They like the bravado, they like the confidence, they like a certain type of patriotism, they like the performance of a certain kind of virility," Williams said. "So when these episodes of sexual misconduct come out, I think people are willing to give it a pass."

For Nuñez, Trump's victory over Hillary Clinton in 2016 was "a double whammy" given his behavior. His presidency, and later the #MeToo movement, spanned her time in college at Loyola Marymount University. She sees progress in small victories, like when her workplace required sexual misconduct training.

"These beginnings give me hope that one day when I have my own children," she said, "leaders will be held accountable for all their actions, and all types violence against women will not be tolerated."

---

Follow Legal Affairs Writer Maryclaire Dale on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/Maryclairedale>

## **Pandemic-related asylum restrictions known as Title 42 expire, straining US immigration system**

By VALERIE GONZALEZ, ELLIOT SPAGAT and GIOVANNA DELL'ORTO Associated Press

EL PASO, Texas (AP) — As pandemic-era asylum restrictions ended early Friday, migrants in northern Mexico faced more uncertainties about a new online system for appointments to seek asylum in the U.S. Some migrants still waded apprehensively into the Rio Grande, defying officials who shouted for them to turn back, while elsewhere along the U.S.-Mexico border people hunched over cell phones trying to access an appointment app that may change their future.

President Joe Biden's administration introduced the new asylum rules in a bid to get asylum-seekers to stop coming across the border illegally by reviving and sharpening pre-pandemic penalties and creating new legal pathways to asylum that aim to cut out unscrupulous smugglers.

The transition to the new system unfolded in the night amid legal challenges and last-ditch efforts by migrants to cross a border fortified with barbed wire and troops.

A federal judge in Florida dealt a potentially serious legal setback to the plan by temporarily blocking the administration's attempt to release migrants more quickly when Border Patrol holding stations are full.

At Matamoros, Mexico, across the Rio Grande from Brownsville, Texas, migrant families — with some parents holding children — hesitated only briefly as the deadline passed before entering the waters of the Rio Grande, clutching cell phones above the water to light the way toward the U.S.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 27 of 88

U.S. authorities shouted for the migrants to turn back.

"Be careful with the children," an official shouted through a megaphone. "It is especially dangerous for the children."

Separately, at an outdoor encampment of migrants beside a border bridge in Ciudad Juárez, across from El Paso, Texas, cell phones were afloat as migrants attempted to book an asylum appointment online through an app administered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

"There's no other way to get in," said Venezuelan Carolina Ortiz, accompanied by her husband and children, ages 1 and 4. Others in the camp had the same plan: keep trying the app.

The expired rule, known as Title 42, was in place since March 2020. It allowed border officials to quickly return asylum seekers back over the border on grounds of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

While Title 42 prevented many from seeking asylum, it carried no legal consequences, encouraging repeat attempts. After Thursday, migrants face being barred from entering the U.S. for five years and possible criminal prosecution.

At the U.S. border with Tijuana, as Title 42 expired, there was no visible reaction among hundreds of migrants who were in U.S. custody between two border walls, many of them for days with little food. They slept on the ground under bright lights in cool spring air. Shelters across Tijuana were filled with an estimated 6,000 migrants.

It was not clear how many migrants were on the move or how long the surge might last. By Thursday evening, the flow seemed to be slowing in some locations, but it was not clear why, or whether crossings would increase again.

A U.S. official reported the Border Patrol stopped some 10,000 migrants on Tuesday — nearly twice the average daily level from March and only slightly below the 11,000 figure that authorities have said is the upper limit of what they expect after Title 42 ends.

More than 27,000 people were in U.S. Customs and Border Protection custody, the official said.

"Our buses are full. Our planes are full," said Pedro Cardenas, a city commissioner in Brownsville, as recent arrivals headed to locations across the U.S.

The administration hopes that a new system will be more orderly, and will help some migrants to seek asylum in Canada or Spain instead of the U.S. But Biden has conceded the border will be chaotic for a while. Immigrant advocacy groups have threatened legal action, and migrants fleeing poverty, gangs and persecution in their homelands are still desperate to reach U.S. soil at any cost.

Holding facilities along the border already were far beyond capacity. But late Thursday, U.S. District Judge T. Kent Wetherell, an appointee of President Donald Trump, halted the administration's plan to begin releasing migrants with notices to report to an immigration office in 60 days when holding centers reach 125% capacity, or where people are held an average of 60 hours. The quick releases were to also be triggered when authorities stop 7,000 migrants along the border in a day.

In a statement, Customs and Border Protection said it would comply with the court order, while calling it a "harmful ruling that will result in unsafe overcrowding ... and undercut our ability to efficiently process and remove migrants."

Wetherell blocked the releases for two weeks and scheduled a May 19 hearing on whether to extend his order.

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas had already warned of more crowded Border Patrol facilities to come.

"I cannot overstate the strain on our personnel and our facilities," he told reporters Thursday.

On Wednesday, Homeland Security announced a rule to make it extremely difficult for anyone who travels through another country or who did not apply online to qualify for asylum, with few exceptions. It also introduced curfews with GPS tracking for families released in the U.S. before initial asylum screenings.

Minutes before the new rule took effect, advocacy groups sued to block it.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in San Francisco by the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies and other groups, alleges the Biden administration "doubled down" on a policy proposed by President Donald Trump

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 28 of 88

that the same court rejected. The Biden administration has said its new rule is substantially different.

The administration also said it is beefing up the removal of migrants found unqualified to stay in the U.S. on flights like those that sent nearly 400 migrants home to Guatemala from the U.S. on Thursday.

Among them was Sheidi Mazariegos, 26, who arrived with her 4-year-old son just eight days after being detained near Brownsville.

"I heard on the news that there was an opportunity to enter, I heard it on the radio, but it was all a lie," she said. Smugglers got her to Matamoros and put the two on a raft. They were quickly apprehended by Border Patrol agents.

Mazariegos said she made the trek because she is poor and hoped to reunite with her sisters living in the U.S.

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador noted an uptick in smugglers at his country's southern border offering to take people to the United States, and said they were telling migrants the U.S. border was open.

At the same time, the administration has introduced expansive new legal pathways into the U.S.

Up to 30,000 people a month from Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela can enter if they apply online with a financial sponsor and enter through an airport. Processing centers are opening in Guatemala, Colombia and elsewhere. Up to 1,000 can enter daily through land crossings with Mexico if they snag an appointment on an online app.

At shelters in northern Mexico, many migrants chose not to rush to the border and waited for existing asylum appointments or hopes of reserving one online.

At the Agape Misión Mundial shelter in Tijuana, hundreds of migrants bided their time. Daisy Bucia, 37, and her 15-year-old daughter arrived at the shelter over three months ago from Mexico's Michoacán state fleeing death threats, and have an asylum appointment Saturday in California.

Bucia read on social media that pandemic-era restrictions were ending at the U.S.-Mexico border, but wasn't sure if it was true and preferred to cross with certainty later.

"What people want more than anything is to confuse you," Bucia said.

---

Gonzalez reported from Brownsville, Texas; Spagat reported from Tijuana, Mexico. Associated Press writers Colleen Long and Rebecca Santana in Washington; Christopher Sherman in Mexico City; Gerardo Carrillo in Matamoros, Mexico; Maria Verza in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico; Morgan Lee in Santa Fe, New Mexico; and Suman Naishadham in Tijuana, Mexico contributed to this report.

## It's Eurovision time! Here's how the contest works and who to watch for

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LIVERPOOL, England (AP) — Sprinkle the sequins and pump up the volume: The 67th Eurovision Song Contest reaches its climax on Saturday with a grand final broadcast live from Liverpool. There will be catchy choruses, a kaleidoscope of costumes and tributes to the spirit of Ukraine in a competition that for seven decades has captured the changing zeitgeist of a continent.

Here's what to expect as acts from across Europe — and beyond — vie for the continent's pop crown.  
WHO'S COMPETING?

This year, 37 countries sent an act to Eurovision, selected through national competitions or internal selections by broadcasters. The host country is usually the winner of the previous year's event, but 2022 runner-up Britain is hosting this time around on behalf of the winner, Ukraine.

Twenty-six countries will compete in Saturday's final at the Liverpool Arena, beside the River Mersey in the port city that gave birth to The Beatles. Six countries automatically qualify: last year's winner and the "Big Five" who pay the most to the contest -- France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the U.K.

The other 20 finalists, chosen by public votes in two semifinals on Tuesday and Thursday, are: Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Israel, Lithuania,

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 29 of 88

Moldova, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

WAIT — AUSTRALIA?

Eurovision is about spirit, not just geography. Eurovision is hugely popular in Australia, and the country was allowed to join the competition in 2015. Other entrants from outside Europe's borders include Israel and Azerbaijan.

WHO ARE THIS YEAR'S FAVORITES?

It's hard to predict victors in a contest whose past winners have ranged from ABBA to Finnish cartoon metal band Lordi, but bookmakers say Swedish diva Loreen, who won Eurovision in 2012, is favorite to score a double with her power ballad "Tattoo."

Finland's Käärijä was a crowd-pleaser in the semifinals with his pop-metal party tune "Cha Cha Cha," and Canadian singer La Zarra, competing for France, is also highly ranked for her Edith Piaf-esque chanson "Évidemment."

And never underestimate left-field entries like Croatia's Let 3, whose song "Mama Šć!" is pure Eurovision camp: an antiwar rock opera that plays like Monty Python meets "Dr. Strangelove."

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE FINAL?

Around 6,000 fans will attend the final, hosted by long-time BBC Eurovision presenter Graham Norton, "Ted Lasso" star Hannah Waddingham, British singer Alesha Dixon and Ukrainian rock star Julia Sanina.

Each competing act must sing live and stick to a three-minute limit, but otherwise is free to create its own staging — the flashier the pyrotechnics and more elaborate the choreography, the better.

Russia's war in Ukraine will lend a solemn note to a contest famed for celebrating cheesy pop. The show will open with a performance by last year's winner, Ukrainian folk-rap band Kalush Orchestra. Ukrainian singer Jamala, who won the contest in 2016, will perform a tribute to her Crimean Tatar culture.

One person who won't be appearing is Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. He asked to address the final by video — but organizer the European Broadcasting Union said "regrettably," that would breach "the nonpolitical nature of the event."

HOW IS THE WINNER DECIDED?

After all the acts have performed, viewers in participating nations can vote by phone, text message or app — though they can't vote for their own country. This year for the first time, viewers in nonparticipating countries can also vote online, with the combined "rest of the world" votes being given the weight of one individual country.

National juries of music industry professionals also allocate between one and 12 points to their favorite songs, with an announcer from each country popping up to declare which has been granted the coveted "douze points" (12 points).

Public and jury votes are combined to give each country a single score. Ending up with "nul points" (zero points) is considered a national embarrassment. It's a fate the U.K. has suffered several times.

HOW CAN I WATCH?

Eurovision is being shown by national broadcasters that belong to the European Broadcasting Union, including the BBC in Britain, and on the Eurovision YouTube channel. In the United States, it's being shown on NBC's Peacock streaming service.

For more AP coverage of Eurovision, visit <https://apnews.com/hub/eurovision-song-contest>

## Title 42 has ended. Here's what it did, and how US immigration policy is changing

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. is putting new restrictions into place at its southern border to try to stop migrants from crossing illegally and encourage them instead to apply for asylum online through a new process.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 30 of 88

## WHAT ABOUT FAMILIES?

Families crossing the border illegally will be subject to curfews and the head of household will have to wear an ankle monitoring bracelet. Immigration officials will try to determine within 30 days whether a family can stay in the U.S. or be deported. Usually the process would take years.

The Biden administration considered detaining families until they cleared initial asylum screenings but opted instead for the curfews, which will run from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. and begin soon in Baltimore; Chicago; Newark, New Jersey; and Washington, D.C., according to a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity because the information was not intended to be public. Families who do not appear for their screening interviews will be picked up by immigration authorities and deported.

## OVERCROWDING

Border Patrol stations are meant to house migrants temporarily and don't have capacity to hold the volume of people coming. Some stations are already too crowded. As a result, agents began releasing migrants into the U.S. with instructions to appear at an immigration office within 60 days or face deportation.

Agents were told to begin releases in any area where holding facilities were at 125% capacity or the average time in custody exceeded 60 hours. They also were told to start releases if 7,000 migrants were taken into custody across the entire border in any one day.

That's already happened, with some 10,000 people taken into custody on Tuesday. This could create problems for Biden administration officials trying to crack down on those entering the country.

Florida filed a lawsuit claiming the releases violate an earlier court ruling. Late Thursday, a federal judge agreed and at least temporarily halted the administration's plan for releases. Customs and Border Protection said in a statement that it would comply with the court order, while also calling it a "harmful ruling that will result in unsafe overcrowding ... and undercut our ability to efficiently process and remove migrants."

## MIGRATION HUBS

U.S. officials plan to open 100 regional migration hubs across the Western Hemisphere, where people can seek placement in other countries, including Canada and Spain.

There will be hubs in Colombia and Guatemala, but it's not clear where others will be or when they will be up and running.

---

Associated Press Writers Rebecca Santana in Washington and Elliot Spagat in San Diego contributed to this report.

## Scenes from the US-Mexico border amid expiration of Title 42

By ANITA SNOW Associated Press

From the Rio Grande Valley in Texas to San Diego and Tijuana, many migrants gathered along some sections of the U.S.-Mexico border were left questioning when or whether they would cross into the United States to seek asylum once pandemic-related restrictions known as Title 42 ended.

Some migrants who had traveled from Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Central America feared that it could be harder for them to stay on U.S. soil with the restrictions lifted.

Here are some of the stories from along the 1,950-mile (3,140-kilometer) international boundary:

\_\_\_ Aylin Guevara, 45, hurried her steps as she walked through the scorching desert of Ciudad Juarez toward the border.

She was accompanied by her two children, ages 16 and 5, and her husband. The family fled their coastal city in Colombia after receiving death threats and hoped to seek refuge in the U.S.

After spending the previous night in a hotel, they were eager to get to the border — "to get in and go with the help of God and baby Jesus," Guevara said.

But when they arrived with just hours to go before the end of Title 42, a U.S. immigration officer said they could not pass.

"Not anymore, it's over," he told them in a firm voice, instructing them to go to bridges 10 miles (16 kilometers) to their left or right.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 31 of 88

\_\_\_ María José Durán, a 24-year-old student from Venezuela, was on the verge of tears as she sat on a riverbank in Matamoros, Mexico.

Mexican immigration officials were trying to move migrants to an improvised camp and away from a spot where they could wade across the Rio Grande.

Durán said she dropped out of college when her parents could no longer afford it and set out for the U.S. with a group of friends and relatives. They crossed the treacherous Darien Gap dividing Colombia and Panama and then a half-dozen more countries before arriving at the U.S. border.

"I don't know what to think now, having made such a difficult journey to now find ourselves with this," she said, motioning toward the opposite shore where at least a dozen Texas state troopers with rifles stood behind concertina wire.

From the Mexico side, Texas National Guard members could be seen reinforcing another stretch of wire to keep migrants out.

Later, Durán could be seen walking along the levee with other migrants who had crossed the Rio Grande and passed the barbed wire.

\_\_\_ Hundreds of migrants lined up next to the border wall in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, were still crossing over Thursday and being received by the U.S. Border Patrol in the hours before the Title 42 restrictions lifted. The numbers were notably lower than in recent days.

Ecuadorians Washington Javier Vaca and his wife, Paulina Congo, along with their two children, ages 14 and 7, knew nothing about the change in rules.

"And now will it be better or worse for us?" Congo asked. "We asked for asylum in Mexico and after four months they denied us."

A Salvadoran man who gave his name as David moved away from the border and back into Ciudad Juarez for fear of being deported.

\_\_\_ Authorities in the remote desert community of Yuma, Arizona, expressed alarm after the average daily number of migrant arrivals grew this week from 300 to 1,000.

Hundreds who entered the Yuma area by crossing the Colorado River early Thursday surrendered to border agents, who later brought adults and children to buses.

Mayor Doug Nicholls asked that the federal government declare a national disaster so that Federal Emergency Management Agency resources and National Guard troops can be rushed to his and other small border communities.

Most migrants are transported to shelters operated by nonprofit organizations farther away from the border, but border officials will release them into communities if enough transportation isn't available. Nicholls said officials have already told him they plan to release 141 people in Yuma County on Friday.

"The question keeps coming up: 'What now?' I've been asking that question for two years, with no answers," Nicholls said. "We are at a situation we've never been at before."

\_\_\_ Hundreds of migrants who waited for days for a chance to apply for asylum lined up Thursday along the towering steel bollards separating Tijuana from San Diego.

At one point a U.S. Border Patrol agent bent over and talked to a woman who fainted on the dusty ground.

Others chose not to crowd the border, instead remaining at shelters in Tijuana to wait for existing asylum appointments or trying to get them online. There were hundreds in the bright yellow buildings of the Agape Mision Mundial shelter, as more arrived at the metal gate with little more than paperwork and a few belongings.

Daisy Bucia, 37, arrived at the shelter over three months ago with her 15-year-old daughter after fleeing Mexico's Michoacan state due to death threats she received. The two were waiting to take a bus to the inland city of Mexicali on Saturday for an asylum appointment across the border in Calexico, California.

\_\_\_ Leaders of nonprofit organizations that assist asylum seekers away from the border in Arizona say they are as ready as possible for the new scenario.

"We'll put our best foot forward and approach this with every resource available," said Teresa Cavendish, executive director of the Tucson shelter Casa Alitas, the state's largest. "But it may not be enough."

Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona runs Casa Alitas' new 300-bed facility for men, as well

as four other locations that also temporarily house women, families and vulnerable people for a combined capacity of over 1,000 beds.

David Miliband, president of the International Rescue Committee, who visited the organization's Welcome Center in Phoenix this week, expressed confidence in the agency's ability to handle any increase in asylum seekers there. The 340-bed shelter was at less than half capacity.

"The challenge can be managed as long as it is done in an organized and humane manner," Miliband said.

Beth Strano, engagement manager for the center in a quiet south Phoenix neighborhood, said: "We served 50,000 people last year and 38,000 people the year before that without any negative impact to our clients or community."

Smugglers helped Guatemalan Sheidi Mazariegos and her 4-year-old son get to Matamoros, Mexico, where she and the child crossed the Rio Grande on a raft.

But Border Patrol agents took the pair into custody a week ago near Brownville, Texas. On Thursday, the 26-year-old and her son arrived back in Guatemala on one of two flights carrying a total of 387 migrants.

"I heard on the news that there was an opportunity to enter," Mazariegos said. "I heard it on the radio, but it was all a lie."

On a stretch of border wall in Tijuana, migrants asked passersby for blankets, food and water as the sun set over a steep hill.

Gerson Aguilera, 41, got to Tijuana around 4 p.m. with his three kids and wife to make a go at crossing and ask for asylum. From Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Aguilera said he and his family fled after organized criminals started demanding he pay twice the extortion money he was already paying of 2,000 Honduran lempira (roughly \$81) a week.

"It's very hard. For a payment, they will kill you," Aguilera said with tears in his eyes.

The owner of a welding shop, Aguilera said he left his home once before in 2020 because of threats, but returned when things calmed down. That wasn't an option anymore.

"We ask that God helps us," Aguilar said.

Associated Press journalists Gerardo Carrillo in Matamoros, Mexico, María Verza in Ciudad Juarez, Sonia Pérez D. in Guatemala City and Suman Naishadham in Tijuana contributed to this report. Snow reported from Phoenix.

## The AP Interview: Mitsotakis hopes for better relations with Turkey if reelected as Greek premier

By ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

VOLOS, Greece (AP) — Greece's prime minister says he will extend "a hand of friendship" to the winner of upcoming elections in the country's neighbor and longtime regional rival Turkey — but adds that he hopes the next government will "reconsider its approach toward the West."

Kyriakos Mitsotakis, himself facing an election in just over a week, said he is willing to speak to whomever emerges victorious from Sunday's polls in Turkey.

"But I'm not naive," he told The Associated Press in a wide-ranging interview while on the campaign trail in central Greece on Thursday evening. "I know that foreign policies of countries don't change from one day to the next."

Turkey's increasingly authoritarian President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has led his country as prime minister and president since 2003, faces his most challenging election. Amid a faltering economy, Erdogan has lost some ground to his main rival, the secular, center-left Kemal Kilicdaroglu.

Although not to the same level as with Greece, a fellow NATO member, Turkey's relations with the United States and several European countries have seen strain. Turkey is blocking Sweden's request to join NATO, pressing the country to crack down on Kurdish militants and other groups that Turkey regards as terrorist threats.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 33 of 88

"I would hope that the next Turkish government would overall reconsider its approach towards the West, not just towards Greece, towards Europe, towards NATO, and towards the United States," Mitsotakis said. "But again, I have to be a realist and not be too naive, and that is why we will continue with ... our firm foreign policy. That means we will continue to strengthen our deterrence capabilities and our defense capabilities."

Greece and Turkey have been at odds for decades over issues including their maritime boundaries in the Mediterranean. But bilateral relations in recent years plummeted to new lows that saw the two countries' warships shadowing each other and Turkish officials suggesting they could invade Greek islands.

In response, Greece has embarked on an extensive military procurement program to modernize its armed forces, including purchasing advanced French-built fighter jets.

"I wish I did not have to spend much more than 2% of my GDP on defense. But unfortunately, we live in a precarious neighborhood with ... a much larger country than us that's also been behaving aggressively," Mitsotakis said.

The prime minister said that he hopes to build on a reduction of rhetoric following devastating earthquakes in Turkey in February that killed tens of thousands. Similarly improved ties after earthquakes struck both Turkey and Greece in 1999 lasted for several years.

"It is a pity. We don't have to wait for a catastrophe to strike, nor are we destined to live in a state of permanent tension," Mitsotakis said. But, he stressed, better ties require an end to bellicose rhetoric from Turkey. "If the Turkish government every other day talks about coming at night to invade our islands, obviously that is not very conducive towards building a climate of trust and goodwill," he said.

Mitsotakis, a Harvard-educated 55-year-old, has headed the center-right New Democracy party since 2016 and became prime minister in 2019. He has been leading his main opposition rival, left-wing former prime minister Alexis Tsipras and his Syriza party, in opinion polls as he seeks a second four-year term in office in a May 21 election.

Born into a political family, Mitsotakis is the son of the late prime minister Constantine Mitsotakis, a political heavyweight of the late 1980s and early 1990s. His sister, Dora Bakogiannis, is a former foreign minister, and his nephew is the current mayor of Athens.

Because of a change in Greece's electoral law, the winner of the ballot is unlikely to garner enough votes to be able to form a government without seeking coalition partners. If no party can form a government, a second election will be held roughly a month later, when the electoral law will give the winning party bonus parliamentary seats.

"I've made it very clear I don't believe in this electoral system. What we need is ... a stable government, and preferably we need a single-party government," Mitsotakis said.

On an often brutal campaign schedule, Mitsotakis toured parts of central Greece on Thursday, delivering a speech in the seaside city of Volos before heading east on Friday to the islands of Lesbos and Rhodes.

Lesbos was home for several years to the notoriously overcrowded Moria migrant camp, which grew to become Europe's largest until it burnt down in 2020. The island and several others in the eastern Aegean Sea became flashpoints in a refugee crisis in 2015 that saw hundreds of thousands of people arriving from Turkey and heading into Europe through Greece.

Mitsotakis' government has cracked down on immigration, seeking to prevent migrants and asylum-seekers from entering the country by increasing land and sea border patrols and vastly expanding a fence along the land border with Turkey.

But Greek authorities have also been accused by rights organizations and migrants themselves of carrying out summary — and illegal — deportations without allowing migrants to apply for asylum. Greece has strenuously denied it engages in the practice known as pushbacks.

Mitsotakis vowed to maintain the policy if he wins a second term. The current border fence spans just under 40 kilometers (25 miles) and the government plans to extend it by 35 kilometers (22 miles) over the next 12 months. Officials have said more than 100 kilometers (160 miles) of wall will be added to that by 2026.

"I want to make it very clear I'm unapologetic about that," he said. "We have reversed the policy of the previous government, which had an open door policy which ended up allowing more than a million people to cross into Greece in 2015. That's not going to happen again."

When Mitsotakis first came to power, Greece was barely emerging from a brutal decade-long financial crisis that saw it lose access to international bond markets and put the country's finances under the strict supervision of international creditors in return for billions of euros in bailout loans.

Although Greece has regained market access, international rating agencies still rank its bonds just below investment grade. Mitsotakis has said that he expects Greek bonds to be lifted out of junk status this year — if he wins reelection. Tsipras' government often clashed with Greece's bailout creditors, who set strict fiscal policies in return for emergency funds.

"I'll be very, very blunt," Mitsotakis said. "If Syriza tries to implement even a fraction of what they have said," it will lead to "a certain downgrade of our economy."

Theodora Tongas contributed to this story.

## Sex? Sexual intercourse? Neither? Teens weigh in on evolving definitions — and habits

By JOCELYN GECKER AP Education Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — "Situationships." "Sneaky links." The "talking stage," the flirtatious getting-to-know-you phase — typically done via text — that can lead to a hookup.

High school students are having less sexual intercourse. That's what the studies say. But that doesn't mean they're having less sex.

The language of young love and lust, and the actions behind it, are evolving. And the shift is not being adequately captured in national studies, experts say.

For years, studies have shown a decline in the rates of American high school students having sex. That trend continued, not surprisingly, in the first years of the pandemic, according to a recent survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The study found that 30% of teens in 2021 said they had ever had sex, down from 38% in 2019 and a huge drop from three decades ago, when more than half of teens reported having sex.

The Associated Press took the findings to teenagers and experts around the country to ask for their interpretation. Parents: Some of the answers may surprise you.

THE MEANING OF SEX: DEPENDS WHO YOU ASK

For starters, what is the definition of sex?

"Hmm. That's a good question," says Rose, 17, a junior at a New England high school.

She thought about it for 20 seconds, then listed a range of possibilities for heterosexual sex, oral sex and relations between same-sex or LGBTQ partners. On her campus, short-term hookups — known as "situationships" — are typically low commitment and high risk from both health and emotional perspectives.

There are also "sneaky links" — when you hook up in secret and don't tell your friends. "I have a feeling a lot more people are quote unquote having sex — just not necessarily between a man and a woman."

For teens today, the conversation about sexuality is moving from a binary situation to a spectrum and so are the kinds of sex people are having. And while the vocabulary around sex is shifting, the main question on the CDC survey has been worded the same way since the government agency began its biannual study in 1991: Have you "ever had sexual intercourse?"

"Honestly, that question is a little laughable," says Kay, 18, who identifies as queer and attends a public high school near Lansing, Michigan. "There's probably a lot of teenagers who are like, 'No, I've never had sexual intercourse, but I've had other kinds of sex.'"

The AP agreed to use teenagers' first or middle names for this article because of a common concern they expressed about backlash at school, at home and on social media for speaking about their peers' sex lives and LGBTQ+ relations.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 35 of 88

The changes come with the end of coronavirus restrictions on asylum that have allowed the U.S. to quickly turn back migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border for the past three years. Those restrictions are known as Title 42, because the authority comes from Title 42 of a 1944 public health law allowing curbs on migration in the name of protecting public health.

Disinformation has swirled and confusion has set in during the transition. A look at the new rules (and the old ones):

## WHAT IS TITLE 42 AND WHAT DID IT DO?

Title 42 is the name of an emergency health authority. It was a holdover from President Donald Trump's administration and began in March 2020. The authority allowed U.S. officials to turn away migrants who came to the U.S.-Mexico border on the grounds of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Before that, migrants could cross illegally, ask for asylum and be allowed into the U.S. They were then screened and often released to wait out their immigration cases.

Under Title 42, migrants were returned over the border and denied the right to seek asylum. U.S. officials turned away migrants more than 2.8 million times. Families and children traveling alone were exempt.

But there were no real consequences when someone illegally crossed the border. So migrants were able to try again and again to cross, on the off chance they would get into the U.S.

President Joe Biden initially kept Title 42 in place after he took office, then tried to end its use in 2022. Republicans sued, arguing the restrictions were necessary for border security. Courts had kept the rules in place. But the Biden administration announced in January that it was ending national COVID-19 emergencies, and so the border restrictions have now gone away.

Biden has said the new changes are necessary, in part because Congress has not passed immigration reform in decades.

## SO WHAT'S HAPPENING NEXT?

The Title 42 restrictions lifted at 11:59 p.m. EDT Thursday.

The Biden administration has put into place a series of new policies cracking down on illegal crossings. The administration says it's trying to stop people from paying smuggling operations to make a dangerous and often deadly journey.

Now there will be strict consequences. Migrants caught crossing illegally will not be allowed to return for five years and can face criminal prosecution if they do.

## NEW ASYLUM RULES

Under U.S. and international law, anyone who comes to the U.S. can ask for asylum. People from all over the world travel to the U.S.-Mexico border to seek asylum. They are screened to determine whether they have a credible fear of persecution in their homeland. Their case then goes to the immigration court system to determine if they can stay in the U.S., but that process can take years. Usually they are released into the U.S. to wait out their cases.

The Biden administration is now turning away anyone seeking asylum who didn't first seek protection in a country they traveled through, or first applied online. This is a version of a Trump administration policy that was overturned by the courts. Advocacy groups sued to block the new rule minutes before it took effect.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in San Francisco by the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies and other groups, alleges the Biden administration "doubled down" on the policy proposed by Trump that the same court rejected. The Biden administration has said its new rule is substantially different.

## WHO'S ALLOWED IN?

The U.S. has said it will accept up to 30,000 people per month from Venezuela, Haiti, Nicaragua and Cuba as long as they come by air, have a sponsor and apply online first. The government also will allow up to 100,000 people from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras into the U.S. who have family here if they, too, apply online. Border officials will otherwise deport people, including turning 30,000 per month from Venezuela, Haiti, Nicaragua and Cuba who will be sent back over the border to Mexico.

Other migrants also may be allowed in if they apply through the CBP One app. Right now, 740 people per day have been allowed in using the app, which is being increased to 1,000 per day.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 36 of 88

## SEXUAL IDENTITY IS EVOLVING

Several experts say the CDC findings could signal a shift in how teen sexuality is evolving, with gender fluidity becoming more common along with a decrease in stigma about identifying as not heterosexual.

They point to another finding in this year's study that found the proportion of high school kids who identify as heterosexual dropped to about 75%, down from about 89% in 2015, when the CDC began asking about sexual orientation. Meanwhile, the share who identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual rose to 15%, up from 8% in 2015.

"I just wonder, if youth were in the room when the questions were being created, how they would be worded differently," said Taryn Gal, executive director of the Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health.

Sex is just one of the topics covered by the CDC study, called the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. One of the main sources of national data about high school students on a range of behaviors, it is conducted every two years and asks about 100 questions on topics including smoking, drinking, drug use, bullying, carrying guns and sex. More than 17,000 students at 152 public and private high schools across the country responded to the 2021 survey.

"It's a fine line we have to try to walk," says Kathleen Ethier, director of the CDC's Division of Adolescent and School Health, which leads the study.

From a methodological standpoint, changing a question would make it harder to compare trends over time. The goal is to take a national snapshot of teenage behavior, with the understanding that questions might not capture all the nuance. "It doesn't allow us to go as in depth in some areas as we would like," Ethier says.

The national survey, for example, does not ask about oral sex, which carries the risk of spreading sexually transmitted infections. As for "sexual intercourse," Ethier says, "We try to use a term that we know young people understand, realizing that it may not encompass all the ways young people would define sex."

## IS LESS TEEN SEX GOOD NEWS?

Beyond semantics, there are a multitude of theories on why the reported rates of high school sex have steadily declined — and what it might say about American society.

"I imagine some parents are rejoicing and some are concerned, and I think there is probably good cause for both," says Sharon Hoover, co-director of the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland. Health officials like to see trends that result in fewer teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

"But what we don't know is what this means for the trajectory of young people," Hoover says.

This year's decrease, the sharpest drop ever recorded, clearly had a lot to do with the pandemic, which kept kids isolated, cut off from friends and immersed in social media. Even when life started returning to normal, many kids felt uncomfortable with face-to-face interaction and found their skills in verbal communication had declined, Hoover said.

The survey was conducted in the fall of 2021, just as many K-12 students returned to in-person classrooms after a year of online school.

Several teens interviewed said that when schools reopened, they returned with intense social anxiety compounded by fears of catching COVID. That added a new layer to pre-pandemic concerns about sexual relations like getting pregnant or catching STIs.

"I remember thinking, 'What if I get sick? What if I get a disease? What if I don't have the people skills for this?'" said Kay, the 18-year-old from Michigan. "All those 'what ifs' definitely affected my personal relationships, and how I interacted with strangers or personal partners."

Another fear is the prying eyes of parents, says college student Abby Tow, who wonders if helicopter parenting has played a role in what she calls the "baby-fication of our generation." A senior at the University of Oklahoma, Tow knows students in college whose parents monitor their whereabouts using tracking apps.

"Parents would get push notifications when their students left dorms and returned home to dorms," says Tow, 22, majoring in social work and gender studies.

Tow also notices a "general sense of disillusionment" in her generation. She cites statistics that fewer

teenagers today are getting driver's licenses. "I think," she says, "there is a correlation between students being able to drive and students having sex."

Another cause for declining sex rates could be easy access to online porn, experts say. By the age of 17, three-quarters of teenagers have viewed pornography online, with the average age of first exposure at 12, according to a report earlier this year by Common Sense Media, a nonprofit child advocacy group.

"Porn is becoming sex ed for young people," says Justine Fonte, a New York-based sex education teacher. She says pornography shapes and skews adolescent ideas about sexual acts, power and intimacy. "You can rewind, fast forward, play as much as you want. It doesn't require you to think about how the person is feeling."

## IS THERE AN EVOLVING DEFINITION OF CONSENT?

Several experts said they hoped the decline could be partly attributed to a broader understanding of consent and an increase in "comprehensive" sex education being taught in many schools, which has become a target in ongoing culture wars.

Unlike abstinence-only programs, the lessons include discussion on understanding healthy relationships, gender identity, sexual orientation and preventing unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. Contrary to what critics think, she said, young people are more likely to delay the onset of sexual activity if they have access to sex education.

Some schools and organizations supplement sex education with peer counseling, where teens are trained to speak to each other about relationships and other topics that young people might feel uncomfortable raising with adults.

Annika, 14, is a peer ambassador trained by Planned Parenthood and a high school freshman in Southern California. She's offered guidance to friends in toxic relationships and worries about the ubiquity of porn among her peers, especially male friends. It's clear to her that the pandemic stunted sex lives.

The CDC's 2023 survey, which is currently underway, will show if the decline was temporary. Annika suspects it will show a spike. In her school, at least, students seem to be making up for lost time.

"People lost those two years so they're craving it more," she said. She has often been in a school bathroom where couples in stalls next to her are engaged in sexual activities.

Again, the definition of sex? "Any sexual act," Annika says. "And sexual intercourse is one type of act."

To get a truly accurate reading of teen sexuality, the evolution of language needs to be taken into account, says Dr. John Santelli, a Columbia University professor who specializes in adolescent sexuality.

"The word intercourse used to have another meaning," he points out. "Intercourse used to just mean talking."

---

Jocelyn Gecker is an education reporter for The Associated Press, based in San Francisco. Follow her on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/jgecker>

---

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

## **Philippine court acquits former justice secretary of drug charges after key witnesses said they lied**

By JOEAL CALUPITAN and PATRICK QUINN Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A former Philippine opposition senator and justice secretary was acquitted of drug charges Friday after key witnesses recanted and said they had lied about her involvement in narcotics trafficking.

Leila de Lima, 63, remained jailed, however, as she has one outstanding charge against her.

De Lima has been detained since 2017 on drug charges she says were fabricated by former President Rodrigo Duterte and his officials in an attempt to muzzle her criticism of his deadly crackdown on illegal

drugs. His campaign left thousands of mostly petty suspects dead and sparked an International Criminal Court investigation as a possible crime against humanity.

Duterte, who has insisted on de Lima's guilt, left office last June at the end of his turbulent six-year term.

Trial court judge Abraham Alcantara said in his ruling that a former senior police official's recantation led to his decision to acquit de Lima.

"Without his testimony, the crucial link to establish conspiracy is shrouded with reasonable doubt," he wrote, "which warrants the acquittal."

As supporters surrounded her police escort and chanted "free Leila de Lima" outside the court, she said she felt vindicated.

"Answered prayers, this is a glorious day, this is the beginning of my vindication. May I say this to my oppressors: You can never crucify the truth," she said as she was surrounded by police.

Prosecution witness Rafael Ragos, a former head of the Bureau of Corrections, retracted a claim to have delivered money from drug lords to de Lima and said he had been forced by government officials to make it.

De Lima said through her attorney that she was looking forward to her full acquittal on all charges. She has been held in pretrial detention since her arrest without any convictions.

"I have no doubt from the very beginning that I will be acquitted from all the cases the Duterte regime has fabricated against me based on the merits and strength of my innocence. That's already two cases down and one more to go," she said in a statement read out by lawyer, Boni F. Tacardon.

"I am of course happy that with this second acquittal in the three cases filed against me, my release from more than six years of persecution draws nearer. I am extremely grateful to those who stood by and prayed for me all these years," she added.

Quinn contributed from Bangkok.

## **From allies to foes: How uneasy relations between Sudan army, separate force exploded into violence**

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Over recent years, Sudan's military and a separate armed force accumulated power, each suspicious of the other, even as they worked together against the country's pro-democracy movement. Officers inside both forces say it was a long-building recipe for disaster.

Their tenuous alliance ended in mid-April, when they turned their guns on each other, sparking a conflict that threatens to engulf Africa's third largest country.

In interviews with The Associated Press, more than a dozen senior officers from Sudan's military and the rival paramilitary known as the Rapid Support Forces described what led them to an all-out war. They, along with political activists and a U.N. official, recounted how both sides made power grabs, shifted alliances and moved to protect their interests under international pressure for a transition to civilian government.

All spoke on the condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal or because they were not authorized to speak to the media. Neither the RSF nor the military responded to requests for comment.

It was Sudan's strongman and former president, Omar al-Bashir, who created the RSF out of Darfur's notorious Janjaweed militias in 2013. For al-Bashir, the RSF and the regular military were both useful in suppressing dissent and bids for independence by minority communities around the country. By keeping the two forces independent of each other, he also ensured that no one figure held enough power to overthrow him,

That changed when a popular protest movement against Bashir arose in 2019. The head of the military, Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan, and RSF leader Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo decided it was time for the president's 30-year-rule to end. They mounted their first of two coups together.

Together, they also formed a bulwark against the pro-democracy movement. Weeks after al-Bashir's ouster, RSF forces led the storming of the protesters' sit-in in central Khartoum, killing at least 120 people

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 39 of 88

and raping dozens of women.

The paramilitary's head, Dagalo, started to expand his influence. He built up significant wealth, controlling gold mining operations in Darfur's Jebel Amer and other parts of the country in cooperation with Russia's Wagner mercenary group.

The RSF recruited thousands of new troops, purchased new weapons and set up its own parallel bases in most of the country's provinces. The army's command was unhappy that it was done "mostly without coordination with the military's leadership," one member of the military's top governing council told the AP.

That's when there were first signs of the already fraught relationship starting to unravel.

Career officers in the military began to press their leadership to curb the growing power of the RSF, several military officials said. The higher salaries of many RSF fighters fueled resentment.

In September 2021, a military unit based just outside the capital staged a small-scale mutiny. The military, with the RSF's help, crushed the attempt. It served as a reminder of the paramilitary's strength. Afterwards Burhan received internal reports showing that a majority of officers wanted the paramilitary dissolved.

Some refused to salute Dagalo, one military official said. "They would say, 'He is not a real officer,'" he recounted.

But Burhan and the military leadership still needed the RSF amid pressure for a democratic transition. As a deadline to hand power to civilians approached, Burhan and Dagalo on Oct. 25, 2021, joined forces to lead their second coup, removing the government of Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.

Now effectively joint rulers of Sudan, the gap between them only widened.

RSF attempts to build its own air force severely strained the relationship, officials from both sides said. The paramilitary tried to recruit officers and technicians from within the air force's ranks, according to the military officials.

In a March 2022 meeting, Burhan sharply told Dagalo that the military "will not allow any air force outside its control," according to an official who attended the meeting. Dagalo replied that he had abandoned the idea, but Burhan countered with evidence of recent recruiting attempts, the official said.

Dagalo decamped to Darfur for two months to get away from his military counterpart, an RSF official said.

There, he was alarmed by military attempts to weaken the RSF's grip over its stronghold of Darfur. He found that military leaders had designs for a new border guard force in coordination with militia leader Musa Hilal, a longtime foe of Dagalo, according to military and RSF officials.

Dagalo considered it "a stab in his back," an official from his inner circle said.

Meanwhile, international calls for the generals to sign a roadmap for a transition to civilian rule grew louder. American pressure on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to withhold badly needed financial aid was crucial in forcing them to bow, said a former official from the coup-ousted government who remained close to both camps.

"They were pushed to a corner," he said.

Dagalo tried to whitewash his image. He declared the coup a mistake and portrayed himself as a supporter of demands for civilian rule. He allied with the Forces of Freedom and Change, the main umbrella group of pro-democracy organizations.

"It was an alliance of convenience," said a political figure who has been involved in negotiations with the generals. For the FCC, Dagalo was a counterbalance to Islamists in the military, he said.

Burhan and other military commanders were furious, feeling that Dagalo had betrayed them.

Dagalo "tried to save himself on the expense of the military," a senior military official close to Burhan said.

In December, the military, RSF and the pro-democracy groups reached an initial deal promising a transition to civilian rule.

One of its key provisions – that the RSF be incorporated into the military – proved the final wedge between them.

The military wanted the merger to take place within two years, the deadline for elections to be held, and demanded the RSF answer to the head of the military.

The RSF demanded a 10-year period for integration, during which the entire security establishment would be overhauled. The RSF also wanted to report to the head of state.

In the following months both sides poured forces into and around Khartoum as rhetoric escalated. Altogether, there were more than 200,000 soldiers in the Khartoum area, said Mariam al-Mahdi, a former minister in the deposed civilian government.

Deadlines to sign a final political deal were repeatedly pushed back. Close observers warned an open conflict was possible.

On April 13, the RSF deployed forces closer to a military air base in the northern town of Meroe, where Egyptian troops were conducting an exercise with the Sudanese military, according to Egyptian authorities. The military denounced the deployment. International diplomats rushed to de-escalate, fearing shots could be fired.

On the morning of April 15, clashes erupted at Khartoum's Sports City, a decades-old, incomplete athletics complex where both the RSF and military had bases. Each accused the other of firing first as part of a desperate power grab.

Within hours, millions of Sudanese were pinned down under fire, as the two forces battled in the streets of Khartoum and other cities, and warplanes blasted RSF bases.

"We all saw the enormous tensions and we all saw ... that any single spark, even though unintended, could lead to an outbreak of hostilities," Volker Perthes, the U.N. envoy for Sudan, told the AP. "In the end, it was a power struggle between the two military leaders."

## **For Buffalo shooting victims' kin, Mother's Day is a reminder of loss, a lesson in navigating grief**

By AARON MORRISON AP National Writer

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Tirzah Patterson will dedicate this Mother's Day to the hardest part of a mother's job, trying to help her child make sense of tragedy.

Patterson and her husband had divorced but remained close for the sake of their son. Then Heyward Patterson was gunned down along with nine people in a racist attack at a Buffalo supermarket a year ago Sunday.

Tirzah and 13-year-old Jaques "Jake" Patterson recently opened up about coping with immense grief after a mass shooting, an unceasing story across the nation.

Jake's compass through grief, his mother has told him, should be his faith and prayer. That guidance would serve so many mothers and fathers as the death toll from gun violence in America climbs and spreads, she said.

A beloved church deacon known for offering rides home from the supermarket for people without cars, Heyward Patterson made a heartfelt call to his ex-wife last Mother's Day, telling his ex-wife what a great mother she was and how happy he was about how she was raising his son.

"He poured his heart out to me and, a week later, he left," Patterson said. "He gave me closure."

"He probably didn't know why he was doing it," she said. "God knows."

The May 14 assault-rifle attack on Tops Friendly Market was one of the most brazen race-motivated atrocities in modern U.S. history.

"What I've been doing with Jake is constantly reinforcing and reiterating that this is a healing process," Tirzah said while seated next to her son in their East Buffalo home.

"You will never forget (your dad). He may not be here physically, but he will always be in your heart."

Heyward Patterson, 67, had two adult daughters. Jake, his youngest child, was his only son.

"He used to call him, 'Boy.' He never called him by his name," Tirzah recalled as a wide grin spread across her son's face.

"I would say, 'You're going to make that boy think his name is Boy!'"

"He's truly missed," she added.

Heyward was at the Tops Friendly Market assisting a shopper with groceries when he was shot and killed by an assault-rifle-toting white supremacist. The nine others killed, all Black, ranged in age from 32 to 86. The attacker, Payton Gendron, was 18 when he drove more than 200 miles from his home in rural New

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 41 of 88

York, looking for Black people to kill in Buffalo's largely minority and working-class East side.

In February, Gendron was sentenced to life in prison without parole after pleading guilty to murder and other charges brought by local prosecutors. A federal criminal hate crimes case is still pending, as U.S. Justice Department officials weigh whether to seek the death penalty if Gendron is convicted.

The city of Buffalo will pause Sunday to mark the passing of one year since the attack. Events include a moment of silence and the chiming of church bells. Tirzah said she and Jake hadn't planned on participating in events locally.

She hasn't burdened Jake with details of the criminal cases. Tirzah is much more focused on her son's mental health.

"Right now, he's being very fearful, very low key. He doesn't really like to go out," she said. "So I'm trying to teach him that that one incident doesn't mean it's going to happen all the time, or if you go out, something's going to happen.

"I want him to grow up and be the best he can, because he's very smart, very gifted."

Nearly a year ago, during a press conference with the Rev. Al Sharpton, civil rights attorney Ben Crump and other shooting victims' families, a grief-stricken Tirzah wondered whether she was cut out to raise Jake without her ex-husband's help.

"His heart is broken, he half eats, he half sleeps," she tearfully told reporters, with Jake, then 12, at her side, his face covered with his hands.

"As a mother, what am I supposed to do to help him get through this? I need a village to help me raise and be here for my son," she pleaded.

In the AP interview, Jake said his appetite is much improved. His go-to McDonald's order includes a crispy McChicken sandwich, a large fries and a large Coke.

He's an avid gamer. On the weekends, his older brother, Tirzah's son from another relationship, takes Jake to kickboxing lessons. And the teen is interested in becoming a musician.

Heyward Patterson had a talent for singing in church. His son still cries when he hears certain songs during Sunday service. But other memories bring smiles and laughs.

Heyward was not a talented cook, Jake said laughing, recalling how his father once badly burned Spam, the canned meat. Jake's trips to the movies with Dad and Mom were always funny, because Heyward would spill so much theater popcorn around his seat that you'd be forgiven for thinking children had been sitting there.

Still, there are moments where grief and sadness hit Jake unexpectedly. As an adolescent, he copes the best way he can and has advice for others his age grappling with the same feelings.

"I would just say, don't really think about it too much. If you feel like it's about to come, if you feel you're about to cry or something, play (a game) or listen to some music to escape. Get your mind to escape from it."

Jake paused and then added, "Just keep moving on."

At Tirzah and Jake's home, an apartment located just a few blocks northeast of Tops Friendly Market, several award plaques honoring Heyward lean against a TV stand. A large picture of the church deacon, displayed on an easel, overlooks the kitchen. The placement of these reminders of him are all deliberate, Tirzah said.

One memento that Jake cherishes more than others is a large woven blanket that bears an image of him and his father: a smiling Heyward sporting a black skull cap, a pair of tinted glasses, a salt-and-pepper goatee, a tan colored check patterned suit with pink necktie and handkerchief.

An inscription woven next to Jake and his dad reads, in part, "My Father taught me everything I know except how to live without him."

"I haven't slept with this cover yet, Mom," Jake said, holding the blanket up for display. "It's just on the bed."

This Mother's Day, the 13-year-old has a glowing review, or rather a score, for his mom. Nine thousand points out of a possible 10,000, he said.

Tirzah grinned.

"What keeps us going is the joy, the memories, the good memories we have, the laughter," she said. "So, anybody that experiences this: Pray, keep God first and just take one day at a time. Because after a while, it'll get better."

—  
Aaron Morrison is a New York-based member of the AP's Race and Ethnicity team. Follow him on Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/aaronlmorrison>

## Thailand's election may deliver mandate for change, but opposition victory may not assure power

By GRANT PECK Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Voters disaffected by nine years of plodding rule by a coup-making army general are expected to deliver a strong mandate for change in Thailand's general election Sunday. But a predicted victory by the allies of Thaksin Shinawatra, whose ouster by coup 17 years ago plunged the country into prolonged instability, has caused concern for an unhindered democratic transition.

Dissatisfaction with the incumbent prime minister running for reelection, Prayuth Chan-ocha, is high, due in part to a slumping economy and his government's mismanaged response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

But weariness and even anger at the military's habitual interference in politics is a major factor. Thailand has had more than a dozen coups since becoming a constitutional monarchy in 1932, the last one in 2014 carried out by Prayuth when he was army commander. Prayuth's governments slapped down democratic reforms and prosecuted activists.

"The main factor could be that people are no longer willing to tolerate the authoritarian government that has been in power for over nine years, and there is a significant wish for change among the people," said Pinkaew Laungaramsri, a professor of anthropology at Chiang Mai University.

Seventy political parties are contesting the 500 seats up for grabs in the House of Representatives: 400 are directly elected, with 100 chosen via a form of proportional representation.

Opposition parties endorsing reforms to rein in the army are running strides ahead in opinion polls. But pitching policies that threaten the status quo alarms the ruling conservative establishment. It has repeatedly shown itself capable of bringing down popularly elected governments it didn't like, through rulings in the royalist courts and army coups.

Prayuth represents one pole of the country's politics, centered around royalists and the military. Thaksin, the billionaire populist ousted in the 2006 coup, represents the other. The power struggle between Thaksin's supporters and his opponents has been fought — sometimes in the street, sometimes at the ballot box — for almost two decades.

Prayuth is trailing badly in opinion polls behind Thaksin's 36-year-old daughter, Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who inherited the popularity and political style of her father. She campaigned intensively while heavily pregnant and gave birth to a son last week.

She is the favorite among the opposition Pheu Thai Party's three registered nominees for prime minister. Her party looks set to win a majority of seats in the lower house of Parliament.

Recent history strengthens the appearance of this election as a grudge match between the Shinawatras and their foes. Prayuth's 2014 coup unseated a government that had come to power with Yingluck Shinawatra — Paetongtarn's aunt, Thaksin's sister — as prime minister. And Pheu Thai topped the field in the 2019 vote, only to be denied power when the army-backed Palang Pracharath Party found partners to assemble a coalition government.

But a third major player has injected a sharp ideological aspect into the election. The Move Forward Party, led by 42-year-old businessman Pita Limjaroenrat, has galvanized younger voters and is running a strong second to Pheu Thai in the polls. However, for conservative Thailand, its platform is frighteningly radical: reform of the military and reform of the powerful monarchy, a bold move because the institution has been traditionally treated as sacrosanct.

Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a professor at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University, points out that while Move Forward's agenda would be considered just "progressive" in other countries, in the Thai context it is "revolutionary."

"This election is the most important in contemporary Thai politics because it's an election that's going to determine Thailand's political future," he says, crediting Move Forward with "pushing the frontiers of Thai politics into areas where it needs to go."

Pheu Thai largely shares Move Forward's reformist agenda, but the smaller party's more forthright stand poses a dilemma. Adding Move Forward to a coalition government could antagonize the Senate, a conservative body whose support is crucial to taking power.

Thailand's 2017 constitution, adopted under military rule, calls for the prime minister to be selected by a joint vote of the 500-member House and the unelected 250-seat Senate, whose members were appointed by Prayuth's junta.

In 2019, the Senate voted as a bloc, unanimously backing Prayuth. This time, a party that wins a clear majority of House seats still might need at least 376, or 75% plus one, of the votes in the 500-member lower house if its prime minister candidate was opposed in the Senate.

If Pheu Thai lands in such a position, it could find coalition partners among parties that win some House seats. It could also nominate one of its other candidates for prime minister, most likely 60-year-old Srettha Thavisin, who is not burdened with the Shinawatra name that is anathema to the Senate's conservatives.

Most intriguingly, Pheu Thai could ally with another former general, 77-year-old Prawit Wongsuwan, who has been Prayuth's ambitious deputy prime minister and is this year's prime minister candidate for the Palang Pracharath Party.

He and his party are polling badly, but his presence in government might reassure some senators. Such an alliance would seem like a deviance from Pheu Thai's platform, but could be sold to supporters on the basis that Prawit was not actively involved in plotting the 2014 coup.

Until Sunday's votes are counted, Pheu Thai's path forward will remain unclear.

"Many said that this election reflects the people's hope for change in politics, but at the same time, the greater the hope for change imposed on this election, the more nervous the conservatives currently holding power become," says Chiang Mai University's Pinkaew. "We will begin to see the retaliation from the conservative side, from provoking a sense of extreme nationalism to obstructing some parties."

---

Associated Press writer Jintamas Saksornchai contributed to this report.

## **GOP boycott in Oregon threatens abortion, transgender bills and protesters' own political careers**

By ANDREW SELSKY Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — A boycott by Republican state senators in Oregon threatens to derail dozens of bills, including on gun control and abortion rights, as a deadline looms that could also upend the protesters' political futures.

Democrats control the Statehouse in Oregon, but under the rules still need a certain number of Republicans to be present in the chambers to pass legislation.

Republican and Democratic leaders in the Oregon Legislature met behind closed door for a second day Thursday to try to bridge the divide as the boycott entered its ninth straight day, with partisan bills on abortion, gender-affirming care and gun control on the line. Lawmakers with 10 unexcused absences are barred from reelection under a constitutional amendment passed overwhelmingly last November by voters weary of repeated walkouts.

Several statehouses around the nation, including in Montana and Tennessee, have been ideological battlegrounds. Oregon — having pioneered marijuana decriminalization, recycling, and protecting immigrants — is often viewed as being one of America's most liberal states. But it also has deeply conservative rural areas.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 44 of 88

That clash of ideologies has led to the Senate being out of action since May 2, with pending bills stacked up and the biennial state budget, which must be approved by both the House and Senate by the end of June, left undone. Democrats control both the House and Senate but two-thirds of members need to be in attendance for a quorum, and the GOP is leveraging that rule.

To give time for negotiations — and keep boycotters with nine unexcused absences from hitting that 10-day tripwire — Senate President Rob Wagner agreed to cancel Senate sessions that were scheduled for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. It was instead scheduled to reconvene on Monday.

"I hope this agreement to pause Senate floor sessions will create room for progress," Wagner said.

About 100 people, including members of Moms Demand Action, a gun-safety group, protested the walkout late Thursday on the steps of the Oregon State Capitol in Salem.

"Get back to work," they chanted.

"We demand you show up!" Liz Marquez, a political organizer with PCUN, a farmworkers union, said over a loudspeaker. "Every day, Oregon workers show up for difficult and sometimes dangerous jobs."

Republican lawmakers in Oregon have stymied several previous legislative sessions. In one boycott, they were backed by dozens of truckers who surrounded the Capitol while blasting their horns, fearing that a bill addressing climate change would adversely impact them.

This time, Republican senators insist their stayaway is mostly due to a 1979 law — rediscovered last month by a GOP Senate staffer — that requires bill summaries to be written at an eighth grade level. Senate Minority Leader Tim Knopp said Republicans also want Democrats to set aside "their most extreme bills."

But to Democrats, it's obvious the readability issue is just an excuse to prevent progress on Democrat-priority bills, like House Bill 2002, intended to protect abortion and gender-affirming health care for transgender people by boosting legal safeguards and expanding access and insurance coverage.

"It is abundantly clear that there is a concerted effort to undermine the will of people and bring the Legislature to a halt in violation of the Constitution of the state of Oregon," Wagner said as he gaveled closed the May 5 floor session because of lack of quorum. "It is also clear that this is an effort to stop this chamber from holding a debate on House Bill 2002."

Knopp, the GOP Senate leader, said Thursday he hopes the cancellation of this weekend's Senate sessions "will give us time to work out a legitimate agreement that will benefit all Oregonians."

But Wagner says the bill on abortion rights and gender-affirming care is not negotiable.

A prolonged boycott by Senate Republicans would throw into doubt not only the rest of the 2023 legislative session, which is supposed to end by June 25, but could sow complications for next year's primaries and general election.

That's because it's unclear how the boycotters would be disqualified from running again. The 2022 ballot measure is now part of the Oregon Constitution, which was amended to state that 10 or more unexcused absences "shall disqualify the member from holding office as a Senator or Representative for the term following the election after the member's current term is completed."

A disqualified candidate "may run for office in the next primary and general elections and win, but cannot hold office," says an explanatory statement for Ballot Measure 113, filed with the Oregon Secretary of State and signed by a former state supreme court justice and others.

Ben Morris, spokesperson for the secretary of state's office, said the secretary of state's elections division should be able to prevent a disqualified candidate's name from appearing on ballots.

"A legislator who violated M113 would not be allowed to file to run for office at the next election," Morris said in an email. "While this may differ from the explanatory statement, the courts have interpreted the elections statutes to state that a filing officer can't allow a candidate on the ballot if it knows the candidate won't qualify for office."

Republicans are expected to file legal challenges to the constitutional amendment if they're disqualified.

The SEIU503 union, which represents care workers, nonprofit employees and public workers throughout Oregon, strongly backed the ballot measure. Union Executive Director Melissa Unger said the fact that Measure 113 didn't prevent a walkout doesn't mean it is a failure.

"The reality is, all things take time to change," Unger said Thursday. "So I guess we'll have new senators in two years, and maybe they'll learn a lesson."

## Tiny bats provide 'glimmer of hope' against a fungus that threatened entire species

By WILSON RING Associated Press

DORSET, Vt. (AP) — Deep in a cool, damp cave in Vermont, tens of thousands of furry, chocolate brown creatures stir.

The little brown bats, survivors of a deadly fungus that decimated their population, went into hibernation last fall. Now in early May, they're waking, detaching from their rock wall roosts and making their first tentative flights in search of the moths, beetles and flying aquatic insects they devour.

It's here, in deep passages that creep into a Vermont mountain, where scientists found one of the first North American outbreaks of the fungus that causes white nose syndrome. Bat bones litter the cave floor like dry lawn-mower cuttings. Look closer and you'll find tiny skulls.

And the bats are still dying.

White nose syndrome is caused by an invasive fungus first found in an upstate New York cave in 2006, a short bat flight from the Dorset, Vermont, colony. The fungus wakes bats from hibernation, sending them into the frigid, winter air in search of food. They die of exposure or starvation because the insect population is too sparse to support them that time of year.

Smaller than a mouse and about the weight of three pennies in the hand, the Dorset bats skitter across the cave walls or cling to one another for warmth. Their health hints that at least some species are adapting to the fungus that has killed millions of their brethren across North America.

"That's really significant, because it seems to be a stronghold where these bats are mostly surviving and then spreading out throughout New England in the summer," said Alyssa Bennett, a small mammal biologist for the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. She has studied bats and white nose syndrome for more than a decade.

"We're hoping that it's a source population for them to recover," Bennett said as critters flitted and swooped around her.

It will take time. Little brown bat females birth only one pup a year. And while they can live into their teens or 20s, only 60% to 70% of pups make it beyond their first 12 months, Bennett said.

Scientists now estimate that between 70,000 and 90,000 bats hibernate in the Dorset cave, the largest concentration in New England. Their numbers have dwindled from an estimated winter population of 300,000 to 350,000 or more in the 1960s, the last time the location was surveyed before white nose infiltrated.

It's unclear how far the numbers dropped after the fungus set in, but biologists who visited in 2009 or 2010 noted the ground in front of the cave was carpeted with dead bats.

The fungus that causes white nose syndrome is believed to have been brought to North America from Europe, where bats are apparently accustomed to it. Named for the white, fuzzy spots it produces on noses and other bat body parts, the fungus has killed 90% or more of the bat populations in parts of North America.

Last month, a report by the North American Bat Conservation Alliance found that 81 of the 154 known bat species in the United States, Canada and Mexico are at severe risk from white nose infection, climate change and habitat loss.

It matters. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that bats boost U.S. agriculture by \$3.7 billion a year by eating crop-destroying insects such as larvae-laying moths, whose offspring bore into corn plants.

Scientists have known for years that some little brown bats seemed to survive being exposed to the fungus, despite an overall mortality rate that was feared could eradicate them. Though Dorset's little brown bats are holding on, other once common species found with them, like northern long eared or tricolor bats, are almost impossible to detect there now, Bennett said.

"There's something special about those bats," Bennett said of Dorset's little browns. "We can't tell ex-

actly what that is, but we have genetic research that we've collaborated on that suggests those bats do have factors that are related to hibernation and immune response that are allowing them to tolerate this disease and pass those features on to their young."

Winifred Frick, chief scientist at Bat Conservation International, who has followed white nose syndrome's march across North America, said the fungus has been found in 38 states so far. She says it's a "gut punch" each time she hears of a new outbreak.

Colorado reported its first infected bats earlier this year.

Frick is relieved that bats are beginning to repopulate some areas where carcasses once piled up, even if the rebound is so far only a fraction of earlier numbers.

"That's a real glimmer of hope," she said.

In addition to Vermont, other areas near where white nose was first discovered also report stable, possibly rising numbers of little brown bats.

Pennsylvania lost an estimated 99.9% of its population after white nose struck, said Greg Turner, the state mammal expert for the Pennsylvania Game Commission. While the numbers are still low, they're slowly increasing in some places. One old mine in Blair County had just seven bats in 2016. This year, there were more than 330.

"I'm feeling pretty comfortable," Turner said. "We're not going to be stuck staring down the barrel of extinction."

His research shows bats that hibernate at colder temperatures do better against white nose because the fungus grows more slowly.

That may mean the bats are less likely to wake up from the irritation it causes, though scientists still don't understand the mechanism that allows some animals to survive while so many succumb.

"By selecting colder temperatures, they're helping themselves in two ways, they're helping themselves preserve fat and preserve their energy and they're also getting less disease," Turner said.

Still, there are worrying trends. Pennsylvania's bat population is a tiny fraction of what it was before white nose invaded. In some locations, Turner and his colleagues see more bats, but inexplicably few females.

In Virginia, populations have plummeted more than 95%, though the state is starting to see some colonies stabilize or slightly grow their numbers. However, that's happening at only a fraction of the sites once monitored, said Rick Reynolds, a non-game mammal biologist with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources.

"We remain positive, but there is a long road ahead with much uncertainty," Reynolds said in an email.

Back in Vermont, where temperatures in the Dorset cave fall into the low 40s (around 4.4 degrees Celsius) in winter, the bats seem to have found a sweet spot cold enough to slow growth of the fungus.

Bennett is working with Laura Kloepper, a bioacoustics expert from the University of New Hampshire, to get a better handle on the population count. Using acoustic modeling, they're working to get a baseline population estimate this year by comparing sound recordings with thermal imaging. They'll survey using the same method again next year to try to determine the change.

"We want to try to understand what we can possibly do to save not only the species of bat, not only the bats at this cave, but really bats around the world," Kloepper said.

## Federal government's \$1 billion effort to recruit next generation of doctors at risk

By AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

SALISBURY, Md. (AP) — Thousands of women living in rural, eastern Maryland have few options when they're looking for someone to deliver their babies.

The local hospital doesn't have an obstetrics doctor on staff so most women in this region, flanked by sprawling farm fields and antique stores, turn to the Chesapeake Health Care clinic.

Five of the 10 obstetricians and midwives at the clinic are there because of the National Health Service Corps, which promises to pay off \$50,000 in medical school debt for every two years that a doctor serves

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 47 of 88

working in rural, urban or poor areas.

"OB is frightfully difficult to recruit, and I'm not real sure exactly why," said the clinic's chief medical officer Dr. Lee Jennings. "We're isolated, we're in an area where we're the only OB group in the entire area."

Over the last three years, millions of taxpayer dollars were pumped into the National Health Service Corps to hire thousands more doctors and nurses willing to serve the country's most desperate regions during the COVID-19 pandemic in exchange for forgiving medical school debts. Now, with the health emergency over, the program's expansion is in jeopardy – even as people struggle to get timely and quality care because of an industry-wide dearth of workers.

Funding for the program expires at the end of September, although President Joe Biden asked Congress to sign off an extra half-billion dollar for the project in his budget.

The number of nurses, physician, dentists, counselors, and midwives has ballooned thanks to an extra \$800 million the U.S. Congress kicked to the program in stimulus packages unveiled as coronavirus raged. Last year, just over 20,000 people were corps members – up 50% from 13,000 people in 2019.

The program has placed medical professionals across a variety of disciplines – from occupational therapists in Ohio to counselors who treat drug and alcohol addictions in Alaska – in community health centers around the country. Those clinics receive federal funding to provide primary care for patients, regardless of their health insurance status or ability to pay.

The program has found rare bipartisan support from Republican and Democratic lawmakers who say they're grateful for the void corps members fill in rural and needy communities alike that are coping with shortages. The U.S. is short thousands of family doctors, OB-GYNs and nurses, a problem that is only expected to worsen over the next decade.

Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, who oversees the powerful Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, has made the issue a top talking point in hearings. Sanders said in his state, people have complained to him about waits as long as five months just to get a physical with a doctor.

The situation would worsen, he told The Associated Press, if corps funding is not renewed and increased.

"People are going to struggle to find a dentist, to find a mental health counselor," Sanders said. "If it's bad now, it's only going to get worse."

Last month, a group of House Republicans sponsored a bill that would continue funding for the corps program, but not give it the same cash infusion that Biden has requested.

"One of the most consistent issues I've heard in my district in Pennsylvania is the shortage of physician and health care workers," Republican Rep. John Joyce, who introduced the bill, said during a congressional hearing on the health care worker shortage last month.

Still, the program's future is hanging in the balance with a split Congress that's just weeks away from allowing the U.S. to default on its debts. Uncertainty around funding for the program also makes it difficult for health clinics to recruit providers, said Carole Johnson, who heads up the federal Health Resources and Services Administration that oversees corps funding.

"We're hopeful to continue to grow. We know there's a net demand out there," Johnson said. "All the conversations that we've had have been very positive; that doesn't make it easy."

One of the largest areas of growth for the program has been in mental health, with more than 2,000 additional counselors, social workers, psychologists, and substance abuse counselors being hired over the past four years.

At Chicago's largest, around-the-clock treatment center, about eight of the Haymarket Center's providers are corps members. The center sees roughly 12,000 patients every year, many of them homeless. The corps program allows the not-for-profit Haymarket Center to recruit health care workers in a competitive market with a different benefit: as much as \$250,000 in student loan repayment, said Jeffrey Collord, the vice president of operations at the center.

"We might not be able to compensate staff at the highest levels so being able to be part of the program allows us to provide a benefit that other sites don't have access to," Collord said.

Student loan forgiveness allowed Dr. Stephen Robinson to be the family physician that he always hoped

to be. He worried through medical school about the mountain of student loan debt that was piling up and watched as many of his classmates pursued more lucrative salaries as specialty doctors. But his dad researched alternatives and discovered the National Health Service Corps program.

"If more providers thought they could come out and still be able to pay off their debt, they'd go into primary services," Robinson said. "This has allowed us to do that."

His wife, Caitlin, is one of the coveted OB-GYNs that Chesapeake Health Care recruited through the program. Pregnant women drive as much as an hour to see her.

Both are now nearly debt-free after spending seven years in the program. But they don't plan on leaving this small Maryland town anytime soon. The Robinsons love raising their children close to the shore, fresh air and parks.

"We have no plans on going anywhere, even though we're done," Stephen Robinson said.

## US, Spain collaboration on migration looms large as Biden, Sánchez hold talks at White House

By COLLEEN LONG and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez are set to hold talks Friday as their countries are collaborating along with Canada to establish migration hubs in Latin America where asylum seekers fleeing poverty and violence in their home countries can go to apply for protection.

The two leaders are also expected to discuss Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine, climate change and other issues. But efforts by the U.S. and Spain to cooperate on asylum processing will loom large over the White House talks as the Biden administration rolls out new immigration measures now that COVID-19 immigration restrictions have ended. The changes could fundamentally alter how migrants arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border.

The new efforts are designed to crack down on illegal crossings while opening up legal pathways meant to incentivize migrants to apply for asylum online where they are, instead of making the dangerous and often deadly journey to the border. Those caught illegally crossing the southern U.S. border cannot return for five years and they face criminal prosecution if they do. And migrants will be barred from seeking asylum at the border if they did not first ask for protection in a country they traveled through, or apply online.

A major piece of the expanded legal pathway is the creation of processing centers in Colombia and Guatemala and up to 100 others in the Western Hemisphere where migrants can go to apply to come to the U.S., Spain or Canada.

It was a huge boon for the White House to get Spain and Canada to agree to take in asylum seekers from Latin America. And it helps reinforce the Biden administration's argument that the current migration quandary facing the Americas is a global problem that needs a global solution — much like the refugee crises that have impacted Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine in recent years.

The U.S. has increasingly seen migrants arrive at its Southern border who are from China, Ukraine, Haiti, Russia and other nations far from Latin America, and who are increasingly family groups and children traveling alone. Thirty years ago, by contrast, illegal crossings were almost always single adults from Mexico who were easily returned back over the border.

Spain, like many other nations globally, needs workers, and it will be able to choose migrants who have skills needed in the country. The Spanish ministry has said the pathway will only apply to those who have already received international protection status. That means the migrants it accepts will need to be considered refugees and will be treated in much the same way that Syrian asylum seekers, coming via Turkey, have been treated by Spain.

Plans for the processing centers to be established in Guatemala and Colombia were announced last month, but the centers have yet to begin operating. Once up and running, they are expected to process thousands of applicants a month. United Nations organizations will operate the centers, but U.S. officials will be present as well to help with processing of applications.

While Biden predicted this week that the situation at the border could be "chaotic for a while," his ad-

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 49 of 88

ministration is looking to discourage migrants from paying smuggling operations to help them journey to the U.S., particularly through the Darien Gap. Officials hope that by both cracking down at the border and opening up other ways to the U.S., they will be able to bring a measure of order to the U.S.-Mexico border that has seen record crossings in recent years.

The pandemic restrictions, known as Title 42, were a Trump administration endeavor that went into effect in March 2020 amid the global pandemic. It allowed border officials to turn away migrants to help stop the spread of COVID-19. But there were concerns the policies were put into place merely to keep people out.

While Title 42 was used to deny asylum more than 2.8 million times, it carried no legal consequences, which encouraged repeat attempts by migrants to enter the U.S. The public health emergency officially ended on Thursday night, and with it the restrictions.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is also expected to be high on the agenda for Biden and Sánchez, two NATO allies.

Sánchez is expected to discuss with Biden his recent talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, both of whom have put forward ideas to end the conflict. Sánchez is expected to urge Biden to take into account the opinions of other countries affected by the war outside of Europe.

---

Associated Press writer Renata Brito in Barcelona, Spain, and Ciarán Giles and Jennifer O'Mahony in Madrid contributed to this report.

## **18 years after Natalee Holloway's disappearance, Peru to extradite key suspect to US**

By REGINA GARCIA CANO and FRANKLIN BRICENO Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — The chief suspect in the unsolved 2005 disappearance of American student Natalee Holloway is poised to face charges linked to the young woman's vanishing for the first time after the government of Peru authorized his extradition to the United States.

Neither U.S. nor Peruvian authorities on Thursday would say when they might transfer custody of Dutch citizen Joran van der Sloot. A day earlier the Peruvian Embassy in Washington announced the decision to extradite him to face trial on extortion and wire fraud charges, each of which carries lengthy sentences.

Van der Sloot is in a maximum-security prison in the Andes serving a 28-year sentence for the murder of a Peruvian woman.

Holloway, who lived in suburban Birmingham, Alabama, was 18 when she was last seen during a trip with classmates to the Caribbean island of Aruba. She vanished after a night with friends at a nightclub, leaving a mystery that sparked years of news coverage and countless true-crime podcasts. She was last seen leaving a bar with van der Sloot, who was a student at an international school on the island.

Van der Sloot was identified as a suspect and detained weeks later, along with two Surinamese brothers. Holloway's body was never found, and no charges were filed in the case. A judge later declared Holloway dead.

The federal charges filed in Alabama against van der Sloot stem from an accusation that he tried to extort the Holloway family in 2010, promising to lead them to her body in exchange for hundreds of thousands of dollars. A grand jury indicted him that year on one count each of wire fraud and extortion, each of which is punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

Also in 2010, van der Sloot was arrested in Peru for the murder of 21-year-old Stephany Flores, who was killed five years to the day after Holloway's disappearance.

Peruvian prosecutors accused van der Sloot of killing Flores, a business student from a prominent family, to rob her after learning she had won money at the casino where the two met. They said he killed her with "ferocity" and "cruelty," beating then strangling her in his hotel room. He pleaded guilty in 2012.

A 2001 treaty between Peru and the U.S. allows a suspect to be temporarily extradited to face trial in the other country. It requires that the prisoner "be returned" after judicial proceedings are concluded

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 50 of 88

“against that person, in accordance with conditions to be determined by” both countries.

The U.S. Justice Department declined to comment Thursday on the extradition from Peru. A resolution published in the South American country’s federal register states that U.S. diplomats on Jan. 10 presented the temporary extradition request to Peru’s Ministry of Foreign Relations.

The time that van der Sloot ends up spending in the U.S. “will be extended until the conclusion of the criminal proceedings,” including the appeal process should there be one, according to the published resolution. The resolution also says U.S. authorities agreed to return the suspect to the custody of Peru afterward.

The extradition request indicated “that an additional delay in the prosecution of the case that is being pursued in the United States of America could significantly reduce the possibility of conviction, that the ages and health conditions of the key witnesses in the case would make the prosecution would be extremely difficult if it is not carried out soon,” according to a March order from Peru’s top court.

In a statement, the young woman’s mother, Beth Holloway, said she was blessed to have Natalee in her life for 18 years.

“She would be 36 years old now. It has been a very long and painful journey, but the persistence of many is going to pay off. Together, we are finally getting justice for Natalee,” Beth Holloway said.

An FBI agent wrote in an affidavit that van der Sloot reached out to Holloway’s mother and wanted to be paid \$25,000 to disclose the location and then another \$225,000 when the remains were recovered. Van der Sloot requested that an agreement be drafted and signed by the mother and him.

A New York attorney representing Beth Holloway traveled to Aruba with the agreement and gave van der Sloot \$10,000 in cash during a recorded meeting, according to court records. The indictment says both men then went to a site where the student’s remains were purportedly buried, and Beth Holloway made a wire transfer for \$15,000 to van der Sloot’s bank account in the Netherlands.

In the affidavit, the FBI agent wrote that van der Sloot in later emails to the attorney admitted to lying about the location.

Attorney Maximo Altez, who represents van der Sloot, told The Associated Press that he would fight the decision on extradition once he received proper notification from the Peruvian government.

“I am going to challenge that resolution,” Altez said. “I am going to oppose it since he has the right to a defense.”

Van der Sloot could not immediately be reached for comment. More than a decade ago, he told a Peruvian judge that he would fight efforts to be extradited to the U.S.

The governor of Alabama praised the extradition decision and commended the persistence of Beth Holloway.

“Joran van der Sloot’s extradition to Birmingham, Alabama — Natalee’s home for her 18 years — is significant,” Gov. Kay Ivey said in a statement. “Criminals like him are deceptive and vicious. Alabama moms like Beth Holloway are stronger.”

Van der Sloot married a Peruvian woman in July 2014 in a ceremony at a maximum security prison. He has been transferred from prisons in response to reports that he enjoyed privileges such as television, internet access and a cellphone, and accusations that he had threatened to kill a warden.

The announcement from the Peruvian government Wednesday marks the second high-profile extradition decision between the two countries in less than three weeks. In late April, former Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo arrived in Lima after being extradited from the U.S. to face charges he allegedly received millions of dollars in bribes in a giant corruption scandal.

---

Associated Press writer Regina García Cano reported from Mexico City. AP journalist Kimberly Chandler in Montgomery, Alabama, contributed to this report.

## Migrants rush across US border in final hours before Title 42 expires

By VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 51 of 88

MATAMOROS, Mexico (AP) — Migrants rushed across the Mexico border Thursday, racing to enter the U.S. before pandemic-related asylum restrictions are lifted in a shift that threatens to put a historic strain on the nation's beleaguered immigration system.

The imminent end of the rules known as Title 42 stirred fear among migrants that the changes would make it more difficult for them to stay in the U.S. And the Biden administration was dealt a potentially serious legal setback when a federal judge temporarily blocked its attempt to more quickly release migrants when Border Patrol holding stations are full.

With a late-night deadline looming, misinformation and confusion buffeted migrants as they paced the border at the Rio Grande, often unsure of where to go or what to do next.

At Matamoros, across from Brownsville, Texas, throngs of migrants — some clutching small children — waded across spring river currents, pushed through thickets to confront a border fortified with razor wire. Other migrants settled into shelters in northern Mexico, determined to secure an asylum appointment that can take months to schedule online.

Many migrants were acutely aware of looming policy changes designed to stop illegal crossings and encourage asylum seekers to apply online and consider alternative destinations, including Canada or Spain.

"I don't know what's going to happen tomorrow," said Jhoan Daniel Barrios, a former military police officer from Venezuela as he paced with two friends along the the border in Ciudad Juárez, across from El Paso, Texas, looking for a chance to seek refuge in the U.S.

"We don't have any money left, we don't have food, we don't have a place to stay, the cartel is pursuing us," said Barrios, whose wife was in U.S. custody. "What are we going to do, wait until they kill us?"

Last week, Barrios and his friends entered the U.S. and were expelled. They had little hope of a different result Thursday.

On the U.S. side of the river, many surrendered immediately to authorities and hoped to be released while pursuing their cases in backlogged immigration courts, which takes years.

It was not clear how many migrants were on the move or how long the surge might last. By Thursday evening, the flow seemed to be slowing in some locations, but it was not clear why, or whether crossings would increase again after the coronavirus-related restrictions expire.

A U.S. official reported the Border Patrol stopped some 10,000 migrants on Tuesday — nearly twice the level from March and only slightly below the 11,000 figure that authorities have said is the upper limit of what they expect after Title 42 ends.

More than 27,000 people were in U.S. Customs and Border Protection custody, the official said.

"Our buses are full. Our planes are full," said Pedro Cardenas, a city commissioner in Brownsville, Texas, just north of Matamoros, as recent arrivals headed to locations across the U.S.

President Joe Biden's administration has been unveiling strict new measures to replace Title 42, which since March 2020 has allowed border officials to quickly return asylum seekers back over the border on grounds of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

The new policies crack down on illegal crossings while also setting up legal pathways for migrants who apply online, seek a sponsor and undergo background checks. If successful, the reforms could fundamentally alter how migrants arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border.

But it will take time to see results. Biden has conceded the border will be chaotic for a while. Immigrant advocacy groups have threatened legal action. And migrants fleeing poverty, gangs and persecution in their homelands are still desperate to reach U.S. soil at any cost.

Many migrants were acutely aware of looming policy changes as they searched Thursday for an opportunity to turn themselves over to U.S. immigration authorities before the 11:59 EDT deadline.

While Title 42 prevented many from seeking asylum, it carried no legal consequences, encouraging repeat attempts. After Thursday, migrants face being barred from entering the U.S. for five years and possible criminal prosecution.

Holding facilities along the border already were far beyond capacity. But late Thursday, U.S. District Judge T. Kent Wetherell, an appointee of President Donald Trump, halted the administration's plan to begin releas-

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 52 of 88

ing migrants with notices to report to an immigration office in 60 days when holding centers reach 125% capacity, or where people are held an average of 60 hours. The quick releases were to also be triggered when authorities stop 7,000 migrants along the border in a day.

The state of Florida argued the administration's plan was nearly identical to another Biden policy previously voided in federal court. Earlier Thursday, the Justice Department said its new move was a response to an emergency and being prevented from carrying it out "could overwhelm the border and raise serious health and safety risks to noncitizens and immigration officials."

Weatherell blocked the releases for two weeks and scheduled a May 19 hearing on whether to extend his order.

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas had already warned of more crowded Border Patrol facilities to come.

"I cannot overstate the strain on our personnel and our facilities," he told reporters Thursday.

Even as migrants were racing to reach U.S. soil before the rules expire, Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said smugglers were sending a different message. He noted an uptick in smugglers at his country's southern border offering to take migrants to the United States and telling them the border was open starting Thursday.

On Wednesday, Homeland Security announced a rule to make it extremely difficult for anyone who travels through another country, like Mexico, or who did not apply online, to qualify for asylum. It also introduced curfews with GPS tracking for families released in the U.S. before initial asylum screenings.

The administration says it is beefing up the removal of migrants found unqualified to stay in the U.S. on flights like those that brought nearly 400 migrants home to Guatemala from the U.S. on Thursday.

Among them was Sheidi Mazariegos, 26, who arrived with her 4-year-old son just eight days after being detained near Brownsville.

"I heard on the news that there was an opportunity to enter, I heard it on the radio, but it was all a lie," she said. Smugglers got her to Matamoros and put the two on a raft. They were quickly apprehended by Border Patrol agents.

Mazariegos said she made the trek because she is poor and hoped to reunite with her sisters living in the U.S.

At the same time, the administration has introduced expansive new legal pathways into the U.S.

Up to 30,000 people a month from Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela can enter if they apply online with a financial sponsor and enter through an airport. Processing centers are opening in Guatemala, Colombia and elsewhere. Up to 1,000 can enter daily though land crossings with Mexico if they snag an appointment on an online app.

At shelters in northern Mexico, many migrants chose not to rush to the border and waited for existing asylum appointments or hopes of reserving one online.

At the Agape Misión Mundial shelter in Tijuana, hundreds of migrants bided their time. Daisy Bucia, 37, and her 15-year-old daughter arrived at the shelter over three months ago from Mexico's Michoacán state – fleeing death threats — and have an asylum appointment Saturday in California.

Bucia read on social media that pandemic-era restrictions were ending at the U.S.-Mexico border, but preferred to cross with certainty later.

"What people want more than anything is to confuse you," Bucia said.

---

Associated Press writers Colleen Long and Rebecca Santana in Washington; Christopher Sherman in Mexico City; Gerardo Carrillo in Matamoros, Mexico; Maria Verza in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico; Morgan Lee in Santa Fe, New Mexico; Giovanna Dell'Orto in El Paso; and Elliot Spagat in Tijuana, Mexico, contributed to this report.

**Lainey Wilson triumphs at Academy of Country Music Awards;  
Chris Stapleton wins top honor**

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 53 of 88

By The Associated Press undefined

FRISCO, Texas (AP) — Lainey Wilson was seemingly everywhere at the Academy of Country Music Awards, collecting four trophies on a night that saw Chris Stapleton win the entertainer of the year honor.

Wilson performed twice Thursday — back-to-back — and delivered heartfelt speeches after her wins, which put her next to fellow winners and country music legends.

She won album of the year for “Bell Bottom Country,” accepting the honor slightly breathless after performing her song “Grease.”

Wilson called the album a “labor of love” and said she wrote 300 songs during the pandemic. She said people often tell her how much the album means to their lives, and she said writing them “saved mine.”

When she won female artist of the year, co-host Dolly Parton handed her the trophy. “I can’t believe I just met Dolly Parton, first of all,” Wilson said.

She gave credit to the female artists who preceded her and the sacrifices she knew they had all made: “I’m up here because of y’all. Because of people like Dolly Parton, paving the way.”

“For the little girls watching this, this stands for hard work,” Wilson said, referencing her trophy. “If you’re going to be a dreamer, you better be a do-er.”

Stapleton owned the stage at the end of the night, winning the ACMs’ top honor.

“I am shocked, truly,” Stapleton said. “By any imaginable metric, I don’t deserve this. ... I’ve never thought of myself as somebody who would win this award.”

He dedicated the award to his children at home, saying they sacrifice a lot of time with him and his wife because of his career.

Breathless moments weren’t uncommon during the performance-heavy show. Cole Swindell won the night’s first award, song of the year, for “She Had Me at Heads Carolina.” He had just performed the song with Jo Dee Messina.

Swindell later won single of the year for the same song. “Thank you country music fans, that’s all I’ve ever been,” he said. “I don’t know what I ever did to get this fortunate.”

Singer-songwriter HARDY entered the show as the leading nominee and collected four awards. “Wait in the Truck,” his duet with Wilson, who was the second-leading nominee, won the music event award.

“Thank you Lainey, you absolutely killed it,” HARDY said. He credited her with making people believe in the song, which references domestic violence and seeking revenge.

“This was a song about real life,” Wilson said. “I didn’t want people to relate to this song, but a lot of them do.”

Old Dominion frontman Matthew Ramsey used the band’s win for group of the year to address recent divisiveness and gun violence. He referenced the party atmosphere of the show but said he also recognized that “there are people obviously hurting in the world right now trying to figure out how to make sense of the divisiveness and shootings and things like that.”

Ramsey continued: “We are most proud to be able to make music for people that are hurting right now. So thank you for including us in the party and allowing us to make music for whoever needs it.”

Garth Brooks and Parton hosted the two-hour awards show, streamed live on Amazon Prime from the Ford Center at the Star in Frisco.

The easy banter between Brooks, in his first hosting gig, and Parton carried the show’s early moments. Parton closed out the show with a performance of a song from her upcoming rock album.

A later routine involved the pair video conferencing with Willie Nelson to wish him happy birthday. The country legend recently turned 90, and the ACMs honored him with a performance of Nelson’s hit with Waylon Jennings, “Mammas Don’t Let Your Babies Grow Up to be Cowboys” by Cody Johnson.

The show opened with Keith Urban performing, fittingly given the location of the show, his song “Texas Time.”

Texas references and celebrities ran throughout the show. Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott and Hall of Famer Emmitt Smith presented the first award.

HARDY was also a nominee as a songwriter for Morgan Wallen’s “Sand in my Boots.” The country super-

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 54 of 88

star didn't perform as planned due to a vocal cord injury that's halted his tour and was not in attendance when he won best male artist. Brooks took off his hat to honor Wallen, saying missing out on the show "must be killing him."

Hailey Whitters and Zach Bryan have won best new artist honors.

## **Supreme Court backs California law for more space for pigs. Producers predict pricier pork, bacon**

By JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Thursday backed a California animal cruelty law that requires more space for breeding pigs, a ruling the pork industry says will lead to higher costs nationwide for pork chops and bacon.

"While the Constitution addresses many weighty issues, the type of pork chops California merchants may sell is not on that list," Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote in an opinion for the court.

Industry groups have said the law would mean expensive, industry-wide changes even though a majority of the farms where pigs are raised are not in California, the nation's most populous state, but instead in the Midwest and North Carolina.

A majority of the high court agreed that lower courts had correctly dismissed pork producers' challenge to the law. Both liberal and conservative justices were a part of the majority, though they were not united in their reasoning.

Gorsuch said the pork producers challenging the law were asking the justices to "fashion two new and more aggressive constitutional restrictions on the ability of States to regulate goods sold within their borders." The justices declined.

Four justices would have sent the case back to continue in lower courts. Chief Justice John Roberts was joined in that view by fellow conservative justices Samuel Alito and Brett Kavanaugh and liberal Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.

During arguments in the case in October, liberal and conservative justices underscored the potential reach of the case. Some worried whether greenlighting the animal cruelty law would give state legislators a license to pass laws targeting practices they disapprove of, such as a law that says a product cannot be sold in the state if workers who made it are not vaccinated or are not in the country legally. They also worried about the reverse: How many state laws would be called into question if California's law were not permitted?

California Attorney General Rob Bonta said in a statement that the ruling "affirms states' important role in regulating goods sold within their borders" and that it "means that California can continue to have in place humane and commonsense standards, instead of the extreme confinement pushed by some pork producers."

The case before the court involved California's Proposition 12, which voters passed in 2018. It said that pork sold in the state needs to come from pigs whose mothers were raised with at least 24 square feet of space, with the ability to lie down and turn around. That rules out confined "gestation crates," metal enclosures that are common in the pork industry.

The American Farm Bureau Federation and the Iowa-based National Pork Producers Council sued. They said that while Californians consume 13% of the pork eaten in the United States, nearly 100% of it comes from hogs raised outside the state, including in Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana and North Carolina. The vast majority of sows, meanwhile, are not raised under conditions that would meet Proposition 12's standards.

Scott Hays, the president of the National Pork Producers Council said in a statement following the ruling that the group was "very disappointed" with the court's opinion. "Allowing state overreach will increase prices for consumers and drive small farms out of business, leading to more consolidation," he wrote.

The Biden administration had urged the justices to side with pork producers, telling the court in written filings that Proposition 12 would be a "wholesale change in how pork is raised and marketed in this

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 55 of 88

country” and that it has “thrown a giant wrench” into the nation’s pork market.

Pork producers argued that 72% of farmers use individual pens for sows that do not allow them to turn around and that even farmers who house sows in larger group pens do not provide the space California would require.

They also say that the way the pork market works, with cuts of meat from various producers being combined before sale, it is likely all pork would have to meet California standards, regardless of where it is sold. Complying with Proposition 12 could cost the industry \$290 million to \$350 million, they said.

Animals rights groups cheered the decision.

“We’re delighted that the Supreme Court has upheld California Proposition 12 — the nation’s strongest farm animal welfare law — and made clear that preventing animal cruelty and protecting public health are core functions of our state governments,” the president of the Humane Society of the United States, Kitty Block, wrote in a statement. The organization had backed Proposition 12 and was a participant in the case.

## Don’t miss this week: Jonas Brothers, Muppets, Zelda and a Bennifer double feature

By The Associated Press undefined

New music from the Jonas Brothers, a double feature of Ben Affleck/Jennifer Lopez films and the latest installment in the highly popular Zelda games are among the entertainment titles coming to a device near you this week. Associated Press’ entertainment journalists break down what’s arriving on TV, streaming services and music and video game platforms this week.

### NEW MOVIES TO STREAM

— After successfully doing the rounds in theaters, “Air” is finally making its debut on Prime Video on Friday. The film, directed by Ben Affleck and written by Alex Convery, tells the origin story of the Air Jordan sneaker and how Nike’s then-struggling basketball department defied the odds and signed rookie Michael Jordan in an unprecedented deal. It’s the first time Affleck has directed his pal Matt Damon, who plays Nike executive Sonny Vaccaro, and it’s the first film from their joint company Artists Equity. They brought in a starry cast, including Viola Davis as Michael Jordan’s mother, Deloris, as well as Jason Bateman, Chris Tucker, Chris Messina and Marlon Wayans, and it has been widely praised for its well-told story — smart, adult and solidly entertaining.

— Or you can watch Affleck’s better half, Jennifer Lopez, in her new movie “The Mother,” about an assassin who comes out of hiding to protect a 12-year-old daughter she hasn’t seen for years. Unlike her recent action rom-com “Shotgun Wedding,” this is a more straightforward action thriller. “The Mother” was directed by Niki Caro (“Mulan,” “Whale Rider”) and co-stars Joseph Fiennes, Lucy Paez, Omari Hardwick, Paul Raci and Gael García Bernal. It hits Netflix on Friday. (Read AP’s review here.)

— Also on Hulu on Friday there is “Saint Omer,” which may be the opposite of a feel-good Mother’s Day weekend movie, but is one of the best movies to be released this year. It is a penetrating and restrained portrait of a matricide trial that will leave you moved and changed. It comes from a true story, fictionalized and dramatized by French documentary filmmaker Alice Diop, in this unconventional courtroom drama. In her review for AP, Jocelyn Noveck wrote that Diop “has taken us further into the emotional, social and moral crevices of this real-life case than any documentary could. And we’re much the better for it.”

— AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

### NEW MUSIC TO STREAM

— Jonas Brothers have been super-busy lately — a stint on Broadway, appearances on “Saturday Night Live” and “The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon” and now a new album, called simply “The Album,” out Friday. The trio have released the singles “Wings” and “Waffle House,” an ode to the place they would go to decompress and connect. They may need the waffle house soon: The brothers have a one-night-only show at Yankee Stadium on Aug. 12 where they’ll perform five albums in one night.

— With “Resound NYC,” Moby reimagines and orchestrates 15 of his old tracks written or recorded in New York from 1994 to 2010, with guest vocalists including Gregory Porter, Margo Timmins and Amythyst Kiah. The songs include “Helpless,” “In My Heart” and “Run On.” Moby adds a swell and depth to “In This

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 56 of 88

World" and the new "South Side" featuring Ricky Wilson of Kaiser Chiefs is radically different. Says Moby: "Rather than having every song receive the same orchestral treatment, I kind of built a bespoke orchestral approach for each song."

— PBS' "Great Performances" is celebrating 50 years of Broadway with a concert. Hosted by two-time Tony winner Sutton Foster, the special has Sara Bareilles singing "She Used to Be Mine" from "Waitress" and Chita Rivera performing "All That Jazz" from "Chicago." There's a tap number from "Jelly's Last Jam" performed by Corbin Bleu, a tribute to "A Chorus Line" and André De Shields performing "So You Wanted To See the Wizard." Additional stars include Shoshana Bean, Raúl Esparza, Ledisi, Norm Lewis, Rob McClure, Patina Miller, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Jessie Mueller, Jessica Vosk and Vanessa Williams. It premieres Friday on PBS, [pbs.org/broadwayonpbs](https://pbs.org/broadwayonpbs) and the PBS app.

— AP Entertainment Writer Mark Kennedy

## NEW SERIES TO STREAM

— Move over Kermit and Miss Piggy, the house band for "The Muppet Show," called Dr. Teeth and the Electric Mayhem, moves center stage with their own show for Disney+ called "The Muppets Mayhem." It follows the group — including Animal, Lips, Janice, Zoot, Floyd and, of course, Dr. Teeth — as they record a long-awaited album. The series is presented documentary-style with Lilly Singh as a music executive tasked with keeping the band on track. It's got vibes of "Spinal Tap", "Daisy Jones & The Six" and, of course, "The Muppets." Guest stars include Tommy Chong, Lil Nas X, Tommy Lee and Kesha. All 10 episodes drop Wednesday.

— The use of artificial intelligence, also known as A.I., has become a hot topic in sectors including the government, education, and even the Hollywood writers' strike, over questions of security, ethics, privacy, and labor. It's also the focus of a new limited series called "Class of '09" coming to FX on Hulu on Wednesday. Brian Tyree Henry and Kate Mara portray FBI agents in the story, which unfolds over three timelines. Throughout the show, questions arise throughout over the use of A.I. in law enforcement and whether it makes us safer or strips people of autonomy.

— The new crime drama "City on Fire" for Apple TV+ is inspired by a novel of the same name by Garth Risk Hallberg. The series stars Jemima Kirke, Nico Tortorella and Chase Sui Wonders and is set in 2003 and kicks off with the murder of an NYU student. The investigation reveals a connection to a series of fires in New York, the city's music scene, and a wealthy family. "City on Fire" debuts Friday.

— Alicia Rancilio

## NEW VIDEO GAMES TO PLAY

— The last time Nintendo released a Legend of Zelda game — 2017's Breath of the Wild — it pretty much reinvented the franchise and won just about every Game of the Year prize around. So expectations are high for The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom. Our hero, Link, has another grueling journey ahead across the sprawling land of Hyrule, but first he gets to visit a bunch of mysterious islands that have popped up in the skies overhead. Link can also build structures and vehicles, add exotic powers to his weapons, pass through solid objects above him and even reverse time. Even with all the tricky puzzles usually found in a Zelda game, how can he lose? His old enemy Ganondorf will probably have something to say about that, starting Friday on Nintendo Switch.

— Perhaps you're one of those gamers who finds Zelda a little too cheerful. Red Hook Studios has just the antidote: Darkest Dungeon II, the sequel to the hopelessly grimdark role-playing adventure that tormented us all in 2016. The twist, again, is that not only do you have to fight monsters, you have to stave off illness, starvation and your own impending psychosis. Red Hook promises an even deeper and darker dungeon — 500 feet under! — as well as new enemies and a new gang of desperate fortune hunters willing to risk their sanity. If you're that type of masochist, you can dig in Monday on PC.

— Lou Kesten

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

## **Banning gun sales to young American adults under 21 is unconstitutional, judge rules**

By DENISE LAVOIE AP Legal Affairs Writer

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — A federal judge in Virginia has ruled that a law banning licensed federal firearms dealers from selling handguns to young adults under 21 violates the Second Amendment and is unconstitutional.

The ruling Wednesday by U.S. District Court Judge Robert Payne in Richmond, if not overturned, would allow dealers to sell handguns to 18- to 20-year-olds.

In his 71-page ruling, Payne wrote that many of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship are granted at the age of 18, including the right to vote, enlist in the military without parental permission and serve on a federal jury.

"If the Court were to exclude 18-to-20-year-olds from the Second Amendment's protection, it would impose limitations on the Second Amendment that do not exist with other constitutional guarantees," Payne wrote.

"Because the statutes and regulations in question are not consistent with our Nation's history and tradition, they, therefore, cannot stand," he wrote.

Payne's ruling is the latest decision striking down gun laws in the wake of a landmark Supreme Court ruling last year that changed the test courts have long used to evaluate challenges to firearm restrictions. The Supreme Court said judges should no longer consider whether the law serves public interests, like enhancing public safety. Governments that want to uphold a gun restriction must look back into history to show it is consistent with the country's "historical tradition of firearm regulation," the Supreme Court said.

Amid upheaval in the months since that ruling, courts have declared unconstitutional laws including federal measures designed to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and defendants under felony indictment, as well as a ban on possessing guns with the serial number removed. A federal judge recently cited the high court decision in ruling against a Minnesota law prohibiting 18- to 20-year-olds from getting permits to carry handguns in public. A judge struck down a similar law last year on gun restrictions for young adults in Texas.

Payne, who cited the 2022 Supreme Court ruling repeatedly in his ruling, wrote that the government failed to present "any evidence of age-based restrictions on the purchase or sale of firearms from the colonial era, Founding or Early Republic." The lack of similar regulations from those time periods indicates that the "Founders considered age-based regulations on the purchase of firearms to circumscribe the right to keep and bear arms confirmed by the Second Amendment," he wrote.

John Corey Fraser, 20, along with several other plaintiffs, challenged the constitutionality of the Gun Control Act of 1968 and the associated regulations from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives after they were turned down when they tried to buy handguns.

"Even though it ensures that future buyers can now purchase these firearms in the federal system — one that includes background checks and other requirements — we expect the defendants will appeal," said Elliott Harding, Fraser's attorney. He said he is optimistic that the ruling will be affirmed.

Harding said the lawsuit was aimed at "closing a loophole" because 18- to 20-year-olds can already buy handguns from private sellers, a process that is "completely unregulated."

"This allows them to go in and buy a registered firearm, direct from a manufacturer, but they'll also go through background checks," he said. "They have to go through the traditional steps in purchasing a firearm."

Everytown Law, a legal group that advocates for gun violence prevention in the courts and has filed a brief supporting the age restrictions, said the law is constitutional and an essential tool for preventing gun violence.

"Not only are guns the leading cause of death for U.S. kids and teens, but research shows us that 18- to 20-year-olds commit gun homicides at triple the rate of adults 21 years and older," said Janet Carter, Everytown Law's senior director of issues and appeals.

"The Court's ruling will undoubtedly put lives at risk," she said. "It must be reversed."

The Justice Department and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives did not respond to emails seeking comment on the ruling.

AP Legal Affairs Reporter Alanna Durkin Richer contributed to this report from Boston.

## **New fighting kills 2 Palestinian militant commanders, elderly man in Israel as Egypt pushes truce**

By FARES AKRAM and ILAN BEN ZION Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip killed two militant commanders Thursday, while a 70-year-old man was killed by Palestinian rocket fire in the first fatality inside Israel amid the current wave of fighting. The continuing bloodshed, which has left 30 Palestinians dead, came despite Egyptian efforts to broker a cease-fire.

It has been the worst bout of fighting between Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza in months, with at least 10 civilians — mostly women and children — among the dead. The conflagration, now in its fourth day, comes at a time of soaring tensions and spiking violence over the past year in the occupied West Bank.

Palestinian militants launched unrelenting rocket barrages into Israel throughout the day. One rocket struck an apartment block in the central Israeli city of Rehovot, killing a 70-year-old man, the MADA rescue service said. It said four others were moderately wounded.

Earlier Thursday, Israeli military pressed ahead with its strikes against the Islamic Jihad militant group and said a senior commander in charge of the group's rocket launching force, Ali Ghali, was killed when his apartment was hit.

Later in the day, Israel said it killed another Islamic Jihad commander who was meant to replace Ghali in southern Gaza. Islamic Jihad confirmed the man, Ahmed Abu Daqqa, was one of its commanders.

The Health Ministry in Gaza said a total of 30 people had been killed since the fighting erupted. An Associated Press tally showed that among the dead were 14 militants, including at least five Islamic Jihad commanders; 10 civilians; and six others, including four who Israel says were killed in failed rocket launches, whose affiliation remained uncertain.

Late Thursday, the Gaza-based Palestinian Center for Human Rights said its preliminary investigations indicated that three Palestinians, including two children aged 8 and 16, died when "homemade rockets had fallen short" inside Gaza in three incidents. It said 26 other people were wounded in these cases.

Military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari told Israeli Army Radio that two other militants were also killed in the early morning strike, although no group immediately claimed them as members, and that the rest of the building remained intact.

"The apartment was targeted in a very precise way," Hagari said. "I hope this leads to a reduction, a blow and a disruption of the Islamic Jihad rocket abilities."

The strikes targeted the top floor of a building in a residential, Qatari-built complex in southern Gaza Strip. The pre-dawn airstrike in the city of Khan Younis caused damage to three surrounding buildings. The complex, known as Hamad City, consists of several tall buildings and thousands of housing units. The strike created panic among residents, with falling debris and shattered glass littering the streets.

"My children started crying. I did not see anything because of the dust, broken glasses, and debris," said Abdullah Hemaïd, who lives across from the targeted building.

Islamic Jihad said Ghali was a commander in charge of its rocket squad and a member of its armed group's decision-making body. The group has said it will only cease fire if Israel agrees to halt targeted killings of its fighters.

The current round of fighting erupted overnight Tuesday when Israel killed three senior Islamic Jihad commanders in near-simultaneous airstrikes.

On Wednesday, a state-run Egyptian TV station announced that Egypt, a frequent mediator between the sides, had brokered a cease-fire. But with the violence continuing late Thursday, there was still no

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 59 of 88

breakthrough.

The Israeli military says that in its strikes on some 150 targets, it has zeroed in on militants with what it says are precision strikes. But children, among them a 4-year-old, were also killed.

Hagari, the military spokesman, told Army Radio that a quarter of the rockets launched have fallen in Gaza, killing at least four, including a 10-year-old girl, two 16-year-olds and a 51-year-old man. That claim could not immediately be independently confirmed.

Efforts to mediate a cease-fire were still underway Thursday with top Islamic Jihad political bureau member Mohamad al-Hindi arriving to Cairo to discuss details. A delegation of Egyptian mediators also was traveling to Israel, according to Israeli press reports.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said that "despite our strenuous efforts, these efforts still have not yielded the desired fruits and results."

Israeli officials declined to comment.

The initial Israeli airstrikes set off a burst of rocket fire on Wednesday that triggered air-raid sirens throughout southern and central Israel.

The military said more than 500 rockets have been fired toward Israel. It said most were intercepted by Israel's missile defense system or fell in open areas.

Damage was reported when rockets slammed into buildings that were empty because residents had fled the area. Three buildings in the southern town of Sderot were struck Thursday, officials said, but there were no immediate reports of casualties.

Israel says the airstrikes are a response to a barrage of rocket fire launched last week by Islamic Jihad in response to the death of one of its West Bank members from a hunger strike while in Israeli custody.

Israel has come under international criticism for the high civilian toll. In past conflicts, rights groups have accused Israel of committing war crimes due to high civilian deaths. Israel says it does its utmost to avoid civilian casualties and holds militant groups responsible because they operate in heavily populated residential areas. It also says militants fire rockets indiscriminately at Israeli communities.

Hagari said Israel does its best to avoid harming civilians and that under international norms, there was a "proportionate ratio" of combatants to noncombatants among the dead in Gaza.

In signs that both sides were trying to show restraint, Israel has avoided attacks on the ruling Hamas militant group, targeting only the smaller and more militant Islamic Jihad. Hamas, which has much more to lose than Islamic Jihad, also has remained on the sidelines.

Israel and Hamas have fought four wars and numerous smaller engagements since the Islamic militant group took control of Gaza in 2007.

The army said that schools would remain closed and restrictions on large gatherings would remain in place in southern Israel until at least Friday. Residents were instructed to stay near bomb shelters.

Meanwhile, in the West Bank, where Israeli-Palestinian violence has surged over the past year, the Palestinian Health Ministry said a 30-year-old man died after he was shot by Israeli troops in a raid on Wednesday, and that a 66-year-old Palestinian man died after he was shot during a gun battle between Israeli troops and Palestinian militants in a refugee camp near the northern West Bank city of Tulkarem on Thursday.

The Israeli army said it has arrested 25 suspected Islamic Jihad members in West Bank raids in recent days.

Ben Zion reported from Jerusalem. Associated Press writer Tia Goldenberg in Tel Aviv, Israel, contributed to this report.

## Top Biden aide tells Chinese diplomat that US wants to 'move beyond' spy balloon

By AAMER MADHANI and ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan told senior Chinese foreign

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 60 of 88

policy adviser Wang Yi during talks in Vienna this week that the Biden administration is "looking to move beyond" tensions spurred by the U.S. shooting down a Chinese spy balloon that traversed the continental United States, according to a senior Biden administration official.

The meeting was not publicized by Washington or Beijing ahead of the high-level talks on Wednesday and Thursday in the Austrian capital. The White House described the wide-ranging discussions, in which the two leaders spent more than eight hours together, as "candid" and "constructive."

The administration official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity to discuss the private meeting, said that both sides recognize that the February incident was "unfortunate" and are now looking to "reestablish standard, normal channels of communications."

The talks are the latest in a series of small signs that tensions could be easing between the world's two biggest economies.

As the political and military rivalry between China and the U.S. intensifies, American officials and analysts are worried that a lack of reliable crisis communications could cause a minor confrontation to spiral into greater hostilities. They cite the ability to communicate with the former Soviet Union as allowing the Cold War to end without a nuclear exchange.

The White House in a statement said the meeting was part of "ongoing efforts to maintain open lines of communication and responsibly manage competition," and that Sullivan and Wang discussed key issues in the U.S.-China relationship, Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine, Taiwan, and more.

The meeting took place in a luxury hotel along Vienna's historical Ringstrasse, according to an Austrian official familiar with the matter. The official, who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity, said planning for the meeting was closely guarded and Austrian authorities were only given a few days' advance notice that Vienna was chosen for the talks.

Chinese officials saw the discussions as "substantive" and said both sides would "continue to make good use of this channel of strategic communication," according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

Sullivan also repeated White House concerns about a lack of "constructive engagement" by Beijing to use its influence to press Russia to end its invasion of Ukraine and called on China to do more to stop the movement of illegal drugs, according to the administration official. The U.S. in particular has been pressing China to clamp down on the production of precursor chemicals used to make fentanyl.

Sullivan also raised the cases of three American citizens imprisoned in China – Mark Swidan, Kai Li, and David Lin. All three have been designated by the State Department's office of the special presidential envoy on hostage affairs designates as "wrongful detainees."

Tensions between the countries spiked last year after then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to democratically governed Taiwan. That visit, the first by a sitting House speaker since Newt Gingrich in 1997, led China, which claims the island as its territory, to launch military exercises around Taiwan.

U.S.-China relations became further strained earlier this year after the U.S. shot down a Chinese spy balloon that had crossed the United States.

Beijing also was angered by Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen's stopover in the U.S. last month that included an encounter with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. The speaker hosted the Taiwanese leader at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in southern California.

But there are signs that the two sides are getting diplomatic communications back on track.

President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping held talks in Bali, Indonesia, in November. Secretary of State Antony Blinken was to travel to China in February, but the trip was postponed after the spy balloon incident. Blinken and Wang, China's top diplomat, met later in February on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference after the U.S. had shot down the balloon.

The White House has expressed interest in rescheduling Blinken's visit. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre earlier this week said that Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo also could visit Beijing at some point.

The talks between Sullivan and Wang was their first face-to-face meeting since Wang was elevated last year to the Communist Party's Politburo, the top policymaking body made up of the party's 24 most senior officials.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 61 of 88

Wang served as foreign minister for nearly 10 years and was the only diplomat promoted to the Politburo. U.S. Ambassador Nicholas Burns and Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang also met in Beijing this week, and Biden's special envoy for climate, John Kerry, held a call last month with his counterpart, Xie Zhenhua. Burns, during a virtual forum hosted by the Stimson Center earlier this month, said communication is improving.

"Yes, we did have instances when we wanted to have certain very high-level conversations when it wasn't possible," Burns said. "But I have to say, in recent weeks, in the last month or so, there's been a consistent communication between myself and senior officials in the foreign ministry, my colleagues in the U.S. mission and their counterparts in the foreign ministry here."

Stephanie Liechtenstein in Vienna contributed reporting.

## Elon Musk says he's found a woman to lead Twitter as new CEO

By BARBARA ORTUTAY and MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writers

Elon Musk said Thursday he has found a new CEO for Twitter, or X Corp. as it's now called — and it's a woman. He did not name her but said she will be starting in about six weeks.

Musk, who bought Twitter last fall and has been running it since, has long insisted he is not the company's permanent CEO. The Tesla billionaire said in a tweet Thursday that his role will transition to being Twitter's executive chairman and chief technology officer.

In mid-November, just a few weeks after buying the social media platform for \$44 billion, he told a Delaware court that he does not want to be the CEO of any company.

While testifying, Musk said "I expect to reduce my time at Twitter and find somebody else to run Twitter over time."

More than a month later, he tweeted in December: "I will resign as CEO as soon as I find someone foolish enough to take the job." The pledge came after millions of Twitter users asked him to step down in a Twitter poll the billionaire himself created and promised to abide by.

In February, he told a conference he anticipated finding a CEO for San Francisco-based Twitter "probably toward the end of this year."

Analysts who follow Twitter's business welcomed the news even without knowing who the replacement will be. Twitter's advertising business has taken a hit under Musk's mercurial rule, though the billionaire told BBC last month that the company is now "roughly" breaking even.

"A new CEO is the only way forward for Twitter," said Insider Intelligence analyst Jasmine Enberg. "The single biggest problem with Twitter's ad business was Elon Musk. As he steps back, Twitter can begin to unravel Musk's personal brand from the company's corporate image and attempt to regain trust among advertisers. The success of those efforts will depend on who takes over, but it's difficult to imagine that the new CEO could be more controversial or damaging to Twitter's ad business than Musk has been."

Shares of Tesla rose about 2% Thursday after Musk made the announcement. Shareholders of the electric car company have been concerned about how much of his attention is being spent on Twitter.

Last November, he was questioned in court about how he splits his time among Tesla and his other companies, including SpaceX and Twitter. Musk had to testify in the trial in Delaware's Court of Chancery over a shareholder's challenge to his potentially \$55 billion compensation plan as CEO of the electric car company.

Musk said he never intended to be CEO of Tesla, and that he didn't want to be chief executive of any other companies either, preferring to see himself as an engineer. Musk also said at the time that he expected an organizational restructuring of Twitter to be completed in the next week or so. It's been nearly six months since he said that.

Musk's tenure at Twitter's helm has been chaotic, and he's made various promises and proclamations he's backtracked or never followed up on. He began his first day firing the company's top executives, followed by roughly 80% of its staff. He's upended the platform's verification system and has scaled back

content moderation and safeguards against the spread of misinformation.

Bantering with Twitter followers late last year, Musk expressed pessimism about the prospects for a new CEO, saying that person "must like pain a lot" to run a company that "has been in the fast lane to bankruptcy."

"No one wants the job who can actually keep Twitter alive. There is no successor," Musk tweeted at the time.

## **Man indicted on 98 charges including hate crimes for 2022 shooting at Taiwanese church in California**

By AMY TAXIN and CHRISTOPHER WEBER Associated Press

SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP) — A man accused of fatally shooting one person and wounding five others at a Southern California church luncheon last year has been charged with dozens of federal hate crimes in connection with the attack, which investigators said was motivated by political hatred of Taiwan.

The indictment announced Thursday by the U.S. Department of Justice charges David Chou, of Las Vegas, with 98 counts including weapons and explosives charges and forcefully obstructing the free exercise of religion.

Messages seeking comment from attorneys who have represented Chou, 69, in a separate case in state court were not immediately returned.

Authorities said Chou chained and nailed shut exit doors before launching the attack on a gathering of older parishioners from the Irvine Taiwanese Presbyterian Church in Laguna Woods on May 15, 2022.

Chou had two handguns, bags of ammunition and four Molotov cocktail-style devices, and was motivated by hatred of Taiwan, where he grew up, investigators said.

Among the charges were 45 counts of obstructing free exercise of religious beliefs by force, "which resulted in the death of one person, included attempts to kill 44 others, and involved the use of a firearm and attempted use of explosives and fire," the Justice Department said in a statement.

Chou was charged last year by Orange County prosecutors with murder and attempted murder including enhancements for a hate crime and other counts. He pleaded not guilty. Online records show Chou is currently being held without bail in Orange County and due back in court July 14.

Authorities said Chou had no prior connection to the church. They said he spent an hour with attendees before the attack, apparently to gain their trust, then closed the doors and started shooting.

Dr. John Cheng, the 52-year-old son of a congregant, charged at Chou and was killed, authorities say. His action helped disrupt the shooter, who was hit by a chair thrown by the church's former pastor and jumped on by several people who tied him up with an extension cord until police arrived.

The wounded victims ranged in age from 66 to 92.

Chou, a U.S. citizen, grew up in Taiwan after his family was forced from mainland China when communists took control, authorities have said.

If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of death or life in prison without parole.

Weber reported from Los Angeles.

## **US ambassador accuses South Africa of providing weapons, ammo to Russia**

By GERALD IMRAY and MICHAEL BIESECKER Associated Press

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — The U. S. ambassador to South Africa accused the country Thursday of providing weapons and ammunition to Russia for its war in Ukraine via a cargo ship linked to a sanctioned company that docked secretly at a naval base near the city of Cape Town in December.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said an investigation into the visit by a Russian vessel named Lady R to his nation's main naval base was already underway behind the scenes with the help of U.S.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 63 of 88

intelligence services before Ambassador Reuben Brigety went public at a news conference in the South African capital, Pretoria, that the cargo was weapons and ammunition.

Brigety said the U.S. was certain that military equipment was loaded onto the Lady R at the Simon's Town naval base between Dec. 6 and Dec. 8 and then transported to Russia. He said it brought into question South Africa's supposed neutral stance on the war in Ukraine and its calls for the conflict to end.

"The arming of the Russians is extremely serious and we do not consider this issue to be resolved," Brigety said in comments reported by multiple South African news outlets.

If South Africa is found to be giving Russia military aid, it threatens to fracture the relationship between the United States and a key partner in Africa. Despite South Africa's neutral stance on the war in Ukraine, the Biden Administration was hoping it could still be a key buffer against growing Russian and Chinese influence on the continent.

While Ramaphosa's office said in a statement later Thursday that there was currently "no evidence" to support allegations that arms were loaded onto the Lady R, The Associated Press established that the vessel is tied to a company that was sanctioned last year by the U.S. for being involved in transporting military equipment for the Russian government.

The news of Brigety's comments broke while Ramaphosa was in Cape Town answering questions on other matters in Parliament. When the leader of the political opposition, John Steenhuisen, asked about the weapons and ammunition, the president replied that "the matter is being looked into, and in time we will be able to speak about it."

Ramaphosa declined to comment further, citing the need for the investigation to play out.

Steenhuisen asked the president if South Africa was "actively arming Russian soldiers who are murdering and maiming innocent people?"

Ammunition supplies have become a problem for Russia in the war. The leader of Russian military company Wagner complained last week about his mercenary soldiers in Ukraine allegedly dealing with dire shortages.

Ramaphosa's office acknowledged in its statement that the Lady R docked in South Africa, but did not say when, where or for what reason. The statement also criticized the American ambassador for going public.

Records reviewed by the AP show the Lady R was purchased by a Russian company, Transmorflot LLC, in 2019. In May 2022, the U.S. sanctioned Transmorflot and several vessels it alleges are controlled by the company, including the Lady R, for aiding the Russian war effort. The company then changed its name to MG-Flot LLC, which is also listed as the current owner of the Lady R.

Last month, The Wall Street Journal reported that another ship owned by MG-Flot, the Rasul Gamzatov, transported artillery shells from Iran to Russia, citing Middle Eastern officials.

The AP has also independently confirmed that the Lady R docked at the Simon's Town naval base during the time frame Brigety cited.

MarineTraffic, a service that collects radio and satellite transponder data from ships, tracked the Lady R off the South African coast in early December, but the signal was lost on Dec. 5. Ships are required by international law to keep their transponders on while at sea. Smugglers often turn them off to hide their movements.

Satellite imagery obtained by AP shows a ship the same length, color and layout as the Lady R docked at the naval base the following day and remained there through Dec. 8. AP also obtained photos of the ship at the naval base, the name Lady R clearly visible on its stern in both English and Russian. The ship set sail Dec. 9 and its transponder signal popped back up on Dec. 10. It returned to the Russian port of Novorossiysk on the Black Sea on Feb. 22.

Steenhuisen's opposition party had previously raised questions over the appearance of a "mystery" Russian vessel in Simon's Town. In late December, South African Defense Minister Thandi Modise said the ship was handling an "old order" for ammunition, and arms were offloaded, not loaded onto the ship.

The South African government has stated numerous times it is neutral on the war in Ukraine and wants the conflict resolved peacefully through diplomacy but recent displays of its closeness to Russia opened Africa's most developed country to accusations that it has effectively taken Russia's side.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 64 of 88

South Africa hosted Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov for talks in January, giving him a platform to blame the West for the war in Ukraine.

Weeks later, South Africa allowed warships from the Russian and Chinese navies to perform drills off its east coast. The Russian navy brought its Admiral Gorshkov frigate, one of its navy's flagship vessels. The South African navy took part in the drills and said they would "strengthen the already flourishing relations between South Africa, Russia and China."

South Africa also faces a diplomatic dilemma over a possible visit this year by Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is the subject of an International Criminal Court arrest warrant for alleged war crimes involving the abductions of children from Ukraine. Putin is due to visit South Africa in August for a meeting of leaders of the BRICS economic bloc, made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

South Africa is a signatory to the international court based in The Hague, Netherlands, and obliged to arrest Putin. The government indicated it would not detain the Russian leader and threatened to leave the ICC instead. Ramaphosa's office released a statement last month backtracking on the threat.

AP Writer Mogomotsi Magome in Johannesburg contributed to this story. AP Global Investigative Reporter Michael Biesecker reported from Washington.

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

## George Santos inks deal to avoid prosecution in Brazil over bad checks

By DIANE JEANTET and DAVID BILLER Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A day after New York Rep. George Santos pleaded not guilty to charges in the U.S., he signed an agreement Thursday with public prosecutors in Brazil to avoid prosecution for forging two stolen checks in 2008.

"What would have been the start of a case was ended today," Santos' lawyer in Brazil, Jonymar Vasconcelos, told The Associated Press in a text message. "As such, my client is no longer the subject of any case in Brazil."

Asked about the details of the non-prosecution agreement, Vasconcelos demurred, citing the fact the case proceeded under seal. The public prosecutors' office of Rio de Janeiro state also declined to comment when contacted by the AP.

Court records in Brazil, first uncovered by The New York Times, show Santos was the subject of a criminal charge for using two stolen checks to buy items at a shop in the city of Niteroi, including a pair of sneakers that he gifted to a friend. At the time, Santos would have been 19. The purchase totaled 2,144 Brazilian reais, then equal to about \$1,350, according to the charge prosecutors filed in 2011.

That followed an investigation opened in 2008 and Santos' signed confession, in which he admitted to having stolen the checkbook of his mother's former employer from her purse and making purchases, including in the store, and recognizing the fraudulent checks as those he had signed, according to the court documents reviewed by the AP.

A judge accepted the charges against Santos in 2011, but subsequent subpoenas for him to appear personally or present a written defense went unanswered and, with authorities repeatedly unable to determine his whereabouts, the case was suspended in 2013. That changed after he won a U.S. congressional seat and the subsequent flurry of media attention focused on his dubious credentials. Rio state prosecutors then petitioned to reopen the case.

Per terms of the non-prosecution agreement, Santos will pay 24,000 reais (almost \$5,000), with the majority going to the shopkeeper who received the bad checks and the remainder to charities, newspaper Folha de S.Paulo reported, without saying how it obtained the information. Santos attended the meeting virtually, the paper reported.

Resolution of the case removes the possibility Santos might have been obliged to travel to another coun-

try to resolve pending charges; that could have been complicated after he was forced to surrender his passport after recent charges in the U.S.

On Wednesday in New York, Santos pleaded not guilty to charges he stole from his campaign and lied to Congress about being a millionaire, while collecting unemployment benefits he didn't deserve.

## **EPA: New pollution limits proposed for US coal, gas power plants reflect 'urgency' of climate crisis**

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration proposed new limits Thursday on greenhouse gas emissions from coal- and gas-fired power plants, its most ambitious effort yet to roll back planet-warming pollution from the nation's second-largest contributor to climate change.

A rule announced by the Environmental Protection Agency could force power plants to capture smokestack emissions using a technology that has long been promised but is not used widely in the United States.

"This administration is committed to meeting the urgency of the climate crisis and taking the necessary actions required," said EPA Administrator Michael Regan.

The plan would not only "improve air quality nationwide, but it will bring substantial health benefits to communities all across the country, especially our front-line communities ... that have unjustly borne the burden of pollution for decades," Regan said in a speech at the University of Maryland.

President Joe Biden called the plan "a major step forward in the climate crisis and protecting public health."

If finalized, the proposed regulation would mark the first time the federal government has restricted carbon dioxide emissions from existing power plants, which generate about 25% of U.S. greenhouse gas pollution, second only to the transportation sector. The rule also would apply to future electric plants and would avoid up to 617 million metric tons of carbon dioxide through 2042, equivalent to annual emissions of 137 million passenger vehicles, the EPA said.

Almost all coal plants — along with large, frequently used gas-fired plants — would have to cut or capture nearly all their carbon dioxide emissions by 2038, the EPA said. Plants that cannot meet the new standards would be forced to retire.

The plan is likely to be challenged by industry groups and Republican-leaning states. They have accused the Democratic administration of overreach on environmental regulations and warn of a pending reliability crisis for the electric grid. The power plant rule is one of at least a half-dozen EPA rules limiting power plant emissions and wastewater treatment.

"It's truly an onslaught" of government regulation "designed to shut down the coal fleet prematurely," said Rich Nolan, president and CEO of the National Mining Association.

Regan denied that the power plant rule was aimed at shutting down the coal sector, but acknowledged, "We will see some coal retirements."

The proposal "relies on proven, readily available technologies to limit carbon pollution" and builds on industry practices already underway to move toward clean energy, he said.

Coal provides about 20% of U.S. electricity, down from about 45% in 2010. Natural gas provides about 40% of U.S. electricity. The remainder comes from nuclear energy and renewables such as wind, solar and hydropower.

Environmental groups hailed EPA's action as urgently needed to protect against devastating harms of climate change, from increasingly severe flooding, hurricanes and drought to worsening wildfires. The proposal "will bring us closer to a clean energy future with healthier air, a safer climate, good jobs and affordable, reliable electricity," said Fred Krupp, president of the Environmental Defense Fund.

But Jim Matheson, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, said the plan would further strain America's electric grid and "undermine decades of work to reliably keep the lights on across the nation."

Matheson, whose association represents 900 local electric cooperatives across the country, said EPA's plan could "force critical, always-available power plants into early retirement, and make new natural gas

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 66 of 88

plants exceedingly difficult to permit, site and build.”

The EPA rule would not mandate use of equipment to capture and store carbon emissions — a technology that is expensive and still being developed. Instead, the agency would set caps on carbon dioxide pollution that plant operators would have to meet. Some natural gas plants could start blending gas with another fuel source such as hydrogen, which does not emit carbon, although specific actions would be left to the industry.

Still, the regulation is expected to lead to greater use of carbon capture equipment, a technology that EPA said has been “adequately demonstrated” to control pollution. Only a handful of projects are operating in the country despite years of research.

Jessie Stolark, executive director the Carbon Capture Coalition, said the proposed rules “elevate the role of carbon capture by naming it as one of the available technologies for reaching emissions standards.” Even with aggressive growth of renewables over the next decade, fossil fuels, especially natural gas, “will be in the domestic energy mix for decades,” said Stolark, whose coalition includes industry, labor and environmental groups.

Groups on both ends of the political spectrum questioned whether carbon capture and storage is a realistic solution

“Billions of dollars have been wasted trying to prove that this technology is real — and all we have to show for it are a series of spectacular failures,” said Wenonah Hauter, executive director of Food & Water Watch, a left-leaning advocacy group.

Marty Durbin, president of the U.S. Chamber’s Global Energy Institute, said EPA regulations “must be grounded in what is technologically feasible and commercially available. Going beyond that, as this regulation does, could threaten electric reliability and raise energy prices to unsustainable levels.”

About 60% of the electricity generated in the U.S. last year came from burning fossil fuels at the nation’s 3,400 coal and gas-fired plants, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

“We need to do this to meet the climate crisis,” said David Doniger, senior strategic director for climate and clean energy at the Natural Resources Defense Council. The power plant rules are crucial to meeting Biden’s goals to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030 and eliminate carbon emissions from the power grid by 2035, he and other advocates said.

The proposal comes weeks after the administration announced strict new tailpipe pollution limits that would require up to two-thirds of new vehicles sold in the U.S. to be electric by 2032 and months after Biden announced rules to curb methane leaks from oil and gas wells.

The rules follow climate action by the 2021 infrastructure law and billions of dollars in tax credits and other incentives from the Inflation Reduction Act, approved last year.

While Biden has made fighting global warming a top priority, he has faced sharp criticism from environmentalists — particularly young climate activists — for a recent decision to approve the contentious Willow oil project in Alaska. The massive drilling plan by oil giant ConocoPhillips could produce up to 180,000 barrels of oil a day on Alaska’s petroleum-rich North Slope. Environmental groups call Willow a “carbon bomb” and have mounted a social media #StopWillow campaign.

The new plan comes 14 years after the EPA declared that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases endanger public health. President Barack Obama tried to set limits on carbon pollution from U.S. power plants, but his 2015 Clean Power Plan was blocked by the Supreme Court and later was rolled back by President Donald Trump.

Last year, the Supreme Court limited how the Clean Air Act can be used to reduce climate-altering emissions from power plants. The 6-3 ruling confirmed the EPA’s authority to regulate carbon emissions from power plants but said it could not force a nationwide transition away from the use of coal to generate electricity.

Vickie Patton, general counsel at the Environmental Defense Fund, said the rule relies on EPA’s traditional authority to regulate air pollution and “what you see here is a proposal that takes great care to address the Supreme Court’s concerns.”

The EPA said its new rule will give plant operators flexibility to meet the new standards in a method

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 67 of 88

of their choosing. And instead of creating one limit that all power plants must meet, the agency said it will set a range of targets based on the size of the plant, how often it is used and whether it is already scheduled for retirement.

Associated Press writer Chris Megerian contributed to this report.

Follow the AP's coverage of climate change at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate-and-environment>

## Expel George Santos? GOP leaders aren't ready to take that step

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Protecting a narrow, four-vote majority, Republican leaders in the House are making clear that they intend to let the legal process play out with New York Rep. George Santos before they take steps to force his resignation or expel him.

The freshman congressman was accused Wednesday by federal prosecutors of embezzling money from his campaign, falsely receiving unemployment funds and lying to Congress about his finances and could face up to 20 years in prison if convicted. Santos pleaded not guilty.

Republican leaders, who for months have faced mounting questions about Santos after most of his campaign biography was exposed as a lie, were unmoved and brushed aside calls — including from some colleagues — that they take immediate action to push Santos out of Congress.

"In America, there's a presumption of innocence. But they're serious charges. He's going to have to go through the legal process," said House Majority Leader Steve Scalise of Louisiana.

Scalise was seconded by Republican Rep. Elise Stefanik of New York, the No. 3 House Republican, who sidestepped the question of whether Santos should resign.

"As I've said from the very beginning on questions on this subject, this legal process is going to play itself out," she said.

The position Republican leaders have staked out generally follows the precedent that Congress has set in similar criminal cases over the years. The House has expelled just two members in recent decades, and both votes occurred after the lawmaker had been convicted on federal charges. But many say the narrow majority that Republicans won in the House is surely another factor in the GOP leadership's thinking.

"There are a few members of the New York delegation and a few others calling for his immediate expulsion on the Republican side, which could tilt the leadership's hand. But given where we're at with the debt limit and a four-vote majority, they don't want to lose any of those votes right now," said Casey Burgat, an assistant professor who leads the legislative affairs program at George Washington University.

Santos is adamant that he will stay in Congress and seek reelection. In a press conference outside a Long Island federal courthouse, he spoke Wednesday of getting back to Washington so he could vote on a top House GOP priority, a border bill that would restrict some asylum seekers and boost border enforcement.

He ended up voting for that bill Thursday as well as one that seeks to give states more incentive to pursue cases of unemployment insurance fraud. One of the counts Santos faces is that he fraudulently collected unemployment benefits during the pandemic, even though he was being paid a substantial salary at the time.

Santos also voted last month for the House GOP bill that ties a debt limit extension to an estimated \$4.8 trillion in deficit reduction over 10 years. In a dramatic flourish, Santos was the last Republican to cast a vote in favor of that bill, helping it win passage by a paper-thin margin — 217-215.

While GOP leaders say the legal system needs to run its course, a few Republicans have seen enough.

"The people of New York's 3rd district deserve a voice in congress," tweeted Rep. Tony Gonzales, R-Texas. "George Santos should be immediately expelled from Congress and a special election initiated at the soonest possible date."

The House and the Senate have the power to punish members of their chamber for misconduct, including through expulsion. To date, according to the Congressional Research Service, 20 members have been

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 68 of 88

expelled, but the large majority of them occurred at the outset of the Civil War. Half of the 20 expulsions were the result of a single vote in the Senate involving senators who represented states that had seceded from the Union, but had not formally resigned.

The two most recent expulsions followed convictions on public corruption charges were:

—Rep. Michael J. “Ozzie” Myers, D-Penn., was convicted of bribery and conspiracy for taking money from FBI agents who posed as Arab sheiks. He was expelled in 1980 following his conviction and served more than a year in prison.

—Rep. James Traficant, D-Ohio, was expelled in 2002, three months after he was found guilty of 10 federal charges, including racketeering, bribery and fraud for taking bribes and kickbacks from businessmen and his own staff.

Some lawmakers have also resigned upon being convicted of a crime, pre-empting an expulsion vote.

Last year, Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, R-Neb., resigned from office after a California jury convicted him of lying to federal authorities about an illegal campaign donation from a foreign national.

Two years earlier, Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., submitted his resignation about a month after pleading guilty to a charge of conspiring with his wife to steal about \$250,000 in campaign funds to pay for a lavish lifestyle, from vacations to outings with friends and private school tuition. Then-President Donald Trump pardoned Hunter shortly before he left office.

Trump also pardoned former Rep. Chris Collins, R-N.Y., who resigned in 2019 ahead of admitting to helping his son and others dodge \$800,000 in stock market losses when he learned that a drug trial by a small pharmaceutical company had failed.

More than three dozen Democratic lawmakers have signed onto a bill from Rep. Robert Garcia, D-Calif., that would expel Santos from the House.

“It’s pretty clear to everyone, including his constituents, that he is a complete fraud and shouldn’t be in Congress,” Garcia said.

Garcia said McCarthy is not pushing to expel Santos because he needs his vote. He urged the several Republicans from New York who have criticized Santos to sign on to the expulsion legislation.

“He can barely keep his caucus together on votes, so it’s clear that he’s using George Santos’ support to keep him in leadership,” Garcia said.

During a press conference Thursday, the House Democratic leader, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, stood in front of a photo of Santos and Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., known for her incendiary rhetoric, and said it was time for the GOP conference: “to decide who are you.”

“I’ve made clear that George Santos is not fit to serve in the United States House of Representatives, and the American people share that opinion as well, including the overwhelming majority of the people in the third congressional district in New York,” Jeffries said.

Republicans deny that Santos has been a distraction and say they are focused on other issues.

“This place is bigger than any one member,” said Rep. Kevin Hern, R-Okla., the chairman of the powerful Republican Study Committee.

Despite the reports that Santos was facing federal charges, and a crush of media attention at his arraignment in New York, Republicans said there was no discussion of him during their weekly, closed-door caucus meeting on Wednesday morning.

“I never heard his name mentioned once,” said Rep. Andrew Clyde, R-Ga.

---

Associated Press staff writer Stephen Groves contributed to this report.

## **Man who choked NYC subway rider to death will face manslaughter charge, prosecutors say**

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Manhattan prosecutors said Thursday that they will bring criminal charges against a man who used a fatal chokehold on an unruly passenger aboard a New York City subway train, a death

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 69 of 88

that stirred outrage and debates about the response to mental illness in the nation's largest transit system.

Daniel Penny, a 24-year-old U.S. Marine Corps veteran, will be arrested and face a charge of second degree manslaughter, which could carry a jail term of up to 15 years.

"We cannot provide any additional information until he has been arraigned in Manhattan Criminal Court, which we expect to take place tomorrow," the Manhattan district attorney's office said in a statement.

The charges come nearly two weeks after Penny pinned fellow subway rider Jordan Neely, 30, to the floor of a subway car and put him in a chokehold that lasted for several minutes.

According to a freelance journalist who witnessed the struggle, Neely, who is Black, had been screaming and begging for money aboard the train prior to the takedown, but had not physically attacked anyone.

Attorneys for Penny, who is white, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. They previously said their client, along with two other riders who helped restrain Neely, had acted in self-defense.

"Daniel never intended to harm Mr. Neely and could not have foreseen his untimely death," they said in a statement.

A former subway performer known for his spot-on Michael Jackson impression, Neely struggled in recent years with homelessness and worsening mental illness, friends said. He had been arrested several times, and had recently pleaded guilty to assaulting a 67-year-old woman in 2021 as she left a subway station. After pleading guilty, he missed a court date, leading to a warrant for his arrest that was still active at the time of his death.

His death has divided some in New York and beyond, triggering intense debates and protests. Left-leaning advocates described the killing as an act of racist vigilantism, invoking comparisons to the infamous subway shooting carried out by Bernhard Goetz against four teenagers in 1984.

Others, including Mayor Eric Adams, have urged caution, calling on New Yorkers to wait for the full facts and investigations. They note that much is still not known about what precipitated the chokehold.

As the investigation has continued, Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg has faced pressure to make an arrest. Penny was questioned by police in the hours after Neely died, but released without charges.

A second-degree manslaughter charge in New York will require the jury to find that a person has engaged in reckless conduct that creates an unjustifiable risk of death, and then consciously disregards that risk. The law also requires that conduct to be a gross deviation from how a reasonable person would act in a similar situation.

## **CNN faces backlash over chaotic Trump town hall event**

By ALEXANDRA OLSON and DAVID BAUDER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — CNN is facing a backlash over its town hall featuring former President Donald Trump, an event that swiftly turned chaotic in a stark display of the tightrope facing journalists covering a leading 2024 Republican candidate who refuses to play by the rules.

The town hall Wednesday was the first major television event of the 2024 presidential campaign, and CNN defended its decision to hold it as a chance to put Trump in front of a wider audience, outside of the conservative media bubble he has largely kept to since early in his presidency.

Critics said the event, which was staged in front of Republicans and unaffiliated voters who were expected to vote in the GOP primary, instead turned into a Trump campaign rally and allowed him to repeat longstanding falsehoods while dodging difficult questions

Tom Jones, a senior writer at the media research institute Poynter, said he had favored the idea of CNN holding the town hall at St. Anselm College in New Hampshire. But he said he was surprised by the conduct of the audience, which he had expected to be more neutral.

Instead, the crowd gave Trump a standing ovation when he walked onstage, applauded some of his most provocative comments and laughed at many of his quips, including when he criticized E. Jean Carroll, the advice columnist who accused him of raping her in 1996 and this week won a \$5 million judgment against him.

Jones said the atmosphere put CNN's moderator, Kaitlan Collins, in an almost impossible position as she

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 70 of 88

tried to elicit straightforward answers from Trump and fact-check his comments about the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol by his supporters and the 2020 election, which he still falsely insists he won.

"Whenever she might have had him cornered, he was built up by the audience," Jones said. "It just emboldened him. He realized, 'I can do or say anything I want,' and she got steamrolled at that point through no fault of her own. It was her against the entire room."

The event was indicative of the new era of leadership at CNN and management's efforts to lure back viewers who turned to Fox News and other conservative outlets over the past decade.

At a Thursday morning meeting at CNN, Chairman and CEO Chris Licht praised Collins' "masterful performance," saying she asked tough questions in difficult circumstances.

"If someone was going to ask tough questions and have that messy conversation, that damn well should be on CNN," he said in a recording of the meeting obtained by The Associated Press.

He also defended the decision to hold the town hall before a Trump-friendly crowd.

"While we all may have been uncomfortable hearing people clapping, that was also an important part of the story, because the people in that audience represent a large swath of America," Licht said. "And the mistake the media made in the past is ignoring that those people exist. Just like you cannot ignore that President Trump exists."

The event did widen CNN's audience, at least for a night. Nielson said the town hall averaged 3.3 million viewers, compared to the 707,000 who tuned in to CNN during the same time slot a night earlier.

But Jones said he was skeptical that the town hall would help CNN's reputation in the long term, given the backlash. He noted that most of the network's post-event commentary was highly critical of Trump, likely alienating conservative viewers who had tuned in just to watch the former president.

Nick Arama, a writer for the conservative website RedState.com, criticized CNN's Gary Tuchman, who spoke with some of the audience members after Trump's appearance, saying "he didn't act as much like a moderator trying to get their opinion as a Democratic propagandist trying to impose his own opinion on them."

Meanwhile, critics from the left were unsparing, saying CNN should have predicted how chaotic the event would be.

"CNN should be ashamed of themselves. They have lost total control of this 'town hall' to again be manipulated into platforming election disinformation, defenses of Jan. 6th and a public attack on a sexual abuse victim. The audience is cheering him on and laughing at the host," Democratic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, of New York, wrote in a tweet.

Frank Sesno, a former CNN Washington bureau chief now at George Washington University, said the event was a harbinger of the difficult coverage decisions "every news organization needs to wrestle with because Donald Trump is not a normal candidate."

"You can't ignore him, but you can't give him carte blanche either," he said.

A one-on-one interview would have been preferable, though whether Trump would have agreed to that is a different question, said Sesno, who added that he saw value in allowing Trump to speak to a broader audience, including many people who might have mostly tuned him out in recent years.

Sesno noted that although Trump supporters delighted in his performance, Republican critics, including New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, seized on it to press their concerns about the former president's ability to win a national election.

"As chaotic and weird as the event was, I as a journalist think it's important for people to see this," he said.

---

Associated Press writer Wyatte Grantham-Philips contributed to this report.

## Sen. Tuberville criticized for remarks on white nationalists: 'I call them Americans'

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 71 of 88

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Republican Sen. Tommy Tuberville is facing backlash for remarks he made about white nationalists in the armed forces in an interview about his blocking of military nominees. He said that while Democrats may consider such people to be racists, “I call them Americans.”

Tuberville said Thursday that his comments had been misinterpreted. His office said he had been expressing skepticism at the idea that white nationalists were in the armed services.

The first-term senator from Alabama made his initial remarks in an interview last week with WBHM, an NPR affiliate. He suggested that the Biden administration’s efforts to expand diversity in the military were weakening the force and hampering recruitment, though the Army has said that the real problem is that many young people do not see enlistment as safe or a good career path.

“We are losing in the military so fast. Our readiness in terms of recruitment,” Tuberville said, according to the station’s transcript of the May 4 interview. “And why? I’ll tell you why. Because the Democrats are attacking our military, saying we need to get out the white extremists, the white nationalists, people that don’t believe in our agenda.”

When asked if he believed white nationalists should be allowed in the U.S. military, Tuberville responded, “Well, they call them that. I call them Americans.”

Responding to criticism of his comments, Tuberville said Thursday at the U.S. Capitol that he had been trying to refute the notion that all supporters of former President Donald Trump are white nationalists.

“Democrats portray all Trump people as white nationalists. That’s what I was saying ...” Tuberville said. “There’s a lot of good people that are Trump supporters that for some reason my Democratic colleagues want to portray as white nationalists. That’s not true.”

The comments came as Tuberville continued to hold up Senate approval of a slew of military appointments over his opposition to Pentagon abortion policies. Those policies provide travel funds and support for troops and dependents who seek abortions but are based in states where they are now illegal.

The White House National Security Council said it was “abhorrent that Senator Tuberville would argue that white nationalists should be allowed to serve in the military, while he also threatens our national security by holding all pending DOD military and civilian nominations. Extremist behavior has no place in our military. None.”

Democratic Senate leader Chuck Schumer said Thursday on the Senate floor that Tuberville’s words were “gravely damaging” and that senators “are called to a higher standard of conduct.”

“Does Sen. Tuberville honestly believe that our military is stronger with white nationalists in its ranks?” Schumer said. “I cannot believe this needs to be said, but white nationalism has no place in our armed forces and no place in any corner of American society, period. Full stop. End of story.”

Tuberville, who has endorsed former President Donald Trump in his 2024 White House bid, has faced criticism for previous comments related to race. At a Nevada rally featuring Trump, he asserted in October that Democrats support reparations for the descendants of enslaved people because “they think the people that do the crime are owed that.”

Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Thursday that the move to hold up all the nominations is what will actually degrade America’s armed forces.

He said that the nominations of about 650 senior officers, for jobs that generally put them in command of large, complex organizations across the military, “is unsettling for the institution” and over time will significantly degrade readiness, capability and morale.

---

Meg Kinnard can be reached at <http://twitter.com/MegKinnardAP>

---

Associated Press writer Lolita C. Baldor in Washington contributed to this report.

**‘Money, power, sex’: Idaho jury deliberates case against slain kids’ mom in alleged doomsday plot**

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 72 of 88

By REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — An Idaho jury is weighing the fate of a woman charged in the slayings of her two youngest children and a romantic rival in what prosecutors say was a strange doomsday-focused plot.

Lori Vallow Daybell wanted the victims' money, so she used sex and power to manipulate her brother and a lover into carrying out the crimes, Idaho prosecutors told jurors Thursday at the close of the weeklong case. The panel of 12 jurors began deliberations shortly after 2 p.m.

"Money, power and sex," Madison County Prosecutor Rob Wood said, urging the jury to convict Lori Vallow Daybell in the deaths of 7-year-old Joshua "JJ" Vallow, 16-year-old Tylee Ryan, and her fifth husband's previous wife Tammy Daybell.

"What does justice for these victims require? It requires a conviction on each and every count," Wood said.

Defense attorney Jim Archibald countered that there was no evidence tying his client to the killings but plenty showing she was a loving, protective mother whose life took a sharp turn when she met her fifth husband, Chad Daybell, and fell for the "weird" apocalyptic religious claims of a cult leader.

Daybell told her they had been married in several previous lives and she was a "sexual goddess" who was supposed to help him save the world by gathering 144,000 followers so Jesus could return, Archibald said.

"Why can't people escape religious cult figures, why can't they break out, why can't they break away from that mind control?" Archibald said. "Promises are marvelous to some people even if they sound like stupid gibberish to the rest of us."

Vallow Daybell and Chad Daybell are both charged with murder, conspiracy and grand theft in the three killings. Prosecutors say the two worked with Vallow Daybell's brother, Alex Cox, to carry out the crimes. Cox died in December 2019 and was never charged.

The two youngest children were receiving Social Security survivor benefits from the earlier deaths of their fathers, and prosecutors say Vallow Daybell continued to collect those checks after the children were killed. Chad Daybell increased Tammy Daybell's life insurance policy, prosecutors said, and Vallow Daybell married him just two weeks after his previous wife was asphyxiated in their home.

Both defendants have pleaded not guilty. Vallow Daybell faces up to life in prison if she is convicted. Chad Daybell's trial is still months away.

Vallow Daybell wanted to be "unencumbered by obstacles," Wood said, including her children.

"The plan that she set in motion must end today in the verdicts you render in this trial," Wood said.

Tylee had her whole life ahead of her, Wood told the jury, when she was killed in September 2019.

"Tylee's body was burned beyond recognition. Her body was dismembered in such a grotesque and extreme manner," that the medical examiner couldn't determine the cause of death, Wood said. Marks on her pelvis showed she was stabbed, he said.

"JJ Vallow's voice was silenced forever by a strip of duct tape over his mouth," just two weeks later, Wood said. "A white plastic bag was placed over his head, and secured with duct tape around and around from his forehead to his chin."

Evidence shows JJ struggled, Wood said, and at one point the boy's arms and legs were bound with duct tape.

"He stopped breathing, his heart stopped beating and he died. It was a brutal, horrific murder of a 7-year-old boy with special needs," he said.

Vallow Daybell never reported the kids missing but continued to collect the survivor benefit checks each child was receiving because of the earlier deaths of their fathers, Wood said.

Wood said Tammy Daybell was slain between Oct. 18 and Oct. 20, 2019.

"Tammy Daybell, a loving, active mother of five and a school librarian, was murdered in her own home. She was asphyxiated in her own home," Wood said.

Wood also reviewed the evidence and testimony presented to jurors over the past four weeks and reminded the jurors that under Idaho law, aiding and abetting, such as by helping in the planning of a crime, is the same as a person committing it herself.

At times, the testimony in the case has been heartbreaking — such as when Vallow Daybell's only sur-

living child, Colby Ryan, accused her of murdering his siblings in a recorded jailhouse phone call.

Other testimony has been strange, such as when Vallow Daybell's former friend Melanie Gibb testified that Vallow Daybell believed people in her life had been taken over by evil spirits and turned into "zombies" — including her two youngest kids. Four of the people the defendant described as "zombies" were later killed or shot at, according to the testimony.

It has also been gruesome, such as when law enforcement officers testified about finding JJ and Tylee's remains buried in Chad Daybell's yard. JJ's body had been wrapped in duct tape and plastic, and Tylee's remains had been destroyed and burned with her bones showing evidence of chopping or stabbing marks, the witnesses said. Hair belonging to Vallow Daybell was found on a piece of duct tape used to wrap JJ, a DNA analyst testified.

Vallow Daybell's defense did not call any witnesses, and Vallow Daybell declined to testify. Instead, Archibald asserted that prosecutors had not proven their case, suggesting that there was not enough evidence to find beyond a reasonable doubt that she committed a crime.

"Of the 15,000 texts you have in evidence, show me one where Lori is part of that conspiracy," Archibald said in closing arguments.

The case began in July 2019, when Vallow Daybell's then-husband, Charles Vallow, was shot and killed by her brother, Alex Cox, at his home in a Phoenix suburb. Lori and Charles were estranged, and he had filed divorce documents claiming that she believed she was a goddess sent to usher in the Biblical apocalypse.

At the time, Cox told police he acted in self-defense, and he was never charged in connection with the death. Cox died later that year of what authorities determined were natural causes. Lori Vallow Daybell was later charged in Arizona in connection with Charles Vallow's death; she has not yet had the opportunity to enter a plea in that case.

According to prosecutors, Vallow Daybell was already in a relationship with Chad Daybell, who was still married to his wife, Tammy Daybell, at the time. She moved to eastern Idaho with her brother and kids to be closer to Chad Daybell.

The children were last seen alive in September of 2019. Police discovered they were missing a month later after an extended family member became worried that she wasn't able to get ahold of JJ. Their bodies were found the following summer.

The case has garnered widespread interest not just in Idaho but around the world, and the judge banned cameras from the courtroom in an effort to limit pretrial publicity. The trial was also moved to the capital city of Boise, where 1,800 potential jurors were called and winnowed to a panel of 18 people.

## **Trump's defiance at the CNN town hall may scare off many voters — but not the GOP base**

By STEVE PEOPLES AP National Political Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Republicans in the audience laughed when former President Donald Trump mocked a woman who accused him of rape. They cheered when he defended his role during the Jan. 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol. And they applauded again after he said he was "honored" to "terminate Roe v. Wade."

Trump's defiant performance at the CNN town hall on Wednesday may ultimately hurt his standing with key groups of voters in next fall's general election, especially women, suburbanites and independents. But the reaction of those who attended also demonstrated his extraordinary grip on the conservative voters who will soon decide the fight for the GOP presidential nomination.

The magnitude of the challenge ahead for Trump's Republican rivals was clear as the former president repeatedly turned his greatest political liabilities into jokes and applause lines for the GOP base. On Thursday, a day after the town hall, Trump's Republican critics conceded they don't know how to stop him.

"GOP voters want what Trump gave them last night — the lies, the personal attacks... and the confrontation with the media," said Sarah Longwell, founder of the anti-Trump Republican Accountability Project. "I

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 74 of 88

think it was an important wakeup call that Trump is still the likeliest GOP nominee. It's scary, but important we face it and do everything we can to keep him from becoming president again."

The first votes of the GOP primary won't be cast until early next year and the nomination itself won't be formally decided until next summer. But early public polling suggests Trump is the overwhelming frontrunner. And so far, most of his Republican opponents have been unable, or unwilling, to use his most egregious behavior against him for fear that such attacks could alienate the same conservative voters they hope to win over.

Almost none of the GOP's 2024 class has seized on Trump's many legal entanglements, even after a jury this week found Trump liable for sexual abuse and defamation in a civil case brought by advice columnist E. Jean Carroll. The jury ordered Trump to pay her \$5 million.

The verdict was met with silence from most of Trump's Republican competitors. Those forced to respond defended the former president.

Former Vice President Mike Pence, who is preparing to challenge Trump in the 2024 primary with a focus on evangelical voters, suggested in an NBC interview that any focus on the sexual abuse verdict was a distraction from more important issues like the economy and public safety.

Asked if he feels comfortable with someone who found liable of sexual abuse serving as president, Pence said, "I would tell you in my four and a half years serving alongside the president I never heard or witnessed behavior of that nature."

It's much the same with the stunning violence on Jan. 6.

Pence, whose life was threatened that day, has been one of the only Republican presidential prospects willing to call out Trump for sparking the insurrection. Most have downplayed the incident given that most Republican voters believe Trump's false claims that sparked the attack despite a mountain of evidence to the contrary.

And on abortion restrictions, an issue that repelled women and other suburban voters in many high-profile elections last year, Trump won't likely suffer any consequences in the upcoming Republican primary for proudly claiming credit for the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Quite the contrary. Some Republican opponents have staked out even more aggressive anti-abortion positions, understanding that primary voters overwhelmingly oppose abortion rights.

If Trump is vulnerable to any Republican attack, it may be related to his electability.

In the wake of the GOP's disappointing 2022 midterm performance, party leaders openly opined that Trump and his brand of politics have become toxic among the broader electorate, especially women, independents and college-educated suburban voters.

Such concerns may have faded in recent weeks, however, as the party rallies behind Trump in response to new legal entanglements.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis is the latest Republican to try to weaken Trump by raising electability concerns.

In a memo shortly before the CNN town hall, DeSantis' super PAC released a memo warning that a Trump nomination would be "a disaster" for the Republican Party at the ballot box.

"The data suggest that if Trump were to become the 2024 nominee, he will likely cost the GOP control of the House and multiple winnable seats in the Senate," wrote Chris Wilson, head of data for the "Never Back Down" super PAC. "In a general election, Trump's endorsements signal ideological extremism to non-Republicans and, ultimately, reduce moderate and Democratic support for Republican congressional candidates."

It's far from certain that electability concerns alone will be enough to knock Trump from his dominant position in the Republican primary.

Democratic President Joe Biden appears to be eager for a re-match.

"It's simple, folks. Do you want four more years of that?" Biden tweeted immediately after the CNN town hall.

Hours later, the Biden campaign released a video featuring Trump's description of Jan. 6 during the town hall as "a beautiful day." At the bottom of the split-screen, Trump supporters on Jan. 6 are shown

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 75 of 88

pummeling police officers fighting to defend the U.S. Capitol.

A handful of lower-profile Republicans are struggling to make the same case to GOP primary voters.

Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who is actively preparing to launch another Republican presidential bid, targeted New Hampshire voters with Facebook ads during the CNN event that said Trump "PROVOKES VIOLENCE," "PAYS HUSH MONEY" and "ABUSES WOMEN".

"Is this really the conduct we want from the president of the United States?" the Christie ad asks.

Former Rep. Liz Cheney, who lost her reelection last fall after leading the congressional probe into Jan. 6, paid to run a 60-second ad in New Hampshire during the town hall focused on the insurrection.

"Donald Trump is the only president in American history who has refused to guarantee the peaceful transfer of power," Cheney says in the ad. "Donald Trump is a risk America can never take again."

But if the Jan. 6 attack is a political liability for Trump in 2024, he doesn't seem worried.

In addition to describing the violence as "a beautiful day," Trump also said at the town hall that he's "inclined to pardon many of" his supporters who were convicted of criminal charges after participating in the attack.

"They're living in hell," Trump said of his loyalists who sought to disrupt the peaceful transfer of power to Biden. "Many of them are just great people."

## Ukraine says counteroffensive delayed; Britain sending cruise missiles to Kyiv

By SUSIE BLANN and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in remarks broadcast Thursday that Kyiv is delaying its long-awaited counteroffensive against Russia's occupying forces because Ukraine lacks enough Western weapons to succeed without suffering too many casualties.

His remarks, in an interview with European broadcasters, were aired shortly before Britain said it has sent Ukraine air-launched cruise missiles that would allow pilots to extend their reach farther than possibly any other weapon in their arsenal, to locations deep behind the front line.

A Ukrainian counteroffensive against Russia's more than 14-month-old invasion has been expected since warmer weather improved battlefield conditions, and Zelenskyy said it's possible that "we can go forward and be successful," the BBC reported.

"But we'd lose a lot of people. I think that's unacceptable," he was quoted as saying in the interview, conducted in Kyiv with public service broadcasters who are members of Eurovision News, including the BBC.

"So we need to wait. We still need a bit more time," Zelenskyy was quoted as saying. "In terms of equipment, not everything has arrived yet."

Analysts and Ukrainian officials have talked for months of a coming Ukrainian counterpunch. Zelenskyy's remarks could be designed to keep the Russians guessing, with more uncertainty because both sides are struggling to secure enough ammunition.

Ukraine's troops are receiving Western training, as well as advanced weapons, as it gears up for such an assault.

Later Thursday, U.K. Defense Secretary Ben Wallace told lawmakers it sent Ukraine the Storm Shadow missiles, a conventionally armed weapon with a range of more than 250 kilometers (150 miles). By contrast, the truck-mounted HIMARS launchers that Washington has supplied feature GPS-guided missiles capable of hitting targets up to 80 kilometers (50 miles) away.

Wallace said the cruise missiles "are now going into or are in the country itself," but didn't say how many were provided.

The air-launched missiles would allow Ukrainian forces to target locations such as Russia-occupied Crimea. Kyiv has pledged not to use them to attack Russia itself, U.K. media reported. The U.S. and its allies have expressed concern that enabling Ukraine to use their weapons to hit targets inside Russia could provoke the Kremlin to escalate the war.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 76 of 88

The British delivery adds to the tanks and long-range precision artillery that Western countries have already supplied to Ukraine.

Retired Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, a former commander of the U.S. Army in Europe, tweeted: "Well done UK!" "This will give Ukraine capability to make Crimea untenable for Russian forces" and require Russia to reevaluate the positioning of its Black Sea fleet, Hodges said.

Sidharth Kaushal, a research fellow at London's Royal United Services Institute, said the Storm Shadow missiles could allow Ukraine to strike Russian vessels in its Black Sea headquarters port of Sevastopol, from which Moscow's Kalibr missiles "have been used to target crucial Ukrainian infrastructure."

Patrick Bury, senior lecturer in security at the University of Bath, wasn't surprised at Zelenskyy's comments about delaying the spring campaign.

"If you are Zelenskyy, you are doing everything you can to make sure you get everything you need" before launching the offensive, he said.

"On the other hand, I would not be surprised at all if it started in the next couple of weeks, depending on the mud. ... As of last week it was still one of the wettest springs they've had over there in years. ... It's just not favorable," Bury added.

A Ukrainian military claim Wednesday that its troops had advanced up to 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) around the hotly contested eastern city of Bakhmut fueled speculation that the counteroffensive was underway.

Serhii Cherevatyi, spokesman for Ukraine's Operational Command East, told The Associated Press that the fighting and forward movement was not the "grand counteroffensive, but it's a harbinger showing that there will be more such attacks in the future."

But Yevgeny Prigozhin, the head of Russia's private military force Wagner that has spearheaded Moscow's battle for Bakhmut, claimed Kyiv's counteroffensive was "in full swing," with Ukrainian forces advancing "on the flanks" around the city.

"Unfortunately, in some areas they're doing it successfully," Prigozhin said.

Kremlin forces are deeply entrenched in eastern Ukraine with layered defensive lines reportedly up to 20 kilometers (12 miles) deep. Kyiv's counteroffensive would likely face minefields, anti-tank ditches and other obstacles.

Russia is "acting slow" in Ukraine because it wants to preserve infrastructure and save lives there, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told the Bosnian Serb channel ATV on Wednesday night.

Moscow has repeatedly explained its lack of advances on the battlefield as an effort to protect civilians, but those claims have been proven false, with frequent attacks on civilian buildings.

Zelenskyy said Russian President Vladimir Putin wants to reduce the war to a so-called frozen conflict, with neither side able to dislodge the other, according to the BBC. He ruled out surrendering territory to Russia in return for a peace deal.

The Kremlin wants Kyiv to acknowledge Russian sovereignty over Crimea and to recognize September's illegal annexation of the provinces of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia. Ukraine has rejected the demands and ruled out any talks with Russia until its troops withdraw from all occupied territories.

Military analysts have warned that Putin hopes the West's costly support for Kyiv will fray.

Ukraine's Western allies have sent the country 65 billion euros (\$70 billion) in military aid, and with no peace talks on the horizon, the alliance is gearing up to send more.

European Union Foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said delaying a counteroffensive was a sign that the West must step up its military support for Ukraine.

"Certainly, they need more preparation," Borrell said at a defense and security conference in Brussels. "They need more arms. They need to gather more capacity, and it is us who have to provide for that."

Russia also is seeking more weapons and ammunition. The U. S. ambassador to South Africa accused the country Thursday of providing weapons and ammunition to Russia via a cargo ship that docked secretly at a naval base near Cape Town in December. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said an investigation was underway.

Over the winter, the Ukraine conflict became bogged down in a war of attrition, with both sides relying heavily on bombarding each other's positions.

A counteroffensive is a major challenge, requiring the Ukrainian military to orchestrate a wide range of capabilities, including providing ammunition, food, medical supplies and spare parts, along potentially extended supply lines. The front line extends more than 1,000 kilometers (600 miles).

Zelenskyy has been making the rounds of Western capitals to seek more support. As part of that effort, Pope Francis could meet Zelenskyy at the Vatican this weekend, a Vatican official said Thursday. Francis recently revealed a secret peace "mission" but provided no details. Zelenskyy was expected in Germany starting Saturday evening. Italian media, citing unidentified sources, reported that Zelenskyy might be in Rome earlier that day to meet with Premier Giorgia Meloni and the pope.

A Vatican official said an audience with the pope on Saturday "is a possibility." The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the visit was not confirmed.

Russia's latest long-range barrages killed at least six civilians and wounded 13 others, Ukraine's presidential office said.

In other developments, a Ukrainian drone damaged a fuel storage tank across the Russian border in Bryansk, the region's governor reported on Telegram. In Ukraine's Russian-occupied city of Melitopol, meanwhile, Russian-appointed authorities reported an assassination attempt against a judge. The authorities didn't report how the attack occurred, saying only that the judge wasn't injured, but two of his guards were. Ukraine didn't comment on either attack.

Lawless reported from London. Lorne Cook in Brussels, Gerald Imray in Cape Town, South Africa, and Nicole Winfield in Rome contributed.

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

## **Tesla shouldn't call driving system Autopilot because humans are still in control, Buttigieg says**

By TOM KRISHER and HILARY POWELL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Tesla shouldn't be calling its partially automated driving system Autopilot because the cars can't drive themselves, the top U.S. transportation official says.

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg says he's concerned about Tesla's marketing of the system, which is under investigation by his department in connection with crashes that have caused at least 14 deaths.

"I don't think that something should be called, for example, an Autopilot, when the fine print says you need to have your hands on the wheel and eyes on the road at all times," Buttigieg said in an interview with The Associated Press.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, an agency within Buttigieg's department, has sent investigative teams to more than 30 crashes since 2016 in which Teslas suspected of operating on Autopilot or its more sophisticated automated Full Self-Driving system have struck pedestrians, motorcyclists, semi trailers and parked emergency vehicles.

The probes are part of a larger investigation by the NHTSA into multiple instances of Teslas using Autopilot crashing into parked emergency vehicles that are tending to other crashes. The NHTSA has become more aggressive in pursuing safety problems with Teslas in the past year, announcing multiple recalls and investigations.

Tesla, based in Austin, Texas, didn't immediately return messages left Thursday by the AP seeking comment.

Autopilot can keep a car in its lane and away from vehicles in front of it, while Full Self-Driving can take on most driving tasks. But in each case, Tesla tells owners they must be ready to intervene at all times.

Buttigieg said the Transportation Department will hold Tesla or any other company accountable for complying with federal safety standards. "We call balls and strikes," he said. "I view it as something where it's very important to be very objective. But anytime a company does something wrong or a vehicle needs to be recalled or a design isn't safe, we're going to be there."

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 78 of 88

In the Wednesday interview, Buttigieg said that self-driving vehicles have enormous potential to reduce the nearly 40,000 U.S. roadway deaths that happen each year, a level that he called unacceptable. But he said the technology has not been proved yet. "It's far from automatic that it's going to meet that potential," he said. "That's what we're trying to shape here at the Department of Transportation."

The NHTSA also is looking at Tesla's Full Self-Driving system. In February, the agency pressured Tesla into recalling nearly 363,000 vehicles with the software because the system can break traffic laws. The problem was to be fixed with an online software update.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk has said he expects to have fully autonomous vehicles this year, a pledge he has made for several years. "The trend is very clearly toward full self-driving," Musk said in April. "And I hesitate to say this, but I think we'll do it this year."

The system is being tested on public roads by as many as 400,000 Tesla owners. But the NHTSA said in documents that the system can make unsafe actions such as traveling straight through an intersection from a turn-only lane, going through a yellow traffic light without proper caution or failing to respond to speed limit changes.

The NHTSA also has opened investigations during the past three years into Teslas braking suddenly for no reason, suspension problems and other issues.

Buttigieg wouldn't comment specifically on the pending investigations. "Both outside bodies, states and other regulatory entities on the marketing side, and us from a vehicle safety perspective, are always paying attention," he said.

No vehicle on sale today can drive itself, he stressed, saying that drivers must pay attention in all cases.

The Justice Department also has asked Tesla for documents about Full Self-Driving and Autopilot.

Buttigieg also touted the Biden administration's efforts to electrify the nation's auto fleet.

"The bottom line is the automotive sector is going electric, and we want that to happen quickly enough to help us meet our climate goals," he said. "We want it to happen on American soil so that we get these American jobs and we want it to happen in an equitable way that everybody can benefit from."

Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., has criticized the administration for what he calls lax enforcement of rules that require EV batteries to be produced in North America.

Buttigieg acknowledged "some real differences of opinion" on how to implement the tax provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act, but said tax credits that take thousands of dollars off the purchase price of EVs are crucial along with a network of charging stations to accommodate millions of new EVs.

"The president set out a goal of 500,000 chargers by the end of this decade. I think we can hit that goal or beat it, but it's going to take a lot of work," he said, noting that chargers and other benefits from the climate law and 2021 infrastructure law go to every state. "Red states, blue states, purple states all came back with a plan to use those dollars, and they're all going forward with it right now. So I think we can succeed in this EV revolution."

He noted that he is a former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, former home to the Studebaker car company that went out of business in the 1960s.

"I know how important it is that we win this time, and that America lead the world in this revolution that is going to happen one way or the other very aggressively," he said.

Krisher reported from Detroit. Associated Press writer Matthew Daly in Washington contributed to this story.

## Republicans continue push to restrict teachings on race in South Carolina

By JAMES POLLARD Associated Press/Report for America  
COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — South Carolina Republicans are one step closer to restricting how teachers discuss race in K-12 classrooms.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 79 of 88

As conservatives nationwide push bans on so-called "critical race theory," the state Senate passed a likeminded effort Wednesday in a late night 27-10 vote after nearly six hours of debate. Parents could challenge any educational materials they say violate banned teachings around white privilege and implicit bias under a bill sent back to the GOP-controlled House.

Missing from the bill is the explicit phrase "critical race theory." It instead prevents teaching that an individual "bears responsibility for actions committed in the past" by other members of their race, and that someone is inherently privileged or should receive "adverse or favorable treatment" due to their race.

The bill states that nothing prevents teachings about any ethnic group's history or the "fact-based discussion" of "controversial" periods and current events. Senate Majority Leader Shane Massey said the bill encourages educators to teach students about slavery and Jim Crow, but within the historical facts.

"H.3728 keeps the subjective opinions of those who want to rewrite American History from creeping into South Carolina's schools," Massey said in a statement.

Democratic Sen. Dick Harpootlian questioned who would determine the "facts." He worried that parents could challenge lessons that the Civil War was fought over slavery and not states' rights.

Harpootlian, 74, who is white, added that while he and some Black colleagues all grew up during segregation, they did not share the same experiences, or "facts."

"When I think back on the 50s and 60s, and my history of growing up in Charlotte, North Carolina, the facts I know are not necessarily the facts you know," he said.

Opponents said vague language would chill educators' speech and sanitize the truth. Democratic Sen. Ronnie Sabb asked how teachers should approach the deadly Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol insurrection if parents who wrongly consider it "an act of patriotism" challenge lessons that call it an attempt to thwart democracy.

Democrats noted the debate came on the same date the state passed a 1740 law making it illegal for enslaved people to assemble in groups, earn money and learn to read.

Sen. Mia McLeod connected the enslavement of Black people to modern-day inequities that opponents fear would be banned from discussion. She pointed to racial disparities in sentencing, generational wealth and health outcomes.

"Instead of prioritizing a solution in search of a problem, I just wonder why we've chosen not to focus on the problems that we all know exist systemically," she said.

The measure would also ban any mandated gender or sexuality trainings and require that materials be "age appropriate."

Republicans named a couple instances where teachers presented inappropriate or unapproved outside materials. Democrats argued that local school boards already handled those situations by firing the educators in question.

Palmetto State Teachers Association Executive Director Kathy Maness has said the prohibited concepts are not widespread. Maness, who previously sought the Republican nomination for state superintendent of education, told the AP last month that most teachers "won't have anything to worry about."

The bill requires school districts to announce on their websites that parents may review curriculum and establish a complaint process for contested materials. Parents could see selected titles online and examine their contents in-person.

Complaints must be lodged by parents and undergo specific steps from the principal to the superintendent to the local school board and finally the state school board.

Republican Sen. Larry Grooms said the process allows parents to know what their children are learning. Opponents argued it amounts to burdensome surveillance that would increase the stressors on a profession already experiencing record vacancies.

Senators struck a provision inserted by the House that would have allowed parents to sue any district they accused of teaching prohibited concepts. Another removed section would have forced teachers to post any changes to classroom materials three days before they were taught.

The bill would cement a budget proviso prohibiting state funds for school districts that "inculcate" a

similar list of ideas.

Opponents noted that parents have already cited that proviso in challenges to books like "Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You." A local NAACP branch sued the Pickens County School District last month over its decision to remove the title from its classrooms and libraries.

"We ought not give those who would weaponize legislation like this the power and authority," Sabb said.

An earlier version of this report incorrectly said Kathy Maness served as the state superintendent of education. She previously ran to be the Republican nominee for the position.

James Pollard 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.

## **New blood donation rules allow more gay men to give in US**

By MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gay and bisexual men in monogamous relationships can give blood in the U.S. without abstaining from sex under updated federal health guidelines that focus on donors' behavior, not their sexual orientation.

The Food and Drug Administration guidelines finalized Thursday ease decades-old restrictions designed to protect the blood supply from HIV. The agency announced plans for the change in January and said this week the new approach can now be implemented by blood banks.

The updated guidelines do away with a requirement that men who have sex with men abstain from sex for three months prior to giving blood.

Instead, all potential donors — regardless of sexual orientation, sex or gender — will be screened with a new questionnaire that evaluates their individual risks for HIV based on sexual behavior, recent partners and other factors. Potential donors who report having anal sex with new partners in the last three months will be barred from giving until a later date.

The FDA said the new policy reflects the latest scientific evidence and is in line with rules in the U.K. and Canada.

It's the latest move by the FDA to broaden donor eligibility, with the potential to boost donations.

"The implementation of these recommendations will represent a significant milestone for the agency and the LGBTQI+ community," Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA's center for biological therapies, said in a statement.

Gay rights groups have long opposed blanket restrictions on who can give blood, saying they discriminate. Medical societies including the American Medical Association have also said such exclusions are unnecessary given advances in blood testing.

Anyone who has ever tested positive for HIV will continue to be ineligible to donate blood. Those taking pills to prevent HIV through sexual contact will also still be barred, until three months after their last dose. The FDA noted that the medications, known as PrEP, can delay the detection of the virus in screening tests.

The Human Rights campaign, an LGBTQ+ advocacy group, called Thursday's announcement "a real step forward" in a statement. It added that more "can and must be done so that people taking PrEP can donate as well."

The FDA sets requirements and procedures for U.S. blood banks. All potential donors answer questions about their sexual history, injectable drug use and any recent tattoos or piercings, among other factors that can contribute to the spread of blood-borne infections. Donated blood is then tested for HIV, hepatitis C, syphilis and other infectious diseases.

In 2015, the FDA dropped the lifetime ban on donations from men who have sex with men and replaced it with a one-year abstinence requirement. Then in 2020, the agency shortened the abstinence period to three months, after donations plummeted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regulators said there has been no negative impact on the blood supply as a result of those changes.

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

## From 'Psycho' to a new crop of horror movies, the genre has some mommy issues

By KRISTA FAURIA Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — If you're stumped for how to spend this Mother's Day, consider relishing a good scare. Since the genre's inception, horror movies have tapped into the psychological trauma and terror that can only come from a mother, and a number of recent films are embracing that time-honored tradition.

Take, for example, Brandon Cronenberg's "Infinity Pool," which became one of the buzziest films to come out of this year's Sundance Film Festival.

It's no surprise it was replete with disturbing moments. The director, after all, has surely learned a thing or two from his filmmaker dad and giant of the genre, David Cronenberg.

In one talked-about scene, Gabi (Mia Goth) exposes her bare chest to James (Alexander Skarsgård) in an invitation to breastfeed, revealing a complicated tension between his actual mother and his understanding of Gabi as his new one.

While the genre has often been dismissed as low-brow, Adam Lowenstein, a film and media studies professor at the University of Pittsburgh who specializes in horror, said it is well-suited for grappling with these kinds of deep-seated, psychological issues.

"Horror is, at its core, a very primal genre," he said. "It makes absolute sense that things like family, sex, death would all be things that the horror film is constantly mining because those are primal fascinations and experiences."

Perhaps the seminal example of mommy issues in a horror film is Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho" (1960).

In it, the infamous Norman Bates of the Bates Motel develops a split personality after killing his controlling mom and her lover out of jealousy. His grief and guilt cause him to keep her corpse stashed away, and assume her personality when he commits violence against women he becomes attracted to.

Part of what makes the maternal bond such a fertile one for exploring psychological trauma, Lowenstein said, is that it is so universal and freighted.

"We all have real mothers, just the way we have real constructs about motherhood that we subscribe to. And these things are very hard to separate," he said. The gap between expectation and reality becomes fruitful territory for a good scare.

Zach Cregger's "Barbarian" (2022) also turns breastfeeding into a spectacle, not from an inviting yet depraved sexual partner as in "Infinity Pool," but from a monstrous maternal creature who forces her victims to feast.

Other films let the dynamic between mother and child carry the drama. "Evil Dead Rise," now available to rent on streaming services, plays with the fear-inducing extreme of a mom being possessed by a demon.

"I think it's very terrifying to imagine somebody so familiar to you in your world becoming a subversion of that, and becoming something really dangerous and evil," said director Lee Cronin. "It just lent itself to this exploration of maternal fears and what it might mean if your mother was to turn on you."

In Ari Aster's new "Beau is Afraid," the central theme is the fear and pain that can come from the mother-child bond. The movie — about a man trying to get to his mom's house — is as much a surrealist epic as it is a horror movie.

And while Aster's third movie is admittedly less scary than his "Midsommar" or "Hereditary," another film that exploits the terrors of family dynamics and mother-induced trauma, it is safe to conclude by the end that Beau's fear of his guilt-inducing mother was warranted.

"When I left 'Beau Is Afraid,' I heard a teenage woman ahead of me walking out of the theater saying

to her friends, "That just made me want to call my mom and say I'm sorry for everything," Lowenstein recounted. "We think horror and we think fear and dread and haunting, but we don't necessarily think guilt, shame, humiliation. And Ari Aster clearly understands the connection between these things."

It is not insignificant that almost all of these scary movies about protagonists' relationships with their mothers are directed by men.

But Lowenstein maintains that the genre's mommy issues began with a woman, and long before film: Mary Shelley's classic 1818 horror novel, "Frankenstein," is often considered to be the inception of modern horror.

"Her story is about a man who wants to be God, but he also wants to be a mother. Really, he wants to create life without the intervention of women," he said. "What Mary Shelley shows us is what a bad idea this really is, and how male hubris really does monstrous things with motherhood."

## **Peloton is recalling more than 2 million exercise bikes in the U.S. Here's why**

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN AP Business Writer

Peloton is recalling more than 2 million of its exercise bikes in the U.S. because the bike's seat post assembly can break during use, posing fall and injury hazards.

The recall includes approximately 2.2 million of the Peloton Bikes Model PL01. The bikes were sold in the U.S. from January 2018 through May 2023 for about \$1,400. They were sold at Peloton and Dick's Sporting Goods stores nationwide and online at Amazon, Peloton and Dick's websites.

Peloton has received 35 reports of the seat post breaking and detaching from the bike during use, including 13 reports of injuries including a fractured wrist, lacerations and bruises due to falling from the bike.

The Peloton original Bike in the U.K., Germany and Australia and the Peloton Bike+ are not included in the recall.

Consumers in the U.S. are advised to immediately stop using the recalled exercise bikes and to contact Peloton for a free repair. Peloton is offering a free seat post that can be self-installed.

Peloton can be reached at 866-679-9129 from 6 a.m. to 12 a.m. ET, seven days a week or online at [www.onepeloton.com](http://www.onepeloton.com). Consumers can click on Product Recalls at the bottom of the Peloton website page for information on how to request the free seat post and instructions for installation.

Peloton has been in the process of a corporate reorganization. In October the company announced it was cutting about 500 jobs. That announcement came after the company said in August that it would cut 784 jobs, close its North America distribution network and shift delivery work to third-party providers.

Peloton experienced incredible sales growth during the height of the coronavirus pandemic. The New York-based company's share price multiplied by more than five times in 2020 amid lockdowns that made its bikes and treadmills popular among customers who pay a monthly fee to participate in its interactive workouts.

But sales began to slow in 2021 as the distribution of vaccines drew many people out of their homes and back into gyms.

Shares of Peloton Interactive Inc. fell more than 8% in Thursday afternoon trading.

## **Jacklyn Zeman, longtime 'General Hospital' cast member who played nurse Bobbie Spencer, dies at 70**

By ALICIA RANCILIO Associated Press

Jacklyn Zeman, who became one of the most recognizable actors on daytime television during 45 years of playing nurse Bobbie Spencer on ABC's "General Hospital," has died. She was 70.

Zeman died of cancer, her family confirmed Wednesday. News of her death was first announced by the show's executive producer, Frank Valentini.

"I am heartbroken to announce the passing of our beloved Jackie Zeman," he wrote on Twitter. "Just like

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 83 of 88

her character, the legendary Bobbie Spencer, she was a bright light and a true professional that brought so much positive energy with her work."

ABC Entertainment and "General Hospital" also released a statement saying Zeman "leaves behind a lasting legacy for her Emmy-nominated portrayal of the bad girl turned heroine and will always be remembered for her kind heart and radiant spirit. We are devastated by the news of her passing, and send our deepest condolences to Jackie's family, friends and loved ones."

Zeman joined "General Hospital" in 1977 as Barbara Jean, who went by Bobbie, and was the feisty younger sister of Anthony Geary's Luke Spencer. Zeman grew to regard Geary as family off camera. "I'm probably closer to him than I would be a real-life brother," she told co-star Maurice Benard last year on his YouTube series "State of Mind."

Bobbie had worked as a teen prostitute and given up a baby for adoption but had managed to turn her life around and become a nurse at General Hospital. Zeman's portrayal of Spencer was a spirited, upbeat woman who was as sweet as pie but who also had a sense of self. She didn't suffer fools and had no problem revoking the niceties if warranted.

"Bobbie has been a fascinating person for me to play," she said in an interview in 1982. "I get to do ... all the things that most women think about but wouldn't dare."

One of Zeman's most memorable scenes was in 1994, when Bobbie's daughter B.J. was in a school bus accident that left her brain dead. Bobbie and then-husband Tony (played by Brad Maule) made the decision to donate their daughter's heart to her cousin, Maxie, who had Kawasaki disease.

Laura Wright, who plays Bobbie's daughter Carly Spencer, posted to Instagram Thursday, "I'm so grateful to have shared so many years with this beautiful woman. Jackie told the best stories - she had an INCREDIBLE spirit and she lived such an amazing life... saying she will be missed is an understatement."

Benard, who plays mobster Sonny Corinthos, posted, "This hit me really hard. A gut punch. I think because Jackie was such a sweet, delicate soul." Jon Lindstrom, who plays Kevin Collins described Zeman as a "life force" in a tweet.

Zeman's death is the third death to hit the "General Hospital" cast and crew in six months. Cast member Sonya Eddy died in December from complications of an emergency surgery and beloved producer Nneka Garland died suddenly in April.

Born March 6, 1953, in Englewood, New Jersey, Zeman discovered a love for dance as a child, and as a teen began acting in school productions. She worked in Venezuela as a dancer after high school and was pre-med at New York University but dropped out when she was offered a contract at the ABC soap "One Life to Live" after originally being hired for just three days of work.

On "One Life," she played Lana McClain for a little more than one year and then left for "General Hospital." "I didn't even audition," she told a blogger in 2010. Zeman was nominated for four Daytime Emmy Awards for her work on the show.

Outside soap operas, Zeman worked as a Playboy Bunny to help pay for college and also acted in commercials. She had a role in 1982's "National Lampoon's Class Reunion" and appeared in a string of TV movies, including the ABC Afterschool Special "Montana Crossroads" in 1993. She also had a series regular role as Sofia Madison in the crime drama series "The Bay," earning her a fifth Emmy Award nomination.

Zeman last's appearance on "General Hospital" was in April for the wedding of her character's grandson. The same month, she also celebrated the show's 60th anniversary by posting a video on Instagram to fans.

"A great, big heartfelt thank you to the very special people who have been watching us and supporting us and keeping us on the air all these years. We love you."

She was married and divorced three times, first to Glenn Gordon and later to Steve Gribbin and disc jockey Murray "Murray the K" Kaufman. Zeman's survivors include two daughters, Cassidy and Lacey, from her marriage to Gordon.

**NBC will air most of marquee Olympic events from Paris live during daytime**

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 84 of 88

By JOE REEDY AP Sports Writer

Swimming, gymnastics and track & field fans can rejoice. For the first time in a European Olympics, those event finals will be televised live on network television in the United States.

NBC will have at least nine hours of weekday daytime coverage, expanding to at least 11 hours on weekends. With Paris six hours ahead of New York, the marquee finals will air live in the morning or late afternoon.

NBCUniversal's Peacock streaming service will have every sport and event live, including all 329 medal events, from July 26-Aug. 11, 2024.

"The Paris Olympics are going to be the most binge-worthy event of 2024," said Pete Bevacqua, Chairman, NBC Sports. "For those wanting to watch the competition as it happens, Peacock will have everything live, creating the greatest single destination in sports media history."

Most fans have wanted to watch Olympic events live. NBCUniversal has done that in the past with most sports, using its sister channels for around-the-clock coverage, but has kept the marquee events and finals for primetime.

During the Tokyo Games two years ago, the only way to watch gymnastics finals live was on Peacock or other NBC Sports digital platforms.

This will be the first time since 2012 that a Summer Games are being held in Europe. The London Games marked the first time NBC had a site devoted to streaming every event live by using the Olympics world feed. That meant track fans could stream the 100 meter finals live while most waited until watching the taped coverage on NBC in primetime.

While some may look at this as an evolution in NBC's coverage, Molly Solomon, the Executive Producer & President of NBC Olympics Production, termed it as a better way of taking advantage of the time zone.

"I believe you take each Olympics separately. I love after you finish an Olympics, you get to start with a clean slate for the next one," she said. "To bring the Olympics to the greatest number of people, how can we take advantage of the time zone? And so what we did when you look at six hours ahead, we're like we can take over NBC in the daytime, and have live competition all day long, including the most popular sports, their finals in the afternoon on NBC."

The prime time show will show replays of the important events from the day while adding storytelling and other features.

"So really prime time in Paris will be the best of the best. And the time zone gives us the opportunity to create an amazing storytelling event," Solomon said. "This gives us the opportunity to reimagine and contemporize coverage."

Prime time host Mike Tirico also will be used during the morning and weekday coverage when there are marquee finals.

Besides streaming every sport and event, Peacock will have on-demand replays and original programming, including preview and recap shows spotlighting marquee sports.

This will be third Olympics for Peacock, which launched in 2020, although the first Summer Games in which it has all events.

"I think this is going to be a chance for fans to engage in ways that they haven't really been able to before, because you're going to have all of these content options," said Peacock president Kelly Campbell. "We're giving people this flexibility to watch and enhance the viewing experience."

U.S. viewers streamed 5.5 billion minutes from Tokyo, a 22% increase over Rio in 2016, according to NBC and Nielsen.

NBC is hoping the expanded hours will help ratings rebound after the Tokyo and 2022 Beijing winter games, which were held in pandemic conditions without fans.

Tokyo averaged 15.6 million prime-time viewers, including cable and streaming. That was down 42% from Rio. Beijing fared worse, with a combined average of 11.4 million.

## Army sergeant who fatally shot BLM protester in Texas sentenced to 25 years as governor seeks pardon

By JIM VERTUNO Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A U.S. Army sergeant who fatally shot an armed protester at a Black Lives Matter march in Texas was sentenced to 25 years in prison Wednesday, after prosecutors used his social media history and text messages to portray him as a racist who may commit violence again.

Daniel Perry's sentence now pushes the case toward a potentially thorny decision for Republican Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who has said he wants to issue a swift pardon.

Abbott requested the state Board of Pardons and Paroles to send him a pardon recommendation for Perry shortly after he was convicted in April of killing Garrett Foster at the Austin march in July 2020.

Abbott lauded Texas' tough Stand Your Ground self-defense laws and said Perry was railroaded by a liberal prosecutor. Since then, Perry's trail of texts and online posts, including shockingly racist images, have been made public and the governor has stayed silent on the matter.

Abbott's office did not respond to an Associated Press request for comment on the sentence or whether he still intends to issue a pardon. Perry, 36, could have received up to life in prison.

Rice University political science professor Mark Jones said Abbott moved too soon on the call for a pardon. "Abbott clearly boxed himself into a corner," when he appeared to respond to criticism from conservative former Fox News star Tucker Carlson, who demanded the governor act, Jones said.

"I suspect if Gov. Abbott had known all that he knows now, he would not have jumped the gun on pledging to pardon him," Jones said.

The Pardons and Parole board, which is appointed by Abbott, has already started reviewing Perry's case. State law requires the board to recommend a pardon before the governor can act.

The case has been embroiled in politics as it came amid widespread demonstrations against police killings and racial injustice, following the killing of George Floyd, a Black man, by a white Minneapolis police officer.

Perry's attorneys on Wednesday called the case a "political prosecution" and the release of the texts and social media posts "character assassination."

Attorney Clinton Broden said the defense team would pursue both a pardon and a standard appeal in the court system.

"Those who claim that Governor Abbott's expressed intent is based on politics simply choose to ignore the fact that it was only the political machinations of a rogue district attorney which led to Sgt. Perry's prosecution," he said.

Travis County District Attorney Jose Garza said it was Abbott "who decided to insert politics in this case." Garza said he's been assured by the parole board that he and Foster's family will be given a chance to address the board in Perry's case.

In a statement, the board confirmed the investigation is ongoing and declined further comment.

"The entire history of the board, the board has been a careful steward of the power of clemency in this state," Garza said. "Our criminal justice system is not perfect, but in this case it worked exactly as it should. The Travis County District Attorney's office is not done fighting for Garrett and the integrity of that process here."

In a brief statement before sentencing, state District Judge Clifford Brown said Perry received a fair trial. The jury's verdict "deserves our honor and it deserves to be respected," Brown said, without mentioning the potential pardon.

Jones predicted the board will let Perry's legal appeals happen first, and that it would be years, if ever, before the board makes a recommendation in the case.

"The majority (of conservatives) will want to put it in the rearview mirror," Jones said. "Conservatives have far better causes and individuals to support, far better than Daniel Perry."

Perry, who is white, was stationed at Fort Hood, about 70 miles (110 kilometers) north of Austin, when the shooting happened. He was working as a ride-share driver and had just dropped off a customer when he turned onto a street filled with protesters. Foster, a 28-year-old Air Force veteran who was also white,

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 86 of 88

was legally carrying an AK-47 rifle.

Perry said he acted in self defense, claiming that he was trying to drive past the crowd and fired his pistol when Foster pointed a rifle at him. Witnesses testified that they did not see Foster raise his weapon, and prosecutors argued that Perry could have driven away without shooting.

Army spokesman Bryce Dubee has said Perry is classified as in "civilian confinement" pending separation from the military.

Among Perry's statements introduced Tuesday, he wrote on Facebook a month before the shooting: "It is official I am a racist because I do not agree with people acting like animals at the zoo."

Floyd was killed on May 25, 2020. A few days later as protests erupted, Perry sent a text message to an acquaintance: "I might go to Dallas to shoot looters."

Foster was with his girlfriend, Whitney Mitchell, who is Black and uses a wheelchair, when Perry gunned him down. Mitchell and several members of Foster's family were in the courtroom for sentencing Wednesday.

Foster's mother, Sheila Foster, was allowed to address Perry after he was sentenced and still in the courtroom.

"After three long years we're finally getting justice for Garrett," she said. "Mr. Perry, I pray to God that one day he will get rid of all this hate that is in your heart."

## Stunning mosaic of baby star clusters created from 1 million telescope shots

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Astronomers have created a stunning mosaic of baby star clusters hiding in our galactic backyard.

The montage, published Thursday, reveals five vast stellar nurseries less than 1,500 light-years away. A light-year is nearly 6 trillion miles (9.7 trillion kilometers).

To come up with their atlas, scientists pieced together more than 1 million images taken over five years by the European Southern Observatory in Chile. The observatory's infrared survey telescope was able to peer through clouds of dust and discern infant stars.

"We can detect even the faintest sources of light, like stars far less massive than the sun, revealing objects that no one has ever seen before," University of Vienna's Stefan Meingast, the lead author, said in a statement.

The observations, conducted from 2017 to 2022, will help researchers better understand how stars evolve from dust, Meingast said.

The findings, appearing in the journal *Astronomy and Astrophysics*, complement observations by the European Space Agency's star-mapping Gaia spacecraft, orbiting nearly 1 million miles (1.5 million kilometers) away.

Gaia focuses on optical light, missing most of the objects obscured by cosmic dust, the researchers said.

---

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

## Today in History: May 12, Soviets lift Berlin Blockade

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, May 12, the 132nd day of 2023. There are 233 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 12, 1949, the Soviet Union lifted the Berlin Blockade, which the Western powers had succeeded in circumventing with their Berlin Airlift.

On this date:

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 87 of 88

In 1780, during the Revolutionary War, the besieged city of Charleston, South Carolina, surrendered to British forces.

In 1932, the body of Charles Lindbergh Jr., the 20-month-old kidnapped son of Charles and Anne Lindbergh, was found in a wooded area near Hopewell, New Jersey.

In 1933, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration were established to provide help for the needy and farmers.

In 1943, during World War II, Axis forces in North Africa surrendered. The two-week Trident Conference, headed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, opened in Washington.

In 1958, the United States and Canada signed an agreement to create the North American Air Defense Command (later the North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD).

In 1970, the Senate voted unanimously to confirm Harry A. Blackmun as a Supreme Court justice.

In 1975, the White House announced the new Cambodian government had seized an American merchant ship, the Mayaguez, in international waters. (U.S. Marines gained control of the ship three days after its seizure, not knowing the 39 civilian members of the crew had already been released by Cambodia.)

In 1982, in Fatima, Portugal, security guards overpowered a Spanish priest armed with a bayonet who attacked Pope John Paul II. (In 2008, the pope's longtime private secretary revealed that the pontiff was slightly wounded in the assault.)

In 1986, the military action-drama film "Top Gun," starring Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis and released by Paramount Pictures, had its world premiere in New York.

In 2008, a devastating 7.9 magnitude earthquake in China's Sichuan province left more than 87,000 people dead or missing.

In 2009, five Miami men were convicted in a plot to blow up FBI buildings and Chicago's Sears Tower; one man was acquitted. Suspected Nazi death camp guard John Demjanjuk (dem-YAHN'-yuk) was deported from the United States to Germany. (On this date in 2011, Demjanjuk, who maintained his innocence, would be convicted by a German court of being an accessory to the murder of tens of thousands of Jews; he died in March 2012 at age 91.)

In 2011, CEOs of the five largest oil companies went before the Senate Finance Committee, where Democrats challenged the executives to justify tax breaks at a time when people were paying \$4 a gallon for gas.

Ten years ago: Pope Francis gave the Catholic Church new saints, including hundreds of 15th-century martyrs who were beheaded for refusing to convert to Islam, as he led his first canonization ceremony before tens of thousands of people in St. Peter's Square. Nineteen people were wounded in a gang-related shooting during a Mother's Day parade in New Orleans. Serena Williams kept her No. 1 ranking and added career title No. 50 as she beat Maria Sharapova 6-1, 6-4 in the final of the Madrid Open; Rafael Nadal won his fifth title since returning from a knee injury by beating Stanislas Wawrinka (vah-VRINK'-ah) 6-2, 6-4.

Five years ago: North Korea said it would dismantle its nuclear test site later in the month, in what analysts described as a mostly symbolic event that wouldn't represent a material step toward denuclearization. Iraq held its first elections since the collapse of the Islamic State group; there was a record-low turnout for balloting that saw the political coalition of Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr win the most seats in parliament without capturing a majority.

One year ago: Finland's leaders came out in favor of applying to join NATO in part of a historic realignment on the continent 2 1/2 months after Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine sent a shiver of fear through Moscow's neighbors. The Kremlin reacted by warning it will be forced to take retaliatory "military-technical" steps. (Finland would be admitted into NATO in 2023). The world got a look at the first wild but fuzzy image of the supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way galaxy, with astronomers calling it a "gentle giant" on a near-starvation diet.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Millie Perkins is 87. R&B singer Jayotis Washington is 82. Country singer Billy Swan is 81. Actor Linda Dano is 80. Actor Lindsay Crouse is 75. Singer-musician Steve Winwood is 75. Actor Gabriel Byrne is 73. Actor Bruce Boxleitner is 73. Singer Billy Squier is 73. Blues singer-musician Guy

# Groton Daily Independent

**Friday, May 12, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 308 ~ 88 of 88**

Davis is 71. Country singer Kix Brooks is 68. Actor Kim Greist is 65. Rock musician Eric Singer (KISS) is 65. Actor Ving Rhames is 64. Rock musician Billy Duffy is 62. Actor Emilio Estevez is 61. Actor April Grace is 61. TV personality/chef Carla Hall is 59. Actor Stephen Baldwin is 57. Actor Scott Schwartz is 55. Actor Kim Fields is 54. Actor Samantha Mathis is 53. Actor Jamie Luner is 52. Actor Christian Campbell is 51. Actor Rhea Seehorn is 51. Actor Mackenzie Astin is 50. Country musician Matt Mangano (The Zac Brown Band) is 47. Actor Rebecca Herbst is 46. Actor Malin (MAH'-lin) Akerman is 45. Actor Jason Biggs is 45. Actor Rami Malek (RAH'-mee MA'-lihk) is 42. Actor-singer Clare Bowen is 39. Actor Emily VanCamp is 37. Actor Malcolm David Kelley is 31. Actor Sullivan Sweeten is 28.