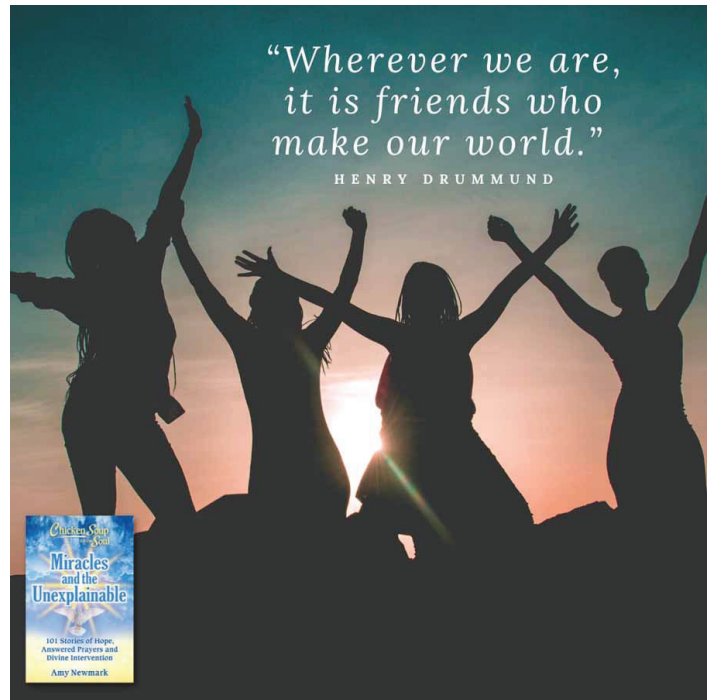


# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 1 of 77

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Water reservoir filling alert](#)
- [3- Baseball Stories and Stat Sheets](#)
- [7- Sunday Extras](#)
- [25- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [26- Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [27- Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [28- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
- [30- EarthTalk - Kinetic Energy](#)
- [31- Weather Pages](#)
- [36- Daily Devotional](#)
- [37- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [38- Subscription Form](#)
- [39- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [40- News from the Associated Press](#)



## Groton Community Calendar

### Sunday, June 4

United Methodist: Worship with communion: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran worship with communion, 9 a.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.

St. John's worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Zion worship with communion, 11 a.m.

Amateurs at Redfield, 7 p.m.

Legion at Milbank Tourney

### Monday, June 5

Senior Menu: Ranch chicken breast, boiled potatoes, mixed vegetables, pineapple tidbits, whole wheat bread.

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

**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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Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.  
Jr. Teener hosts Aberdeen Smitty's, 5:30 p.m. (2)  
U10BB R/W hosts Britton, 5:30 p.m. (2)  
U8BB Blue hosts Britton, 5:30 p.m. (2)  
U10SB at Doland, 7 p.m. (1)  
State Golf at Rapid City

### Tuesday, June 6

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Senior Menu: Beef stroganoff, noodles, squash, cookie, apple sauce.

Olive Grove: Ladies League, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

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

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

Legion hosts W.I.N., 5 p.m. (1)

Jr. Legion hosts W.I.N., 7 p.m. (1)

U12BB at Webster, 6 p.m. (2)

U10BB R/B at Webster, 6 p.m. (2)

U8BB R/B hosts Webster, 6 p.m. (2)

State Golf at Rapid City

## Groton City



# RED ALERT

**Water restrictions are still in place until June 7th. The city is currently attempting to fill the reservoir, but WEB water can barely keep up keeping the tower full with the city-wide usage. Fines will be imposed for those violating the water restrictions that have been in place since the middle of May. Filling of the reservoir started at 5:30 Saturday morning. Please conserve water for the next few days and absolutely no outdoor watering with sprinklers or irrigation systems. Watering your garden or flowers with a watering can or garden hose is acceptable.**

**Your cooperation is greatly appreciated!**

### **City Ordinance on Water Restrictions**

8-4-12 Water - Restrictions. The city may limit or prohibit temporarily the use of water from the city distribution system for any purpose, except domestic purposes within the dwellings of consumers or in business establishments, during emergencies, in the event of plant breakdown, prolonged drought or shortage of water supply for any reason in order to maintain maximum fire protection efficiency. The Mayor shall authorize the imposition of these restrictions. The city will attempt to notify affected utility customers if time permits of any such limitation. Any person violating the terms of such prohibition or restriction after such notice shall upon conviction thereof be subject to the penalties provided in this ordinance (11- 1-1). Water service to the premises involved may be discontinued entirely during emergency.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 3 of 77

## Two Groton Legion Post 39 Pitchers Combine In Shutout Victory Against SD Claremont Post 262 Legion

Groton Legion Post 39 defeated SD Claremont Post 262 Legion 8-0 on Saturday as two pitchers combined to throw a shutout. Brevin Flihs struck out Danny Feist to finish off the game.

Groton Legion Post 39 got things moving in the first inning, when Tate Larson was hit by a pitch, driving in a run.

Groton Legion Post 39 put up three runs in the second inning. Bradin Althoff and Larson all contributed in the big inning with RBIs.

A single by Jack Podoll in the third inning was a positive for SD Claremont Post 262 Legion.

Althoff was credited with the victory for Groton Legion Post 39. The southpaw lasted five innings, allowing two hits and zero runs while striking out nine. Flihs threw one inning in relief out of the bullpen.

Ben Gustafson took the loss for SD Claremont Post 262 Legion. The pitcher lasted five innings, allowing nine hits and eight runs while striking out two.

Groton Legion Post 39 racked up ten hits on the day. Colby Dunker, Flihs, and Larson all had multiple hits for Groton Legion Post 39. Larson, Flihs, and Dunker each managed two hits to lead Groton Legion Post 39. Groton Legion Post 39 was sure-handed and didn't commit a single error. Cade Larson made the most plays with ten.

Grant Cutler went 2-for-3 at the plate to lead SD Claremont Post 262 Legion in hits.

## Groton Legion Clinches Lead in Eighth Inning to Defeat Milbank

Groton Legion Post 39 snatched the lead late in the game in a 20-12 victory over Milbank Post 9 on Saturday. The game was tied at ten with Groton Legion Post 39 batting in the top of the eighth when Brevin Flihs tripled on a 1-0 count, scoring two runs.

Groton Legion Post 39 was boosted by Flihs who went 4-for-7 at the plate. Flihs singled in the fourth, tripled in the sixth, doubled in the seventh, and tripled in the eighth.

Groton Legion Post 39 got on the board in the first inning. Tate Larson drove in one when Larson singled.

Groton Legion Post 39 knotted the game up at ten in the top of the seventh inning. Larson singled on a 1-0 count, scoring one run.

After Groton Legion Post 39 scored three runs in the top of the fourth, Post 9 answered with three of their own. Groton Legion Post 39 scored when an error scored one run for Groton Legion Post 39, Cole Simon singled on a 2-1 count, scoring one run, and Bradin Althoff doubled on the first pitch of the at bat, scoring one run. Post 9 then answered when Merik Junker drew a walk, scoring one run, Owen Tesch drew a walk, scoring one run, and Sage Locke was struck by a pitch, driving in a run.

Flihs pitched Groton Legion Post 39 to victory. Flihs lasted two innings, allowing five hits and two runs while striking out five and walking one. Colby Dunker and Caden McInerney entered the game out of the bullpen and helped to close out the game in relief.

Locke took the loss for Post 9. Locke went two-thirds of an inning, allowing zero runs on one hit and walking zero.

Simon started the game for Groton Legion Post 39. The righthander surrendered eight runs on seven hits over three and two-thirds innings, striking out five. Joe Schulte started the game for Post 9. The hurler allowed 20 hits and 20 runs over seven and a third innings, striking out seven.

Groton Legion Post 39 tallied 21 hits on the day. Dunker, Flihs, Larson, Braxton Imrie, Simon, Ryan Groeblichhoff, and Althoff all managed multiple hits for Groton Legion Post 39. Flihs and Dunker each collected four hits to lead Groton Legion Post 39. Groton Legion Post 39 tore up the base paths, as two players stole at least two bases. Teylor Diegel led the way with two.

Post 9 tallied 13 hits. Junker, Justus Osborn, Schulte, and Josh Pederson each managed multiple hits for Post 9. Junker went 4-for-5 at the plate to lead Post 9 in hits.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 4 of 77

SD Claremont Post 262 Legion **0 - 8** Groton Legion Post 39

📍 Home 📅 Saturday June 03, 2023

	1	2	3	4	5	6	R	H	E
SDCL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3
GRTN	3	3	0	1	0	1	8	10	0

## BATTING

SD Claremont Post	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
B Gustafson (P, C)	2	0	0	0	1	0
G Cutler (SS)	3	0	2	0	0	0
T Leidtholt (C, P)	3	0	1	0	0	2
D Feist (3B)	2	0	0	0	1	2
C Dauwen (CF)	2	0	0	0	0	1
R Bruns (1B)	2	0	0	0	0	1
J Podoll (2B)	1	0	1	0	0	0
C Cutler (2B)	1	0	0	0	0	0
B Hanse (LF)	2	0	0	0	0	2
C Glines (RF)	1	0	0	0	0	1
K Keough (RF)	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>

**TB:** T Leidtholt, J Podoll, G Cutler 2, **SB:** J Podoll, **LOB:** 4

Groton Legion Post	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
B Flihs (3B, P)	4	2	2	0	0	0
C Simon (CF, SS)	2	2	1	0	2	1
B Althoff (P, RF)	3	3	0	1	1	0
T Larson (1B)	2	1	2	2	1	0
R Groeblichhoff (...)	3	0	1	1	1	0
C Larson (C)	3	0	0	1	1	0
C Dunker (LF)	4	0	2	2	0	0
B Imrie (2B)	3	0	1	0	0	0
T Diegel (RF, CF)	3	0	1	0	0	1
CR: K Kucker	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>

**2B:** T Larson 2, T Diegel, B Flihs, **TB:** C Dunker 2, T Larson 4, T Diegel 2, B Flihs 3, C Simon, B Imrie, R Groeblichhoff, **HBP:** T Larson, **SB:** B Flihs 3, B Althoff, **LOB:** 7

## PITCHING

SD Claremon	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
B Gustafson	5.0	9	8	5	5	2	0
T Leidtholt	0.0	1	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

**L:** B Gustafson, **P-S:** T Leidtholt 9-4, B Gustafson 103-62, **WP:** B Gustafson, **HBP:** B Gustafson, **BF:** T Leidtholt 2, B Gustafson 32

Groton Legio	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
B Althoff	5.0	2	0	0	2	9	0
B Flihs	1.0	2	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>

**W:** B Althoff, **P-S:** B Flihs 9-5, B Althoff 78-47, **BF:** B Flihs 3, B Althoff 19

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 5 of 77

## Groton Legion Post 39 **20 - 12** Post 9

📍 Away 📅 Saturday June 03, 2023

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	R	H	E
GRTN	1	0	0	3	0	2	4	10	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1</b>
PST9	3	1	1	3	0	2	0	2	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>

### BATTING

Groton Legion Post	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
B Flihs (2B, P)	7	3	4	6	0	1
C Simon (P, CF)	5	2	2	2	2	0
B Althoff (RF, LF,...	5	2	2	1	1	1
T Larson (1B)	5	1	2	3	1	0
R Groeblichhoff (...)	5	1	2	1	1	1
C Larson (C)	6	1	1	2	0	2
C Dunker (LF, P, LF)	4	4	4	0	2	0
K Kucker (SS)	5	2	1	2	1	2
T Diegel (CF, LF)	3	2	0	0	0	0
C McInerney (RF...)	1	1	1	0	0	0
B Imrie (2B)	2	1	2	2	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>

**2B:** C Dunker 2, B Flihs, B Althoff, **3B:** B Flihs 2, R Groeblichhoff, B Althoff, **TB:** B Imrie 2, C Simon 2, C McInerney, C Dunker 6, B Flihs 9, R Groeblichhoff 4, B Althoff 5, T Larson 2, K Kucker, C Larson, **SB:** C Simon 2, T Diegel 2, **LOB:** 12

### PITCHING

Groton Legion	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
C Simon	3.2	7	8	6	6	5	0
C Dunker	1.2	1	2	2	3	3	0
<b>C McInerney</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
B Flihs	2.0	5	2	2	1	5	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>

**W:** B Flihs, **P-S:** C Simon 87-53, C McInerney 9-4, C Dunker 40-17, B Flihs 43-28, **HBP:** C Dunker 2, **BF:** C Simon 24, C McInerney 3, C Dunker 11, B Flihs 12

Post 9	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
J Pederson (SS)	6	1	2	1	0	3
J Schulte (P, 3B)	5	3	2	0	1	0
J Osborn (C)	5	2	3	1	1	0
M Junker (2B)	5	1	4	2	1	0
T Hallquist (1B)	5	2	1	1	1	3
O Tesch (CF)	3	1	1	2	2	2
S Locke (3B, P)	1	0	0	2	2	1
R Rabe (RF)	3	1	0	1	2	3
M Miester (LF)	2	0	0	1	1	1
CR: S Femling	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>

**2B:** M Junker, **3B:** M Junker, J Osborn, **TB:** M Junker 7, J Pederson 2, J Schulte 2, T Hallquist, O Tesch, J Osborn 5, **SAC:** M Miester, **SF:** S Locke, **CS:** M Junker, **HBP:** S Locke, M Miester, **SB:** M Junker, J Schulte, M Miester, J Osborn, **LOB:** 14

Post 9	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
J Schulte	7.1	20	20	17	8	7	0
S Locke	0.2	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>

**L:** S Locke, **P-S:** J Schulte 175-98, S Locke 18-12, **WP:** J Schulte, S Locke, **BF:** J Schulte 53, S Locke 4

## Groton Jr. Teeners Grabs Lead in Fourth Inning to Defeat Moberidge

Groton Jr. Teeners snatched the lead late in the game in an 8-7 victory over Moberidge on Saturday. The game was tied at seven with Groton Jr. Teeners batting in the top of the fourth when.

Despite falling down by five runs in the second inning, Moberidge tried to fight back. Moberidge scored four runs in the failed comeback. Trueth Crow Ghost, Wesley Arnott, Delmar Erickson, and Tyrel Bleyle all picked up RBIs in the rally.

In the first inning, Groton Jr. Teeners got their offense started. Ethan Kroll hit into a fielder's choice, scoring one run.

Moberidge evened things up at seven in the bottom of the third inning.

Groton Jr. Teeners tallied four runs in the second inning. The offensive firepower by Groton Jr. Teeners was led by Quinn Cogley, Shaydon Wood, Alex Abeln, and Ryder Schelle, all sending runners across the plate with RBIs in the inning.

Moberidge scored three runs in the second inning. Moberidge offense in the inning was led by Crow Ghost, Arnott, and Erickson, who each had RBIs in the inning.

Nick Groeblichhoff led things off on the hill for Groton Jr. Teeners. Groeblichhoff surrendered seven runs on four hits over three innings, striking out five.

Mack Saxon toed the rubber for Moberidge. The righty lasted one and one-third innings, allowing zero hits and six runs. Arnott threw two and two-thirds innings in relief out of the bullpen.

Schelle went 1-for-2 at the plate to lead Groton Jr. Teeners in hits.

Moberidge racked up four hits. Crow Ghost and Bleyle each collected multiple hits for Moberidge.

Moberidge won the second game, 12-1, scoring four runs in the first inning and eight in the second. Groton scored one run in the third inning. Lincoln Krause hit a single to get on base. He advanced to second on an Alex Abeln grounder and scored when Ethan Kroll hit a single line drive to center field. Ethan Kroll, TC Schuster, Braeden Flihs and Lincoln Krause all had a hit.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 7 of 77

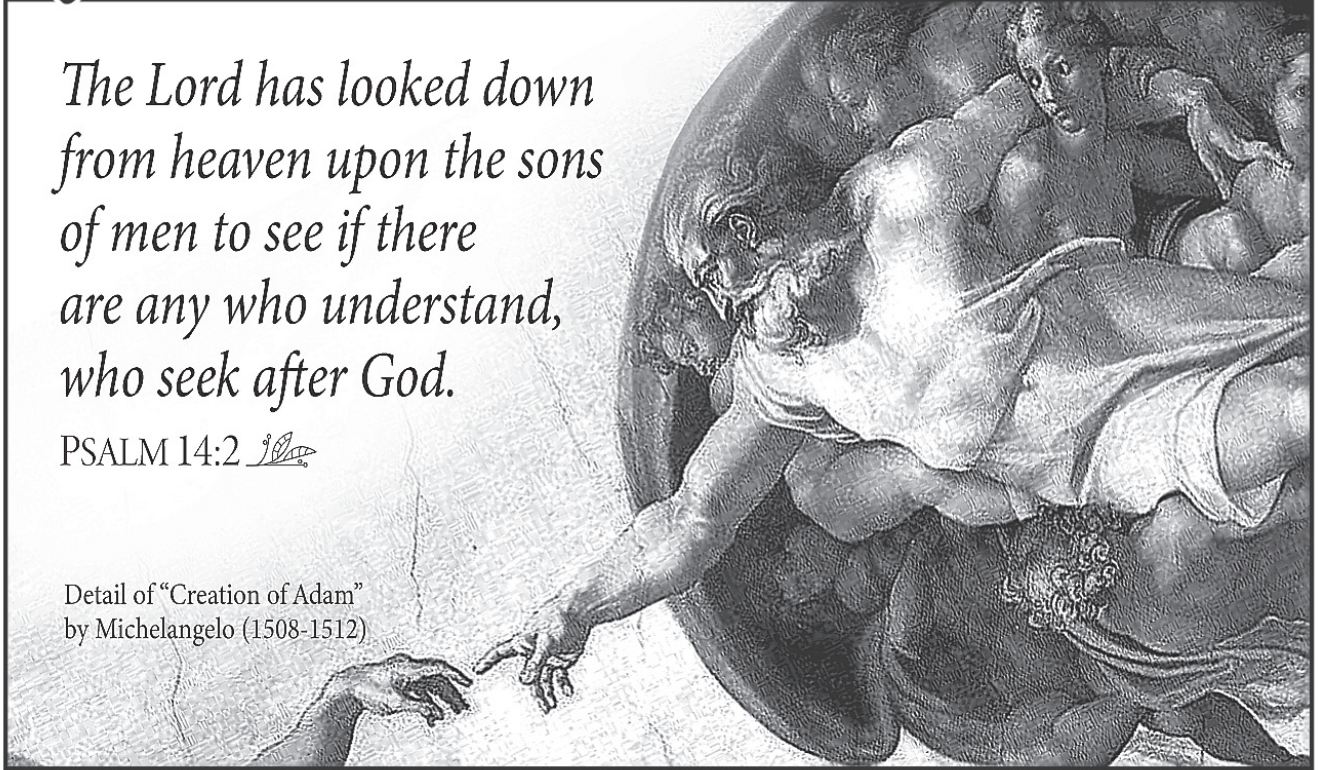


## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

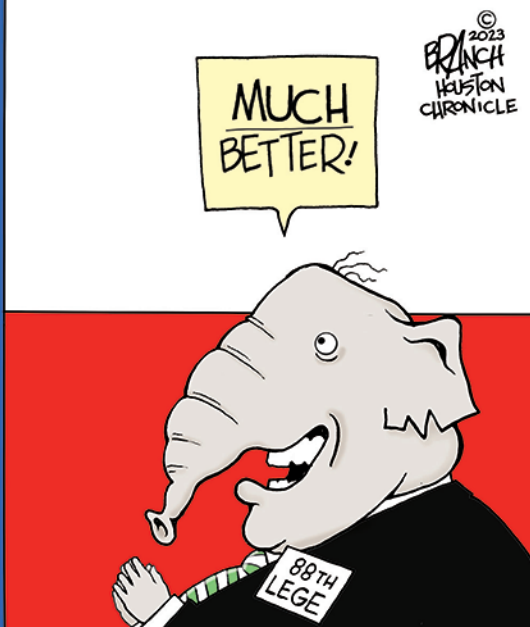
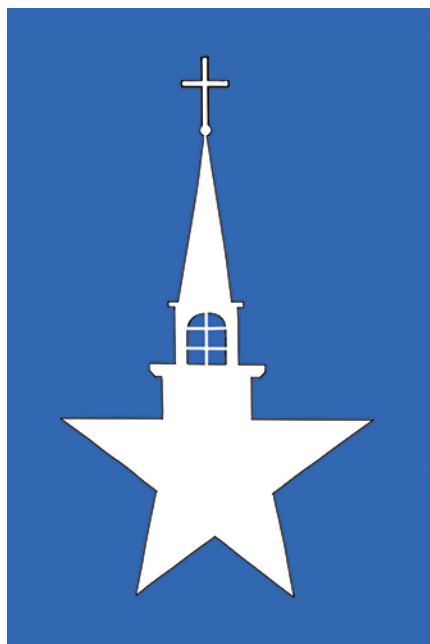
*The Lord has looked down  
from heaven upon the sons  
of men to see if there  
are any who understand,  
who seek after God.*

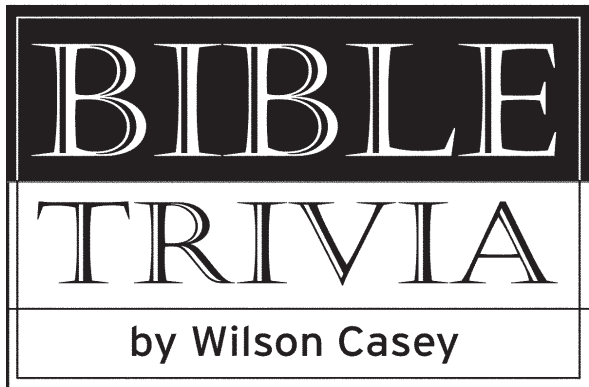
PSALM 14:2 *ISA*

Detail of "Creation of Adam"  
by Michelangelo (1508-1512)



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

2. Which prophet was trapped at a wall by an angel with drawn sword? *Daniel, Balaam, Jeremiah, Nathan*

3. In Proverbs 21:17, he that loveth wine and oil shall not be ...? *Pure, Blamed, Liked, Rich*

4. From Genesis 37:3, who had a coat of many colors? *Abraham, Goliath, Adam, Joseph*

5. Which Hebrew woman became Queen of Persia? *Sarah, Esther, Deborah, Ruth*

6. From Judges 10:2, how many years did Tola judge Israel? *1, 7, 23, 110*

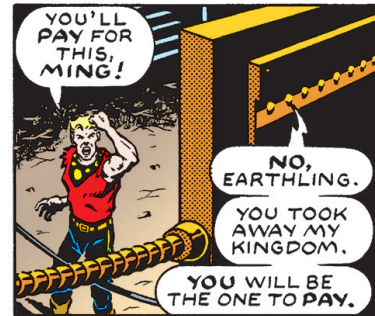
ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Balaam, 3) Rich, 4) Joseph, 5) Esther, 6) 23

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

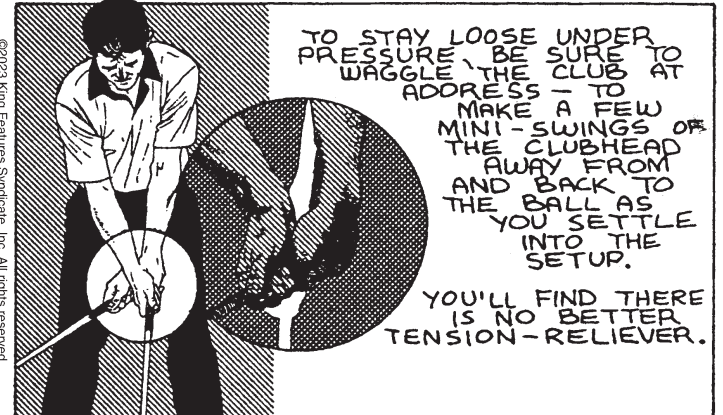
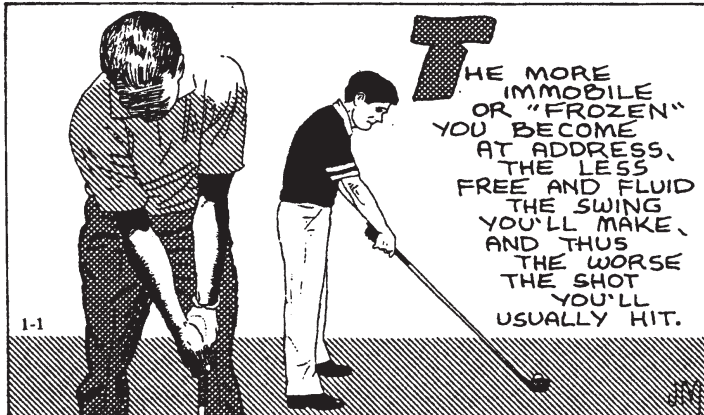


# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 9 of 77



## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





## Do Companies Advertise Ineffective Supplements?

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I see supplements advertised on television that are supposed to clear “brain fog” and do many other beneficial things. Are these any good, and can they actually do the things that they claim? If they are effective, why aren’t they sold at drugstores? If not, how is it that companies are allowed to make these false claims and advertise these supplements on television? — *J.L.P.*

**ANSWER:** I believe that there are over-the-counter supplements that are effective for treating some medical conditions, and there are a few instances in which there is strong evidence of benefit, such as a vitamin and mineral formula to slow progression of macular degeneration. Very often, there isn’t enough data to be sure a supplement is either effective or ineffective.

It is certainly true that supplement companies sometimes make claims that they cannot support. By law, supplement advertising can claim to support a body part or function (which is why you see claims like “supports heart health”), but these claims must be followed by: “This statement has not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.”

Often, the advertising for a supplement is at odds with that statement, and there are many instances of supplement manufacturers having to pay fines or change their advertising. A supplement that is found to be unsafe can be removed from the market by the FDA. In addition, any substance can be toxic if taken at a high enough dose. Vitamin A supplements are a good example.

The U.S. FDA does not regulate sup-

plements, and supplement manufacturers do not need to prove that their products are effective. Further, there is strong evidence that some supplements sold in the U.S. do not contain as much (or any!) of the supplement they claim to provide. I always recommend getting a supplement that is verified by a third party, such as the U.S. Pharmacopeia or the National Science Foundation, if possible.

There are very few supplements proven to prevent problems, so I generally recommend against supplements in people who are healthy and have no symptoms. This definitely includes vitamin supplements. Supplements may have benefit in relieving symptoms for some less-serious medical conditions, and physicians should be (or get) familiar with more common supplements, their potential benefits and their toxicities.

\*\*\*

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I read your recent article on lichen planus. I have suffered with this for over two years. After doing a lot of research, I found that many people, like me, have diabetes. Nothing helped it, and the last treatment was too dangerous for me, although it did help me to lose 35 pounds and my sugar levels are now healthy. I understand that I can never get rid of lichen planus and that it’s just in remission now. — *N.T.*

**ANSWER:** Most studies show that people with diabetes are somewhat more likely to develop lichen planus (an itchy skin condition). About 1.5% of people with diabetes will develop lichen planus, compared to 0.75% of people without diabetes.

Unfortunately, I could not confirm that either weight loss or better diabetes control improves the symptoms of lichen planus. Sometimes lichen planus becomes inactive on its own. However, there are many good reasons to keep diabetes under control, and I am publishing your letter in the hope that it helps someone else.

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 11 of 77



## Lily-Rose Depp and Abel Tesfaye star in "The Idol."

Courtesy of Max

"Avatar: The Way of Water" (PG-13) -- James Cameron's latest blockbuster reaches Disney's streaming service on June 7, after bringing home \$2.3 billion at the box office. As the sequel to Cameron's 2009 film, "The Way of Water" takes place 16 years after Jake Sully (Sam Worthington) became part of the Na'vi, where he is now the chief and raises a family alongside his mate, Neytiri (Zoe Saldana). But the Resources Development Administration is as determined as ever to colonize Pandora, so Jake and his family are forced

to move away from their home toward the reef people, where they learn the way of water. If you thought the first film was visually appealing, the special effects of the second film will blow your mind. (Disney+)

"The Idol" (TV-MA) -- "Euphoria" creator Sam Levinson continues to push the envelope when it comes to his shows. "The Idol," his latest project, focuses on pop star Jocelyn (Lily-Rose Depp) following a nervous breakdown that put her career on halt. Jocelyn meets modern-day cult leader Tedros (Abel Tesfaye), who ignites the fire inside her to get her career pumping again. This project, however, hasn't had the smoothest start. After the original director, Amy Seimetz, exited the show, Levinson took over and implemented Tesfaye's critiques that the show was "leaning too much into a female perspective." Following its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival, critics have called the show perverse, toxic and regressive. The first episode is out now on streaming for you to decide for yourself. (Max)

"Shooting Stars" (PG-13) -- Based on the 2009 book about LeBron James' beginnings in basketball, this film centers on James and three of his best friends who've been playing basketball together since they were kids. Even though the boys play for their own reasons, the love of the game and the love for their "Fab Four" unite them. So, when their coach threatens to separate them, they collectively decide to switch to a Catholic school to remain together. But this transfer comes with great obstacles that could tear the Fab Four apart on their way to securing a championship for their new school. "Stranger Things" star Caleb McLaughlin stars in this sports biopic out now. (Peacock)

"Flamin' Hot" (PG-13) -- Eva Longoria makes her feature film directorial debut with quite the savory tale -- the origin story of a cherished snack called Flamin' Hot Cheetos. Richard Montanez gets a new job as a Frito-Lay janitor, but he quickly learns that his factory could close because Frito-Lay isn't producing enough orders. Then, one day, an idea comes to him. What Frito-Lay needed was a spicy chip, a snack that the underrecognized Hispanic population could really enjoy. The rest is finger-lickin' history. Jesse Garcia, Dennis Haysbert, Tony Shalhoub and Matt Walsh star in this biographical comedy-drama out on June 9. (Hulu)

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 12 of 77



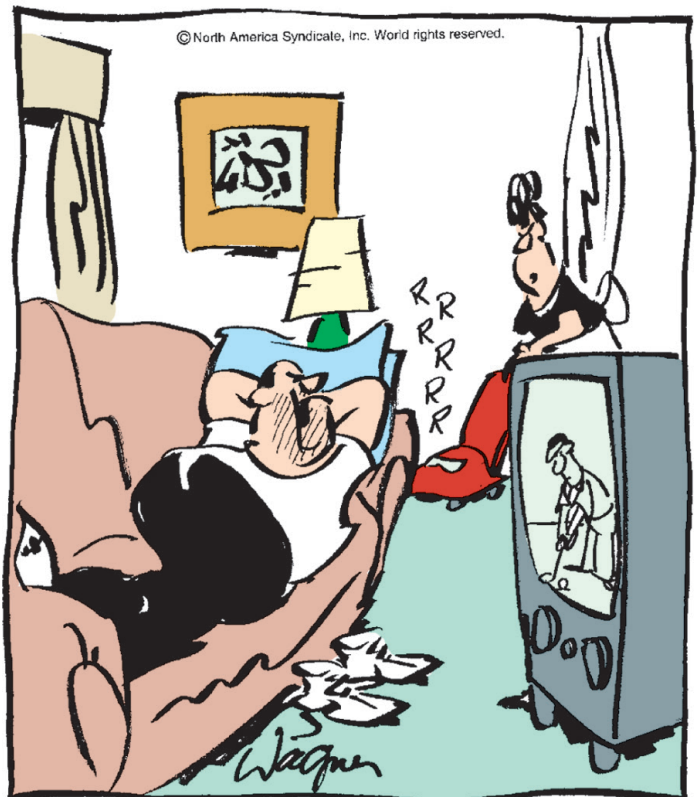
1. Name the artist who wrote and released "The Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A."
2. Which artist released "You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine"?
3. The video for which Boy George and Culture Club song was filmed aboard a riverboat?
4. Which duo wrote and released "She's Gone"?
5. Name the song that contains these lyrics: "I live my life the way, To keep you coming back to me, Everything I do is for you."

## Answers

1. Donna Fargo, in 1972. A rumor, later denied, was that Fargo was sued by Disney for one specific line in the lyrics.
2. Lou Rawls, in 1976. The song opened up his career, ending up at the top of both the R&B and easy listening charts.
3. "Karma Chameleon," in 1983. It was filmed at Desborough Island near Surrey, England.
4. Daryl Hall and John Oates, in 1973.
5. "Quit Playing Games (with My Heart)," by the Backstreet Boys in 1996. When it began to rain during filming of the video, the boys took off their shirts and continued filming. MTV didn't want to air the video due to the shirt portion but relented after the phone-in responses on Total Request Live.

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## GRIN and BEAR IT Wagner



"Don't do that while he's putting!"

## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



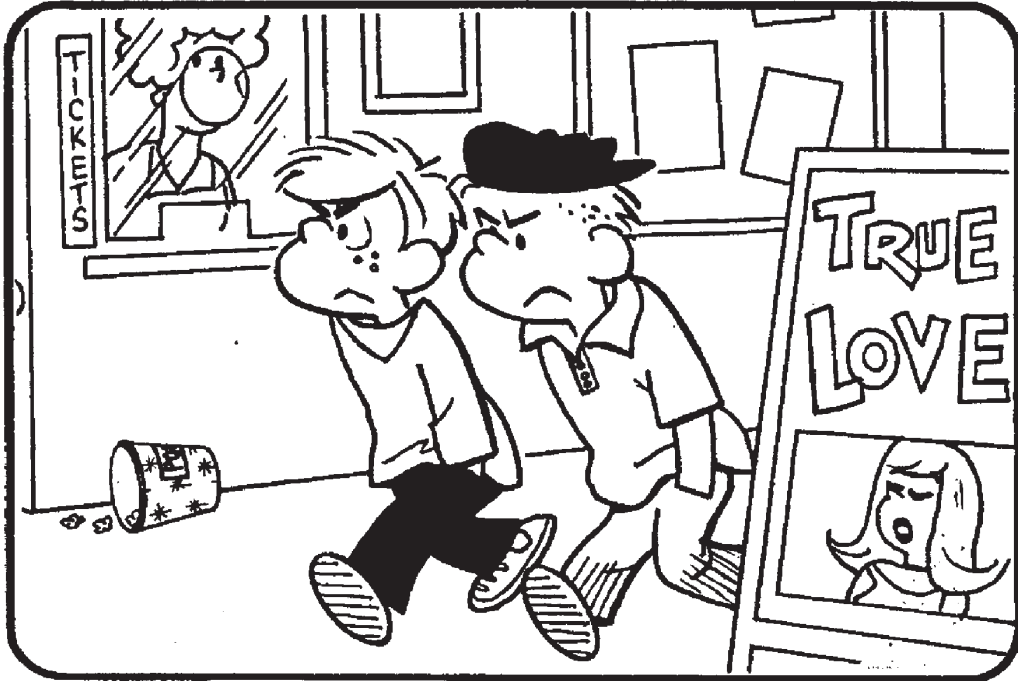
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# Groton Daily Independent

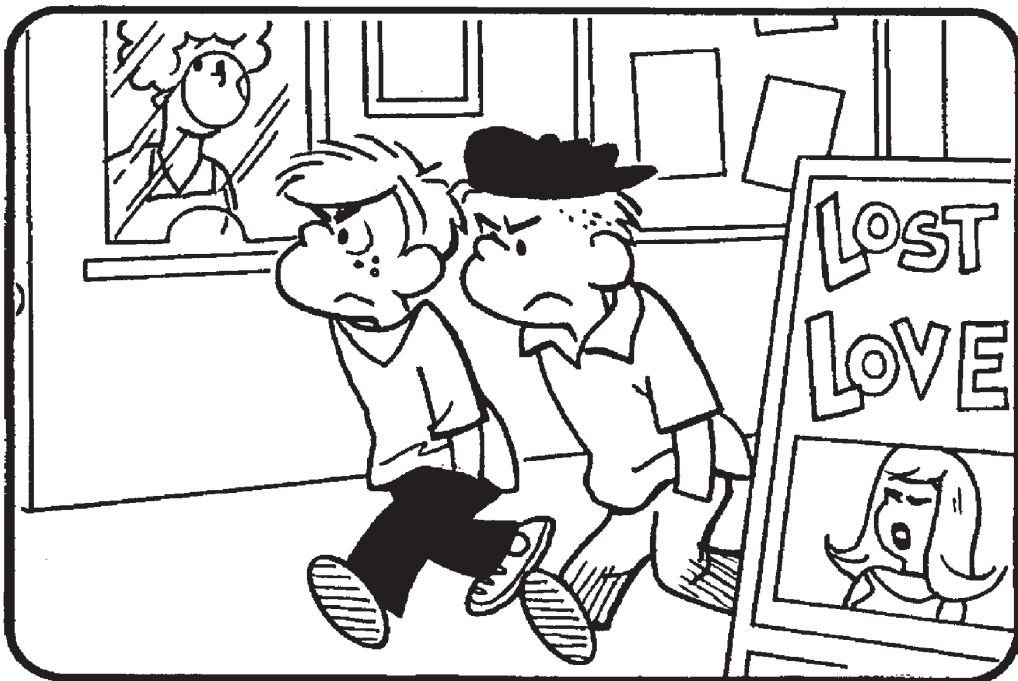
Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 13 of 77

## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY  
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Sign is missing. 2. Window opening differs. 3. Container is missing. 4. Sleeve is shorter. 5. Buttons are missing. 6. Tilt differs.

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# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 14 of 77



\* Purchase a large tub of cookie dough, and when you make the first batch, go ahead and portion out the remaining dough by teaspoons onto a cold cookie sheet. Freeze as balls, and then replace them in the container they came from. Refreeze. Now you can take out only as many cookies as you would like to make, and cook them straight from frozen.

\* "This is a tip for painting stairs. Paint every other stair. Let them dry. Then paint the other stairs. This will make your staircase usable the whole way through your paint job." -- R.L. in Michigan

\* Spray old artificial flowers with hair spray to make the look fresh and vibrant.

\* Many food containers can be reused to store personal items. Glass jars can be cleaned and labels removed. Paperboard boxes can be custom trimmed and covered with leftover wrapping paper or wallpaper. Paper milk cartons can be cleaned with soap and water, dried thoroughly then painted to hold a variety of items. Don't overlook the many possibilities in a piece of recycling or trash.

\* Use plain household vinegar to kill grass that grows in the cracks of walkways and driveways.

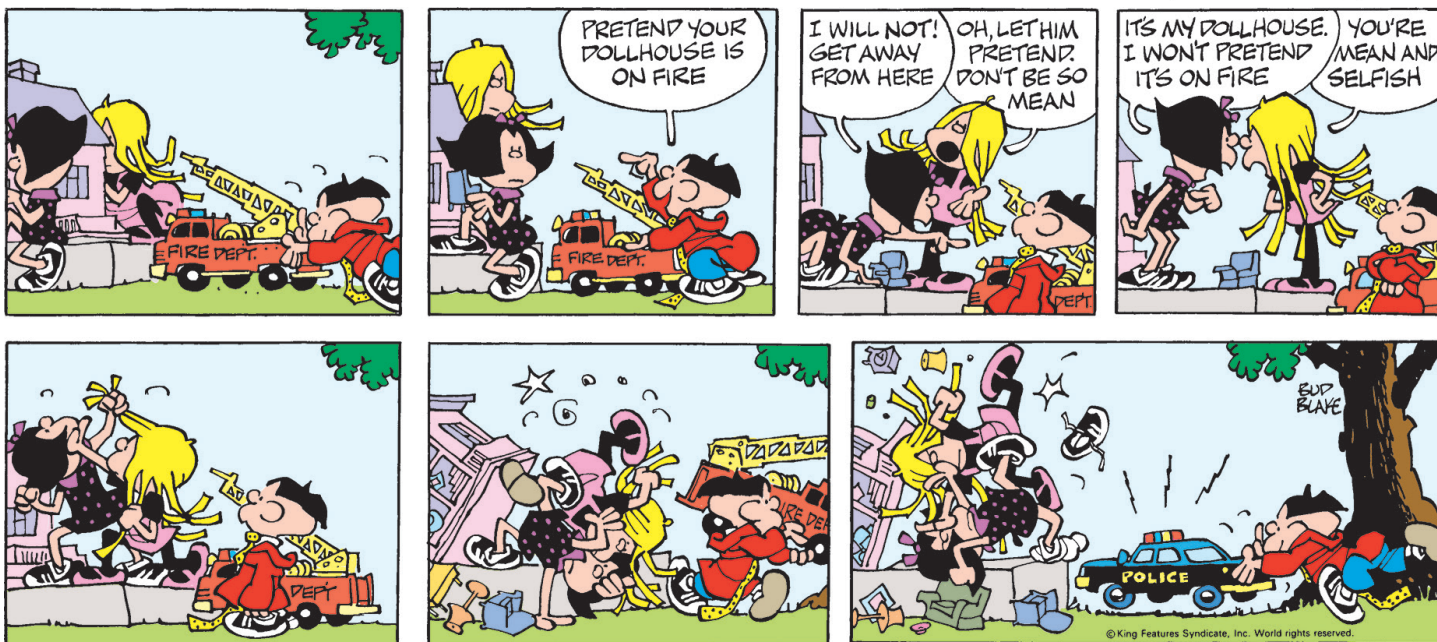
\* "Use bathroom fans appropriately. Make sure to turn them off. They vent air to the outside, and that includes your paid-for air conditioning, too. Close the bathroom door after showering and let the fan run for about 10 minutes. Then turn it off." -- D.A. in Texas

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

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## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 15 of 77

## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Cave flier
- 4 Beans
- 8 Experts
- 12 Punk rock off-shoot
- 13 Classic theaters
- 14 Global septet
- 15 Ages and ages
- 16 When bar drinks are discounted
- 18 First-rate, in slang
- 20 Perched
- 21 Apothecary measure
- 24 Of the Arctic
- 28 Annual celebration for a saint

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16				17				
18			19				20					
			21		22	23		24		25	26	27
28	29	30					31		32			
33				34				35		36		
37			38		39				40			
41				42		43						
			44		45			46		47	48	49
50	51	52				53	54			55		
56					57					58		
59					60					61		

- 32 Forbidden act
- 33 Freedom, for short
- 34 First half of an LP
- 36 Pol. party org.
- 37 Raw materials
- 39 Magazine founded in 1933
- 41 Costume
- 43 Admin. aide
- 44 Composer Rorem
- 46 Grammarian's concern
- 50 Freshman
- 55 Pen name

- 56 Garfield's pal
- 57 North Sea feeder
- 58 "This tastes awful!"
- 59 Engrossed
- 60 Conked out
- 61 Uncle (Sp.)

### DOWN

- 1 Gridlock sound
- 2 Latin love
- 3 Singer Braxton
- 4 Companions
- 5 Oklahoma city
- 6 Zing
- 7 Easy targets
- 8 Actor Kutcher
- 9 Corp. boss
- 10 Vichy water
- 11 Old map letters
- 17 Chatter
- 19 Rx writers
- 22 Tennis score
- 23 Tyler Perry persona
- 25 Mine find
- 26 Diarist Frank
- 27 Boulder
- 28 Promote aggressively
- 29 Hibernia
- 30 Help a hood
- 31 Evergreen trees

- 35 Promised
- 38 Twilight time
- 40 Scale amts.
- 42 Favorite
- 45 Turned blue?
- 47 Border on
- 48 Leslie Caron role
- 49 Repeat
- 50 Supporting
- 51 Lupino of film
- 52 Wardrobe malfunction
- 53 Peyton's brother
- 54 Actor Vigoda

## — King Crossword —

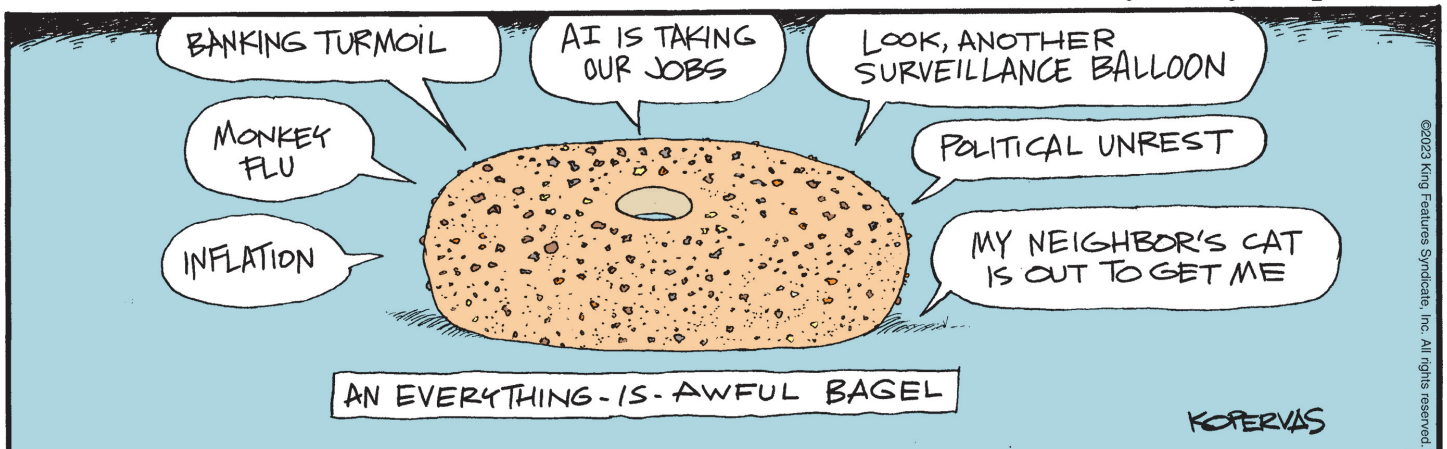
Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

B	A	T		C	A	P	S		A	C	E	S	
E	M	O		O	D	E	A		S	E	A	S	
E	O	N		H	A	P	P	Y	H	O	U	R	
P	R	I	M	O			S	A	T				
				D	R	A	M		P	O	L	A	R
F	E	A	S	T	D	A	Y		N	O	N	O	
L	I	B		S	I	D	E	A		D	N	C	
O	R	E	S		N	E	W	S	W	E	E	K	
G	E	T	U	P		A	S	S	T				
				N	E	D			U	S	A	G	E
F	I	R	S	T	Y	E	A	R		B	I	C	
O	D	I	E		E	L	B	E		U	G	H	
R	A	P	T		D	I	E	D		T	I	O	

Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas





# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 17 of 77

THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS  
**POPEYE**  
BY RANDY MILHOLLAND

DO YOUR WORST, SEA RAT! I'M NOT SCARED OF YOU!

BESIDES, I KNOW YOUR MORAL CODE WON'T LET YOU LAY A FINGER ON ME!

I MEAN, KUDOS TO YOU FOR KEEPING TO YOUR ETHICS.

ALRIGHT, SEA HAG! 'NUFF IS 'NUFF!

YA TURNED ME PAPPY INTO A PIG! NOW TURN HIM BACK!

I'D NEED THE WAND OF CIRCE, WHICH CHANGED HIM IN THE FIRST PLACE.

MY INTERN DOES! ZAP HIM, LINDEN!

OKAY, SURE. BUT FIRST...

WHAT?! ARE YOU KIDDING?!

I'M TRYING TO GET IN SHAPE! AND HE CAN'T TELL ME ONCE HE'S A PIG!

AND I DON'T HAVE IT.

CAN YOU RECOMMEND A GOOD BOXING TRAINER?

BOXIN'S A GREAT WAY TO WORK OUT! I KNOW JUSK THE PERSON!

GO TO THE GYM OFF RIVERA STREET AN' ASK FER OLIVE'S FRIEND, MAE!

THANKS!

OH, NO. THANK YA!

UH-OH.

SO I WANT TO BE IN BETTER SHAPE. KILL ME!

TRUST ME. THAT'S ON THE TABLE.

BARNEY GOOGLE AND  
**SNUFFY SMITH**

A SMIF...A BARLOW...SMIF... SMIF... ANOTHER BARLOW... BARLOW...BARLOW... OH !! HERE'S A JONES !!

DOCKET

BRING HIM IN FURST, SHERIFF--WE COULD 'DO WIF A LI'L CHANGE'A PACE 'ROUN' HERE !!

DO YA KNOW IF DOC GOT US THAT TEE TIME, SHERIFF TAIT ?

NOPE !! 'FRAID HE STRUCK OUT, YORE HONOR !!

DANG !! ARE TH' FISH BITIN' ?

NOPE !! I HEAR IT'S BEEN PURTY SLOW THIS WEEK !!

PROB'LY TOO EARLY T'GIT A POKER GAME GOIN' !!

'FRAID SO, JUDGE !!

HOOTIN' HOLLER COURT HOUSE

≡SIGH !!≡ VERY WELL, THEN !!

THIS COURT IS NOW IN SESSION !!

6-12

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 18 of 77

Hal Foster's **Prince Valiant**  
BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES

O, THE ASPIRATIONS OF A GENERATION, TO SEE ITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS REMEMBERED BY THE NEXT! WHILE VAL HAS COME TO ACCEPT THAT NATHAN'S FUTURE LIES MORE IN THE FINE ARTS THAN IT DOES IN THOSE OF WAR, HE STILL WISHES FOR A DIRECTION MORE REFLECTIVE OF HIS TASTES...

4/3/12

"SON, WHY DO YOU CHOOSE TO RECORD COMMONPLACE NATURE? YOU SHOULD BE ILLUMINATING EPICS! LISTEN, NATHAN, TO A TALE TO INSPIRE MEN - LET ME TELL YOU HOW I TAMED AND WON YOUR MOTHER..."

"YOUR MOTHER WAS A HARD, UNFORGIVING QUEEN - HER KINGDOM OF THE MISTY ISLES SLEW ALL WHO WOULD BEACH ON ITS SHORES. FURTHERMORE..."

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"... SHE HAD PLACED ME UNDER A TERRIBLE SPELL WHEN FIRST WE MET. I COULD NOT ESCAPE HER GLAMOUR, BUT STILL I SWORE TO TEACH HER A LESSON."

"AND SO I STORMED HER PALACE, AND STOLE HER FROM UNDER THE NOSES OF HER MANY SUITORS!"

3922 NEXT: Hal's version

## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE JUST THROWING OUT THE TOWEL.

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DON'T YOU MEAN... THROWING "IN" THE TOWEL?

YOU HAVEN'T SEEN MY TOWEL!!

PICKERING

## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### Tips and Fees Eating Into Our Money

Just when so many of us are struggling financially with the rising cost of everything, along comes yet another way to separate us from our dollars: Many businesses are now charging a fee to return items we've purchased online from them.

I'm not going to name names or point fingers here, but know that it's the big name companies that are doing this.

The return fees seem to range from \$5 to nearly \$10 per return. And you don't have much choice, because they already have your money (from when you paid for the item) and will neatly deduct their fee from your refund.

So, beware what you purchase online. Try to be sure that you'll want to keep it. And check your state's consumer protection office to see if it's even legal to charge a restocking fee ([www.usa.gov/state-consumer](http://www.usa.gov/state-consumer)). There might be a question about whether you were notified at the time of purchase.

And it's not just online places that sell us items that want extra money from us; it's places where we actually go to pick things up, such as fast-food carryout locations when we grab up a cup of coffee on the way home. It's called "tip creeping," and it's spreading everywhere.

Be cautious when you check out with your credit card. In increasing numbers, the establishment might have an automatic tip amount selected, and if you click too quickly you could be saying yes.

I've even heard -- and this is disturbing -- that some people who do not tip are subjected to ugly comments from staff. Don't give in! Stand your ground. If you feel pushed to give a tip for carryout and don't wish to, then don't. Tip creeping is meant to make us feel guilty for not tipping.

What merchants will eventually figure out, if they make enough of us uncomfortable, is that we'll spend our dwindling dollars elsewhere ... or not spend them at all.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 20 of 77

1. The Buffalo Braves, an NBA franchise from 1970-78, were a forerunner of what current NBA team?

2. On May 6, 1953, what pitcher for the St. Louis Browns threw a no-hitter in his first Major League start?

3. What Pro Football Hall of Fame defensive end helped the Baltimore Colts win NFL championships in 1958-59 and has his No. 89 retired by the Indianapolis Colts?

4. Name the German Formula One driver who was killed -- along with 15 spectators -- in a horrific crash at the 1961 Italian Grand Prix.

5. What team did Basketball Hall of Fame coach Dr. Jack Ramsay lead to the 1977 NBA championship?

6. What activist and writer cofounded the Institute for the Study of Sport and Society in 1970 and authored the book "The Athletic Revolution" in 1971?

7. Name the manager who guided the Toronto Blue Jays to consecutive World Series titles in 1992-93.



by Ryan A. Berenz

## Answers

1. The Los Angeles Clippers.

2. Bobo Holloman.

3. Gino Marchetti.

4. Wolfgang von Trips.

5. The Portland Trail Blazers.

6. Jack Scott.

7. Cito Gaston.

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





## This Cat Clings too Much

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My 6-year-old cat Ella has gotten very clingy lately. She was always fairly independent and preferred to lounge atop the sofa and watch the world outside the window. Now she refuses to do that. She runs to greet me at the door, meows nonstop until I feed her and then wants to climb into my lap the instant I sit down. She also begs to come into the bedroom and curl up at the end of the bed next to my feet. I know this sounds just darling, but it's unusual behavior from her. What's your advice?  
-- Susan W., Burlington, Vermont

DEAR SUSAN: It's interesting that Ella's behavior has changed so noticeably, so fast. Has anything

changed in the home environment, like you have a new work schedule, or moved furniture around, or added (or lost) a human family member?

Also, has anything about Ella's health changed? Does she have any underlying condition that might be getting worse? Check with the vet to be sure.

If neither environment nor health are the problem, you can try to enforce some rules to alter Ella's behavior.

-- Boredom: Make sure you play with Ella more often each day. The clingy behavior may be a request for additional attention.

-- Boundaries: Don't change feeding times just because Ella demands it. And don't let her into the bedroom if you don't want her there. Keep the door shut.

-- Bribery: Well, not really bribes, but positive reinforcement. When Ella goes to her old lounging spot, reward her with praise or a treat. Don't give her treats when she's in your lap; instead, lead her away and give a treat to her elsewhere.

Send your tips, comments or questions to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).

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## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

house. Once caught, she was given the key to the city by Cincinnati's mayor and allowed to peacefully live out her remaining days in a New York sanctuary.

\* Before he became the axman for Guns N' Roses, Slash auditioned for the band Poison but decided not to join when he was asked about wearing makeup.

\* Persian King Agha Mohammad Khan ordered the execution of two servants for being too loud. Since it was a holy day, he postponed the event for 24 hours and made the servants return to their duties. It turned out to be an unfortunate decision, as they murdered the ruler in his sleep that very night.

\* When George Washington died, Napoleon Bonaparte gave a personal eulogy and ordered a 10-day mourning period for France.

\* By 1930, doping had become so prevalent and even accepted in the Tour de France that its organizers felt compelled to inform cyclists in the official rulebook that drugs would not be provided.

\* Onions are the only commodity banned from futures trading in America.

\* The man for whom Mount Everest was named, George Everest, didn't want the honor, pointing out that his name was difficult to write or pronounce in Hindi and that all previous Himalayan peaks were officially given indigenous names.

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "Live deep instead of fast." -- Henry Seidel Canby

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\* The "Guinness World Records" holds the world record for being the most stolen book from public libraries.

\* Some New York City taxis are actually undercover cop cars.

\* Nintendo was sued and found guilty because kids were getting blisters from playing too much Mario Party.

\* A cow named Cincinnati Freedom lived up to her name when she evaded police officers for 11 days after jumping a 6-foot fence to escape a slaughter-

### The Garden Bug

#### Bolting



"Bolting" is when plants begin to flower and set seed; this is the end of the harvesting period. To prevent it from happening, cut off the flowers from plants such as bok choy, beet leaves, chard, parsley, and basil; these plants will continue to produce leaves that taste great and are no different from the leaves before the plant flowered. It is a good idea to cut off the flowering stems in order to focus the plant on leafy growth rather than its reproductive cycle; if you do so, the leaves you can continue to harvest will largely be unaffected.

Brenda Weaver

Source: [www.treehugger.com](http://www.treehugger.com)



by Freddy Groves

## Volunteer Drivers Needed for Veteran Patients

Have you considered how much of a problem it would be if you needed to go to a medical appointment and had no way to get there? If you have spare time or if you're retired, there is a task you could take on that would benefit other veterans: Become a volunteer driver.

The Volunteer Transportation Network, supported by the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) group, coordinates drivers to get veterans to medical appointments and home again. For disabled or elderly vets or those without transportation, this service can in every sense of the word be lifesaving.

And you certainly won't be alone in this task if you join up. Last year alone, DAV volunteer drivers took more than 156,000 veterans to appointments. Drivers use government vehicles and can fill up the tank using a purchase card. The DAV has spent over \$80 million to purchase 3,000 vehicles to transport veterans to their medical appointments.

Your eligibility requirements: a valid license and a physical at the VA (it's free and won't cost you a cent.) You don't need to be a DAV member to volunteer with them.

Take a look at the VA's volunteer website ([www.volunteer.va.gov](http://www.volunteer.va.gov)) and click on "Volunteer Drivers." You'll go to a five-minute YouTube video. Or see the DAV site ([www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)) and click on "Medical Transportation" for more info.

And then there's the Veterans Transportation Service. Working in conjunction with the individual VA facilities, drivers transport elderly, disabled or mobility-challenged vets to their health appointments, whether it's at a VA facility or a non-VA health site.

Find their participating locations (as well as phone number and contact person) at [www.va.gov/health-benefits/vtp/map.asp](http://www.va.gov/health-benefits/vtp/map.asp), or call Voluntary Services at your local VA medical facility.

Consider, too, all the volunteer slots at your local VA Voluntary Services Office: parking lot shuttle driver, office assistant, info desk help, book cart, mailroom help, visitors guide ... and so much more. No matter your skill, there's sure to be a place for you.

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# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 24 of 77

## Wishing Well®

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

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

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1. MOVIES: Which actor voiced the character of Darth Vader in the first three "Star Wars" movies released?
2. TELEVISION: Which was the first TV show to react to the 9/11 attack on the United States?
3. LITERATURE: Who is the youngest person to win the Nobel Prize for literature?
4. HISTORY: Which city did Anne Frank and her family live in hiding before they were discovered?
5. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is the tallest breed of dog?
6. FOOD & DRINK: What is considered the national dish of Spain?
7. GEOGRAPHY: Which is the only city that also is the smallest country in the world?
8. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Which holiday is considered the Jewish New Year?
9. ANATOMY: What are the bones in the fingers called?
10. ASTRONOMY: How many primary phases of the moon exist?

### Answers

1. James Earl Jones.
2. "The West Wing."
3. Rudyard Kipling.
4. Amsterdam.
5. Great Dane.
6. Paella.
7. Vatican City.
8. Rosh Hashanah.
9. Phalanges.
10. Four.

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# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 25 of 77

South Dakota Governor

**Kristi Noem**



**South Dakota:** *Under God, the People Rule*

## **Grit and Grind: Building South Dakota for the Next Generation**

I first ran for public office for a handful of reasons, but the reason at the heart of everything has always been my kids – and now my grandkids. I ran to ensure that they would be able to live in the same South Dakota that I was born and raised in. I ran so that they would understand why America is the greatest nation in the history of the world. I ran so that they would learn the small-town values that built the generations before them.

Today, South Dakotans can be confident that their kids will inherit the greatest state we can give them.

As Governor, I have prioritized building a stronger South Dakota that we will be proud to pass on to the next generation.

South Dakota has the strongest economy in the nation. Our people see it in the money that's staying in their pockets. And the rest of the nation is seeing it too. Freedom-loving people from all over America are picking up their lives and moving to South Dakota.

Just recently, Moody's Investors Service reaffirmed South Dakota's AAA stable credit rating. The report reads that "South Dakota continues to stand out among US states in terms of its very healthy finances and its low debt, pension, and fixed cost liabilities. These will remain long-term credit strengths that bolster the state's capacity to attend unforeseen challenges."

South Dakota's record-breaking economy is here to stay. We have continued to grow through challenges like a global pandemic and harsh winters – and our economy is equipped to face any challenges that come our way.

Unemployment in South Dakota is the lowest in the history of our state. More than that, it's the lowest in American history. And we still have open jobs!

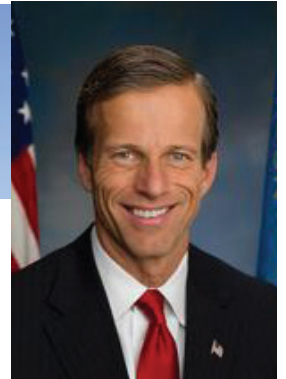
This kind of economic success doesn't just happen overnight. I went into my first term as Governor with a goal to let South Dakotans make decisions for themselves. It is not the role of the government to tell people how to live their lives. And it's thanks to South Dakota's fiscal responsibility that our economy has been so successful these last few years.

The people of South Dakota made this possible, and we will continue to give back to them. We will keep supporting our state's top industries like agriculture and tourism. We will keep passing policies that allow South Dakotans to keep even more of their money in their pockets. And we will keep empowering our citizens to make the best decisions for themselves and for their families.

I am proud of how far South Dakota has come. I am also proud of our work ethic. We are a kind of people that never settle, we never say "good enough." Even though we have the best economy in America, we are still working to make it better.

I have never been more confident that we will give the next generation a South Dakota that is thriving and growing. Our kids and grandkids will inherit a state that embodies the American Dream – a state that will be a shining beacon of Freedom for years to come.

**John Thune**  
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



## Getting Serious About Cutting Wasteful Spending

The need to address the federal budget has only grown more urgent as the Biden administration has racked up trillions of dollars in more debt in the last two years alone. Recognizing that this level of spending is irresponsible and unsustainable, the American people elected a Republican majority in the House of Representatives last year as a check on the president's policies and Democrats' reckless spending. Although the president tried to avoid negotiating budget cuts for over three months, Republicans were intent on restoring fiscal sanity to Washington. Divided government requires compromise, and the spending reform deal that Speaker McCarthy negotiated shows what can be achieved when both sides work together.

The bill they agreed to, the Fiscal Responsibility Act, delivers on Republicans' promise to rein in excess federal spending. It reduces the deficit by \$1.5 trillion through spending cuts and by restoring budget caps – all without raising taxes. The Fiscal Responsibility Act also claws back more previously allocated federal funds than any other bill in American history, rescinding tens of billions of dollars in unused COVID funding. And it begins to chip away at the unnecessary influx of money that would have gone to hiring new IRS agents.

Equally as important as limits on spending are the common-sense policies in the bill that limit the size of government. The Fiscal Responsibility Act strengthens work requirements in federal assistance programs to ensure those who are able can move from welfare to work. It makes a down payment on permitting reform that will help get energy projects off the ground more quickly, encourage domestic energy production, and lower costs for American families. And it creates zero new federal programs.

This is not a perfect bill, but these cuts and reforms are important steps in changing the trajectory of the federal budget. At \$31 trillion, our national debt is larger than the entire economy, and it continues to grow at an unsustainable rate. Just paying the interest on the debt is taking up an enormous share of the budget. In a few years, unless additional responsible fiscal policies are enacted, interest payments will exceed what we spend on national defense. Think about that – we're on pace to spend more money on interest payments than what we spend to maintain our top-tier armed forces and other defense capabilities. And it's out-of-control spending that is driving these concerning trends and jeopardizing our future prosperity.

The policies in this bill won't magically correct years of wasteful spending, but they are meaningful reforms and spending cuts that mark an important step toward helping to get our fiscal house in order. Our spending problem didn't emerge overnight, and it won't be solved with a single bill, but I am committed to restoring fiscal responsibility in Washington, and I hope President Biden and congressional Democrats are as well.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 27 of 77



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



## 605 Day

South Dakota is home. It's where I grew up, went to college, met my wife, and where I chose to raise my kids. June 5 holds a special place in the hearts of South Dakotans.

In honor of 605 Day, I asked South Dakotans what they like most about our state, and I think you'll agree with a lot of their answers:

Needles Highway

Wide open spaces

Garage sale season

The best sunsets over the prairie—it seems endless.

Every time I cross the border or fly back into FSD, it just feels like home, like you can breathe easier.

Small town living and helping out at the family farm.

The stars at night are amazing because the sky lasts forever.

There's so many great things to do and see in South Dakota, but one answer that was the most common was the quality of the people. I got answers like the below:

The people there are the nicest you will meet. If your car gets stuck in the snow, they will come out of their house to help you shovel it out and bring you hot coco to warm up.

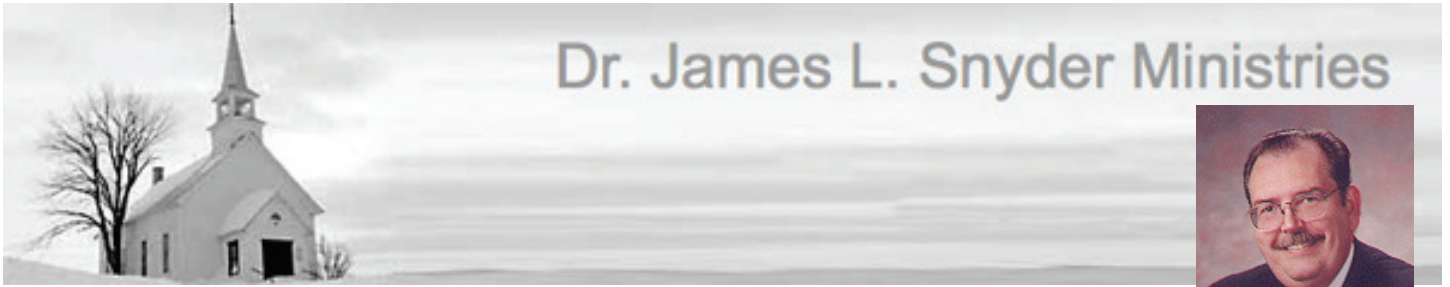
Anyone will talk to you, so you have a "friend" no matter where you go.

The people of South Dakota are what makes it so great. We take "Midwest nice" to another level. Being able to do our favorite things with our favorite people makes the memories more special. And whenever we have visitors to one of our unique state and national parks, I know they'll be greeted with a smile and treated with kindness.

I hope you celebrate 605 Day with some chislic and fellow South Dakotans.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 28 of 77



## I Feel Sorry for My Good-Looking Friends



The one place in our humble residence I would prefer to avoid, especially in the morning, is my bathroom. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has her bathroom, and I have mine.

I make visiting my bathroom in the morning as quick as possible. As I walk into my bathroom, on the right side is that awful and terrible thing called the mirror. Whenever I look into it, some old man looks back at me and then smiles.

I have asked The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage if I could put a curtain in front of my mirror so that I would only see it when I had to.

She would laugh and say, "Oh, you silly boy, you need that mirror to help you look the best you can."

Her mirror is a lot different from my mirror. My mirror shows some grumpy old guy, whereas her mirror shows a charming young lady. I have offered to exchange mirrors, but she would not have anything to do with that.

I'm not very concerned about how ugly I look. After all, ugly isn't really that big of a deal.

In the pharmacy section of Publix the other day, one of the workers came and asked me if I wanted some skincare products that were on sale. "It'll sure make your face look a lot better."

I declined her offer and left the store.

As I was thinking about this, it reminded me of some of my good friends who are rather good-looking despite their age. They spend much time and money keeping themselves looking young and beautiful.

I would rather use my money to buy Apple Fritters than any skincare products.

Many of my friends spend a lot of money and time to keep themselves as young looking as possible. They exercise, go on a strict diet, and some even have surgery to make them look better than they are.

I have one friend, a very wonderful lady, whom I've known most of my life. One thing about this young lady is that she wants people to think she's young and works tirelessly to keep looking young.

Her biggest concern is wrinkles, and she seems allergic to them.

I love my wrinkles because they are a product of getting older. And I plan to get as old as I can.

# Groton Daily Independent

**Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 29 of 77**

But this young lady, I will not mention her name for obvious reasons, seems quite allergic to wrinkles. She has had several facelifts to make sure all of the wrinkles disappear. Whenever she sees a wrinkle, she has to stop whatever she's doing and take care of it, no matter the cost.

I don't see her often anymore, but whenever I do, I usually say something like, "Is that a new wrinkle on your face? I think it's a wonderful wrinkle."

She will laugh and then disappear into the bathroom in a few moments to check out that wrinkle. Sometime that week, she will be at her doctor getting rid of that wrinkle.

If I had all the money she has spent caring for her wrinkles, I would be wealthy and could afford all the Apple Fritters I want.

That is why I'm very concerned about some of my good-looking friends. I don't know, and I have yet to ask any of them how much it costs to look as young and good-looking as they appear. It does not come without cost, I assure you.

I have not spent a single nickel dealing with my wrinkles, and have the wrinkles to prove it.

If I had the time and money my friends used to eliminate the wrinkles, I could retire in luxury.

Many try to show how young they look whenever we have a family get-together. They walk around smiling, hoping somebody will notice how young they look.

For some of them, when we plan to get together, it takes several weeks to prepare for that get-together. I can get together overnight and have no problems with that.

I try to contain myself, but it is tough when you have all my wrinkles. Whenever I meet one of those people, and I know who they are, I always compliment them on their good looks. They always smile back and thank me.

Then, out of nowhere, I sometimes say, "You don't have as many wrinkles today as you did the last time I saw you." I laugh, but they usually don't join in.

I don't know any of them that like me saying that sort of thing, but that's the cost of trying to look young when you're old.

It must be a very hard job to stay young anymore. On the other side of the mirror, I have an easy life of looking as old as possible. Every wrinkle on my face is an opportunity to celebrate that I'm still getting older.

In the Old Testament, Job had an issue with wrinkles. "And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face" (Job 16:8).

I can relate to Job, but then I remembered what the Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 5:27, "That he (Christ) might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

My life, even my wrinkles, is in the capable hands of God.

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Can we harness kinetic energy to reduce our carbon footprint? – J.B., via email

Harnessing kinetic energy as a means to reduce our carbon footprint is indeed a promising avenue for a sustainable future. Kinetic energy is the energy possessed by an object due to its motion, and finding innovative ways to capture and utilize this energy can have significant environmental benefits.

Wind turbines are a prime example of harnessing kinetic energy from the movement of air molecules. These turbines convert the kinetic energy of the wind into mechanical energy, which is then transformed into electricity. Wind power has already become a substantial contributor to global electricity generation, and its continued expansion can play a crucial role in reducing our carbon footprint. By investing in wind energy infrastructure, we can shift away from fossil fuel-based electricity generation and achieve a more sustainable and clean energy mix.

Another way to harness kinetic energy is through the use of kinetic energy recovery systems (KERS). KERS technology allows for the capture and storage of energy that is typically lost during braking or deceleration in vehicles, such as cars, buses and trains. By retrofitting vehicles with KERS, the kinetic energy generated during braking can be converted into electricity and stored in batteries or other energy storage systems. This stored energy can then be used to power vehicle systems or assist with acceleration, reducing the overall energy consumption and carbon emissions of the vehicle.

The potential for KERS technology extends beyond transportation. Some energy harvesting systems can convert the kinetic energy generated by human footsteps into electrical energy. Specialized flooring or walkways can convert this mechanical stress (called footfalls) into electrical charges. This energy can be used to power various applications, such as lighting, sensors or even charging stations for small electronic devices. Implementing footfall energy harvesting systems in high-traffic areas, such as shopping malls or train stations, could significantly contribute to reducing our reliance on conventional energy sources.

There are still challenges to overcome in the widespread adoption of kinetic energy harnessing. The efficiency and cost-effectiveness of these systems need further improvement to make them economically viable on a large scale. Research and development efforts should focus on enhancing the efficiency of energy conversion, optimizing storage capabilities and reducing manufacturing costs. Policy support and incentives can also play a crucial role to promote the deployment of these technologies.

Indeed, harnessing kinetic energy in multiple ways can undoubtedly contribute to reducing our carbon footprint. By capturing and utilizing the energy generated by motion, we can decrease our reliance on fossil fuels and mitigate the environmental impacts associated with traditional energy sources. However, it is important to view kinetic energy harnessing as part of a comprehensive approach to sustainability, combining multiple strategies to achieve a greener and more sustainable future.



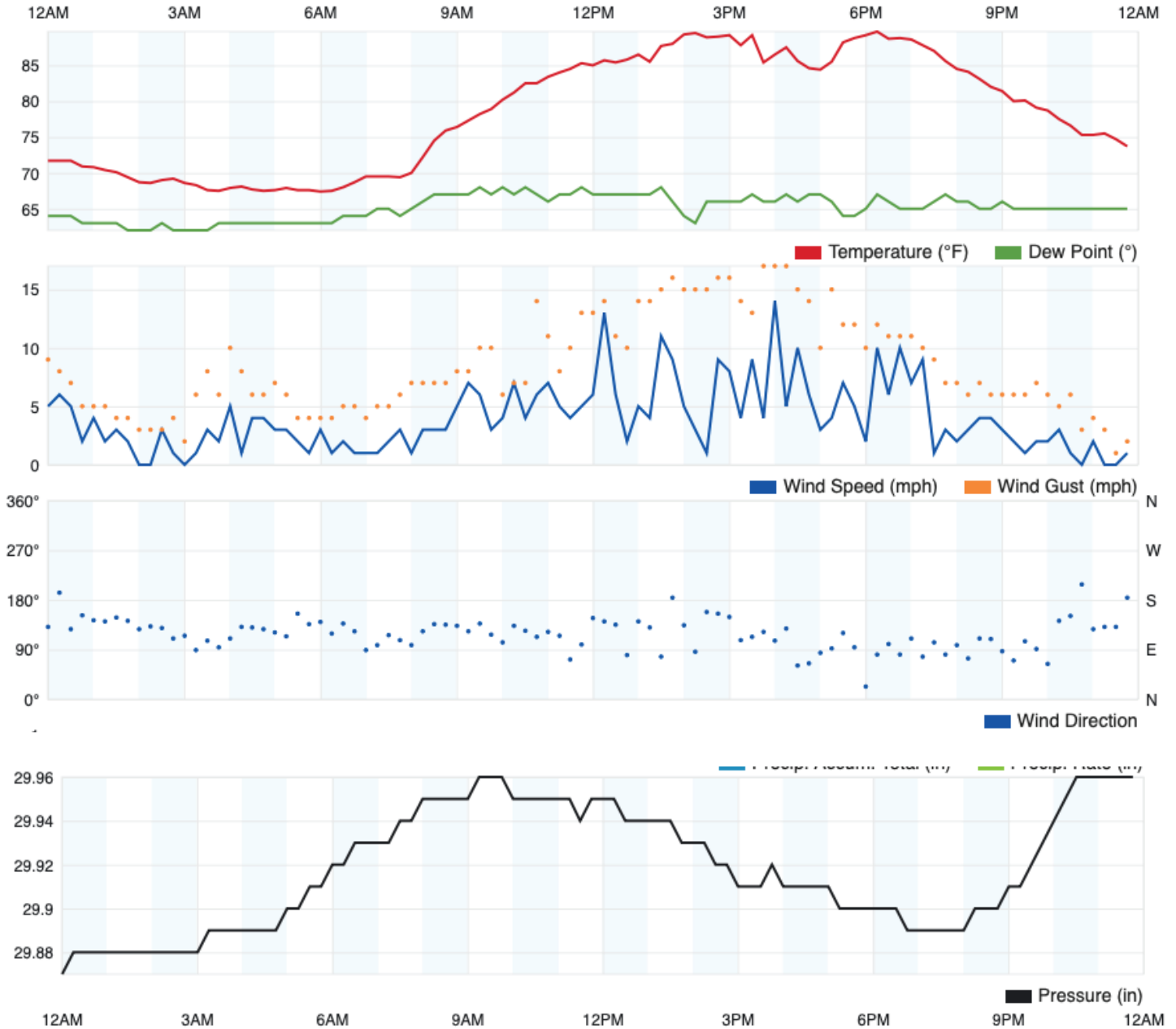
**Col. Raymond Nelson, Professor and Physics department head at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, demonstrates at a grade school science fair how kinetic energy can be harnessed to help ween us off fossil fuels.** Credit: U.S. Military Academy,

FlickrCC.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 31 of 77

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



## ABERDEEN

May 2023 Review  
Records since 1893

### RAINFALL

 **1.53"**

Most on a single day was 0.72" on the 6<sup>th</sup>

**32<sup>nd</sup> Driest May on Record**

1.75" Below Normal / 47% of Normal

Measurable Rainfall on 8 Days – Normal is 10 Days

### WIND

 **45 mph**

Peak Gust Recorded on  
May 1<sup>st</sup>

**10.6 mph**

Average wind speed

### TEMPERATURE

 **63.6°** Average

**7<sup>th</sup> Warmest May on Record**

6.3° Above Normal

Note: April was 6.9° \*below\*  
normal and 6<sup>th</sup> \*coldest\* on record



Days with Above  
Normal Temperatures








**90°** Warmest Day -  
May 23, 30<sup>th</sup>

**30°** Coldest Low -  
May 3<sup>rd</sup>



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 33 of 77

Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms then Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Chance Showers	Slight Chance T-storms then Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms
High: 89 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 90 °F	Low: 64 °F	High: 90 °F	Low: 63 °F	High: 90 °F



## Not Much Change In The Forecast

June 4, 2023  
3:24 AM



NORR National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Don't want to sound like a broken record, but the forecast continues to be the same with warm temperatures and a chance of mid afternoon thunderstorms.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 34 of 77

## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 90 °F at 2:12 PM

Low Temp: 67 °F at 6:08 AM

Wind: 20 mph at 3:35 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 15 hours, 33 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 101 in 1933

Record Low: 34 in 1954

Average High: 77

Average Low: 52

Average Precip in June.: 0.44

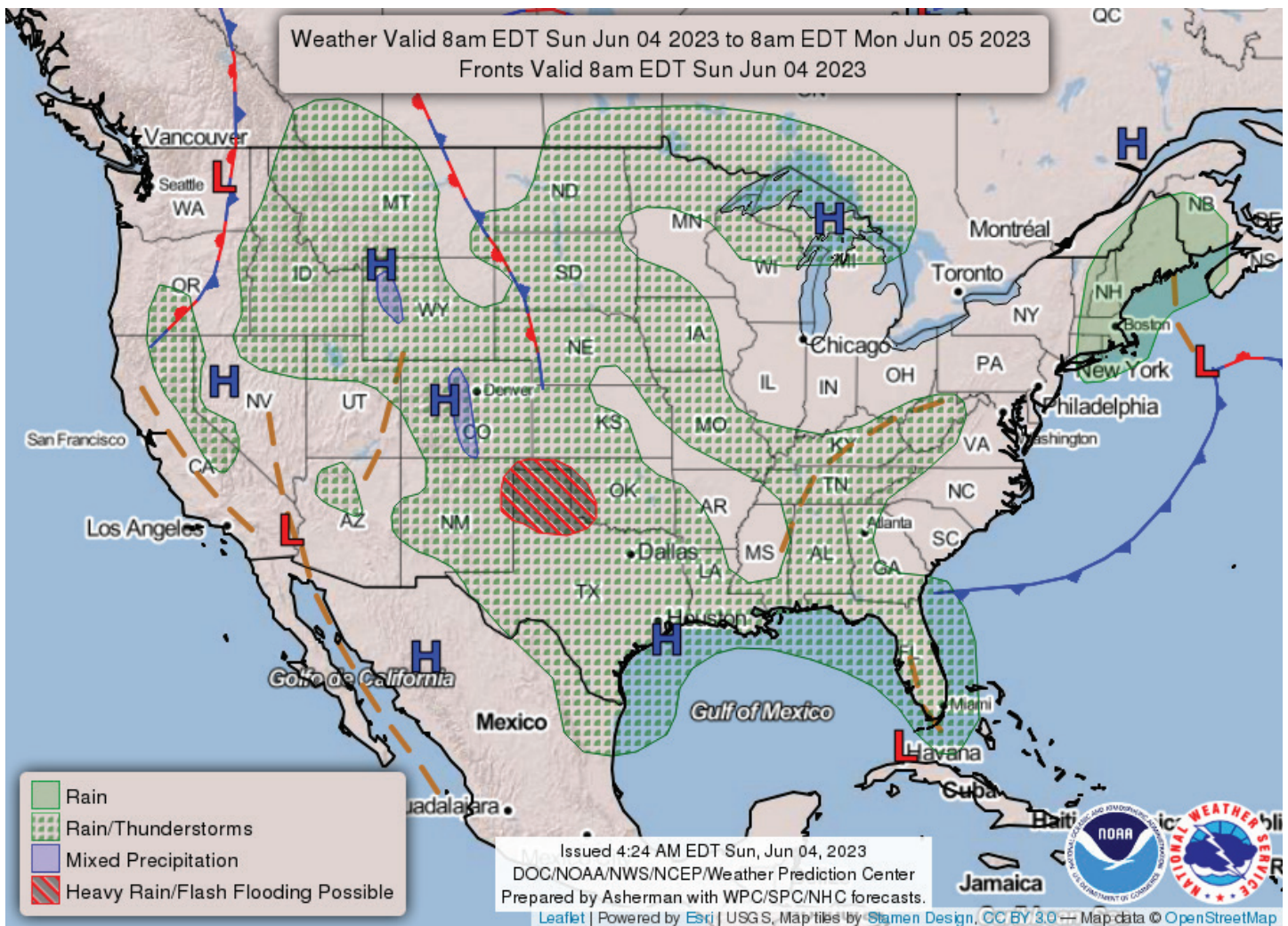
Precip to date in June.: 0.04

Average Precip to date: 7.69

Precip Year to Date: 7.95

Sunset Tonight: 9:17:35 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:43:28 AM



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 35 of 77

## Today in Weather History

June 4, 1984: Heavy rains of up to seven inches caused the Bad River to rise over 23 feet in six hours at Fort Pierre. Flash flooding resulted as a dam, 17 miles west of Fort Pierre gave way, and an irrigation dam near town was damaged. Water covered some roads and bridges. Many homes had water damage. Strong thunderstorm winds gusting up to 60 mph downed numerous branches and several signs in Faulk, Edmunds, McPherson, and Brown Counties.

June 4, 1991: Heavy rains of 2 to 5 inches caused street flooding in Harrold. Several county roads in Stanley, Sully, Hughes, and Lyman Counties were closed due to flooding. Some rainfall amounts include 1.83 inches at Oahe Dam; 1.96 inches, 12 miles SSW of Harrold; and 3.20 inches, two miles North of Onaka.

June 4, 1993: An earthquake measuring 4.1 on the Richter scale shook a portion of northeast South Dakota but caused no real damage or injuries. The epicenter of the quake was 22 miles northwest of Morris, Minnesota or 38 miles east of Sisseton and was felt in most of Roberts, Grant, and Deuel Counties. The quake was the first in the area since 1975.

1825: A severe storm of tropical origin swept up the Atlantic Coast during the first week of June 1825 with reports of significant damage from Florida to New York City. Shipping logs told of a disturbance at Santo Domingo on May 28th and Cuba on June 1st. Gales were reported at St. Augustine, Florida on the 2nd. The Norfolk and Portsmouth Herald reported "undiminished violence" from the gale force winds for 27 hours, ending on June 4th. The effect of the storm reached well inland. Washington had cold, heavy rain all day on the 4th with high winds laying the crops in the vicinity. The wind also tore up trees by the roots in front of the State House in Philadelphia. This storm impacted the New Jersey Coast and the Long Island area as well with high winds and a two-foot storm surge. A Columbian frigate was driven ashore as were many smaller boats. The largest loss of life occurred along the Long Island shore when a schooner capsized. The entire crew of seven was lost.

1825 - A hurricane struck Long Island NY leveling trees and causing damage to ships. The early season hurricane, which originated around Cuba, caused major damage along the Atlantic coast from Charleston SC to New York City. Many were lost at sea. (David Ludlum)

1860 - Iowa's Commanche Tornado, with wind speeds estimated in excess of 300 mph, was unquestionably one of the worst experienced by early settlers, with nearly a million dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)

1877: A tornado of estimated F4 intensity touched down just west of Mt. Carmel, Illinois and moved east-northeast, devastating the town. 20 businesses and 100 homes were damaged or destroyed. At least 16 people and as many as 30 were killed, with 100 others injured.

1982 - A four day storm began over New England which produced up to 14 inches of rain in southern Connecticut breaching twenty-three dams and breaking two others. Damage was estimated at more than 276 million dollars. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Early morning thunderstorms in south Texas produced 6.5 inches of rain at Hockheim, and five inches at Hallettsville, in just a few hours. Afternoon thunderstorms in Virginia deluged northern Halifax County with 5.5 inches of rain in two hours. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 76 mph at Dusty WA, and wind gusts to 88 mph at Swanquarter NC. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A dozen cities in the eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Atlantic City NJ with a reading of 40 degrees. Fifteen cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Glasgow MT and Havre MT with readings of 102 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from the Southern Plains Region and the Lower Mississippi Valley to the Southern Atlantic Coast Region during the day and into the night. Just four tornadoes were reported, but there were 87 reports of large hail and damaging winds. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 36 of 77

Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### GRACE THAT IS SUFFICIENT

A pastor was visiting a member of his church who had been hospitalized for many weeks. She was suffering from excruciating pain. After praying with her, he offered her a book and said, "This book brought me much comfort while I was ill a few years ago. You will enjoy it greatly, and it will bring you much peace. It will be most helpful!"

"Thank you," she answered. "I'm well acquainted with its contents."

"Have you read it?" he asked.

"More than that," she replied. "I wrote it."

It is always comforting to be able to talk with someone who has experienced pain or problems that are similar to our own. They have been where we are and know and understand our pain or suffering, sadness or sorrow, fears and doubts, questions and concerns. There is a sense of understanding that brings a closeness or connection, a bond and a blessing.

When we go through difficult times and are comforted by our Heavenly Father, we must realize that "God comforts us that we can comfort others who need comforting." Often the "unwanted gifts" of pain and sorrow come from God as a "special gift" that equips us to understand, care for and help others who "are going through their valley with dark shadows."

Prayer: Help us, Father, to care for others the way You care for us. May we be open and accepting of Your love, mercy, and grace so we can share it with others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. 2 Corinthians 1:3-11



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

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 37 of 77

## 2023 Community Events

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 38 of 77

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# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 39 of 77



## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.02.23

3 16 19 36 60 25

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$218,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.03.23

9 14 21 22 48 2

All Star Bonus: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$3,470,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.03.23

16 19 20 42 46 12

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 41 Mins 41 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.03.23

7 8 9 14 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$85,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.03.23

8 26 34 58 69 7

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.03.23

15 45 64 67 68 18

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$269,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

PREVIOUS RESULTS

## News from the Associated Press

### **Iowa company bid \$13M for Minnesota pork plant and will not retain 1,000 workers**

WINDOM, Minn. (AP) — An Iowa pork producer says it will not keep more than 1,000 employees at a bankrupt Minnesota plant if a judge approves its winning bid to purchase the business.

Premium Iowa Pork, based in Hospers, Iowa, bid \$13 million to buy the slaughterhouse in Windom, which is the largest employer in the southwestern Minnesota town. The plant was scheduled to close Saturday, the Minneapolis Star Tribune reported.

Stacey Ashley, a spokesperson for HyLife, which owns the Windom plant, confirmed in an email that the company had a buyer, pending court approval.

She also confirmed Premium Iowa Pork will not retain Windom employees, many of whom are immigrants who came to work at the plant on worker visas. She said the company will “arrange transportation” for those employees back to their home countries.

The Star Tribune reported 450 of the plant’s workers were brought to Windom from foreign countries, with a large percentage from Guanajuato, Mexico.

Premium Iowa Pork did not say in court filings what it plans to do with the plant.

HyLife’s attorney said he expected the sale to be finalized by Wednesday in time for a hearing on Friday.

When it announced that it planned to sell the plant, HyLife cited inflation, high grain costs, foreign exchange rates and the plant’s operational losses.

U.S. District Judge Thomas Horan did approve an agreement to sell about 20,000 finisher hogs to AgriSwine Alliance of Aberdeen, South Dakota, for about \$1.3 million.

### **Indian railways official says error in signaling system led to crash that killed over 300 people**

By KRUTIKA PATHI, SHEIKH SAALIQ and ASHOK SHARMA Associated Press

BALASORE, India (AP) — The derailment in eastern India that killed more than 300 people and injured hundreds was caused by an error in the electronic signaling system that led a train to wrongly change tracks and crash into a freight train, officials said Sunday.

Authorities worked to clear the mangled wreckage of the two passenger trains that derailed Friday night in Balasore district in Odisha state in one of the country’s deadliest rail disasters in decades.

Jaya Verma Sinha, a senior railway official, said the preliminary investigations revealed that a signal was given to the high-speed Coromandel Express to run on the main track line, but the signal later changed, and the train instead entered an adjacent loop line where it rammed into a freight loaded with iron ore. The collision flipped Coromandel Express’s coaches onto another track, causing the incoming Yesvantpur-Howrah Express from the opposite side also to derail, she said.

The passenger trains, carrying 2,296 people, were not overspeeding, she said. Trains that carry goods are often parked on an adjacent loop line on the side so the main line is clear for a passing train.

Verma said the root cause of the crash was related to an error in the electronic signaling system. She said a detailed investigation will reveal whether the error was human or technical.

The electronic interlocking system is a safety mechanism designed to prevent conflicting movements between trains. It also monitors the status of signals that tell drivers how close they are to a next train, how fast they can go and the presence of stationary trains on the track.

“The system is 99.9% error free. But 0.1% chances are always there for an error,” Verma said. To a question whether the crash could be a case of sabotage, she said “nothing is ruled out.”

On Sunday, a few shattered carriages, mangled and overturned, were the only remnants of the tragedy. Railway workers toiled under the sun’s glare to lay down blocks of cement to fix the broken tracks. A crew



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 41 of 77

with excavators was removing mud and the debris to clear the crash site.

Fifteen bodies were recovered on Saturday evening and efforts continued overnight with heavy cranes being used to remove an engine that settled on top of a rail car. No bodies were found in the engine and the work was completed on Sunday morning, said Sudhanshu Sarangi, director-general of fire and emergency services in Odisha.

The crash occurred at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi is focusing on the modernization of the British colonial-era railroad network in India, which has become the world's most populous country with 1.42 billion people. Despite government efforts to improve safety, several hundred accidents occur every year on India's railways, the largest train network under one management in the world.

Modi visited the crash site on Saturday and talked to rescue officials. He also visited a hospital to inquire about the injured, and spoke to some of them.

Modi told reporters he felt the pain of the crash victims. He said the government would do its utmost to help them and strictly punish anyone found responsible.

In 1995, two trains collided near New Delhi, killing 358 people in one of the worst rail accidents in India. In 2016, a passenger train slid off the tracks between the cities of Indore and Patna, killing 146 people.

Most such accidents in India are blamed on human error or outdated signaling equipment.

About 22 million people ride 14,000 trains across India every day, traveling on 64,000 kilometers (40,000 miles) of track.

Saaliq and Sharma reported from New Delhi.

## With oil prices slumping, OPEC+ producers weigh more production cuts

By DAVID McHUGH AP Business Writer

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — The major oil-producing countries led by Saudi Arabia and Russia are wrestling with whether to make another cut in supply to the global economy as the OPEC+ alliance struggles to prop up sagging oil prices that have been a boon to U.S. drivers and helped ease inflation worldwide.

The 23-member group is meeting Sunday at OPEC headquarters in Vienna after sending mixed signals about possible moves. Saudi Arabia, dominant among the oil cartel's members, has warned speculators that they might get burned by betting on lower prices. Russia, the leader of the non-OPEC allies, has indicated no change to output is expected.

The decision comes amid uncertainty about when the slow-growing global economy will regain its thirst for fuel for travel and industry, and with producers counting on oil profits to bolster their coffers.

Oil prices have fallen even after OPEC+ slashed 2 million barrels per day in October, angering U.S. President Joe Biden by threatening higher gasoline prices a month before the midterm elections. Then, several OPEC members led by the Saudis made a surprise cut of 1.16 million barrels a day in April.

International benchmark Brent crude climbed as high as \$87 per barrel but has given up its post-cut gains and been loitering below \$75 per barrel in recent days. U.S. crude has dipped below \$70.

Those lower prices have helped U.S. drivers as the summer travel season kicks off, with prices at the pump averaging \$3.55, down \$1.02 from a year ago, according to auto club AAA. Falling energy prices also helped inflation in the 20 European countries that use the euro drop to the lowest level since before Russia invaded Ukraine.

The U.S. recently replenished its Strategic Petroleum Reserve — after Biden announced the largest release from the national reserve in American history last year — in an indicator that U.S. officials may be less worried about OPEC cuts than in months past.

The Saudis, on the other hand, need sustained high oil revenue to fund ambitious development projects aimed at diversifying the country's economy. The International Monetary Fund estimates the kingdom needs \$80.90 per barrel to meet its envisioned spending commitments, which include a planned \$500 billion futuristic desert city project called Neom.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 42 of 77

That may have been one motivation behind Energy Minister Abdulaziz bin Salman's warning to speculators that they will be "ouching" if they keep betting on lower oil prices.

Bin Salman's pointed comment isn't necessarily a prelude to a cut at Sunday's meeting, said James Swanston, Middle East and North Africa economist at Capital Economics.

"Our expectation is that OPEC+ will stick with current output quotas," he said, adding that "there have been signs that the government may be readying to live with lower oil prices and running budget deficits."

On top of that, Russia may find current prices to its liking because its oil is finding eager new customers in India, China and Turkey. Western sanctions over the war in Ukraine have forced Russian oil to sell at discounts of around \$53 to \$57 per barrel.

At those prices, Moscow's shipments avoid triggering the \$60 price cap imposed by the Group of Seven major democracies to try to limit oil profits flowing into Russia's war chest. The price ceiling allows the world's No. 3 oil producer to keep supplying non-Western customers to avoid a global shortage that would drive up prices for everyone.

Insurers and shipping companies largely based in Western countries are barred from handling Russian oil if it is priced above the cap. Russia has found ways to evade the limits through "dark fleet" tankers, which tamper with transponders showing their locations or transfer oil from ship to ship to disguise its origin.

An OPEC+ "production cut could push the price of Russian oil above the G7 price cap of \$60 per barrel, which would make it difficult to transport and thus to sell the oil," commodity analyst Carsten Fritsch at Commerzbank wrote in a research note. "Russia appears to be doing good business at the current price level."

The International Energy Agency said in its April oil market report that Russia has not completely followed through on its announcement to extend a voluntary cut of 500,000 barrels per day through the end of the year.

In fact, Russia's total exports of oil and refined products such as diesel fuel rose in April to a post-invasion high of 8.3 million barrels per day. That is in spite of a near-total boycott from the European Union, formerly Russia's biggest customer.

Analysts say OPEC+ faces conflicting pressures. A cut could support prices or send them higher, with demand expected to pick up later this year.

"The impact of higher oil prices on the global economy will weigh heavily on the ministers' minds," said Jorge Leon, senior vice president of oil market research at Rystad Energy. "High oil prices would fuel inflation in the West right when central banks are starting to see inflation gradually recede."

"This could prompt central banks to continue increasing interest rates, a detrimental move for the global economy and oil demand," Leon wrote in a research note.

AP reporter Fatima Hussein contributed from Washington.

## Ukraine keeps up pressure following Russian declaration of victory in Bakhmut

By MSTYSLAV CHERNOV and JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

OUTSIDE BAKHMUT, Ukraine (AP) — Watching imagery from a drone camera overhead, Ukrainian battalion commander Oleg Shiryayev warned his men in nearby trenches that Russian forces were advancing across a field toward a patch of trees outside the city of Bakhmut.

The leader of the 228th Battalion of the 127th Kharkiv Territorial Defense Brigade then ordered a mortar team to get ready. A target was locked. A mortar tube popped out a loud orange blast, and an explosion cut a new crater in an already pockmarked hillside.

"We are moving forward," Shiryayev said after at least one drone image showed a Russian fighter struck down. "We fight for every tree, every trench, every dugout."

Russian forces declared victory in the eastern city last month after the longest, deadliest battle since their full-scale invasion of Ukraine began 15 months ago. But Ukrainian defenders like Shiryayev aren't re-

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 43 of 77

treating. Instead, they are keeping up the pressure and continuing the fight from positions on the western fringes of Bakhmut.

The pushback gives commanders in Moscow another thing to think about ahead of a much-anticipated Ukrainian counteroffensive that appears to be taking shape.

Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Maliar said Russia sought to create the impression of calm around Bakhmut, but in fact, artillery shelling still goes on at levels similar to those at the height of the battle to take the city. The fight, she said, is evolving into a new phase.

"The battle for the Bakhmut area hasn't stopped; it is ongoing, just taking different forms," said Maliar, dressed in her characteristic fatigues in an interview from a military media center in Kyiv. Russian forces are now trying — but failing — to oust Ukrainian fighters from the "dominant heights" overlooking Bakhmut.

"We are holding them very firmly," she said.

From the Kremlin's perspective, the area around Bakhmut is just part of the more than 1,000-kilometer (621-mile) front line that the Russian military must hold. That task could be made more difficult by the withdrawal of the mercenaries from private military contractor Wagner Group who helped take control of the city. They will be replaced with Russian soldiers.

For Ukrainian forces, recent work has been opportunistic — trying to wrest small gains from the enemy and taking strategic positions, notably from two flanks on the northwest and southwest, where the Ukrainian 3rd Separate Assault Brigade has been active, officials said.

Russia had envisioned the capture of Bakhmut as partial fulfillment of its ambition to seize control of the eastern Donbas region, Ukraine's industrial heartland. Now, its forces have been compelled to regroup, rotate fighters and rearm just to hold the city. Wagner's owner announced a pullout after acknowledging the loss of more than 20,000 of his men.

Maliar described the nine-month struggle against Wagner forces in nearly existential terms: "If they had not been destroyed during the defense of Bakhmut, one can imagine that all these tens of thousands would have advanced deeper into Ukrainian territory."

The fate of Bakhmut, which lays largely in ruins, has been overshadowed in recent days by near-nightly attacks on Kyiv, a series of unclaimed drone strikes near Moscow and the growing anticipation that Ukraine's government will try to regain ground.

But the battle for the city could still have a lingering impact. Moscow has made the most of its capture, epitomized by triumphalism in Russian media. Any slippage of Russia's grip would be a political embarrassment for President Vladimir Putin.

Michael Kofman of the Center for Naval Analyses, a U.S. research group, noted in a podcast this week that the victory brings new challenges in holding Bakhmut.

With Wagner fighters withdrawing, Russian forces are "going to be increasingly fixed to Bakhmut ... and will find it difficult to defend," Kofman told "War on the Rocks" in an interview posted Tuesday.

"And so they may not hold on to Bakhmut, and the whole thing may have ended up being for nothing for them down the line," he added.

A Western official who spoke on condition of anonymity said Russian airborne forces are heavily involved in replacing the departing Wagner troops — a step that is "likely to antagonize" the airborne leadership, who see the duty as a further erosion of their "previously elite status" in the military.

Ukrainian forces have clawed back slivers of territory on the flanks — a few hundred meters (yards) per day — to solidify defensive lines and seek opportunities to retake some urban parts of the city, said one Ukrainian analyst.

"The goal in Bakhmut is not Bakhmut itself, which has been turned into ruins," military analyst Roman Svitan said by phone. The goal for the Ukrainians is to hold on to the western heights and maintain a defensive arc outside the city.

More broadly, Ukraine wants to weigh down Russian forces and capture the initiative ahead of the counteroffensive — part of what military analysts call "shaping operations" to set the terms of the battle environment and put an enemy in a defensive, reactive posture.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 44 of 77

Serhiy Cherevatyi, a spokesman for Ukrainian forces in the east, said the strategic goal in the Bakhmut area was "to restrain the enemy and destroy as much personnel and equipment as possible" while preventing a Russian breakthrough or outflanking maneuver.

Analyst Mathieu Boulègue questioned whether Bakhmut would hold lessons or importance for the war ahead.

Military superiority matters, he said, but so does "information superiority" — the ability "to create subterfuge, to create obfuscation of your force, to be able to move in the shadows."

Boulègue, a consulting fellow with the Russia and Eurasia program at the Chatham House think tank in London, said those tactics "could determine which side gains an advantage that catches the other side by surprise, and turns the tide of the war."

Keaten reported from Kyiv, Ukraine. Associated Press writers Hanna Arhirova and Illia Novikov in Kyiv, Yuras Karmanau in Tallinn, Estonia, and Jill Lawless in London contributed to this report.

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

## What to know as Prince Harry prepares to take on a British tabloid publisher in court

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Prince Harry is going where other British royals haven't for over a century: to a courtroom witness stand.

The Duke of Sussex is set to testify in the first of his five pending legal cases largely centered around battles with British tabloids. Opening statements are scheduled Monday in his case.

Harry said in court documents that the royal family had assiduously avoided the courts to prevent testifying about matters that might be embarrassing.

His frustration and anger at the press, however, impelled him to buck convention by suing newspaper owners — allegedly against the wishes of his father, now King Charles III.

If Harry testifies as scheduled Tuesday in his lawsuit against the publisher of the Daily Mirror, he'll be the first member of the royal family to do so since the late 19th century, when Queen Victoria's eldest son, Prince Albert Edward, testified twice in court.

The man who would go on to become King Edward VII testified in the divorce proceedings of a woman he was accused of having an affair with (he denied it) and in a slander case involving a man who cheated at cards. Edward VII was the great-grandfather of Queen Elizabeth II, Harry's grandmother.

A look at Prince Harry's legal battles:

### HARRY'S HISTORY WITH PHONE HACKING AND PAPARAZZI

The Daily Mirror case is one of three Harry has brought alleging phone hacking and other invasions of his privacy, dating back to when he was a boy.

In court documents, he described his relationship with the press as "uneasy" in court documents, but it runs much deeper than that. The prince blames paparazzi for causing the car crash that killed his mother, the late Princess Diana.

He also cites harassment and intrusion by the British Press and "vicious, persistent attacks" on his wife, Meghan, including racist articles, as the reason the couple left royal life and fled to the U.S. in 2020. Reforming the news media has become one of his life's missions.

News that British journalists hacked phones for scoops first emerged in 2006 with the arrest of a private investigator and the royals reporter at the now-defunct News of the World. The two were jailed, and the reporter apologized for hacking phones used by aides of Harry, his older brother, Prince William, and their father.

A full-blown hacking scandal erupted five years later when it was revealed that the Rupert Murdoch-

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 45 of 77

owned tabloid eavesdropped on voicemails on the phone of a slain girl, forcing the paper to close and launching a public inquiry.

Since that time, other newspapers have been accused of illegal intrusions that extended to tapping phones, bugging homes and using deception to obtain phone, bank and medical records.

## WHO IS HARRY SUING?

The duke is taking on three of Britain's best-known tabloid publishers.

In addition to Mirror Group Newspapers, he is suing Murdoch's News Group Newspapers, publisher of The Sun, and Associated Newspapers Ltd., which owns the Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday.

The claims are similar: that journalists and people they employed listened to phone messages and committed other unlawful acts to snoop on Harry and invade his privacy.

In a sign of how much the cases matter to him, Harry attended several days of hearings in March in the case against the Mail publisher.

Several celebrities with similar allegations have also filed claims being heard alongside Harry's, including Hugh Grant in the News Group case, and Elton John and Elizabeth Hurley in the Associated Newspapers case.

Associated Newspapers "vigorously denies" the claims. News Group has apologized for News of the World's hacking but The Sun does not accept liability or admit to any of the allegations, according to spokespeople.

Both publishers argued during High Court hearings this spring that the lawsuits should be thrown out because Harry and the others failed to bring them within a six-year time limit.

The lawyer representing Harry and other claimants said they should be granted an exception because the publishers lied and concealed evidence that prevented them from learning of the covert acts in time to meet the deadlines.

## WHAT'S THE CURRENT TRIAL ABOUT?

At the outset of the proceedings, Mirror Group appeared to fall on its sword, acknowledging instances when its newspapers unlawfully gathered information. It apologized in court papers and said Harry and two of the other three claimants in the case were due compensation.

But the admission involving Harry — the hiring of a private eye to dig up unspecified dirt for an article about his nightclubbing — wasn't among the nearly 150 articles between 1995 and 2011 for which he claimed Mirror Group reporters used phone hacking and other illegal methods to gather material. The trial is focusing on 33 of those stories.

Harry's lawyer, David Sherborne, said unlawful acts by reporters and editors at the Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror and Sunday People were "widespread and habitual" and carried out on "an industrial scale." He pointed the finger at management, in particular TV personality Piers Morgan, a former Daily Mirror editor.

Morgan has publicly denied involvement in phone hacking, as has Mirror Group in its court submissions. Mirror lawyer Andrew Green said a substantial proportion of the articles at issue involved a "breathtaking level of triviality" and that with the exception of a few instances of unlawful information gathering, the company's reporters had used public records and sources to legally obtain information.

The trial is a test case involving four claimants, including two members of Britain's longest-running soap opera, "Coronation Street." But the verdict could determine the outcome of hacking claims also made against Mirror Group by the estate of the late singer George Michael, former Girls Aloud member Cheryl and former soccer player Ian Wright.

The case is broken into two parts: a generic case that lasted nearly three weeks in which Harry's lawyer laid out evidence of alleged skullduggery at the newspapers; the second part, starting Monday, with the four claimants testifying about specific acts targeting them.

## WHAT ARE THE OTHER LAWSUITS ABOUT?

Harry's fear and loathing of the press intersects with two active cases that center around the government's decision to stop protecting him after he abandoned royal duties.

Harry argued his security is compromised when he visits the U.K., saying that aggressive paparazzi chased him after a charity event in 2021. He sued the British government for withdrawing his security detail.

With that lawsuit pending, he unsuccessfully tried to challenge the government's subsequent rejection

of his offer to pay for his own police protection.

A judge is weighing whether Harry's libel suit against Associated Newspapers for reporting that he tried to hide his legal efforts to get the British government to provide security should go to trial.

"How Prince Harry tried to keep his legal fight with the government over police bodyguards a secret... then — just minutes after the story broke — his PR machine tried to put a positive spin on the dispute," the Mail on Sunday wrote in its headline.

In past cases, Meghan won an invasion of privacy case in 2021 against the Mail on Sunday for printing a private letter she wrote to her father. That led to a 1-pound settlement for violating her privacy and an undisclosed sum for copyright infringement.

The couple has also settled lawsuits against photo agencies for flying a drone over their California home and a helicopter over a home where they were living in England.

## Las Vegas ballpark pitch revives debate over public funding for sports stadiums

By GABE STERN Associated Press/Report for America

CARSON CITY, Nev. (AP) — Gov. Joe Lombardo wants to help build Major League Baseball's smallest ballpark, arguing that the worst team in baseball can boost Las Vegas, a city striving to call itself a sports mecca.

Debate about public funding for private sports clubs has been revived with the Oakland Athletics ballpark proposal. The issue pits Nevada's powerful tourism industry, including trade unions, against a growing chorus of mostly progressive groups nationwide raising concerns about the use of tax dollars to finance sports stadiums that could otherwise fund government services or schools.

The debate over relocating the team from California to Nevada echoes others around the country. Politicians have approved large sums of taxpayer money going to sports clubs in Buffalo, New York; Atlanta; and Nashville, Tennessee. In Tempe, Arizona, though, voters rejected a \$2.3 billion proposal that would have included a new arena for the NHL's Arizona Coyotes.

The Oakland A's organization has hired more than a dozen lobbyists to persuade lawmakers in Nevada's normally sleepy, 60,000-resident state capital to approve the proposal to build a \$1.5 billion stadium, arguing the project will create jobs, boost economic activity and add a new draw to the tourism-based economy in Las Vegas — all without raising taxes.

Central to the pitch is the city's newfound sports success with NFL, NHL and WNBA teams that were nonexistent or based elsewhere seven years ago.

"Las Vegas is clearly a sports town, and Major League Baseball should be a part of it," Lombardo, a Republican, said in a statement.

Those against giving professional sports teams incentive packages have said tax credits and other means of public financing aren't beneficial. They cite growing evidence that dollars generated from the new stadium would not be spent at nearby resorts and restaurants.

Half of the tax credits may not be paid back to the state. Much of the A's investment in the community, including homelessness prevention and outreach, hinges on whether the ball club has money left over after stadium costs.

"I just cannot justify giving millions of public dollars to a multibillion dollar corporation while we cannot pay for the basic services that our folks need," Democratic Assemblywoman Selena La Rue Hatch said.

Last month, Lombardo's office introduced the stadium financing bill with less than two weeks left in the legislative session.

The bill would provide up to \$380 million in public assistance, partly through \$180 million in transferable tax credits and \$120 million in county bonds, which are taxpayer-backed loans, to help finance projects and a special tax district around the stadium. Backers have pledged the district will generate enough money to pay off those bonds and interest.

The A's would not owe property taxes for the publicly owned stadium and Clark County, which includes

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 47 of 77

Las Vegas, also would contribute \$25 million in credit toward infrastructure costs.

In places like Buffalo and Oakland, proponents of new stadiums have argued tax incentives prevent the departure of decades-old businesses. But the debate in Nevada differs.

The state already heavily relies on entertainment and tourism to power its economy, and lawmakers or appointed boards for years have talked about diversifying the economy to justify incentives to businesses including Tesla. Another deal that legislators are weighing would expand a film tax credit system to \$190 million annually over at least 20 years to bring major film studios to Las Vegas.

The Legislature has until Monday, when the session adjourns until 2025, to push through the stadium and film proposals, although the possibility of a special legislative session looms.

Both proposals are far from a done deal as lawmakers prepare to vote.

In recent decades there has been an increase in new stadium deals that are mostly — but not always — publicly funded. Two vastly different examples already are visible on the Strip.

A last-minute bill in Nevada's 2016 special session paved the way for \$750 million in public funding from hotel room taxes for the \$2 billion Allegiant Stadium, home of the Las Vegas Raiders and host of the upcoming Super Bowl.

T-Mobile Arena, home to the NHL's Las Vegas Golden Knights, opened in 2016 after MGM Resorts and a California developer covered the full \$375 million price tag. On Saturday, the arena hosted the first game of the Stanley Cup.

The A's recently received the backing of the powerful Culinary Union, a 60,000-member group of workers on the Las Vegas Strip, after agreeing to let stadium employees unionize. It's a key endorsement from the state's most prominent labor group, often seen as a vital mobilizing force for Democratic campaigns in the western swing state.

"We will support large-scale projects — whether they're pro-teams, event centers or large companies — if they're going to bring good union jobs with healthcare and pensions," said Ted Pappageorge, the Culinary Union's secretary-treasurer.

While the debate surrounding public financing for private sports stadiums has animated governing bodies nationwide, there isn't a debate among economists.

Roger Noll, a Stanford University economics emeritus professor, said economists question whether bringing new stadiums to cities has a slightly negative or positive net impact without public assistance.

To be effective, a Las Vegas stadium in Las Vegas would have to draw a substantial number of visitors who would not normally come to the city. If stadiums are another asset in an existing structure, then most of the spending there would likely be in neighboring attractions, like the Sunset Strip's resorts and restaurants, Noll said.

Much of the ball club's financing also goes toward player salaries, who often don't live in their team's city year-round, he noted.

"It's not that they don't exist, but they're tiny," Noll said of the economic benefits. "They can't possibly be big enough to justify hundreds of millions of dollars in expenditure."

Noll, who authored a book about stadium financing, added there is "no serious contrary view" among his peers who study the topic.

Jeremy Aguero, the founder of a firm partnering with the A's, acknowledged the criticism at the recent hearing, but told lawmakers that Las Vegas' tourism-driven market was different.

In a study funded by the A's, Aguero's firm projected 53% of the stadium's annual attendees would come from beyond the city, and 30% of the estimated 405,000 out-of-towners would not visit Las Vegas without stadium events.

"They come and they stay in our hotel rooms, and they eat in our restaurants and they shop in our stores," Aguero told lawmakers. "It drives a tremendous amount of value."

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Stern is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service that places journalists in newsrooms. Follow Stern on Twitter: @gabestern326.

## Carter and the Kings: A friendship and alliance — but after MLK's assassination

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The voice of Martin Luther King Sr., a melodic tenor like his slain son, carried across Madison Square Garden, calming the raucous Democrats who had nominated his friend and fellow Georgian for the presidency.

"Surely, the Lord sent Jimmy Carter to come on out and bring America back where she belongs," the venerated Black pastor said as the nominee smiled behind him. "I'm with him. You are, too. Let me tell you, we must close ranks now."

Carter then shared a moment with Coretta Scott King, clasping hands and locking eyes with the widowed first lady of the Civil Rights Movement, their children looking on.

For the Kings, closing the 1976 convention affirmed their continued reach — and their pragmatism — eight years after Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. For Carter, it marked the evolution of a white politician from the Old Confederacy: As a local leader and state senator who aspired for more, he had mostly avoided controversial stands during the civil rights era. During all their years in Atlanta, he never met the movement's leader.

"Carter never did anything racist himself. But he didn't participate," biographer Jonathan Alter said. "And King was right there."

Yet the alliance Carter later forged with the King family endured as he grew into a governor, president and global humanitarian who advanced racial equality and human rights.

"He was one of the few presidents who really was an advocate for the Black community out of a pureness of heart," said the Rev. Bernice King, who leads the King Center that her mother founded.

Now 98, Carter is receiving hospice care in Plains, Georgia. King, just 39 when he was gunned down in 1968, would have been 94.

Certainly, King would have expanded his own legacy with a longer life span — after civil rights victories for Black Americans he turned his focus to challenging Western militarism and rapacious capitalism — and there's no way to know what kind of relationship King might have had with Carter once the Georgia Democrat reached high office.

As it was, Carter used the most visible decades of his public life to reflect King's values and often his rhetoric, while playing a central role in memorializing King as an American icon.

Carter opened government contracts to Black-owned businesses and appointed record numbers of Black citizens to executive and judicial posts. He steered more public money to historically Black colleges and opposed tax breaks for discriminatory private schools. He echoed King's emphasis on peace, expressing pride long after his presidency that he never started a shooting war.

Carter quoted many of the same theologians King cited in his practice of nonviolent resistance, and he would join King in 2002 as a Nobel Peace Prize winner. As a former president, Carter tracked King's later economic observations, declaring the U.S. an oligarchy, rather than a fully functioning democracy, because of wealth inequality and money in politics.

That record, Bernice King told The Associated Press, cements Carter as a "courageous" and "principled" figure who built on her father's work, while having "genuine" relationships with her mother and grandfather.

Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter welcomed the Kings to the White House to present Coretta with a posthumous Medal of Freedom for her husband, making him one of the few Black Americans to receive the nation's highest civilian honor at that point. Carter helped establish government observances of King's birthday and enabled the federal historic site encompassing King's birthplace, burial site and the family's Ebenezer Baptist Church.

The former president even served as private mediator for King's children, helping settle an extended dispute over their parents' estate. "I appreciate his efforts" ending the highly publicized fight, Bernice



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 49 of 77

King said.

Barely 5 years old when her father was killed, the younger King said she does not "know for sure" when the families' friendship began. She thinks her mother made the first overture, after Carter became Georgia governor in 1971.

"My mother was the kind of leader who made sure that she connected with the people she felt could assist her in the work that she was doing to continue my father's legacy," King said.

It had not been obvious before Carter reached statewide office that he could be such a partner.

During the peak of the Civil Rights Movement, as Martin Luther King Jr. worked with President Lyndon Johnson on the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act, Carter was a one-term state senator. He supported Johnson's election in 1964 and never aligned with segregationist colleagues in Atlanta, but Carter didn't speak out in favor of the federal laws during his two campaigns for governor, nor did he appear at Ebenezer, just a few blocks from the Georgia Capitol.

When King was assassinated, Carter did not attend the funeral. In 1970, he won the governor's race as a conservative Democrat, avoiding explicit mentions of race while assuring voters of his general preference for "local control" over federal intervention.

A "code-word campaign," Alter called it.

Then, at his inauguration, the 46-year-old Carter issued a surprise edict: "The time for racial discrimination is over."

Bernice King assessed his declaration as "very profound at the time."

Within a few years, Carter stood with the King family in the Georgia Capitol as Coretta unveiled a portrait of King, while Ku Klux Klan members protested outside.

King Sr. had no trouble reconciling Carter's earlier maneuverings before reaching the governor's seat.

"He had never been characterized as a 'cracker' lawmaker, the way so many rural statesmen had been," the elder King wrote in his autobiography.

He said Carter "achieved an unusual reputation" among Black constituents with his "willingness to meet with people and work long hours on issues and needs."

Such attention showed the way for Democrats as expanded voting rights finally allowed Black voters to flex political power. Every Democratic president since then has depended on strong Black support to win the nomination and general election. President Joe Biden has recognized the dynamics by pushing the national party to put more diverse states, including Georgia, earlier in the nominating process.

Political calculations aside, Bernice King said her grandfather and Carter shared "real kinship" as two Baptists raised in small-town Georgia. The senior King once described their conversations as "one country boy to another."

Carter paid the elder King an in-person visit to ask for his support at the outset of his presidential bid. Never a party loyalist, the elder King initially told Carter he would support his White House bid only if Republican Vice President Nelson Rockefeller did not run again. King's reasoning: Carter was a longshot, while Rockefeller, a civil rights liberal, was already a heavyweight.

When it became clear Rockefeller would not be President Gerald Ford's running mate in 1976, King endorsed Carter. It was an invaluable imprimatur for a white Southern governor from the same generation as segregationists like Alabama's George Wallace and Georgia's Lester Maddox.

King vouched for Carter in Black churches across the country and to the nearly all-white national press corps, particularly after Carter mangled federal housing policy discussions by defending "ethnic purity" in American neighborhoods.

Carter tried to clean up his remarks with more explanations, saying he would "oppose very strongly and aggressively" any "exclusion of a family because of race or ethnic background" but still saw it as "good to maintain the homogeneity of neighborhoods if they've been established that way."

Carter eventually followed with an apology.

Bernice King said her grandfather saw Carter's word choices as "an innocent mistake" and urged journalists and voters to see Carter's values and full record.

During the first half of Carter's long life, "he had to navigate in a society, in a culture where, as a white

person, you were expected to hate and see Black people in a very demeaning way," Bernice King said. Considering the whole of his life, she said, "I think he managed that very well."

Along the way, Carter learned something the King siblings and cousins always understood about their grandfather and that "booming" voice.

"When Granddaddy opened his mouth," Bernice King said, "you paid attention."

## Slow start to New York's legal pot market leaves farmers holding the bag

By MICHAEL HILL Associated Press

ARGYLE, N.Y. (AP) — Seth Jacobs has about 100 bins packed with marijuana flower sitting in storage at his upstate New York farm.

And that's a problem. There aren't enough places to sell it.

The 700 pounds (318 kilograms) of pungent flower was harvested last year as part of New York's first crop of legally grown pot for recreational use. He also has roughly 220 pounds (100 kilograms) of distillate. Months later, there are only a dozen licensed dispensaries statewide to sell what Jacobs and more than 200 other farmers produced.

Now, another growing season is underway and farmers still sitting on much of last year's harvest are in a financial bind.

"We are really under the gun here. We're all losing money," Jacobs recently said at his farm on rolling land near the Vermont border. "Even the most entrepreneurial and ambitious amongst us just can't move much product in this environment."

New York pot farmers aren't the only ones struggling with difficult economic conditions. Marijuana growers in western states have also complained that low prices, tough competition from the black market, high state taxes and federal banking and exporting restrictions have made it tough for legal growers to make money.

But the farmers' plight in New York is directly tied to the bumpy launch of the state's recreational pot market.

State leaders had always planned to gear up the market in stages, giving a chance for a diverse set of participants to get a toe-hold. The state's process for licensing new dispensaries, however, has moved at a far slower pace than expected.

Last fall, Gov. Kathy Hochul foresaw 20 new shops opening every month or so to start this year. Instead, one store was open by the start of the year, with 11 more opened since.

Unlicensed shops rushed in to fill the void, especially in New York City, but those outlets aren't a legal market for the state's farmers. Federal law prohibits the New York farmers from transporting their crop across state lines.

That means limited shelf space to sell the 300,000 pounds (136,000 kilograms) of cannabis grown in the state last year, much of the product meant to be processed for items like gummies and vapes.

Statewide, there is estimated to be hundreds of millions of dollars worth of unsold cannabis, about 80% in the form of cannabis oil, according to the Cannabis Association of New York, a trade group. There are concerns the smokable flower will eventually become too old to sell.

Jacobs keep his bins of buds at Slack Hollow Organics in secure, temperature controlled units. More valuable still is the distillate at various processors he's waiting to sell. Elsewhere in rural New York, Brittany Carbone, co-founder of Tricolla Farms, said the stock they're sitting on includes 1,500 packs of pre-rolled joints and about 2,000 packs of edibles.

"What we really need to see is more retailers get open, and that's going to actually give us the sustainable solution," Carbone said.

The lack of sales is a particular problem for small farmers who stretched themselves thin financially to produce last year's crop and now need capital for their second year.

Jacobs, whose brand is Bud & Boro, said he won't grow plants for distillate this year because of the

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 51 of 77

race that broke turnout records.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, who won her 2018 race by 11 points, is up for reelection next year and has yet to draw a Republican opponent. Republicans are already voicing concerns about the lack of an announced top tier challenger and the possibility of yet another expensive, divisive primary like this year's Supreme Court contest.

Wisconsin has long been one of a handful of battleground states, one of the few places where either party can win a statewide contest.

With that in mind, Milwaukee will play host to the first Republican presidential primary debate in August. Republicans will return next summer for their national convention. Democrats, in another nod to the importance of the Midwest, will gather just across the border in Chicago for their national convention in 2024.

Wisconsin Republican Party leaders are trying to get the rank and file to refocus on the fights ahead, while recent losses and divisions within the party among conservatives loyal to former President Donald Trump pose challenges.

"I'm not coming over to put lipstick on the corpse," said Wisconsin Republican Party Chairman Brian Schimming, who took over the job in December. "We have a philosophy of winning here. And that takes doing a lot of things. But we are doing them. We've proved that we can do them."

The theme of the state Republican convention this month, "Red to the Roots," speaks directly at the priority of connecting with its grassroots activists, some of whom have broken with party leaders in the Trump era.

"We can win when we're unified," Schimming said. "We can win when we're focused and focused on the grassroots."

Wisconsin Republicans are divided between a group that's "hacked off" and "all-in on Trump" and a growing segment that wants to move on, said Rohn Bishop, the Republican mayor of Waupun and former Fond du Lac County GOP chair.

"If we go the Trump revenue tour route, we're doomed to defeat," said Bishop, one of the most vocal Republicans against Trump's lies that the 2020 election was stolen.

"If Republicans get their act together, Wisconsin can be very close," Bishop said.

Longtime western Wisconsin GOP activist Brian Westrate said Republicans are frustrated, but also optimistic about their chances in 2024.

He compares the position Republicans are in now to 2009, when Democrats had majority control of the Legislature, the governor's office, both U.S. Senate seats and a majority of House seats. In 2010, that flipped with Republicans winning the governor's office, a Senate seat and majority control of the Legislature.

Schimming puts it bluntly: "The only thing that focuses people more than winning is losing."

Republicans say recent high-profile losses, including Trump's defeat in 2022, overshadow other gains they've made. Those include reelecting U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson last year, picking up a congressional seat and increasing majorities in the state Senate and Assembly just shy of a veto-proof supermajority under maps they drew in 2010 and 2020 that are recognized as among the most gerrymandered in the country. Republicans also now hold six of the state's eight congressional seats.

Schimming said he tries to remind the party faithful with another high stakes presidential election looming that "things change fast."

"People are more unified than maybe a lot of people would expect after the Supreme Court thing," Schimming said. "The excitement level's pretty high for our folks."

Still, Republicans have struggled with how to handle abortion after the U.S. Supreme Court last year overturned *Roe v. Wade*. That resulted in an 1849 state abortion ban, enacted before women had the right to vote, going back into effect in Wisconsin. A lawsuit seeking to undo the law could be decided by the new liberal-controlled Wisconsin Supreme Court before the 2024 election.

Christy Welch is one of many Democrats in Wisconsin who decided to get more involved in politics after *Roe* was overturned. She quit her job last year "to try to influence what's happening with politics" and now chairs the Brown County Democratic Party, which will play host to the state convention.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 52 of 77

In addition to abortion, Democrats also hope the Wisconsin Supreme Court will redraw the boundaries for legislative and congressional districts, another issue that played large in Protasiewicz's win.

"Obviously folks were very excited and it feels really good to be able to build off of momentum and wins," Welch said.

## China defends buzzing American warship in Taiwan Strait, accuses US of provoking Beijing

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — China's defense minister defended sailing a warship across the path of an American destroyer and Canadian frigate transiting the Taiwan Strait, telling a gathering of some of the world's top defense officials in Singapore on Sunday that such so-called "freedom of navigation" patrols are a provocation to China.

In his first international public address since becoming defense minister in March, Gen. Li Shangfu told the Shangri-La Dialogue that China doesn't have any problems with "innocent passage" but that "we must prevent attempts that try to use those freedom of navigation (patrols), that innocent passage, to exercise hegemony of navigation."

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told the same forum Saturday that Washington would not "flinch in the face of bullying or coercion" from China and would continue regularly sailing through and flying over the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea to emphasize they are international waters, countering Beijing's sweeping territorial claims.

That same day, as a U.S. guided-missile destroyer and a Canadian frigate were intercepted by a Chinese warship as they transited the strait between the self-governed island of Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory, and mainland China. The Chinese vessel overtook the American ship and then veered across its bow at a distance of 150 yards (about 140 meters) in an "unsafe manner," according to the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command.

Additionally, the U.S. has said a Chinese J-16 fighter jet late last month "performed an unnecessarily aggressive maneuver" while intercepting a U.S. Air Force reconnaissance aircraft over the South China Sea, flying directly in front of the plane's nose.

Those and previous incidents have raised concerns of a possible accident occurring that could lead to an escalation between the two nations at a time when tensions are already high.

Li suggested the U.S. and its allies had created the danger, and should instead should focus on taking "good care of your own territorial airspace and waters."

"The best way is for the countries, especially the naval vessels and fighter jets of countries, not to do closing actions around other countries' territories," he said through an interpreter. "What's the point of going there? In China we always say, 'Mind your own business.'"

In a wide-ranging speech, Li reiterated many of Beijing's well-known positions, including its claim on Taiwan, calling it "the core of our core interests."

He accused the U.S. and others of "meddling in China's internal affairs" by providing Taiwan with defense support and training, and conducting high-level diplomatic visits.

"China stays committed to the path of peaceful development, but we will never hesitate to defend our legitimate rights and interests, let alone sacrifice the nation's core interests," he said.

"As the lyrics of a well-known Chinese song go: 'When friends visit us, we welcome them with fine wine. When jackals or wolves come, we will face them with shotguns.'"

In his speech the previous day, Austin broadly outlined the U.S. vision for a "free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific within a world of rules and rights."

In the pursuit of such, Austin said the U.S. was stepping up planning, coordination and training with "friends from the East China Sea to the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean" with shared goals "to deter aggression and to deepen the rules and norms that promote prosperity and prevent conflict."

Li scoffed at the notion, saying "some country takes a selective approach to rules and international laws."

"It likes forcing its own rules on others," he said. "Its so-called 'rules-based international order' never tells you what the rules are and who made these rules."

By contrast, he said, "we practice multilateralism and pursue win-win cooperation."

Li is under American sanctions that are part of a broad package of measures against Russia — but predate its invasion of Ukraine — that were imposed in 2018 over Li's involvement in China's purchase of combat aircraft and anti-aircraft missiles from Moscow.

The sanctions, which broadly prevent Li from doing business in the United States, do not prevent him from holding official talks, American defense officials have said.

Still, he refused Austin's invitation to talk on the sidelines of the conference, though the two did shake hands before sitting down at opposite sides of the same table together as the forum opened Friday.

Austin said that was not enough.

"A cordial handshake over dinner is no substitute for a substantive engagement," Austin said.

The U.S. has noted that since 2021 — well before Li became defense minister — China has declined or failed to respond to more than a dozen requests from the U.S. Defense Department to talk with senior leaders, as well as multiple requests for standing dialogues and working-level engagements.

Li said that "China is open to communications between our two countries and also between our two militaries," but without mentioning the sanctions, said exchanges had to be "based on mutual respect."

"That is a very fundamental principle," he said. "If we do not even have mutual respect, than our communications will not be productive."

He said that he recognized that any "severe conflict or confrontation between China and the U.S. will be an unbearable disaster for the world," and that the two countries need to find ways to improve relations, saying they were "at a record low."

"History has proven time and again that both China and the United States will benefit from cooperation and lose from confrontation," he said.

"China seeks to develop a new type of major-country relationship with the United States. As for the U.S. side, it needs to act with sincerity, match its words with deeds, and take concrete actions together with China to stabilize the relations and prevent further deterioration," Li said.

## North Korean leader's sister vows 2nd attempt to launch spy satellite, slams UN meeting

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed again Sunday to push for a second attempt to launch a spy satellite as she lambasted a U.N. Security Council meeting over the North's first, failed launch.

The North's attempt to put its first military spy satellite into orbit last Wednesday failed as its rocket crashed off the Korean Peninsula's western coast. An emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council was still convened at the request of the U.S., Japan and other countries to discuss the launch because it had violated council resolutions banning the North from performing any launch using ballistic technology.

On Sunday, Kim's sister and senior ruling party official, Kim Yo Jong, called the U.N. council "a political appendage" of the United States, saying its recent meeting was convened following America's "gangster-like request."

She accused the U.N. council of being "discriminative and rude" because it only takes issue with the North's satellite launches while thousands of satellites launched by other countries are already operating in space. She said her country's attempt to acquire a spy satellite is a legitimate step to respond to military threats posed by the U.S. and its allies.

"(North Korea) will continue to take proactive measures to exercise all the lawful rights of a sovereign state, including the one to a military reconnaissance satellite launch," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement carried by state media.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 54 of 77

In her earlier statement Friday, Kim Yo Jong said the North's spy satellite "will be correctly put on space orbit in the near future" but didn't say when its second launch attempt would take place.

South Korea's spy agency told lawmakers Wednesday it will likely take "more than several weeks" for North Korea to learn the cause of the failed launch but it may attempt a second launch soon if defects aren't serious.

Washington, Seoul and others criticized the North's satellite launch for raising international tensions and urged it to return to talks.

A military surveillance satellite is among a list of sophisticated weapons systems that Kim Jong Un has vowed to acquire amid protracted security tensions with the United States. Since the start of 2022, Kim has carried out more than 100 missile tests in what he called a warning over expanded military drills between the U.S. and South Korea.

Experts say Kim would want to use his modernized weapons arsenal to wrest concessions from Washington and its partners in future diplomacy.

North Korea was slapped with rounds of U.N. sanctions over its past nuclear and missile tests and satellite launches. But the U.N. Security Council failed to toughen those sanctions over North Korea's recent testing activities because China and Russia, both permanent members of the U.N. council, blocked the U.S. and others' attempts to do so. During the latest U.N. council session Friday, China and Russia again clashed with the U.S. over the North's failed launch.

After repeated failures, North Korea placed Earth-observation satellites into orbit in 2012 and 2016, but foreign experts say there is no evidence that either satellite transmitted imagery and other data.

Also Sunday, North Korea threatened not to notify the International Maritime Organization of future satellite launches in advance to protest the group's condemnation of North Korean missile tests.

The IMO's maritime safety committee on Wednesday adopted a rare resolution denouncing North Korea for conducting launches without proper notification that "seriously threatened the safety of seafarers and international shipping."

Kim Myong Chol, an international affairs analyst in North Korea, said in a statement carried by state media: "In the future, IMO should know and take measures by itself over the period of (North Korea's) satellite launch and the impact point of its carrier and be prepared to take full responsibility for all the consequences from it."

Ahead of its recent spy satellite launch, North Korea told the IMO and Japan that a launch would occur between May 31 and June 11.

## **Texas bans gender-affirming care for minors after governor signs bill**

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas has become the most populous state to ban gender-affirming care for minors after Gov. Greg Abbott signed legislation on Friday.

Texas joined at least 18 other states that have enacted similar bans.

Every major medical organization, including the American Medical Association, has opposed the bans and supported the medical care for youth when administered appropriately. Lawsuits have been filed in several states where bans have been enacted this year.

Last year, Abbott became the first governor to order the investigation of families who were receiving care. The investigations were later halted by a Texas judge.

The GOP-controlled Legislature sent the bill to Abbott last month. Republicans in the Senate took the final vote over the objections from Democrats, who used parliamentary maneuvers to delay passage but could not derail it entirely.

Transgender rights activists have disrupted the Texas House with protests from the chamber gallery, which led to state police forcing demonstrators to move outside the building.

## Twitter executive responsible for content safety resigns after Elon Musk criticism

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A top Twitter executive responsible for safety and content moderation has left the company, her departure coming soon after owner Elon Musk publicly complained about the platform's handling of posts about transgender topics.

The departure pointed to a fresh wave of turmoil among key officials at Twitter since Musk took over last year.

Ella Irwin, Twitter's head of trust and safety, confirmed her resignation in a pair of tweets late Friday. She did not say in the message why she was leaving, but her departure came shortly after Musk criticized Twitter's handling of tweets about a conservative media company's documentary that questions transgender medical treatment for children and teens.

Musk was responding to complaints by Jeremy Boreing, co-CEO of the media company, the Daily Wire. Boreing said in tweets and retweets of conservative commentators Thursday that Twitter was suppressing the movie by flagging posts about it as hate speech and keeping the movie off lists of trending topics.

Boreing tweeted that Twitter canceled a deal to premiere "What is a Woman?" for free on the platform "because of two instances of 'misgendering.'" Twitter rules prohibit intentionally referring to transgender individuals with the wrong gender or name.

"This was a mistake by many people at Twitter. It is definitely allowed," Musk tweeted back. "Whether or not you agree with using someone's preferred pronouns, not doing so is at most rude and certainly breaks no laws."

Irwin tweeted Friday that "one or two people noticed" she left the company the day before, and she noted speculation about whether she was fired or quit. She teased that she would post 24 tweets to explain her departure.

Then she posted that she was just kidding about the long narrative.

"In all seriousness, I did resign but this has been a once in a lifetime experience and I'm so thankful to have worked with this amazing team of passionate, creative and hardworking people. Will be cheering you all and Twitter as you go!"

Next to Musk, Irwin had been the most prominent voice of the company's ever-changing content policies in recent months.

Twitter has struggled to bring back advertisers turned off by Musk's drastic changes and loosening of rules against hate speech since he bought Twitter for \$44 billion in October. Twitter also has an incoming CEO, Linda Yaccarino, known for decades of media and advertising industry experience, but she hasn't started yet.

Irwin and Twitter didn't respond to requests from The Associated Press for comment.

Twitter has been in turmoil including mass layoffs and voluntary departures since the billionaire Tesla owner bought the San Francisco company and took it private. The company's head of trust and safety left shortly after the takeover, and turnover in the top ranks has continued.

## DeSantis signs Bible, Pence hops on motorcycle at 'Roast and Ride' event in Iowa

By MICHELLE L. PRICE, HANNAH FINGERHUT and THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Amid plates of sliced pork, statement-making leather ensembles and piles of political T-shirts, eight Republican presidential hopefuls descended on Iowa to pitch themselves to voters and, in Mike Pence's case, hop on a motorcycle.

The former vice president and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis were among the White House contenders appearing at a rally at the state fairgrounds near Des Moines hosted by U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst. Her annual political event, the "Roast and Ride" — a combination barbecue-rally and motorcycle ride — kicks off a busy summer campaign season heading into the state's first-in-the-nation caucuses early next year.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 56 of 77

backlog. Carbone said they are planting on less than the acre they're legally allowed and are holding off on infrastructure investments, like hoop houses to help with growing.

In New York, many critics blame missteps by state officials in their well-intentioned effort to open the market to a diverse array of entrepreneurs. That meant reserving the first legal pot harvests for struggling hemp farmers. And people with past marijuana convictions were given the chance to open some of the first dispensaries.

Critics say the process has been cumbersome for dispensary applicants. And there have been issues with a planned \$200 million fund to help "social equity" dispensary licensees with the costly task of setting up shops.

The fund was supposed to consist of up to \$150 million in private investment. But state Dormitory Authority spokesperson Jeffrey Gordon declined to say whether any private money had been invested yet, saying in an email only that "work to raise private capital is ongoing."

Gordon noted New York's "complex and unprecedented" effort to create a new statewide enterprise from scratch, which included evaluating 10,000 commercial properties for dispensary locations and arranging for banking, training and other services for the licensees.

The retail rollout also was hobbled by a federal judge's ruling in November that temporarily barred New York from issuing dispensary licenses in parts of the state, including Brooklyn and Buffalo. The injunction was later narrowed to the Finger Lakes region before a settlement was reached this week.

The Office of Cannabis Management has taken recent steps to boost demand, including the provisional approval last month of 50 new dispensary licenses. And plans are in the works for that would allow groups of growers to join with retail licensees to sell their cannabis at places other than stores, like at a farmers' market or a festival.

"We know these cultivators are worried about how to sell last year's harvest as they decide whether to plant a cannabis crop in 2023, and we will continue to support them as more adult-use dispensaries open to sell their products," cannabis office spokesman Aaron Ghitelman said in an email.

On a separate track, Hochul and the Legislature approved a new law giving regulators broader power to seize weed from the illicit shops competing with the legal shops.

Though frustrated, farmers like Jacobs and Carbone are hanging on. Carbone has gotten her farm's brand, TONIC, into six dispensaries. Jacobs has received some intermittent payments and hopes the farmers market policy being devised will give him a new avenue to sell his marijuana.

"This all will get worked out," Jacobs said. "And I want to be there when it does."

## Wisconsin Republicans look for rebound, Democrats stay on offensive as 2024 fights loom

By SCOTT BAUER Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Wisconsin Republicans still reeling from an April election that saw conservatives lose majority control of the state Supreme Court for the first time in 15 years hope to use their upcoming state convention to unify and refocus on the 2024 presidential race in which Wisconsin will once again be a battleground.

Democrats, recognizing that four of the past six presidential elections in the state have been decided by less than a percentage point, are trying not to become overconfident in the face of recent gains. They are gathering for their annual state convention starting June 10 in Green Bay.

"The wind is at our backs, but in Wisconsin no one should ever take anything for granted," said state Democratic Party Chairman Ben Wikler. "I haven't met a single Democrat who thinks we can rest easy."

Democratic candidates, including Gov. Tony Evers and President Joe Biden, have won 14 of the past 17 statewide elections. In April, Democratic-backed Supreme Court candidate Janet Protasiewicz's 11-point win over the GOP-supported candidate proved once again the power of abortion as an issue for Democrats. She ran as a supporter of abortion rights, and for revisiting Republican-drawn political district maps, in a



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 57 of 77

Former President Donald Trump, the leading GOP presidential candidate, was notably absent after spending two days in the state this past week. He has largely avoided any events that have him sharing the stage with his 2024 rivals.

DeSantis, with his wife, Casey, and three young kids in tow, chatted with voters, gave out autographs and signed the Bible of a man who thanked DeSantis for "standing up to Disney." DeSantis just wrapped up his first week as an official candidate with a blitz of campaign stops across three early-voting states.

Casey DeSantis wore a black leather jacket in 86-degree weather with the words "Where Woke Goes to Die" and an outline of Florida on the back. It brought to mind comparisons to first lady Melania Trump, who famously sent a back-of-the-jacket message of her own in 2018 with a green-hooded jacket that read "I really don't care do u" as she departed the White House for a trip to visit migrant children in Texas.

Pence was the only White House hopeful who participated in a morning motorcycle ride for charity that is a staple of Ernst's annual "Roast and Ride" event. He wore jeans, boots and a leather vest with patches that said "Indiana" and messages supportive of the military.

The former Indiana governor, who has made frequent trips to Iowa over the past year, is expected to launch his long-anticipated campaign at an event in Des Moines on Wednesday.

"I'll be back a little later next week," Pence teased the crowd when he spoke later at the rally. "I don't have anything to announce today."

Earlier in the morning, before setting out on their motorcycle ride, Pence, standing with Ernst in the back of a pickup truck, again hinted at his looming candidacy.

"One of the reporters just asked me if we're showing up more in Iowa, what our lane would be. I said I'm more worried about the lane we're going to be staying in today," Pence joked.

The former vice president, wearing a white motorcycle helmet and a big grin, then rode off on a cobalt blue Harley Davidson. The group rode to the fairgrounds, where candidates gave speeches and chatted with barbecue-eating voters.

Other candidates speaking at the event included former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina, former Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, Michigan businessman Perry Johnson, author Vivek Ramaswamy and conservative talk radio host Larry Elder.

In their remarks, the candidates all tiptoed around mentions of the former president. Haley repeated a version of a line she has been using as a candidate that seems to allude to the 76-year-old Trump and his political career as replete with controversies.

"It's time for a new-generation leader. We've got to leave the baggage of the negativity behind," she said.

Off stage, however, several of the candidates did not hesitate to criticize Trump when asked about his social media post on Friday congratulating North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for his country's receiving a place on the executive board of the World Health Organization.

"I was surprised to see that. I mean, I think, one, Kim Jung Un is a murderous dictator," DeSantis said, when a reporter asked him about the post.

Pence, in an interview Saturday with Fox News, said: "Look, whether it is my former running mate or anyone else, no one should be praising the dictator in North Korea."

Hutchinson later tweeted: "We sanction leaders who oppress their people. We do not elevate them on the world stage."

In their speeches, the GOP candidates hit on similar conservative themes: criticizing President Joe Biden, promising tough policies on China and the U.S.-Mexico border and restrictions on abortion and gender-affirming policies.

The event had the feel of a large political fair, with about 1,000 people gathered to listen to the presidential prospects speaking in front of bales of hay in a building at the fairgrounds. Many of the campaigns set up tables full of stickers, T-shirts and drink can coolers.

Rows of dozens of shiny Harley Davidson motorcycles, of all colors, were parked neatly in the parking lot outside, along with campaign buses for Ramaswamy and the DeSantis super PAC. Nearby was what appeared to be a mechanical bull converted to resemble a motorcycle, surrounded by an inflatable landing area to catch thrown riders—all sponsored by the political super PAC Never Back Down, which supports

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 58 of 77

DeSantis.

Marie Andres of Des Moines signed a form, distributed by Never Back Down, to pledge to caucus for DeSantis early next year.

"Trump did a great job, but in my opinion, too much drama," the 74-year-old said. She said she committed to DeSantis because she thinks he is "the best we're gonna get."

Jill Villalobos, 54, was buying a Haley T-shirt — not for herself, but for her brother in Florida. The Altoona resident is planning to support Scott, whom she thinks can bring the GOP and the country together. "I really like his message," Villalobos said.

Victoria Ortiz had heard little of the candidates to date, and was at the event to learn more. She walked away with interest in DeSantis, Haley and Scott.

"I believe in the strong work ethic they promote. As a Hispanic, that's how I was raised," the 35-year-old rental property owner and manager from Des Moines' south side said. "I don't believe in giveaways. You have to work for it."

She said she didn't like Trump.

"His persona, pretty much, and the things he says, are not things I want my children to hear from a president," she said.

Ernst, along with Gov. Kim Reynolds, is one of the most sought-after Republican officials in the early stages of Iowa's leadoff caucuses.

The senator has pledged to remain neutral and not endorse during the caucus campaign.

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Price reported from New York. Associated Press writer Jill Colvin in New York contributed to this report.

## **Haley says US forces 'need to align' with countries including Russia; campaign says she misspoke**

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Republican presidential hopeful Nikki Haley suggested in an interview that United States forces "need to align" with non-European countries including Russia to enhance global security, a remark her campaign characterized as a gaffe.

Asked by WMUR-TV for a segment Wednesday on regions of the world to which she felt the U.S. could pay more attention, Haley — who served the Trump administration as United Nations ambassador, first said "the Arab world," saying the U.S. needs Arab countries "to kind of join with us" on opposing Iran.

"You see Saudi Arabia making deals with China, that's not good for us. We need them to be with us, and then we need to align with others, Russia, Australia, Japan, Israel," Haley added.

"We need to start focusing on the allies that we have besides the Europeans and make sure that we have more friends — one, for our needs, so that we're not dependent on an enemy for energy or medicines or anything else, and then two, to make sure that we build those alliances so that the world is more safe."

On Saturday, Haley's campaign said the candidate misspoke when she included Russia with the other countries.

"This is completely ridiculous, she obviously misspoke," spokesman Ken Farnaso told The Associated Press on Saturday. "No one one has been tougher on Russia than Nikki Haley."

Asked to comment on the interview, Haley in a statement to AP called the country an "enemy" and referred to President Vladimir Putin as a "thug."

"I fought them at the U.N. and I will continue to fight them," Haley said. "They want to destroy us and our allies and they are not to be trusted."

During her tenure as U.N. ambassador during the Trump administration, Haley was critical of Russia, denouncing its invasion of Crimea, condemning the country for "holding the hands" of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as the countries sparred over sanctions. She also referred to Russian corruption as a "virus" which is "impeding our ability to achieve complete denuclearization in North Korea."

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 59 of 77

A divide has emerged within the Republican field on how the U.S. should handle Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In response to a query earlier this year from then-Fox News host Tucker Carlson, Haley said U.S. support for Ukraine was critical against an anti-American regime that is "attempting to brutally expand by force into a neighboring pro-American country," saying a Russian victory would only make countries like China and Iran "more aggressive."

At the time, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who has since entered the GOP primary race, argued that stopping the aggression wasn't a vital U.S. strategic interest, characterizing the situation as a "territorial dispute."

A number of fellow Republicans were critical of DeSantis' initial remarks. Trump, who had called on European countries to share more of the financial burden of defending Ukraine, said DeSantis' answers were "following what I am saying." A day later, Haley said she agreed with Trump that "DeSantis is copying him," writing in an op-ed that the characterization of the war as a "territorial dispute" represented "weakness."

Following those critiques, DeSantis said his earlier comments referenced ongoing fighting in the eastern Donbas region, as well as Russia's 2014 seizure of Crimea. Ukraine's borders are internationally recognized, including by the United Nations.

For months, Stand for America, a super PAC supportive of Haley, has been aiming to draw a contrast between the former South Carolina governor and DeSantis.

"While DeSantis changes his policy positions based on the mood of his donors and television hosts, Haley never backs down," SFA Lead Strategist Mark Harris said in a release last month.

On Saturday, a spokesman for Never Back Down, the super PAC supporting DeSantis, called Haley's remark to WMUR "almost as bizarre as her aligning with woke Disney," a reference to the former South Carolina governor's critiques of DeSantis' ongoing dispute with the entertainment giant, whose jobs she has said her home state "will happily accept" should it choose to leave Florida.

The U.S. has been upping its military aid to Ukraine as Russia's invasion enters its 16th month. In late May, President Joe Biden approved a new aid package that totals up to \$300 million and includes additional munitions for drones and an array of other weapons.

To date, the U.S. has committed more than \$37.6 billion in weapons and other equipment to Ukraine since Russia attacked on Feb. 24, 2022. This latest package will be done under presidential drawdown authority, which allows the Pentagon to take weapons from its own stocks and quickly ship them to Ukraine, officials said.

Meg Kinnard can be reached at <http://twitter.com/MegKinnardAP>

## Ukraine says inspections found nearly a quarter of its air-raid shelters locked or unusable

By SUSIE BLANN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Concerns around civilian safety spiked in Ukraine on Saturday, as officials announced that an inspection had found nearly a quarter of the country's air-raid shelters locked or unusable, just days after a woman in Kyiv allegedly died waiting outside a shuttered shelter during a Russian missile barrage.

The Ukrainian interior ministry said through its press service Saturday that of the "over 4,800" shelters it had inspected, 252 were locked and a further 893 "unfit for use."

That same day, the Kyiv regional prosecutor's office reported that four people were detained in a criminal probe into the 33-year-old's death on Thursday outside the locked shelter. The prosecutor's office said that one person, a security guard who had failed to unlock the doors, remained under arrest, while three others, including a local official, had been put under house arrest.

According to the prosecutor's office, the suspects face up to eight years in prison for official negligence that led to a person's death.

Also on Saturday, Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko said that city authorities have received "more than a thousand" complaints regarding locked, dilapidated or insufficient air-raid shelters within a day of launching

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 60 of 77

an online feedback service.

In a Telegram update, Klitschko reported that “almost half” of the complaints concerned facilities being locked, while about a quarter had to do with them being in poor condition. Some 250 Kyiv residents wrote in to complain of a lack of nearby shelters.

The interior ministry said that over 5,300 volunteers, including emergency workers, police officers and local officials, would continue to inspect shelters across Ukraine.

Russia on Thursday launched a pre-dawn missile barrage at the Ukrainian capital, killing a 9-year old, her mother, and another woman, in what was the highest toll from a single attack on Kyiv over the past month. A 33-year-old woman died as she and others waited to enter a locked shelter, which left the group at the mercy of falling missile fragments, her husband told Ukrainian media.

Late Saturday, the governor of the Dnipropetrovsk region, Serhiy Lysak, said 13 people were injured in shelling in the region; one person was pulled from a damaged residential building in the town of Podgorodnenska and other were believed to be trapped in the rubble.

Elsewhere, Ukrainian regional officials reported Saturday morning that Russian shelling had killed at least four civilians across the country in the previous 24 hours. A 67-year-old man died in the early hours of Saturday as Russian forces shelled the northeastern Kharkiv region, local Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said on Telegram. According to Syniehubov, two other civilians were killed on Friday and overnight, while six more, including a 3-year-old boy, suffered wounds.

In the frontline Kherson region in the south, two boys aged 10 and 13 were hospitalized with “serious” injuries after an explosive device detonated Saturday in a village playground, regional Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin reported. Prokudin also said that five others, including two children, were wounded by Russian shelling over the previous day.

In the Sumy province further west, a Russian mortar shell killed an 85-year-old man as he sat by the orchard outside his house, the Ukrainian prosecutor general’s office reported Saturday. Shelling also killed two people in Russia’s Belgorod region just across the border, including an elderly woman who died on the spot, according to local Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov. Gladkov added that another woman had been hospitalized with injuries, and blamed Ukraine for the attack.

It was not immediately possible to verify the above claims by regional authorities in Ukraine and Russia.

## **Biden signs debt ceiling bill that pulls US back from brink of unprecedented default**

By CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With just two days to spare, President Joe Biden signed legislation on Saturday that lifts the nation’s debt ceiling, averting an unprecedented default on the federal government’s debt.

It was a decidedly low-key denouement to a monthslong drama that unnerved financial markets at home and abroad and caused anxious retirees and social service organizations to make contingency plans in case the country was unable to pay all its bills.

Instead of holding a public ceremony with lawmakers from both parties — showcasing the bipartisanship that Biden had cited in an Oval Office address on Friday evening — the president signed the legislation in private in a reflection of the tight deadline facing the nation’s leaders.

The Treasury Department had warned that the country would start running short of cash on Monday, which would have sent shockwaves through the U.S. and global economies.

The White House released a picture of the president signing the legislation at the Resolute Desk. In a brief statement, Biden thanked Democratic and Republican congressional leaders for their partnership, a cordial message that contrasted with the rancor that initially characterized the debt debate.

“No matter how tough our politics gets, we need to see each not as adversaries, but as fellow Americans,” Biden said in a video message released after the signing. He said it was important to “stop shouting, lower the temperature, and work together to pursue progress, secure prosperity and keep the promise of America for everybody.”

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 61 of 77

The standoff began when Republicans refused to raise the country's borrowing limit unless Democrats agreed to cut spending. Eventually, the White House began weeks of intense negotiations with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., to reach a deal.

The final agreement, passed by the House on Wednesday and the Senate on Thursday, suspends the debt limit until 2025 — after the next presidential election — and restricts government spending. It gives lawmakers budget targets for the next two years in hopes of assuring fiscal stability as the political season heats up.

Raising the nation's debt limit, now at \$31.4 trillion, will ensure that the government can borrow to pay debts already incurred.

After Congress passed the legislation, Biden used the occasion to deliver his first speech from the Oval Office as president on Friday.

"No one got everything they wanted but the American people got what they needed," he said, highlighting the "compromise and consensus" in the deal. "We averted an economic crisis and an economic collapse."

Biden touted the achievements of his first term as he runs for reelection, including support for high-tech manufacturing, infrastructure investments and financial incentives for fighting climate change. He also highlighted ways he blunted Republican efforts to roll back his agenda and achieve deeper cuts.

"We're cutting spending and bringing deficits down at the same time," Biden said. "We're protecting important priorities from Social Security to Medicare to Medicaid to veterans to our transformational investments in infrastructure and clean energy."

Biden's remarks were the most detailed comments from the Democratic president on the compromise he and his staff negotiated. He largely remained quiet publicly during the high-stakes talks, a decision that frustrated some members of his party but was intended to give space for both sides to reach a deal and for lawmakers to vote it to his desk.

Biden praised McCarthy and his negotiators for operating in good faith, and all congressional leaders for ensuring swift passage of the legislation. "They acted responsibly, and put the good of the country ahead of politics," he said.

In addition to restrictions on spending, the 99-page bill changes some policies, including imposing new work requirements for older Americans receiving food aid and greenlighting an Appalachian natural gas pipeline that many Democrats oppose. Some environmental rules were modified to help streamline approvals for infrastructure and energy projects — a move long sought by moderates in Congress.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the legislation could actually expand total eligibility for federal food assistance, with the elimination of work requirements for veterans, homeless people and young people leaving foster care.

The legislation also bolsters funds for defense and veterans, cuts back some new money for the Internal Revenue Service and rejects Biden's call to roll back Trump-era tax breaks on corporations and the wealthy to help cover the nation's deficits. But the White House said the IRS' plans to step up enforcement of tax laws for high-income earners and corporations would continue.

The agreement imposes an automatic overall 1% cut to spending programs if Congress fails to approve its annual spending bills — a measure designed to pressure lawmakers of both parties to reach consensus before the end of the fiscal year in September.

In both chambers, more Democrats backed the legislation than Republicans, but both parties were critical to its passage. In the Senate the tally was 63-36 including 46 Democrats and independents and 17 Republicans in favor, 31 Republicans along with four Democrats and one independent who caucuses with the Democrats opposed.

The vote in the House was 314-117.

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AP Congressional Correspondent Lisa Mascaro contributed to this report.

**Key suspect in Natalee Holloway's case moved to new prison**

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 62 of 77

## ahead of extradition to US

By MAURICIO MUÑOZ and GABRIELA MOLINA Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — The chief suspect in the unsolved 2005 disappearance of American student Natalee Holloway is being transferred to a prison near Peru's capital ahead of his pending extradition to the United States to face charges linked to her vanishing, officials said Saturday.

The government of Peru, where Dutch citizen Joran van der Sloot was serving a 28-year sentence for the murder of a Peruvian woman, authorized his extradition to the U.S. in May.

Máximo Altez, van der Sloot's lawyer, said his client was being taken by land from the Challapalca prison in Peru's southern Andes to the Piedras Gordas prison on the outskirts of Lima.

"In the coming days, the INPE (National Penitentiary Institute) will hand over the condemned man to Interpol Peru with the goal of handing him over to U.S. authorities from the FBI," said a statement from the INPE released Saturday.

Altez said that once the bureaucratic procedures are completed and van der Sloot is given a medical exam, his client will be transferred to the U.S. He estimated the extradition could take place on Tuesday, but Peruvian officials did not confirm this day.

Van der Sloot has agreed to be sent to the United States where he faces trial for alleged extortion and wire fraud charges linked to the Holloway case, his lawyer said.

When asked by the Associated Press why his client agreed, the lawyer responded: "He is imprisoned in the worst prison in the world," referring to the maximum-security Challapalca prison.

"Any prison in the United States is a five-star hotel" in comparison, he said.

Altez said that, according to the treaty between Peru and the United States, van der Sloot is being extradited to the U.S. temporarily for one year to face legal proceedings and in the event of a delay, this period can be extended for another year.

"At the end of this, he has to be returned to Peru," Altez said. He will spend "at most two years in the United States."

Altez said his client denies being guilty of the crimes of extortion and fraud.

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

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

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

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

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

Van der Sloot married a Peruvian woman in July 2014 in a ceremony at a maximum security prison. He has been transferred from prisons in response to reports that he enjoyed privileges such as television, internet access and a cellphone, and accusations that he had threatened to kill a warden.

A 2001 treaty between Peru and the U.S. allows a suspect to be temporarily extradited to face trial in the other country. It requires that the prisoner "be returned" after judicial proceedings are concluded "against that person, in accordance with conditions to be determined by" both countries.

## India train crash kills over 280, injures 900 in one of nation's worst rail disasters

By RAFIQ MAQBOOL, ASHOK SHARMA and KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

BALASORE, India (AP) — Rescuers found no more survivors in the overturned and mangled wreckage of two passenger trains that derailed in eastern India, killing more than 280 people and injuring hundreds in one of the country's deadliest rail crashes in decades, officials said Saturday.

Chaotic scenes erupted on Friday night as rescuers climbed atop the wrecked trains to break open doors and windows using cutting torches.

The death toll rose steadily throughout the night. Scores of bodies, covered by white sheets, lay on the ground near the tracks while locals and rescuers raced to free the hundreds of people trapped in the rail cars under the twisted metal and broken glass. Army soldiers and air force helicopters joined the effort in Odisha state.

An Associated Press photographer saw bodies still entangled in a badly mangled coach, as rescuers struggled to retrieve them working under the oppressive heat with temperatures reaching up to 35 degree Celsius (96 degrees Fahrenheit).

"By 10 p.m. (on Friday) we were able to rescue the survivors. After that it was about picking up dead bodies," Sudhanshu Sarangi, director of Odisha state's fire and emergency department, told The Associated Press. "This is very, very tragic. I have never seen anything like this in my career."

At least 280 bodies were recovered overnight and into Saturday morning, he said. About 900 people were injured and the cause was under investigation.

The accident occurred at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi is focussing on the modernization of the British colonial-era railroad network in India, which has become the world's most populous country with 1.42 billion. Despite government efforts to improve rail safety, several hundred accidents occur every year on India's railways, the largest train network under one management in the world.

Modi flew to the crash site and spent half an hour examining the relief effort and talking to rescue officials. He was seen giving instructions on the phone to officials in New Delhi.

He later visited a hospital where he walked around inquiring from doctors about the treatment being given to the injured, and spoke to some of them, moving from bed to bed in a ward.

Modi told reporters that it was a sad moment and he was feeling the pain of those who have suffered in the accident. He said the government would do its utmost to help them and strictly punish those found responsible.

Modi on Saturday was supposed to inaugurate a high-speed train connecting Goa and Mumbai that is equipped with a collision avoidance system. The event was canceled after Friday's accident. The trains that derailed did not have that system.

Amitabh Sharma, a Railroad Ministry spokesperson, said the rescue work was near completion. Rail authorities will start removing the wreckage to repair the track and resume train operations, he said.

D.B. Shinde, a district administrator, said only five to six bodies remained trapped under a damaged coach and were difficult to recover.

"We have deployed a heavy crane. Once we take them out, the rescue work will be over," Shinde said.

About 200 of the severely injured people were transferred to specialty hospitals in other cities in Odisha, said P.K. Jena, the state's top administrative official. Another 200 were discharged after receiving medical care and the rest were being treated in local hospitals, he added. Scores of people also showed up to donate blood.

"The challenge now is identifying the bodies. Wherever the relatives are able to provide evidence, the bodies are handed over after autopsies. If not identified, maybe we have to go for a DNA test and other protocols," he said.

Ten to 12 coaches of one train derailed, and debris from some of the mangled coaches fell onto a nearby track, according to Sharma. The debris was hit by another passenger train coming from the opposite direction, causing up to three coaches of the second train to also derail, he added.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 64 of 77

A third train carrying freight was also involved, the Press Trust of India reported, but there was no immediate confirmation of that from railroad authorities. PTI said some of the derailed passenger coaches hit cars from the freight train.

The rescue operation was slowed because two train cars were pressed together by the impact of the accident, Jena said.

Officials said 1,200 rescuers worked with 115 ambulances, 50 buses and 45 mobile health units through the night. Saturday was declared as a day of mourning in Odisha.

Villagers said they rushed to the site to evacuate people after hearing a loud sound created by the train coaches going off the tracks.

"The local people really went out on a limb to help us. They not only helped in pulling out people, but retrieved our luggage and got us water," PTI cited Rupam Banerjee, a survivor, as saying.

Passenger Vandana Kaleda said that people were falling on each other as her coach shook violently and veered off the tracks.

"As I stepped out of the washroom, suddenly the train tilted. I lost my balance. ... Everything went topsy turvy. People started falling on each other and I was shocked and could not understand what happened. My mind stopped working," she said.

Another survivor who did not give his name said he was sleeping when the impact woke him up. He said he saw other passengers with broken limbs and disfigured faces.

The collision involved two trains, the Coromandel Express traveling from Howrah in West Bengal state to Chennai in Tamil Nadu state and the Howrah Superfast Express traveling from Bengaluru in Karnataka to Howrah, officials said. It was not immediately clear which derailed first.

Ashwini Vaishnaw, India's railway minister, said a high-level probe would be carried out. The political opposition criticized the government and called for Vaishnaw to resign.

In August 1995, two trains collided near New Delhi, killing 358 people in one of the worst train accidents in India.

In 2016, a passenger train slid off the tracks between the cities of Indore and Patna, killing 146 people. Most train accidents are blamed on human error or outdated signaling equipment.

More than 12 million people ride 14,000 trains across India every day, traveling on 64,000 kilometers (40,000 miles) of track.

Sharma and Pathi reported from New Delhi. Associated Press journalist Chonchui Ngashangva in New Delhi contributed to this report.

## Man City beats Man United 2-1 in FA Cup final to complete second leg of treble bid

By STEVE DOUGLAS AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — The second leg of Manchester City's treble mission is secure.

Add the FA Cup, after a 2-1 win over great rival Manchester United on Saturday, to its latest Premier League title.

Now only a first ever Champions League title stands between City and immortality in English soccer.

"We're in a position," City manager Pep Guardiola said, "that we'll probably never be in again."

Ilkay Gundogan scored two goals — the first inside 13 seconds, for the quickest in 142 years of FA Cup finals — to lead City to a 16th trophy since 2011 in what is looking like the crowning season in the tenure of Abu Dhabi's ruling family.

If the Germany midfielder's opener, a perfectly executed volley from the edge of area, was probably his best goal of his seven years at City, his 51st-minute winner at Wembley Stadium might be one of his scrappiest.

This time it was a volley with his left foot after being picked out by Kevin De Bruyne's free kick from the right wing. The ball bobbled between two United defenders and squirmed past goalkeeper David De Gea,



# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 65 of 77

who might have been slightly unsighted but should have done better.

United was looking to protect its proud status as the only team to win the league-FA Cup-European Cup treble, in 1999, and equalized against the run of play through a penalty by Bruno Fernandes in the 33rd minute.

Late pressure saw United hit the crossbar through Raphael Varane. The team needs a favor from Inter Milan in the Champions League final in Istanbul next Saturday to thwart City's treble bid.

"What a privilege — we are one game away," Guardiola said.

City's class of 2023 became the 13th team in English soccer history to clinch a league-and-FA Cup double. It has happened twice under Guardiola, who has won 13 trophies in his seven years at the club and 34 in his managerial career.

The latest haul of titles has come in the same season the club was charged by the Premier League with more than 100 breaches of financial rules. City denies the charges and the players certainly weren't thinking of them after the final whistle blew as they ran from the halfway line and jumped for joy in front of their fans waving blue and white flags.

Right at the heart of the celebrations was Gundogan, who — as it stands — will be leaving City after the Champions League final because he is out of contract. He would depart as a club great and a FA Cup record-breaker.

The opening goal was timed by British broadcaster BBC at 12.91 seconds and came after Gundogan, City's captain, took the kickoff himself. He passed the ball back to goalkeeper Stefan Ortega, who booted it forward for Erling Haaland to flick on. United defender Victor Lindelof could only partially clear to Gundogan, who volleyed in right-footed from 20 meters.

"We aimed for that, to aim for Erling and to try to get the second ball quick," Gundogan said.

The goal jolted United, which was outplayed until a controversial decision to award a penalty against Jack Grealish for handball as he raised his arms while jumping to block a header into the box by United defender Aaron Wan-Bissaka. Play continued and there were few on-field appeals by United's players, but the incident was reviewed by VAR and a penalty was awarded after the referee looked at the pitchside monitor.

Fernandes sauntered up to the ball and sent Ortega the wrong way.

Gundogan ultimately had the final say, just like he did in City's final game of last season when he scored two late goals to complete a turnaround from 2-0 down against Aston Villa and clinch the Premier League with a 3-2 win.

United was looking to clinch a double of domestic trophies in Erik ten Hag's first year in charge, having won the League Cup in February, but more importantly ensure its class of 1999's legacy was preserved.

The 142nd FA Cup final — the first between the two Manchester clubs — was largely one-sided, though, and Ten Hag conceded his team was beaten by "the best team in the world."

United's players stayed on the field and watched as City walked up the steps to collect their winners' medals from Prince William.

"You have to feel it in your stomach," Ten Hag said. "It has to be the fuel."

All roads lead to Istanbul as Guardiola and City chase another piece of history.

"We have to win the Champions League," he said, "to be recognized how the team deserves to be recognized."

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

## Debt deal imposes new work requirements for food aid and that frustrates many Democrats

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats are deeply conflicted about the food aid requirements that President

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 66 of 77

Joe Biden negotiated as part of the debt ceiling deal, fearing damage has been done to safety net programs that will be difficult to unravel in the years ahead as Republicans demand further cuts.

Bargaining over toughening work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly known as food stamps, became the focal point for the White House and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., up until the end. Negotiators from both sides made clear, publicly and privately, that it was the biggest area of disagreement and almost led to the talks breaking down several times.

In the end, Democrats warily accepted new requirements for some able-bodied recipients in exchange for food aid. Republicans agreed to drop some work requirements for veterans, homeless people and others.

The result of the tense back-and-forth was a deal that played to both sides, but one that many Democrats agonized over as they weighed whether to vote for the package that Biden signed Saturday. Many struggled to square cutting access to food for marginalized communities with an outcome that allowed the United States to avoid defaulting on its debt.

"In order for this country to not default on its bills, we then turned and made our most vulnerable communities default," said Rep. Cori Bush, D-Mo. Years before she came to Congress, Bush lived in a car with her then-husband and two young children after the family had been evicted from their rental home.

The federal aid program provides monthly funds — sometimes as little as \$6 a day — to allow low-income individuals and families to buy groceries. It is the largest program in the country focused on fighting hunger, with 41 million people using benefits last year alone to purchase food, according to the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, which administers the program.

By 2025, new requirements will apply to able-bodied adults from age 49 to 54 without dependents — an increase of five years. Those individuals will be required to work or attend training programs for at least 80 hours a month if they want to receive more than three months of SNAP benefits within a three-year period.

Republicans have tried for decades to expand work requirements for these government assistance programs, arguing they result in more people returning to the workforce, despite several studies that have found they have little impact on employment.

"We're going to return these programs to being a life vest, not a lifestyle. A hand up, not a handout and that has always been the American way," Rep. Mike Johnson of Louisiana, the vice chair of the House Republican conference, told reporters.

The White House countered that Republican proposition by getting GOP lawmakers to waive the work requirements for new groups — veterans, individuals who are homeless or facing housing instability and youth aging out of foster care — to balance out the number of people who would now be facing these new restrictions.

The end result could be more people receiving SNAP benefits overall. An estimate from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office released Tuesday said that the changes in the debt ceiling package would add almost 80,000 people to the rolls of SNAP in an average month.

But the trade-off of seemingly helping some groups while hurting others still left the left flank of the Democratic Party — lawmakers who have supported Biden and helped pass his agenda for the first two years of his term — frustrated by the outcome. That was especially the case as advocates, including the nonpartisan National Alliance to End Homelessness, warned of a disturbing trend across the country of an increase in the number of older adults who are becoming homeless, some for the first time.

"What we should not be playing is oppression Olympics," Bush said. "Like which one gets to hurt today? Which one gets to get to that finish line to hurt today? That's not where we should be as a society."

Bush, a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, voted "no" on the debt limit deal on Wednesday night after she spent days hearing from advocate groups and constituents on the issue.

"I think it's important that (Biden) understands that it's good for us to have a strong, no vote because this isn't a deal that he would have made if we hadn't been held hostage," Democratic Rep. Pramila Jayapal of Washington state, chair of the Progressive Caucus, told The Associated Press this past week.

They weren't alone. Several dozen Democrats in the House and a handful in the Senate voted against the compromise, arguing that the bill allowed for Republican hostage-taking and could open the door for

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 67 of 77

future cuts to these government programs in the next several months.

"I did not agree to these SNAP restrictions, and I won't give Republicans an opening to try and take food from more food insecure Americans in Farm Bill negotiations later this year," Sen. John Fetterman, D-Pa., said in a statement.

The White House and Democrats who ended up supporting the negotiated deal said they believe the issue of work requirements and risk posed by Republicans have been put to bed.

"The most important thing to me is the fact that this closes the door on that debate," said Democratic Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, who leads the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee and has been a longtime champion and defender of the SNAP program. "We are not going to bring it up again in the farm bill. This is not something that's going to be renegotiated. It's done."

But advocates warn that could change because the debt limit bill was the most substantial change of the work rules for food aid and other government assistance programs since they were put into place in the 1996 welfare overhaul.

Some of the most conservative Republicans in Congress — part of the right flank whom McCarthy had to pacify to become speaker — have criticized the plan for being "weak" and are itching to go even further to clamp down on these programs.

"In this bill, we have temporary work requirements, but we've added permanent new exceptions," said Texas Rep. Keith Self, a member of the ultra-conservative House Freedom Caucus that overwhelmingly rejected the bill. "That, ladies and gentlemen, is a sleight of hand."

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Associated Press writer Mary Clare Jalonick contributed to this report.

## **US defense secretary says Washington won't stand for 'coercion and bullying' from China**

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin vowed Saturday that Washington would not stand for any "coercion and bullying" of its allies and partners by China, while assuring Beijing that the United States remains committed to maintaining the status quo on Taiwan and would prefer dialogue over conflict.

Speaking at the Shangri-La Dialogue, an annual forum bringing together top defense officials, diplomats and leaders in Singapore, Austin lobbied for support for Washington's vision of a "free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific within a world of rules and rights" as the best course to counter increasing Chinese assertiveness in the region.

The U.S. has been expanding its own activities around the Indo-Pacific to counter sweeping territorial claims from China, including regularly sailing through and flying over the Taiwan Strait and in the South China Sea.

"We are committed to ensuring that every country can fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows," he said at the forum hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank. "And every country, large or small, must remain free to conduct lawful maritime activities."

Austin noted that the U.S. had provided millions of doses of the COVID-19 vaccine during the height of the pandemic and is regularly involved in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance efforts in the region. He said it is working to combat climate change, illegal fishing and ensure that supply chains do not suffer disruptions — ticking off many issues of importance to Asian-Pacific nations.

"We're doubling down on our alliances and partnerships," he said.

He said the U.S. is also committed to deterring North Korea's missile threat and China's claims on Taiwan, a self-governing island democracy that Beijing says is its territory, and said Washington has been stepping up defense planning, coordination and training with partner nations in the region.

"To be clear, we do not seek conflict or confrontation," he said. "But we will not flinch in the face of bullying or coercion."

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 68 of 77

Underscoring Austin's words, a U.S. guided-missile destroyer and a Canadian frigate sailed Saturday through the Taiwan Strait, "waters where high-seas freedoms of navigation and overflight apply in accordance with international law," the U.S. 7th Fleet said. There was no immediate word of a Chinese response.

In Singapore, Chinese Lt. Gen. Jing Jianfeng, a senior member of the delegation accompanying Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu, accused Austin of "overtly or covertly making false accusations against China" in his address.

Speaking with reporters after Austin spoke, Jing alleged the U.S. has been "deceiving and exploiting" Asia-Pacific nations to advance its own self-interests to preserve "its dominant position" in the region.

He suggested that Washington has been holding on to alliances that are "remnants of the Cold War" and establishing new pacts, like the AUKUS agreement with Britain and Australia and the "Quad" grouping with Australia, India and Japan "to divide the world into ideologically-driven camps and provoke confrontation."

Jing, who took no questions, said that by contrast, "China is committed to the region's development and prosperity."

Austin sought to assure China that the U.S. remained "deeply committed" to the longstanding one-China policy, which recognizes Beijing as the government of China but allows informal relations with Taiwan, and continues to "categorically oppose unilateral changes to the status quo from either side."

He added that Russia's invasion of Ukraine had served to underline how dangerous the world would be if big countries were able to "just invade their peaceful neighbors with impunity."

"Conflict is neither imminent nor inevitable," Austin said. "Deterrence is strong today — and it's our job to keep it that way. The whole world has a stake in maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait."

But Jing accused the U.S. of hollowing out the one-China policy, accusing Washington of supporting Taiwanese separatists without citing any evidence, and reiterating Beijing's claim that "Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's sovereign territory."

"There's no room for us to concede or compromise," he said.

He added that "China has indisputable sovereignty over the South China Sea islands and the adjacent waters."

Li, who became China's defense minister in March, declined Austin's invitation to talk on the sidelines of the conference, though the two did shake hands before sitting down at opposite sides of the same table together as the forum opened Friday.

Austin said this was not enough.

"A cordial handshake over dinner is no substitute for a substantive engagement," he said.

Li, who was named defense minister in March, is under American sanctions that are part of a broad package of measures against Russia — but predate its invasion of Ukraine — that were imposed in 2018 over Li's involvement in China's purchase of combat aircraft and anti-aircraft missiles from Moscow.

The sanctions, which broadly prevent Li from doing business in the United States, do not prevent him from holding official talks, American defense officials have said.

It was not clear whether Li, who is to address the forum Sunday morning, was in the room while Austin talked. He did join the American defense secretary and others later for a ministerial roundtable.

Austin reiterated calls that Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese made in his opening address at the forum for China to engage in regular, direct communications to help prevent any possible conflict.

"For responsible defense leaders, the right time to talk is anytime," Austin said. "The right time to talk is every time. And the right time to talk is now."

Jing said, however, that lines of communication needed to be based upon "mutual respect."

"But the U.S. has been calling for communications on one hand and undermining China's interests and concerns on the other," he said.

The U.S. has noted that since 2021 — well before Li became defense minister — China has declined or failed to respond to more than a dozen requests from the U.S. Defense Department to talk with senior leaders, as well as multiple requests for standing dialogues and working-level engagements.

## Trump-appointed judge rejects Tennessee's anti-drag law as too broad, too vague

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Tennessee's first-in-the-nation law designed to place strict limits on drag shows is unconstitutional, a federal judge says.

The law is both "unconstitutionally vague and substantially overbroad" and encouraged "discriminatory enforcement," according to the ruling late Friday by U.S. District Judge Thomas Parker, who was appointed by former President Donald Trump.

"There is no question that obscenity is not protected by the First Amendment. But there is a difference between material that is 'obscene' in the vernacular, and material that is 'obscene' under the law," Parker said.

"Simply put, no majority of the Supreme Court has held that sexually explicit — but not obscene — speech receives less protection than political, artistic, or scientific speech," he said.

The law would have banned adult cabaret performances from public property or anywhere minors might be present. Performers who broke the law risked being charged with a misdemeanor or a felony for a repeat offense.

Parker used the example of a female performer wearing an Elvis Presley costume and mimicking the iconic musician who could be at risk of punishment under the drag law because they would be considered a "male impersonator."

Friends of George's, a Memphis-based LGBTQ+ theater company, filed a complaint in March, saying the law would negatively impact them because they produce "drag-centric performances, comedy sketches, and plays" with no age restrictions.

"This win represents a triumph over hate," the theater company said in a statement Saturday, adding that the ruling affirmed their First Amendment rights as artists.

"Similar to the countless battles the LGBTQ+ community has faced over the last several decades, our collective success relies upon everyone speaking out and taking a stand against bigotry," the group said.

Senate Majority Leader Jack Johnson, a Republican who was one of the law's main sponsors, said he was disappointed with the ruling.

"Sadly, this ruling is a victory for those who support exposing children to sexual entertainment," Johnson said, adding that he hoped the state's attorney general will appeal the "perplexing ruling."

Initially, the complaint listed Republican Gov. Bill Lee, Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti and Shelby County District Attorney General Steven Mulroy as defendants. But the plaintiffs later agreed to dismiss the governor and top legal chief — although Skrmetti continued to represent Mulroy for this case.

A spokesperson for both Skrmetti and Mulroy did not immediately respond Saturday to requests for comment on Parker's ruling.

Tennessee's Republican-dominated Legislature advanced the anti-drag law earlier this year, with several GOP members pointing to drag performances in their hometowns as reasons why it was necessary to restrict such performances from taking place in public or where children could view them.

Yet the actual word "drag" doesn't appear in the statute. Instead lawmakers changed the state's definition of adult cabaret to mean "adult-oriented performances that are harmful to minors." Furthermore, "male or female impersonators" were classified as a form of adult cabaret, akin to strippers or topless dancers.

The governor quickly signed off on the statute and it was set to take effect April 1. However, to date, the law has never been enforced because the federal judge had sided with the group that challenged the statute in March, and he temporarily blocked the law.

Parker also cited how the law's sponsor, Republican state Rep. Chris Todd, had previously helped lead an effort to block a drag show in his district before introducing the drag ban proposal. Todd later confirmed that he hadn't seen the performance, but nevertheless pursued legal action to stop the show and the event was held indoors with an age restriction.

This incident was among the several reasons to believe that the anti-drag law was "geared towards

placing prospective blocks on drag shows — regardless of their potential harm to minors,” Parker wrote. The drag law marks the second major proposal targeting LGBTQ+ people passed by Tennessee lawmakers this year. Lee signed into law GOP-backed legislation banning most gender-affirming care, which is being challenged in court.

## UAE defends Big Oil’s role at UN climate summit it will host

By FRANK JORDANS Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — A senior United Arab Emirates official says the Gulf nation wants the U.N. climate summit it’s hosting later this year to deliver “game-changing results” for international efforts to curb global warming, but doing so will require having the fossil fuel industry at the table.

Environmental campaigners have slammed the presence of oil and gas lobbyists at previous rounds of talks, warning that their interests are opposed to the goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions — caused to a large degree by the burning of fossil fuels. Last month scores of U.S. and European lawmakers called for the summit’s designated chair, Sultan al-Jaber, to be replaced over his links to the state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company.

The issue complicates already-delicate negotiations ahead of the Nov. 30 - Dec. 12 meeting in Dubai, known as COP28. Preliminary talks starting next week in Bonn, Germany, will show whether the incoming UAE presidency can overcome skepticism among parties and civil society groups about its ability to shepherd almost 200 nations toward a landmark deal.

“Our leadership have been very clear to me and our team and our president that they don’t want just another COP that’s incremental,” said Majid al-Suwaidi, who as director-general of the summit plays a key role in the diplomatic negotiations. “They want a COP that is going to deliver real, big, game-changing results because they see, just like all of us, that we’re not on track to achieve the goals of Paris.”

Governments agreed eight years ago in the French capital to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) — ideally no more than 1.5C (2.7F). With average global temperatures already about 1.2C (2.2F) above pre-industrial levels, experts say the window to meet the more ambitious target is closing fast and even the less stringent goal would be missed if emissions aren’t slashed sharply soon.

“We need to have everybody at the table discussing with us about how to deliver that,” al-Suwaidi told The Associated Press in an interview Friday.

“We need to have oil and gas, we need to have industry, we need to have aviation, we need to have shipping, we need to have all the hard to abate sectors,” he said, adding: “We need all those who can to deliver what they can, regardless of who they are.”

Al-Suwaidi pushed back against the idea that the fossil fuel industry would undermine meaningful talks on emissions cuts the way they have done in the past through disinformation campaigns and keeping quiet their own knowledge about climate change.

“There’s no doubt in my mind that the position of the sector has completely changed and that they are engaging with us in an active conversation,” he said.

Asked whether the talks might consider a phaseout of fossil fuels, proposed last year by nations most vulnerable to climate change, al-Suwaidi said the presidency wouldn’t preclude such conversations.

“We welcome any kind of discussion,” the UAE’s former ambassador to Spain said. “But the parties are the ones who will decide what that discussion is and where we land.”

So far, the summit’s designated chair al-Jaber has emphasized the need to cut emissions, rather than end fossil fuel use itself. It’s prompted fears that he might seek loopholes for untested carbon-capture technologies and so-called offsets — both aimed at reducing current levels of carbon dioxide in the air — that experts say distract from the need to end the release of greenhouse gases.

A report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change earlier this year called for a nearly two-thirds cut in carbon emissions by 2035, warning that failure to do so greatly increases the risk of droughts, flooding, sea-level rise and other short- and long-term disasters.

Al-Suwaidi, who also has a background in the oil and gas sector, said the UAE leadership is acutely aware

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 71 of 77

of the existential threat global warming poses — including to their own sun-rich but water-poor nation — and is committed to shifting from fossil fuels toward renewable energy such as wind and solar.

“We want to be part of this new economy,” he said. “We’re a country that’s running head first into this future.”

Al-Suwaidi said agreeing a global goal for ramping up renewable energy in Dubai could send a positive message to those anxious about the transformation required to stop climate change.

“Rather than talking about what we’re stopping people from doing, let’s talk about how we’re helping them to take up solutions ... that are going to help us to address the emissions problem we have,” he said.

The talks in Dubai will also see countries conduct the first ‘global stocktake’ of efforts to tackle climate change since Paris in 2015. The results are meant to inform a new round of commitments by nations to cut emissions and address the impacts of global warming.

Poor nations are also demanding rich countries make good on pledges for vast financial support, an issue that has often caused major disagreements at past meetings.

“We need the developing world to leapfrog into this new climate system and we need to support that transition for them,” said al-Suwaidi. “Finance is going to be really fundamental at COP28.”

This will require rich countries, including the Group of Seven major economies, who are historically responsible for a large chunk of global emissions, to step up, he said.

“They have the technology. They have the know-how. They have the financial ability. We need them to take that leadership role and show us seriousness about addressing this challenge.”

## Here’s how to prepare to start paying back your student loans when the pandemic payment freeze ends

By CORA LEWIS and ADRIANA MORGA Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A three-year pause on student loan payments will end this summer regardless of how the Supreme Court rules on the White House plan to forgive billions of dollars in student loan debt.

If Congress approves a debt ceiling deal negotiated by House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and President Joe Biden, payments will resume in late August, ending any lingering hope of a further extension of the pause that started during the COVID pandemic. Even if the deal falls through, payments will resume 60 days after the Supreme Court decision.

That ruling is expected sometime before the end of June. No matter what the justices decide, more than 40 million borrowers will have to start paying back their loans by the end of the summer at the latest.

Here’s what to know to get ready to start paying back loans:

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR STUDENT LOANS PAYMENTS TO RESTART?

Betsy Mayotte, President of the Institute of Student Loan Advisors, encourages people not to make any payments until the pause has ended. Instead, she says, put what you would have paid into a savings account.

“Then you’ve maintained the habit of making the payment, but (you’re) earning a little bit of interest as well,” she said. “There’s no reason to send that money to the student loans until the last minute of the 0% interest rate.”

Mayotte recommends borrowers use the loan-simulator tool at StudentAid.gov or the one on TISLA’s website to find a payment plan that best fits their needs. The calculators tell you what your monthly payment would be under each available plan, as well as your long-term costs.

“I really want to emphasize the long-term,” Mayotte said.

Sometimes, when borrowers are in a financial bind, they’ll choose the option with the lowest monthly payment, which can cost more over the life of the loan, Mayotte said. Rather than “setting it and forgetting it,” she encourages borrowers to reevaluate when their financial situation improves.

WHAT’S AN INCOME-DRIVEN REPAYMENT PLAN?

An income-driven repayment plan sets your monthly student loan payment at an amount that is intended to be affordable based on your income and family size. It takes into account different expenses in your

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 72 of 77

budget, and most federal student loans are eligible for at least one of these types of plans.

Generally, your payment amount under an income-driven repayment plan is a percentage of your discretionary income. If your income is low enough, your payment could be as low as \$0 per month.

If you'd like to repay your federal student loans under an income-driven plan, the first step is to fill out an application through the Federal Student Aid website.

## TALK TO AN ADVISER

Fran Gonzales, 27, who is based in Texas, works as a supervisor for a financial institution. She holds \$32,000 in public student loans and \$40,000 in private student loans. During the payment pause on her public loans, Gonzales said she was able to pay off her credit card debt, buy a new car, and pay down two years' worth of private loans while saving money. Her private student loan payment has been \$500 a month, and her public student loan payment will be \$350 per month when it restarts.

Gonzales recommends that anyone with student loans speak with a mentor or financial advisor to educate themselves about their options, as well as making sure they're in an income-driven repayment plan.

The Federal Student Aid website can help direct you to counselors, as well as organizations like the Student Borrower Protection Center and the Institute of Student Loan Advisors.

"I was the first in my family to go to college, and I could have saved money with grants and scholarships had I known someone who knew about college," she said. "I could have gone to community college or lived in cheaper housing ... It's a huge financial decision."

Gonzales received her degree in business marketing and says she was "horrible with finances" until she began working as a loan officer herself.

Gonzales's mother works in retail and her father for the airport, she said, and both encouraged her to pursue higher education. For her part, Gonzales now tries to inform others with student loans about what they're taking on and what their choices are.

"Anyone young I cross paths with, I try to educate them."

## CAN I SET UP A PAYMENT PLAN FOR MY STUDENT LOANS?

Yes — payment plans are always available. Even so, some advocates encourage borrowers to wait for now, since there's no financial penalty for nonpayment during the pause on payments and interest accrual.

Katherine Welbeck of the Student Borrower Protection Center recommends logging on to your account and making sure you know the name of your servicer, your due date and whether you're enrolled in the best income-driven repayment plan.

## WHAT IF I CAN'T PAY?

If your budget doesn't allow you to resume payments, it's important to know how to navigate the possibility of default and delinquency on a student loan. Both can hurt your credit rating, which would make you ineligible for additional aid.

If you're in a short-term financial bind, according to Mayotte, you may qualify for deferment or forbearance — allowing you to temporarily suspend payment.

To determine whether deferment or forbearance are good options for you, you can contact your loan servicer. One thing to note: interest still accrues during deferment or forbearance. Both can also impact potential loan forgiveness options. Depending on the conditions of your deferment or forbearance, it may make sense to continue paying the interest during the payment suspension.

## HOW CAN I REDUCE COSTS WHEN PAYING OFF MY STUDENT LOANS?

— If you sign up for automatic payments, the servicer takes a quarter of a percent off your interest rate, according to Mayotte.

— Income-driven repayment plans aren't right for everyone. That said, if you know you will eventually qualify for forgiveness under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, it makes sense to make the lowest monthly payments possible, as the remainder of your debt will be cancelled once that decade of payments is complete.

— Reevaluate your monthly student loan repayment during tax season, when you already have all your financial information in front of you. "Can you afford to increase it? Or do you need to decrease it?" Mayo-



tte said.

— Break up payments into whatever ways work best for you. You could consider two installments per month, instead of one large monthly sum.

## ARE STUDENT LOANS FORGIVEN AFTER 10 YEARS?

If you've worked for a government agency or a nonprofit, the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program offers cancellation after 10 years of regular payments, and some income-driven repayment plans cancel the remainder of a borrower's debt after 20 to 25 years.

Borrowers should make sure they're signed up for the best possible income-driven repayment plan to qualify for these programs.

Borrowers who have been defrauded by for-profit colleges may also apply for borrower defense and receive relief.

These programs won't be affected by the Supreme Court ruling.

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## Pope warns of risk of corruption in missionary fundraising after AP investigation

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis warned the Vatican's missionary fundraisers on Saturday not to allow financial corruption to creep into their work, insisting that spirituality and spreading the Gospel must drive their operations, not mere entrepreneurship.

Francis made the comments in a speech to the national directors of the Vatican's Pontifical Mission Societies, which raise money for the Catholic Church's missionary work in the developing world, building churches and funding training programs for priests and nuns. Deviating from his prepared remarks, Francis appeared to refer to a recent Associated Press investigation into financial transfers at the U.S. branch of the Pontifical Mission Societies: The former head oversaw the transfer of at least \$17 million from a quasi-endowment fund and donations into a nonprofit and private equity fund that he created and now heads. The initiatives provide low-interest loans to church-run agribusinesses in Africa.

"Please don't reduce POM to money," Francis said, referring to the Italian acronym of the Pontifical Mission Societies. "This is a medium, a means. Does it require money? Yes, but don't reduce it, it is bigger than money."

He said if spirituality isn't driving the Catholic Church's missionary efforts, there is a risk of corruption.

"Because if spirituality is lacking and it's only a matter of entrepreneurship, corruption comes in immediately," Francis said. "And we have seen that even today: In the newspapers, you see so many stories of alleged corruption in the name of the missionary nature of the church."

The Vatican has said it is seeking clarity on the transfers at the U.S. branch, which appear to be fully legal since the previous board approved them. The AP investigation uncovered no evidence of corruption, though a legal investigation commissioned by the branch's new national director, Monsignor Kieran Harrington, suggested the former head may have omitted information, or glossed over Vatican concerns, in his presentations to the board that ultimately approved the transfers, officials said.

The legal review determined that the transfers were approved in ways consistent with the board's powers and bylaws at the time, the society said in a statement to AP. After the review, Harrington replaced the staff and board of directors who approved the transfers, and overhauled its bylaws and statutes, to make sure nothing like it ever happens again.

In emailed comments responding to questions from AP, the former head of The Pontifical Mission Societies in the U.S., the Rev. Andrew Small, strongly defended the transfers and investments as fully approved and consistent with the mission of the church and the organization.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 74 of 77

He acknowledged Harrington's new administration reflected the Vatican's "skepticism" about the social justice nature of his nonprofit Missio Corp., and private equity fund, in that they focused on food security, as opposed to the traditional idea of "evangelization" that is the primary and stated mission of The Pontifical Mission Societies.

"I didn't agree with the apartheid between pastoral and humanitarian work of the church then and I don't in my current position," Small said in an email response April 26. "On the ground in Africa, these distinctions aren't relevant as they try to find income to survive."

Small is now the No. 2 at the Vatican's child protection advisory board, which Francis created to provide a response to the clergy sexual abuse scandal. He did not respond to further questions from AP on Saturday about Francis' comments.

Small's boss as head of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, Boston Cardinal Sean O'Malley, also did not respond to questions from AP about the transfers or the implications for the commission, which is itself raising money for its child protection programs.

O'Malley spokesman Terrence Donilon said Thursday and Friday that the cardinal was travelling this weekend and unavailable to comment.

In a message to members of the commission last week after the AP story was published, O'Malley said he was aware of Small's work when he was national director of The Pontifical Mission Societies "and have come to know the work he did in developing Missio Invest."

"Adverse media attention is never easy, whatever its motivation. However, I have said publicly and frequently that, at least in terms of sexual abuse in the church, the media has played a vital role in helping, or maybe shaming, the church into being more open and transparent in its work as well as its commitment to improving its handling of cases and its welcome and care of victims and survivors," O'Malley wrote in the message seen by AP.

"We will continue to monitor the situation and respond accordingly," O'Malley said, adding his appreciation for the commission's "great progress" in signing recent agreements with Vatican offices and local churches on collaborations.

## Inside Russia's penal colonies: A look at life for political prisoners caught in Putin's crackdowns

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — When Alexei Navalny turns 47 on Sunday, he'll wake up in a bare concrete cell with hardly any natural light.

He won't be able to see or talk to any of his loved ones. Phone calls and visits are banned for those in "punishment isolation" cells, a 2-by-3-meter (6 1/2-by-10-foot) space. Guards usually blast patriotic songs and speeches by President Vladimir Putin at him.

"Guess who is the champion of listening to Putin's speeches? Who listens to them for hours and falls asleep to them?" Navalny said recently in a typically sardonic social media post via his attorneys from Penal Colony No. 6 in the Vladimir region east of Moscow.

He is serving a nine-year term due to end in 2030 on charges widely seen as trumped up, and is facing another trial on new charges that could keep him locked up for another two decades. Rallies have been called for Sunday in Russia to support him.

Navalny has become Russia's most famous political prisoner — and not just because of his prominence as Putin's fiercest political foe, his poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin, and his being the subject of an Oscar-winning documentary.

He has chronicled his arbitrary placement in isolation, where he has spent almost six months. He's on a meager prison diet, restricted on how much time he can spend writing letters and forced at times to live with a cellmate with poor personal hygiene, making life even more miserable.

Most of the attention goes to Navalny and other high-profile figures like Vladimir Kara-Murza, who was sentenced last month to 25 years on treason charges. But there's a growing number of less-famous pris-

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 75 of 77

oners who are serving time in similarly harsh conditions.

Memorial, Russia's oldest and most prominent human rights organization and a 2022 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, counted 558 political prisoners in the country as of April — more than three times the figure than in 2018, when it listed 183.

The Soviet Union's far-flung gulag system of prison camps provided inmate labor to develop industries such as mining and logging. While conditions vary among modern-day penal colonies, Russian law still permits prisoners to work on jobs like sewing uniforms for soldiers.

In a 2021 report, the U.S. State Department said conditions in Russian prisons and detention centers "were often harsh and life threatening. Overcrowding, abuse by guards and inmates, limited access to health care, food shortages and inadequate sanitation were common in prisons, penal colonies, and other detention facilities."

Andrei Pivovarov, an opposition figure sentenced last year to four years in prison, has been in isolation at Penal Colony No. 7 in northern Russia's Karelia region since January and is likely to stay there the rest of this year, said his partner, Tatyana Usmanova. The institution is notorious for its harsh conditions and reports of torture.

The 41-year-old former head of the pro-democracy group Open Russia spends his days alone in a small cell in a "strict detention" unit, and is not allowed any calls or visits from anyone but his lawyers, Usmanova told The Associated Press. He can get one book from the prison library, can write letters for several hours a day and is permitted 90 minutes outdoors, she said.

Other inmates are prohibited from making eye contact with Pivovarov in the corridors, contributing to his "maximum isolation," she said.

"It wasn't enough to sentence him to a real prison term. They are also trying to ruin his life there," Usmanova added.

Pivovarov was pulled off a Warsaw-bound flight just before takeoff from St. Petersburg in May 2021 and taken to the southern city of Krasnodar. Authorities accused him of engaging with an "undesirable" organization — a crime since 2015.

Several days before his arrest, Open Russia had disbanded after getting the "undesirable" label.

After his trial in Krasnodar, the St. Petersburg native was convicted and sentenced in July, when Russia's war in Ukraine and Putin's sweeping crackdown on dissent were in full swing.

He told AP in a letter from Krasnodar in December that authorities moved him there "to hide me farther away" from his hometown and Moscow. That interview was one of the last Pivovarov was able to give, describing prison life there as "boring and depressing," with his only diversion being an hour-long walk in a small yard. "Lucky" inmates with cash in their accounts can shop at a prison store once a week for 10 minutes but otherwise must stay in their cells, he wrote.

Letters from supporters lift his spirits, he said. Many people wrote that they used to be uninterested in Russian politics, according to Pivovarov, and "only now are starting to see clearly."

Now, any letters take weeks to arrive, Usmanova said.

Conditions are easier for some less-famous political prisoners like Alexei Gorinov, a former member of a Moscow municipal council. He was convicted of "spreading false information" about the army in July over antiwar remarks he made at a council session.

Criticism of the invasion was criminalized a few months earlier, and Gorinov, 61, became the first Russian sent to prison for it, receiving seven years.

He is housed in barracks with about 50 others in his unit at Penal Colony No. 2 in the Vladimir region, Gorinov said in written answers passed to AP in March.

The long sentence for a low-profile activist shocked many, and Gorinov said "authorities needed an example they could showcase to others (of) an ordinary person, rather than a public figure."

Inmates in his unit can watch TV, and play chess, backgammon or table tennis. There's a small kitchen to brew tea or coffee between meals, and they can have food from personal supplies.

But Gorinov said prison officials still carry out "enhanced control" of the unit, and he and two other inmates get special checks every two hours, since they've been labeled "prone to escape."

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 76 of 77

There is little medical help, he said.

"Right now, I'm not feeling all that well, as I can't recover from bronchitis," he said, adding that he needed treatment for pneumonia last winter at another prison's hospital ward, because at Penal Colony No. 2, the most they can do is "break a fever."

Also suffering health problems is artist and musician Sasha Skochilenko, who is detained amid her ongoing trial following her April 2022 arrest in St. Petersburg, also on charges of spreading false information about the army. Her crime was replacing supermarket price tags with antiwar slogans in protest.

Skochilenko has a congenital heart defect and celiac disease, requiring a gluten-free diet. She gets food parcels weekly, but there is a weight limit, and the 32-year-old can't eat "half the things they give her there," said her partner, Sophia Subbotina.

There's a stark difference between detention facilities for women and men, and Skochilenko has it easier in some ways than male prisoners, Subbotina said.

"Oddly enough, the staff are mostly nice. Mostly they are women, they are quite friendly, they will give helpful tips and they have a very good attitude toward Sasha," Subbotina told AP by phone.

"Often they support Sasha, they tell her: 'You will definitely get out of here soon, this is so unfair here.' They know about our relationship and they are fine with it. They're very humane," she said.

There's no political propaganda in the jail and dance music blares from a radio. Cooking shows play on TV. Skochilenko "wouldn't watch them in normal life, but in jail, it's a distraction," Subbotina said.

She recently arranged for an outside cardiologist to examine Skochilneko and since March has been allowed to visit her twice a month.

Subbotina gets emotional when she recalled their first visit.

"It is a complex and weird feeling when you've been living with a person. Sasha and I have been together for over six years — waking up with them, falling asleep with them — then not being able to see them for a year," she said. "I was nervous when I went to visit her. I didn't know what I would say to Sasha, but in the end, it went really well."

Still, Subbotina said a year behind bars has been hard on Skochilenko. The trial is moving slowly, unlike usually swift proceedings for high-profile political activists, with guilty verdicts almost a certainty.

Skochilenko faces up to 10 years if convicted.

## Today in History: June 4, Battle of Midway begins

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, June 4, the 155th day of 2023. There are 210 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 4, 1942, the World War II Battle of Midway began, resulting in a decisive American victory against Japan and marking the turning point of the war in the Pacific.

On this date:

In 1812, the U.S. House of Representatives approved, by a vote of 79-49, a declaration of war against Britain.

In 1919, Congress approved the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which said that the right to vote could not be denied or abridged based on gender. The amendment was sent to the states for ratification.

In 1939, the German ocean liner MS St. Louis, carrying more than 900 Jewish refugees from Germany, was turned away by U.S. officials on the Florida coast.

In 1940, during World War II, the Allied military evacuation of some 338,000 troops from Dunkirk, France, ended. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill declared: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."

In 1944, U-505, a German submarine, was captured by a U.S. Navy task group in the south Atlantic; it was the first such capture of an enemy vessel at sea by the U.S. Navy since the War of 1812. The U.S. Fifth Army began liberating Rome.

# Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, June 4, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 318 ~ 77 of 77

In 1967, "Mission: Impossible" won outstanding dramatic series and "The Monkees" won outstanding comedy series at the 19th Primetime Emmy Awards.

In 1985, the Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling striking down an Alabama law providing for a daily minute of silence in public schools.

In 1986, Jonathan Jay Pollard, a former U.S. Navy intelligence analyst, pleaded guilty in Washington to conspiring to deliver information related to the national defense to Israel. (Pollard, sentenced to life in prison, was released on parole on Nov. 20, 2015; he moved to Israel after completing parole in December 2020.)

In 1989, a gas explosion in the Soviet Union engulfed two passing trains, killing 575.

In 1990, Dr. Jack Kevorkian carried out his first publicly assisted suicide, helping Janet Adkins, a 54-year-old Alzheimer's patient from Portland, Oregon, end her life in Oakland County, Michigan.

In 1998, a federal judge sentenced Terry Nichols to life in prison for his role in the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, which killed 168 people.

In 2020, in the first of a series of memorials set for three cities over six days, celebrities, musicians and political leaders gathered in front of George Floyd's golden casket in Minneapolis.

Ten years ago: Already heavily criticized for targeting conservative groups, the Internal Revenue Service suffered another blow as new details emerged in a report about senior officials enjoying luxury hotel rooms, free drinks and food at a \$4.1 million training conference. France said it confirmed that nerve gas was used "multiple times in a localized way" in Syria. Joey Covington, a former Jefferson Airplane drummer who co-wrote several of the group's songs, died in a car crash in Palm Springs, California at age 67.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump claimed that he had an "absolute right" to pardon himself, but that it wouldn't be necessary because he had "done nothing wrong;" Trump also tweeted that the Justice Department's appointment of a special counsel in the Russia probe was "totally unconstitutional." The Supreme Court ruled in favor of a Colorado baker who wouldn't make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple, but it was a limited decision that didn't address the larger issue of whether a business can invoke religious objections to refuse service to gay and lesbian people. Howard Schultz announced that he was stepping down as executive chairman of Starbucks, and said public service may be in his future. Saudi Arabia issued its first driver's licenses to women as the kingdom prepared to lift the world's only ban on women driving.

One year ago: Family members mourned at funerals for Makenna Lee Elrod and Rojelio Fernandez Torres, 10-year-old elementary school students who were among the 19 children killed in the mass shooting Uvalde, Texas 11 days earlier. The U.S. aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan concluded a naval exercise with South Korea in the Philippine Sea amid signs that North Korea was possibly preparing to conduct its first nuclear test explosion since 2017. Ann Turner Cook, whose cherubic baby face was known the world over as the original Gerber baby, died at age 95.

Today's Birthdays: Sex therapist and media personality Dr. Ruth Westheimer is 95. Actor Bruce Dern is 87. Musician Roger Ball is 79. Actor-singer Michelle Phillips is 79. Jazz musician Anthony Braxton is 78. Rock musician Danny Brown (The Fixx) is 72. Actor Parker Stevenson is 71. Actor Keith David is 67. Blues singer-musician Tinsley Ellis is 66. Actor Eddie Velez is 65. Singer-musician El DeBarge is 62. Actor Julie White is 62. Actor Lindsay Frost is 61. Actor Sean Pertwee is 59. Former tennis player Andrea Jaeger is 58. Opera singer Cecilia Bartoli is 57. R&B singer Al B. Sure! is 55. Actor Scott Wolf is 55. Actor-comedian Rob Huebel is 54. Comedian Horatio Sanz is 54. Actor James Callis is 52. Actor Noah Wyle is 52. Rock musician Stefan Lessard (The Dave Matthews Band) is 49. Actor-comedian Russell Brand is 48. Actor Angelina Jolie is 48. Actor Theo Rossi is 48. Alt-country singer Kasey Chambers is 47. Actor Robin Lord Taylor is 45. Rock musician JoJo Garza (Los Lonely Boys) is 43. Model Bar Refaeli (ruh-FEHL'-lee) is 38. Olympic gold medal figure skater Evan Lysacek is 38. Americana singer Shakey Graves is 36. Rock musician Zac Farro is 33.