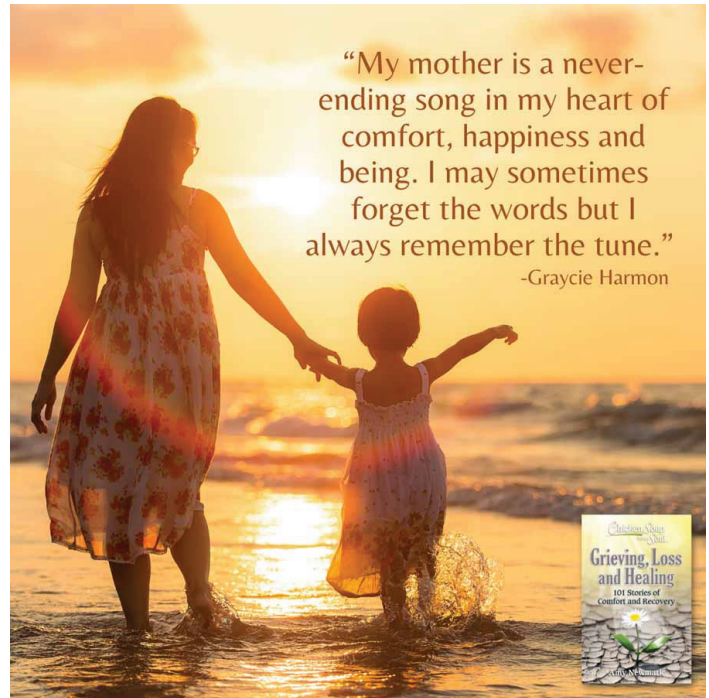


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- [2- Top 24 ratings in track](#)
- [2- Coming Up on GDILIVE.COM](#)
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“My mother is a never-ending song in my heart of comfort, happiness and being. I may sometimes forget the words but I always remember the tune.”
-Gracie Harmon

Groton Community Calendar

Sunday, May 14

MOTHER'S DAY

Graduation, 2 p.m.

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

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

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

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

Monday, May 15

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

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.

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

OPEN: **Recycling Trailer in Groton**
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.
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Groton Area in top 24 in 11 Events

The boys sprint medley relay team entered the top 24 with a good time at the Webster Invitational held last week. At the end of the season, the top 24 in the state qualify for the state track meet. The final time for time and distance improvement will be at the regional track meet scheduled for Thursday in Groton.

Girls 4x200 Relay: Groton Area fell to 17th (14th last time) with a same time of 1:52.27.

Girls 4x400 Relay: Groton Area dropped three places to 22nd with a same time of 4:22.54.

Girls 4x800m Relay: Groton Area fell two spots to 17th with a same time of 10:41.24.

Girls Sprint Medley: Groton Area fell two spots to 21st with an improved time of 4:36.12.

Shot Put: Emma Kutter fell two spots to 23rd with a same distance of 34-4.

Triple Jump: Aspen Johnson remains at 14th with a same distance of 32-9.

Boys 4x100m Relay: Groton Area stays at 16th with an improved time of 45.47.

Boys 4x200m Relay: Groton Area dropped one spot to 15th a same time of 1:34.84.

Boys 4x400m Relay: Groton Area stays at 10th place with a same time of 3:37.04.

Boys 4x800m Relay: Groton Area dropped one spot to 22nd with a same time of 8:59.34

Boys Sprint Medley Relay: Entered the top 24 with a 20th place showing and a time of 3:50.90.

GDI LIVE.COM

Groton Area Graduation Ceremony

Sunday, May 14, 2023

2 p.m. ~ GHS Arena

GDI Subscribers watch for free

Otherwise a \$5 ticket required.



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



... We were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

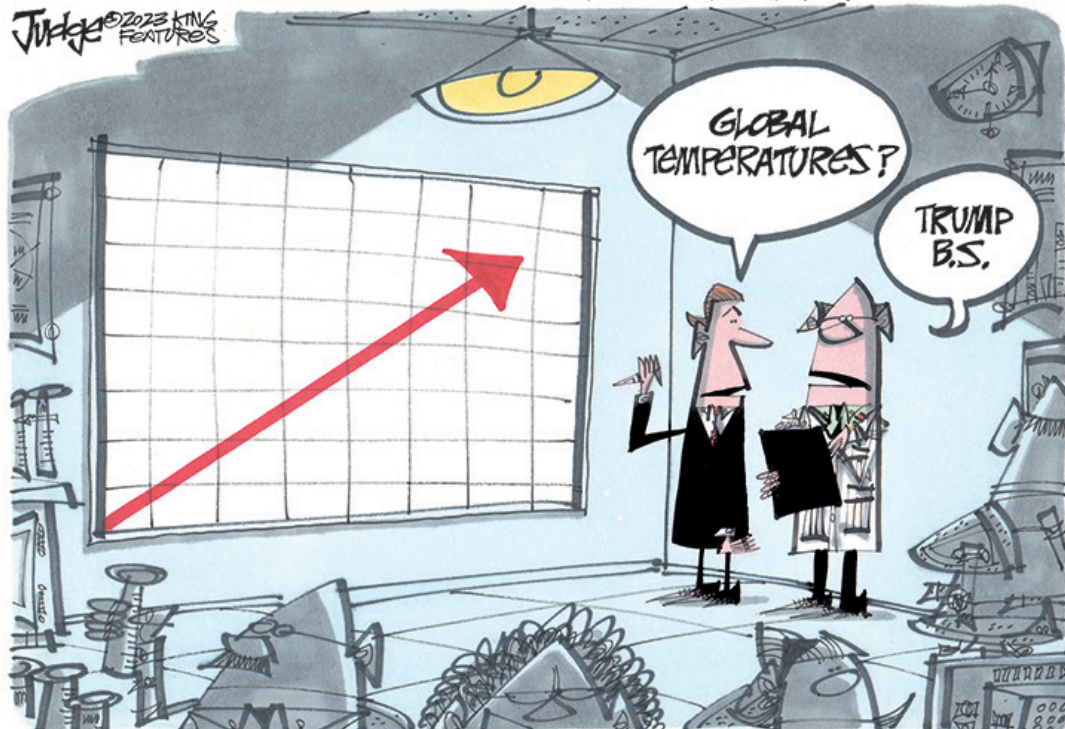
 1 THESSALONIANS 2: 7,8

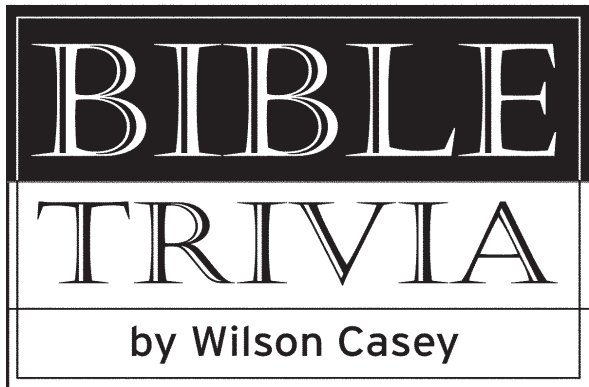
"Mother and Child" by Pablo Picasso (1929)

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NEWS ITEM: ACCORDING TO SCIENTISTS WE'RE REACHING THE LIMITS OF HUMAN SURVIVAL...

Judge © 2023 KING FEATURES





1. Is the book of 3 Timothy (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From Genesis 22:2, who did God command to sacrifice his only son?
Isaac, Job, Noah, Abraham

3. How many times does the word “grandmother” occur in the Bible? *1, 3, 6, 21*

4. From Exodus 20, to whom did God give the Ten Commandments?
Noah, Abraham, Moses, Aaron

5. What’s the middle book of the Old Testament? *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Jeremiah*

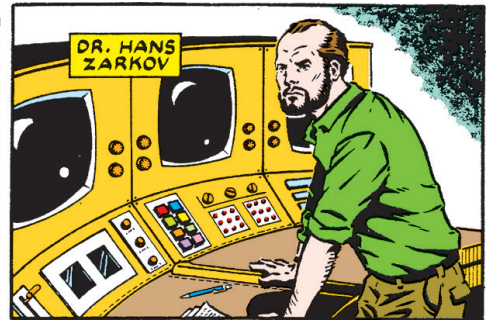
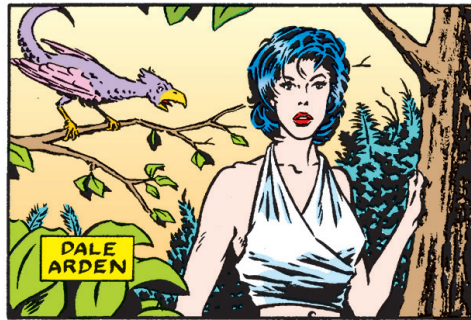
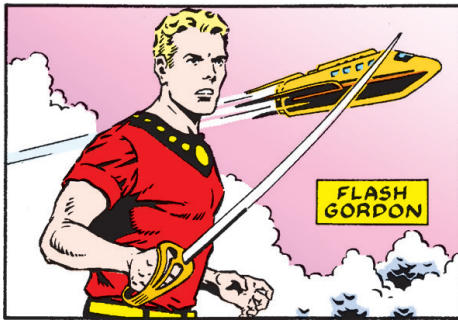
6. Where is the New Testament “Hall of Faith”? *Luke 2, Titus 13, Hebrews 11, John 3*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Abraham, 3) 1 (2 Timothy 1:5), 4) Moses, 5) Proverbs, 6) Hebrews 11

“Test Your Bible Knowledge,” a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.

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FLASH GORDON
By JIM KEEFE 5-14

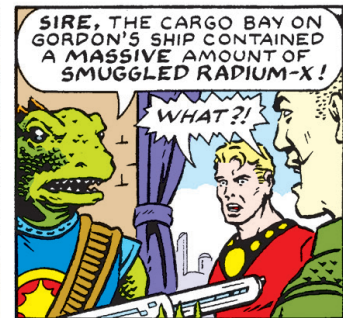
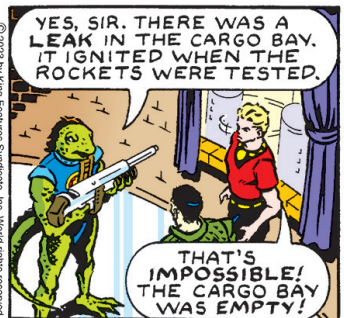
SEEING DALE IN THE SPACECRAFT'S VIEWSCREEN, FLASH WATCHES HORRIFIED AS THE SHIP EXPLODES!

KA-BOOM!

DALE!

FLASH, NO! YOU'LL BE KILLED!

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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

CHECK YOUR ADDRESS POSTURE ANY TIME YOU START MISSING SHOTS BADLY.

YOUR GOALS ARE KNEES SLIGHTLY FLEXED, WEIGHT EVENLY DISTRIBUTED, INCLINED OVER THE BALL FROM THE HIPS WITH YOUR BACK STRAIGHT, ARMS HANGING NATURALLY.

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ALSO, RELAX YOUR RIGHT ARM TO POSITION YOUR RIGHT SIDE SLIGHTLY "BEHIND AND UNDER" YOUR LEFT SIDE.

FINALLY, BE SURE YOUR LEFT EAR IS BEHIND AN IMAGINARY VERTICAL LINE DRAWN UP FROM THE BALL.



Prescription Costs \$500 for a Month's Supply

DEAR DR. ROACH: What can you tell me about a prescription of 145 mcg of Linzess, and why a doctor would prescribe a pill over \$500? What are the advantages to taking this? Surely, there must be something less expensive that will provide the same results. — *J.P.*

ANSWER: Linaclotide (Linzess or Constella) is a medicine used for constipation, either in people with irritable bowel syndrome or in people with constipation for no particular reason. It works by activating a protein to allow chloride and bicarbonate (along with fluid) into the intestine.

Since it is not absorbed into the body, it has few side effects. The major side effect is that it can work too well and cause diarrhea. This is enough of a concern that the medicine is not used in children under the age of 2. There are three different strengths: 72, 145 and 290 mcg.

If you are asking me to defend pharmaceutical pricing, I can't do that. I very seldom use this medicine because there are so many other options for constipation — starting with a different diet without using any medicine at all. But in people with occasional constipation despite having a good diet, I usually start with fiber supplements.

If those don't work, I recommend a surfactant such as docusate (Colace), which allows more water to enter the stool. Yet another option would be nonabsorbable substances like polyethylene glycol (MiraLAX and others), lactulose, sorbitol and magnesium. All of these are much less expensive.

However, there are still people

my patients. It is usually prescribed by an expert (a gastroenterologist) at least in the case of my patients.

Finally, Linzess is roughly \$20 a pill or about \$500 for a month's supply in the U.S. without insurance. Some people only need it occasionally and are very willing to pay, even if insurance doesn't cover it.

DEAR DR. ROACH: The other day, when we were changing our bedsheets, my husband asked me if I knew why the sheets and pillowcases on his side of the bed were stained yellow and the ones on my side weren't. My only thought was that he has a very strong body odor. My high school biology classes came back to me, and I remembered that our sense of smell is a lock-and-key mechanism, where odor comes from a tiny particle that locks into the sensors within our olfactory system. So, I thought that the particles might be staining the bedding. Could this be so? — *J.M.*

ANSWER: Chromhidrosis is the name for colored sweat, and it isn't uncommon. Both men and women can have chromhidrosis. There are several possible causes. One is that the sweat glands themselves can excrete a colored substance, such as lipofuscin, which often causes a yellow discoloration.

I admire your using high school biology, but I don't think you are right in this case. The odor in sweat comes from bacteria that lives in and around the sweat glands. The bacteria themselves rarely cause discoloration, but yellow isn't typical for bacteria.

Occasionally, medicines can cause sweat to turn a different color. The laxative bisacodyl (Dulcolax and others) can cause people to have yellow sweat, and some antiperspirants will cause sweat to have a yellow color.

Since it's both the sheets and pillowcases, I suspect that it's the lipofuscin in this case. Treatment may not be necessary, but capsaicin cream (0.025%) has proven effective, although the mechanism behind how it works is unknown.

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

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"Silo" (TV-MA) -- In a dystopian future where Earth has become toxic and unlivable, a giant silo deep underground hosts a community of men, women and children. The people who live in this silo don't know any information besides the fact that the outside world isn't safe; they don't know even how long they've been underground. The citizens of the silo are only supposed to abide by the rules and never ask to go outside -- or they'll be forced to leave. But, when a rule gets broken and death starts to sweep over the silo, one engineer, Juliette, realizes she must find out the truth about what lies outside of the silo, and why they're even there in the first place. Starring Rebecca Ferguson, Rashida Jones, David Oyelowo and Common, the first three episodes of this sci-fi series are out now. (AppleTV+)



Caption: Sinqua Walls, left, and Jack Harlow star in a remake of "White Men Can't Jump."

Courtesy of Hulu

"Anna Nicole Smith: You Don't Know Me" (TV-MA) -- Releasing May 16, this documentary walks viewers through the life of model and actress Anna Nicole Smith, who died from an accidental overdose at the young age of 39, back in 2007. Before she was Anna Nicole Smith, she was Vickie Lynn Hogan -- a soft-spoken girl from Houston who had dreams so big she could get lost in them. Said to only be known by a very short list of people, Smith skyrocketed to fame by dialing into that bombshell, Marilyn-Monroe-inspired persona of herself, but in the end, it wound up costing her life. (Netflix)

"White Men Can't Jump" (R) -- A remake of the 1992 sports-comedy "White Men Can't Jump," originally starring Wesley Snipes and Woody Harrelson, hits streaming on May 19. Sinqua Walls ("Friday Night Lights") leads the reboot, alongside rapper Jack Harlow in his acting debut. They respectively play hoopers Kamal and Jeremy, who don't get along, but decide to team up and enter a basketball tournament together for the grand prize of \$500,000. Can they learn to work well enough with each other to pull it off and win the much-needed money? Teyana Taylor, Laura Harrier and Vince Staples also star, as well as Lance Reddick in one of his last films before his recent death. (Hulu)

"The Family Stallone" (NR) - Hollywood legend Sylvester Stallone has accomplished much over his lengthy acting career, specifically in the action film realm, but now he's taking on a new adventure in the world of reality TV. Viewers get a glimpse into what it's like to be a Stallone, as the show follows the big guy himself; his wife, Jennifer Flavin; and their three daughters, Sophia, Sistine and Scarlet. Expect moments that range from the profound pep talks Stallone gives to his family, to going behind the scenes on film and TV sets, to entertaining cameos from actors like Al Pacino and Dolph Lundgren. Premieres May 17. (Paramount+)

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1. Who had a hit with "Everybody Loves Somebody"?
2. Which artist wrote and released "Runaround Sue"?
3. Name the artist most likely to intentionally smash guitars on the stage during performances.
4. Which group changed their name to Sugar Ray?
5. Name the 1969 song that contains these lyrics: "I love you so, I always will, And in your voice I hear a choir of carousels."

Answers

1. Dean Martin, in 1964. Written 20 years before, the song never got much attention until Martin's version. It became his signature song on his television show from 1965 to 1974.

2. Dion, in 1961 after his break with the Belmonts. Dion was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame for the song in 2002.

3. Peter Townshend of The Who. At last count, the number of guitars smashed topped 80. Legend says that he always collected the pieces of the guitars and glued them back together.

4. Shrinky Dinx, after a lawsuit by the toy manufacturer of Shrinky Dinks.

5. "Wedding Bell Blues," by the 5th Dimension. The song, written and recorded in 1966 by Laura Nyro when she was only 18 years old, soared to the top of the charts when the 5th Dimension version was released.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



"I propose some amendments."

Groton Daily Independent

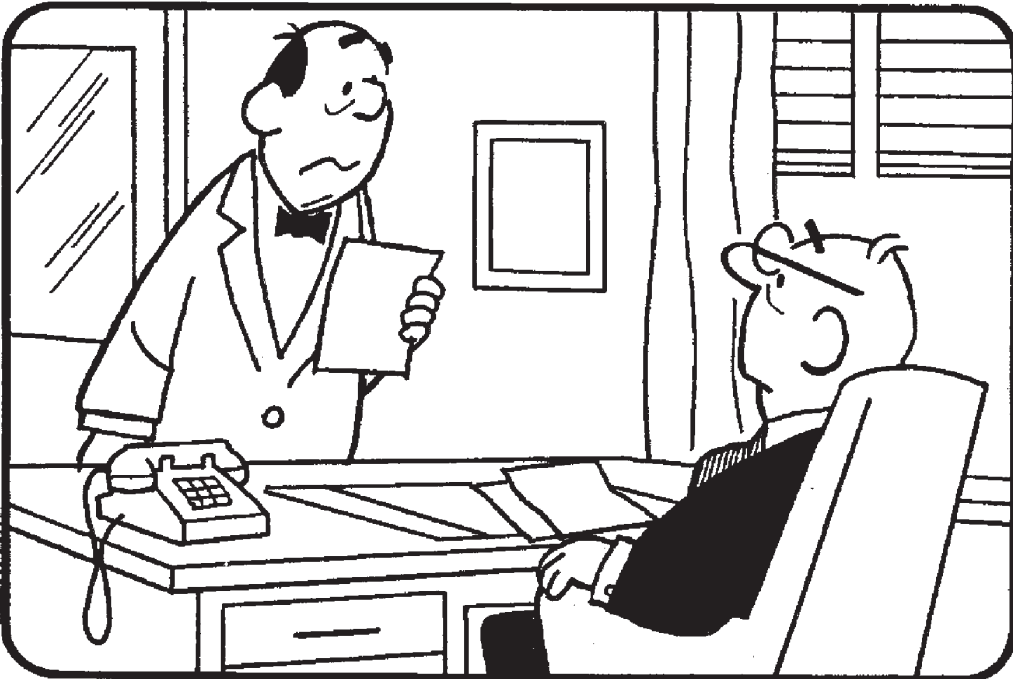
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Nose is different. 2. Tie is different. 3. Picture is moved. 4. Handle is different. 5. Sleeve is shorter. 6. Chair back is lower.

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* "Store kitchen matches wrapped in tin foil to keep them dry when on camping or fishing trips. You can also store them in an empty pill bottle if they are the short kind. If you fill paper egg carton cups with dryer lint and drizzle it with wax, you can cut the cups apart and you'll have small firestarters for your campfires. My family does a lot of camping in the summer, and we use these every time." -- K.R. in Missouri

* To get scorched pan bottoms clean, scrub with sudsy ammonia and rinse well.

* "Baby food jars make wonderful organizer containers; most people know that. But you can make a great first cup from a baby food jar. Screw on the lid tightly and poke holes along one side. Baby can tip and sip, but not much will come out. They are just the right size for small hands." -- M.W. in Alabama

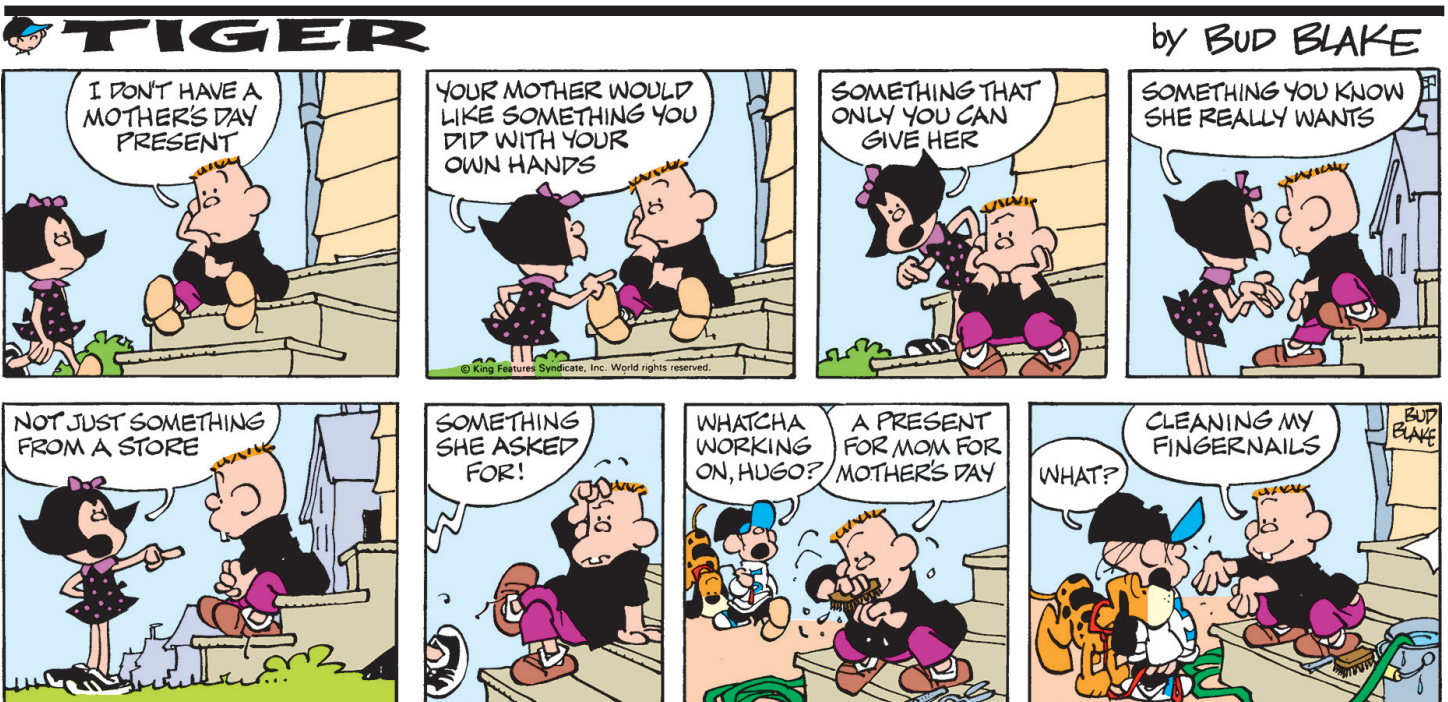
* Baby oil can loosen soap scum from shower doors. Apply and buff lightly with a soft washcloth. Follow with a shampoo cleaning or just leave as is. It will repel water and smells nice, too.

* To keep shirt collars from absorbing oil and grime, sprinkle with talcum powder while ironing.

* Keep your steering wheel in touchable condition on very hot days with a paper grocery bag. Cut out a strip down one side of the bag, allowing it to slip over the steering column. The bag can be refolded and stored next to your seat. When you get out of the car, just slip the bag over the steering wheel. No more burning hands when you get back in the car.

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

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Actor Baldwin
- 5 Hindu hero
- 9 ISP alternative
- 12 Without help
- 13 Burden
- 14 — Jima
- 15 Woody's son
- 16 A/C measures
- 17 Moving vehicle
- 18 High point
- 19 Belief
- 20 Fury
- 21 "There's no — team!"
- 23 Mil. morale booster
- 25 "Bottoms up!"
- 28 Perfect place
- 32 Martial arts mercenary
- 33 "Rubber Capital"
- 34 Cancel out
- 36 Heirs
- 37 Workout unit
- 38 Scratch (out)
- 39 AAA jobs
- 42 Scull tool
- 44 Bigfoot's cousin
- 48 Mimic
- 49 Initial chip
- 50 Cupid's alias
- 51 CSA soldier
- 52 Rhone city
- 53 Baseball's Tommie

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	
12					13					14			
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39	40	41			42	43				44	45	46	47
48				49						50			
51					52					53			
54					55					56			

- 54 Switch settings
- 55 Madame Bovary
- 56 Valentine flower
- DOWN**
- 1 Now, in a memo
- 2 Traditional tales
- 3 Jazzy Fitzgerald
- 4 Ginger snaps vessels
- 5 Small songbirds
- 6 Picnic invaders
- 7 Hawaiian garment
- 8 Ninny
- 9 Prima donna
- 10 Booty
- 11 One and only
- 20 Athlete's first season
- 22 Hopping mad
- 24 Pancake order
- 25 Blitzer's channel
- 26 Hasten
- 27 Chang's brother
- 29 Expert
- 30 Charged bit
- 31 Reply (Abbr.)
- 35 Name derived from a person
- 36 Tennis great Williams
- 39 Tropical tuber
- 40 Frank
- 41 Entanglements
- 43 Teensy bit
- 45 Thus
- 46 Low digits
- 47 "Got it"
- 49 Hearty quaff

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— King Crossword —

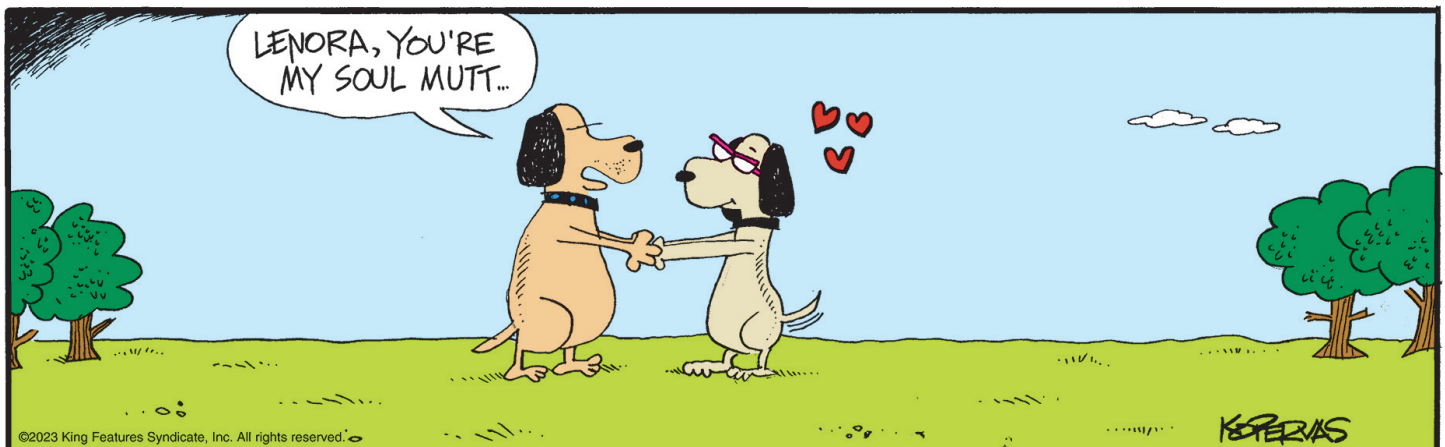
Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

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A	R	L	O		B	T	U	S		V	A	N	
P	E	A	K		I	S	M		R	A	G	E	
			I	I	N		U	S	O				
C	H	E	E	R	S		U	T	O	P	I	A	
N	I	N	J	A				A	K	R	O	N	
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			R	E	P		E	K	E				
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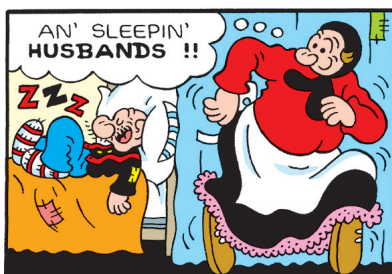
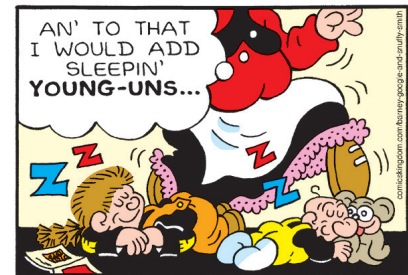
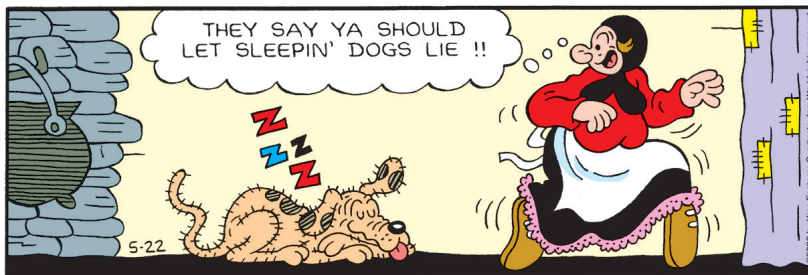
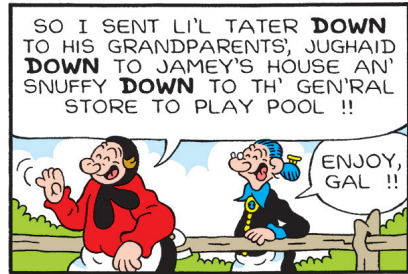
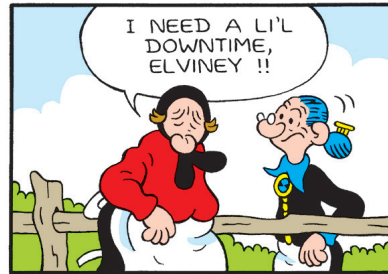
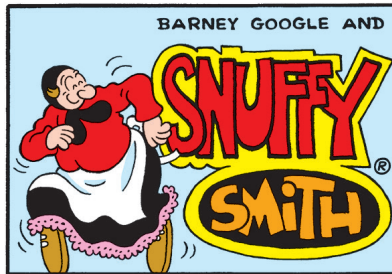
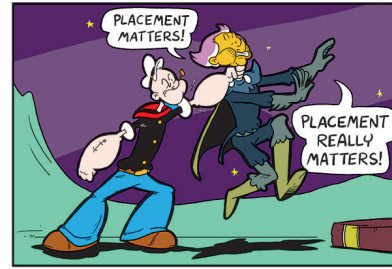
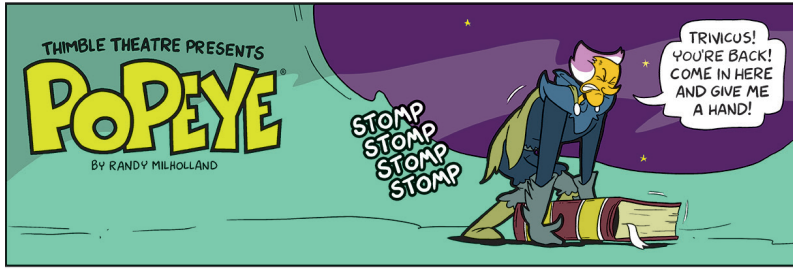
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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Hal Foster's BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ
Prince Valiant

AS THE STRANGER ALETA CALLS ST. GEORGE DESTROYS THE GOLEM, REVELATION COMES TO HIM: "I REMEMBER WHO I AM!"

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"MY NAME IS..." BUT THEN A BOLT OF LIGHTNING STRIKES...

... AND THE BLOND WARRIOR DISAPPEARS — IN A FLASH!



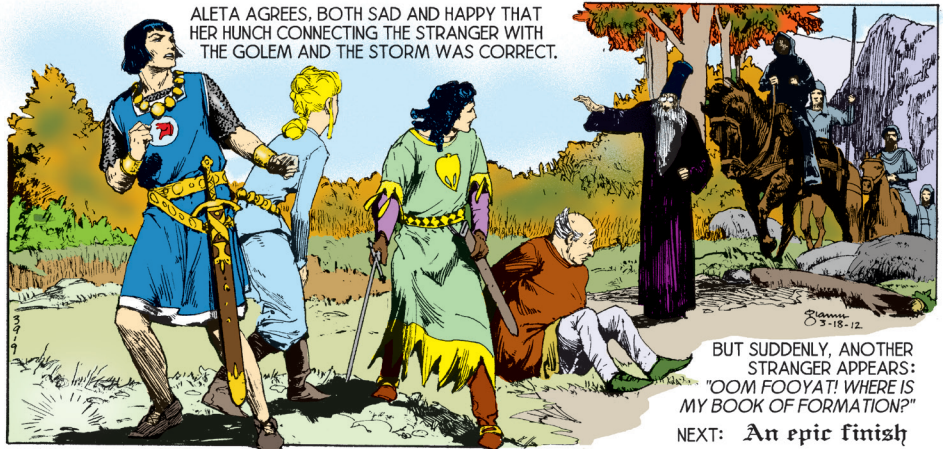
VAL STARES IN DISBELIEF: "HE'S VANISHED!" ALETA WHISPERS: "PERHAPS THE SORCERY CAUGHT UP HIS SOUL ALONG WITH THE GOLEM. NOW HE SHOULD BE FREE TO RETURN HOME."



"OF COURSE! HE'S BACK WHERE HE BELONGS," VAL REPLIES. "HE HAD THE RIGHT SPIRIT— I WISH HIM WELL. BUT ENOUGH — LET US RETURN TO OUR HOME AND THE WAYS I KNOW BEST."



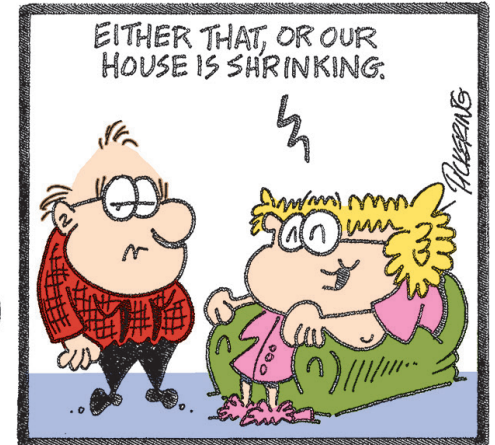
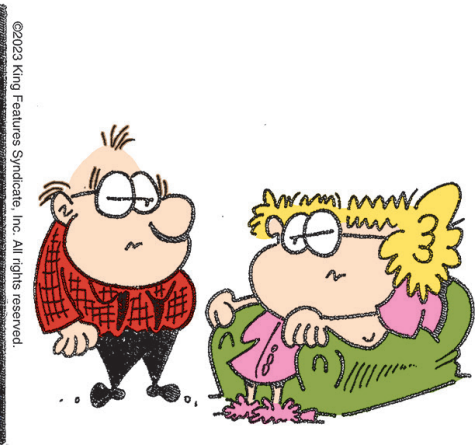
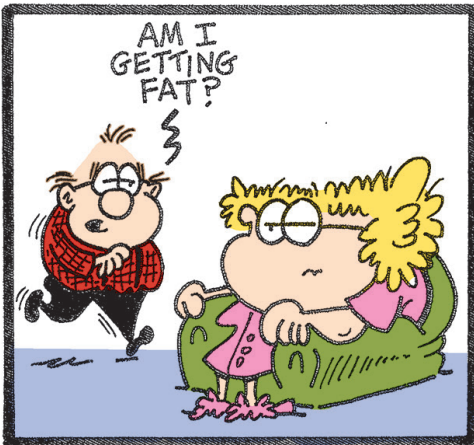
ALETA AGREES, BOTH SAD AND HAPPY THAT HER HUNCH CONNECTING THE STRANGER WITH THE GOLEM AND THE STORM WAS CORRECT.



BUT SUDDENLY, ANOTHER STRANGER APPEARS: "OOM FOOYAT! WHERE IS MY BOOK OF FORMATION?"
NEXT: An epic finish

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Recent Food Safety Recalls

The website for the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is a good place to watch for recalls and alerts. Right now they have notices about potato soup, clam chowder, frozen turkey sausage patties, beef strips -- all for a variety of reasons such as undeclared allergens, temperature mismanagement, packaging in unsanitary conditions, etc.

But the concerns aren't just with food we select at the store; sometimes it's food that's delivered to us. New on the FSIS recall page is an alert for ready-to-cook meatloaf because it has an undeclared allergen in it, specifically milk.

The fine print says they didn't ask for a recall because the products aren't available for purchase. Hmm ... what about people who might have those items in their freezer? This particular meatloaf was sent to groups that deliver at-home meals to seniors and the food therefore does not have an ingredient label on it.

For more information on these recalls or to sign up for email notices, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls. And if you ever have questions about food safety, you can call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 888-MPHotline (888-674-6854).

Food Manufacturing is another good site to watch for up-to-the-minute recall and alert information (www.foodmanufacturing.com/recalls-alerts). While they're not part of the government, they do cover all types of food information. Scroll to the bottom to sign up for email alerts from them.

The Food and Drug Administration (fda.gov) is another site worth watching. Scroll down their page for recalls and alerts on a variety of items, such as food, medical devices, vaccines, drugs and cosmetics. Today their list includes salmonella in flour, sesame in premade sandwiches, eggs in yogurt and listeria in salad kits.

Makes you hesitant to eat anything we buy in a store, doesn't it? Signing up for email alerts might be a good idea.

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1. In baseball, what statistic is recorded for a starting pitcher who pitches at least six innings and allows three earned runs or fewer?

2. What sport originated in Southeast Asia and is similar to volleyball but played without using hands or arms?

3. In 1968, what team did the New York Knicks defeat in the first NBA game played at New York City's Madison Square Garden?

4. Italy's Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari is a racing circuit better known by what name?

5. What award is presented annually to the top NCAA men's hockey player?

6. In 1997, Joe Bugel had a 4-12 record in his only season as head coach of what NFL team?

7. What golfer was 11 years, eight months and 19 days old when she played in the 2014 U.S. Women's Open?



by Ryan A. Berenz

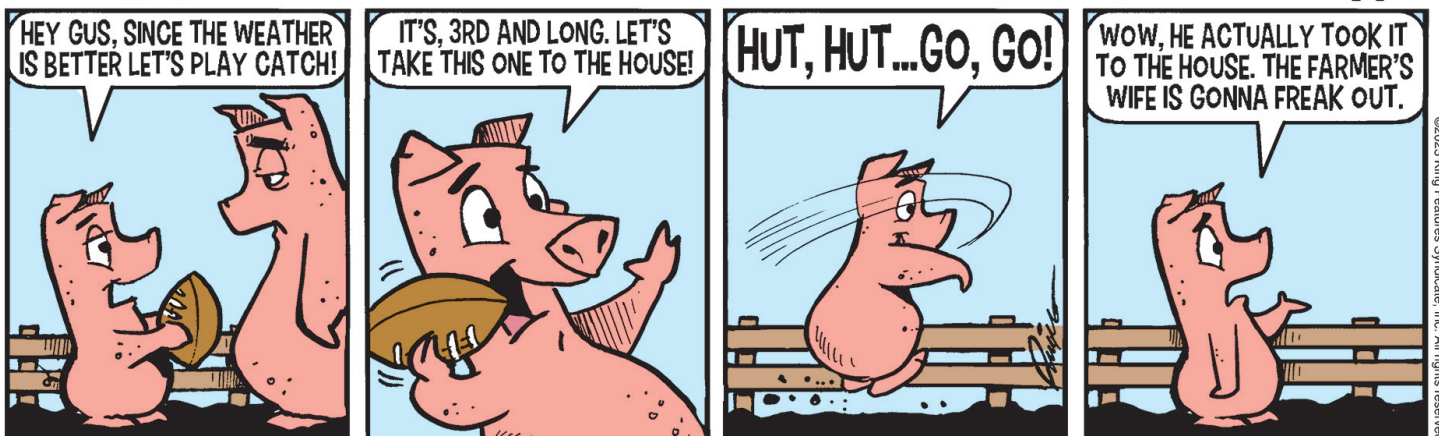
Answers

1. A quality start.
2. Sepak Takraw.
3. The San Diego Rockets.
4. Imola.
5. The Hobey Baker Memorial Award.
6. The Oakland Raiders.
7. Lucy Li.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Pink Tears From Cat Is Normal

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I adopted an older cat recently. Chuck is a joy and has settled into the household without a problem. However, I've started to notice a trickle of liquid from one of his eyes recently. He seems OK otherwise. I took a cotton ball and dabbed away the liquid and found that it was tinged pink! Should I be worried? -- Lane V., Cleveland

Dear Lane: Chuck sounds like a wonderful cat! I'm glad he's with an owner who cares and keeps a close eye on his health.

Excess tears or discharge from the eyes is a concern, but to determine how much of a problem it is,

it's always good to check in with the veterinarian. It sounds like the liquid is clear and tinged red, which is normal -- cats' tears are naturally tinted reddish or brownish. If his tears are gunky, greenish or yellowish, that can indicate an infection is going on around the eye (or even elsewhere in the body, such as a respiratory infection).

Allergies or even the shape of a cat's eyes can cause irritation of the tear ducts.

Take a closer look at Chuck's eyes. The membrane surrounding his eyes should be very light pink, almost white. The eyes themselves should be clear with no inflammation in the white part. His eyelids should look symmetrical -- if one is puffier than the other, there could be inflammation. This site has more detailed information on causes and conditions of excess tears: <https://tinyurl.com/yvu2wma9>.

If you notice Chuck pawing at his face, squinting often or otherwise seems uncomfortable, make a vet appointment to try to find the root cause of his eye irritation.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* According to Cunningham's Law, the best way to get the right answer on the internet is not to ask a question, but to pose the wrong answer.

* Jazz trumpeter Louis Armstrong once asked President Richard Nixon to carry his bags through customs for him because Armstrong was "an old man." We feel pretty sure Nixon wasn't aware the bags contained marijuana.

* In 2015, the 1,000-year-old corpse of a Buddhist monk was discovered inside an ancient statue of Buddha.

* Never mind Freddy Krueger's mutilated face and clawed glove -- Wes Craven designed his red-and-green-striped sweater after he read in Scientific American that the human eye has difficulty recognizing those particular shades. Therefore, just looking at his pullover is subliminally unsettling!

* The first item sold on eBay, for \$14.83, was a broken laser pointer, to someone who kept a collection of broken laser pointers.

* Costa Rica has the world's only sloth orphanage.

* During the Apollo 12 mission, a 2 1/2-ton piece of the lunar module was experimentally crashed onto the surface of the moon, with a quite unexpected result: The moon "rang like a bell" for nearly an hour.

* Dockers recently increased the size of their coin pockets to accommodate the growing size of smartphones.


* In 1999, 15-year-old Jonathan Lebed was making up to \$74,000 a day in the stock market by using internet message boards to manipulate prices. The government eventually caught up with him, but he was still able to keep half a million dollars of his gains.

* Vending machines kill more people per year than sharks.

* Pork was once used in Spain during the Inquisition to show that one wasn't Jewish or Muslim.

Thought for the Day: "Love doesn't make the world go round. Love is what makes the ride worthwhile."
-- Franklin P. Jones

The Garden Bug



Herbs that help nursing moms

Herbs such as blessed thistle (*Cnicus benedictus*), dandelion leaf (*Taraxacum officinale*), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), and fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*) have long been known as beneficial for new mothers. They can encourage good digestion, increase breast milk production, help relieve constipation, lessen uterine bleeding and soothe nervous feelings. They can be cooked and eaten, brewed as a tea or made into tinctures. *Consult your physician before taking herbs.

— Brenda Weaver

BLESSED THISTLE

Source: www.motherearthliving.com



by Freddy Groves

PACT Act Benefits

A half-million claims have been filed under the PACT Act for exposure to toxins. So far, over \$1 billion has been paid in benefits. And that's just since last August, when the act was signed.

Three million veterans have had their new screenings since then, and nearly half of them had exposures. Since last August, 215,000 veterans have signed up for Department of Veterans Affairs health care, a big increase over the previous year. And this fiscal year alone (starting last October), the VA has

paid out over \$65 billion on compensation benefits.

With the PACT Act, any subsequent illnesses are presumptive, meaning that it's assumed that your health condition is caused by exposure to toxins if you were in certain locations at certain times. The act adds over 20 new presumptives to the list.

The list of illnesses from exposure to toxins are serious: cancers of the brain, head, kidney, neck, pancreas and many more. Less serious are allergic rhinitis, bronchial asthma, chronic bronchitis and others. Of the five conditions most frequently claimed via the PACT Act, hypertensive vascular disease tops the list, with 80% of claims granted.

To read more about the PACT Act, go to the dashboard at www.accesstocare.va.gov/healthcare/pactact. Info is updated there every other Friday. A recent issue of the dashboard says that wrapping up PACT claims is taking an average of 156 days. At that time, 45.6% of claims were at over 125 days of being completed, and the approval rate was 80%. Be sure to scroll down the page, as there is a lot of info.

Additionally, you can check va.gov/pact or call them at 800-MYVA411.

Note: The VA wants us to sign up for PACT benefits. If we do this before Aug. 10, 2023, the benefits will likely be backdated a year, to Aug. 10, 2022. Mark that date on your calendar and don't let it slip by if you intend to file for PACT benefits. In fact, why don't you get started now?

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Wishing Well®

7	2	3	6	7	2	8	4	5	6	3	2	6
F	N	O	G	U	E	B	A	C	O	R	V	O
3	5	3	6	5	2	4	5	3	7	5	2	5
I	H	G	D	O	E	B	I	I	N	C	R	E
4	3	7	3	7	4	8	6	4	5	6	4	3
E	N	T	A	I	T	A	P	T	S	O	E	L
2	6	8	5	3	4	2	8	6	5	6	3	8
Q	S	L	A	I	R	U	M	S	R	I	D	Y
3	8	2	6	2	7	8	6	5	4	5	4	3
E	D	I	B	T	M	A	I	E	L	M	I	A
5	7	6	7	3	5	8	4	8	4	6	5	8
A	E	L	S	S	D	Y	F	S	E	I	E	A
7	6	8	6	7	8	7	6	7	6	7	8	8
A	T	H	I	H	E	E	E	A	S	D	A	D

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

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1. ANATOMY: What is a common name for lateral epicondylitis?
2. GEOGRAPHY: What was the country of Portugal known as in Roman times?
3. MOVIES: What are the final words spoken in the movie "The Shawshank Redemption"?
4. LITERATURE: Which novel series includes a fictional place called Godric's Hollow, England?
5. SCIENCE: What is cytology?
6. TELEVISION: What is the name of the ranch in the 1960s western show "Bonanza"?
7. U.S. STATES: Which state has the longest cave system?
8. FOOD & DRINK: In which country were bagels invented?
9. HISTORY: What kind of beetle was revered by the ancient Egyptians?
10. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is the largest lizard on Earth?

Answers

1. Tennis elbow.
2. Lusitania.
3. "I hope."
4. The "Harry Potter" series by J.K. Rowling.
5. The study of cells.
6. Ponderosa.
7. Kentucky.
8. Poland.
9. Scarab.
10. Komodo Dragon.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Cherishing South Dakota Moms

I still remember the first time I was invited to my mother-in-law's home for dinner when I was dating Bryon. I hadn't really talked to Sharon or my father-in-law, Al, very much before, and I was nervous.

Sharon is well-known for making her coffee the "old-fashioned way." She mixes the coffee grounds with an egg and boils it on the stove, then lets the grounds settle to the bottom of the pot before serving. After filling the cups around the table that day, she sat it in the middle of the table for everyone to help themselves when they needed more. It was amazing! It was the most wonderful, smooth coffee I had ever tasted, and I quickly drained my cup and asked for more. As Bryon handed me the hot pot of coffee, our hands got tangled, and the entire pot emptied into my lap! As the boiling liquid seeped through my jeans and started to burn the skin on my legs, it seemed to grow even hotter. The entire family jumped into action, but it was Sharon who was brave enough to state the obvious – "you've got to get those jeans away from your skin to let the heat out!" I excused myself to the bathroom as Sharon handed me cold rags, ointment, and ice. She kept apologizing for that "darn hot coffee," saying, "what was I thinking? I'm so sorry, Kristi," all the way to the bathroom. I was humiliated, in pain from the blistering skin, and wondering what I was going to say when I went back to the dinner.

When I returned to the table, everyone asked how I was and expressed concern. And, once again, Sharon apologized. Then, she made a joke about herself and changed the conversation so we could all relax and enjoy the evening.

I learned everything I needed to know about my mother-in-law that evening. She's a woman who does things with excellence, even if that means they take a little longer to get done. She loves her family enough to work all day helping on the farm and then come in to host a family meal so they could fellowship together. She is caring, helpful, quick to act, and eager to make everyone feel welcome and at ease – even if it meant humbling herself to do so. She loves to laugh, and when hurts come, she not only gives comfort, but helps people move forward.

Sharon is a remarkable woman. When I describe her to people, I often try to summarize her talents and gifts by saying, "she is basically Martha Stewart and Betty Crocker all rolled up into one person." But she is so much more than that. Her heart is good. I don't remember Sharon ever getting angry or sharing a cross word with me, though I'm sure I gave her plenty of reasons to do so.

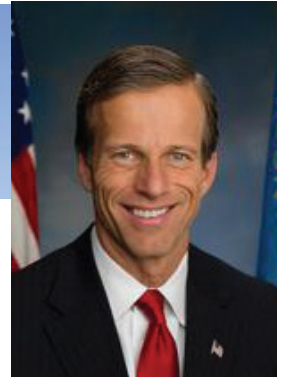
Early on in my marriage with Bryon, I know I prioritized time with my family and siblings. I wasn't as responsive as I should have been, and I could have been a better daughter-in-law. Politics can also be very negative at times. And for a family who hasn't been exposed to that environment before, I'm sure it has been challenging.

I know that not all South Dakotans get to enjoy a wonderful mother-in-law like I do. I consider her one of God's greatest gifts to me and our family. This Mother's Day, I want to make sure she knows it. I know she isn't flawless, but she is perfect for our family. And for that I am so grateful.

Families are flawed, people mess up, and there can be deep hurts and loss incurred for different reasons. This Mother's Day, thank your mom for being as good as she could be. If you don't have a mom, find a mom who doesn't have a daughter or a son and help fill that hole. Think of those who have lost a mom and send them a quick text or make a phone call to let them know you haven't forgotten their loved one either.

We never know how much time we have left to let people care. This Mother's Day let's make the most of it.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Police Officers Answer the Call

Every day, no matter the hour, there's a police officer on duty. It's not an easy job – we ask a lot of our law enforcement community. An ordinary day for the men and women in blue takes extraordinary character, courage, and commitment. During National Police Week, we honor their service and remember those officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Being a police officer isn't just a job. It's a calling. They run toward the unknown and confront threats on a daily basis. If you ask a cop, they usually tell you, "It's just part of the job." But this job entails an array of responsibilities, from catching criminals to keeping drivers safe to teaching kids about the dangers of drugs. There's a great deal of character behind the badge, and I commend these public servants for answering the call to protect and serve their communities.

Policing has never been easy, but the men and women who choose it often do so despite the challenge and risks. Over the last few years, though, steady criticism and vilification of the police, which has sadly been amplified by far-left politicians, has taken a noticeable toll. Retirements and resignations are on the rise nationwide, without enough applicants to fill openings. Facing staffing shortages, many departments are stretching their resources extremely thin. Some have innovated, including the Sioux Falls Police Department, which recently partnered with Southeast Tech to create a pathway for individuals to explore a law enforcement career while earning a paycheck and college credit. I hope programs like this encourage more people to answer the call to serve their community in law enforcement.

Law enforcement agencies throughout the United States are also continuing to adapt to new threats to public safety, particularly those spawned by the crisis at our southern border. County sheriffs and police departments, which were already facing budget cuts, officer shortages, and rising crime, now find themselves assuming de facto national security duties. And drugs coming across the border are making their way around our country. South Dakota law enforcement traces the increased presence of drugs like fentanyl and meth in the state to the border crisis, which will only grow worse now that Title 42 has been lifted. Drug overdoses, which continue to trend upward, have taken too many lives, and confronting the flow of illegal drugs will continue to take a concerted law enforcement effort both at the border and in communities across the country.

There will always be challenges to maintaining law and order, but we can take comfort in knowing that there will always be men and women willing to keep watch, go after criminals, and protect the public. Police officers make sacrifices every day to protect and serve our communities. National Police Week provides an opportunity to be especially grateful for these brave men and women who put service above self to keep us safe.

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



The Crisis at the Border—We Can Fix It

There have been more than 5 million illegal crossings of our southern border since President Biden took office. Title 42 ended May 11, a policy that has allowed border patrol to turn migrants away due to public health concerns. Fentanyl is flowing across the border in record numbers.

President Biden's open-border policies have created a national security crisis, drug crisis, and crime crisis across America. I've joined my colleagues many times urging the President and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas to put a plan in place to secure our border when Title 42 ended. We've known the end date of Title 42 for years, even providing an extension to allow more time for a plan to develop.

May 11 has come and gone, and the Biden Administration has yet to implement legitimate policies to secure the border. This week, Texas Governor Greg Abbott and even Democrat Governor Katie Hobbs of Arizona expressed concern about the influx of migrants crossing the border into their states. They cannot ignore the situation at the border, and neither can we. Every state has become a border state.

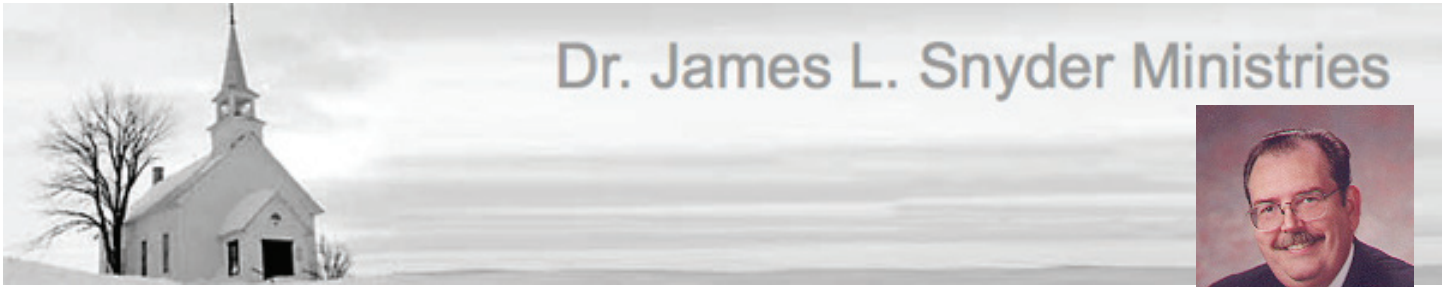
House Republicans have been working on a plan to secure the border for months and it passed the House on Thursday. Our Secure the Border Act would put policies in place that would do the following:

- Restart construction of the border wall using funds appropriated by Congress that President Biden has refused to spend
- Implement border enforcement policies, infrastructure, and advanced technology to help Border Patrol Agents
- Increase the number of Border Patrol agents
- End catch and release policies
- Reinstates the Remain in Mexico policy provisions
- End the Administration's abuse of executive immigration authority

Politics has been played long enough—former Speaker Pelosi blocked border solutions from coming to the floor the last four years. The crisis is real. We must repair the situation at the border to ensure America is a nation that's safe.

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I'd Rather Kiss A Goat



There are very few things in my life I regret, at least that I can remember.

One of the good things about getting old is that you can forget many things. The important thing is to forget the right thing, which is a challenge. You can be sure I work on this all the time. It takes a really good memory to forget the right things.

What I regret the most is that The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage never met my good old Uncle Fred. If she had met him, she would understand me more than she does today. She would understand why I am as crazy as I am. The problem is, she still would want to try to fix me.

One phrase I remember the most about Uncle Fred is, "I'd rather kiss a goat." I can't tell you how many times I heard him say this. Where he got this phrase is a mystery to everyone who knew him.

If someone invited him to an activity he didn't want to attend, he usually would respond by saying, "I'd rather kiss a goat."

People would smile because nobody had any idea what he was saying.

A friend once asked him, "Fred, will you watch the football game tonight?"

Looking at him as seriously as possible, Fred said, "I'd rather kiss a goat."

Knowing him as I did, he wasn't antisocial; he just liked to get under people's skin. Everything was a joke to him, and most people didn't realize it. So they always took Uncle Fred seriously, which he wanted.

As a teenager, I spent time with him working in his garden one summer. He had a fantasy for garden work. If it could be planted, he would plant it. He had the best garden in the whole neighborhood at the time. Some plants in his garden I could not identify. Years later, much to my dismay, I found what some were, which explained a lot.

While spending time with him, I asked, "Uncle Fred, what do you mean when you say, I would rather kiss a goat? Do you really mean that?"

I had been thinking about this question for a long time, and at this point, I had the opportunity to ask him.

"Well, son," he said rather slowly, "it's a very interesting thing.

I have no idea what it means, and the people I say it to have no idea what I mean." He finished by laughing hysterically.

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Then he explained that it was better to confuse people sometimes than try to explain something.

"For instance, if somebody wants you to do something and you don't want to do it but don't want to hurt their feelings, it's best to confuse them. That's where I come in and say, 'I'd rather kiss a goat.'"

According to him, he got out of many sticky situations by saying that.

"Just don't tell anybody I said that." He looked at me and then winked. I wondered if he was telling me the truth or just what he wanted me to know.

It was his way of getting along with people he liked but not doing what they wanted him to do.

It was the summer before Uncle Fred died that we had our family reunion. Just about everyone was there, and it was the last one that I got to go to.

Everyone was there except my grandfather. He was Fred's brother. Nobody knew where he was and was concerned because he never missed a family reunion.

Then, out of nowhere, my grandfather drove in, and in his truck was a goat. So he got out of the truck, brought the goat out, walked over to Fred, and said, "How about kissing this goat?"

Of course, Uncle Fred was stunned by the action, and everyone except Uncle Fred broke out in almost uncontrollable laughter.

Only my grandfather could pull one on Uncle Fred. I'm unsure how long it took him to put this kind of plan together, and he surely deserves credit.

I sure do miss Uncle Fred and wish The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage would've had an opportunity to meet him. I'm afraid, though, she might've given him a goat to kiss but not what he had in mind.

Sometimes you don't really appreciate a person until after they're gone. The more I think of Uncle Fred, the more I appreciate his phrase, "I'd rather kiss a goat."

It all came to a head when the other day, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came into my office and said, "Would you like to go shopping with the girls and me?"

Trying not to smile, I looked at her and said, "I'd rather kiss a goat."

Glaring at me with one of "those glares," she said, "What did you say? Did you just call me a goat?"

Oh boy, do I have some 'splainin' to do?

As I was trying to figure out my defense, I was reminded of what Jesus said in Matthew 12:36-37, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

The most important thing is to understand that God will hold me accountable for every word I speak, even those idle words.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What's the background on the "No Mow May" movement? – J.D., via email

Lawns cover some 40 million acres—or two percent—of land in the United States, making them the single largest irrigated crop we grow. We mow, rake, fertilize, weed, chemically treat and water them—sucking up time, money and other resources. And in spite of all that they provide little if any benefit to wildlife. In fact, they likely do more harm than good. Indeed, grass-only lawns lack floral resources and nesting sites for bees and other pollinators, and serve up a cocktail of toxic pesticides.

Addressing these issues is where the No Mow May campaign comes in, encouraging people to refrain from mowing their lawns during the month of May. The idea is to let wildflowers and other plants grow, providing important habitat for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. The campaign was started in the United Kingdom by the environmental charity Plantlife in 2018. Since then, it has gained popularity in other countries, including the U.S. and Canada. The goal of No Mow May is to raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity and to encourage people to take action to support pollinators.

Many people mow their lawns frequently, often using gas-powered mowers that emit carbon dioxide and other pollutants. This can be harmful to the environment, as well as to human health. Mowing also destroys wildflowers and other plants that provide food and shelter for pollinators. By refraining from mowing their lawns during the month of May, people can help to create a habitat for pollinators. This can include bees, butterflies, moths and other insects, as well as birds and small mammals that feed on them. These creatures play an important role in pollinating crops, which is essential for the production of many types of food.

No Mow May is not only good for the environment, but it can also be good for your lawn. Allowing wildflowers and other plants to grow can help to improve the health of your soil, reduce erosion, and provide a natural fertilizer. This can lead to a healthier lawn that requires less maintenance over time.

If you decide to participate in No Mow May, there are a few things you can do to ensure that your lawn stays healthy and safe. First, make sure that your lawn is free of any hazards, such as large rocks or debris, that could pose a risk to people or pets. You should also check for any weeds or invasive species that could harm native plants.

During the month of May, you can still perform basic lawn maintenance, such as watering and weeding. You can also mow any areas that are high traffic or that pose a safety risk. However, it's best to avoid mowing any areas where wildflowers or other plants are growing.

No Mow May is just one example of how individuals can take action to support biodiversity and protect the environment. By making small changes in our daily lives, we can help to create a healthier, more sustainable world for ourselves and future generations.

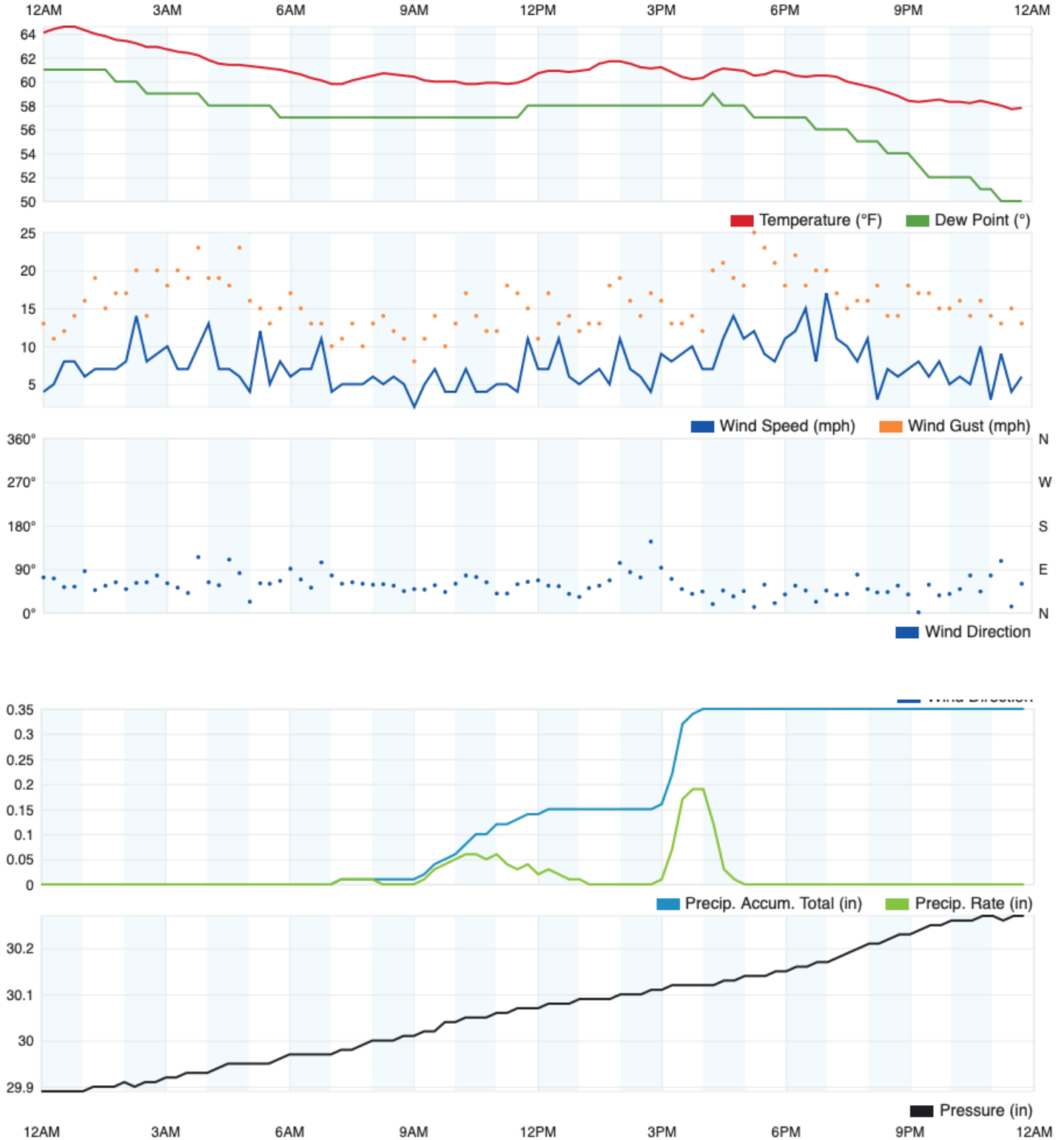


Part of No Mow May is to let wildflowers flourish on lawns where they would otherwise be mowed away. Credit: Roddy Scheer.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Partly Sunny

High: 71 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 44 °F

Monday



Sunny

High: 75 °F

Monday
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 48 °F

Tuesday



Sunny

High: 79 °F

Tuesday
Night



Mostly Clear



Low: 50 °F

Wednesday




Sunny then
Chance
Showers

High: 80 °F

 Getting Warmer 

Today

61 to 72°F



Mother's Day

Monday

69 to 77°F



Tuesday

75 to 80°F



 National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Clouds will be moving out today to make way for sunshine to start the work week. Temperatures are on the upward trend!

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 65 °F at 12:25 AM

Low Temp: 58 °F at 11:27 PM

Wind: 25 mph at 5:11 PM

Precip: : 0.35

Day length: 14 hours, 55 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 94 in 2001

Record Low: 24 in 2004

Average High: 70

Average Low: 44

Average Precip in May.: 1.54

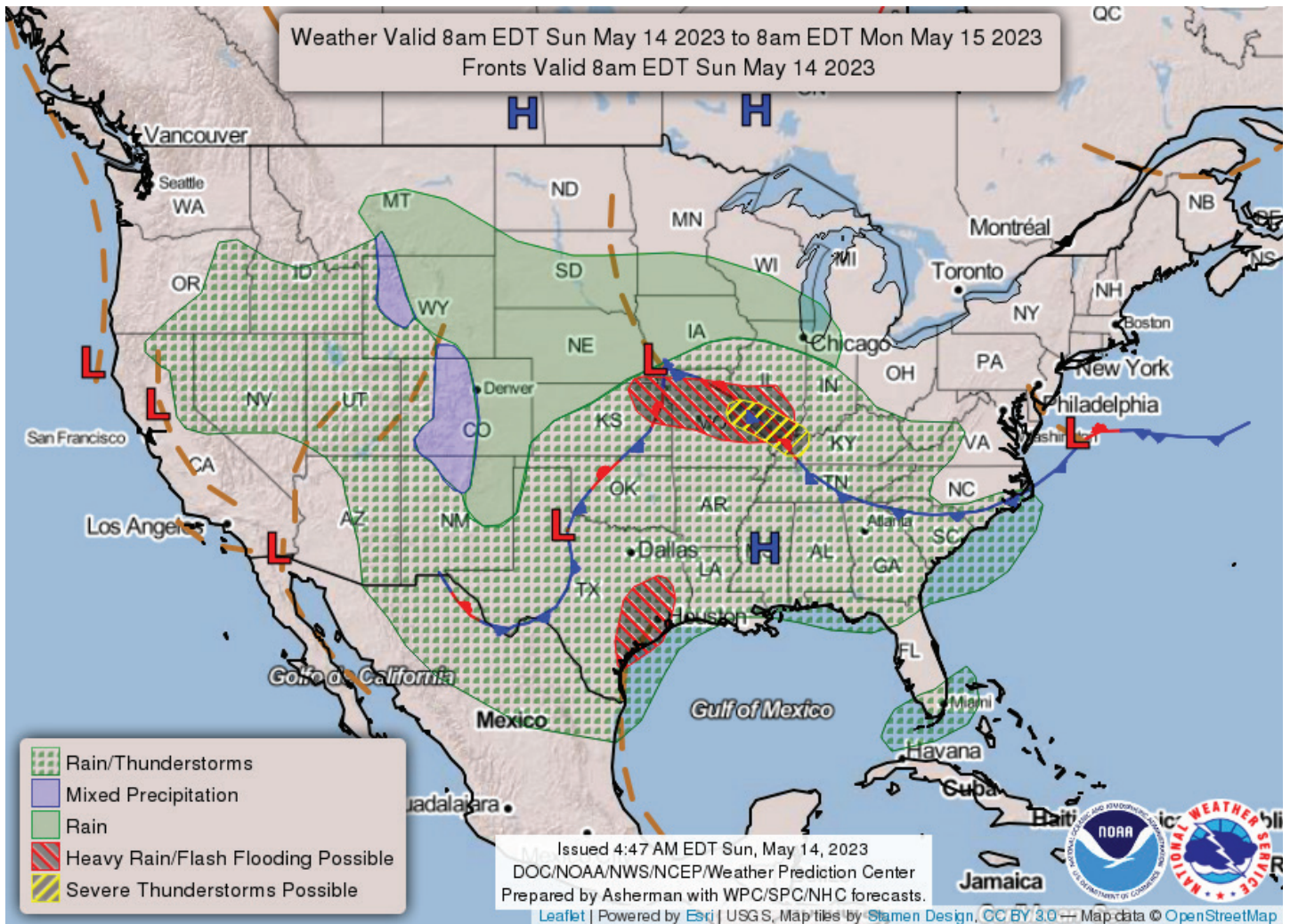
Precip to date in May.: 1.90

Average Precip to date: 5.51

Precip Year to Date: 7.62

Sunset Tonight: 8:56:15 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:00:04 AM



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Today in Weather History

May 14, 1982: Torrential rains pushed the Bad River over the banks at Fort Pierre. One house four miles outside of Fort Pierre had to sandbag. Rainfall amount of 3.83 inches was recorded in Pierre.

1896 - The mercury plunged to 10 degrees below zero at Climax, CO. It was the lowest reading of record for the U.S. during the month of May. (David Ludlum)

1898 - A severe thunderstorm, with some hailstones up to 9.5 inches in circumference, pounded a four mile wide path across Kansas City MO. South-facing windows were broken in nearly every house in central and eastern parts of the city, and several persons were injured. An even larger hailstone was thought to have been found, but it turned out to be a chunk of ice tossed out the window of a building by a prankster. (The Kansas City Weather Almanac) (The Weather Channel)

1923: An early morning violent estimated F5 tornado cut a 45-mile path of destruction through Howard and Mitchell counties in Texas. 23 people lost their lives and 250 sustained injuries. The path width of the tornado reached 1.5 miles at one point, and entire farms were "wiped off the face of the earth." The First Baptist Church in Colorado City, Texas became an emergency hospital for tornado victims.

1987 - Seven cities across the western U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date as unseasonably hot weather made a comeback. The record high of 103 degrees at Sacramento CA was their ninth in eleven days, and also marked a record seven days of 100 degree heat for the month. Their previous record was two days of 100 degree heat in May. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Sunny and dry weather prevailed across the nation. Temperatures warmed into the 80s and lower 90s in the Great Plains Region and the Mississippi Valley. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing along a stationary front produced severe weather in south central Texas and the Southern High Plains Region during the afternoon and evening hours. Thunderstorms produced softball size hail at Spearman and Hitchcock, TX. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather from northwest Texas to western Missouri. Severe thunderstorms spawned seventeen tornadoes, including nine in Texas. Four tornadoes in Texas injured a total of nine persons. Thunderstorms in Texas also produced hail four inches in diameter at Shamrock, and hail four and a half inches in diameter near Guthrie. Thunderstorms over northeastern Kansas produced more than seven inches of rain in Chautauqua County between 9 PM and midnight. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

"IF ONLY" PEOPLE

A psychiatrist was deeply troubled by the sadness of one of his dear friends. Curiously he asked, "What's troubling you?"

After some time he responded, "I've been reviewing the "If only's" of my life. I've made so many mistakes."

Wanting to help he said, "Let's go to my office. I have some recordings I want you to hear."

Sitting quietly he played a tape containing the stories of three very depressed patients. After a moment he asked, "Did you notice that each one kept repeating, "if only?" The "if only's" bring about a sense of hopelessness and helplessness, depression and discouragement. All of us must learn to say, "Next time I'll do things differently. I'll seek God's will and ask for His wisdom and guidance before I make a decision."

James said, "If you need wisdom - if you want to know what God wants you to do - ask Him and He will gladly tell you!" Wisdom in the Bible means "practical insight or guidance" that will lead the Christian to right living and eliminate the "if only's" of life.

Prayer: Father, may we look to You for guidance before we make decisions or plans or try to solve problems. May we seek Your guidance at all times. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. James 1:5



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

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2023 Community Events

- 01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center
- 01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 01/31/2023-02/03/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Drop Off 6-9pm, Community Center
- 02/04/2023-02/05/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Sale 1-5pm, Community Center
- 02/25/2023 Littles and Me, Art Making 10-11:30am, Wage Memorial Library
- 03/25/2023 Spring Vendor Fair, 10am-3pm, Community Center
- 04/01/2023 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
- 04/06/2023 Groton Career Development Event
- 04/08/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
- 04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
- 05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 06/16/2023 SDSU Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament
- 06/17/2023 Groton Triathlon
- 07/04/2023 Couples Firecracker Golf Tournament
- 07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
- 07/26/2023 GGA Burger Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 08/04/2023 Wine on Nine 6pm
- 08/11/2023 GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
- 09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/10/2023 Couples Sunflower Golf Tournament
- 10/14/2023 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
- 10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
- 10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
- 11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
- 12/02/2023 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
- 12/09/2023 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9-11am

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.12.23

1 2 23 40 45 15

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$113,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.13.23

7 34 35 39 43 10

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,900,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.13.23

10 12 16 23 32 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 26 Mins 41 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.13.23

1 7 11 24 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$59,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.13.23

23 32 52 58 60 3

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
05.13.23

3 15 20 23 46 11

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$135,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Cease-fire between Israel and militants in Gaza appears to hold after days of fighting

By FARES AKRAM and TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — A fragile cease-fire between Israeli forces and militants in the Gaza Strip appeared to be holding after a five-day clash that killed 33 Palestinians and two people in Israel.

The latest round of Gaza fighting was sparked Tuesday when Israeli jets killed three top commanders from the Islamic Jihad militant group in response to earlier rocket launches from Gaza. Those killings set off a barrage of militant fire and the conflagration threatened to drag the region into another all-out war until an Egyptian-brokered cease-fire took hold late Saturday.

While the calm appeared to bring a sense of relief to Gaza's 2 million people and hundreds of thousands of Israelis who had been largely confined to bomb shelters in recent days, the agreement did nothing to address the underlying issues that have fueled numerous rounds of fighting between Israel and Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip over the years.

In Gaza, residents surveyed the latest damage caused to their surroundings, with gaping holes left in the apartments serving as what Israel said were hideouts for the six senior Islamic Jihad members killed during this round. Gaza's main cargo crossing with Israel reopened Sunday after warnings that keeping it closed would force Gaza's sole power plant to shut down, deepening a power crisis.

Israel was gradually lifting restrictions on residents in southern Israel, which had borne the brunt of the rocket fire.

Israeli officials expressed satisfaction with the latest battle, having killed at least six members of Islamic Jihad's top brass in what it says were pinpointed strikes based on solid intelligence. But at least 13 of those killed in Gaza were civilians, among them children as young as 4 years old, as well as women.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the targeted attacks on the militants' hideouts would reverberate around the region.

"Israel's enemies in Gaza and much farther than Gaza know that even if they try to hide, we are able and prepared to reach them at any time," he told a meeting of his Cabinet.

Israel has faced criticism in the past from rights groups over the civilian casualties in its bombardments in Gaza. Israel says it does its utmost to avoid harming civilians in its strikes and says militants operate from within the territory's densely populated areas to fire rockets indiscriminately at Israeli communities.

Throughout the fighting, Israel's repeated airstrikes targeting Islamic Jihad and its command centers and rocket-launching sites showed no signs of stopping the rocket fire, prompting Islamic Jihad to declare victory and sending cheering Palestinians out into the streets late Saturday.

The Israeli military reported over 1,400 launches throughout the fighting, with some rockets reaching as far as the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem areas. Israeli jets struck more than 400 targets, according to a preliminary military tally, which also showed about a fifth of the rockets were misfired and landed in Gaza, while most of the rest were either intercepted or landed in open areas.

An 80-year-old woman and a Palestinian laborer who was working inside Israel were killed by rocket fire. A Palestinian human rights group said three people, including two children, were killed in Gaza by errant rockets.

It was the latest in a long series of battles between Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza since the Islamic militant group Hamas seized control of the seaside territory in 2007. Israel and Hamas have fought four wars, and there have been numerous smaller flareups as well.

The more powerful Hamas has praised Islamic Jihad's strikes but remained on the sidelines during the latest round of fighting, limiting the scope of the conflict. As the de facto government held responsible for the abysmal conditions in the blockaded Gaza Strip, Hamas has recently tried to keep a lid on its conflict with Israel. Islamic Jihad, on the other hand, a more ideological and unruly militant group wedded to

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violence, has taken the lead in the past few rounds of fighting with Israel.

Saturday's deal did not address many of the causes of the repeated fighting, including Israel's ongoing blockade of Gaza, the large arsenals of weapons possessed by Hamas and Islamic Jihad and Israeli policies in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem.

The Gaza violence came after more than a year of fighting in the occupied West Bank, where the Israeli military has been staging near-nightly arrest raids and Palestinians have carried out repeated attacks. Tensions could once again soar this week when nationalist Israelis hold an annual march through a sensitive area of Jerusalem's Old City, which the Palestinians view as provocative.

Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians claim all three areas for a future state. Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, but Hamas subsequently overran the territory and expelled forces loyal to the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority.

Israel and Egypt have maintained a blockade over Gaza in what Israel says is a policy aimed at preventing Hamas from arming. The Palestinians and international rights groups say the policy, which restricts the movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza, amounts to collective punishment.

Goldenberg reported from Tel Aviv, Israel.

Erdogan's leadership in the balance as Turkey votes in pivotal elections

By SUZAN FRASER and ZEYNEP BILGINSOY Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkey is voting Sunday in landmark parliamentary and presidential elections that are expected to be tightly contested and could be the biggest challenge President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has faced in his two decades in power.

The vote will either grant the increasingly authoritarian Erdogan a new five-year term in office or set the NATO member country on what his opposition contender calls a more democratic path.

Polling began at 8 a.m. (0500 GMT) and will close at 5 p.m. (1400 GMT). Media organizations are barred from reporting partial results until an embargo is lifted at 9 p.m. (1800 GMT). There are no exit polls.

For the first time in his 20 years in office, opinion polls indicate that the populist Erdogan, 69, is entering a race trailing behind an opponent. Opinion surveys have given a slight lead to Kemal Kilicdaroglu, the 74-year-old leader of the center-left, pro-secular Republican People's Party, or CHP, and the joint candidate of a united opposition alliance. If neither candidate receives more than 50% of the votes, the presidential race will be determined in a run-off on May 28.

More than 64 million people, including 3.4 million overseas voters, are eligible to vote in the elections, which are taking place the year Turkey marks the centenary of the establishment of the republic. Voter turnout in Turkey is traditionally strong, showing continued belief in this type of civic participation in a country where freedom of expression and assembly have been suppressed.

The elections come as the country is wracked by economic turmoil that critics blame on the government's mishandling of the economy and a steep cost-of-living crisis.

Turkey is also reeling from the effects of a powerful earthquake that caused devastation in 11 southern provinces in February, killing more than 50,000 people in unsafe buildings. Erdogan's government has been criticized for its delayed and stunted response to the disaster as well as the lax implementation of building codes that exacerbated the misery.

Internationally, the elections are being watched closely as a test of a united opposition's ability to dislodge a leader who has concentrated nearly all powers of the state in his hands.

Erdogan has led a divisive election campaign, using state resources and his domineering position over media, as he has done previously. He has accused the opposition of colluding with "terrorists," of being "drunkards" and of upholding LGBTQ rights which he says are a threat to traditional family values.

In a bid to woo voters hit hard by inflation, he has increased wages and pensions and subsidized electricity and gas bills, while showcasing Turkey's homegrown defense industry and infrastructure projects.

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He has extended the political alliance of his ruling Justice and Development Party, or AKP, with two nationalist parties to include a small leftist party and two marginal Islamist parties.

Kilicdaroglu's six-party Nation Alliance, has promised to dismantle an executive presidential system narrowly voted in by a 2017 referendum and return the country to a parliamentary democracy. They have promised to establish the independence of the judiciary and the central bank, institute checks and balances and reverse the democratic backsliding and crackdowns on free speech and dissent under Erdogan.

The alliance includes the nationalist Good Party led by former interior minister Meral Aksener, and two parties that splintered from the AKP and are led by former prime minister Ahmet Davutoglu and former finance minister Ali Babacan, as well as a small Islamist party.

The country's main Kurdish political party, currently Turkey's second largest opposition grouping that the government has targeted with arrests and lawsuits, is supporting Kilicdaroglu in the presidential race.

Large crowds gathered outside the polling stations where Erdogan and Kilicdaroglu cast their votes.

"We have all missed democracy so much. We all missed being together," Kilicdaroglu said after voting at a school in Ankara, where his supporters chanted "President Kilicdaroglu!"

"From now on, you will see that spring will come to this country," he said.

Erdogan said voting was underway "without any problems," including in the earthquake-affected region where people were voting "with great enthusiasm and love."

"It is my hope that after the evening's count ... there will be a better future for our country, our nation and Turkish democracy," he said.

Also running for president is Sinan Ogan, a former academic who has the backing of an anti-immigrant nationalist party. One other candidate, the center-left politician Muharrem Ince dropped out of the race on Thursday following a significant drop in his ratings but his withdrawal was considered invalid by the country's electoral board and votes for him will be counted.

Voters will also be casting ballots to fill seats in the 600-member parliament. The opposition would need at least a majority to be able to enact some of the democratic reforms it has promised.

Some have expressed concerns over whether Erdogan would cede power if he lost. Erdogan, however, said in an interview with more than a dozen Turkish broadcasters on Friday that he came to power through democracy and would act in line with the democratic process.

Aksener, the Good Party leader, appealed for respect after she cast her vote.

"Now we are moving to the stage where we must all respect the results that emerge from the ballot boxes where people have voted freely and (with) their conscience," she said.

Balloting in the 11 provinces affected by the earthquake has given rise to concern about the registration of nearly 9 million voters.

Around 3 million people have left the quake zone for other provinces, but only 133,000 people have registered to vote at their new locations. Political parties and non-governmental organizations planned to transport voters by bus but it was not clear how many would make the journey back.

Many of the quake survivors will cast votes in containers turned into makeshift polling stations erected on school yards.

In Diyarbakir, a Kurdish-majority city that was hit by the earthquake, Ramazan Akcay arrived early at his polling station to cast his vote.

"God willing it will be a democratic election," he said. "May it be beneficial in the name of our country."

Bilginsoy reported from Istanbul. Mucahit Ceylan contributed from Diyarbakir, Turkey.

Bangladesh, Myanmar brace as powerful Cyclone Mocha makes landfall

By JULHAS ALAM Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Bangladesh and Myanmar braced Sunday as a severe cyclone started to hit coastal areas and authorities urged thousands of people in both countries to seek shelter.

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The outermost band of Cyclone Mocha, with winds of 180-190 kph (112-118 mph), and gusts of up to 210 kph (130 mph) per hour, reached the coast of Myanmar's Rakhine state on Sunday morning. By afternoon, the center of the storm was expected to make landfall near Sittwe township, which was under the highest weather alert, Myanmar's Meteorological Department said Sunday.

More than 4,000 of Sittwe's 300,000 residents have been evacuated to other cities since Friday and more than 20,000 people are sheltering in sturdy buildings such as monasteries, pagodas and schools located on the city's highlands, said Tin Nyein Oo, who is helping people in shelters in Sittwe.

Many local people live in areas more than 3 meters above sea level, where residents believe the storm surge cannot reach, he added.

"The storm has not yet entered, so we don't have much difficulty. However, there are too many people in the shelters and not enough toilets," he added.

Lin Lin, the chairman of a local charitable foundation, said earlier there was not enough food in the shelters in Sittwe after more people arrived than expected.

On Sunday morning, several deaths caused by wind and rain were reported in Myanmar. A rescue team from the country's eastern Shan state announced on its Facebook social media page that they had recovered the bodies of a couple who were buried when a landslide caused by heavy rain hit their house in Tachileik township. Local media reported that a man was crushed to death when a banyan tree fell on him in Pyin Oo Lwin township in the central Mandalay Region. In Sittwe, a cell phone tower collapsed under high wind and other buildings were damaged, local media reported.

In most of Bangladesh, the weather remained sunny and humid on Sunday morning.

U.N. agencies and aid workers in Bangladesh prepositioned tons of dry food and dozens of ambulances with mobile medical teams in sprawling refugee camps that house more than 1 million Rohingya who fled persecution in Myanmar.

Titon Mitra, the U.N. Development Program representative in Myanmar, tweeted: "Mocha has made landfall. 2m people at risk. Damage and losses are expected to be extensive. We are ready to respond and will need unhindered access to all affected communities."

Bangladesh issued the highest danger signal for the city of Cox's Bazar, home to the camps. The Bangladesh Meteorological Department warned the cyclone could cause severe damage to lives and property in eight coastal districts.

No heavy rainfall had been reported in Cox's Bazar as of Sunday morning. Authorities said some 1.27 million people have been evacuated in the district.

The sea was rough.

Fisher Jamal Uddin in Cox's Bazar said local elected officials and volunteers were helping at the cyclone shelter. "We are asking people to move to safe places. We are trying to stay safe," he said.

"The weather isn't good. We are following the instructions of the Meteorological Department. We are now thinking about what to do," he said.

Bangladesh, with more than 160 million people, has prepared more than 1,500 cyclone shelters. The navy said it's keeping ready 21 ships, maritime patrol aircraft and helicopters for rescue and relief operations.

Authorities in Bangladesh said heavy rains from the cyclone could trigger landslides in Chattogram and Cox's Bazar and three other hilly districts — Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari.

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has ordered officials to prepare for evacuations and rescues.

The Junior Minister for Disaster Management, Enamur Rahman, said Saint Martin's Island in the Bay of Bengal may face greater risk, and that the government has prepared 37 cyclone shelters to accommodate 8,500 people there.

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.

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.

Climate scientists say cyclones can now retain their energy for many days. Cyclone Amphan in eastern India in 2020 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 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.

Military honors for Ukrainian president as he visits Germany to discuss arms deliveries

By FRANK JORDANS Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was welcomed with military honors Sunday by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz as he made his first visit to Germany since Russia invaded Ukraine.

Zelenskyy is visiting allies in search of further arms deliveries to help his country fend off the Russian invasion, and funds to rebuild what's been destroyed by more than a year of devastating conflict.

A Luftwaffe jet flew Zelenskyy to the German capital from Rome, where he had met Saturday with Pope Francis and Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni.

On the eve of his arrival — which is taking place amid tight security — the German government announced a new package of military aid for Ukraine worth more than 2.7 billion euros (\$3 billion), including tanks, anti-aircraft systems and ammunition.

"Already in Berlin. Weapons. Powerful package. Air defense. Reconstruction. EU. NATO. Security," Zelenskyy tweeted Sunday, in an apparent reference to the key priorities of his trip.

After initially hesitating to provide Ukraine with lethal weapons, Germany has become one of the biggest suppliers of arms to Ukraine, including Leopard 1 and 2 battle tanks, and the sophisticated IRIS-T SLM air-defense system. Modern Western hardware is considered crucial if Ukraine is to succeed in its planned counteroffensive against Russian troops.

Zelenskyy first met with President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Germany's head of state, who was snubbed by Kyiv last year, apparently over his previous close ties to Russia, causing a chill in diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Germany.

Since then, both Steinmeier and Chancellor Olaf Scholz have visited Ukraine, assuring Zelenskyy of their support for his country's fight against the Russian invasion. Announcing the new arms package, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said Berlin would help Ukraine for "as long as it takes."

After meeting Scholz and other senior officials at the chancellery, the two leaders are expected to fly to the western city of Aachen for Zelenskyy to receive the International Charlemagne Prize awarded to him and the people of Ukraine.

Organizers say the award recognizes that their resistance against Russia's invasion is a defense "not just of the sovereignty of their country and the life of its citizens, but also of Europe and European values."

While German leaders have expressed strong backing for Ukraine, German voters are divided on whether the country should provide further weapons, particularly advanced fighter jets of the kind Kyiv is asking its allies for.

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

Syria's main insurgent group seeks to move away from al-Qaida past, get off Western terrorism lists

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By GHAITH ALSAYED and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

IDLIB, Syria (AP) — The leader of an insurgent group that rules much of northwest Syria rose to notoriety over the past decade by claiming deadly bombings, threatening revenge against Western “crusader” forces and dispatching Islamist religious police to crack down on women deemed to be immodestly dressed.

Today the man known as Abu Mohammed al-Golani is trying hard to distance his group, Hayat Tahrir al Sham, known as HTS, from its al-Qaida origins, spreading a message of pluralism and religious tolerance.

As part of the rebranding, he has cracked down on extremist factions and dissolved the notorious religious police. For the first time in more than a decade, a Mass was performed recently at a long-shuttered church in Idlib province.

Al-Golani told a recent gathering of religious and local officials that Islamic law should not be imposed by force. “We don’t want the society to become hypocritical so that they pray when they see us and don’t once we leave,” al-Golani said, pointing to Saudi Arabia, which has relaxed its social controls in recent years after decades of strict Islamic rule.

The pivot comes at a time when al-Golani’s group is increasingly isolated. Countries that had once backed insurgents in Syria’s uprising-turned-civil-war are restoring relations with Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Saudi Arabia, a one-time Assad foe, reversed course and led a push resulting in Syria’s return to the Arab League last week, after 12 years of regional isolation.

Even Turkey, the main remaining state backer of armed opposition groups in Syria, has signaled a shift. Last week, the Turkish foreign minister met with his Syrian counterpart in Moscow, the first such meeting since 2011. The foreign ministers of Russia and Iran, Assad’s main allies, also attended.

The meeting marked a significant step toward Damascus and Ankara restoring ties, even as the presence of Turkish troops in northwest Syria remains a sticking point.

At the same time, the United States considers HTS a terrorist group and has offered a \$10 million reward for information on al-Golani’s whereabouts. The United Nations also designates it a terrorist organization.

Earlier this month, the U.S. and Turkey jointly slapped sanctions on two people who allegedly raised money for militant groups, including HTS.

Al-Golani rose to prominence in the early months of the Syrian uprising in 2011, when he became the leader of al-Qaida’s branch in Syria, known at the time as the Nusra Front. Militants and top officials from Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida flocked to the group’s base of operations in northern Syria, where many of them were later killed in U.S. strikes.

In July 2016, the Nusra Front changed its name to Fatah al-Sham Front and said it was cutting ties with al-Qaida, in what was seen by many as an attempt to improve its image. Fatah al-Sham later merged with several other groups and became Hayat Tahrir al Sham.

During that period, al-Golani showed his face publicly for the first time and changed his style of dress from white turbans and robes to shirts and trousers. His fighters went after Islamic State group militants who fled to Idlib after their defeat and cracked down on Horas al-Din or “Guardians of Religion,” another militant group that includes hardcore al-Qaida members who broke away from HTS.

The change in al-Golani’s public image appears not to have impressed the U.S. government.

Posts on social media accounts of the U.S. government’s Rewards for Justice show a photo of al-Golani wearing a light blue shirt and dark blue blazer with a caption in Arabic that reads: “Hello, handsome al-Golani. Nice shirt. You can change your uniform, but you will always be a terrorist. Don’t forget the \$10 million reward.”

In 2017, HTS set up a so-called “salvation government” to run day-to-day affairs in the region. At first, it attempted to enforce a strict interpretation of Islamic law. Religious police were tasked with making sure that women were covered, with only their faces and hands showing. Its members would force shops to close on Fridays so that people could attend the weekly prayers. Playing music was banned, as was smoking water pipes in public.

In March 2020, Russia and Turkey, which support rival groups in the conflict, reached a truce. Since then, rebel-held northwestern Syria has witnessed relative calm, and HTS focused its efforts on cracking down on the remnants of IS and other jihadist groups. The International Crisis Group think tank, in a report

earlier this year, said HTS has evolved and “distanced itself from global jihadism.”

HTS has also sometimes portrayed itself as a defender of minorities in the primarily Sunni Arab northwest.

In March, members of a Turkish-backed armed group shot dead four Kurdish men in the town of Jinderis as they lit a fire to celebrate the Kurdish new year. Al-Golani met with the victims’ families and other Kurdish residents of the area and promised revenge against the perpetrators.

In a 2021 interview with PBS, al-Golani called his group’s terrorist designation “unfair” and “political,” saying that while he had criticized Western policies in the region, “we didn’t say we want to fight (them).”

Al-Golani said his involvement with al-Qaeda has ended, and that even in the past his group was “against carrying out operations outside of Syria.”

The State Department said in a statement that al-Golani remains a designated terrorist and that it does not comment on possible deliberations about changing such designations.

Aron Lund, a fellow with the Century International research center, said he believes it’s unlikely the U.S. will remove HTS and al-Golani from its terrorism list. “As far as I can tell, the U.S. government remains genuinely concerned about the group’s links to global jihadism,” Lund said.

Waiel Olwan, a researcher at the Turkey-based think tank Jusoor for Studies, said he believes al-Golani is trying to show he is in control of Idlib and to guarantee a place for himself in Syria once the conflict ends.

Asim Zedan, an activist whose group tracks violations by HTS, said the ongoing terror designation is a blow to al-Golani’s self-image.

“After forming the salvation government and setting up ministries, al-Golani now sees himself as a head of state,” Zedan said.

Mroue reported from Beirut.

Phoenix Suns fire coach Monty Williams after 4 seasons with the club

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

The Phoenix Suns fired Monty Williams on Saturday, two years after reaching the NBA Finals and a year after he was the overwhelming choice as the coach of the year.

Williams had great success in his four regular seasons in Phoenix, winning 63% of his games. But three consecutive years of playoff frustration was likely too much for the Suns to overlook — especially after two straight years of Phoenix trailing by 30 points at halftime of elimination games at home.

ESPN and The Athletic first reported the decision.

“Monty has been foundational to our success over the past four seasons,” said James Jones, the Suns’ president of basketball operations and general manager. “We are filled with gratitude for everything Monty has contributed to the Suns and to the Valley community.”

Jones also said he made the decision to fire Williams.

The Suns had a 2-0 lead in the 2021 NBA Finals, only to lose in six games. They lost in the second round in each of the last two seasons, both times in an embarrassing home finale — last year to Dallas, this year to Denver.

“Neither day feels good,” Williams said after the loss earlier this week to Denver, when asked to compare last season’s debacle to this year’s season-ending loss.

Saturday likely didn’t feel good, either.

The Suns now become yet another high-profile coaching opening, after Toronto fired Nick Nurse and Milwaukee fired Mike Budenholzer. Nurse won the 2019 NBA title with the Raptors, while Budenholzer was the coach who overcame Phoenix’s 2-0 lead in the 2021 finals.

It’s the second major move made by the Suns in the three months or so since new owner Mat Ishbia closed the sale that gave him control of the club. In February, Ishbia green-lighted a blockbuster trade that brought Kevin Durant to Phoenix and gave the Suns a core — him, Devin Booker, former No. 1 pick Deandre Ayton and Chris Paul — that the team hoped would be enough to deliver a title.

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It just didn't work, at least, not this year. Paul got hurt in the playoffs to continue his run of bad luck on the health front in the postseason, Ayton sat out the finale and Booker and Durant simply looked gassed by the time it was over.

Williams, after the season ended, blamed himself.

"I take that personally, not having our team ready to play in the biggest game of the year," Williams said. "That's something that I pride myself on and it just didn't happen. ... That's something I have to take a deep look at, everything I'm doing."

Williams had been the coach with the fifth-longest tenure with his current team entering Saturday — just four years. Gregg Popovich has been coach in San Antonio since 1996, Erik Spoelstra in Miami since 2008, Steve Kerr in Golden State since 2014 and Michael Malone in Denver since 2015.

Phoenix becomes the fourth team to currently have an opening, along with the Raptors, Bucks and Detroit Pistons.

Of the last nine coaches to take a team to the NBA Finals, only Kerr and Spoelstra are still with the franchise they got to the title series.

The others — Boston's Ime Udoka, the Los Angeles Lakers' Frank Vogel, Cleveland's David Blatt and Tyronn Lue, along with Budenholzer, Nurse and now Williams -- have all been fired by the team that they brought to the finals.

"When you look at really good coaches who have lost their jobs shortly after winning a championship, that's something that is just different about our business," Williams said Friday, adding that "it's just a part of our NBA economy."

The Suns started 16-7 this season, looking every bit like a contender again. They were only 29-30 the rest of the way.

They used 26 starting lineup combinations, and had Durant for only eight regular-season games after the trade. They had to wait about a month after acquiring him for a January knee injury to heal, and then as he warmed up for what was supposed to be his home opener with the Suns on March 8 he slipped on the court during warm-ups, hurt an ankle and missed three more weeks.

The Suns were 12-1 in Durant's first 13 appearances, five of those in the playoffs. And then they went 2-4 against the Nuggets, all four losses by double figures.

And Williams took the fall.

Williams was second in the official NBA coach of the year balloting in 2021, behind New York's Tom Thibodeau. He was the coach of the year that season as chosen by his peers in the National Basketball Coaches Association.

A year later, Williams was the NBA's winner — and the NBCA one yet again.

Now, he's out, and the Suns will start anew.

This was Williams' ninth season as a head coach, after a five-season run with New Orleans from 2010 through 2015. He was 194-115 with the Suns — an NBA-best 168-76 since the start of the restart bubble near Orlando to end the 2020 season.

Phoenix became one of the feel-good stories of the bubble, going 8-0 to narrowly miss out on what would have been a most improbable playoff appearance. Williams got elected as coach of the bubble — "coach of the seeding games" was the official NBA award — and was a four-time Coach of the Month in his tenure with the Suns as well.

That started the run of success. Paul got traded to the Suns in November 2020, the franchise's first finals trip since 1993 was how that season ended, and last season's 64-18 mark was the best in Suns history.

In his nine seasons overall, he's 367-336 in the regular season, plus 29-27 in the playoffs.

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

**Cannes Film Festival readies a blockbuster edition, with Indy,
'Flower Moon,' Depp and more**

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By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

The Cannes Film Festival, which will kick off Tuesday, is such a colossal extravaganza that taking measure of its ups and downs is notoriously difficult. It's a showcase of the world's best cinema. It's a red-carpet spectacular. It's a French Riviera hive of dealmaking.

But by at least some metrics, Cannes — following a canceled 2020 festival, a much-diminished 2021 edition and a triumphant 2022 return — is finally all the way back.

"Let's just say it's gotten very hard to get restaurant reservations again," says Christine Vachon, the veteran producer and longtime collaborator of Todd Haynes.

When the 76th Cannes Film Festival opens Tuesday with the premiere of "Jeanne du Barry," a historical drama by Maïwenn starring Johnny Depp, the gleaming Cote d'Azur pageant can feel confident that it has weathered the storms of the pandemic and the perceived threat of streaming. (Netflix and Cannes remain at an impasse.)

Last year's festival, a banner one by most judgments, produced three Oscar best-picture nominees ("Top Gun: Maverick," "Elvis" and the Palme d'Or winner "Triangle of Sadness"), again proving Cannes as the premiere global launching pad for films big and small.

A BLOCKBUSTER CANNES

This year's festival is headlined by a pair of marquee premieres: Martin Scorsese's Osage Nation 1920s epic "Killers of the Flower Moon," with Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro, and James Mangold's "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," starring Harrison Ford in his final performance as the character.

But as blockbuster as Cannes can be, even those films suggest the wide spectrum of cinema on hand. Both Scorsese and Mangold were first in Cannes decades ago to premiere their early breakthrough films in the Directors Fortnight sidebar. Scorsese with 1973's "Mean Streets," Mangold with 1995's "Heavy."

This time, though, they'll debut much bigger films, sure to be the hottest tickets on the Croisette. Scorsese has his \$200 million epic for Apple TV+. And Mangold will premiere, as he says, "a more splendiferous project" than his minimalist debut.

The "Indy" celebration will include a tribute to Ford. He, along with Michael Douglas, will be given honorary Palme d'Ors. To Mangold, it's a chance for Ford to embrace the franchise's international following. The "Indiana Jones" films' essence, the director says, is rooted in golden-age cinema.

"These are things where you're taking your guidance from the classics," Mangold says. "That's something that's really appreciated by the French about American cinema. In many ways, they revere the old pictures more than even the audience in the United States do. That makes it a really wonderful platform."

A RECORD HIGH FOR FEMALE FILMMAKERS

This year, 21 films are competing for the Palme d'Or, which will be decided by a jury led by last year's winner, Swedish writer-director Ruben Östlund. Seven are directed by women, a new high for Cannes in its nearly eight decades of existence. Among the most anticipated is Italian filmmaker Alice Rohrwacher's "La Chimera," starring Josh O'Connor and Isabella Rossellini.

The festival, running through May 27, will unspool against the backdrop of labor unrest on both sides of the Atlantic. France has been beset in recent months by protests over pension reforms, including raising the retirement age. In the U.S., screenwriters are on strike to seek better pay in the streaming era.

The prospect of a prolonged work stoppage could potentially drive up prices for finished films at Cannes, the world's top movie market. Among the titles seeking distribution is Haynes' "May December," which stars Natalie Portman as a journalist who embeds with a couple (Julianne Moore, Charles Melton) once renown for their age discrepancy.

Though arthouses have struggled to match the box-office recovery at multiplexes, Vachon, a producer on "May December," says her company, Killer Films, and the indie stalwart Haynes are accustomed to "pivoting endlessly and finding opportunities no matter what the sea winds bring."

AUTEURS AND A-LISTERS

As usual, this year's competition lineup returns plenty of Cannes heavyweights, including Hirokazu Koreeda ("Monster"), Wim Wenders ("Perfect Days"), Nuri Bilge Ceylan ("About Dry Grasses"), Ken Loach

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("The Old Oak") and Nanny Moretti ("A Brighter Tomorrow").

Jonathan Glazer's "The Zone of Interest," shot in Auschwitz, is one of the festival's most eagerly awaited films. It's his first since 2013's "Under the Skin." Pedro Almodóvar will premiere the short "Strange Way of Life," with Pedro Pascal and Ethan Hawke. Wes Anderson, flanked by another starry ensemble, will debut "Asteroid City."

There's also the upcoming HBO series "The Idol," from "Euphoria" filmmaker Sam Levinson starring the Weeknd and Lily-Rose Depp; "Firebrand" with Alicia Vikander as Catherine Parr and Judd Law as Tudor King Henry VIII; and the Pixar movie "Elemental," which closes the festival.

Steve McQueen, the "12 Years of Slave" filmmaker, will debut the longest film playing at Cannes and one of its most thought-provoking. "Occupied City," which McQueen made with his wife, Dutch author Bianca Stigter, is a four hour-plus documentary that combines narration detailing violent incidents across Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation with present-day footage from those locations.

McQueen, too, began his feature filmmaking career at Cannes. His 2008 debut, "Hunger," won the Camera d'Or, a prize for best first film. "It's never as good as the first time," McQueen says.

"But it's the most important film festival," continues McQueen. "Our film is asking questions. This is where you want to premiere films that challenge and films that ask questions. You're right on the front line."

POTENTIAL BREAKTHROUGHS

While many eyes will be on reactions to the new Scorsese or "Asteroid City," Cannes will, as it does every year, bring new directors to wider film audiences. Senegalese filmmaker Ramata-Toulaye Sy's "Banel & Adama" is the rare first feature in Palme competition.

Argentine filmmaker Rodrigo Moreno, 50, will be making his first trip to Cannes with "The Delinquents," a heist drama sprinkled with existentialism and cinematic flourishes. It's one of the highlights of the Un Certain Regard section.

The film took Moreno five years to make, partially because of the pandemic. But its Cannes selection is a long time coming in another way. Moreno's first feature as a solo director was invited to both Un Certain Regard and main competition at Berlin. The producers chose Berlin.

"At this point of my career. I'm focused on: If this allows me to keep on working and make the next film, to me, that's OK. It's the only thing I really want," says Moreno.

"The shooting of this film spanned almost five years, which is crazy," he adds. "But the nice side of that is that every year, I had to shoot. The one thing I knew was that a new year began, and I had to shoot. And the following, I had to shoot."

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

A year after mass shooting at Buffalo supermarket, bells to toll for victims

By CAROLYN THOMPSON Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — The city of Buffalo will pause Sunday to mark the passing of one year since a gunman killed 10 people and injured three others in a racist attack that targeted Black people at a city supermarket.

A moment of silence followed by the chiming of church bells at 2:28 p.m. will honor victims of the massacre at the Tops Friendly Market on May 14, 2022.

"The racially motivated mass shooting shook our community to its core. It was the day the unthinkable happened," Mayor Byron Brown said in announcing plans for the commemoration, to be held at the now-reopened supermarket.

Earlier in the week, panelists discussed ways to combat racism and social media radicalization and residents were invited to reflect at an outdoor community gathering.

In the year since the shooting, relatives of the victims have spoken before Congress about white supremacy and gun reform and organized events to address food insecurity that worsened when the neighborhood's

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only grocery store was inaccessible for two months.

Wayne Jones, whose mother Celestine Chaney, 65, died in the attack, urged the city and its institutions to keep on investing in the area and its residents even after the anniversary events are over.

That's why he is willing, he said, "to keep opening up this wound that I have" and talk about it.

The son of 63-year-old shooting victim Geraldine Talley on Sunday released a book that he said describes what he went through after losing his mother. He titled it: "5/14 : The Day the Devil Came to Buffalo."

"I definitely know that she wouldn't want me to be consumed by sadness and anger," Talley said of his mother, speaking outside of the store as the anniversary approached, "so I will definitely try to find strength in her memory and use it to fight injustice and racism for the rest of my life in her name."

Inside the remodeled store, fountains flank a poem dedicated to the victims. A commission is at work designing a permanent memorial for outside.

In the meantime, a hand-painted mural overlooking the parking lot promotes unity, with a Black hand and white hand meeting together in prayer.

The 18-year-old white supremacist carried out the attack after driving more than 200 miles (320 kilometers) from his home in rural Conklin, New York.

Besides Chaney and Talley, the dead included Andre Mackneil, who was buying a cake for his son's third birthday; church deacon Heyward Patterson; community advocate Katherine Massey; Ruth Whitfield, whose son was a Buffalo fire commissioner; Roberta Drury, who had moved back to Buffalo to help a brother diagnosed with cancer; church missionary Pearl Young; Margus Morrison, who was buying dinner for a family movie night; and Aaron Salter, a retired Buffalo police officer who was working as a security guard.

The gunman pleaded guilty to murder and other charges and was sentenced to life in prison without parole in February. A federal case against him is pending.

Stained glass window shows Jesus Christ with dark skin, stirring questions about race in New England

By MARK PRATT Associated Press

WARREN, R.I. (AP) — A nearly 150-year-old stained-glass church window that depicts a dark-skinned Jesus Christ interacting with women in New Testament scenes has stirred up questions about race, Rhode Island's role in the slave trade and the place of women in 19th century New England society.

The window installed at the long-closed St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Warren in 1878 is the oldest known public example of stained glass on which Christ is depicted as a person of color that one expert has seen.

"This window is unique and highly unusual," said Virginia Raguin, a professor of humanities emerita at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, and an expert on the history of stained-glass art. "I have never seen this iconography for that time."

The 12-foot tall, 5-foot wide (3.7 meters by 1.5 meters) window depicts two biblical passages in which women, also painted with dark skin, appear as equals to Christ. One shows Christ in conversation with Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus, from the Gospel of Luke. The other shows Christ speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well from the Gospel of John.

The window made by the Henry E. Sharp studio in New York had largely been forgotten until a few years ago when Hadley Arnold and her family bought the 4,000-square-foot (371-square-meter) Greek Revival church building, which opened in 1830 and closed in 2010, to convert into their home.

When four stained-glass windows were removed in 2020 to be replaced with clear glass, Arnold took a closer look. It was a cold winter's day with the sunlight shining at just the right angle and she was stunned by what she saw in one of them: The human figures had dark skin.

"The skin tones were nothing like the white Christ you usually see," said Arnold, who teaches architectural design in California after growing up in Rhode Island and earning an art history degree from Harvard University.

The window has now been scrutinized by scholars, historians and experts trying to determine the mo-

"I think this belongs in the public trust," she said. "I don't believe that it was ever intended to be a privately owned object."

Off-grid solar brings light, time and income to remotest villages

By VICTORIA MILKO and DITA ALANGKARA Associated Press

LAINDEHA, Indonesia (AP) — As Tamar Ana Jawa wove a red sarong in the fading sunlight, her neighbor switched on a light bulb dangling from the sloping tin roof. It was just one bulb powered by a small solar panel, but in this remote village that means a lot. In some of the world's most remote places, off-grid solar systems are bringing villagers like Jawa more hours in the day, more money and more social gatherings.

Before electricity came to the village a bit less than two years ago, the day ended when the sun went down. Villagers in Laindeha, on the island of Sumba in eastern Indonesia, would set aside the mats they were weaving or coffee they were sorting to sell at the market as the light faded.

A few families who could afford them would start noisy generators that rumbled into the night, emitting plumes of smoke. Some people wired lightbulbs to old car batteries, which would quickly die or burn out appliances, as they had no regulator. Children sometimes studied by makeshift oil lamps, but these occasionally burned down homes when knocked over by the wind.

That's changed since grassroots social enterprise projects have brought small, individual solar panel systems to Laindeha and villages like it across the island.

For Jawa, it means much-needed extra income. When her husband died of a stroke in December 2022, Jawa wasn't sure how she would pay for her children's schooling. But when a neighbor got electric lighting shortly after, she realized she could continue weaving clothes for the market late into the evening.

"It used to be dark at night, now it's bright until morning," the 30-year old mother of two said, carefully arranging and pushing red threads at the loom. "So tonight I work ... to pay for the children."

Around the world, hundreds of millions of people live in communities without regular access to power, and off-grid solar systems like these are bringing limited access to electricity to places like these years before power grids reach them.

Some 775 million people globally lacked access to electricity in 2022, according to the International Energy Agency. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are home to some of the largest populations without access to electricity. Not having electricity at home keeps people in poverty, the U.N. and World Bank wrote in a 2021 report. It's hard for very poor people to get electricity, according to the report, and it's hard for people who don't have it to participate in the modern economy.

Indonesia has brought electricity to millions of people in recent years, going from 85% to nearly 97% coverage between 2005 and 2020, according to World Bank data. But there are still more than half a million people in Indonesia living in places the grid doesn't reach.

While barriers still remain, experts say off-grid solar programs on the island could be replicated across the vast archipelago nation, bringing renewable energy to remote communities.

"Off-grid solar there plays an important role in that it will deliver clean electricity directly to those who are unelectrified," said Daniel Kurniawan, a solar policy analyst at the Institute for Essential Services Reform.

Now, villagers frequently gather in the evening to continue the day's work, gather to watch television shows on cellphones charged by the panels and help children do homework in light bright enough to read.

"I couldn't really study at night before," said Antonius Pekambani, a 17-year old student in Ndapaymi village, east Sumba. "But now I can."

Solar power is still fairly rare in Indonesia. While the country has targeted more solar as part of its climate goals, there has been limited progress due to regulations that don't allow households to sell power back to the grid, ruling out a way of defraying the cost that has helped people afford solar in other parts of the world.

That's where grassroots organizations like Sumba Sustainable Solutions, based in eastern Sumba since 2019, saw potential to help.

Working with international donors to help subsidize the cost, it provides imported home solar systems,

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which can power light bulbs and charge cellphones, for monthly payments equivalent to \$3.50 over three years.

The organization also offers solar-powered appliances such as wireless lamps and grinding machines. It said it has distributed over 3,020 solar light systems and 62 mills across the island, reaching more than 3,000 homes.

Imelda Pindi Mbitu, a 46-year-old mother of five living in Walatungga, said she used to spend whole days grinding corn kernels and coffee beans between two rocks to sell at the local market; now, she takes it to a solar-powered mill shared by the village.

"With manual milling, if I start in the morning I can only finish in the afternoon. I can't do anything else," she said sitting in her wooden home. "If you use the machine, it's faster. So now I can do other things."

Similar schemes in other places, including Bangladesh and sub-Saharan Africa, have helped provide electricity for millions, according to the World Bank.

But some smaller off-grid solar systems like these don't provide the same amount of power as grid access. While cellphones, light bulbs and mills remain charged, the systems don't generate enough power for a large sound system or a church.

Off-grid solar projects face hurdles too, said Jetty Arlenda, an engineer with Sumba Sustainable Solutions .

The organization's scheme is heavily reliant upon donors to subsidize the cost of solar equipment, which many rural residents would be unable to afford at their market cost. Villagers without off-grid solar panels are stuck on waitlists while Sumba Sustainable Solutions looks for more funding. They're hoping for support from Indonesia's \$20 billion Just Energy Transition Partnership deal, which is being negotiated by numerous developed nations and international financial institutions.

There's also been issues with recipients failing to make payments, especially as the island deals with locust outbreaks diminishing crops and livelihoods of villagers. And when solar systems break, they need imported parts that can be hard to come by.

But for now, villagers like Jawa said the solar systems are making a big difference.

"I'm grateful for this lamp," she said, sitting at the loom and nodding towards the hanging bulb. "It will be bright all night."

Associated Press climate and environmental coverage receives support from several private foundations. See more about AP's climate initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Scabby the Rat gives bite to union protests, but is he at the tail end of his relevancy?

By MAE ANDERSON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — For decades, a giant, inflatable rat with beady eyes, sharp teeth and a pustule-covered belly has loomed over union protests, drawing attention to various labor disputes.

As New York City deals with an influx of actual rats, Scabby the Rat has become that rare thing, like Pizza Rat or Buddy the Rat — a rodent New Yorkers can rally behind.

But in the era of TikTok and influencer culture, middle-aged Scabby faces a new challenge: staying relevant.

"It's kind of unfortunate, changing times, older members of the public know exactly what the rat is for," said James Smith, union activity administrator for the NYC District Council of Carpenters. "The newer generation sometimes doesn't — one person thought that we were protesting a building that needed an exterminator."

Nevertheless, Scabby's not collecting hard-won retirement benefits just yet. Most recently, Scabby has been making the rounds at various picket lines in New York for the Hollywood writers strike organized by the Writers Guild of America East and other unions. Scabby is the "true rat czar of New York City," said WGA East communications director Jason Gordon, referencing the more fun title for the city's new director of rodent mitigation.

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At the picket line near HBO and Amazon's New York offices on Wednesday, screenwriter Lisa Kron, 61, said she was "thrilled to see that we were being chaperoned by Scabby the Rat."

She's seen Scabby out and about during her four decades living in New York, but this was her first time picketing with the rat.

"It's one of those great enduring symbols, it's a great piece of visual protest," she said. "It's got humor and it's got a shaming kind of message. And it's very New York."

"It's an attention grabber," said Benjamin Serby, a professor at Adelphi University who has written about the history of Scabby. "It's something that just is very effective, for whatever reason, at making people walking by or driving by, stop and ask: 'What's going on here?'"

Although having a rat as a mascot seems quintessentially New York, Scabby the Rat was actually invented by a union in Chicago around the late 1980s (several claim credit), and other unions around the country quickly adopted the practice of using inflatables to draw attention to actions (pigs, roaches and cats are other popular inflatables to use as well, although they lack a catchy nickname).

There are many Scabbys. At another union action in March at a Petco, Marty Flash sat in the cab of his truck used to ferry one of the NYC District Council of Carpenters' eight rats around (most unions have several, or borrow from unions that do). Most of the District Council's rats, along with a generator and gas can, stay in a locker at union headquarters or in organizers' trucks so they can be quickly deployed.

Flash, a carpenter for 35 years, has seen many reactions to the 10-foot-tall (3-meter-tall) rat, which, at the moment, was towering over Union Square in the truck's bed.

"In midtown Manhattan, it's a tourist attraction. Little children get a real kick out of it. They come over, they want to touch it. Dogs are petrified of it," he said. Flash said Scabby can inflate in about a minute and a half with a generator and deflate in about 30 seconds. Bigger rats — the rats range from 8 to 20-plus feet (more than 6 meters) — can take 15 minutes to fill up.

Scabby's name is a play on "scabs," the derogatory term dating back to the 1800s for strikebreakers who cross picket lines to work. The oozing sores on his belly are a visual reference to the term. But Flash said workers at the sites visited by Scabby shouldn't take offense, since the rat is protesting against contractors and companies, not the workers themselves.

"Some workers think that we are against them. We're actually fighting to get them more money, better pay and better benefits," he said. "But it's perceived as the rat is calling them a rat or implying that they're 'less than.' Which is not our intention. ... It's to imply that a rat contractor is not paying their workers the fair pay."

Rats are made of PVC vinyl and cost between \$8,000 to \$20,000, according to Flash. One company, Blue Sky Balloons outside of Chicago, is responsible for most of the rats found in NYC. But they seem to be distancing themselves from the inflatables, The Guardian reported earlier this year. Blue Sky Balloons responded to an Associated Press query by saying they were new owners who weren't associated with the rat, and didn't respond to follow-up queries.

But Flash says his union still sends their rats to Big Sky for repairs, which can cost up to \$2,000. Repairs are needed often since most are years or decades old — so the unions try to take good care of their rats.

"I baby this one with my life," Flash said. "We have a pool of rats and generators that you take when you need. I just always keep mine with me because I'm familiar with this operation."

Not everyone likes Scabby. Sometimes the inflatable rat gets slashed or attacked by anyone from random passersby to disgruntled workers at sites. The rat has often been the subject of legal challenges by the companies Scabby targets. If he blocks the sidewalk or street, police can boot him. But Scabby is a survivor, winning its most recent legal challenge in 2021, when the National Labor Relations Board ruled that it was a protected form of expression.

These days, Scabby also has to contend with new technology and social media. Its Facebook page, run by a retired union organizer, lets various unions post photos of Scabby at protests around the country, and some rats feature QR codes that give people information about campaigns. But Mike Piccirillo, president of Local 20 Carpenters Union, said a more recent addition to the union's arsenal might overshadow Scabby.

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"Our LED sign truck is a lot more effective than the rat," he said. "I've been in construction for 25 years, and most New Yorkers are numb to the rat. They just walk by it. Now the LED sign with its flashing lights actually gets their attention."

Yet — much like the currently surging rat population in New York — Scabby is unlikely to completely disappear anytime soon, as long as the rat keeps conveying his message of fair pay for workers.

"People are drawn to it in part because it's like an ironic symbol of defiance," Serby said. "Something about this giant, ugly, toothy kind of scary-looking rat makes people feel permitted to express anger and defiance and outrage at employers."

—
This story has been corrected to show the title for New York's rodent control executive is director of rodent mitigation, not migration.

Swedish singer Loreen wins Eurovision Song Contest for 2nd time at event feting Ukraine

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LIVERPOOL, England (AP) — Swedish singer Loreen won the Eurovision Song Contest on Saturday night with her power ballad "Tattoo," at a colorful, eclectic music competition clouded for a second year running by the war in Ukraine.

The diva from Stockholm beat acts from 25 other countries to take the continent's pop crown at the final of the competition in Liverpool. Finnish singer Käärijä was second in a close-fought battle of the Nordic neighbors.

Loreen, 39, previously won Eurovision in 2012 and is only the second performer to take the prize twice, after Ireland's Johnny Logan in the 1980s. It's Sweden's seventh Eurovision victory, matching Ireland's record.

"I am seriously overwhelmed," Loreen said. "This is so beautiful."

She said returning to the contest that helped make her a star was "like coming back to a family. We've had an 11-year-long relationship. We know each other by now."

Britain hosted Eurovision on behalf of Ukraine, which won last year but couldn't take up its right to hold the contest because of the war. Air raid sirens sounded across Ukraine as the contest was underway, and Ukrainian media reported a strike in Ternopil, home town of Ukraine's Eurovision entry, Tvorchi.

Under the slogan "united by music," Eurovision final fused the soul of the English port city that birthed The Beatles with the spirit of war-battered Ukraine.

The sights and sounds of Ukraine ran through the show, starting with an opening film that showed 2022 Eurovision winners Kalush Orchestra singing and dancing in the Kyiv subway, with the tune picked up by musicians in the U.K. — including Kate, Princess of Wales, shown playing the piano.

The folk-rap band itself then emerged onstage in the Liverpool Arena on a giant pair of outstretched hands, accompanied by massed drummers.

Contestants from the 26 finalist nations entered the arena in an Olympics-style flag parade, accompanied by live performances from Ukrainian acts including Go A, Jamala, Tina Karol and Verka Serduchka — all past Eurovision competitors.

Now in its 67th year, Eurovision bills itself as the world's biggest music contest — an Olympiad of party-friendly pop. Competitors each have three minutes to meld catchy tunes and eye-popping spectacle into performances capable of winning the hearts of millions of viewers.

Loreen's anthem of intense love had been the bookies' favorite and won by far the most votes from professional juries in Eurovision's complex voting system. She faced a strong challenge from Käärijä, a wildly energetic performer whose rap-pop party anthem "Cha Cha Cha" won the public vote.

Israel's Noa Kirel came in third with power-pop anthem "Unicorn," while Italy's Marco Mengoni was fourth with his ballad "Due Vite" (Two Lives).

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The varied tastes of the continent were on display in a contest that took in the cabaret-style singing of Portugal's Mimicat, the Britney-esque power pop of Poland's Blanka, echoes of Edith Piaf from La Zarra for France and smoldering balladry from Cyprus' entry, Andrew Lambrou.

From Australia — a Eurovision contender despite its far-away location — guitar band Voyager evoked head-banging '80s stadium rock. Croatia's Let 3 offered a surreal antiwar rock opera, and Austrian duo Teya & Salena sent up the music industry in Poe-referencing song "Who the Hell is Edgar?"

Electronica duo Tvorchy paid tribute to Ukraine's resilience on "Heart of Steel," coming sixth.

Britain's Mae Muller drew the unenviable final performance slot of the night with her jaunty breakup anthem "I Wrote a Song." She came in second to last place — but at least avoided the humiliation of getting "nul points," or zero points.

While votes were cast and counted, Sam Ryder, last year's runner-up for Britain, performed his new single "Mountain," accompanied by Queen drummer Roger Taylor. A "Liverpool Songbook" segment featured past Eurovision stars performing songs from the city, including John Lennon's "Imagine," "You Spin Me Round (Like a Record)" by Dead or Alive and the unofficial civic anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone" — with the audience joining in, as a tribute to both Liverpool and Ukraine.

About 6,000 fans watched the show inside the arena, and tens of thousands more at a Liverpool fan zone and at big-screen events across the U.K. The global television audience has been estimated at 160 million.

Under spring sunshine, fans flocked in their thousands to a Eurovision party zone in the city's dockside area ahead of the contest. Many were draped in flags of their favored nations or dressed as their favorite acts.

"Just to come down and see people from all different nationalities, all different cultures — it's good fun," said Australian Martin Troedel, sporting a kangaroo on his hat. "Frankly there's some quite odd acts, which is what I love about it. You never know what to expect."

Liverpool embraced Eurovision, and Ukraine, with businesses across the city flying Ukrainian flags and a program of cultural events introducing locals to the art, music and food of the eastern European country.

But organizers said they turned down a request by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to make a video address. The European Broadcasting Union said that would breach "the nonpolitical nature of the event."

Founded in 1956, Eurovision is a European cultural institution that has produced breakout stars — ABBA and Celine Dion are both past winners — alongside performers whose careers sank without a trace.

In recent years, it has once again become a platform that can launch stars. Italian rock band Måneskin, who won in 2021, have played major U.S. festivals and opened for the Rolling Stones on tour. Ryder has had a No. 1 album and performed at the Glastonbury festival.

"Now, the music industry, the world, knows that if you appear at Eurovision, you could be in for a great thing," said Steve Holden, host of the official Eurovision Song Contest podcast.

Follow AP coverage of Eurovision at <https://apnews.com/hub/eurovision-song-contest> and of the war in Ukraine at <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

DeSantis in Iowa warns of GOP 'culture of losing' as weather sidelines Trump's event in the state

By THOMAS BEAUMONT and MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

SIoux CENTER, Iowa (AP) — Decrying a Republican "culture of losing," Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis sought Saturday to weaken former President Donald Trump's grip on the GOP as tornado warnings interrupted a collision of leading presidential prospects in battleground Iowa.

DeSantis, expected to announce his 2024 presidential campaign any day, briefly flipped burgers and pork chops at an afternoon picnic fundraiser in Sioux Center that drew hundred of conservatives to the northwest corner of the state. From the podium, the 44-year-old governor highlighted his eagerness to embrace conservative cultural fights and sprinkled his remarks with indirect jabs at Trump.

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tivations of the artist, the church and the woman who commissioned the window in memory of her two aunts, both of whom married into families that had been involved in the slave trade.

"Is this repudiation? Is this congratulations? Is this a secret sign?" said Arnold.

Raguin and other experts confirmed that the skin tones — in black and brown paint on milky white glass that was fired in an oven to set the image — were original and deliberate. The piece shows some signs of aging but remains in very good condition, she said.

But does it depict a Black Jesus? Arnold doesn't feel comfortable using that term, preferring to say it depicts Christ as a person of color, probably Middle Eastern, which she says would make sense, given where the Galilean Jewish preacher was from.

Others think it's open to interpretation.

"To me, being of African American and Native American heritage, I think that it could represent both people," said Linda A'Vant-Deishinni, the former executive director of the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society. She now runs the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence's St. Martin de Porres Center, which provides services to older residents.

"The first time I saw it, it just kind of just blew me away," A'Vant-Deishinni said.

Victoria Johnson, a retired educator who was the first Black woman named principal of a Rhode Island high school, thinks the figures in the glass are most certainly Black.

"When I see it, I see Black," she said. "It was created in an era when at a white church in the North, the only people of color they knew were Black."

Warren's economy had been based on the building and outfitting of ships, some used in the slave trade, according to the town history. And although there are records of enslaved people in town before the Civil War, the racial makeup of St. Mark's was likely mostly if not all white.

The window was commissioned by a Mary P. Carr in honor of two women, apparently her late aunts, whose names appear on the glass, Arnold said. Mrs. H. Gibbs and Mrs. R. B. DeWolf were sisters, and both married into families involved in the slave trade. The DeWolf family made a fortune as one of the nation's leading slave-trading families; Gibbs married a sea captain who worked for the DeWolfs.

Both women had been listed as donors to the American Colonization Society, founded to support the migration of freed slaves to Liberia in Africa. The controversial effort was overwhelmingly rejected by Black people in America, leading many former supporters to become abolitionists instead. DeWolf also left money in her will to found another church in accord with egalitarian principles, according to the research.

Another clue is the timing, Arnold said. The window was commissioned at a critical juncture of U.S. history when supporters of Republican Rutherford B. Hayes and their Southern Democrat opponents agreed to settle the 1876 presidential election with what is known as the Compromise of 1877, which essentially ended Reconstruction-era efforts to grant and protect the legal rights of formerly enslaved Black people.

What was Carr trying to say about Gibbs' and DeWolf's links to slavery?

"We don't know, but it would appear that she is honoring people of conscience however imperfect their actions or their effectiveness may have been," Arnold said. "I don't think it would be there otherwise."

The window also is remarkable because it shows Christ interacting with woman as equals, Raguin said: "Both stories were selected to profile equality."

For now, the window remains propped upright in a wooden frame where pews once stood. College classes have come to see it, and on one recent spring afternoon there was a visit from a diverse group of eighth graders from The Nativity School in Worcester, a Jesuit boys' school.

The boys learned about the window's history and significance from Raguin.

"When I first brought this up to them in religion class, it was the first time the kids had ever heard of something like this and they were genuinely curious as to what that was all about, why it mattered, why it existed," religion teacher Bryan Montenegro said. "I thought that it would be very valuable to come and see it, and be so close to it, and really feel the diversity and inclusion that was so different for that time."

Arnold hopes to find a museum, college or other institution that can preserve and display the window for academic study and public appreciation.

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"Governing is not about entertaining. Governing is not about building a brand or talking on social media and virtue signaling," said DeSantis, who wore a blue button-down shirt without a tie or jacket. "It's ultimately about winning and producing results."

Trump, a candidate since November, had hoped to demonstrate his political strength with a large outdoor rally in Des Moines, the capital, later in the day. He canceled the appearance hours before its scheduled start time due to a tornado warning.

Roughly 200 supporters had already gathered at the venue.

"I feel like it's still Trump's time," said Robert Bushard, 76, who said he drove about four hours from St. Paul, Minnesota to see the former president. Of DeSantis, he said, "He'd be a good president after Trump."

Republican primary voters across the nation are sizing up DeSantis and Trump, two Republican powerhouses who are among a half dozen GOP candidates already in the race or expected to announce imminently. Trump is well ahead of his rivals in early national polls, while DeSantis is viewed widely as the strongest potential challenger.

Trump was hoping to return to the comfort of the campaign stage after a tumultuous week.

On Tuesday, a civil jury in New York found him liable for sexually abusing and defaming advice columnist E. Jean Carroll and awarded her \$5 million. A day later, during a contentious CNN town hall, he repeatedly insulted Carroll, reasserted lies about his 2020 election loss and minimized the violence at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

DeSantis has burnished his reputation as a conservative governor willing to push hard for conservative policies and even take on a political fight with Disney, which he highlighted in Sioux Center. But so far, he hasn't shown the same zest for taking on Trump, who has been almost singularly focused on tearing down DeSantis for months.

On Saturday, DeSantis avoided Trump's legal entanglements or his falsehoods about the 2020 election, instead highlighting the GOP's recent string of electoral losses. The Republican Party has struggled in every national election since Trump's 2016 victory.

"We must reject the culture of losing that has impacted our party in recent years. The time for excuses is over," DeSantis said. "If we get distracted, if we focus the election on the past or on other side issues, then I think the Democrats are going to beat us again."

It's uncertain whether DeSantis' political successes in Florida can be replicated on the national stage.

Even before he formally enters the race, he's already facing questions about his ability to court donors and woo voters.

The Iowa visit, his second in two months, was expected to help address concerns about his sometimes awkward personal appeal as he met with Republican officials, donors and volunteers, all under the glare of the national media. But DeSantis devoted little time — at least compared with most of the GOP's other White House contenders — for selfies or handshakes in Sioux Center, where more than 600 people had gathered to see him at an event billed as a family picnic for U.S. Rep. Randy Feenstra.

DeSantis left most of the politicking to his allied super political action committee, which had set up a table where prospective supporters for his yet-to-be-announced presidential campaign could sign up.

The road outside the museum was flanked with DeSantis 2024 campaign signs.

Trump's team had expected more than 5,000 to attend the rally at an outdoor amphitheater in downtown Des Moines for the purpose of collecting information on would-be supporters and encouraging them to commit to Trump.

Trump's 2024 Iowa campaign, unlike his rag-tag 2016 second-place Iowa effort, is putting together a more disciplined, data-driven operation. The Saturday event was aimed at encouraging attendees to sign up with the campaign on a website so the campaign could maintain contact with them, keep them posted on how and where to caucus, and recruit campaign volunteers.

In a social media post, Trump promised to reschedule the event. Shortly afterward, the campaign released a list of endorsements from more than 150 Iowa elected officials and activists across all of the state's 99 counties.

And as they compete for support, the emerging rivalry with DeSantis has turned increasingly personal.

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DeSantis has largely ignored Trump's most egregious jabs, which have included suggesting impropriety with young girls as a teacher decades ago, questioning his sexuality and calling him "Ron DeSanctimonious."

Trump's campaign began airing an ad mocking DeSantis for yoking himself to the former president in 2018 when he ran for governor, even using some Trump catchphrases as a nod to his supporters in Florida.

Trump's super PAC, MAGA Inc., also has aired spots highlighting DeSantis' votes to cut Social Security and Medicare and raise the retirement age. The group even targeted DeSantis' snacking habits, running an ad that called for him to keep his "pudding fingers" off those benefits. That was a reference to a report in The Daily Beast that the governor ate chocolate pudding with his fingers instead of a spoon on a plane several years ago.

DeSantis has said he does not remember doing that.

At the same time, the pro-DeSantis super PAC, Never Back Down, has hired Iowa staff and begun trying to organize support for the governor before a 2024 announcement. The group announced Thursday that state Senate President Amy Sinclair and state House Majority Leader Matt Windschitl would endorse DeSantis' candidacy. On Friday, it rolled out roughly three dozen more state lawmakers who would endorse him.

Gov. Kim Reynolds and Iowa Sen. Joni Ernst attended DeSantis' Sioux Center appearance.

After his speech, he spent about 15 minutes shaking hands and making small talk with voters as he maneuvered through the large audience, trailed by reporters, TV cameras and a security detail. He then dashed outdoors to pose with Reynolds and Feenstra while tending to burgers and pork chops at the grill.

Lyle and Sonia Remmerde of Rock Valley managed a handshake. She said DeSantis' style comes across as "normal."

"One of the things when you compare Trump and DeSantis, I think DeSantis has — how do you say? — a much more smooth approach," said Lyle Remmerde, 65. "He's less abrasive."

Price reported from Des Moines, Iowa. Peoples reported from New York.

Israel and Islamic Jihad agree on cease-fire to end 5 days of fighting

By FARES AKRAM and JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israel and the Islamic Jihad militant group in the Gaza Strip agreed to an Egyptian-brokered cease-fire late Saturday, seeking to halt five days of intense fighting that killed 33 Palestinians, including at least 13 civilians. Two people in Israel were killed by rocket fire.

The tenuous cease-fire appeared to take effect just after 10 p.m., with a last-minute burst of rocket fire and Israeli airstrikes stretching several minutes past the deadline announced by Egypt. Late Saturday, Israel reported additional incoming fire and said it was again striking in Gaza. But the calm appeared to be quickly restored.

While the calm appeared to bring a sense of relief to Gaza's more than 2 million people and hundreds of thousands of Israelis who had been largely confined to bomb shelters in recent days, the agreement did nothing to address the underlying issues that have fueled numerous rounds of fighting between Israel and Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip over the years.

In Gaza, Islamic Jihad spokesman Tareq Selmi said Israel had agreed to halt its policy of targeted strikes on the group's leaders. "Any stupidity or assassination by the occupation will be met with a response and the Zionist enemy bears the responsibility," he said.

But in a statement thanking Egypt for its mediation efforts, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's national security adviser, Tzachi Nanegbi, said that "quiet would be answered with quiet" and Israel would do "everything that it needs to in order to defend itself."

Tensions could quickly resume next week when Israel holds a contentious march through a main Palestinian thoroughfare in Jerusalem's Old City.

Still, as the truce took hold, the deafening whooshes of outgoing rockets and booms of Israeli airstrikes

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were replaced by the honking of cars in Gaza. Streets that had been desolate in recent days quickly teemed with people reveling in the ceasefire, waving Palestinian flags and flashing victory signs from speeding vehicles. Amid the celebration, a fruit vendor used a loudspeaker, enthusiastically promoting his supply of bananas.

The latest violence erupted Tuesday when Israeli airstrikes killed three senior Islamic Jihad commanders. Israel said the airstrikes were in response to a burst of rocket fire the previous week and that its attacks have been focused on Islamic Jihad targets. But residents in Gaza said homes of people uninvolved in fighting also had been struck.

At least 10 civilians, including women, young children and uninvolved neighbors were killed in those initial strikes, which drew regional condemnation.

Over the past few days, Israel has conducted more airstrikes, killing other senior Islamic Jihad commanders and destroying their command centers and rocket-launching sites. But the airstrikes showed no signs of stopping the rocket fire, prompting Islamic Jihad to declare victory.

Israel reported over 1,200 launches throughout the fighting, with some rockets reaching as far as the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem areas. Israel said about a quarter of the rockets were misfired and landed in Gaza, while most of the rest were either intercepted or landed in open areas. But an 80-year-old woman and a Palestinian laborer who was working inside Israel were killed by rocket fire. A Palestinian human rights group said three people, including two children, were killed in Gaza by errant rockets.

It was the latest in a long series of battles between Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza since the Islamic militant group Hamas seized control of the seaside territory in 2007. Israel and Hamas have fought four wars, and there have been numerous smaller flareups as well.

Saturday's deal did not address many of the causes of the repeated fighting, including Israel's ongoing blockade of Gaza, the large arsenals of weapons possessed by Hamas and Islamic Jihad and Israeli policies in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem.

Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians claim all three areas for a future state. Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, but Hamas subsequently overran the territory and expelled forces loyal to the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority.

Israel and Egypt have maintained a blockade over Gaza in what Israel says is a policy aimed at preventing Hamas from arming. The Palestinians and international rights groups say the policy, which restricts the movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza, amount to collective punishment.

The Palestinian Authority, which governs semi-autonomous parts of the West Bank, said Gaza's main cargo crossing with Israel would open Sunday. Hamas' government warned on Saturday that if the crossing doesn't open, the lone power plant in Gaza will stop, further deepening a power crisis.

The more powerful Hamas has praised Islamic Jihad's strikes but remained on the sidelines during the latest round of fighting, limiting the scope of the conflict. As the de facto government held responsible for the abysmal conditions in the blockaded Gaza Strip, Hamas has recently tried to keep a lid on its conflict with Israel. Islamic Jihad, on the other hand, a more ideological and unruly militant group wedded to violence, has taken the lead in the past few rounds of fighting with Israel.

In a reminder of the combustible situation in the occupied West Bank, the Israeli military raided the Balata refugee camp near the northern city of Nablus, sparking a fire that killed two Palestinians. In a separate incident near the northern city of Jenin, Israeli police said they shot and killed a suspected Palestinian assailant who ran toward soldiers wielding a knife.

Israeli-Palestinian fighting has surged in the West Bank under Israel's most right-wing government in history. Since the start of the year, 111 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, at least half of them affiliated with militant groups, according to a tally by The Associated Press. In that time, 20 people have been killed in Palestinian attacks on Israelis.

The truce could be further tested on Thursday when Israeli nationalists plan their annual "Jerusalem Day" march through the Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City. The march, meant to celebrate Israel's capture of the Old City and its Jewish holy sites in 1967, is a frequent source of friction and helped spark

an 11-day war with Hamas in 2021.

On Saturday, Palestinians in Gaza ventured out to assess the damage wrought by Israeli warplanes and salvage whatever they could from four destroyed homes in a densely populated neighborhood. Residents denied the army's claims that it had attacked Islamic Jihad targets.

"We have no rocket launching pads at all. This is a residential area," said Awni Obaid, beside the debris of what was his three-story house in the central town of Deir al-Balah.

The nearby house of his relative, Jihad Obaid, was also leveled.

"I felt like vomiting because of the dust," he said. "This is extraordinary hatred. They claim they don't strike at children, but what we see is craziness, destruction."

Federman reported from Jerusalem.

Zelenskyy meets Pope Francis at Vatican and seeks backing for Ukraine's peace plan

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had private talks with Pope Francis at the Vatican on Saturday, later saying he sought support for Ukraine's peace plan from the pontiff, who in the past has offered to try to help end the full-scale war launched by Russia a year ago.

Zelenskyy held his hand over his heart and said it was a "great honor" to meet with the pope. Francis, using a cane for his knee problem, came to greet the Ukrainian president before ushering him into a papal studio near the Vatican's audience hall.

In a tweet after the 40-minute audience, Zelenskyy expressed gratitude to Francis for "his personal attention to the tragedy of millions of Ukrainians." He said he spoke with the pontiff "about the tens of thousands of deported (Ukrainian) children. We must make every effort to return them home."

Last month, Ukraine's prime minister, Denys Shmyhal, asked the pope to help get children returned from Russia to Ukraine. But the Vatican's statement Saturday made no mention of the request.

Instead, the Vatican said the two men spoke about Ukraine's "humanitarian and political situation provoked by the ongoing war."

"The pope assured his constant prayer, paid witness to by his many public appeals and by his continued invoking of the Lord for peace, since February of last year," the Vatican said, a reference to the Russian invasion that began Feb. 24, 2022.

The meeting came as Russia's defense ministry said Storm Shadow long-range cruise missiles delivered to Ukraine by the United Kingdom this week damaged unspecified civilian enterprises in Luhansk province in Ukraine's far east. Luhansk authorities separately said another missile strike hit the regional capital, wounding an elderly woman.

Two Russian Mi-8 helicopters and an Su-34 fighter-bomber crashed Saturday in the Bryansk region bordering Ukraine, state news agency Tass and a Telegram channel close to the Russian defense ministry reported; the newspaper Kommersant cited reports of two fighter planes crashing. The causes of the crashes were not immediately disclosed, but concern in Bryansk is growing about cross-border attacks from Ukraine.

Some Ukrainian units continue to push forward near Bakhmut, the commander of Ukraine's land forces said Saturday, just a day after Ukrainian commanders said their troops recaptured territory at the scene of the war's longest and bloodiest battle. "Our soldiers are moving forward in some sectors of the front, and the enemy is losing equipment and manpower," Oleksandr Syrskyi said on Telegram.

Zelenskyy also said that he asked the pope to condemn Russian "crimes in Ukraine" because "there can be no equality between the victim and the aggressor."

"I also talked about our Peace Formula as the only effective algorithm for achieving a just peace," Zelenskyy said. Later, in an interview on Italian state TV, the Ukrainian leader said the pope "knows my position. The war is in Ukraine, that is why it has to be Ukraine's plan" to bring peace.

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Zelenskyy's 10-point plan would establish a special tribunal to prosecute Russian war crimes. It would also create a European-Atlantic security architecture with guarantees for Ukraine, restore Ukraine's damaged power infrastructure and ensure safety around Europe's largest nuclear power plant at Zaporizhzhia.

Earlier in the day, Zelenskyy received from Italian officials pledges of open-ended military and financial support as well as stronger backing for Ukraine's cherished aim to join the European Union.

"The message is clear and simple," Premier Giorgia Meloni said after a meeting with Zelenskyy that lasted more than an hour. "The future of Ukraine is a future of peace and freedom. And it's the future of Europe, a future of peace and freedom, for which there are no other possible solutions."

The premier, who staunchly supports military aid for Ukraine, said Italy would back the country "360 degrees for all the time necessary and beyond."

Separately, Italian President Sergio Mattarella told Zelenskyy, "We are fully at your side," Mattarella told Zelenskyy as he welcomed him. Later, presidential palace sources said Mattarella assured his guest that Italy would continue to support Ukraine militarily and financially, as well as with reconstruction and humanitarian aid.

Since the war began, Italy has contributed about 1 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) in military and financial aid, as well as humanitarian assistance.

Zelenskyy is believed to be heading to Berlin next for what would be his first visit to Germany since the war began. The exact schedule was not publicly announced because of security concerns.

At the end of April, Francis told reporters that the Vatican was involved in a behind-the-scenes peace mission but gave no details. Neither Russia nor Ukraine has confirmed such an initiative.

He has said he would like to go to Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, if such a visit could be coupled with one to Moscow, in hopes a papal pilgrimage could further the cause of peace.

There has been speculation about whether the Vatican could play some mediating role. But in the Italian TV interview on Saturday, Zelenskyy indicated mediation in general would be impossible. "You can't mediate with (Russian President Vladimir) Putin," he said.

The German government, meanwhile, said it was providing Ukraine with additional military aid worth more than 2.7 billion euros (\$3 billion), including tanks, anti-aircraft systems and ammunition.

Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said Berlin wanted to show with the latest package of arms "that Germany is serious in its support" for Ukraine.

"Germany will provide all the help it can, as long as it takes," he said.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

— Officials in the Ternopil region about 350 kilometers (220 miles) west of Kyiv on Saturday night reported a strike on an industrial area. No casualties or other details were immediately stated.

— Russian shelling on Saturday killed two civilians, including a 15-year-old girl, and wounded 10 more in Kostyantynivka, a city less than 30 kilometers (18 miles) west of Bakhmut, the regional prosecutor's office said.

— Russian forces on Friday and overnight resumed their shelling of Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region, killing a civilian, local governor Oleh Syniehubov said. Four civilians were killed over the same period in Donetsk province in the east, said governor Pavlo Kyrylenko.

— A "massive" Russian barrage overnight damaged an energy facility in Ukraine's western Khmelnytskyi region, but didn't affect the power supply, according to the Ukrainian energy ministry,

Frank Jordans in Berlin, Joanna Kozłowska in London, and Nicole Winfield and Gianfranco Stara in Rome contributed to this report.

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

Michigan boy uses a slingshot to save his sister from being abducted from backyard, police say

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ALPENA, Mich. (AP) — A Michigan girl was able to escape an attempted kidnapping when her brother used a slingshot to strike the would-be attacker, authorities said this week.

Mlive.com reports that the Michigan State Police arrested the accused assailant in the city of Alpena on Wednesday.

The 17-year-old's name has not been released though he has been charged as an adult with one count of attempted kidnapping/child enticement, one count of attempted assault to do great bodily harm less than murder, and one count of assault and battery.

Michigan State Police said in a news release that the 8-year-old girl was in her backyard when the alleged assailant came out of the woods, grabbed her and covered her mouth. Authorities said the girl's brother, 13, hit the alleged attacker in the head and chest using a slingshot.

Police later arrested the 17-year-old based on another family member's description of the suspect. Authorities also said the teenager had visible wounds from the slingshot.

This tribe's land was cut in two by US borders. Its fight for access could help dozens of others

By HALLIE GOLDEN Associated Press

For four hours, Raymond V. Buelna, a cultural leader for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, sat on a metal bench in a concrete holding space at the U.S.-Mexico border, separated from the two people he was taking to an Easter ceremony on tribal land in Arizona and wondering when they might be released.

It was February 2022 and Buelna, a U.S. citizen, was driving the pair — both from the sovereign Native American nation's related tribal community in northwestern Mexico — from their home to the reservation southwest of Tucson. They'd been authorized by U.S. officials to cross the border. But when Buelna asked an agent why they were detained, he was told to wait for the officer who brought him in.

"They know that we're coming," said Buelna, who has made the trip for a variety of ceremonies for 20 years. "We did all this work and then we're still sitting there."

Now, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe is trying to change this — for themselves and potentially dozens of other tribes in the U.S.

Tribal officials have drafted regulations to formalize the border-crossing process, working with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's recently formed Tribal Homeland Security Advisory Council, comprised of 15 Native officials across the U.S.

Their work could provide a template for dozens of Native American nations whose homelands, like those of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, were sliced in two by modern-day U.S. borders.

If approved, the rules would become the first clearly established U.S. border crossing procedures specific to a Native American tribe that could then be used by others, according to Christina Leza, associate professor of anthropology at Colorado College.

The regulations would last five years, to be renewed and amended as needed, and require training local U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents and consular personnel on the tribe's cultural heritage, language and traditions. It would require a Yaqui interpreter to be available when needed. It also would require close coordination with the tribe so border crossings are prompt.

"This is just something that will help everybody," said Fred Urbina, attorney general for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. "It will make things more efficient."

Urbina said the tribe has met with Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas about the proposal. DHS did not immediately respond to repeated requests for comment by phone and email on the status of the regulations.

When family members, deer dancers or musicians living in Sonora, Mexico, make the trip into the U.S. for ceremonies, tribal recognition celebrations or family events, they are typically issued an ID card from the tribe and a visitor visa or parole permit from the U.S. government. Still, they still face border officials who they say lack the cultural awareness to process them without problems.

In the last two years, Buelna said, he has made the roundtrip about 18 times and was detained on four

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of them. He said border officials question the people he's escorting, whose first language is Yaqui, without an interpreter, and cultural objects, such as deer and pig hooves, have been confiscated. Officials have touched ceremonial objects, despite only certain people being permitted by the tribe to do so.

Urbina explained that the tribe encountered new challenges when Homeland Security was formed after 9/11 and border security was heightened. It became more pronounced in 2020, when the U.S. prohibited "non-essential" travel across the border to control the spread of the coronavirus. That ban ended this week, but new restrictions are in place.

As a sovereignty issue, Native American nations should be able to determine their people's ability to cross the border to preserve the ceremonial life of their communities, Leza said.

"If the federal government is saying our particular priorities, our interests in terms of securing our borders, trump your interests as a sovereign nation, then that's not really a recognition of the sovereignty of those tribal nations," she said.

Tribes along the U.S.-Canada border face similar problems.

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians is headquartered in Michigan, but 173 of its more than 49,000 enrolled members live in Canada. Kimberly Hampton, the tribe's officer-secretary and vice chair of the Tribal Homeland Security Advisory Council, said those members cross the border for powwows, fasting and to visit with traditional healers and family, but border officials have rudely rifled through eagle feathers and other cultural objects they are carrying.

Hampton wants an agreement that includes having tribal liaisons at border crossings and training developed by the tribe for border personnel.

Members of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe, which has about 8,000 members in the U.S. and about 8,000 in Canada, said they have also been asked at the border to prove that they possess at least 50% "blood of the American Indian race." It stems from a requirement under the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act that "American Indians" born in Canada cannot be denied entry into the U.S. if they can prove this — often through a letter from the tribe.

Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Chief Michael L. Conners wants to eliminate the requirement and boost education for border agents on local and national tribal issues. Drafting regulations specific to the tribe, like the ones the Pascua Yaqui are doing, "would bring a lot of peace of mind to our whole community," he said.

For Buelna, waiting in that concrete holding space, he was reunited with the pair only after he told a border official he thought they'd been overlooked following a shift change, he said.

"Why can't there be a system?" Buelna asked. "Why can't there be already a line for us where we can present the proper paperwork, everything that we need and go about our way?"

End of Title 42 hasn't stopped migrants' push north to US from across the Americas

By MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — For weeks, Solangel Contreras raced.

The Venezuelan migrant and her family of 22 trudged through the dense jungles of the Darien Gap and hopped borders across Central America.

They joined thousands of other migrants from across the Hemisphere in a scramble to reach the United States-Mexico border and request asylum.

They raced, unsure what changing migratory rules and the end of a pandemic-era border restriction, Title 42, would mean for their chances at a new life in the U.S.

But after missing that cutoff, robbed in Guatemala and crossing into Mexico shortly after the program ended Thursday night, Contreras, 33, had only one certainty in her mind: "We're going to keep going."

Confusion has rippled from the U.S.-Mexico border to migrant routes across the Americas, as migrants scramble to understand complex and ever-changing policies. And while Title 42 has come to an end, the flow of migrants headed north has not.

From the rolling mountains and jungles in Central America to the tops of trains roaring through Mexico,

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migrants from Venezuela, Cuba, Haiti, Colombia, Nicaragua, Ecuador and beyond push forward on their journeys.

"We've already done everything humanly possible to get where we are," Contreras said, resting in a park near a river dividing Mexico and Guatemala.

The problem, say experts, is that while migration laws are changing, root causes pushing people to flee their countries in record numbers only stretch on.

"It doesn't appear to be the case that this is going to curb the push or pull factors for migration from Central America, South America and other parts of the world," said Falko Ernst, senior analyst for International Crisis Group in Mexico. "The incentives for people to flee and seek refuge in safer havens in the United States are still in place."

For Contreras, that push came after her brother was killed in Ecuador for not paying extorsions to a criminal group. The family had been living in a small coastal town in the south after fleeing economic crisis in Venezuela two years earlier.

Others, like 25-year-old migrant Gerardo Escobar left in search of a better future after struggling to make ends meet in Venezuela like Contreras' family.

Escobar trekked along train tracks Friday morning just outside Mexico City, with 60 other migrants, including families and small children. They hoped to climb aboard a train migrants have used for decades to carry them on their dangerous journey.

Escobar was among many to say he had no clue what the end of Title 42 would mean, and he didn't particularly care.

"My dream is to get a job, eat well, help my family in Venezuela," he said. "My dream is to move forward."

Despite misinformation prompting a rush to the border last week, analysts and those providing refuge to migrants said that they don't expect new policies to radically stem the flow of migrants.

Title 42 allowed authorities to use a public health law to rapidly expel migrants crossing over the border, denying them the right to seek asylum. U.S. officials turned away migrants more than 2.8 million times under the order.

New rules strip away that ability to simply expel asylum seekers, but add stricter consequences to those not going through official migratory channels. Migrants caught crossing illegally will not be allowed to return for five years and can face criminal prosecution if they do.

The Biden administration has also set caps on the amount of migrants allowed to seek asylum.

At the same time, Biden is likely to continue American pressure on Mexico and other countries to make it harder for migrants to move north.

Mexico's Secretary of Foreign Affairs Marcelo Ebrard said they don't agree with the Biden administration's decision to continue to put up migratory barriers.

"Our position is the opposite, but we respect their (US) jurisdiction," Ebrard said.

Yet in a news briefing on Friday, he announced Mexico would carry out speedier deportations, and that it would no longer give migrants papers to cross through Mexico.

While the new rules likely won't act as a strong deterrent, Ebrard and the head of a migrant shelter in Guatemala said they saw a drop in the number of migrants they encountered immediately following the rush on the U.S. border. Though the shelter leader said numbers have been slowly picking up.

Still, migrants continued to make it across the U.S. border, even as the new rules were announced. At a cemetery near Roma, Texas, about 60 migrants who had crossed the Rio Bravo were waiting to be processed around midnight. They included a large group of Chinese migrants who huddled for cover under a driving rain.

Another member of the group, a Guatemalan who left her country to escape an abusive husband, crossed the river with her four-year-old son. With the rules changing, she was unsure if she'd qualify for any asylum help.

Ernst, of International Crisis Group, warned that such measures could make the already deadly journey even more dangerous.

"You'll see an increase in populations that remain vulnerable for criminal groups to prey on, to recruit

from and make a profit from," he said. "It could just feed into the hands of these criminal groups."

Meanwhile, Contreras continues trucking forward alongside many other migrants, even with no clear pathway forward and little information about what awaits them at the border.

It's worth it, she said, to give a better life to small children traveling with them.

"We've fought a lot for them (the kids)," she said. "All we want is to be safe, a humble home where they can study, where they can eat well. We're not asking for much. We're just asking for peace and safety."

Associated Press journalists contributed from Marco Ugarte in Huehuetoca, Mexico, Edgar H. Clemente in Tapachula, Mexico, Mark Stevenson in Mexico City, and Colleen Long in Washington. Janetsky reported from Mexico City.

Biden's reelection pitch that he can govern well faces daunting challenges with debt, border, more

By ZEKE MILLER AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — A showdown with Congress that has the nation's creditworthiness at stake; a frenzied scene at the border as pandemic restrictions ease; a pivotal foreign trip meant to sustain support for Ukraine and contain a more assertive China in the Indo-Pacific.

Three weeks since launching his reelection campaign, President Joe Biden is confronting a sweeping set of problems in his day job that defy easy solutions and are not entirely within his control. If, as his advisers believe, the single best thing Biden can do for his reelection prospects is to govern well, then the coming weeks can pose a near-existential test of his path to a second term.

Economists warn that the country faces a debilitating recession — and worse — if Biden and lawmakers can't agree on a path to raising the debt limit. Biden wants Congress to raise it without precondition, equating Republicans' demands for spending cuts with ransom for the country's full faith and credit.

The expiration of the COVID-19 public health emergency meant the end of special pandemic restrictions on migrant procedures on an already taxed U.S.-Mexico border. His administration has responded with new policies to crack down on illegal crossings while opening legal pathways encouraging would-be migrants to stay put and apply online to come to the U.S. But Biden himself has predicted a "chaotic" situation as the new procedures take effect.

These tests comes as Biden prepares to depart Washington on Wednesday for an eight-day trip to Japan, Papua New Guinea and Australia. Biden will try to marshal unity among Group of Seven leading democratic economies to maintain support for Ukraine as it prepares to launch a counteroffensive against Russia's invasion, and to invigorate alliances in the face of China's forceful regional moves.

Biden put his ability to solve problems at the core of his pitch to voters in 2020 and it is central to his argument for why, at 80, he's best prepared for four more years in the White House.

"I'm more experienced than anybody that's ever run for the office," Biden told MSNBC this month. "And I think I've proven myself to be honorable as well as also effective."

Yet the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 undercut Biden's image as an effective manager, sending his approval ratings sharply down and he's still working to recover.

An April poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found Biden's job approval rating at 42%, a slight improvement from 38% in March. The March poll came after a pair of bank failures rattled an already shaky confidence in the nation's financial systems, and Biden's approval rating then was near the lowest point of his presidency. It also found that 26% of Americans overall want to see Biden run again — a slight recovery from the 22% who said that in January. Forty-seven percent of Democrats say they want him to run, also up slightly from only 37% who said that in January.

Aides note that Biden entered the White House when the country faced an array of even greater trials: the COVID-19 pandemic, an associated economic crisis and strained international alliances after four years of Donald Trump's presidency.

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"President Biden continues to leverage his experience and judgment to fight for middle-class families and mainstream values, including by standing against congressional Republicans' extreme MAGA threat to trigger a downturn" unless they get sweeping spending cuts, said White House spokesman Andrew Bates.

Biden said Saturday it's "hard to tell" how staff-level talks to avert a crisis on the debt limit will shake out. He plans to reconvene with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and other congressional leaders before he heads overseas, but the White House has been firm that while Biden is open to considering spending cuts as part of the budget process, he won't agree to them as a condition for raising the debt limit.

"There's no deal to be had on the debt ceiling," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Friday. "There's no negotiation to be had on the debt ceiling. This is something that Congress needs to do."

U.S. officials are warning that the impasse threatens national security. Pentagon brass has already warned that it could hurt pay and benefits for troops and U.S. standing around the globe, said National Security Council spokesman John Kirby.

"It sends a horrible message to nations like Russia and China, who would love nothing more than to be able to point at this and say, 'See, the United States is not a reliable partner. The United States is not a stable leader of peace and security around the world,'" he said.

Biden also faces a key test at the southern border, where the transition away from Title 42 has been anything but simple. Migrants along the border were still wading into the Rio Grande to take their chances getting into the country, defying officials shouting for them to turn back. Lawsuits have threatened measures to release migrants into the U.S. to avoid overcrowding in border patrol facilities as well as efforts to crack down on asylum seekers entering the country.

But the problem can't be solved by the U.S. on its own.

"It is true that the Americas is, at the moment, going through an unprecedented displacement crisis," said Olga Sarrado, a spokeswoman for the United Nations refugee agency.

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.

Meanwhile, Border Patrol agents are encountering more nearly 8,000 migrants per day, and the human toll of the challenge was driven home in recent days by the death of a 17-year-old boy in U.S. custody. An investigation continues.

"A decision from one single country is not going to fix the challenges," Sarrado said. "And we cannot forget that these are human beings — many of them in need of international protection— and that we need to put them at the center of any decision that is made."

With just under 18 months to go until Election Day, it's not a given that these issues will shape voters' decisions, said Chapman University presidential historian Luke Nichter.

"There is a long time between now and November 2024," he said. "I don't think today's issues matter a great deal since they won't likely be the issues on the minds of voters more than a year from now."

Jonathan Young, a Democratic donor who came to hear Vice President Kamala Harris on Friday in Atlanta, said Biden must navigate the current gauntlet with something to show the middle of the electorate, especially if Republicans nominate someone other than Trump.

"A rematch might go the same way, because Biden still isn't Trump," Young said, arguing that the former president makes any contest turn on personality more than policy.

But Young noted that Biden's answer to Trump's "big personality" in 2020 was to be almost deliberately boring and stubbornly competent. However Biden navigates the debt ceiling and immigration, Young said, he has to maintain an ability to credibly sell that image again as an incumbent.

"I think he's great on the policy, and I think he's usually great on the politics," Young said of Biden. "He's proven he can read the mood of the country really well."

Associated Press writers Colleen Long and Aamer Madhani in Washington and Bill Barrow in Atlanta

contributed.

Tanked Biden pick highlights escalation of dark-money forces

By TRENTON DANIEL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When President Joe Biden nominated Gigi Sohn to serve on the Federal Communications Commission, the longtime consumer advocate expected to face criticism over her desire to expand free internet access and improve competition among broadband providers.

Instead, Sohn found herself the target of an aggressive campaign funded by a conservative group that doesn't have to disclose its donors. The American Accountability Foundation called Sohn too partisan, anti-police and soft on sex trafficking. The attacks landed — to the point that even some Democrats abandoned her. Sohn withdrew her nomination, ditching her fight for a five-year term as an FCC commissioner.

"Look, I'm not naive. I've been a consumer advocate my whole career. I knew I was going to get some opposition," Sohn told The Associated Press. "Now, did I expect what was to come — the dark money, the lies, the caricatures? No."

The battle over the nomination is the latest example of how organizations with political and financial agendas have been able to sway public opinion by deploying donations that are impossible to trace. It is also emblematic of how nominees' missteps — even on matters wholly unrelated to their prospective jobs — can become fodder for attacks.

In Sohn's case, the stakes were high. Her confirmation would've ended a 2-2 split on the commission, enabling Biden's administration to pursue its agenda of making communication networks more equitable. Sohn has been a vocal advocate of such regulations, which have been aggressively opposed by the telecom industry.

Sohn was not likely to coast to confirmation. Moderate Democrats were going to have trouble justifying their support for a nominee who had assisted controversial liberal groups, seemed to endorse tweets critical of police and accused Fox News of being "state-sponsored propaganda."

When Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia announced his opposition to the nomination in March, the moderate Democrat cited Sohn's "partisan activism, inflammatory statements online, and work with far-left groups."

Even so, outside groups left nothing to chance. Just two of those organizations spent at least \$420,000 on ads seeking to torpedo Sohn's confirmation, a sum that is likely a fraction of the total spent.

Central to the advertising offensive was the American Accountability Foundation, which produced an advertising blitz assailing the nominee on Facebook, as well as in newspapers and on billboards.

Another group, co-founded by a former Democratic senator, said it spent "six figures" on ads arguing that Sohn was "the wrong choice for the FCC and rural America." The National Fraternal Order of Police also joined the fray, chastising Sohn over endorsing social media posts that were critical of law enforcement.

Opposing nominations is hardly new in American politics. But a 2010 ruling by the Supreme Court freed corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts on political campaigns and nomination fights. The Citizens United ruling also opened the door to an influx of untraceable donations, known as "dark money," to special interest groups seeking to influence policy, elections and nominations.

Norman Ornstein, a senior fellow emeritus at the American Enterprise Institute, said such dark-money groups are growing so powerful that they can "hamstring or stymie an entire administration" by discouraging qualified people from accepting nominations.

Sohn's nomination was meant to be historic. If confirmed, Sohn would have been the FCC's first openly LGBTQ+ commissioner. When the White House announced her nomination in October 2021, it hailed her trailblazing biography and called her a consumer advocate who would "defend and preserve the fundamental competition and innovation policies that have made broadband Internet access more ubiquitous."

When Congress failed to confirm Sohn during its last term, Biden didn't give up. In January, he renominated her to the post.

Sohn was a favorite of progressives and had served as a top adviser for Tom Wheeler, the Obama-era

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FCC chair who enacted net neutrality rules that were jettisoned during the Trump administration. Such regulations would have required AT&T, Comcast, Verizon and other internet providers to treat all web traffic equally. The telecommunications industry has battled such rules, arguing they are illegal and overly burdensome.

Some business groups pounced at the possibility of Sohn joining the FCC. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation, said this year that it opposed Sohn's confirmation "due to her longtime advocacy of overly aggressive and combative regulation of the communications sector."

Telecommunications companies and their trade organizations took a less combative approach, at least in public. Some even congratulated her on her nomination.

It is not known whether those companies donated dark money to groups that attacked Sohn. A spokeswoman for USTelecom, a national trade association on broadband, said the group and its "members did not take a position on Ms. Sohn's nomination."

Behind the scenes, however, the industry's lobbyists worked hard to kill the nomination, according to Sohn and her allies. Telecom companies are among the nation's biggest spenders on lobbyists, with the industry shelling out \$117 million last year to influence lawmakers and administration officials, according to OpenSecrets.

In her withdrawal letter, Sohn blamed her failed nomination on "legions of cable and media industry lobbyists, their bought-and-paid-for surrogates, and dark money political groups with bottomless pockets."

"It was a perfect storm of, you know, industry interests," Sohn told the AP in an interview last month at Georgetown Law School, where she is a fellow at its Institute for Technology Law & Policy.

At least three Democratic lawmakers agreed with Sohn's assessment, describing her nomination as a proxy fight over the future of free broadband.

"If affordable broadband gets deployed anywhere, then somehow more affordable broadband might get deployed everywhere," Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., the chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, said at Sohn's February confirmation hearing. "So I think there's probably billions of dollars at stake here, and that is why the vitriol is coming at you."

Sohn took particular umbrage with the campaign waged by the American Accountability Foundation. The nonprofit boasted it spent "hundreds of thousands of dollars" on advertising to "educate the American people how wrong she was for the position."

The AAF dished out more than \$320,000 on Facebook advertising, according a review of advertising data by the AP. Such ads blasted Sohn over her connections to two liberal groups and suggested she opposed stiffening sex-trafficking laws. An ad alleged she was a "complete political ideologue."

The organization targeted most of its advertising in states where moderate Democratic senators are up for reelection next year, including Nevada, Arizona and Montana. In the closely divided Senate, nominees have little margin for error. They can lose only one Democratic vote if all Republican senators oppose them.

It is unknown how much AAF spent on traditional advertising, which included ads in newspapers and on billboards. One of those billboards was on the Las Vegas Strip, looming above an illuminated sign of two showgirls replete with feathered headdresses.

The billboard called Sohn "too extreme" for the FCC and provided information for people to contact AAF. The likely target of that ad was not tourists but Sen. Jacky Rosen, a moderate Democrat seeking reelection next year.

AAF also promoted criticism of Sohn over Twitter posts in 2020 that suggested she supported the "defund the police" movement and agreed with a tweet that alleged police were "armed goons with tear gas."

Tom Jones, the group's executive director, declined an interview request. In an email, he declined to name the the organization's donors, noting only that they are "G-d fearing Patriots!"

"We're guided by traditional American values," wrote Jones, a veteran Republican operative who led opposition research for Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, during his failed 2016 presidential run. His group has led similar campaigns against other nominees who later withdrew from such posts as Federal Aviation Administration administrator, vice chair for supervision of the Federal Reserve Board, director of the Bureau

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of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the comptroller of the currency.

Jones' group was joined in its campaign against Sohn by other organizations, including one led by Heidi Heitkamp, a former Democratic senator from North Dakota.

Heitkamp's advocacy group, the One Country Project, announced in 2022 it was spending at least \$100,000 on a campaign to oppose Sohn's nomination by highlighting her purported disregard for rural broadband.

The former senator, who lost her reelection bid in 2018, did not respond to requests for comment about the source of her group's funding. Heitkamp collected more than \$106,000 in donations from the telecommunications industry during her last Senate campaign, according to OpenSecrets, a nonpartisan nonprofit that tracks U.S. election spending.

The National Fraternal Order of Police also opposed the nomination, a move that surprised Sohn and her allies because the police union has no business before the FCC. Citing Sohn's social media posts about police, the group said in February that a vote for Sohn "would show a complete disregard for the hard-working men and women of law enforcement."

Jim Pasco, FOP's executive director, acknowledged it was unusual for his organization to take sides on an FCC nominee. But he said Sohn's Twitter presence was too incendiary to ignore. He said no telecom companies influenced the union's decision to oppose the nomination.

"You know, we don't — we don't oppose people lightly," Pasco said. "The more we looked into it, the more we saw that this person is really, vocally opposed to just basic public safety efforts in the United States."

Sohn said she knew her nomination was dead at her February confirmation hearing. That's when Rosen, the Nevada Democrat, said police concerns about the social media posts "do give me pause." Other Democrats, Sohn said, put little effort into parrying Republican attacks.

"It was a bloodbath," Sohn said.

Three weeks later, she withdrew from the fight.

Kelly Clarkson responds to report accusing her daytime talk show of being a toxic workplace

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Kelly Clarkson has responded to a Rolling Stone report accusing her daytime talk show of being a toxic workplace.

Clarkson issued a statement on her Instagram page Saturday. She addressed the allegations after 11 current and former employees complained about being overworked and underpaid on "The Kelly Clarkson Show" and also called their work "traumatizing to their mental health" in the magazine's Friday report.

In the report, the anonymous employees called Clarkson "fantastic" but said show producers were "monsters" who made their lives "hell."

Clarkson said she loves her team.

"To find out that anyone is feeling unheard and or disrespected on this show is unacceptable," she said in the post. The talk show host said she wants to maintain a healthy and safe work environment.

"As we prepare for a move to the East Coast, I am more committed than ever to ensuring that not only our team is moving, but also our new team in NY is comprised of the best and kindest in the business," she said. "Part of that build will include leadership training for all of the senior staff, including myself."

Clarkson said that there's "always room to grow" and that she wants the show to be the "best version of ourselves in any business."

"Especially when it comes to leadership, to ensure that any notion of toxicity is eradicated," she said.

An NBCUniversal spokesperson said in a statement that the entertainment corporation is "committed to a safe and respectful work environment." The statement read that workplace complaints are taken "very seriously and to insinuate otherwise is untrue."

"When issues are reported they are promptly reviewed, investigated and acted upon as appropriate," the statement said. "The Kelly Clarkson Show" strives to build a safe, respectful and equitable workplace that nurtures a culture of inclusivity and creativity."

Kenya cult death toll hits 200, with more than 600 reported missing

By EVELYNE MUSAMBI Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — The death toll linked to a doomsday cult in Kenya hit 201 Saturday after police exhumed 22 more bodies, most of them bearing signs of starvation, according to the coast regional commissioner.

The bodies are believed to be those of followers of a pastor based in coastal Kenya, Paul Mackenzie. He's alleged to have ordered congregants to starve to death in order to meet Jesus.

More than 600 people are still missing.

Mackenzie, who was arrested last month, remains in custody. Police plan to charge him with terrorism-related offenses.

Hundreds of bodies have been dug up from dozens of mass graves spread across his 800-acre property, located in the coastal county of Kilifi.

Mackenzie insists that he closed his church in 2019 and moved to his property in a forested area to farm.

Autopsies conducted on more than 100 bodies last week showed the victims died of starvation, strangulation, suffocation and injuries sustained from blunt objects.

Local media outlets have been reporting cases of missing internal body organs, quoting investigators in the case.

Mackenzie, his wife and 16 other suspects will appear in court at the end of the month.

Coast regional commissioner Rhoda Onyancha on Saturday said the total number of those arrested stood at 26, with 610 people reported as missing by their families.

It is unclear how many survivors have been rescued so far from the search and rescue operations on Mackenzie's vast property. Some of them were too weak to walk when they were found.

Cults are common in Kenya, which has a religious society.

Police across the country have been questioning other religious leaders whose teachings are believed to be misleading and contrary to basic human rights.

President William Ruto last week formed a commission of inquiry to investigate how hundreds of people were lured to their deaths at the coast and recommend action on institutions that failed to act.

Mackenzie had in the past been charged with the deaths of children in his church in a case that is ongoing in court. Residents nearby had raised the alarm after his followers moved to the forested area.

Tennessee company refuses US request to recall 67 million potentially dangerous air bag inflators

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — A Tennessee company could be heading for a legal battle with U.S. auto safety regulators after refusing a request that millions of potentially dangerous air bag inflators be recalled.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is demanding that ARC Automotive Inc. of Knoxville recall 67 million inflators in the U.S. because they could explode and hurl shrapnel. At least two people have been killed in the U.S. and Canada, and seven others have been hurt as a result of defective ARC inflators, the agency said.

The recall would cover a large portion of the 284 million vehicles now on U.S. roads, but the percentage is difficult to determine. Some have ARC inflators for both the driver and front passenger.

In a letter posted Friday, the agency told ARC that it has tentatively concluded after an eight-year investigation that ARC front driver and passenger inflators have a safety defect.

"Air bag inflators that project metal fragments into vehicle occupants, rather than properly inflating the attached air bag, create an unreasonable risk of death and injury," Stephen Ridella, director of NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation, wrote in a letter to ARC.

But ARC responded that it no defect exists in the inflators, and that any problems are related to isolated

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manufacturing issues.

The next step in the process is for NHTSA to schedule a public hearing. It could then take the company to court to force a recall.

"We disagree with NHTSA's new sweeping request when extensive field testing has found no inherent defect," ARC said in a statement Friday night.

Also Friday, NHTSA posted documents showing that General Motors is recalling nearly 1 million vehicles equipped with ARC inflators. The recall covers certain 2014-2017 Buick Enclave, Chevrolet Traverse, and GMC Acadia SUVs.

The automaker says an inflator explosion "may result in sharp metal fragments striking the driver or other occupants, resulting in serious injury or death."

Owners will be notified by letter starting June 25, but no fix is available yet. They'll get another letter when one is ready.

GM says it will offer "courtesy transportation" on a case-by-case basis to owners who fear driving vehicles that are part of the recall.

The company said that it's doing the recall, which expands previous actions, "out of an abundance of caution and with the safety of our customers as our highest priority."

One of the two deaths was a mother of 10 who was killed in what appeared to be an otherwise minor crash in Michigan's Upper Peninsula in the summer of 2021. Police reports show that a metal inflator fragment hit her neck in a crash involving a 2015 Chevrolet Traverse SUV.

At least a dozen automakers have the allegedly faulty inflators in use, including Volkswagen, Ford, BMW and GM, NHTSA said.

The agency contends that welding debris from the manufacturing process can block an "exit orifice" for gas that is released to fill the air bag in a crash. Any blockage can cause pressure to build in the inflator, blowing it apart and hurling metal fragments, Ridella's letter says.

But in a response to Ridella dated May 11, ARC Vice President of Product Integrity Steve Gold wrote that NHTSA's position is not based on any objective technical or engineering conclusion about a defect, "but rather conclusory statements regarding hypothesized blockage of the inflator orifice from 'weld slag.'"

He wrote that welding debris has not been confirmed as the cause in any of the seven inflator ruptures in the U.S. ARC contends that only five have ruptured while in use, and that "does not support a finding that a systemic and prevalent defect exists in this population."

Gold also writes that manufacturers must do recalls, not equipment manufacturers like ARC. NHTSA's recall demand, he wrote, exceeds the agency's legal authority.

In a federal lawsuit filed last year, plaintiffs alleged that ARC's inflators use ammonium nitrate as a secondary propellant to inflate the air bags. The propellant is pressed into tablets that can expand and develop microscopic holes if exposed to moisture. Degraded tablets have a larger surface area, causing them to burn too fast and ignite too big of an explosion, according to the lawsuit.

The explosion can blow apart a metal canister housing the chemical, sending metal shards into the cabin. Ammonium nitrate, used in fertilizer and as a cheap explosive, is so dangerous that it can burn too fast even without moisture present, the lawsuit says.

The plaintiffs allege that ARC inflators have blown apart seven times on U.S. roads and two other times in testing by ARC. There have so far been five limited recalls of the inflators that totaled about 5,000 vehicles, including three recalls by GM.

This story has updated to clarify that the portion of U.S. vehicles on the road would be less than the one quarter because some vehicles have ARC driver and passenger inflators.

Housing advocates warn GOP spending plan would be 'disastrous'

By R.J. RICO Associated Press

Housing advocates are raising the alarm about House Republicans' plan to dramatically cut the federal

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deficit to raise the debt ceiling, warning rental aid would be stripped from hundreds of thousands of struggling families who could face eviction and possible homelessness at a time when rents remain high.

House Republicans narrowly passed a sweeping measure last month that would roll back non-defense spending to 2022 levels — a proposal the National Low Income Housing Coalition said would slash housing and homelessness programs by 23%, a significant blow to the Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program that around 2.3 million families rely on to cover rent.

"House Republicans' plan would have drastic negative impacts on communities' abilities to address homelessness and the housing crisis," Diane Yentel, the coalition's CEO and president, told The Associated Press. "If these proposals were enacted, it would mean communities would have to take away housing assistance from people who already have it, and need it."

Though House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's legislation has virtually no chance of becoming law, Republicans hope it will force President Joe Biden to the negotiating table, where the GOP could seek concessions in return for lifting the debt ceiling and ensuring the U.S. Treasury can pay its bills.

Yentel said she worries that Democrats will agree to painful cuts to housing funds in order to reach a compromise.

In 2011, during a similar standoff over the debt ceiling, then-President Barack Obama and then-Speaker John Boehner agreed to automatic annual spending cuts — a deal Yentel said hamstrung the Department of Housing and Urban Development for years.

"The Budget Control Act led to very tight spending caps over 10 years for HUD programs as well as many others," Yentel said. "Even though we haven't been under those tight spending caps over the past couple of years ... we still haven't made up for all of the cuts since 2011."

Due to high inflation and rising rents, voucher program funding needs to rise each year just to maintain the status quo, she said.

It's been over a year since rent increases hit a fever pitch, with median listings rising 16.4% from January 2021 to January 2022, according to realtor.com. Rents rose 0.6% from March to April, according to federal data. Though still high, that's one of the smallest increases in the past year.

"At a time where rents are so high, pandemic-era eviction resources have been all but depleted and homelessness is increasing in many communities — now, more than ever, we can't afford any cuts to these programs," Yentel said. "We need to be increasing funding for them."

Joel Griffith, a research fellow at the conservative Heritage Foundation, said HUD funding has gotten out of control and that housing aid needs to be a "temporary assistance program targeted towards those who are truly in need."

Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, a member of the conservative Freedom Caucus, agreed. "How much debt is too much?" Roy said of the national debt. "We have an obligation to actually limit spending, so we should get serious about doing it."

But in a statement to the AP, Democratic Rep. Emanuel Cleaver of Missouri called the House bill "egregiously offensive," saying it "turns a blind eye to public housing and would further diminish our nation's already short supply of affordable housing."

In December, during a congressional hearing on affordable housing shortly before Republicans took control of the House, GOP Rep. Patrick McHenry told committee members he would work to "prioritize housing" and "actually achieve some bipartisan results."

But over four months later, housing has received almost no attention in McHenry's House Financial Services Committee, with not a single hearing addressing the pressing issue.

It's much the same at the Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, helmed by Rep. Warren Davidson, R-Ohio. Of 74 bills introduced by GOP members, just one was related to housing, though a subcommittee hearing was scheduled for Wednesday on mortgages and housing affordability.

Laura Peavey, a spokesperson for McHenry, did not address whether the GOP spending plan would lead to significant housing cuts. But she said it's "important to note that after two years of unified Democrat control and trillions in new congressional spending, housing is now less affordable." A spokesperson for

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Davidson did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Cleaver, the ranking Democrat on Davidson's subcommittee, said he has tried drawing attention to housing but the recent collapse of Silicon Valley Bank has taken up most of the lawmakers' time.

Cleaver, who grew up in a two-room Texas home, has said he is "obsessed with housing because I don't want a single kid to grow up like I did." He told the AP he'd been pushing to get housing more at the forefront of Davidson's subcommittee, but those hopes "went out the window" once SVB cratered.

"Right now, I don't see anything that's going to move us to giving the kind of attention to housing that I think we need," Cleaver said.

Cleaver has pushed for expanding tax credits for builders who construct low-income housing, which he thinks could gain bipartisan support and help tackle the ever-widening housing supply gap — realtor.com recently estimated the country is short 6.5 million homes. But, he said, the partisan rancor in Congress presents a significant obstacle.

"One of the reasons we have not been able to move with the magnitude and mercy that this housing issue requires is because of what is happening in the country all too often nowadays, and that's a bold and short-sighted political need to divide people," Cleaver said.

Dennis Shea, executive director of the Bipartisan Policy Center's J. Ronald Terwilliger Center for Housing Policy, said he's still optimistic that Congress will take action, pointing to hearings on affordable housing held by the Democrat-controlled Senate finance and banking committees.

"People from both political parties are hearing about housing affordability problems from their constituents," Shea said. "This is not just an urban problem or coastal problem. It's also a Midwestern problem, a rural problem ... and I think Congress is aware of that."

The Bipartisan Policy Center has promoted a series of proposals aimed at increasing housing supply, preserving the existing stock and aiding families struggling with housing costs. Shea highlighted expanding low-income housing tax credits and creating tax credits for low-income families to revitalize homes in distressed communities, saying the measures would lead to 2.5 million new homes over the next decade.

Shea said McHenry, the chair of the House Financial Services committee, is "very plugged in on the importance of affordable housing."

"It's just incumbent on us to push housing efforts to the top of the priority list," Shea said. "That's our challenge."

Lisa Mascaro in Washington contributed.

Mother's Day gift guide: Wheels, books, tech and more

By LEANNE ITALIE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — From just the right book to just the right wheels, there are lots of ways to please all the mothers in your life when their special holiday rolls around.

Some ideas:

TECHNOLOGY

Give the gift of a heartbeat. Bond Heart is a smart necklace in the shape of a heart that allows the wearer to record heart beats and play them back in pulses felt when the bauble is grasped. From a company called Bond Touch, the \$99 necklace pairs with iOS and Android phones via Bluetooth. Instructions on how to record heartbeats using the pulse from a finger are included. An app stores multiple heartbeats for playback in the heart.

Reach for a digital camera. There's one that's great for beginners if mom isn't a pro but would like to be pro-like. It's the Canon EOS R50 Mirrorless Camera for \$799.99. It's light, compact, and reviewers rave about how easy it is to use. Comes in black or white. Turn it on and begin. The A+ mode does the rest.

Have at it on pricier options. But in the under \$1,000 range, The Strategist's Steven John recommends the Sony Alpha A6000 Mirrorless Digital Camera for its versatility and superfast autofocus abilities, among other things.

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BOOKS

"The Art of Feminism." This collection of art, illustration, photography and graphic design spans the feminist aesthetic over two centuries. The original book, out in 2018, has been revised to add 60 pages of material. It's an in-depth examination of the subject, from the suffragists and Judy Chicago to Zanele Muholi and Andrea Bowers. Chronicle Books. \$45. Consultant editor Helena Reckitt. Written by Lucinda Gosling, Hilary Robinson and Amy Tobin.

"Head of Household: A Journal for Single Moms." Beth Raymer, a single mom, has put together words of inspiration from famous single mothers, prompts aimed at reflection, and ways to help their lives go easier. "What are the top five things you wish people understood or acknowledged about your single-mom experience?" she asks. Some estimates put the number of children in the U.S. being raised by single mothers at 15 million. Princeton Architecture Press. \$24.95.

How about a burn book? Emily Rose, host of the podcast "It's Become a Whole Thing," has put together "The Stuff I Hate Journal." Among the prompts: What's the most condescending remark you've ever received? Who's the person in your life who always has to outdo everyone else? Think of the worst neighbors you've ever had and write the note you'd love to leave on their doorstep. Might be just the thing to help mom take the edge off. Adams Media. \$15.99.

SUPPORT ADOPTION

The nonprofit Helpusadopt.org sells beaded bracelets with a gold leaf charm symbolizing the family tree. It gives 100% of its proceeds to its grant program that helps families struggling with the cost of adoption. The bracelets come in a variety of colors and materials, including marble and glass. They're also accentuated by gold beads with the group's "Help Us Adopt" signature. Available at Helpusadopt.org. Prices range from \$50 for a single bracelet to \$175 for a stack.

The nonprofit Jockey Being Family Foundation, which funds post-adoption support, benefits from the sale of a plush bear, because why shouldn't mom have her own stuffed animal? Jockey sets aside \$5 per bear for the foundation's work. There are two bear versions dubbed Sam and Donna. They cost \$10 each at Jockey.com.

FOR MOMS WHO ROLL

The folks at Oprah Daily put this bike on the O list for Mother's Day: The Electra Loft 7D. And it's a beaut. At \$549.99, it comes in cream and seafoam green. It's lightweight, European style and has seven speeds. Considered a commuter bike, it has an aluminum frame and painted fenders. Tires are slightly wider than traditional road tires. Available at REI.

Consider a new suitcase, either carry-on size or larger. There's a huge selection out there so track down a sale.

Perhaps a balance ball would serve if your gift recipient is still working from home. There's one that comes with a traditional chair, including arms. \$237.99. For new moms, a ball could double as a new baby activity.

MISCELLANEOUS GOODNESS

Walking poles are abundant. Jetty Poles go a step further. They're walking poles that add an extra pound each for fuller-body intensity on a stroll or hike. The poles come with rubber soles made of the same material as car tires to help navigate a range of terrains. From Jetty Fitness, the poles come in lengths of petite (5 feet to 5 foot, 3 inches) to extra tall (5 feet, 11 inches to 6 feet, 2 inches). They come in blue, pink and yellow. A carry bag is included.

Don't forget about Pickleball. ProXR has on offer a paddle from Beth Bellamy. The special-edition paddle comes in a white design with a premium fiberglass face for extra pop. A cover is included. Bellamy is ranked No. 1 in senior world pro women's singles. \$179.99.

Got a crafter? Solve her storage crisis with the Dreambox. The rolling storage closet is full of adjustable shelving, rods, hooks and boxes. And, to reiterate, it's on wheels so can be stashed when not unfurled. There's lighting built in, along with an adjustable table, with options to add two additional side tables. Comes in two designs in white. Lots of other add-ons are available, like a white magnetic board that can be used to stick metal cutting dies onto. Making dreams come true sometimes doesn't come cheap. The

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base cost is around \$2,500.

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

Census rejecting some big-city complaints of 2020 undercounts

By MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

Some of the largest U.S. cities challenging their 2020 census numbers aren't getting the results they hoped for from the U.S. Census Bureau — an effort by Memphis to increase its official population resulted in three people being subtracted from its count during an initial appeal.

Some successes have come from challenges to totals of "group quarters" — dorms, jails and nursing homes. They were among the most difficult to count as campuses closed and prisons and nursing homes were locked down at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Census Bureau created a separate program to handle these challenges.

The Census Bureau has received more than 100 submissions in total for its two challenge programs from cities, towns and villages of all sizes across the U.S.

The challenges won't affect how many congressional seats each state got during the apportionment process, or the more detailed numbers used for redrawing political boundaries. But new numbers could shape how the federal government distributes \$1.5 trillion for transportation, health programs and other funding, which is most pertinent for cities.

State, tribal and local governments have until the end of June to file challenges, and any changes will be reflected in future population estimates that are calculated each year between censuses.

Here's where the challenges stand for Austin, Boston, Detroit, Memphis, Milwaukee and Phoenix.

AUSTIN

Austin, determined to be the 11th most populous U.S. city with 964,000 residents, claimed that 7,329 housing units were missed. With an average Austin household size of almost 2.4 people in 2020, that could mean more than 17,500 residents overlooked.

The Census Bureau, however, added only a single housing unit, and provided little information on its methodology, officials in Texas' capital said.

"This outcome is incredibly disappointing and disheartening," Mayor Kirk Watson said in a letter to the bureau.

City officials plan to meet with Census Bureau officials in the near future to get a more detailed explanation of how bureau officials reached their decision.

BOSTON

Officials in Boston, a hub of higher education, believed the 2020 census missed more than 6,000 students living in university housing and 419 inmates at local jails. The Census Bureau approved the submission from Boston, which had 675,647 residents in the 2020 census, of which the city claimed 41,776 were students living in student housing.

"It's no surprise that many of these special populations were miscounted due to the untimely and completely unanticipated emergence of a global pandemic that just happened to perfectly coincide with the 2020 count," said Susan Strate, senior program manager at the UMass Donahue Institute, which assisted Boston in its challenge.

DETROIT

Detroit filed two challenges. One said the count shortchanged Michigan's largest city by 8% of its occupied homes, overlooking tens of thousands of residents. The 2020 census found 639,111 Detroit residents, down from its 2019 population estimate of 670,052.

Detroit succeeded only with its group quarters challenge, adding 1,478 more people in 61 group quarters, said Corey McIsaac, the city's deputy director of media relations.

Detroit plans to challenge its annual population estimates through a separate program.

MEMPHIS

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Memphis launched two challenges, saying the census missed 15,895 residents, and that Memphis grew since 2010, for the first time in 50 years. The 2020 census, however, found 633,104 residents, a drop of 13,785 residents from 2010.

Memphis was unsuccessful in its appeal of its housing count in which the city said more than 10,700 people were missed. The Census Bureau actually subtracted a housing unit and three residents, a result Memphis is disputing. The other challenge deals with misapplied geographic boundaries impacting more than 5,100 people, and is still pending.

"The Census count was wrong," Allison Fouche, Memphis' chief communications officer, said in an email. "The gains we have seen in investments in Memphis, especially in the core city, over the last few years tell a different story."

MILWAUKEE

Wisconsin's largest city succeeded with its claim that more than 800 jail inmates were missed, part of a challenge organized with other Wisconsin municipalities.

Milwaukee's other appeal is still pending, claiming 16,500 residents were overlooked in houses and apartments, primarily in communities of color. The 2020 census put Milwaukee at 577,222 residents, down about 3% from 2010.

PHOENIX

Phoenix awaits a response to its challenge of its group quarters count, claiming 3,500 people in 192 facilities were missed, according to a letter from Mayor Kate Gallego obtained through a public records request.

The city said two jails were overlooked, along with drug and alcohol treatment centers, a group home for people with diabetes and Alzheimer's disease and a residential facility for juveniles needing mental health treatment.

The census determined that Phoenix was the fastest-growing big city in the U.S. between 2010 and 2020, increasing by 11.2% to 1.6 million residents and making it the fifth most populous U.S. city.

Follow Mike Schneider on Twitter at @MikeSchneiderAP

Before Musk picked Yaccarino as Twitter CEO, she challenged him on policies, and his own tweets

By DAVID HAMILTON AP Business Reporter

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — On Friday, Elon Musk announced that NBC Universal's Linda Yaccarino will serve as the new CEO of Twitter. Yaccarino is a longtime advertising executive credited with integrating and digitizing ad sales at NBCU. Her challenge now will be to woo back advertisers that have fled Twitter since Musk acquired it last year for \$44 billion.

Since taking ownership, Musk has fired thousands of Twitter employees, largely scrapped the trust-and-safety team responsible for keeping the site free of hate speech, harassment and misinformation, and blamed others — particularly mainstream media organizations, which he views as untrustworthy "competitors" to Twitter for ad dollars — for exaggerating Twitter's problems.

In April, the two met for an on-stage conversation at a marketing convention in Miami Beach, Florida. Here are some highlights of their conversation:

MUSK AND YACCARINO SPAR OVER CONTENT MODERATION

The Miami discussion was cordial, although both participants drew some distinct lines in the sand. On a few occasions, Yaccarino steered the conversation toward issues of content moderation and the apparent proliferation of hate speech and extremism since Musk took over the platform. She couched her questions in the context of whether Musk could help advertisers feel more welcome on the platform.

At one point, she asked if Musk was willing to let advertisers "influence" his vision for Twitter, explaining that it would help them get more excited about investing more money — "product development, ad safety, content moderation — that's what the influence is."

Musk shut her down. "It's totally cool to say that you want to have your advertising appear in certain places in Twitter and not in other places, but it is not cool to try to say what Twitter will do," he said.

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"And if that means losing advertising dollars, we lose it. But freedom of speech is paramount."

MUSK REPEATS: NO SPECIAL INFLUENCE FOR ADVERTISERS

Yaccarino returned to the issue a few moments later when she asked Musk if he planned to reinstate the company's "influence council," a once-regular meeting with marketing executives from several of Twitter's major advertisers. Musk again demurred.

"I would be worried about creating a backlash among the public," he said. "Because if the public thinks that their views are being determined by, you know, a small number of (marketing executives) in America, they will be, I think, upset about that."

Musk went on to acknowledge that feedback is important, and suggested Twitter should aim for a "sensible middle ground" that ensures the public "has a voice" while advertisers focus on the ordinary work of improving sales and the perception of their brands.

PRESSING ELON ON HIS OWN TWEETS

Musk didn't pass up the opportunity to sell the assembled marketers a new plan to solve Twitter's problems with objectionable tweets, which the company had announced the day before. Musk called the policy "freedom of speech but not freedom of reach," describing it as a way to limit the visibility of hate speech and similar problems without actually removing rule-breaking tweets.

Yaccarino took a swing. "Does it apply to your tweets?" Musk has a history of posting misinformation and occasionally offensive tweets, often in the early morning hours.

Musk acknowledged that it does, adding that his tweets can also be tagged with "community notes" that provide additional context to tweets. He added that his tweets receive no special boosts from Twitter.

"Will you agree to be more specific and not tweet after 3 a.m.?" Yaccarino asked.

"I will aspire to tweet less after 3 a.m.," Musk replied.

This story has been edited to correct Linda Yaccarino's name.

Modi's Hindu nationalist party loses India's Karnataka state in crucial polls ahead of national vote

By SHEIKH SAALIQ Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India's main opposition Congress party wrested control of the crucial southern Karnataka state from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist party, according to a near complete vote count Saturday that boosted its prospects ahead of national elections due next year.

The poll results are expected to energize the largely divided opposition that is banking on forming a united front to challenge Modi in next year's general election in which he will seek to extend his prime ministership for a third consecutive term. They will also help prospects of the Congress party, which was routed by Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party in the last two national polls and is striving to regain its political prominence nationwide.

The defeat in Karnataka means Modi's party, which was banking on his popularity, has lost the only southern state it has ever controlled and where its strident Hindu nationalist politics has found relatively slower reception than the rest of the country. Over the past several weeks, Modi had campaigned aggressively in Karnataka, home to 65 million people, and crisscrossed the state by holding huge roadshows.

With vote counting continuing, India's Election Commission said the Congress had crossed the majority mark of 113 in the state assembly by winning 123 seats and leading in 12 other constituencies. Modi's party won or was leading in 64 seats. Another regional party, the Janata Dal (Secular), won 20 seats.

Karnataka, one of the wealthiest states in India, voted on Wednesday and full results are expected later Saturday.

Karnataka is the second state Modi's party has lost to the Congress in the last six months. In December, the Congress unseated BJP in northern Himachal Pradesh, a small state tucked in the Himalayas.

Jairam Ramesh, the Congress general secretary, attributed the party's win to having fought the election

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campaign on local issues of "livelihood and food security, price rise, farmer distress, electricity supply, joblessness, and corruption."

"The PM injected divisiveness and attempted polarisation. The vote in Karnataka is for an engine in Bengaluru that will combine economic growth with social harmony," Ramesh wrote on Twitter.

Bengaluru, the state capital, is India's information technology hub and a sought-after workplace for young professionals.

"The markets of hate have been shut down and the shops of love have opened," Congress leader Rahul Gandhi told reporters at the party headquarters in New Delhi, where his jubilant supporters and party members burst firecrackers and danced to the beat of drums.

Over the past couple of years, Modi's party had been trying to maximize gains in Karnataka, where communal polarization between majority Hindus and minority Muslims has deepened after BJP leaders and supporters banned girls from wearing the headscarf as part of their school uniform. According to the 2011 census, India's most recent, 84% of Karnataka's people were Hindu, almost 13% Muslim and less than 2% Christian.

Initially, Modi's party promised to spur development and wooed voters with social welfare measures. However, in the lead-up to the polls it veered toward Hindu nationalism, its usual playbook campaign, and accused the Congress of disregarding Hindu values and appeasing minority groups, particularly Muslims. It also scrapped a 4% reservation in job and education quotas for Muslims and distributed them to two Hindu caste groups.

The Congress built its campaign by targeting Modi's party over rising inflation, allegations of corruption and poor infrastructure development in the state, while promising electricity subsidies, rations to poor families, and financial assistance to unemployed graduates.

The polls were also seen as yet another faceoff between Modi and Gandhi, the scion of the dynastic Congress party leadership who was convicted of making defamatory remarks about the prime minister's last name during an election rally in 2019. It led to Gandhi's ouster from Parliament in March and he risks losing his eligibility to run in elections for the next eight years if a court does not overturn his conviction.

Late last year, Gandhi set on a 3,500-kilometer (2,185-mile) walking tour of Indian cities, towns and villages to rejuvenate the party and win the people's support.

The election in Karnataka is the first of five crucial state polls this year. They are seen as an indicator of voter sentiment ahead of national elections next year.

More AP coverage of the Asia-Pacific region is at <https://apnews.com/hub/asia-pacific>

Today in History: May 14, Freedom Riders attacked

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, May 14, the 134th day of 2023. There are 231 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 14, 1940, the Netherlands surrendered to invading German forces during World War II.

On this date:

In 1643, Louis XIV became King of France at age 4 upon the death of his father, Louis XIII.

In 1796, English physician Edward Jenner inoculated 8-year-old James Phipps against smallpox by using cowpox matter.

In 1804, the Lewis and Clark expedition to explore the Louisiana Territory as well as the Pacific Northwest left camp near present-day Hartford, Illinois.

In 1948, according to the current-era calendar, the independent state of Israel was proclaimed in Tel Aviv by David Ben-Gurion, who became its first prime minister; U.S. President Harry S. Truman immediately recognized the new nation.

In 1955, representatives from eight Communist bloc countries, including the Soviet Union, signed the

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Warsaw Pact in Poland. (The Pact was dissolved in 1991.)

In 1961, Freedom Riders were attacked by violent mobs in Anniston and Birmingham, Alabama.

In 1988, 27 people, mostly teens, were killed when their church bus collided with a pickup truck going the wrong direction on a highway near Carrollton, Kentucky. (Truck driver Larry Mahoney served 9 1/2 years in prison for manslaughter.)

In 1998, singer-actor Frank Sinatra died at a Los Angeles hospital at age 82. The hit sitcom "Seinfeld" aired its final episode after nine years on NBC.

In 2001, the Supreme Court ruled 8-0 that there is no exception in federal law for people to use marijuana for medical purposes.

In 2003, more than 100 immigrants were abandoned in a locked trailer at a Texas truck stop; 19 of them died. (Truck driver Tyrone Williams was later sentenced to nearly 34 years in prison for his role in the deaths.)

In 2008, the Interior Department declared the polar bear a threatened species because of the loss of Arctic sea ice.

In 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned doctors about a serious rare inflammatory condition in children linked with the coronavirus.

Ten years ago: In an op-ed appearing in The New York Times, Oscar-winning actress Angelina Jolie said she'd undergone a preventive double mastectomy after learning she carried a gene that made it extremely likely she would get breast cancer. Flamboyant huckster Billie Sol Estes died in DeCordova Bend, Texas, at age 88.

Five years ago: Israel and the U.S. held a festive inauguration ceremony for the new American Embassy in Jerusalem; just a few miles away, Israeli forces shot and killed nearly 60 Palestinians and wounded hundreds of others during mass protests along the Gaza border that were the culmination of weekly demonstrations aimed at breaking a border blockade. The Supreme Court cleared the way for states coast to coast to legalize betting on sports. Writer Tom Wolfe, who chronicled the space race in "The Right Stuff" before turning his satiric wit to such novels as "The Bonfire of the Vanities," died in New York at the age of 88.

One year ago: A gunman wearing body armor opened fire in a supermarket in a predominantly Black neighborhood in Buffalo, New York, killing at least 10 people before being taken into custody. Russian troops began withdrawing from around Ukraine's second-largest city after bombarding it for weeks, as Kyiv and Moscow's forces engaged in a grinding battle for the country's eastern industrial heartland. Bernard Bigot, a French scientist leading a vast international effort to demonstrate that nuclear fusion could be a viable source of energy, died at age 72.

Today's Birthdays: Photo-realist artist Richard Estes is 91. Actor Dame Sian Phillips is 90. Former Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., is 81. Movie producer George Lucas is 79. Guitarist Gene Cornish is 79. Actor Meg Foster is 75. Movie director Robert Zemeckis is 72. Rock singer David Byrne is 71. Actor Tim Roth is 62. Rock singer Ian Astbury (The Cult) is 61. Rock musician C.C. (aka Cecil) DeVille is 61. Actor Danny Huston is 61. Rock musician Mike Inez (Alice In Chains) is 57. Fabrice Morvan (ex-Milli Vanilli) is 57. R&B singer Raphael Saadiq is 57. Actor Cate Blanchett is 54. Singer Danny Wood (New Kids on the Block) is 54. Movie writer-director Sofia Coppola (KOH'-pah-lah) is 52. Former Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen is 51. Actor Gabriel Mann is 51. Singer Natalie Appleton (All Saints) is 50. Singer Shanice is 50. Actor Carla Jimenez is 49. Rock musician Henry Garza (Los Lonely Boys) is 45. Alt-country musician-singer Ketch Secor is 45. Rock singer-musician Dan Auerbach is 44. Rock musician Mike Retondo (Plain White T's) is 42. Actor Amber Tamblyn is 40. Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg is 39. Actor Lina Esco is 38. NFL player Rob Gronkowski is 34. Actor Miranda Cosgrove is 30.