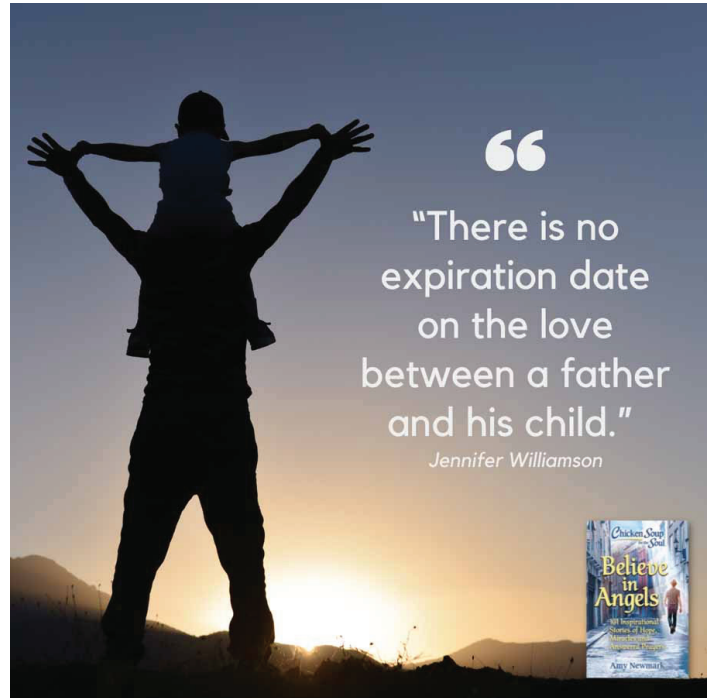


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“

There is no expiration date on the love between a father and his child.”

*Jennifer Williamson*

## Groton Community Calendar

### Sunday, June 18 - FATHER'S DAY

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Worship at Avantara, 3 p.m.

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

Amateurs host Northville, 5 p.m.

Legion at Milbank, 2 p.m. (2)

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

**CLOSED:** **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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*We the People*

The South Dakota Humanities Council is making available a weekly column -- "We the People" -- that focuses on the U.S. Constitution. It is written by David Adler, who is president of The Alturas Institute, a non-profit organization created to promote the Constitution, gender equality, and civic education.



By David Adler

## Trump Trial Tests the Framers' Constitution and the Rule of Law"

"What are the implications of the trial of Donald Trump for the Constitution, presidential power and the rule of law?" a reader asks, adding another important question: "Did the Framers of the Constitution adequately limit presidential power?"

These enormously important questions have been and will continue to be discussed and debated for months and years to come, and they require more than a single column to offer a summary explanation. We focus this week on the adequacy of constitutional limitations, turning next week to the questions about the impact of the trial.

The short answer is that the Framers, who lived in dread fear of a powerful executive, were committed to closely confining presidential power as a means of protecting the nation from the kind of arbitrary actions of chief executives—kings, despots, and tyrants—occurring in other nations. The Framers' design of Article II—the Executive Article—cannot be blamed for the expansive claims of power by presidents of both parties. Certainly, there is no basis in the Constitution for presidential domination of foreign affairs and national security, including the claim of unilateral power to take the nation to war. And, to say the least, the president does not have absolute, but indeed merely limited, authority.

The emergence of the Imperial Presidency in the 1960s, under Richard Nixon and Lyndon Johnson, reflected high-flying claims of power not grounded in the text of the Constitution or the purposes of the Framers. This new viewpoint was combined with a lethal cocktail of congressional abdication of power, judicial acquiescence, and demands by the citizenry for the Chief Executive to become the Problem-Solver-in-Chief, regardless of the lack of constitutional authority to assume such sweeping responsibilities.

For the founders—keen students of history—executive abuse of power was an article of faith, for it represented an abiding threat to liberty. Their experience under King George III, whom they regarded as a tyrant, confirmed their historical concerns. They were particularly influenced by the 17th Century English Civil Wars, in which parliamentarians went to war against the Royal Prerogative and arbitrary pretensions of a series of monarchs.

Those experiences led delegates in the Constitutional Convention, in James Madison's words, "to confine and define" presidential power. Fear, not confidence in the exercise of executive power, shaped their thinking. The Framers granted the president, in contrast to the wide scope of congressional authority, sharply limited powers in both domestic and foreign affairs. The Constitutional Convention subordinated the president to the rule of law, the first time such control of executive power had been achieved in the world.

The subordination of the president to the law was, the Framers believed, insured by the availability of judicial review, which empowered the federal judiciary to overturn presidential actions in violation of the Constitution, the active interplay of the doctrine of checks and balances and, ultimately, the power of impeachment, capable of bringing errant executives to heel.

Consider the limited scope of the president's authority derived from Article II, the sole source of presidential power. The president has the duty to take care to faithfully enforce the law, but failure to do so, the Framers believed, represented an impeachable offense. The president is commander in chief of the nation's armed forces, when called into service. Congress, however, does the calling. This means, as James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, among others, said in the Convention, that Congress enjoys under the

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War Clause the exclusive authority to take the nation to war. The president may grant pardons for offenses against the nation, but the Framers provided that the abuse of power is subject to judicial review and the impeachment power.

The president, readers will be surprised to learn, has no unilateral power in the realm of foreign affairs and national security apart from the authority to receive ambassadors and foreign ministers. But this "power" is better understood as a "duty" to receive visiting ministers, what Hamilton called a mere "administrative function" often performed in other countries by a ceremonial head of state. The president shares with the Senate the authority to make treaties and appoint officials, including judges. The president may veto bills, but this power is subject to a congressional override.

The reality of this limited grant of presidential authority under the Constitution, replete with guardrails and checks at every turn, reflects two key factors. First, the Framers' fears of the Royal Prerogative and arbitrary executive actions which, historically, exploited subjects, persuaded them to keep the president on a short leash. Second, as Madison wrote in Federalist No. 51, in a republic, the "legislature necessarily predominates," which meant that Congress, not the executive, was intended to be the first branch of government, and the most powerful.

That the Framers' design for the presidency has been ignored by presidents of both parties, sometimes with encouragement and applause, is telling at this juncture in our history when Americans wonder how they can restore a constitutional presidency. A first step would be an informed and conscientious citizenry willing to criticize presidential acts that violate the Constitution and the laws of the land, irrespective of party affiliation and partisan goals.

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## **Jr. Legion scores nine runs in first inning to run past Britton**

Groton Jr. Legion scored nine runs in the first inning to breeze past Britton in baseball action played Saturday in Groton, 17-5.

Gavin Englund hit a two RBI double after the first two batters were walked in the bottom of the first inning. Jarrett Erdmann then hit an RBI single to give Groton a 3-0 lead. Groton would score six runs with two outs that included a three RBI double by Braxton Imrie, an RBI single by Englund, one score with bases loaded on a walk and one score with a hit by pitch with bases loaded.

Britton scored four runs in the top of the third inning to make it 9-4.

Englund would have another RBI single in the bottom of the third. Nick Morris hit a sacrifice fly to center field to score two runs. Karsten Flihs and Caden McInerney each had an RBI single as Groton took a 14-4 lead after three innings.

Britton would score once in the top of the fourth inning, but Groton would get more runs in the bottom of the inning as Englund, Erdmann and Morris would each have an RBI single.

Groton scored 17 runs on 15 hits and had one error. Britton scored five runs on eight hits and had three errors.

Englund and Imrie each had doubles for Groton. Imrie had two stolen bases while Brevin Flihs and Erdmann each had one.

Karsten Flihs was the winning pitcher in three innings with six hits, five runs, four walks and two strike-outs. Nick Morris also pitched with two hits and two strike-outs in two innings. Morris and Flihs also traded as catchers.

## **Groton Jr. Teeners Claims Blow Out Win Over Britton Thanks to Second Inning Boost**

Groton Jr. Teeners knocked in nine runs in the second on its way to a 16-1 victory over Britton on Saturday. Groton Jr. Teeners's big bats in the inning were led by singles by Lincoln Krause, Alex Abeln, TC Schuster, Easton Weber, and Nick Groeblichhoff, a walk by Braeden Flihs, a triple by Krause, and by Ethan Kroll.

Groton Jr. Teeners got on the board in the first inning. Ryder Schelle grounded out, scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Teeners scored nine runs in the second inning. Krause, Flihs, Abeln, Schuster, Weber, and Kroll each had RBIs in the frame.

Groeblichhoff earned the victory on the pitcher's mound for Groton Jr. Teeners. The righty allowed five hits and one run over four innings, striking out eight.

Mitch Burger took the loss for Britton. The bulldog surrendered nine runs on seven hits over one and one-third innings.

Groton Jr. Teeners totaled 17 hits in the game. Abeln, Schuster, Tristin McGannon, Krause, Kroll, and Groeblichhoff all managed multiple hits for Groton Jr. Teeners. Schuster and Abeln each collected three hits to lead Groton Jr. Teeners. Groton Jr. Teeners tore up the base paths, as two players stole at least two bases. Schuster led the way with two.

Colton Chapin led Britton with two hits in two at bats.

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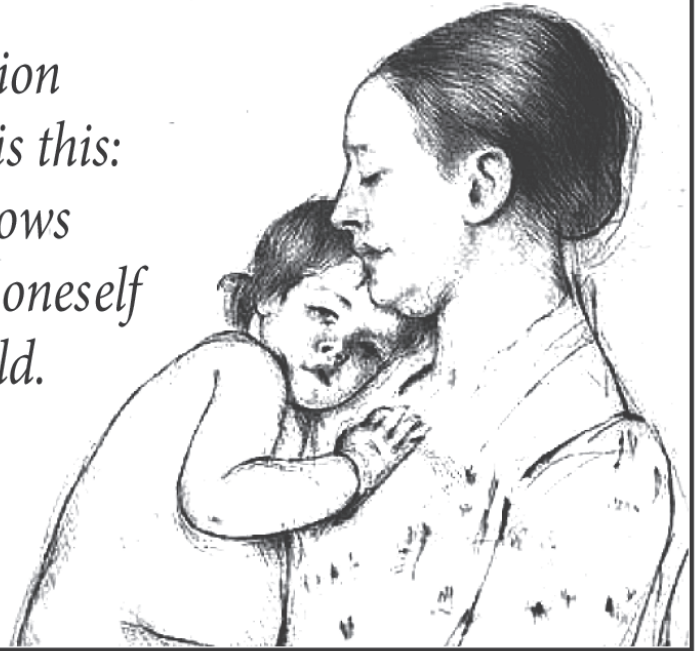


## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Detail of "Quietude" by Mary Cassatt (1891)

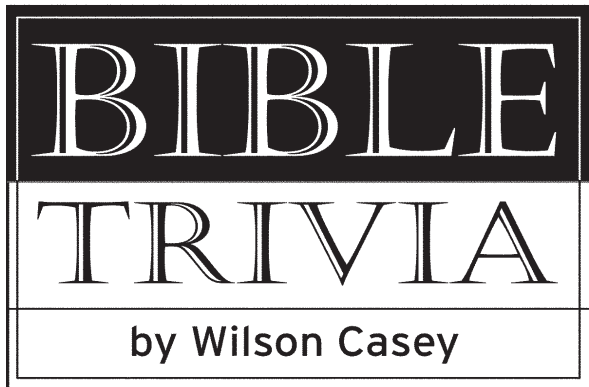
*Pure and undefiled religion  
before God and the Father is this:  
to visit orphans and widows  
in their trouble, and to keep oneself  
unspotted from the world.*

🌿 JAMES 1:27 🌿



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

2. From Ephesians 6:16, “Taking the — of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts.” *Vows, Leap, Shield, Sword*

3. From Luke 1:56, how many months did Mary stay with Elizabeth?  
*1/2, 1, 3, 5*

4. Eve’s name appears in the New Testament (KJV) how many times? *1, 2, 46, 63*

5. From Psalms 27:1, “The Lord is my light and my ...” *Rock, Glory, Salvation, Anointed*

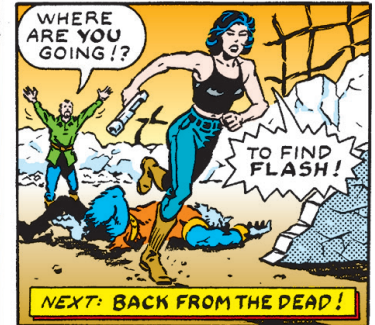
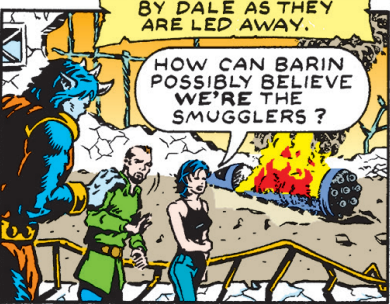
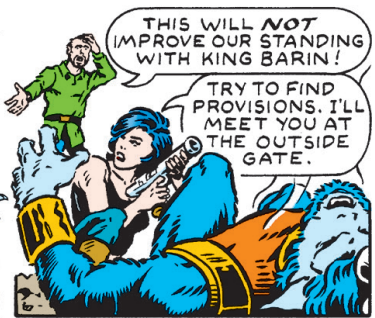
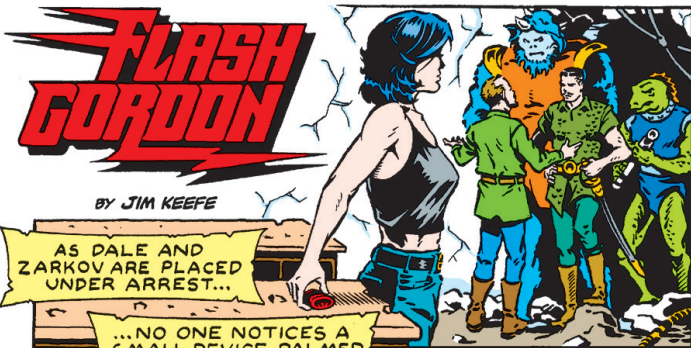
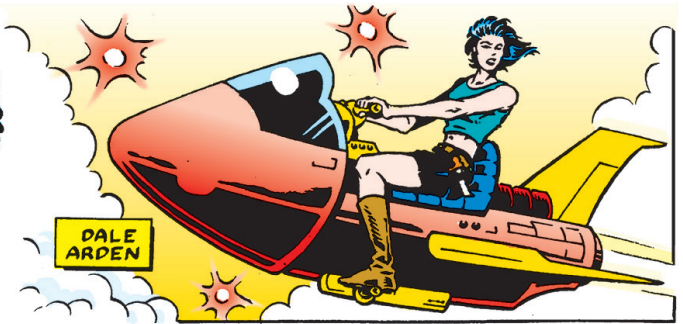
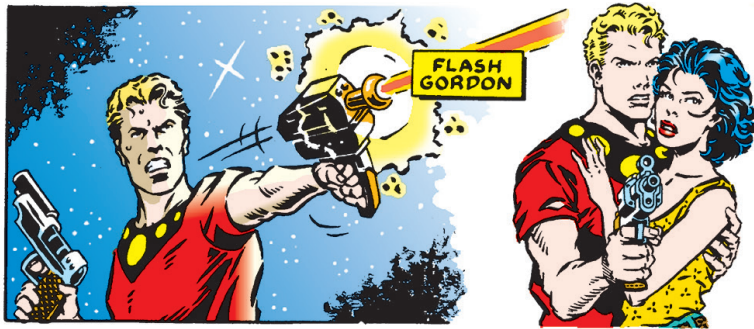
6. After David, who wrote the most Psalms? *Solomon, Paul, Job, Asaph*

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Shield, 3) Three, 4) Two (2 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Timothy 2:13), 5) Salvation, 6) Asaph

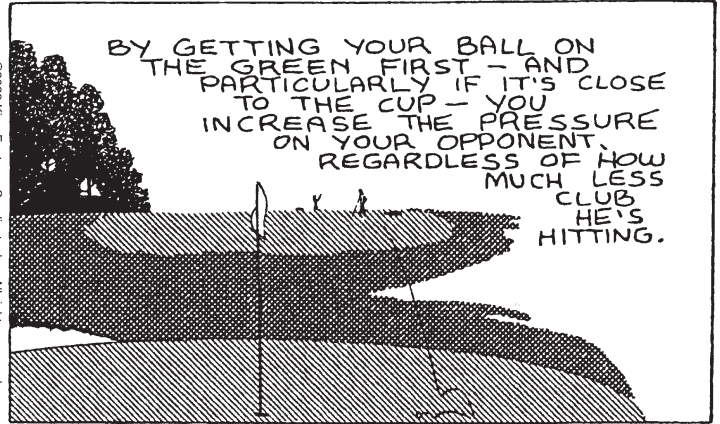
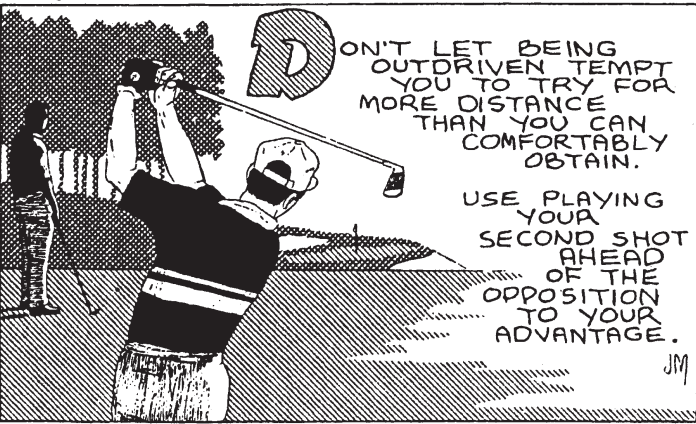
*Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson’s Casey’s latest book, “Test Your Bible Knowledge,” now available in bookstores and online.*

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## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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## Possible Heart Disease Symptoms Are Written Off Due to Weight

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I've been experiencing pain in my chest, dizziness and shortness of breath on exertion. The chest pain lasts for a few hours. At one point, it was so bad that I couldn't walk a hundred feet, had to use a cane and severely limit my physical activity. I've been to the doctor about this before. They take an EKG, which comes back normal, so they chalk it up to anxiety, then tell me I'm fat. (I am not unaware that I'm fat, but even when I was doing intense martial arts twice a week, I couldn't lose the weight. And my physical therapist told me not to do yoga.)

If it makes a difference, I'm also a Type 2 diabetic and have fibromyalgia as well as PTSD. This is not the only issue that doctors have refused to treat because they decide to blame it all on my weight. My diabetes went unchecked for a while because my doctor only told me to lose weight, instead of ordering blood tests when I complained about the symptoms.

When these symptoms happen, my friends tell me to go to the doctor, but they don't do anything to change the situation. Why should I pay over \$1,000 and waste a few hours for an urgent care visit and an EKG only to get told that I'm fat and anxious, when I can cover my chest with stickers, play on my phone and tell myself I'm fat at home for free? Who's right, me or my friends?  
— S.T.

how poorly you are being treated. I have heard from many people that doctors do not take symptoms seriously in people who are overweight or obese. (There is strong evidence that this is true, and that women and people of color are also treated worse systemically. People with any mental health issue, such as anxiety or PTSD, are often disbelieved.)

While I understand that you are frustrated, your symptoms are very concerning. Particularly if you are over 50, they are highly suggestive of heart disease — especially in a person with diabetes, which increases risk of heart disease.

Given your poor experience, how much you are paying and your PTSD, I can absolutely understand why you are reluctant to go. However, you deserve to get good care, and I believe you will be able to find a doctor who can treat you well and not automatically write off any complaint due to your weight and anxiety. I'd recommend you be completely honest about your concerns.

When I have a patient with multiple ER or acute care visits for possible heart disease, I often recommend a more definitive test than an EKG and blood testing, which is the usual acute care evaluation when looking for damage to the heart muscle. This may be a coronary CT angiogram, which is highly sensitive and specific. (The weight limit for this test depends on the scanner, but is typically 450 pounds.)

If you have blockages in your heart causing your recurrent symptoms, it needs to be treated to prevent a heart attack. If blockages aren't the cause, the EKGs usually aren't helpful, and you'll need a different type of evaluation to find out where these symptoms are coming from.

*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).*



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"Black Mirror: Season 6" (TV-MA) -- Ah, "Black Mirror," how deeply you were missed. Four years after the last season of the sci-fi anthology series premiered, fans are finally getting a new season, this time taking viewers to five different mind-bending realities in five separate episodes. One episode, titled "Joan Is Awful," follows an average woman named Joan who discovers that a major streaming platform has made a TV adaptation of her life ... starring Salma Hayek. Another episode -- "Demon 79" -- centers on a sales assistant who is forced to commit heinous acts to stop disaster from striking. All episodes are available to stream now. (Netflix)



**Ben Barnes and Salma Hayek star in the episode "Joan Is Awful" from "Black Mirror: Season 6." Courtesy of Netflix**

"And Just Like That ... : Season 2" (TV-MA) -- For the next few Thursdays stretching into August, season two of the "Sex and the City" sequel series, "And Just Like That ... ," will be occupying our television screens. Of course, more drama is headed the ladies' way, with Charlotte (Kristin Davis) having to deal with qualms about her daughter, Lily, growing up too quickly. A year after Big's death, Carrie (Sarah Jessica Parker) is learning to love again, perhaps with a certain old flame (Aidan Shaw), while Miranda (Cynthia Nixon) is still going strong with her partner, Che. But the most shocking dramatic moment of all is the return of Kim Cattrall as fan-favorite Samantha! After being adamant about not wanting to return for any more sequels, Cattrall will be featured in just one scene during the season two finale. (And just like that ... she's back!) The first two episodes premiere June 22. (Max)

"Wildflower" (R) -- Kiernan Shipka ("Chilling Adventure of Sabrina") leads this new coming-of-age film premiering June 23. Shipka stars as Bea, a senior in high school who's had a very non-traditional way of growing up. Since she had two disabled parents, Bea often switched between the "daughter" role and the "caretaker" role, and she grapples with the fact that she must make plans for her future with her parents' well-being in the back of her mind. It's ultimately up to her to find the right balance in her life with her family before she walks across that graduation stage. Alexandra Daddario ("The White Lotus") and Jacki Weaver ("Yellowstone") also co-star in the film. (Hulu)

"I'm a Virgo" (TV-14) -- From Boots Riley, the creator of the surrealist film "Sorry to Bother You," comes a new comedy TV series with just as much absurdity as his previous project. Jharrel Jerome ("When They See Us") plays Cootie, a 13-foot, 19-year-old man who was raised by his aunt (Carmen Ejogo) and uncle (Mike Epps) in Oakland, California. Because of his gigantic stature, Cootie was kept from the outside world. But when he gets discovered by a group of teenage activists, Cootie becomes the world's latest obsession -- and he finally gets to experience what it feels like to live an unsheltered life. All seven episodes of "I'm a Virgo" drop June 23. (Prime Video)

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1. On which album does Black Sabbath's "Iron Man" originally appear?
2. "Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head" was penned for which 1969 film?
3. Who released "Baby Don't Forget My Number"?
4. What is Juice Newton's real first name?
5. Name the song that contains these lyrics: "Wednesday morning at five o'clock as the day begins, Silently closing her bedroom door."

## Answers

1. Their "Paranoid" album, released in 1970. It was their live version on the "Reunion" album in 2000 that netted them a Grammy for Best Metal Performance.
2. "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid." The song, which a few others had declined to record and which was generally disliked by those in the film, went on to become a massive hit.
3. Milli Vanilli, in 1988. It was discovered the following year that the duo was lip-syncing every song when the behind-the-scenes recording got stuck and started repeating a line during a live performance.
4. She was born Judith but in 1978 legally changed it to Juice.
5. "She's Leaving Home," by the Beatles, in 1967. The story, about a girl leaving home and not telling her parents, was taken loosely from a news story about a teen girl in London.

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## GRIN and BEAR IT <sup>by Wagner</sup>



"Son, it's time we had that talk. ...  
There's nothing on TV."

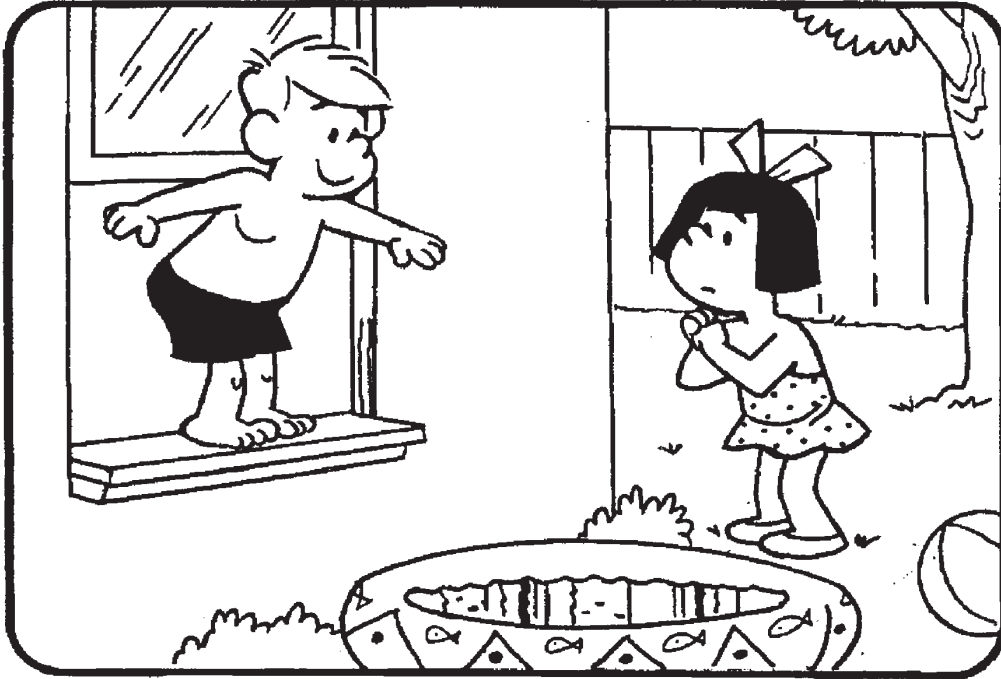
## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

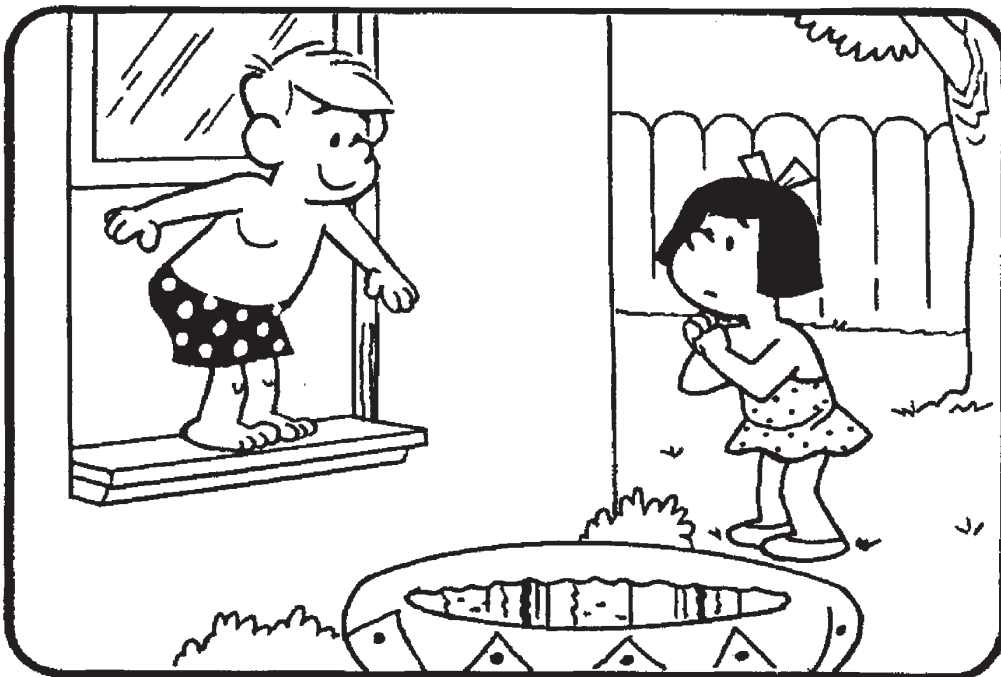


## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY  
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Trunks are different. 2. Arm is moved. 3. Pool design is different. 4. Fence is different. 5. Bow is smaller. 6. Ball is missing.

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\* To soothe minor burns in the kitchen, use the cut side of a raw potato pressed into the burn area for a minute or two.

\* "Personal appliances can get very dirty and can harbor many species of bacteria. One of the worst, in my opinion, is the cellphone. Make sure you clean it regularly by wiping front and back surfaces with a soft cloth dampened with alcohol. We touch our phones with our hands and press them into our faces. It's just smart to keep it clean."  
-- W.D. in Indiana

\* Grilling season is in full swing. A great way to clean the grill surface is by using a wad of aluminum foil. It can be pressed into the grate to get all the gunk off, before or after grilling.

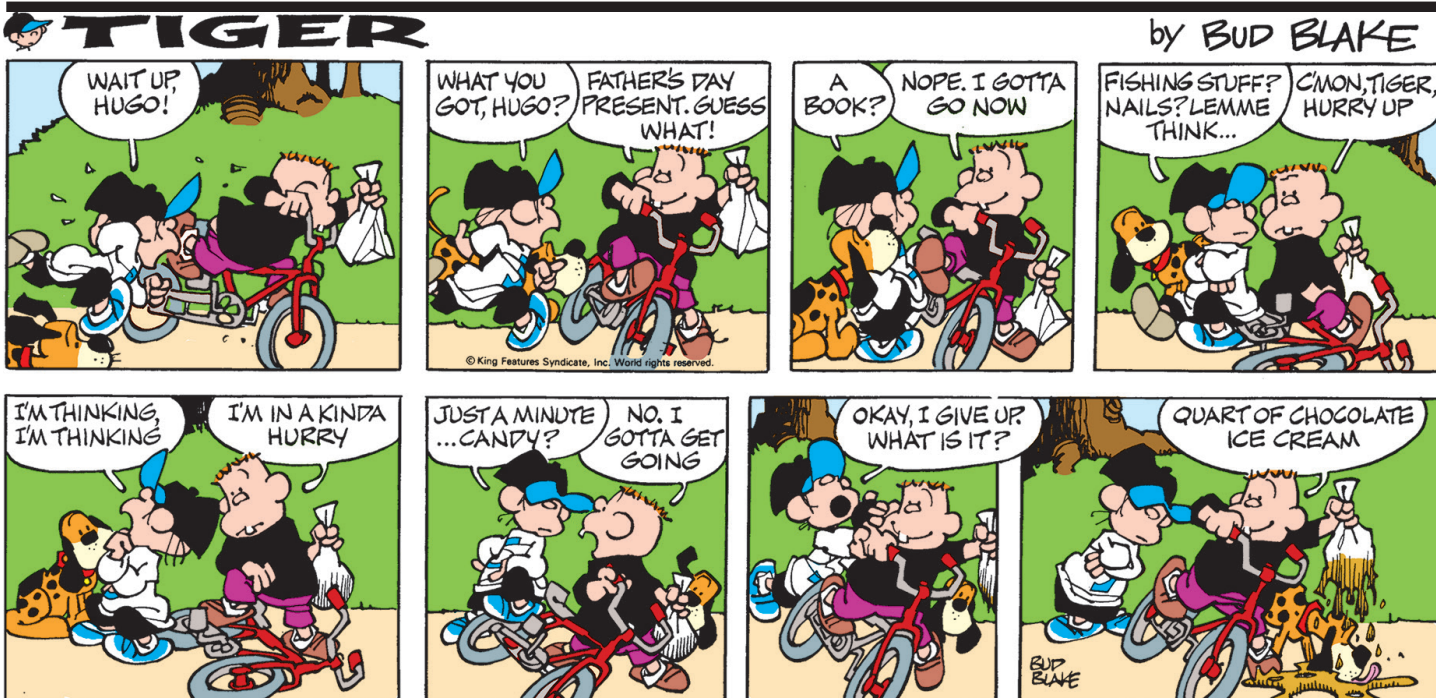
\* "I love my windowbox planters, but I would get dirt splashed on my windows or the sill when it rained. My friend advised me to put a shallow layer of small gravel over the dirt. It looks nice and there is no splatter after watering or rain." -- R.L. in Washington

\* To remove sticky residue from photo frames, try hairspray. Spray on, let sit for just a minute, then wipe off.

\* "When you have small children, always hang a hand towel over the door of the bathroom so they can't lock themselves in and get scalded with hot water." -- J.R. in Virginia

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

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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Fireplace residue
- 4 Height of fashion?
- 7 "Serpico" director
- 12 Scary cry
- 13 Oklahoma city
- 14 Sports venue
- 15 Takes too much, briefly
- 16 First-rate
- 18 Mafia boss
- 19 "Once upon —"
- 20 Send forth
- 22 Author Umberto
- 23 Hardly hirsute
- 27 Do sums
- 29 Composer Prokofiev

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14				
15				16			17					
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38					39	40			41	42	43	44
				45				46		47		
48	49	50	51							52		
53						54				55		
56						57				58		

- 31 New Zealand native
- 34 Daydreamer Walter
- 35 Hansel's sister
- 37 Center
- 38 Round Table titles
- 39 Jargon suffix
- 41 Winds up
- 45 Michelangelo masterpiece
- 47 Have the flu
- 48 First-rate
- 52 Bikini top
- 53 Worth
- 54 Samovar

- 55 Slugger Mel
- 56 Brownstone feature
- 57 "The Bells" author
- 58 "See ya!"

### DOWN

- 1 Home
- 2 Sin city
- 3 Egypt's Mubarak
- 4 "Funny!"
- 5 Redacted
- 6 Wizardry
- 7 Chantilly, e.g.
- 8 Web address
- 9 "Give — break!"

- 10 Em halves
- 11 Prof's helpers
- 17 Med. plan options
- 21 Small fruit pies
- 23 Illegal payment
- 24 Literary rep
- 25 Allow
- 26 Hobbyist's abbr.
- 28 Conk out
- 30 Outback bird
- 31 Brit. sports cars
- 32 Onassis nickname
- 33 Not 'neath

- 36 "Star Wars" royal
- 37 Straight, for short
- 40 Clinch
- 42 Mogul
- 43 Begrimed
- 44 Roofing material
- 45 Get ready, briefly
- 46 "Rule, Britannia!" composer
- 48 Den sets
- 49 Feedbag bit
- 50 Mideast org.
- 51 Pair with an air

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## — King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

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

Out on a Limb



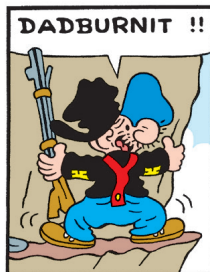
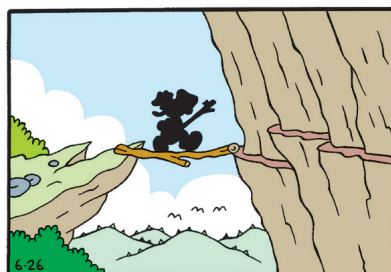
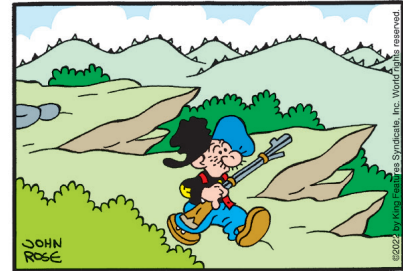
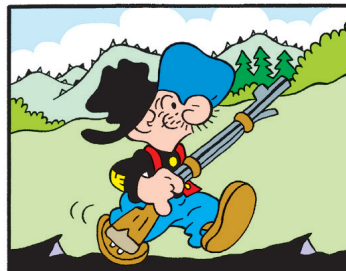
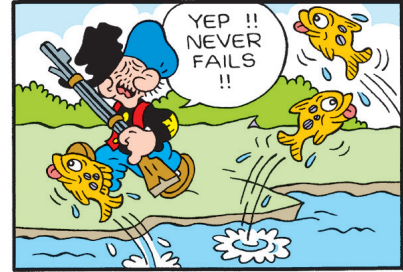
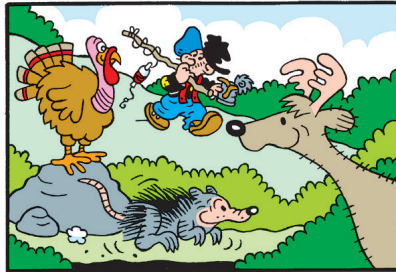
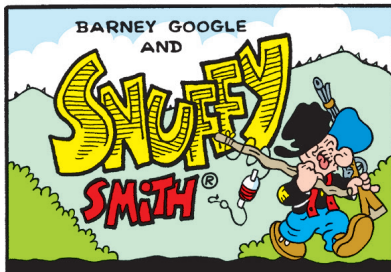
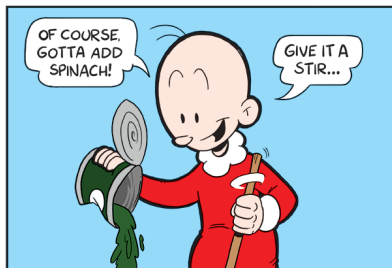
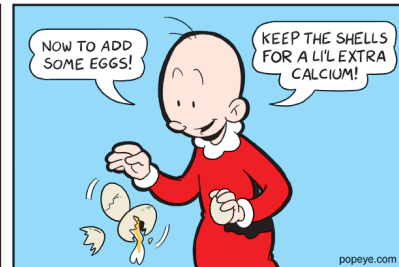
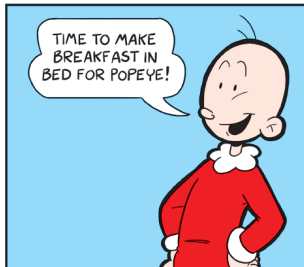
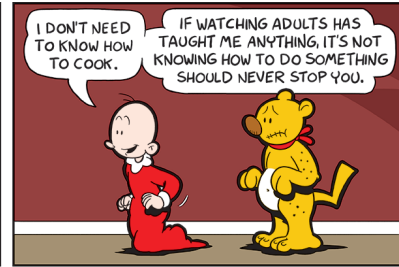
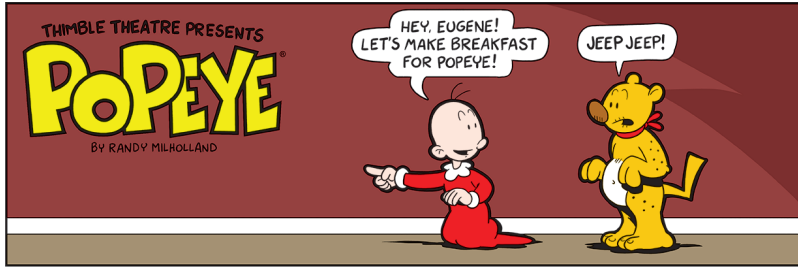
by Gary Kopervas



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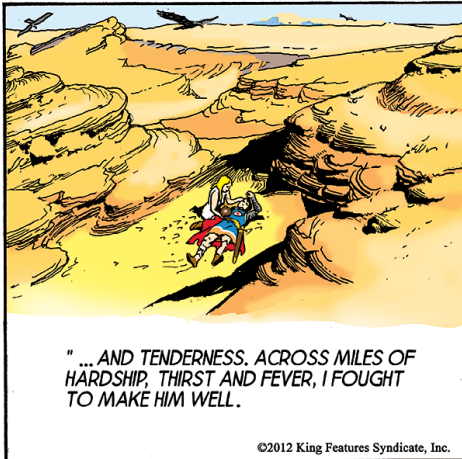
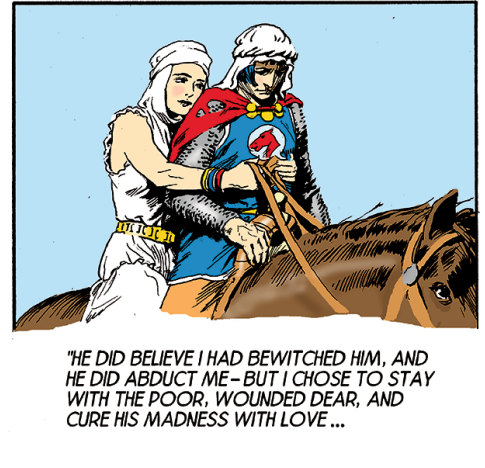
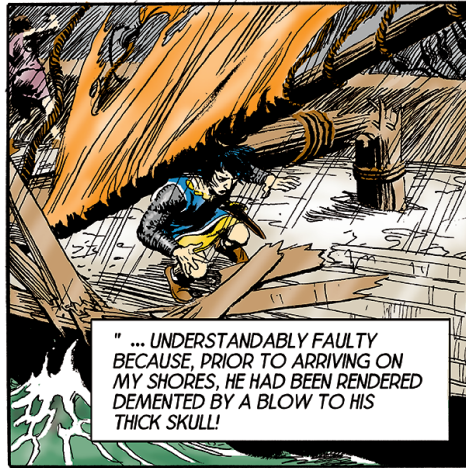
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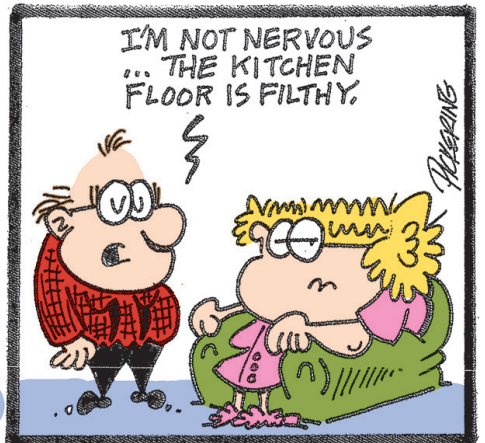
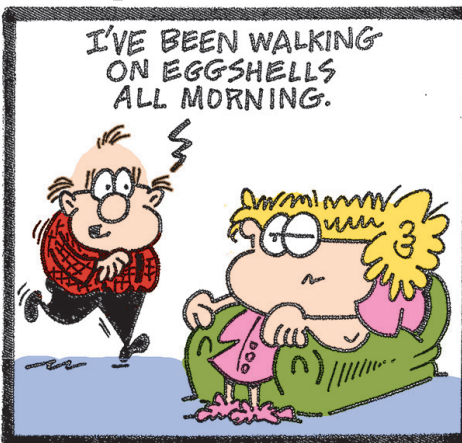
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## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering





## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### When It's Time for a New Cellphone

Like it or not, sometimes we just have to buy a new cellphone. When the old one won't hold a charge anymore or it won't take the newest security updates, we have to cave in and begin a hunt for a new one.

Sometimes it's easy. You take the old phone to the same store where you bought it and tell them you want an upgraded version of that phone. You look it over, press all the buttons, like it, and there you go ... a new phone.

Most of the time, however, it's not that easy. Technology moves along so quickly, and so do the capabilities of new phones. If it's been more than three years since your last phone purchase, talk to friends and family. Play with their phones and see how they feel in your hand. Look up cellphones on the internet and compare the features -- all before you even head to a phone store.

Your choice of phones depends in part on what you want it to do. If you want to keep things simple, check out RAZ phones and the Jitterbug lineup. The RAZ phones, for example, only do regular voice and video calls.

For fancier options, do you want to cruise the internet, send email, watch videos, make calls, take photos, send text messages or play games? Most of the phones out there now do all of this.

Decide in advance how you want to handle the purchase of the phone. Do you want it to be part of a monthly plan or pay for it completely? Do you want to be on a monthly plan at all, which may involve signing a contract?

Additionally, ask at the store whether they'll give you anything for trading in your old phone and whether they'll transfer your information to a new phone.

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1. Former San Diego Chargers placekicker Rolf Benirschke hosted the daytime version of what TV game show in 1989?

2. What 2002 sports comedy film starred Miguel J. Nunez Jr. as a suspended pro basketball player who dresses as a woman in order to play in a women's pro league?

3. What Los Angeles Dodgers general manager (1968-87) resigned after making controversial statements about racial inequality in sports during an interview with "Nightline's" Ted Koppel?

4. What is the nickname for the Western Michigan University's athletic teams?

5. Name the snowboarder from France who won a gold medal at the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics and died in a mountain-climbing accident in 2009.

6. What Hockey Hall of Fame goaltender and four-time Vezina Trophy winner has his No. 1 retired by the Detroit Red Wings?

7. Who jockeyed Secretariat on his three Triple Crown race victories in 1973?



by Ryan A. Berenz

## Answers

1. "Wheel of Fortune."

2. "Juwanna Mann."

3. Al Campanis.

4. The Broncos.

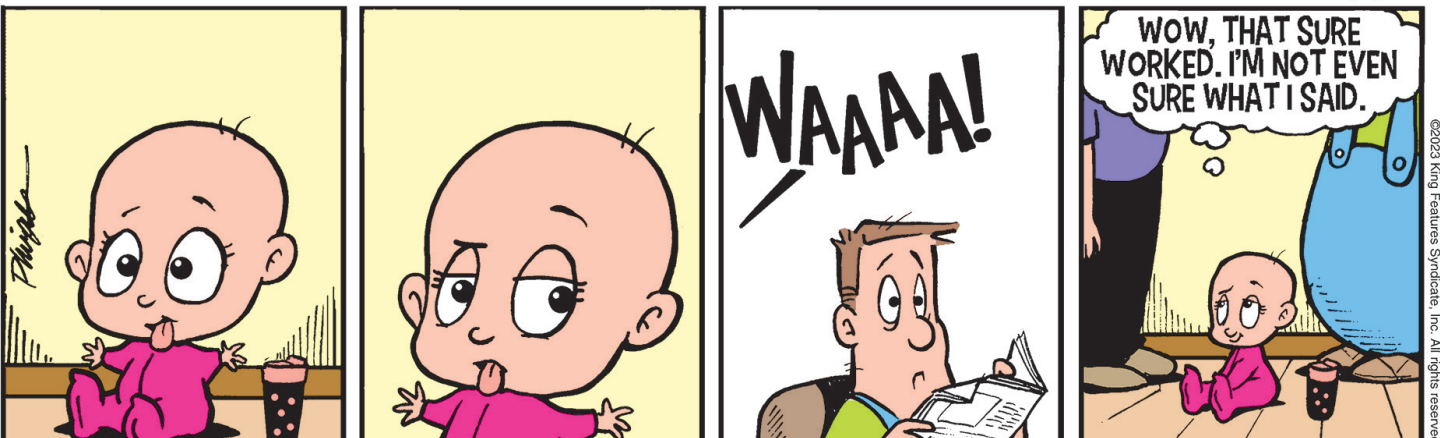
5. Karine Ruby.

6. Terry Sawchuk.

7. Ron Turcotte.

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## Amber Waves



by Dave T. Phipps



## Beware of Some "Natural" Flea and Deworming Treatments

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I want my dog to be healthy and to use natural treatments as much as possible. So I don't like giving her conventional, mainstream flea and tick chewables or making her wear a chemical-laced collar. And if I have to deworm her, I don't want to give her medications that carry a risk of side effects. But I'm also seeing a lot of products that are touted as "natural" that contain ingredients that are pretty questionable -- like garlic tablets for dogs! (Garlic is toxic to dogs and cats, if you're wondering.) Can you let your readers know that it's very important to read the labels and make sure a natural supple-

ment is actually safe? -- Rebecca in Winchester, Virginia

DEAR REBECCA: You told them, and I thank you. Many "natural" flea and tick preventatives exist today, but reading the label is imperative.

Over-the-counter treatments and preventatives are not as tightly regulated as prescription medications given by veterinarians. They may contain ingredients that are known to be harmful to dogs and cats -- like garlic, onion or tobacco. And they are generally less effective at prevention, and often completely ineffective for treating an active infestation.

There's a risk that over-the-counter and "natural" medications can make your pet as ill -- or even sicker -- than the vet's recommended medication. Treating parasitic infestations in pets can be tough, and it's important to balance the type of treatment with the health of the pet.

So folks, read the labels, consider all the risks and talk to your vet before jumping entirely onto the "natural" wagon.

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

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## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

\* When Core Design animator Toby Gard wanted to make an interactive movie starring a male character looking for treasure in Egyptian pyramids, the character was deemed too similar to Indiana Jones, so the character was switched to a South American woman named Laura Cruz. Then Core wanted a more U.K.-friendly name, so employees went to the phone book for a new surname. We now know her as Lara Croft.

\* In Mexico, the first slice of your birthday cake must be given to the person you love most.

\* Florida mom Geraldine Gimblet spent her entire life savings on medical treatment for her daughter's breast cancer ... then won \$2 million in the lottery just days after making the final payment.

\* Japanese warriors wore their hair in a small ponytail after shaving the front of their heads, but not to make a fashion statement. Instead, it helped to keep their helmets secure.

\* To protect the giraffe's brain from sudden changes in blood pressure when it drinks, the animal's jugular veins have elastic walls and large one-way valves that allow the veins to significantly expand, preventing blood from flowing back to the brain when the giraffe's head is lowered.

\* It is illegal to gamble in a library in the U.K.

\* The Battle of the Oranges is an annual festival held in Ivrea, Italy, in which participants pelt each other with the citrus fruit to commemorate the town's liberation from a cruel medieval ruler.

\* It took the writers of the Oxford English Dictionary five years just to reach the word "ant." This was partly due to the level of detail necessary to trace word origins as well as their evolution.

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "Too many people overvalue what they are not and undervalue what they are."  
-- Malcolm Forbes

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### Building your own bird house

You can download free plans for bird houses,  
bird feeders, wind chimes, butterfly houses  
and much more at these sites:

[www.craftybirds.com](http://www.craftybirds.com)

[www.freebirdhouseplans.net](http://www.freebirdhouseplans.net)

[www.birdwatching-bliss.com](http://www.birdwatching-bliss.com)

[www.thespruce.com](http://www.thespruce.com)

[www.construct101.com](http://www.construct101.com)

- Brenda Weaver





by Freddy Groves

## No More Masks at the VA

You can ditch the mask now if you visit a Department of Veterans Affairs medical facility. Because, they say, the public health emergency is over.

While it appears that you can walk into a VA medical facility without a mask, there are still high-risk places within the facilities where masks are required: chemo units, emergency and urgent care departments, open bay ICU units, transplant areas, dialysis and spinal cord injury/community living centers. And, of course, if you have Covid or any other respiratory infection,

or even suspect you do, mask up.

Additionally, if you, the patient (or a caregiver or family member) request that medical personnel wear a mask, they're required to do so. Stand up for yourself. If you want a medical provider to put on a mask, say so.

Yes, Covid is fading, but it's not gone. A couple of stats: Across the U.S., only 17% of people have had the newest booster, and only 69% got the original vax. Approximately 4,000 people are in the hospital every day because of Covid. Several states have 2,000 to 5,000 new cases each week. In my state, Covid hospital admissions rose 250% in one recent week in two different counties, yet the state is listed as low level for Covid.

One important fact, and something that might be our undoing long-term when it comes to the Covid battle, is that it's no longer required for insurance to cover the cost of the at-home tests. Veterans, however, can still get two free tests when at a VA medical appointment, if you ask and they're still in stock. (Check the expiration date if you get those.) It's better to have a couple on hand at home than to pay over \$20 each at a civilian pharmacy.

Do yourself (and those around you) a big favor and keep washing your hands a full minute with antibacterial hand soap, not the 20 seconds that is generally recommended. Don't become a statistic at this late date. There have been 870,000 veterans treated for Covid. Don't let your guard down just yet.

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## Wishing Well®

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

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 movie features the line, "Where we're going, we don't need roads"?
2. HISTORY: Which serious disease was declared eradicated in 1980?
3. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What color is the "black box" that is used to record data on airplanes?
4. GAMES: How much does getting out of jail cost in the board game Monopoly?
5. LITERATURE: What kind of animal is the novel "Black Beauty" about?
6. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Who was the youngest president?
7. TELEVISION: Who played the Penguin in the original "Batman" TV series?
8. GEOGRAPHY: What is the northernmost point of the United States?
9. ASTRONOMY: Which is the only planet in our solar system that spins clockwise?
10. FOOD & DRINK: Which fast-food restaurant chain claims that "We have the meats"?

### Answers

1. "Back to the Future."
2. Smallpox.
3. Orange.
4. \$50.
5. A horse.
6. Theodore Roosevelt (42).
7. Burgess Meredith.
8. Point Barrow, Alaska.
9. Venus.
10. Arby's.

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South Dakota Governor

**Kristi Noem**



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

## Prioritizing Family Bonding

**By: Ian Fury and Kieran Tate**

Nothing brings perspective to life like a newborn baby. Everything trivial and inconsequential fades into the background as you welcome a new tiny human into the world with a full heart and wide-open

arms. And even if you turn your attention elsewhere for a moment, their cries for milk and screams about a gassy tummy or dirty diaper will bring your focus right where it should be!

As Father's Day comes around, countless families across South Dakota are celebrating the bonds between parents and their kids. Both of us have welcomed new babies to our families in the last few weeks. Kieran and her family welcomed their third baby, Nina, in early May, and Ian and his family welcomed their first baby, Gavin, into the world just a few days later.

We've very much appreciated the opportunity to get to know these new kiddos. They waste no time exhibiting their own unique personalities. Nina is a hungry, hungry hippo, and is already packing on pounds since she was born. Her favorite place to be is either outside in the sunshine, or in the baby wrap close to mom. Gavin has a fiery spirit – all the temper in the world, but when he smiles, it sets the room aglow. He also loves to demand cuddles at 4 am!

Both of us have been tremendously blessed to benefit from the excellent Paid Family Leave (PFL) benefits offered to state employees. Governor Noem worked hard to pass PFL for state employees into law back in 2020, and this year, she expanded that opportunity even further for state employees.

While our babies were born before the expanded policy took effect, we are so encouraged for other parents to have the opportunity to prioritize their families in these crucial first few weeks. And we are grateful this benefit is in place for any future babies that may come our way. The last thing parents should have to worry about is figuring out how they will take time off after they welcome a baby into the family. Governor Noem has created a culture in state government that allows parents to put their families first.

**KIERAN:** As someone who has personally experienced the challenges of taking an unpaid maternity leave, I'm grateful to have access to paid family leave so that I can spend more time bonding with Nina, and I'm excited for the parents who will be able to utilize the new paid family leave benefit that went into effect on May 22nd of this year. Having paid time off has not only allowed me to spend this time with our brand-new baby, but has also afforded me the extra, necessary time to rest and recover while not worrying about bringing in money for our family.

**IAN:** From a dad's perspective, while there's so much that I can't do for Gavin – like grow him for 9 months or create the food he relies on every day – I have valued the opportunity to step up as a supporting figure. Dishes still need to be cleaned, laundry still needs to be done, and yes, diapers need changing. But most importantly, PFL allows me to support a brand-new mom. We have been blessed with the opportunity to strengthen our family, together.

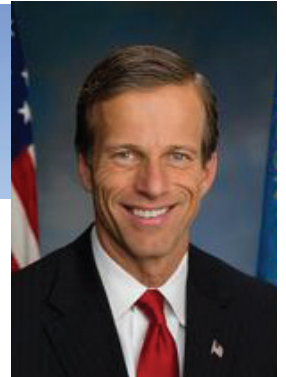
Those first few months after having a baby, while undeniably sweet, can also be very stressful for new moms and dads. PFL affords parents the opportunity to focus more time on bonding with their new baby and spend less time worrying about going back to work soon or other financial stressors. They're only newborns once, and time goes so fast!

Governor Noem has made stronger families her top priority, and she will continue working to help as many South Dakotans as possible gain the ability to share these important opportunities.

Ian Fury serves as Chief of Communications for Governor Kristi Noem.

Kieran Tate serves as Director of Communications for the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

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



## Eliminating Unnecessary Red Tape

South Dakotans know all too well the impacts that ill-considered regulations from Washington can have on a farm, ranch, small business, or family budget. Lately, we've seen no shortage of regulations from the Biden administration that place new burdens on hard-working people. But the president's regulatory power is not without limit. In our system of checks and balances, the courts and Congress have the power to hold the White House accountable and even block excessive use of executive power.

Last year, the Biden administration put forward two of its most significantly burdensome executive actions. The Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule would have given the federal government jurisdiction over most water features on private property, including ponds and potentially ditches, and imposed heavy compliance costs and regulatory burdens on landowners. The president's student loan giveaway would unfairly put taxpayers on the hook for half a trillion dollars in student loan debt. Both of these actions were challenged in the U.S. Supreme Court, which has already ruled that WOTUS exceeded the president's authority and will soon rule on the president's student debt action.

In addition to the courts, Congress has the ability to pass resolutions of disapproval to prevent presidential actions from going into effect. While the president needs to sign these resolutions, it's a tool that can be used to check excessive use of executive power. Bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress voted to block the president's student loan giveaway and the overreaching WOTUS rule. And Republicans are making additional use of this tool to push back on a range of new regulations.

In total, the Senate has disapproved of nine Biden administration actions this year – every one with a bipartisan vote. Many of these rules would unnecessarily impact Americans in service of the president's radical environmental agenda. One rule limiting truck emissions would add thousands of dollars to the cost of heavy-duty vehicles and possibly drive small trucking operations out of business. Another would allow pension plans to consider environmental, social, and governance factors, not just the best rate of return, when investing American workers' retirement funds. Others would unnecessarily add delays and red tape to infrastructure, energy, and other projects.

Despite bipartisan rebukes of its regulatory agenda, the Biden administration seems intent to continue pushing for more red tape. The administration recently finalized a rule that threatens to shutter more power plants while the energy industry warns that plants are already closing faster than they can be replaced with new renewable energy. And the Biden administration is also proposing regulations that could limit the availability of gas stoves and gas-powered vehicles over the next few years.

Rather than work with Congress, President Biden has made clear his intent is to advance a progressive agenda through executive action. But that doesn't mean he can avoid accountability for the costs and other burdens this agenda places on our economy and on hardworking Americans. And it doesn't mean that Congress won't still have its say. As we move forward, Republicans will continue to use the Congressional Review Act to push back against excessive regulations and protect Americans' livelihoods from burdensome red tape.



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



## Cleared for Takeoff

Without action this week, rural airports in Aberdeen, Watertown, and Pierre would have faced over \$4 million in new expenses over the next ten years. This cost burden would have many potential impacts: flight cancellations, higher ticket prices, and maybe even a risk of closure if our local governments can't come up with these additional funds.

A committee I serve on proposed this change, and I stopped it. If this change had been made, traveling in and out of these towns would have impacted "life as we know it" for many travelers. One small change to a bill in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee made all the difference and saved these three airports from facing daunting expenses.

I was proud to lead efforts to exempt the most rural airports from the original provision that would have taken millions of dollars away from our small towns. These rural airports are well over 175 miles (a three-hour drive) from hub airports. Requiring our most rural airports to incur hefty costs isn't sustainable. The financial burden would likely end in higher flight prices or the city government laying off employees or cutting other services, changing the social fabric of these towns.

We have a commitment to connect rural and metropolitan areas. The risk of losing these airport services would fracture that commitment. The airports in Watertown, Aberdeen, and Pierre connect South Dakotans to other parts of the state, region, and country.

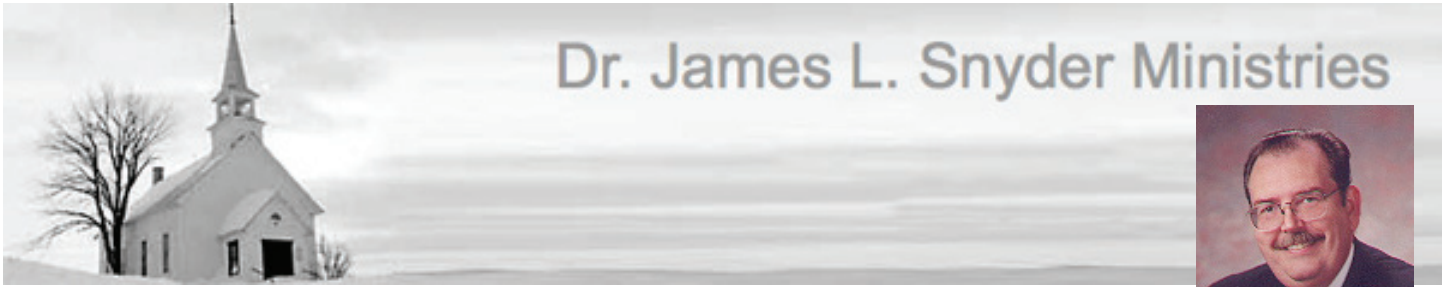
Our state capital is the second smallest in the country. Without the Pierre airport, or with higher costs, our state legislators, state employees, and visitors would be forced to travel hours by car from airports like Sioux Falls and Rapid City or pay higher ticket prices for their flight.

Thankfully, my amendment was adopted and the airports in Aberdeen, Watertown, and Pierre won't have to face this burden—protecting your airports and flights around the state.

Wheels up!

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## If Only I Had It My Way

Every once in a while, I have a little thought giggling in my brain to the effect that if only I had it my way. I don't have it often, but I try to take it seriously when I do.

My personal history is that it turns out to be a disaster whenever I have everything my way. And, boy, have I had disasters in my life.

I often think of Frank Sinatra's song, "I Did It My Way." For the life of me, I do not know what that is all about. Maybe it worked for him, but it hasn't worked for me, at least not yet. If I did everything my way, I'm sure I would be locked up in jail or an insane asylum by now. I'm not sure which is worse.

Regarding this, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has several PhDs in "Doing It My Way." If I were smart and not saying I am, I would let her always have it her way.

There is only one place I can have anything my way: my Personal Interior Castle, my office. I sit at my desk; look at my computer, surrounded by thousands of books. In this "safe place," I can have it my way every day.

Occasionally, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage will come into my Interior Castle and say something to the effect, "Would you like me to do any organizing in here?"

I smile as best I can and respond, "You can organize in here if you permit me to go to your craft room and organize there." I then chuckle, knowing she would never permit me to enter her craft room, let alone organize anything.

Don't let this get out, but a couple of times when she's away, I sneak into her craft room and move things around so she can't find them when she needs them. When she returns, she will go into her craft room, and I will stand outside to listen and hear her say something to the effect, "Now, where is that? I know it was right here when I left."

I have to be careful that, you know who, does not hear me chuckling.

She has her space to do her thing her way, and I have my space to do my thing my way, and the twain shall never entangle themselves.

One of my great pleasures is that when she does something her way, and it turns out to be wrong. I have to keep my laughter under control in those circumstances.

We often go across town for appointments, and when we do that, I allow her to take her Sissy Van, and I ride along strap in on the passenger side. Driving across town, she always decides which way to go.

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Just recently, we had an appointment across town at some new location. We'd never been there before, so we had to be careful driving to that location.

When we got to a certain traffic light, I told her, "You need to turn right here on this street."

Looking at me, she said, "I'm driving, and so I know where I'm going. I don't need any information from you. Sit back and let me do it my way."

With that, she turned left, and I could hardly hold my laughter because I knew where that street would end up.

Looking at me, she said, "Why are you laughing?"

"I was just thinking of a joke."

"Oh, yeah. What was that joke?"

I looked at her, and in a moment, I said, "Why was six afraid of seven?"

"I don't know, why was six afraid of seven?"

"Because," I said, "seven, eight, nine."

"So," she grveled, "that was the joke you were thinking of?"

It wasn't, but I had to use something to cover up my laughter.

All I had to do was wait, and when we came to the end of this street, we would find out that we were at the wrong end of town. Oh, I love it when a plan comes together.

When she finally realized we were at the wrong end of town, she looked at me, "Don't you dare say what you're thinking."

Then she turned around and headed in the right direction.

My problem is that I caught her doing it her way, and it was the wrong way, and I can't exploit it. I have to pretend that it didn't happen. Oh, how I wish I could remind her of this mistake every time we are in the car.

Of course, I know if I do that, there will be heavy consequences on my side to deal with. Sometimes it's best to keep some things under lock and key. But I do confess there are times while she is driving that I think of that mistake, and I can only smile.

Later that day, I was reminded of what the apostle Paul said. "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness" (1 Corinthians 3:18-19).

My craftiness has never done well for me. I choose to trust God in every situation that is before me. After all, He knows best.

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: How is America's outdated power grid inhibiting efforts to fight climate change?

-- Jim S., Milwaukee, WI

Our outdated power grid is indeed a significant hindrance to efforts to combat climate change. One of the key issues is the grid's limited capacity to integrate renewable energy sources (solar, wind, etc.), a needed step if we're to make the transition to a clean energy economy. Today's grid is made up of a patchwork of local and regional interests often at odds with one another and developed to process locally sourced coal and gas into electricity that rarely gets transported more than a few dozen miles away.

To take full advantage of renewables, these local and regional utilities need to coordinate on the production and placement of thousands of miles of new high voltage transmission lines that could send electricity generated by wind and solar for thousands of miles across multiple grid regions. But without clear financial incentives, utilities aren't in any rush to pursue such endeavors.

A key challenge of renewable energy generation is its intermittency. Solar and wind power is variable depending on weather conditions, making it essential to have a grid capable of balancing supply and demand in real-time. An outdated grid with limited energy storage capacity and transmission capability can't effectively manage the fluctuations in renewable energy production. So renewable energy gets wasted while the grid keeps using fossil fuels to meet demand during times of low renewable generation.

Moreover, an outdated power grid falls short in integrating electric vehicles (EVs) into the transportation sector, a crucial component of efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. EV adoption is on the rise, but the existing grid is ill-equipped to support a widespread charging infrastructure. This hinders the growth of the EV market. To fully realize the potential of EVs as a climate solution, a grid must be able to support increased demand from charging stations and manage the associated load fluctuations.

Outdated power grid vulnerabilities are further exacerbated by the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events linked to climate change. Aging infrastructure is more susceptible to damage from storms, hurricanes and wildfires, resulting in prolonged power outages and disruptions. These events not only have immediate impacts on public safety and health but also impede climate change mitigation efforts by hampering renewable energy generation and slowing down the restoration of power supply.

To address these challenges, significant investments in grid modernization are essential. Upgrading the power grid to a smart grid, equipped with advanced sensors, automation and two-way communication can enhance grid resilience and flexibility. Smart grid technologies enable real-time monitoring and response, optimizing electricity distribution, and facilitating the integration of renewable energy sources. Additionally, expanding energy storage infrastructure, such as battery systems, can help mitigate the intermittency of renewable energy generation and provide backup power during outages..

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).



**One issue with our grid is that the transmission lines across the U.S. weren't designed to carry renewable energy long distances.** Credit: Pexels.com.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Congressional delegation active on rural airports, pistol braces, drug prices**

**BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - JUNE 17, 2023 1:00 PM**

Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-South Dakota, said his amendments to pending legislation could protect three South Dakota cities from about \$4 million in air-service fees.

The cities are Pierre, Aberdeen and Watertown. The bill's original language would have charged the cities' airports new fees for the next decade to participate in the Essential Air Service program, Johnson said. Essential Air Service airports receive federal funding to ensure air service to rural and small communities.

A House committee approved the bill Wednesday. It now goes to the full House.

Johnson said he amended the bill to protect the most remote passenger airports from the new expenses. The protections cover EAS airports that are more than 175 driving miles from the nearest medium- or large-hub airport.

"South Dakotans and rural Americans deserve reasonable access to airport travel," Johnson said afterward in a news release.

The bill is the Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act. It's a five-year reauthorization of Federal Aviation Administration programs.

#### **Pistol-brace vote**

The House passed a resolution last week expressing disapproval of a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms rule making certain types of pistol braces illegal. Johnson supported the resolution.

"This rule from the ATF is gross federal overreach by the Executive Branch to push their anti-Second Amendment agenda," Johnson said in a news release.

Sens. John Thune and Mike Rounds, R-South Dakota, are sponsors of similar legislation in the Senate that has not received a vote.

The ATF rule reclassifies pistols as short-barreled rifles if they have a stabilizing brace attachment, and also requires registration with the bureau.

Director Steven Dettelbach explained the logic behind the rule in a January news release, saying, "In the days of Al Capone, Congress said back then that short-barreled rifles and sawed-off shotguns should be subjected to greater legal requirements than most other guns."

"The reason for that is that short-barreled rifles have the greater capability of long guns, yet are easier to conceal, like a pistol," Dettelbach added. "But certain so-called stabilizing braces are designed to just attach to pistols, essentially converting them into short-barreled rifles to be fired from the shoulder. Therefore, they must be treated in the same way under the statute."

Opponents of the rule have said some disabled veterans rely on braces to use their firearms, and they could face jail time, fines and the loss of their firearms if they fail to register pistols with stabilizing braces.

#### **Reservation crime**

Thune, Rounds and Johnson sent a letter last week to U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. They urged her to direct the Bureau of Indian Affairs to provide additional support for tribal law enforcement agencies in South Dakota "to help combat the spike of violent crime on reservations."

"While a significant number of tribal communities in South Dakota are dealing with an increase in serious crime, it is important to note the situation on each respective reservation is unique and requires individual attention," the delegation wrote. "Therefore, we request the BIA closely evaluate tribal crime statistics and work directly with individual tribal leaders to address these threats to public safety."

The letter did not include any statistics on reservation crime.

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## Wounded Knee bill gains support

A House committee passed a bill from Johnson last week that would help protect land at the Wounded Knee Massacre site on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The bill now goes to the full House.

Johnson's bill is the Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act. It deals with 40 acres purchased by the Oglala Sioux and Cheyenne River Sioux tribes in 2022. Johnson has said the land, which was formerly in private ownership, "is believed to be the killing field."

The bill would place the land in "restricted fee status." That differs from other forms of tribal land ownership, including "trust status," in which the federal government holds land in trust for tribes. Restricted fee status puts ownership directly in tribal hands with a restriction against selling or transferring the land.

The massacre occurred on Dec. 29, 1890, when a force of nearly 500 U.S. soldiers took positions around approximately 350 Miniconjou Lakota people. Soldiers struggled with a man in the camp who refused to give up his gun, it fired into the sky, and chaotic shooting ensued. Fewer than 40 soldiers were killed (some by friendly fire, according to historians), while Native American deaths have been estimated at 200 or 300 or more, depending on the source.

## Opposition to conservation rule

Gov. Kristi Noem testified to a House committee last week against a Bureau of Land Management rule that would allow conservation leases on federal lands. Johnson introduced her to the committee, which conducted a hearing on a bill that would force withdrawal of the rule.

Meanwhile, Thune, Rounds and Johnson sent a letter to Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and BLM Director Tracy Stone-Manning urging immediate withdrawal of the rule.

The rule would create a conservation leasing system, similar to how the BLM divides land for extractive uses. The rule's supporters — many Democrats and environmental groups — say it provides an important tool to better manage lands threatened by climate change, without significantly affecting use by ranchers, miners, energy companies or other federal lands users.

Thune, Rounds and Johnson have a different view.

"This new process has the potential to lock away land for more than a decade, keeping out hunters, livestock owners who graze on public lands, and American taxpayers and tourists who want to enjoy the great outdoors," they wrote.

## Outpatient drug discounts

The "340B program" was created by Congress in 1992. The program requires drug manufacturers who participate in Medicaid to provide certain nonprofit health care providers, hospitals and clinics a discount on outpatient drugs.

Thune joined a group of colleagues last week on the Senate 340B bipartisan working group to send a letter to stakeholders seeking feedback on ways to improve the program.

"I continue to hear concerns from many of the health care providers in South Dakota about uncertainty in the program," Thune said.

## SEC disclosures

Rounds joined nine Republican colleagues to reintroduce legislation they said would "safeguard public companies from bureaucratic overreach."

The Mandatory Materiality Requirement Act would only allow the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission to impose future disclosure requirements if the information is important for investors' decisions, Rounds said.

"The heavy hand of government is hampering the growth of our businesses and economy," Rounds said in a news release.

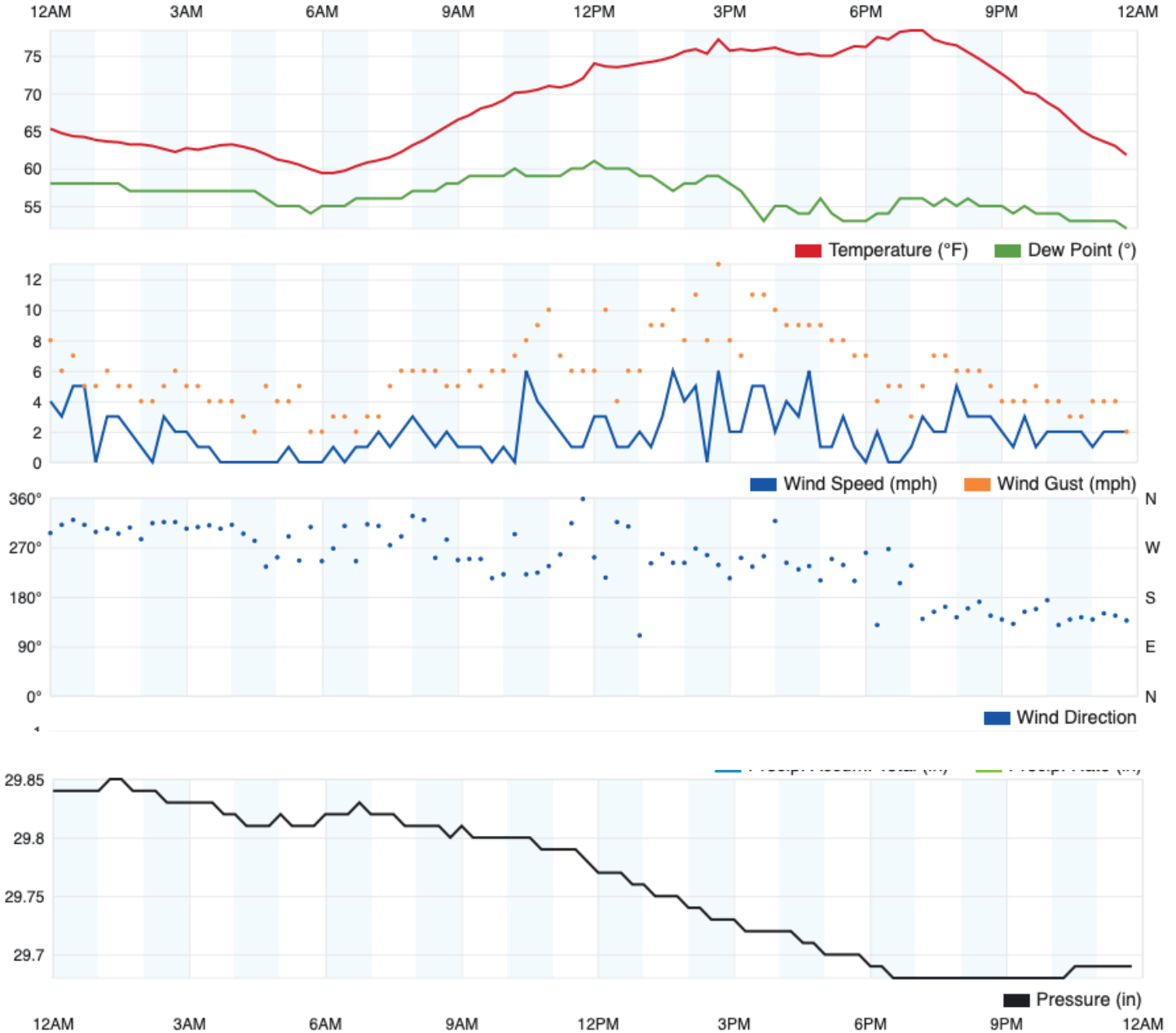
The bill targets a rule proposal by the SEC that would require public companies to make climate-related disclosures, including information on greenhouse gas emissions. Rounds said the rule would also require reporting by the companies' downstream suppliers, such as farmers and ranchers.

"This rule would potentially limit access to capital, discourage new companies from going public and result in onerous reporting requirements that will be borne by farmers and small businesses," Rounds said.

# Groton Daily Independent






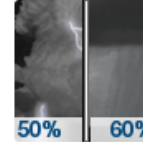
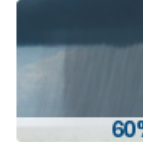
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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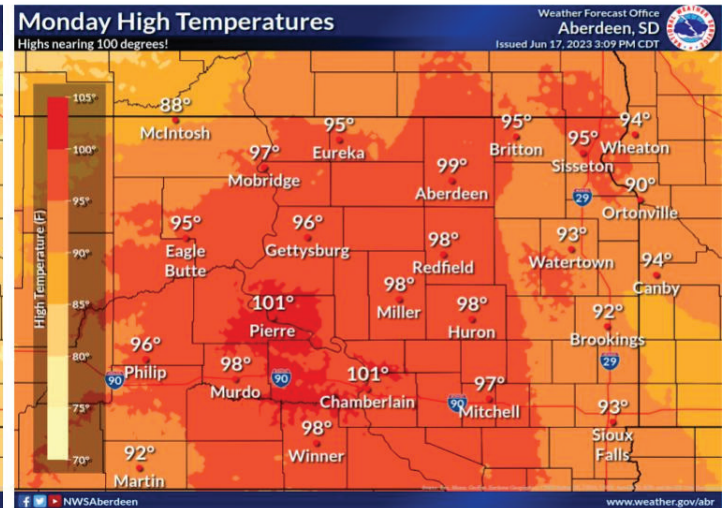
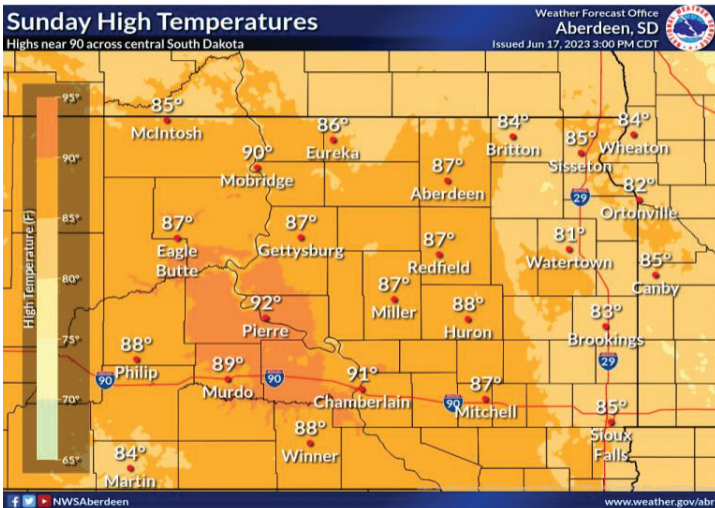
Today	Tonight	Juneteenth	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Hot	Mostly Clear and Breezy	Hot and Breezy	Breezy, Chance T-storms then Showers Likely	Showers Likely
High: 85 °F	Low: 63 °F	High: 97 °F	Low: 74 °F	High: 97 °F	Low: 69 °F	High: 87 °F

## Heating Up Over the Next Couple Days!

June 17, 2023 3:32 PM

Highs around 100 by Monday

- Dry conditions expected through Monday.
- Heat indices don't appear to be a big concern as of now.
- Weather pattern becoming more active by mid-week.



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

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Things will begin to heat up as we head into early next week. Highs in the 80s to around 90 degrees can be expected on Sunday. But, once we reach Monday, highs are forecast to soar into the 90s to around 100 degrees. Expect this heat to linger into Tuesday as well, before slightly cooler temperatures and a more active pattern return for mid-week.



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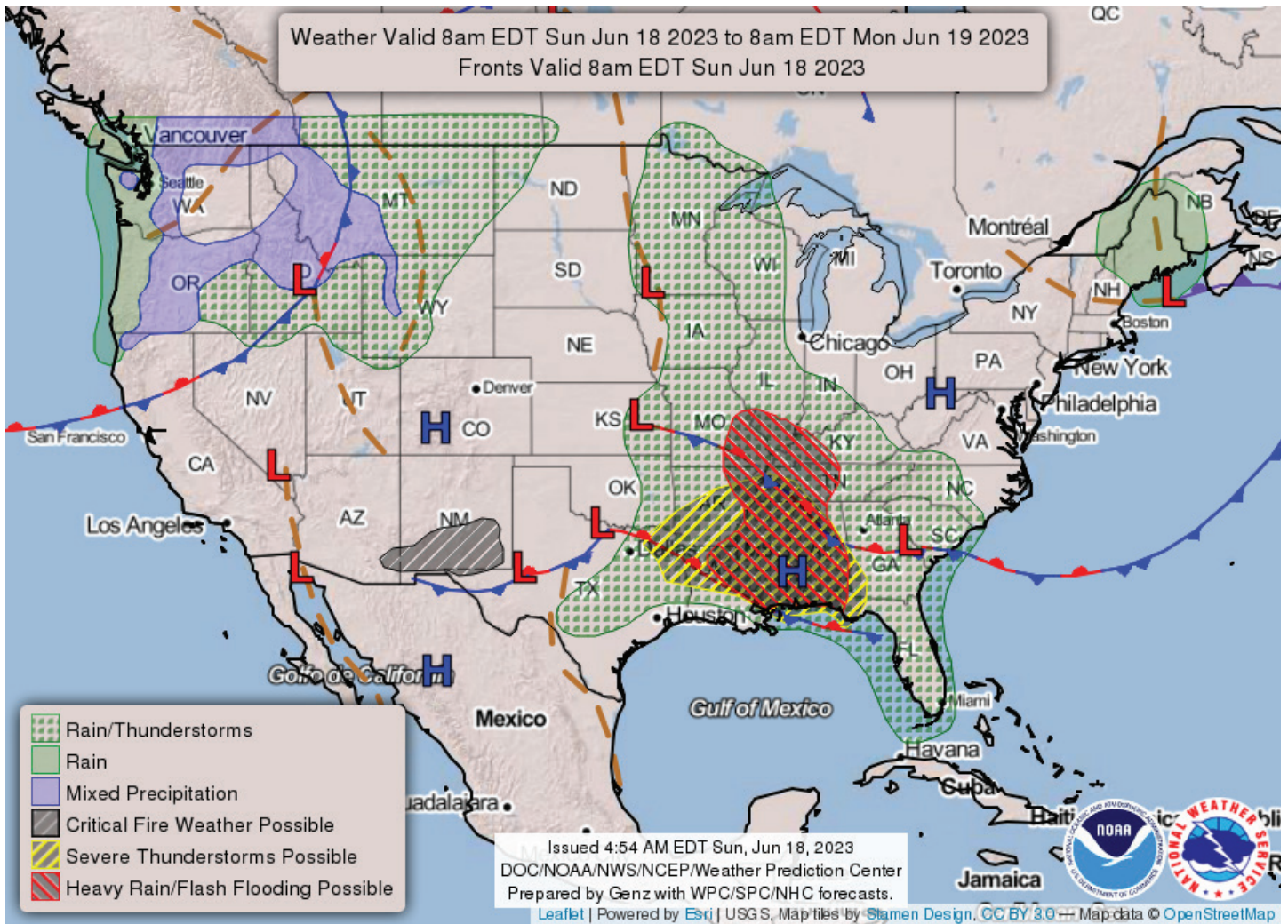
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 79 °F at 7:04 PM**  
**Low Temp: 59 °F at 6:21 AM**  
**Wind: 13 mph at 2:41 PM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 15 hours, 43 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 108 in 1933  
Record Low: 38 in 1902  
Average High: 81  
Average Low: 56  
Average Precip in June.: 2.16  
Precip to date in June.: 0.51  
Average Precip to date: 9.41  
Precip Year to Date: 8.42  
Sunset Tonight: 9:25:33 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:41:42 AM



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## Today in Weather History

June 18, 1964: A tornado moved from SSW to NNE damaging three farmsteads between Hoven to 8 NNW of Bowdle. This tornado was estimated to have F2 strength. An estimated five inches of rain fell in three hours near Bowdle causing soil erosion just before the tornado hit.

Another storm moved from south to north and intensified as it moved northward. Winds between 50 and 100 mph were reported. The highest damage was in McPherson County where an estimated 2 million dollars in crop damage occurred. Heavy rain was also observed on this day. Some storm total rainfall includes; 6.73 inches in Eureka, 4.28 in Roscoe, 3.75 in Leola, 2.68 in Shelby, 2.45 in Britton, and 2.31 inches in Ipswich.

June 18, 1991: Large hail up to 2 inches in diameter broke windows and produced widespread tree damage in Watertown and vicinity. Extensive damage was caused to surrounding soybean and corn fields. Approximately 25,000 acres of crops were destroyed. Thunderstorm winds of 55 mph uprooted trees and downed power lines primarily on the Reville area. Trees fell on cars, and an apartment complex was damaged.

1875 - A severe coastal storm (or possible hurricane) struck the Atlantic coast from Cape Cod to Nova Scotia. Eastport ME reported wind gusts to 57 mph. (David Ludlum)

1958: Hailstones up to four inches in diameter killed livestock as a storm passed from Joliet to Belfry in Carbon County, Montana.

1970 - Wind and rain, and hail up to seven inches deep, caused more than five million dollars damage at Oberlin KS. (The Weather Channel)

1972: Hurricane Agnes was one of the most massive June hurricanes on record. The system strengthened into a tropical storm during the night of the 15th and a hurricane on the 18th as it moved northward in the Gulf of Mexico.

1987 - It was a hot day in the Upper Great Lakes Region. Nine cities in Michigan and Wisconsin reported record high temperatures for the date. The high of 90 degrees at Marquette, MI, marked their third straight day of record heat. Severe thunderstorm in the Northern and Central High Plains Region spawned half a dozen tornadoes in Wyoming and Colorado. Wheatridge, CO, was deluged with 2.5 inches of rain in one hour. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Severe thunderstorms in eastern North Dakota and northern Minnesota produced hail three inches in diameter and spawned four tornadoes in Steele County. Thunderstorms also produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Clearbrook MN. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably hot weather prevailed in the southwestern U.S. In Arizona, afternoon highs of 103 degrees at Winslow, 113 degrees at Tucson, and 115 degrees at Phoenix were records for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### WHERE TO FIND HAPPINESS

A professor was known to ask his students questions to make them think. On one occasion he stood before the class and wrote on the chalkboard, "Who's more content - the man with six million dollars or the man with six children? Now think!" he challenged them.

After a few moments, one of the students raised his hand and answered, "The man with the six children." "Oh. Why?" asked the professor.

"Well, the man with the six million dollars would always want more!" came the reply.

True contentment is always independent of "things" - whether possessions or pleasures. It only comes from an inner attitude toward life. That is why Paul said, "True religion, with contentment, is great wealth."

This does not imply that being a Christian means living in poverty or wanting to be poor. But it does mean that the power of "things" will never bring happiness and that the Christian must always focus on "things" that are eternal.

In the final analysis, we can only take two "things" to Heaven: Ourselves and what we have done with our lives.

So, we must live our lives with one goal that dominates our heads, hearts, and hands: to present ourselves to God without shame! As Paul said, "I beg you...to be living sacrifices!"

Prayer: Help us, Father, to realize that life does not consist in amassing an abundance of "things." Give us Your insight and wisdom to live lives that honor You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. 1 Timothy 6:6



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

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## 2023 Community Events

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

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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.16.23

4 24 34 45 57 19

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$300,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.17.23

4 23 26 35 36 8

All Star Bonus: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$4,180,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.17.23

14 29 30 40 44 18

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 48 Mins 41 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.17.23

7 8 16 21 29

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$107,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.17.23

8 12 21 33 51 14

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

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
06.17.23

2 12 45 61 64 26

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$380,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### **Velociraptor statue heist ends with 3 arrests in South Dakota**

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police have hunted down a velociraptor that was stolen from outside a South Dakota arts and science center.

Sioux Falls police Sgt. Aaron Benson said Friday that a security officer spotted three people carrying the statue away from the Washington Pavilion and called police just after midnight. Surveillance video then helped officers track the statue to a nearby apartment, The Argus Leader reports.

“When opening the door, detectives could clearly see the velociraptor was sitting right inside,” Benson said.

Police detained the three suspects on charges of grand theft. Benson said one was 18, another 19 and the third a juvenile.

“Fortunately, the statue was not damaged,” stated Madelyn Grogan, the Pavilion’s director of education, programming and exhibits, in an email Friday.

The statue and many other dinosaur representations are part of the “Dinosaurs in the Wild” exhibition at the Washington Pavilion’s science center. The organization did not provide any information on the size or weight of the statue. Scientists believe velociraptors grew to about 6 feet (1.8 meters) long and weighed about 100 pounds (45 kilograms) when they roamed the earth millions of years ago.

Grogan said officials are evaluating how they can better secure the dinosaur statue. It was one of two velociraptors featured outside as part of the collection of dinosaur statues; one was perched on the roof of the building, looking out at the city, and the other was almost directly below.

<sup>—</sup>This spelling of Sioux has been corrected in the dateline.

### **Both sides suffer heavy casualties as Ukraine strikes back against Russia, UK assessment says**

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia and Ukraine are suffering high numbers of military casualties as Ukraine fights to dislodge the Kremlin’s forces from occupied areas in the early stages of its counteroffensive, British officials said Sunday.

Russian losses are probably at their highest level since the peak of the battle for Bakhmut in March, U.K. military officials said in their regular assessment.

According to British intelligence, the most intense fighting has centered on the southeastern Zaporizhzhia province, around Bakhmut and further west in Ukraine’s eastern Donetsk province. While the update reported that Ukraine was on the offensive in these areas and had “made small advances,” it said that Russian forces were conducting “relatively effective defensive operations” in Ukraine’s south.

The Ukrainian military said in a regular update Sunday morning that over the previous 24 hours Russia had carried out 43 airstrikes, four missile strikes and 51 attacks from multiple rocket launchers. According to the statement by the General Staff, Russia continues to concentrate its efforts on offensive operations in Ukraine’s industrial east, focusing attacks around Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Marinka and Lyman in the country’s Donetsk province, with 26 combat clashes taking place.

Donetsk regional Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said that two civilians were killed, with a further three wounded in the past day.

Ukrainian officials said Russian forces also launched airstrikes on other regions of the east and south of the country.

One civilian was killed and four more wounded in Kherson province as a result of Russia’s attacks, said regional Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin, while Zaporizhzhia regional Gov. Yuriy Malashko said one person was wounded in Russian attacks that hit 20 settlements in the province.

Serhiy Bratchuk, spokesperson of the regional government in the southwestern Odesa province, said

Ukrainian forces destroyed a "very significant" ammunition depot near the Russian-occupied port city of Henichesk in nearby Kherson province.

"Our armed forces dealt a good blow in the morning," Bratchuk said in a video message on Sunday morning, posted to his Telegram channel.

Western analysts and military officials have cautioned that Ukraine's counteroffensive to dislodge the Kremlin's forces from occupied areas, using Western-supplied advanced weapons in attacks along the 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line could last a long time.

A group of African leaders have carried out a self-styled "peace mission" to both Ukraine and Russia in recent days to try to help end their nearly 16-month-old war, but the visit ended on Saturday with no immediate signs of progress.

Meanwhile, the death toll from flooding following the destruction of the Kakhovka dam has risen to 16 in Ukrainian-held territory, Ukraine's interior ministry said late Saturday, while Russian officials said 29 people died in territories controlled by Moscow.

Massive flooding from the destruction of the dam on June 6 devastated towns along the lower Dnieper River in the Kherson region, a front line in the war. Russia and Ukraine accuse each other of causing the breach.

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

## **Blinken kicks off meetings in Beijing on high-stakes mission to cool soaring US-China tensions**

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

BEIJING (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Sunday kicked off two days of high-stakes diplomatic talks in Beijing aimed at trying to cool exploding U.S.-China tensions that have set many around the world on edge.

Blinken opened his program by meeting Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang for an extended discussion to be followed by a working dinner. He'll have additional talks with Qin, as well as China's top diplomat Wang Yi and possibly President Xi Jinping, on Monday.

Neither Blinken nor Qin made any substantive comments to reporters as they began the meeting at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse.

Despite Blinken's presence in the Chinese capital, prospects for any significant breakthroughs are slim, as already strained ties have grown increasingly fraught in recent years. Animosity and recriminations have steadily escalated over a series of disagreements that have implications for global security and stability.

Blinken is the highest-level American official to visit China since President Joe Biden took office and the first secretary of state to make the trip in five years.

Biden and Xi agreed to Blinken's trip early at a meeting last year in Bali. It came within a day of happening in February but was delayed by the diplomatic and political tumult brought on by the discovery of what the U.S. says was a Chinese spy balloon flying across the United States that was shot down.

The list of disagreements and potential conflict points is long, ranging from trade with Taiwan, human rights conditions in China and Hong Kong to Chinese military assertiveness in the South China Sea and Russia's war in Ukraine.

Blinken will also be pressing the Chinese to release detained American citizens and to take steps to curb the production and export of fentanyl precursors that are fueling the opioid crisis in the United States.

U.S. officials have said Blinken will raise each of these points, though neither side has shown any inclination to back down on their entrenched positions.

Shortly before leaving, Blinken emphasized the importance of the U.S. and China establishing and maintaining better lines of communication. The U.S. wants to make sure "that the competition we have with China doesn't veer into conflict" due to avoidable misunderstandings, he told reporters.

Biden and Xi had made commitments to improve communications "precisely so that we can make sure



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we are communicating as clearly as possible to avoid possible misunderstandings and miscommunications," Blinken said Friday.

Xi offered a hint of a possible willingness to reduce tensions, saying in a meeting with Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates on Friday that the United States and China can cooperate to "benefit our two countries."

"I believe that the foundation of Sino-U.S. relations lies in the people," Xi said to Gates. "Under the current world situation, we can carry out various activities that benefit our two countries, the people of our countries, and the entire human race."

Biden told White House reporters Saturday he was "hoping that over the next several months, I'll be meeting with Xi again and talking about legitimate differences we have, but also how ... to get along."

Chances for such a meeting could come at a Group of 20 leaders' gathering in September in New Delhi and at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in November in San Francisco that the United States is hosting.

Since the cancellation of Blinken's trip in February, there have been some high-level engagements. CIA chief William Burns traveled to China in May, while China's commerce minister traveled to the U.S. And Biden's national security adviser Jake Sullivan met with Wang in Vienna in May.

But those have been punctuated by bursts of angry rhetoric from both sides over the Taiwan Strait, their broader intentions in the Indo-Pacific, China's refusal to condemn Russia for its war against Ukraine, and U.S. allegations from Washington that Beijing is attempting to boost its worldwide surveillance capabilities, including in Cuba.

And, earlier this month, China's defense minister rebuffed a request from U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin for a meeting on the sidelines of a security symposium in Singapore, a sign of continuing discontent.

Austin said Friday he was confident that he and his Chinese counterpart would meet "at some point in time, but we're not there yet."

Underscoring the difficulties, China rejected a report by a U.S. security firm, that blamed Chinese-linked hackers for attacks on hundreds of public agencies, schools and other targets around the world, as "far-fetched and unprofessional"

A Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson repeated accusations that Washington carries out hacking attacks and complained the cybersecurity industry rarely reports on them.

That followed a similar retort earlier in the week when China said Qin had in a phone call with Blinken urged the United States to respect "China's core concerns" such as the issue of Taiwan's self-rule, "stop interfering in China's internal affairs, and stop harming China's sovereignty, security and development interests in the name of competition."

Meanwhile, the national security advisers of the United States, Japan and the Philippines held their first joint talks Friday and agreed to strengthen their defense cooperation, in part to counter China's growing influence and ambitions.

This coincides with the Biden administration inking an agreement with Australia and Britain to provide the first with nuclear-powered submarines, with China moving rapidly to expand its diplomatic presence, especially in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific island nations, where it has opened or has plans to open at least five new embassies over the next year.

The agreement is part of an 18-month-old nuclear partnership given the acronym AUKUS — for Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Speaking ahead of Blinken's arrival, two U.S. officials downplayed hopes for major progress and stressed that the trip was intended to restore a sense of calm and normalcy to high-level contacts.

"We're coming to Beijing with a realistic, confident approach and a sincere desire to manage our competition in the most responsible way possible," said Daniel Kritenbrink, the top U.S. diplomat for East Asia and the Pacific.

Kurt Campbell, the top Asia expert at the National Security Council, said "intense competition requires intense diplomacy if we're going to manage tensions. That is the only way to clear up misperceptions, to signal, to communicate, and to work together where and when our interests align."

## Belarus crackdown targets not just political activists but also their lawyers

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — For nearly three years, a harsh crackdown on dissent in Belarus by its authoritarian leader Alexander Lukashenko has filled the country's penal colonies with thousands of political prisoners, with new arrests reported daily.

At the same time, a government campaign has gotten rid of many independent lawyers, making it increasingly difficult for the detainees to mount any kind of legal defense.

Siarhej Zikratski is among those lawyers forced to leave Belarus under the threat of arrest. More than 500 of his colleagues have been stripped of their law licenses and quit the profession since 2020, and many of them have moved abroad after facing reprisals at home. Some even ended up in prison.

Zikratski says Belarus has effectively run out of independent lawyers to represent the many political prisoners in the country of 9.5 million people, a situation he calls "catastrophic."

Lawyers are reluctant to take on "politically motivated cases, and even those who already have signed contracts with clients are no longer willing to provide them with legal services," Zikratski told The Associated Press by phone from a Western country. "Chances of finding a lawyer for a political prisoner in Belarus are now close to zero."

The demand for lawyers is outstripping the supply, with repressions escalating and the number of political prisoners growing, he said, "but there is no one to defend them."

The sweeping crackdown began after Lukashenko, who has run Belarus with an iron fist for 29 years, won reelection in August 2020 in a presidential election that was widely seen at home and in the West as fraudulent.

The country was swept by massive protests, some of which drew more than 100,000 people. Authorities responded with a brutal crackdown that saw over 35,000 people arrested, thousands beaten by police while in custody, and dozens of nongovernmental organizations and independent media shut down.

The number of lawyers in Belarus has dropped from about 2,200 in 2020 to about 1,650 this year, the Justice Ministry said.

Zikratski said authorities have created a system in which only lawyers who are loyal to the government are allowed to represent political prisoners.

"It profanes the very idea of legal defense, and political prisoners aren't only deprived of the right for legal assistance but can't even report on torturous conditions behind bars," he said.

In the Belarusian legal system, where convictions are a near certainty once charges are filed against a defendant, independent lawyers still serve an important function. They ensure, for example, that a case is not rushed to a conclusion and that legal procedures are followed, and they serve as important conduits between detainees and their families.

In a recent speech, Lukashenko has bluntly declared that defense lawyers "must be under control."

"A defense lawyer is a public servant and his actions must be based on legal norms and not some imaginary norms like freedom of speech and other freedoms," he said. "We have had enough of those freedoms."

Eight prominent lawyers who defended political prisoners are serving long sentences on what are seen as trumped-up charges, including attorney Maksim Znak, who represented a presidential hopeful and got 10 years on charges of involvement in an extremist group, conspiracy to seize power and calls for actions against national security. Aliaksandr Danilevich, who spoke against Russia's war in Ukraine and defended Belarusian athletes who supported protests, got the same sentence on charges of hurting national security and aiding extremist activities.

Human rights activist Ales Bialiatski, who won the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize, is serving 10 years after being convicted of financing actions that violated the public order and smuggling — charges he rejects. His defense lawyer, Vital Brahinet, got an eight-year sentence for inciting actions against national security, and another of his lawyers was stripped of his law license.

Bialiatski's wife, Natalia Pinchuk, now won't even identify his last remaining lawyer for fear of losing him.

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She said she's "desperate" because she hasn't heard from her husband since May, when he was moved to a notoriously brutal maximum-security prison and has been denied access to a lawyer.

Pinchuk said she had received information via other prisoners that authorities have denied Bialiatski even a pen and paper to request access to a lawyer.

"They are keeping him in tight information blackout and creating unbearable conditions to demonstrate that even a Nobel Prize laureate could be deprived of everything, including an opportunity to meet with a lawyer," she told AP. "The authorities have learned how to use lawyers as an instrument of manipulation and pressure."

Recent letters from the 60-year-old Bialiatski said his health — particularly his eyesight — has deteriorated, Pinchuk said, adding it's impossible to assess his condition without a lawyer.

"The authorities have realized that lawyers tell journalists and international organizations about violations and torturous conditions in Belarusian prisons for political prisoners," she said. "Lawyers know better than anyone else that confinement in Belarusian prisons seriously undermines inmates' health."

There's been no word for over 100 days about opposition leader Nikolai Statkevich, who is serving a 14-year prison term, and Maria Kolesnikova, who got an 11-year term. Likewise, the condition of Viktor Babaryka, an aspiring presidential candidate serving 14 years, hasn't been known for over a month, and his supporters suspect he was beaten and put in a prison hospital.

Pinchuk believes the United Nations should intervene to help "rupture the information blackout around Belarusian political prisoners."

"It would be great if the U.N. properly used all the instruments it has," she said. "Regrettably, we have recently seen that despite the terror in Belarus, the U.N. often has turned a blind eye to the situation."

Authorities have banned the activities of private law firms, and all defense lawyers were made part of state associations that are tightly overseen by the Justice Ministry. It appoints the heads of such associations.

By law, authorities appoint a state defense lawyer for a defendant who can't find his own representation. State lawyers usually side with investigators instead of their clients.

Volha Vysotskaya, who was charged with inciting tensions, said she tried to contact a state lawyer for her trial so she could see documents pertaining to her case, "but he not only has refused to talk to me but switched off his phone and blocked me on all messaging apps."

The 24-year-old fled the country before her trial began, and she was convicted in absentia and sentenced to 12 years.

"Defense lawyers in Belarus have become an instrument of government repression instead of defense, and it's not even clear what is worse — a lack of a defense during a trial or a formal presence of a lawyer legitimizing the verdict," Vysotskaya said.

Opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who challenged Lukashenko in the 2020 election and was pressured to flee Belarus after the vote, was put on trial in absentia and convicted of extremism, high treason and threatening state security. She was sentenced to 15 years.

She said she was unable to read materials of her case and talk to a state lawyer appointed to represent her.

She ran for president after her husband, Siarhei Tsikhanouski, a popular blogger and activist, was arrested days after declaring his candidacy. He was convicted of organizing mass unrest, inciting hatred and disobeying police, and sentenced to 19 1/2 years.

Tsikhanouskaya told AP that her husband has been held "in torturous conditions" without access to a lawyer, and that she hasn't heard from him for over three months.

Citing the traditional depictions of the Greek goddess of justice as blindfolded, the opposition leader said Lukashenko has added "a gag in her mouth and earplugs."

Last month, hundreds of lawyers who fled the country established the Belarusian Association of Human Rights Lawyers, and urged the U.N. to act.

"Belarus has approved legislation that violates the very principles and essence of legal defense and applied the practice of total control over lawyers," the association said. "The repressions have destroyed

procedural and professional guarantees for lawyers' activities, resulting in the effective destruction of legal defense in the country."

Zikratski said his former homeland has reached a "terrible moment."

"Belarus is quickly turning into a concentration camp in the middle of Europe," he said. "Repressions in Belarus are escalating and the country has run out of lawyers, the consequences of which aren't difficult to predict."

## **After escaping the Taliban, hundreds of Afghans languish in Albania in a prolonged US visa process**

By LLAZAR SEMINI Associated Press

SHENGJIN, Albania (AP) — Almost two years since he fled Afghanistan to escape the Taliban takeover, Firooz Mashoof is still haunted by the memory of his last day in Kabul — the bus that took him to the airport, getting on a packed plane and taking off as gunfire echoed across the city.

"The last thing I saw were the mountains around Kabul and the dreary sunset as the Qatar Airways took off," he said.

Today, thousands of miles from his homeland, the 35-year-old photojournalist and former employee of the Afghan soccer federation, is languishing in warm and sunny Albania. With each passing day, his anxiety grows over the delay in the promised U.S. visa, casting a shadow on his dreams of a new beginning in America.

For hundreds of others like him, it's an emotional roller coaster. Some try to find work and live with a semblance of normalcy but the concern and fear for families back home permeates their days — even in welcoming Albania.

They are hopeful, despite the prolonged bureaucracy, and look to a new life.

In Shengjin, a town on the Adriatic coast some 70 kilometers (45 miles) northwest of the Albanian capital of Tirana where hundreds of Afghans were given temporary shelter, Mashoof often goes for long walks by the sea. He has found work at a mall, an hour's bus ride away.

The walks stave off panic attacks that he has been forgotten — or the "crazy fear" for his family back in western Herat province.

"I was saved, ... and now I am to start my new life in America," he said, "But when?"

The Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021 as U.S. and NATO troops were in the final weeks of their withdrawal from the country after two decades of war and as the U.S.-backed Afghan government and military crumbled.

Despite initial promises of a more moderate rule, they soon started to enforce restrictions on women and girls, barring them from public spaces and most jobs, and banning education for girls beyond the sixth grade.

The measures harked back to the previous Taliban rule of Afghanistan in the late 1990s, when they also imposed their strict interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia. The harsh edicts prompted an international outcry against the already ostracized Taliban, whose administration has not been officially recognized by the United Nations or the international community.

As the Taliban pursued an ever more hard-line path, a severe economic downturn followed, despite efforts by aid agencies to help large swaths of the impoverished nation.

In the days of the chaotic pullout, Washington had decided to take in all those who had worked for the U.S. government and American troops or for U.S.-based media organizations and nongovernmental groups in Afghanistan. But over time, the complicated visa process for Afghans who demonstrate they are at risk of persecution became protracted.

More than 3,200 Afghans have stayed in Albania's tourist resorts along the Adriatic Sea. A NATO member, Albania first agreed to house fleeing Afghans for one year before they move for final settlement in the United States, then pledged to keep them for longer if their visas were delayed.

There are about 76,000 Afghans already in the U.S., where congressional efforts meant to permanently

resolve their immigration status have also stalled.

A top Albanian government official told The Associated Press that the authorities in Tirana would not be against keeping Afghans more long-term in the Balkan country, if they can find jobs. The official did not elaborate and spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the subject.

Last year, a small group of Afghans in Shengjin staged a protest, calling on Washington to speed up the process of their transfer. Some women and children held posters reading, "We are forgotten."

"I don't have the heart to protest because of the delay," Mashoof said. "There is nothing I can do."

Fazil Mohammad Shahab, a senior soccer federation official in Afghanistan, came to Albania in November 2021. Unlike many of the thousands of tourists who visit Shengjin and other Albanian resorts, he doesn't see the pristine coastline as an unspoiled paradise.

"For me, it's a place of waiting," he said.

On a sunny day earlier this month in Shengjin, Afghan women holding scarves clustered in small groups as their children played on the grass. Afghan couples walked along the beach or sat at a nearby café.

Farishta Oustovar, a television news reporter and a former player on Afghanistan's national volleyball team, arrived in Albania in September 2021. Within two months she found work — first at a hotel, then at a shoe factory and finally at a childcare center.

"I need to feel that I can have a normal life," said the 23-year-old, despite worries for her family in Herat.

A popular TV presenter and comedian, 30-year-old Qasim Taban resumed producing funny YouTube clips from Shengjin. He says he finds strength in humor and is hopeful friends and fans back home can see the videos.

"We, here in Albania, and also Afghans back in Afghanistan need to laugh," he said.

Follow L Lazar Semini at <https://twitter.com/lsemini>

## **Philippine ferry catches fire at sea, all 120 people aboard rescued**

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — All 120 passengers and crew members aboard a Philippine ferry that caught fire at sea on Sunday were rescued safely and the fire was extinguished, the coast guard said.

The M/V Esperanza Star caught fire at dawn while traveling from Siquijor province to Bohol province in the central Philippines with 65 passengers and 55 crewmembers, the coast guard said. It added that it deployed two vessels for rescue and to help put out the flames, which raged for more than five hours.

Photos and video released by the coast guard show flames and black smoke billowing from two decks at one end of the ferry. Coast guard personnel onboard another vessel used a water cannon to put out the fire while a fishing boat and one other vessel can be seen nearby.

"All those who were onboard the ferry are safe," Joy Gumatay, coast guard spokeswoman, said in a statement but gave no further details.

She added that the survivors were brought to the port city of Tagbilaran in Bohol province and an investigation was underway.

Sea accidents are common in the Philippine archipelago because of frequent storms, poorly maintained vessels, overcrowding and spotty enforcement of safety regulations, especially in remote provinces.

In March, a fire broke out — and raged overnight — on a ferry carrying about 250 people and killed at least 31 passengers and crew members off the southern island province of Basilan, the coast guard said.

In December 1987, the ferry Dona Paz sank after colliding with a fuel tanker, killing more than 4,300 people in the world's worst peacetime maritime disaster.

## Vegas Golden Knights and fans celebrate 1st NHL championship with parade and rally

By KEN RITTER Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Thousands of Vegas Golden Knights fans lined the Las Vegas Strip on Saturday for a Stanley Cup victory parade and a rally in front of the team's home arena to mark the city's first NHL championship.

For the team that played its first game as an expansion franchise in October 2017 and for tourists in hotel rooms with windows overlooking the parade route in 2023, the event bore echoes of the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history five years ago. Guests in high-rises with views of the strip were awakened by security guards asking to check around windows for guns or other weapons.

The motorcade route proceeded from an area near Flamingo Road about 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) to Tropicana Avenue before a fan rally at Toshiba Plaza and the Park District in front of T-Mobile Arena.

Las Vegas police said they prepared for upwards of 100,000 people to cram street-level viewing areas along Las Vegas Boulevard for the celebration that planners compared with annual New Year's Eve fireworks shows that in past years drew estimates of 400,000 people.

At one point people separated barricades and climbed fences but the crowd otherwise remained orderly.

Above the arena stage where the hockey players gathered with the trophy, a banner displayed the names of victims of the October 2017 mass shooting in Las Vegas that killed 58 people and injured more than 850.

A lone gunman rained bullets from 32nd floor windows of the Mandalay Bay hotel into a crowd of 20,000 people at an outdoor country music festival across the street. Fifty-eight people died that night and two died later of their injuries. Authorities said more than 850 people were injured. The gunman killed himself before police reached him. His motive for the attack was never firmly established.

People in the crowd Saturday recalled the shooting and the role the Golden Knights played in helping to rebuild the spirit of the community.

Players who dubbed themselves the Golden Misfits after being drafted from other NHL teams embraced survivors, first responders and volunteers and the team has over the years become a key part of "Vegas Strong" events aimed at healing community trauma.

That first year, team owner Bill Foley famously predicted the Golden Knights would make the playoffs in three years and win the Stanley Cup in six years. The franchise surprised many by making the playoffs the first year and advancing to the championship before losing to the Washington Capitals in five games.

This year, the Golden Knights cruised through the playoffs, never facing an elimination game, and routed the Florida Panthers 9-3 in Game 5 on Tuesday. Team captain Mark Stone scored a three-goal "hat trick." Jonathan Marchessault received the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP.

Marchessault is one of the six original members of the Golden Knights expansion team. He and the others — Reilly Smith, William Karlsson, Shea Theodore, Brayden McNabb and William Carrier — were among the first to hold the Stanley Cup during post-game celebrations.

All week, players have been spotted celebrating at some of the same glittery resorts the procession passed. The casinos have familiar names: Caesars Palace, Flamingo, Bellagio, Horseshoe, Paris Las Vegas, Cosmopolitan, Planet Hollywood, New York-New York, Aria, MGM Grand.

The parade route, arena and plaza also hosted a championship victory celebration last September, after the Las Vegas Aces defeated the Connecticut Sun to win the WNBA Championship. The women's basketball team also plays at T-Mobile Arena.

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Associated Press sports writer Mark Anderson contributed to this report.

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This story has been updated to correct that road closures start at 4:30 p.m., not 3 p.m.

## Cruising to Nome: The first U.S. deep water port for the Arctic to host cruise ships, military

By MARK THIESSEN Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The cruise ship with about 1,000 passengers anchored off Nome, too big to squeeze into into the tundra city's tiny port. Its well-heeled tourists had to shimmy into small boats for another ride to shore.

It was 2016, and at the time, the cruise ship Serenity was the largest vessel ever to sail through the Northwest Passage.

But as the Arctic sea ice relents under the pressures of global warming and opens shipping lanes across the top of the world, more tourists are venturing to Nome — a northwest Alaska destination known better for the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and its 1898 gold rush than luxury travel.

The problem remains: There's no place to park the big boats. While smaller cruise ships are able to dock, officials say that of the dozen arriving this year, half will anchor offshore.

That's expected to change as a \$600 million-plus expansion makes Nome, population 3,500, the nation's first deep-water Arctic port. The expansion, expected to be operational by the end of the decade, will accommodate not just larger cruise ships of up to 4,000 passengers, but cargo ships to deliver additional goods for the 60 Alaska Native villages in the region, and military vessels to counter the presence of Russian and Chinese ships in the Arctic.

It's a prospect that excites business owners and officials in Nome, but concerns others who worry about the impact of additional tourists and vessel traffic on the environment and animals Alaska Natives depend on for subsistence.

The expansion will "support our local economy and the local artists here, the Indigenous artists having access to the visitors and teaching and sharing our culture and our language and how we how we make our beautiful art," said Alice Bioff, an Inupiaq resident of Nome.

Bioff was a tour guide who greeted the Serenity's passengers when they arrived in 2016. One of the guests admired her cloth kuspuk, a traditional Alaska Native garment similar to a smock, and wanted to know if it was water resistant.

It wasn't, but the interaction inspired Bioff to create her own line of waterproof jackets styled like kuspuks. She now sells to tourists and locals alike from her own Naataq Gear gift store, a retail spot in the post office building, where about 20 Alaska Native artists offer ivory carvings, beadwork or paintings through consignment.

Studies show that cruise ship passengers typically spend about \$100 per day in Nome, city manager Glenn Steckman said.

With the expansion, he's hoping guests on larger cruise ships will extend their stays to experience more of Nome and the tundra, to view wild musk ox, or to sip a drink at the 123-year-old Board of Trade Saloon.

Climate change is making this all possible.

Nome, founded after gold was discovered in 1898, has seen six of its 10 warmest winters on record just in this century. The Bering Strait shipping lanes have gotten only busier since 2009, going from 262 transits that year to 509 in 2022.

"We're going to be the first deep-draft Arctic port but probably not going to be the last," Nome Mayor John Handeland said.

The Bering Sea ice on average reaches Nome in late November or December, about two or three weeks later than it did 50 years ago, said Rick Thoman, a climate specialist at the International Arctic Research Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

In 2019, mushers in the Iditarod, who normally drive their dog teams on the Bering Sea ice to the finish line in Nome, were forced onto the beach because of open water. The ice season will only get shorter, Thoman said.

The existing port causeway was completed in the mid-1980s. The expansion will be completed in three

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phases and effectively double its size. The first part of the project is funded by \$250 million in federal infrastructure money with another \$175 million from the Alaska Legislature. Field work is expected to begin next year.

Currently three ships can dock at once; the expanded dock will accommodate seven to 10.

Workers will dredge a new basin 40 feet (12.2 meters) deep, allowing large cruise ships, cargo vessels, and every U.S. military ship except aircraft carriers to dock, Port Director Joy Baker said.

U.S. Rep. Dan Sullivan, an Alaska Republican, said the expanded port will become the centerpiece of U.S. strategic infrastructure in the Arctic. The military is building up resources in Alaska, placing fighter jets at bases in Anchorage and Fairbanks, establishing a new Army airborne division in Alaska, training soldiers for future cold-weather conflicts and has missile defense capabilities.

"The way you have a presence in the Arctic is to be able to have military assets and the infrastructure that supports those assets," Sullivan said.

The northern seas near Alaska are getting more crowded. A U.S. Coast Guard patrol board encountered seven Chinese and Russian naval vessels cooperating in an exercise last year about 86 miles (138 kilometers) north of Alaska's Kiska Island.

Coast guard vessels in 2021 also encountered Chinese ships 50 miles (80 km) off Alaska's Aleutian Islands.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg last year warned that Russia and China have pledged to cooperate in the Arctic, "a deepening strategic partnership that challenges our values and interests."

Still, the prospect of Nome welcoming more tourists and a greater military presence bothers some residents. Austin Ahmasuk, an Inupiaq native, said the port's original construction displaced an area traditionally used for subsistence hunting or fishing, and the expansion won't help.

"The Port of Nome is development purely for the sake of development," Ahmasuk said.

## Fowler, Clark share the US Open lead with major champs chasing them

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Rickie Fowler only had 3 1/2 feet left for par on what should have been his last shot Saturday in a U.S. Open round filled with far bigger moments. At stake was his first 54-hole lead in a major. Shockingly, he missed and slipped into a tie with Wyndham Clark.

Fowler wasn't the least bit bothered.

He knows what to expect by looking ahead at a final round on a Los Angeles Country Club course getting tougher by the minute, and by looking behind at some of the players chasing them — Rory McIlroy, Scottie Scheffler, Dustin Johnson.

"It would be nice for that one to go in," Fowler said. "Really doesn't matter — having the lead, being one back, two back — you're going to have to play good golf tomorrow. Bummer to have that one slip away, but tomorrow is a whole new day.

"That's kind of when the tournament really starts."

Fowler brought the buzz to the U.S. Open with a 70-foot birdie putt only to lose the lead with a three-putt bogey on the 18th hole, which turned into a two-shot lead and a tie for the lead when Clark boldly took on a tight pin he could barely see for a closing birdie.

Clark's birdie put him — and not McIlroy — in the final group. And he knew it.

"I wanted to be in the final group. Every shot matters out here," Clark said.

For all the drama over the final hour — big putts, Scheffler's eagle-birdie finish, Xander Schauffele going from a crash to a recovery to another crash — McIlroy played a steady hand with one birdie and one bogey over his final 14 holes.

He had a 69 that left him one shot behind, poised to end nine long years without a major.

"It's nice to be in the hunt," McIlroy said.

Fowler had to settle for an even-par 70. Clark escaped big trouble from the barranca right of the 17th green with a 6-foot bogey putt to stay close, and then boldly took on a tight left pin at the 18th for a



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6-foot birdie and a 69.

They were at 10-under 200.

The final hour brought a surprise at every turn. A long day of blazing sunshine baking the North course at Los Angeles Country Club gave way to the infamous marine layer that brought out some sweatshirts late in the day.

Scheffler, the No. 1 player in the world, never looked to be in the mix until he closed out his round of 68 by holing a 7-iron from 196 yards on the 17th hole and making a 20-foot birdie putt that put him in the penultimate group with McIlroy.

For so many others, it didn't take much to lose ground.

Schauffele began his round by taking three shots to get out of a fairway bunker, making three bogeys in five holes, only to get it all back before losing ground at the end with a series of poor drives. He was at 73, five shots back.

Harris English kept pace with the leaders until he missed short putts, big drives and ended his day with a chip shot from the deep collar around the 18th green that didn't move the ball. His fourth bogey of the back nine gave him a 71, leaving him four shots behind.

The final hour saved what had been a stale atmosphere among the glitz of LA, with just about everyone playing a part. The five players within five shots of the lead included three major champions who have been No. 1 in the world — McIlroy, Scheffler and Johnson (71).

This is the third time Fowler has been in the final group at a major. This is only the third time Clark has played in the final round of a major. He showed plenty of mettle, following consecutive bogeys with a birdie on the 13th — right after Fowler wowed the gallery with his 70-footer — and smartly took a penalty drop on the 17th before a closing bogey.

There was a lot going on at the end.

"I felt like I handled all of it really well," Clark said. "I felt like I handled all the adversity, and I feel like my best round is still out there."

McIlroy had a chance to end his major drought last summer at St. Andrews when he shared the lead going into the final round at St. Andrews, only for Cameron Smith to blow past him. He has been in position twice in the last two weeks, at the Memorial and Canadian Open, only to turn in a dud of a final round.

The stakes are enormous this time, on this stage. And he has the experience, though he wasn't sure to make of that.

"It's been such a long time since I've done it," said McIlroy, whose last major was at the PGA Championship in 2014. "I'm going out there to try to execute a game plan, and I feel like over the last three days I've executed that game plan really, really well. And I just need to do that for one more day."

Scheffler is suddenly in the mix, all because of one remarkable shot and one big putt. He has been the model of consistency this year, even in the majors — a tie for 10th at the Masters, a runner-up finish in the PGA Championship.

"I'm standing there on 17 tee and just made another bogey, and I think I was probably 4 under for the tournament and I'm looking up at the board and I'm seven shots back and I'm thinking maybe I can steal one shot coming in," Scheffler said.

He stole three and now is well within range.

The marine layer blocking the sun had kept LACC's greens receptive and scoring ridiculous, at least by U.S. Open standards. The sunshine made it a stronger test, and perhaps offered a preview of what's to come.

The scores don't indicate this is the toughest test in golf. It's likely to feel like way for the players chasing the silver trophy — Fowler and Clark going for their first, McIlroy hopeful of a win that will take attention away from what has been keeping him from another.

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indefinitely with pay and told Huggins to rehabilitate himself.

Huggins was allowed to return to work two months later, saying that "I made a terrible mistake, and what bothers me most is I hurt other people. All I can do is work like crazy to be a better person, a better coach, be better at everything I do and make those people proud of me."

By 2005, Huggins' Cincinnati career was over; he was fired amid a power struggle with the school's president as well as the aftermath of the 2004 arrest.

After spending one season at Kansas State, Huggins took his dream job at West Virginia, his alma mater, in 2007.

Last month, Huggins agreed to a three-game suspension, a \$1 million salary reduction and sensitivity training for using the slur during an interview with Cincinnati radio station WLW. Huggins was asked about the transfer portal and whether he had a chance of landing a player at West Virginia from Xavier, a Jesuit school.

"Catholics don't do that," Huggins said. "I tell you what, any school that can throw rubber penises on the floor and then say they didn't do it, by God they can get away with anything.

"It was the Crosstown Shootout. What it was, was all those (expletive), those Catholic (expletive), I think."

In a joint statement later that week, Gee and Baker said the university "made it explicitly clear to Coach Huggins that any incidents of similar derogatory and offensive language will result in immediate termination."

Huggins' salary of \$4.15 million had been reduced by \$1 million after the slur. That reduction was to be used to directly support WVU's LGBTQ+ Center, as well as a mental health center at the university and other groups that support marginalized communities. At the time, he was suspended for the first three games of the 2023-24 season. In addition, his contract was amended from a multiyear agreement to a year-by-year agreement that began on May 10.

Huggins entered the Basketball Hall of Fame last September. In 41 seasons, his teams have gone to 25 NCAA Tournaments, finished ranked in the top 10 of The Associated Press poll seven times and finished under .500 five times. The Mountaineers have 11 NCAA Tournament appearances under Huggins.

Huggins had assembled a solid group from the transfer portal for next season, including Syracuse center Jesse Edwards, Arizona guard Kerr Kriisa, Manhattan guards Jose Perez and Omar Silverio, and Montana State guard RaeQuan Battle.

"Man.. I knew the dude 3 months but felt like forever," Kriisa said Saturday night on Twitter. "So thankful for really believing in me and taking me as part of your family forever. Love u coach."

AP college basketball: <https://apnews.com/hub/college-basketball> and <https://apnews.com/hub/ap-top-25-college-basketball-poll> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25)

## Heat wave has US South sweltering, from tornado-ravaged West Texas town to Florida beaches

By KEN RITTER Associated Press

Communities from Houston to New Orleans opened cooling centers to bring relief as steamy hot temperatures settled across a broad swath of the U.S. South on Saturday, and beachgoers fled a waterspout that swept ashore on a Florida beach.

Gov. Greg Abbott, meanwhile, visited Perryton in the Texas Panhandle, where officials said more than 1,000 customers were left without electricity after a tornado killed three people late Thursday. The Perryton Ochiltree Chamber of Commerce said it would open a cooling center in the town of 8,000 people, about 115 miles (185 kilometers) northeast of Amarillo, to counteract the effects of the high temperatures that followed the storm.

"At times of events like these, Texans come together," Abbott told reporters as he signed a disaster declaration that he said would "trigger all the resources the state can bring to bear ... to accelerate the ability to rebuild."

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The Republican governor said he was shocked to see how much of the town had been destroyed and praised what he called "non-stop heroic efforts by healthcare providers" who he said treated 160 injured people at the local hospital that has just 25 beds.

W. Nim Kidd, chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, warned that more severe weather was forecast for the area late Saturday, bringing rain, high winds and possibly more tornadoes.

The National Weather Service issued excessive heat warnings through Saturday night along the Gulf Coast from Brownsville, Texas, to Houston. It said heat indexes ranging from near 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46 Celsius) in Houston to near 120 F (49 C) at Brownsville and Corpus Christi in Texas. Cooling shelters were set up in cities along the coast and farther inland for residents left without electricity.

"What's really going is the humidity," said Allison Prater, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Fort Worth, Texas. "That's making the heat index, or the 'feels like' temperature really skyrocket."

Prater said the air temperature Saturday in the Dallas area could reach 94 F (34 C), but high humidity would make it feel like 105 F (40.5 C).

"The reason we're having such heat is there is a lot of moisture being pulled up from the Gulf of Mexico," Prater said. "That's working with the warmer temperatures to induce ... that 'feels like' temperature."

Two women and an 11-year-old boy died when the tornado slammed into Perryton. On Saturday, authorities upgraded the intensity of the twister to EF-3, saying it packed winds of up to 140 mph (225 kph).

Ochiltree County Sheriff Terry Bouchard told KVII-TV in Amarillo that missing people had been located.

"It dropped down right on top of Perryton," Bouchard said. "We've lost a lot of homes, businesses, rental properties. There's just a lot of damage to our community and it's going to take some time to get this cleaned up."

Storm-related power outages were also reported in East Texas late Friday, ahead of a weekend promising sweltering days of high temperatures and high humidity.

In Louisiana, the National Weather Service projected daytime temperatures through Monday at about 94 F (34 C) with high humidity and heat index values as high as 112 F (44 C).

The City of New Orleans opened cooling centers and hydration stations and advised residents to take extra precautions if they were spending time outside by wearing lightweight and loose-fitting clothing, taking frequent rest breaks in shaded or air-conditioned environments, and drinking lots of water.

Entergy New Orleans and the Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans suspended electricity shut-offs for delinquent accounts through Tuesday.

In Florida, city officials in Clearwater said in an email that a waterspout came ashore Friday afternoon "sending beach-related items flying into the air" and injuring two people from Kansas.

Authorities said the 70-year-old woman and 63-year-old man were treated for minor injuries at a local hospital. Their identities were not made public.

Waterspouts develop over water, usually during severe thunderstorms or tornadoes and dissipate rapidly when they make landfall, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Some can cause significant damage and injuries.

The National Weather Service in Miami issued a heat advisory through 7 p.m. Saturday for most of the South Florida area, where the combination of heat and humidity was forecast to reach a "feels like" temperature of 105 F (40.5 C).

"Hot temperatures and high humidity may cause heat illnesses to occur," the service reported. The air temperature in Miami and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, was expected to reach about 92 degrees (33 Celsius) on Saturday.

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Associated Press reporters Ken Miller in Oklahoma City; Chevel Johnson in New Orleans; Curt Anderson in St. Petersburg, Florida; and Julie Walker in New York contributed to this report. Ritter reported from Las Vegas.

**Microsoft says early June disruptions to Outlook, cloud platform,**

## were cyberattacks

By FRANK BAJAK AP Technology Writer

BOSTON (AP) — In early June, sporadic but serious service disruptions plagued Microsoft's flagship office suite — including the Outlook email and OneDrive file-sharing apps — and cloud computing platform. A shadowy hacktivist group claimed responsibility, saying it flooded the sites with junk traffic in distributed denial-of-service attacks.

Initially reticent to name the cause, Microsoft has now disclosed that DDoS attacks by the murky upstart were indeed to blame.

But the software giant has offered few details — and did not immediately comment on how many customers were affected and whether the impact was global. A spokeswoman confirmed that the group that calls itself Anonymous Sudan was behind the attacks. It claimed responsibility on its Telegram social media channel at the time. Some security researchers believe the group to be Russian.

Microsoft's explanation in a blog post Friday evening followed a request by The Associated Press two days earlier. Slim on details, the post said the attacks "temporarily impacted availability" of some services. It said the attackers were focused on "disruption and publicity" and likely used rented cloud infrastructure and virtual private networks to bombard Microsoft servers from so-called botnets of zombie computers around the globe.

Microsoft said there was no evidence any customer data was accessed or compromised.

While DDoS attacks are mainly a nuisance — making websites unreachable without penetrating them — security experts say they can disrupt the work of millions if they successfully interrupt the services of a software service giant like Microsoft on which so much global commerce depends.

It's not clear if that's what happened here.

"We really have no way to measure the impact if Microsoft doesn't provide that info," said Jake Williams, a prominent cybersecurity researcher and a former National Security Agency offensive hacker. Williams said he was not aware of Outlook previously being attacked at this scale.

"We know some resources were inaccessible for some, but not others. This often happens with DDoS of globally distributed systems," Williams added. He said Microsoft's apparent unwillingness to provide an objective measure of customer impact "probably speaks to the magnitude."

Microsoft dubbed the attackers Storm-1359, using a designator it assigns to groups whose affiliation it has not yet established. Cybersecurity sleuthing tends to take time — and even then can be a challenge if the adversary is skilled.

Pro-Russian hacking groups including Killnet — which the cybersecurity firm Mandiant says is Kremlin-affiliated — have been bombarding government and other websites of Ukraine's allies with DDoS attacks. In October, some U.S. airport sites were hit. Analyst Alexander Leslie of the cybersecurity firm Recorded Future said it's unlikely Anonymous Sudan is located as it claims in Sudan, an African country. The group works closely with Killnet and other pro-Kremlin groups to spread pro-Russian propaganda and disinformation, he said.

Edward Amoroso, NYU professor and CEO of TAG Cyber, said the Microsoft incident highlights how DDoS attacks remain "a significant risk that we all just agree to avoid talking about. It's not controversial to call this an unsolved problem."

He said Microsoft's difficulties fending off this particular attack suggest "a single point of failure." The best defense against these attacks is to distribute a service massively, on a content distribution network for example.

Indeed, the techniques the attackers used are not old, said U.K. security researcher Kevin Beaumont. "One dates back to 2009," he said.

Serious impacts from the Microsoft 365 office suite interruptions were reported on Monday June 5, peaking at 18,000 outage and problem reports on the tracker DOWNDetector shortly after 11 a.m. Eastern time.

On Twitter that day, Microsoft said Outlook, Microsoft Teams, SharePoint Online and OneDrive for Business were affected.

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Attacks continued through the week, with Microsoft confirming on June 9 that its Azure cloud computing platform had been affected.

On June 8, the computer security news site BleepingComputer.com reported that cloud-based OneDrive file-hosting was down globally for a time.

Microsoft said at the time that desktop OneDrive clients were not affected, BleepingComputer reported.

## DeSantis quiet on Trump indictment as he faces conservatives in Trump country

By STEVE PEOPLES AP National Political Writer

GARDNERVILLE, Nevada (AP) — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on Saturday condemned Walt Disney World and the U.S. Justice Department — not his chief Republican rival, Donald Trump — as he courted Nevada Republicans deep in the heart of Trump country.

The U.S. “is off the rails,” the Republican governor said. “Insanity is reigning supreme.”

Speaking to Nevada Republicans for the first time as a presidential candidate, DeSantis made no direct mention of the federal indictment of Trump, who is facing dozens of felony counts for mishandling classified documents.

“We’re going to end this weaponization of government once and for all,” said DeSantis, donning an untucked short-sleeve shirt from a podium adorned with bales of hay and bull horns.

The comments come as the GOP’s crowded 2024 presidential class grapples with how to respond to Trump’s recent indictment. While some Republicans have raised serious concerns about the charges, DeSantis has largely ignored the situation, touching on it only generally by attacking the Justice Department.

Looking up at Trump in many polls, it’s unclear if DeSantis can catch Trump by avoiding one of the dominant issues in the race.

The debate was playing out as DeSantis courted more than 2,000 conservatives, many Trump loyalists among them, who gathered for an annual Basque Fry under a blazing sun at a western Nevada ranch.

DeSantis’ team believes he is especially well-positioned to compete with Trump in Nevada, one of the first four states to host a presidential primary contest early next year.

Beyond issues like his “war on woke,” DeSantis also hopes to benefit from a close personal connection with a top Republican leader. Adam Laxalt, a former state attorney general and host of Saturday’s gathering, was a roommate of DeSantis during naval officer training and has long remained a friend. Despite serving as Trump’s Nevada chairman during the 2020 election, Laxalt already lined up behind the Florida governor by becoming the chairman of DeSantis’ national super PAC.

“I believe Gov. DeSantis is the only person in America who can win the primary and the general and be a conservative warrior for all of us,” Laxalt said as he introduced DeSantis.

Despite his optimism, it was unclear on Saturday how many Republican voters in this pivotal western state were convinced to abandon Trump. There was only a smattering of polite applause as the early speakers tried to cast DeSantis as the GOP’s best hope in 2024.

Don Fautt, a Republican voter from nearby Sparks, Nevada, said he would support DeSantis in the upcoming primary only if Trump were not on the ballot.

“Trump is the only guy who can go in and fix things,” Fautt insisted. “I get tired of his mouth, but I’ll tell you what: He’s a warrior. He’ll fight. That’s what we need.”

Once he took the stage, DeSantis played up his willingness to fight any and all political opponents — especially Disney.

He told his Nevada audience that the children’s entertainment giant is “supporting the sexualization of minors.”

The feud between the Florida governor and the Florida entertainment giant started last year after the company, in the face of significant pressure, publicly opposed legislation concerning lessons on sexual orientation and gender identity in early grades that critics called “Don’t Say Gay.”

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As punishment, DeSantis took over Disney World's governing district through legislation passed by lawmakers and appointed a new board of supervisors.

DeSantis was speaking out at Laxalt's annual Basque Fry, an event modeled after cookouts hosted by the former Nevada attorney general's grandfather, U.S. Sen. Paul Laxalt — the son of a Basque immigrant shepherd.

In recent years, the event has emerged as a key stop on the Republican presidential circuit, drawing rising stars who hoped to boost their White House ambitions and endear themselves to voters through sampling the local fare. Unlike the pork chops and butter sculptures of the Iowa State Fair, the cuisine at the Basque Fry includes beans, chorizo and — for those daring enough — the event's signature fried lamb testicles.

DeSantis spent much of the afternoon in a large barn with VIPs and event sponsors before taking the stage. His wife, Casey, chatted with attendees outside the barn after her children played on the inflatable bull.

Carlene Rader, a retiree from Carson City, said she's leaning toward DeSantis over Trump. She said she's particularly upset about the allegations against Trump outlined by federal prosecutors last week. The indictment charged the former president with 37 felony counts — many under the Espionage Act — that accuse him of illegally storing classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, and trying to hide them from investigators who demanded them back.

"He's done a lot of things that he shouldn't have done," Rader said of Trump. "Trump's had his time. I like DeSantis a little better."

## **A Utah city violated the First Amendment in denying a drag show permit, judge rules**

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The city of St. George must issue a permit for a Utah-based group that organizes drag performances to host an all-ages drag show in a public park, a federal judge ruled, calling the city's attempt to stop the show unconstitutional discrimination.

"Public spaces are public spaces. Public spaces are not private spaces. Public spaces are not majority spaces," U.S. District Judge David Nuffer wrote in a Friday ruling granting the preliminary injunction requested by the group. "The First Amendment of the United States Constitution ensures that all citizens, popular or not, majority or minority, conventional or unconventional, have access to public spaces for public expression."

Southern Utah Drag Stars and its CEO, Mitski Avalōx, sued the city of St. George in May after the city denied the group permits for an all-ages show it aimed to host in a public park in April. A complaint filed in federal court accused city officials of "flagrant and ongoing violations of their free speech, due process, and equal protection rights," and asked for St. George to reverse its decision and authorize a drag show at the end of June.

A city events coordinator told Drag Stars, Avalōx said, that the group could start advertising for the April show before obtaining a permit. The city council later denied the permit, citing a never-previously-enforced ordinance that forbids advertising before permit approval.

The permit denial based on that ordinance, Nuffer wrote in his ruling, was a pretext for discrimination.

"Public officials take an oath to 'support, obey, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Utah,'" Nuffer wrote. "They do not merely serve the citizens who elect them, the majority of citizens in the community, or a vocal minority in the community."

The city now may not enforce any new advertising prohibitions against the group or its show, Nuffer ruled, ordering that the performance must "take scheduling precedence over any other event."

In a statement, the city of St. George said it is committed to ensuring public parks and facilities remain viable and open to residents and those who want to hold special events.

"Our intent is always to follow the law both when we enact laws and when we enforce laws, and we will continue to do so," the statement said. "We have read Judge Nuffer's opinion and while we are disappointed in the result, we are currently evaluating our options in light of the ruling."

## West Virginia basketball coach Bob Huggins resigns hours after drunken driving arrest

By JOHN RABY AP Sports Writer

West Virginia basketball coach Bob Huggins has resigned a day after his arrest on suspicion of drunken driving in the latest incident in a Hall of Fame career that imploded quickly.

The university announced the resignation Saturday night. It came a month after the university suspended him for three games for using an anti-gay slur while also denigrating Catholics during a radio interview.

The 69-year-old Huggins leaves as the third-winningest coach all-time in Division I with 935 career victories, behind only Mike Krzyzewski of Duke (1,202) and Jim Boeheim of Syracuse (998), both of whom are retired. Unlike the others, Huggins had no national titles, taking Cincinnati to the Final Four in 1992 and West Virginia in 2010.

Huggins had 16-year stints each with the Bearcats and Mountaineers. Both ended in the aftermath of arrests for drinking and driving.

Huggins was charged with driving under the influence on Friday night after his SUV had stopped in the middle of traffic in Pittsburgh with a shredded tire and the driver's side door was open at about 8:30 p.m. According to a criminal complaint, a breath test determined Huggins' blood alcohol content was more than twice the legal limit.

Huggins was charged with driving under the influence, released from custody and will appear at a later date for a preliminary hearing, according to a police report.

In a statement to the West Virginia community on Saturday night, Huggins said: "Today, I have submitted a letter to President Gordon Gee and Vice President and Director of Athletics Wren Baker informing them of my resignation and intention to retire as head men's basketball coach at West Virginia University effective immediately."

In a separate statement Saturday night, West Virginia's athletic department said it accepted the resignation "in light of recent events."

"We support his decision so that he can focus on his health and family. On behalf of West Virginia University, we share our appreciation for his service to our University, our community and our state."

No replacement was immediately named for Huggins. The athletic department statement said that "in the days ahead, we will focus on supporting the student-athletes in our men's basketball program and solidifying leadership for our program."

Huggins said his recent actions do not represent the university's values or the leadership expected in his role as coach.

"While I have always tried to represent our University with honor, I have let all of you — and myself — down," he said. "I am solely responsible for my conduct and sincerely apologize to the University community — particularly to the student-athletes, coaches and staff in our program. I must do better, and I plan to spend the next few months focused on my health and my family so that I can be the person they deserve."

Huggins added that it was "the honor of my professional career" to lead the team at his alma mater. Born in Morgantown, he said it "will always be my home, and I will always be a Mountaineer. Thank you to everyone who has supported our program over the years. It has meant more to me and my family than you could ever know."

Friday night, officers directed Huggins to move off the road so they could help with the tire, then activated their lights when they observed Huggins having trouble maneuvering the SUV to allow vehicles to pass. Upon questioning, officers suspected he was intoxicated and asked him to exit the vehicle. The report said he failed standard field sobriety tests, was taken into custody without incident and transported for further testing.

It was Huggins' second such arrest. The other occurred in 2004, when he was the head coach at Cincinnati.

In June 2004, Huggins pleaded no contest to driving under the influence in a suburb of Cincinnati and was ordered to attend a three-day intervention program. The University of Cincinnati suspended him

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The lawsuit marked the most recent development in a fight over drag shows in St. George, Utah, a conservative city 111 miles (179 kilometers) northeast of Las Vegas, Nevada. Since HBO filmed a drag show in a public park last year for an episode of its series "We're Here," the city has emerged as a flash-point in the nationwide battle over drag performances as they've garnered newfound political scrutiny in Republican-controlled cities and states.

Public events like drag queen story hours and the all-ages event that Avalōx intended to put together have been increasingly targeted in legislatures throughout the country. In May, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a ban on minors attending drag shows, and Montana Gov. Greg Gianforte signed a ban on people dressed in drag from reading books to children at public schools and libraries.

In Utah, a proposal from a St. George Republican to require warning notices for events like drag shows or pride parades in public places stalled after advancing through the state House of Representatives in March. The proposal stemmed from the pushback that resulted from the HBO-produced drag show in St. George.

City officials issued permits for the show over the objection from some council members and community activists. City Manager Adam Lenhard resigned months later after writing councilmembers to say that he could not legally deny the show permits, according to emails obtained by The Salt Lake Tribune.

Avalōx founded Southern Utah Drag Stars after the fallout, hoping to showcase drag for members of the LGBTQ+ community in a rural place where such forms of entertainment are often lacking.

"I made it my mission to continue to do these events and not just one month out of the year, but to do so people that were like me when I was little ... can see that there are queer adults that get to live a long and fulfilled life," Avalōx said in an interview with The Associated Press. "My biggest ambition was to provide a public space where people can go to a park and enjoy a show that's meant for everyone."

## **Biden strikes economic populist tone during campaign rally before exuberant union members**

By SEUNG MIN KIM and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — President Joe Biden delivered an unapologetically economic populist message Saturday during the first rally of his reelection campaign, telling an exuberant crowd of union members that his policies had created jobs and lifted the middle class. Now, he said, is the time for the wealthy to "pay their fair share" in taxes.

Biden spotlighted the sweeping climate, tax and health care package signed into law last year that cut the cost of prescription drugs and lowered insurance premiums — pocketbook issues that advisers say will be the centerpiece of his argument for a second term.

"I'm looking forward to this campaign," Biden said to cries of "four more years!" before adding, "We've got a record to run on."

His choice of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania — and a friendly union audience — as his first official campaign stop reflected their crucial role in his reelection effort. The city was the site of his 2020 campaign headquarters and the state was one of a handful that had voted for Republican Donald Trump in 2016 but flipped back to Democrats four years later.

Until the rally, Biden's primary reelection campaign activity had been fundraising as the campaign tries to amass an impressive fundraising haul before the year's second quarter concludes at the end of the month. The president raised money at a private home in Greenwich, Connecticut, on Friday and soon will hold fundraisers in California, Maryland, Illinois and New York.

More than 1,000 union workers representing professions from carpenters and airport service workers to entertainers and heavy service equipment engineers — most wearing T-shirts bearing their union's logos — began chanting "Let's go, Joe!" and "We want Joe" and blowing whistles hours before the president arrived.

Biden did not mention any of his potential Republican opponents by name, but said many in the GOP "oppose everything I've done." Pointing to high inflation rates, Republicans have criticized "Biden-omics" a term the president tried to turn back his opponents on Saturday.



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"I don't know what the hell that is," he said, "but it's working."

The event, which organizers said included unions representing 18 million workers nationwide, recalled then-candidate Biden opening his 2020 presidential campaign at a union hall in Pittsburgh.

Several of the nation's most powerful unions — including the AFL-CIO, American Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees — officially endorsed Biden's campaign on Friday. The first-of-its-kind joint endorsement among the unions, and the backdrop of hundreds of workers are part of a meticulously choreographed effort to show the support of labor behind what Biden himself calls the most pro-union president in history.

The union endorsements followed Wednesday's joint endorsement from major environmental groups, a back-to-back backing by design, according to a campaign official, meant to demonstrate that tackling climate change through green jobs does not threaten workers' rights.

Biden claimed in his remarks that if Wall Street bankers went on strike, no one would notice. But if unions members walked off the job, "the whole country would come to a grinding halt." He also criticized those worth more than \$1 billion for paying, he said, as little as 8% in federal taxes.

That prompted a man in the audience to shout, "What do you pay?" to which Biden responded, "I pay a hell of a lot more than that." He said repeatedly that the wealthy must "pay their fair share."

Before addressing the union gathering, Biden took a helicopter tour over the collapsed section of Interstate 95 in Philadelphia that has complicated traffic along one of the nation's most crowded highways.

Michael Smith, a 62-year-old retired electrician and is a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, said he liked Biden's chances next year because of his administration's championing green jobs and construction.

Jennifer McKinnon, 53, a grade school librarian and member of the National Education Association, said she felt that Biden had a personal commitment to education because his wife, Jill, was a teacher who continued to teach English at a Northern Virginia community college as first lady. Jill Biden, an NEA member, addressed the union rally, too.

"I fear that the Republicans are going to get caught in their cycle that they did last time and people aren't going to buy it this time, so Joe's going to sweep right in," McKinnon said of the 2024 election, alluding to Trump, the early front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination.

Biden said his economic policies can lift all Americans regardless of economic status, an argument that could help him counter the kind of economic populism that buoyed Trump with some rank-and-file union members during his first two presidential campaigns.

Clark Hamilton, a 63-year-old retiree and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers member, said Biden embraced union values but also noted that the president sometimes "plays it like most politicians, in the middle." He referenced Biden's urging Congress to help prevent a rail strike last year, which the president said could cripple commerce nationwide.

"That's a shame," Hamilton said. "But he was trying to save the economy."

Still, Hamilton said he's confident that Biden's record will secure him a second term next year "especially if it's against Trump."

## **Collapsed stretch of Interstate 95 in Philadelphia to reopen within 2 weeks, governor says**

By SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The collapsed stretch of Interstate 95 in Philadelphia will reopen within two weeks, Pennsylvania's governor said Saturday, after joining President Joe Biden on a helicopter tour over the critical segment of the highway closed to East Coast traffic since last weekend.

"We are getting it done here in Philly," Gov. Josh Shapiro said at a briefing at Philadelphia International Airport after the flyover that included members of Congress and the city's mayor.

Biden outlined the substantial initial federal commitment and longer term support for a permanent fix

for the vital roadway. "I know how important this stretch of highway is" to Philadelphia and the Northeast Corridor, he said. "Over 150,000 vehicles travel on it every day, including 14,000 trucks. ... It's critical to our economy and it's critical to our quality of life."

Shapiro, offering a timeline that would be welcome news to commuters and long-haul truckers alike, said with Biden at his side: "I can state with confidence that we will have I-95 reopened within the next two weeks. We are going to get traffic moving again thanks to the extraordinary work that is going on here."

He said "folks here in Philly have a real renewed sense of civic pride through this project" and that "there's something special happening in our community" with people coming together.

The stretch of the East Coast's main north-south highway collapsed early last Sunday after a tractor-trailer hauling gasoline flipped over on an off-ramp and caught fire. State transportation officials said the driver was trying to navigate a curve and lost control.

"I've directed my team ... to move heaven and earth to get this done as soon as humanly possible," Biden said. He said he told the governor, "There's no more important project right now in the country as far as I'm concerned." The president described it as an "all hands on deck" project to address a "crisis."

"We're with you. We're going to stay with you until this is rebuilt, until it's totally finished," he said at the briefing.

Pennsylvania's plan for the work involves trucking in 2,000 tons of lightweight glass nuggets for the quick rebuilding, with crews working around the clock until the interstate is open to traffic. Instead of rebuilding the overpass right away, crews will use the recycled glass to fill in the collapsed area to avoid supply-chain delays for other materials, Shapiro has said.

After that, a replacement bridge will be built next to it to reroute traffic while crews excavate the fill to restore the exit ramp, officials have said.

Biden said the design was "incredibly innovative in order to get this work done in record time."

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, who visited the area Tuesday, promised that the federal government would provide the needed assistance to repair the destruction, although he warned that the wreckage will likely raise the cost of consumer goods in the short term because truckers must now travel longer routes.

Joining Biden on the presidential Marine One helicopter were Shapiro, Sens. Bob Casey and John Fetterman and Rep. Brendan Boyle and Mayor Jim Kenney, all Democrats. Later Saturday, Biden was to attend a 2024 campaign event with union workers at the convention center.

To view live video of the construction work via the state Department of Transportation, go to: <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-6/Pages/AlertDetails.aspx>

## **Putin meets with African leaders in Russia to discuss Ukraine peace plan, but no visible progress**

By JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday met with a group of leaders of African countries who traveled to Russia on a self-styled "peace mission" the day after they went to Ukraine, but the meeting ended with no visible progress.

The seven African leaders — the presidents of Comoros, Senegal, South Africa and Zambia, as well as Egypt's prime minister and top envoys from the Republic of Congo and Uganda — visited Ukraine on Friday to try to help end the nearly 16-month-old war.

The African leaders then traveled to St. Petersburg on Saturday to meet with Putin who was attending Russia's showpiece international economic forum.

Details about the delegation's proposals were thin.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said after the three-hour meeting that the Africans' peace plan consisted of 10 elements, but "was not formulated on paper."

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"The peace initiative proposed by African countries is very difficult to implement, difficult to compare positions," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. But "President Putin has shown interest in considering it."

"He spoke about our position. Not all provisions can be correlated with the main elements of our position, but this does not mean that we do not need to continue working," Peskov said.

"The main conclusion, in my opinion, from today's conversation is that our partners from the African Union have shown an understanding of the true causes of the crisis that was created by the West, and have shown an understanding that it is necessary to get out of this situation on the basis of addressing these underlying causes," Lavrov said.

Russia says that it was effectively forced to send troops into Ukraine because it was threatened by Ukraine's desire to join NATO and by the country's support from the United States and Western Europe.

Speaking at the economic forum on Friday, Putin declared that the first Russian tactical nuclear weapons have been deployed to Belarus, describing the move as a deterrent against Western efforts to defeat Russia in Ukraine. He previously said that the deployment would begin in July.

Asked if he could order the use of battlefield nuclear weapons in Ukraine, Putin said that there was no need for that but noted that Moscow could use its nuclear arsenals in case of a "threat to the Russian statehood."

"In that case, we will certainly use all the means that the Russian state has. There should be no doubt about that," he said.

The mission to Ukraine, the first of its kind by African leaders, comes in the wake of other peace initiatives — such as one by China — and carries particular importance for Africa, which relies on food and fertilizer deliveries from Russia and Ukraine. The war has impeded exports from one of the world's most important breadbaskets.

"This conflict is affecting Africa negatively," South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said at a news conference alongside Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and four other African leaders after their closed-door talks on Friday.

Ramaphosa and others acknowledged the intensity of the hostilities but insisted all wars must come to an end and emphasized their willingness to help expedite that.

"I do believe that Ukrainians feel that they must fight and not give up. The road to peace is very hard," he said, adding that "there is a need to bring this conflict to an end sooner rather than later."

The delegation, including Presidents Macky Sall of Senegal and Hakainde Hichilema of Zambia, represent a cross-section of African views on the war.

South Africa, Senegal and Uganda have avoided censuring Moscow over the conflict, while Egypt, Zambia and Comoros voted against Russia last year in a U.N. General Assembly resolution condemning Moscow's invasion.

Many African nations have long had close ties with Moscow, dating back to the Cold War when the Soviet Union supported their anti-colonial struggles.

Speaking during Friday's news conference, Comoros President Azali Assoumani floated the idea of a "road map" to peace, prompting questions from Zelenskyy who sought a clarification and insisted he didn't want "any surprises" from their visit with Putin.

Chances for peace talks look dim as Ukraine and Russia take sharply different stands. Ukraine demands that Russia withdraws its troops from all its occupied territories as a condition for peace talks. The Kremlin, in turn, wants Ukraine to recognize the Crimean Peninsula, which Moscow illegally annexed from Ukraine in 2014, as part of Russia and acknowledge other land gains it has made.

China presented its own peace proposal at the end of February. Ukraine and its allies largely dismissed the plan, as the warring sides look no closer to a cease-fire.

The African peace mission comes as Ukraine launches a counteroffensive to dislodge the Kremlin's forces from occupied areas, using Western-supplied advanced weapons in attacks in several sections of more than the 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line.

In the village of Blahodatne, taken by Ukrainian forces in the counteroffensive six days ago, soldiers said they have orders to keep advancing and not retreat, indicating long grueling battles ahead in the direction

where Russians have built up dense lines of fortifications.

"Morale is really strong because the guys know they're moving forward to liberate their lands," said a Ukrainian soldier with the callsign Skripal (Violinist). "We have an order not to retreat and to move forward, so we're trying."

Village roads are punctured with craters, buildings are caved in and bullet holes peppered nearly every residence. Inside a cultural center, a Ukrainian commander with the call sign "Lermontov" said that they'd captured many Russian soldiers during the liberation of the village and showed journalists four bodies whom he said were Russian fighters who had been recruited from prisons.

Sam McNeil in Blahodatne, Ukraine, and Jim Heintz in Tallinn, Estonia, contributed to this story.

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

## Greek leader blasts critics of rescue effort for sunken migrant vessel

By DEMETRIS NELLAS Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Authorities continued to search Saturday for victims and survivors of a trawler that sank off the coast of Greece with as many as 750 migrants on board, as conservative leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis blasted critics of the rescue operation.

Naysayers, Mitsotakis said at a campaign stop in the town of Sparta, should turn their ire against traffickers he called "human scum." The vessel sank on Wednesday.

The Greek coast guard announced Saturday that one Greek Navy frigate and four other vessels were operating 47 nautical miles (54 miles; 87 kilometers) southwest of the town of Pylos in Greece's southwest. Earlier, two helicopters from the navy and coast guard joined the operation, the coast guard said.

The rescue operation is taking place in rough seas, with near gale-force winds, and in some of the Mediterranean Sea's deepest waters. at over 5,000 meters (3 miles).

To date, 104 survivors have been rescued and 78 bodies have been recovered. The trawler carried as many as 750 men, women and children from Syria, Egypt, the Palestinian territories and Pakistan. No survivors or bodies have been found since the day of the accident.

The survivors have been taken to a migrant reception center outside Athens. A few have been visited by relatives residing in other European countries.

The Egyptian embassy in Athens on Saturday shared a list of 43 Egyptian migrants, including minors, who survived the shipwreck. The survivors are all men from Cairo and the Nile Delta provinces of Sharqia and Menofia, the list shows. The embassy said the list was provided by Greek authorities.

Greek authorities continue to face criticism, however, over their failure to act more quickly. They say the migrants insisted they didn't need any help, but non-governmental organizations say they received a number of calls for help.

On Saturday, parts of the Greek rescue vessel captain's testimony were published by Greek media. In it he said the migrants refused help, saying they were going to Italy, and untied a rope loosely tied to the trawler's bow when the coast guard ship had gone closer to inspect.

"It is very unfair for some so-called 'people in solidarity' to insinuate that the (Coast Guard) did not do its job. ... These people are out there battling the waves to rescue human lives and protect our borders," Mitsotakis said.

Mitsotakis, the favorite to win a second four-year term in elections on June 25, attacked the main opposition party Syriza for its own record on migration while in government.

"Those who today appear as the so-called authentic humanitarians are those who allowed detention camps such as Moria to exist. The same who, a few days ago, were condemned by the European Court of Human Rights for the wretched conditions at Moria."

The notoriously overcrowded migrant camp of Moria, on the island of Lesbos across from the Turkish

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coast, opened in January 2013 under a three-party coalition government led by New Democracy. It saw its population swell during the migration crisis of 2015. It operated throughout the Syriza administration from 2015-19 and burned down in September 2020. Just before it did, it was estimated that 20,000 people lived in a camp designed to accommodate 3,000.

Mitsotakis also attacked Syriza for "opening the doors to millions of people" in 2015 and defended his own more restrictive policies, vowing to continue them.

"We followed a different migration policy ... fair and strict, of monitoring and guarding our borders. A policy which resulted in illegal crossings dropping 90 percent," he told the crowd. "This policy has been acknowledged (by Europe) as the right one. Because if we leave Europe's borders to allow in everyone, then the numbers of those wanting to cross the Mediterranean will rise exponentially and so will the chances of tragic shipwrecks."

Separately on Saturday, a successful rescue operation took place in Italy, where a coast guard vessel from the port of Roccella, in Calabria, rescued 96 migrants on a sailboat more than 100 nautical miles (115 miles; 185 kilometers) from the port.

Turbulent seas made the rescue difficult but with the assistance of a Portuguese coast guard vessel operating for Frontex, the European Union's border agency, and several commercial vessels, the rescue was completed.

Associated Press writers Samy Magdy in Cairo and Nicole Winfield, in Rome, contributed to this report.

## **Nikki Haley's husband begins Africa deployment as she campaigns for 2024 GOP nomination**

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — Nikki Haley's husband deployed Saturday for a yearlong stint in Africa with the South Carolina Army National Guard, a mission that will encompass most of the remainder of her campaign for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination.

"He's always been my rock," she said after a deployment ceremony for about 200 soldiers at The Citadel, a military college in Charleston. "We have both lived a life of service, and so when he goes off to deploy, my support is completely with him. If I happen to be running for president, his support is completely with me. ... We will continue to stay in touch as best we can."

Maj. Michael Haley is being deployed as a staff officer with the 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, which the National Guard says is providing support in the Horn of Africa.

The United Nations, where Nikki Haley served as Donald Trump's ambassador for two years, says that region is facing the worst drought in 40 years, with more than 43.3 million people in need of assistance in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, and more than half of those lacking access to sufficient food.

Last month, a high-level U.N. conference raised less than \$1 billion of the more than \$5 billion organizers were hoping for to help more than 30 million people in the Horn of Africa cope with the climate crisis and mass displacement after years of conflict.

Nikki Haley, who is also a former South Carolina governor, has been highly critical of President Joe Biden's performance as commander in chief. She has spoken out against his administration's efforts to expand diversity in the military, complaining they were weakening the force and hampering recruitment, though the Army has said that the real problem is that many young people do not see enlistment as safe or a good career path.

She has also pledged to make cuts in \$46 billion in foreign aid to countries that she says "hate America."

Michael Haley, the candidate's husband of 26 years, has been a constant at his wife's campaign events since she became a White House candidate. During his deployment, the campaign said the couple's college-age son, Nalin, will be taking over that role.

Nikki Haley frequently mentions her status as a military wife. Joining the Guard as an officer in 2006, her husband made his first overseas deployment January 2013, when she was midway through her first

term as governor, and their children were age 10 and 14.

"He left me as a single mom governor, but we're still married," Haley said during a recent campaign appearance in Greer, South Carolina. She went on to critique the Biden administration's chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021.

Citing the current deployment during a CNN town hall in Iowa this month, Haley called it the start of "a yearlong prayer that they're effective and that they're strong and that they come home safely."

She has also referenced her husband's upcoming deployment in terms of the U.S. Department of Justice's case against 2024 rival Trump on charges of mishandling classified documents, including national defense information.

Arguing that "two things can be true at the same time" and echoing many Republicans' arguments that "the DOJ and FBI have lost all credibility with the American people," Haley said on Fox News this past week that "if this indictment is true, if what it says is actually the case, President Trump was incredibly reckless with our national security."

"My husband is about to deploy this weekend," Haley went on. "This puts all of our military men and women in danger, if you are going to talk about what our military is capable of, or how we would go about invading or doing something with one of our enemies."

On Saturday, Haley said her husband's service has in part framed her viewpoint on foreign policy and military strategy.

"We don't want to go into a way that's going to put our men and women at harm's danger. They are going because Africa is a hotbed," Haley said. "We've always known that when our men and women go overseas, it's to keep us safe here at home."

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

## Rescuers are braving snipers as they rush to ferry Ukrainians from Russia-occupied flood zones

By SAMYA KULLAB, EVGENIY MALOLETKA and SAM MCNEIL Associated Press

KHERSON, Ukraine (AP) — At last, help came for Vitalii Shpalin. From a distance, he spotted the small Ukrainian rescue boat traversing floodwaters that had submerged the 60-year-old's entire neighborhood after a catastrophic dam collapse in the country's embattled south.

He and others boarded with sighs of relief — interrupted suddenly by the crackle of bullets.

Shpalin ducked, and a bullet scraped his back. He felt one pierce his arm, then his leg. The boat's rescue worker cried into the radio for reinforcements. "Our boat is leaking," Shpalin heard him say. An older man died before his eyes, his lips turning blue.

Their vessel, taking civilians to safety in Kherson city across the river, had been shot by Russian soldiers positioned in a nearby house, according to Ukrainian officials and witnesses on the boat.

"They (Russians) let the boats through, those coming to rescue people," Shpalin said. "But when the boats were full of people, they started shooting."

Massive flooding from the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam on June 6 has devastated towns along the lower Dnieper River in the Kherson region, a front line in the war. Russia and Ukraine accuse each other of causing the breach.

In the chaotic early days of flooding, Ukrainian rescue workers in private boats provided a lifeline to desperate civilians trapped in flooded areas of the Russian-occupied eastern bank — that is, if the rescue missions could brave the drones and Russian snipers.

The boats have carried volunteers and plainclothes servicemen, shuttling across from Ukrainian-held areas on the western bank to evacuate people stuck on rooftops, in attics and elsewhere.

Now, that window is closing. As floodwaters recede, rescuers are increasingly cut off by putrid mud. And more Russian soldiers are returning, reasserting control.

Accounts of Russian assistance vary among survivors, but many evacuees and residents accuse Rus-

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sian authorities of doing little or nothing to help displaced residents. Some civilians said evacuees were sometimes forced to present Russian passports if they wanted to leave.

Russia's Defense Ministry didn't immediately respond to requests from The Associated Press for comment about actions by authorities in the Russia-occupied flood zone, or about the attack on the rescue boat.

The AP spoke with 10 families rescued from the eastern bank, as well as with rescue workers, officials and victims injured on the rescue missions.

"The Russian Federation provided nothing. No aid, no evacuation. They abandoned people alone to deal with the disaster," said Yulia Valhe, evacuated from the Russian-occupied town of Oleshky. "I have my friends who stayed there, people I know who need help. At the moment, I can't do anything except to say to them, 'Hold on.'"

At least 150 people have been rescued by Ukraine from Russian-controlled areas in the risky evacuation operations, government spokesperson Oleksandr Tolokonnikov said. It is a small fraction compared to the nearly 2,750 people rescued from flooded regions controlled by Ukraine.

A local organization Helping to Leave, which helps Ukrainians living under Russian occupation to escape, said it received requests from 3,000 people in the occupied zone, said Dina Urich, who heads the organization's evacuation department.

"We will surely do everything we can, but we also cannot expose our people to danger," Tolokonnikov said.

"Russians keep threatening us and fulfilling their threats by shooting people in the back," he said.

Olha, another resident of Oleshky, said she had heard about the rescue missions, but didn't know how to get on a list. "If we could, we would have done the same, but I didn't know how," she said, declining to give her last name for safety reasons.

Rescuers have often used information provided by relatives of those stranded. Military drone pilots have searched for people and plotted routes through the fast-moving waters laden with debris, while navigating around Russian troop positions.

They also have delivered water, food and cigarettes to people with a note "from Santa."

Valerii Lobitskyi, a volunteer rescuer, said shelling often derailed the missions. He has been shot at once, and on another occasion had to abort a mission to rescue an older woman after a close call with a Russian motor boat.

Every civilian evacuated from the eastern bank carried a harrowing tale of survival, of racing to relocate to higher ground. They described the initial scramble on the morning of June 6. Within hours, the water came gushing in, reaching their ankles and then submerging entire floors.

In Oleshky, many residents moved from the outskirts of town to the center, which sits on an elevated plain.

Valhe, who was rescued with her family on June 12, said neighbors and friends tried to save people themselves in the absence of an official rescue effort.

"I saw soldiers, I saw FSB workers (Russia's Federal Security Service), but no rescue service," she said.

One older man tried to flee the deluge by climbing a tree. But the winds were too strong. Valhe heard his cries for help, but knew that if she tried to approach him, she would perish in the current.

He told her, "My dear, stay put, don't follow me."

She watched him drown.

Shpalin said he lied to Russian soldiers when they tried to evacuate him to another area. He had heard from others who accepted the Russian offer that they were taken only to a nearby village and told they couldn't go further unless they agreed to obtain Russian passports.

Shpalin told the soldiers he wouldn't leave because he had lost his documents in the flood. In reality, they were on his person.

"I didn't believe them," he said.

When the Ukrainian rescuers found him, he was sheltering with other civilians on a sandy hill near a quarry in the village of Kardashynka.

The attack that wounded Shpalin on the evacuation boat on June 11 killed three civilians and injured 10 others. At least two police officers also were wounded. Kherson authorities and President Volodymyr

Zelenskyy's chief of staff said Russian soldiers fired the shots.

Drone footage obtained by the AP shows gunshots being fired from a nearby summer home as the evacuation boat passes an estuary. The video's authenticity was confirmed by Tolokonnikov.

Serhii, 59, another evacuee on the boat, said that he saw Russian soldiers on the balcony of the house. They shouted something — "Move on," or "Don't move" — then fired, he said. Serhii, who would only give his first name because his family still lives in occupied territory, threw his body over his wife's to protect her.

Some days later, in Kherson, the boom of artillery resounded in the background as 46-year-old Vitalii Holodniak, one of those killed in the boat attack, was laid to rest.

His sister Svitlana Nosik, 56, held up his death certificate. "Place of death: Dneiper River, evacuation boat," it read.

"That is not how I expected to greet my brother in Kherson," she said.

Another evacuee, Kateryna Krupych, said she looked out the window on June 7 to find mucky water surrounding her home on the island of Chaika, in the gray zone between front lines. Houses floated by. She packed up her family's supplies and they left in a boat, but got separated along the way. Eventually, they were all rescued by Ukrainians.

Krupych said the previous eight months under Russian occupation had been hard. Her family survived by relying on the kindness of neighbors who fled to Kherson city. They told her where to find the spare keys to their homes and leftover food supplies.

"It was mentally difficult when the (Russians) entered our island, when they terrorized us," she said. Russian soldiers frequently passed their home, she said, pressuring them to leave.

For Olha, still in Oleshky, the costs of the dam collapse continue to be revealed. Many houses are collapsing, she said, and she struggles to find drinking water and food. There is the risk of water-borne diseases.

Plus, "(Russians) can force-evacuate people — we are scared of this, we don't want to go to their territories," she said. "We don't want to be forgotten."

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Samya Kullab reported from Kyiv. Evgeniy Maloletka and Sam McNeil reported from Kherson.

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For more AP coverage of the war in Ukraine, go to <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>.

## **WNBA working with Brittney Griner and Mercury on travel options including charter flights**

By DOUG FEINBERG AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The WNBA is working with Brittney Griner and the Phoenix Mercury on travel options including charter flights going forward.

Griner's travel was back in the spotlight last week when the team took a flight to Texas and then Indiana, requiring Griner and her Mercury teammates to go through commercial airports. While going through a Dallas airport last Saturday, the All-Star center who had been detained in Russia for nearly 10 months was harassed by what the WNBA called a "provocateur."

The league doesn't allow teams to use charter flights except for when they have back-to-back games.

Many teams have been using public charter airline JSX. Those flights are allowed by the WNBA with certain protocols in place, including that teams fly on the 30-seat planes using preset routes and times.

The Mercury flew to their first road game in Los Angeles on JSX and took the airline to Dallas. There wasn't a standard flight available on the airline from Dallas to Indianapolis, which was why Griner was on the commercial flight.

Questions remain about who would pay for it if the WNBA allows Griner to fly privately. And also if the league allows Phoenix to use JSX to fly to any of the other 11 cities that teams play in by creating their own flights, how other teams would view that since it would give the Mercury a potential competitive advantage.

The league said Griner's security has been an ongoing concern since before the season began. League



officials were talking with Mercury officials and the seven-time All-Star's representatives about how to protect Griner and her teammates following the highly publicized legal case, during which she was jailed in Russia on drug charges before being freed in December in a prisoner exchange.

The league granted Griner permission to book her own charter flights before the season started.

"We're just working with Phoenix to make sure we have a good plan going forward," WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert said Friday on ESPN, "certainly for Brittney and for the rest of the Phoenix Mercury."

The executive director of the WNBA players' union talked to Griner on Thursday and said she was frustrated.

"She said, 'We knew this was going to happen,'" Terri Jackson said. "She said: 'Terri, I read the mail that comes to my locker. It's fan mail, but it's also a lot of hate mail.'"

The Mercury currently are on a two-game road trip to Washington and New York. Griner didn't play in Friday's loss to the Mystics because of a hip injury.

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

## At least 41 killed in rebel attack on Ugandan school near Congo border

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — Suspected rebels attacked a school in a remote area of Uganda near the Congo border, killing at least 41 people in a nighttime raid before fleeing across the porous frontier, authorities said. Thirty-eight students in their dormitories were among the victims.

Some students were burned beyond recognition, and others were shot or hacked to death after militants armed with guns and machetes attacked the school in the frontier district of Kasese, a local mayor told The Associated Press.

In addition to the 38 students, one guard and two residents of the local community in Mpondwe-Lhubiriha town were killed in the attack, said Mayor Selevest Mapoze. A Ugandan military statement said the rebels abducted six students, taken as porters of food looted from the school's store.

The school, co-ed and privately owned, is located about two kilometers (just over a mile) from the Congo border.

Authorities are blaming the massacre at Lhubiriha Secondary School on the Allied Democratic Forces, or ADF, a shadowy extremist group which has been launching attacks for years from bases in volatile eastern Congo. Villagers in the Congolese provinces of Ituri and North Kivu have been the victims of the group's alleged attacks in recent years.

But attacks on the Ugandan side of the border are rare, thanks in part to the presence of an alpine brigade of Ugandan troops in the region.

The attack has sent shockwaves in this normally peaceful East African country whose long-time leader cites security as a strength of his government. It is also a blow to the country's armed forces, who since 2021 have deployed in parts of eastern Congo under a mission specifically to hunt down the militants accused of attacking a school.

Speaking to reporters near the scene of the attack, the commander of Ugandan troops in Congo told reporters that the rebels spent two nights in Kasese before carrying out their attack. He gave no further details.

ADF rebels, when under pressure, "divert" their pursuers' attention by splitting into small groups that then launch violent attacks in other places, said Maj. Gen. Dick Olum, suggesting that the latest attack was an attempt by the rebels to ease battlefield pressure.

"A typical ADF signature," he said, "because this is pressure. They are under huge pressure, and that's what they have to do to show the world that they are still there, and to show the world that they can still do havoc."

The school raid, which happened around 11:30 p.m., involved about five attackers, according to the

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Ugandan military. Soldiers from a nearby brigade who responded to the attack found the school on fire, "with dead bodies of students lying in the compound," military spokesman Brig. Felix Kulayigye said in a statement.

Winnie Kiiza, an influential political leader and a former lawmaker from the region, condemned the "cowardly attack" on Twitter. She said "attacks on schools are unacceptable and are a grave violation of children's rights," adding that schools should always be "a safe place for every student."

The ADF has been accused of launching many attacks in recent years targeting civilians in remote parts of eastern Congo. It rarely claims responsibility for attacks.

The ADF has long opposed the rule of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, a U.S. security ally who has held power in this East African country since 1986.

The group was established in the early 1990s by some Ugandan Muslims, who said they had been sidelined by Museveni's policies. At the time, the rebels staged deadly attacks in Ugandan villages as well as in the capital, including a 1998 attack in which 80 students were massacred in a town not far from the scene of the latest attack.

A Ugandan military assault later forced the ADF into eastern Congo, where many rebel groups are able to operate because the central government has limited control there. The group has since established ties with the Islamic State group.

In March, at least 19 people were killed in Congo by suspected ADF extremists.

Ugandan authorities for years have vowed to track down ADF militants even outside Ugandan territory. In 2021, Uganda launched joint air and artillery strikes in Congo against the group.

## US ambassador marches in Warsaw Pride parade, sending message to NATO ally

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — The United States ambassador held a U.S. flag high as he marched in the yearly Pride parade in Warsaw on Saturday, a clear message of Washington's opposition to discrimination in a country where LGBTQ+ people are facing an uphill struggle.

"America embraces equality," Ambassador Mark Brzezinski said, as he marched with more than 30 other members of the U.S. Embassy and alongside representatives from Canada, Austria and other Western countries in the Equality Parade.

In recent years Western governments have been alarmed as the conservative government in Warsaw depicted gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people as threats to the nation and its children.

The participation of the U.S. ambassador sent a clear message to the government of Poland, a NATO member on the alliance's eastern flank where the United States has increased its military presence since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine last year.

Poland has for decades considered Washington its key guarantor of security, but the importance of U.S. protection has only grown with the war playing out across its border in Ukraine.

The U.S. is also seen as a guarantor of protection to the LGBTQ+ community, which a few years ago was fighting for the right of same-sex union or marriage, but recently has been more concerned about a climate of hostility from the government and Catholic Church.

The colorful and joyful parade was a brief moment of celebration and relief for a community that has been criticized by elected leaders as a threat to nation's traditional Catholic identity.

LGBTQ+ members have been especially worried because of elections this fall. The conservative nationalist ruling party, Law and Justice, has openly criticized the community ahead of past elections, an attempt to mobilize its conservative base.

Brzezinski told The Associated Press that his embassy "has heard disturbing reports of an organized campaign targeting Poland's LGBTQI+ community with hate, lies, and slander in an attempt to divide Polish society. These attempts to sow divisions only strengthen the hand of those who seek to weaken democracy."

"We hope these reports are not true. We hope disagreement does not devolve into discrimination or worse," Brzezinski said. "Words matter. Hate masquerading as morality can play no productive role in our societies."

Some participants in the parade that numbered many thousands said they were not aware that the ambassador took part. A couple noted that the U.S., which is seeing a backlash against transgender rights in some states, also doesn't have a perfect record. But a handful interviewed said they appreciated the support.

"The fact that he supports basic human rights — that's a great thing," said Aleksandra Jarmolinska, 33. She added that the ambassador is probably one of the few people able to pressure Polish politicians.

As Polish President Andrzej Duda campaigned for reelection in 2020, he called the promotion of LGBTQ+ rights an "ideology" more destructive than communism. The education minister, who oversees schools, was appointed to that job after saying LGBTQ+ members are not equal to "normal people."

Last summer, the ruling party leader, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, mocked transgender people, saying "we must protect ourselves from madness."

And this spring, Poland's commissioner for children's rights ordered an inspection of schools that were ranked as the most LGBT-friendly in the country, saying he wanted to make sure principals were checking their employees against a pedophile registry.

## **Under court deal, Binance can continue U.S. operations as it battles SEC fraud charges**

By FRANK BAJAK Associated Press

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and Binance have reached an agreement in court that lets the world's largest cryptocurrency exchange continue to operate in the United States as it battles SEC fraud charges.

Under a consent order filed Saturday, the defendants in the June 5 lawsuit agreed to repatriate all assets held for the benefit of Binance's U.S. trading customers.

The SEC alleges Binance broke U.S. law by operating as an unregistered securities exchange. It filed similar charges against the world's other top cryptocurrency exchange, Coinbase, nearly simultaneously.

But Binance and its CEO, Changpeng Zhao, face additional charges of diverting customer funds - concealing the fact that it was commingling billions of dollars in investor assets and sending them to a third party that Zhao also owned.

As a result, the SEC asked that the assets of Binance's U.S. platform be frozen.

The order signed by Washington, D.C. federal judge Amy Berman Jackson prevents the defendants from spending corporate assets other than for ordinary business expenses. It also requires SEC oversight on any spending and prohibits the defendants from destroying records, the agency said in a statement.

The consent order obliges Binance to create new digital wallets for U.S. customers and transfer assets to them within two weeks.

The cryptocurrency industry has been marred by scandals and market meltdowns. Industry leaders say the SEC crackdown signals that U.S. regulators believe cryptocurrency has no room in the traditional financial system.

In August 2021, SEC chair Gary Gensler said investors weren't adequately protected in crypto markets, calling them more like the "Wild West."

The collapse of crypto prices last year as well as the demise of several notable crypto companies — including FTX — exposed investors to billions of dollars in losses.

## 6 key points from the scathing report on Minneapolis police after George Floyd's killing

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

The Justice Department on Friday issued a scathing assessment of Minneapolis police, alleging that racial discrimination and excessive force went unchecked before George Floyd's killing because of inadequate oversight and an unwieldy process for investigating complaints.

The probe began in April 2021, a day after former officer Derek Chauvin, who is white, was convicted of murder and manslaughter in the May 25, 2020, killing of Floyd, a Black man. Floyd, who was in handcuffs, repeatedly said he couldn't breathe before going limp as Chauvin knelt on his neck for 9 1/2 minutes. The killing was recorded by a bystander and sparked months of mass protests as part of a broader national reckoning over racial injustice.

Here are six takeaways from the report:

### WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATION?

The focus of the probe was to examine whether there has been a pattern or practice of unconstitutional or unlawful policing in the Minneapolis Police Department. It examined the use of force by officers, including during protests, and whether the department engages in discriminatory practices. It also looked at the handling of misconduct allegations, treatment of people with behavioral health issues and systems of accountability.

### WHAT WERE THE KEY FINDINGS?

Investigators found numerous examples of excessive force, unlawful discrimination and First Amendment violations. They reviewed 19 police shootings and determined that officers sometimes fired without first determining whether there was an immediate threat of harm to the officers or others.

In 2017, for example, an officer fatally shot Justine Ruszczyk Damond, an unarmed white Australian-born woman who "spooked" him when she approached his squad car, according to the report. She had called 911 to report a possible rape behind her house. The city paid \$20 million to settle with her family.

In another case, officers shot a suspect after he started stabbing himself in the neck in a police station interview room.

Officers also used neck restraints like the one Chauvin used on Floyd 198 times between Jan. 1, 2016, and Aug. 16, 2022, including 44 instances that didn't require an arrest. Some officers continued to use neck restraints even after they were banned in the wake of Floyd's killing, the report said.

At protests, it found, people were sometimes shot with rubber bullets when they were committing no crime or were dispersing. According to the report, one journalist was hit by a rubber bullet and lost her eye, while another was shoved to the pavement while filming and pepper-sprayed in the face. One protester was shoved so hard that she fell backward, hit the pavement and lay unconscious for three minutes.

### WHAT DID INVESTIGATORS FIND ABOUT RACIAL BIAS IN POLICING?

The report documented rampant racism and racial profiling in the department, with Black drivers more than six times more likely to be stopped than white ones.

The racism also extended to arrests.

When one Black teen was held at gunpoint for allegedly stealing a \$5 burrito, the teen asked the plain-clothes officer if he was indeed police. "Really?" the officer responded, according to a video recording. "How many white people in the city of Minneapolis have you run up against with a gun?"

In another case, a woman reported that an officer said to her that the Black Lives Matter movement was a "terrorist" organization. "We are going to make sure you and all of the Black Lives Matter supporters are wiped off the face of the Earth," she recalled him saying. Her complaint against the officer was closed by the department with a finding of "no merit."

### HOW DID THE DEPARTMENT TREAT THE MENTALLY ILL?

Mental health crises often were made worse when police responded, investigators found.

In 2017, for instance, officers encountered an unarmed man in the midst of what neighbors described as a mental health episode. He initially paced around his yard, yelling. After complying with orders to sit

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on his front steps, an officer fired his taser without warning.

In another case, a mother called 911 to report that her adult daughter, a Black woman with bipolar disorder, was attempting to hurt herself by lying in the road. By the time officers got there, the woman was calmly walking through a park. The officers nevertheless grabbed her, and she began yelling and pulled away. The woman was then put in a neck restraint as her mother pleaded, "Don't choke her like that!"

HOW DID OFFICERS GET AWAY WITH MISCONDUCT?

Investigations into police misconduct took months and sometimes years, according to the report. And those conducting the inquiries frequently failed to view video corroborating public complaints.

Supervisors also were quick to back their subordinates. In one case, an officer tased a man eight times without pausing even as the man protested that he was doing "exactly" what he was told. The supervisor found no policy violations and told the man after the fact that if he hadn't been resisting, "they wouldn't have had to strike you."

The report also highlighted the case of John Pope, who was just 14 when Chauvin struck him in the head with a flashlight multiple times and pinned him to a wall by his throat. He then knelt on the Black teen, as his mother pleaded, "Please do not kill my son." Chauvin, the report found, kept his knee on the teen's neck or back for over 15 minutes.

But due to poor supervision and a failed internal investigation, commanders did not learn what had happened to Pope until three years later, after Chauvin killed Floyd, the report said. The city ultimately agreed to settle a lawsuit in the case for \$7.5 million.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

The report noted that the department has made some improvements, such as banning chokeholds and no-knock warrants, training officers on the duty to intervene and sending mental health workers to some incidents. But it said there is still work to be done.

As a result of the investigation, the city and the police department agreed to a deal known as a federal consent decree, which will require reforms to be overseen by an independent monitor and approved by a federal judge. That arrangement is similar to previous interventions in cities such as Seattle, New Orleans, Baltimore and Ferguson, Missouri.

## Government shutdown warnings rise as Republicans seek deeper cuts in budget battle

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Kevin McCarthy's bid to appease Republican hard-liners and get the House moving again after a recent party rebellion on the floor has some Democrats warning of a difficult road ahead when it comes to passing legislation that will keep the government running.

Republicans teed up votes this past week on guns and on censuring one of former President Donald Trump's most prominent critics, Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif. Those votes helped get the House moving again, though the latter effort failed, with Schiff helped by some 20 Republicans.

The most consequential move of the week, however, was an announcement from GOP leadership that arrived with little fanfare. Republicans said they plan to pursue appropriations bills, which fund government programs and agencies, with less spending than the top-line numbers they agreed to in a deal with the White House last month. That compromise avoided what would have been an unprecedented federal default.

McCarthy argued that the numbers he negotiated with the White House amount to a cap and "you can always do less." GOP Rep. Kay Granger of Texas, who leads the House Appropriations Committee, followed with a statement that said she would seek to limit nondefense spending at 2022 budget levels, saying the debt agreement "set a top-line spending cap -- a ceiling, not a floor."

The announcements delighted Republicans who had criticized McCarthy, R-Calif., and opposed the debt ceiling legislation because they felt that agreement allowed too much spending. But it drew immediate pushback from Democrats who say an attempt to circumvent the debt ceiling agreement's top-line num-

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bers effectively guarantees a standoff with the Senate and White House and possibly even a damaging government stoppage when funding expires this fall.

"It is a prelude to a shutdown — what they are engineering," said Connecticut Rep. Rosa DeLauro, the top Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee.

The emerging dynamic raises the potential for another round of economy-rattling brinkmanship in Washington just months after lawmakers narrowly avoided a damaging federal default.

Partial government shutdowns have become increasingly common in the modern era, with the longest coming under President Donald Trump as he demanded money for a U.S.-Mexico border wall. With President Joe Biden facing down the Republican-controlled House as he runs for reelection in 2024 and some conservatives openly dismissive of the damage a shutdown can cause, the spending fight appears nearly certain to escalate.

The tension created by the GOP's pursuit of more non-defense spending cuts was evident during hearings held Wednesday and Thursday of the House Appropriations panel.

Democrats accused House Republicans of going back on their word. "Do you think any of us would have made a deal if we thought your '22 number was the deal?" said Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md. "What kind of deal is that? What kind of respect for yourselves is that?"

"You knew that wasn't a ceiling," said Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla. "Traditionally, that's where we are starting. Caps are not ceilings in our world. They are a starting point and then we negotiate from those numbers we have agreed to. That's how it has always been."

But Republicans said McCarthy was clear during negotiations that spending had to come down from current levels.

"We can try to fool the American people with smoke and mirrors and pretend, but the speaker was clear. We are in a debt crisis in this country," said Rep. Andy Harris, R-Md.

Under the debt ceiling agreement, the White House said nondefense spending was expected to be roughly flat in the next budget year and increase by 1% the following year. Defense spending would increase by about 3.3% next year and 1% the following year. The agreement to curb discretionary spending does not include programs like Medicare and Social Security, which are considered mandatory spending.

A few Republicans have urged leadership not to bend to a minority within the conference.

"I think we've just got to be really careful not to allow, you know, a small portion of our conference to continually be chipping away at previously agreed upon issues," said Rep. Steve Womack, R-Ark. "That top-line number was agreed to in the (debt-ceiling bill.) They may not like it. They voiced their displeasure last week. They kind of shut the House down, but we've got work to do. We need to be doing it."

Republicans only have a five-seat majority in the House, which magnifies the power that a small bloc can have. It took just 11 members, mostly members of the House Freedom Caucus, to stall House votes on legislation in early June and send lawmakers home early. One of those 11, Rep. Bob Good, R-Va., said moving to 2022 spending levels for nondefense programs will be good for Republican candidates in next year's general election because that's what voters are demanding.

"Democrats have no interest in cutting spending," Good said. "They have to be forced to do so. We should have used the debt ceiling to force them to cut spending. We should use the appropriations process to force them to cut spending. We shouldn't fear a government shutdown. Most of what we do up here is bad anyway."

Many senators, Democrat and Republican, did not seem as concerned about the possibility of a shutdown.

"This crowd that is giving McCarthy trouble is irrelevant for purposes of getting appropriations bills passed," said Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn. "When it comes to appropriations bills, you have to create a coalition that doesn't include the Freedom Caucus."

"In the end, I think we'll resolve these issues," said Sen. Susan Collins, the top Republican on the Senate Appropriations Committee.

## What to know as King Charles takes part in his first Trooping the Color birthday parade as monarch

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — King Charles III rode on horseback Saturday to take part in his first Trooping the Color ceremony as U.K. monarch, inspecting hundreds of soldiers and horses in a spectacular annual military display at central London's Horse Guards Parade.

Charles, 74, the colonel in chief, received the royal salute and watched as the most prestigious regiments in the U.K. army paraded to mark his official birthday.

It was the first time in more than 30 years that a U.K. monarch has taken part in the pomp-filled ceremony on horseback.

Earlier, Charles' eldest son, Prince William, and the king's siblings, Prince Edward and Princess Anne, also rode on horseback in procession from Buckingham Palace. All the royals were dressed in red and gold tunics and tall black bearskin hats, matching the uniforms worn by many of the 1,400 soldiers taking part.

Others in the royal family, including Queen Camilla, Kate, the Princess of Wales, and her three young children, rode in horse-drawn carriages as thousands of people thronged the Mall, the grand avenue outside Buckingham Palace, to watch the pageantry.

Here are some things to know about the colorful spectacle:

### BIRTHDAY PARADE

Trooping the Color is essentially a grand birthday parade to honor the reigning monarch. The annual ceremony is a tradition that dates back more than 260 years.

Huge crowds turn out each June to watch the display, which begins with a procession involving horses, musicians and hundreds of soldiers in ceremonial uniform from Buckingham Palace. The monarch then inspects their troops, including both foot guards and horse guards. Gun salutes and a crowd-pleasing military flyby over the palace typically round out the celebrations.

Charles' actual birthday is Nov. 14, 1948. But U.K. monarchs have traditionally celebrate two birthdays — their real one and an official one — to ensure that public celebrations can take place in warm summer weather.

Charles' late mother, Queen Elizabeth II, always held the Trooping the Color birthday parade in June, while she celebrated her actual April birthday privately with family.

### "THE COLOR"

The central part of the parade features a battle flag — or the "Color" — being displayed and marched past troops and the monarch.

This is a ceremonial reenactment of the way regimental flags were once displayed for soldiers on the battlefield to provide a crucial rallying point if they became disoriented or separated from their unit.

The flags were traditionally described as "Colors" because they displayed the uniform colors and insignia worn by soldiers of different units.

A different flag is trooped each year. This year the "Color" was the King's Color of the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards.

### KING ON HORSEBACK

Saturday was the first time a monarch has ridden on horseback at the event since Elizabeth did so in 1986.

The queen rode her favorite horse, called Burmese, to 18 Trooping the Color ceremonies until the black mare retired in 1986. After that she decided to use a carriage for the event instead.

Charles also rode on horseback for the spectacle last year, when as heir to the throne he inspected the troops on behalf of his mother. Elizabeth died last September at the age of 96.

### BONUS MILITARY FLYBY

The birthday parade typically reaches its climax when, at the end of the military procession, the royal family lines up on Buckingham Palace's balcony to watch a spectacular flyby.

The Royal Air Force's aerobatic team, the Red Arrows, usually wows the crowds as they fly in formation leaving plumes of red, white and blue vapor trails.

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This year, the flyby was even more impressive, because a similar display on Charles' coronation day in May had to be scaled back because of bad weather. Around 70 aircraft took part Saturday, including Spitfire and Hurricane fighters from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

Eighteen Typhoon fighter jets flying in precise formation spelt out "CR" — "Charles Rex" — in the sky as the royal family and thousands of spectators cheered.

## Eviction filings are 50% higher than they were pre-pandemic in some cities as rents rise

By MICHAEL CASEY and R.J. RICO Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Entering court using a walker, a doctor's note clutched in his hand, 70-year-old Dana Williams, who suffers serious heart problems, hypertension and asthma, pleaded to delay eviction from his two-bedroom apartment in Atlanta.

Although sympathetic, the judge said state law required him to evict Williams and his 25-year-old daughter De'mai Williams in April because they owed \$8,348 in unpaid rent and fees on their \$940-a-month apartment.

They have been living in limbo ever since.

They moved into a dilapidated Atlanta hotel room with water dripping through the bathroom ceiling, broken furniture and no refrigerator or microwave. But at \$275-a-week, it was all they could afford on Williams' \$900 monthly social security check and the \$800 his daughter gets biweekly from a state agency as her father's caretaker.

"I really don't want to be here by the time his birthday comes" in August, De'mai Williams said. "For his health, it's just not right."

The Williams family is among millions of tenants from New York state to Las Vegas who have been evicted or face imminent eviction.

After a lull during the pandemic, eviction filings by landlords have come roaring back, driven by rising rents and a long-running shortage of affordable housing. Most low-income tenants can no longer count on pandemic resources that had kept them housed, and many are finding it hard to recover because they haven't found steady work or their wages haven't kept pace with the rising cost of rent, food and other necessities.

Homelessness, as a result, is rising.

"Protections have ended, the federal moratorium is obviously over, and emergency rental assistance money has dried up in most places," said Daniel Grubbs-Donovan, a research specialist at Princeton University's Eviction Lab.

"Across the country, low-income renters are in an even worse situation than before the pandemic due to things like massive increases in rent during the pandemic, inflation and other pandemic-era related financial difficulties."

Eviction filings are more than 50% higher than the pre-pandemic average in some cities, according to the Eviction Lab, which tracks filings in nearly three dozen cities and 10 states. Landlords file around 3.6 million eviction cases every year.

Among the hardest-hit are Houston, where rates were 56% higher in April and 50% higher in May. In Minneapolis/St. Paul, rates rose 106% in March, 55% in April and 63% in May. Nashville was 35% higher and Phoenix 33% higher in May; Rhode Island was up 32% in May.

The latest data mirrors trends that started last year, with the Eviction Lab finding nearly 970,000 evictions filed in locations it tracks — a 78.6% increase compared to 2021, when much of the country was following an eviction moratorium. By December, eviction filings were nearly back to pre-pandemic levels.

At the same time, rent prices nationwide are up about 5% from a year ago and 30.5% above 2019, according to the real estate company Zillow. There are few places for displaced tenants to go, with the National Low Income Housing Coalition estimating a 7.3 million shortfall of affordable units nationwide.

Many vulnerable tenants would have been evicted long ago if not for a safety net created during the



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pandemic.

The federal government, as well as many states and localities, issued moratoriums during the pandemic that put evictions on hold; most have now ended. There was also \$46.5 billion in federal Emergency Rental Assistance that helped tenants pay rent and funded other tenant protections. Much of that has been spent or allocated, and calls for additional resources have failed to gain traction in Congress.

"The disturbing rise of evictions to pre-pandemic levels is an alarming reminder of the need for us to act — at every level of government — to keep folks safely housed," said Democratic U.S. Rep. Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts, urging Congress to pass a bill cracking down on illegal evictions, fund legal help for tenants and keep evictions off credit reports.

Housing courts are again filling up and ensnaring the likes of 79-year-old Maria Jackson.

Jackson worked for nearly two decades building a loyal clientele as a massage therapist in Las Vegas, which has seen one of the country's biggest jumps in eviction filings. That evaporated during the pandemic-triggered shutdown in March 2020. Her business fell apart; she sold her car and applied for food stamps.

She got behind on the \$1,083 monthly rent on her one-bedroom apartment, and owing \$12,489 in back rent was evicted in March. She moved in with a former client about an hour northeast of Las Vegas.

"Who could imagine this happening to someone who has worked all their life?" Jackson asked.

Last month she found a room in Las Vegas for \$400 a month, paid for with her \$1,241 monthly social security check. It's not home, but "I'm one of the lucky ones," she said.

"I could be in a tent or at a shelter right now."

In upstate New York, evictions are rising after a moratorium lifted last year. Forty of the state's 62 counties had higher eviction filings in 2022 than before the pandemic, including two where eviction filings more than doubled compared to 2019.

"How do we care for the folks who are evicted ... when the capacity is not in place and ready to roll out in places that haven't experienced a lot of eviction recently?" said Russell Weaver, whose Cornell University lab tracks evictions statewide.

Housing advocates had hoped the Democrat-controlled state Legislature would pass a bill requiring landlords to provide justification for evicting tenants and limit rent increases to 3% or 1.5 times inflation. But it was excluded from the state budget and lawmakers failed to pass it before the legislative session ended this month.

"Our state Legislature should have fought harder," said Oscar Brewer, a tenant organizer facing eviction from the apartment he shares with his 6-year-old daughter in Rochester.

In Texas, evictions were kept down during the pandemic by federal assistance and the moratoriums. But as protections went away, housing prices skyrocketed in Austin, Dallas and elsewhere, leading to a record 270,000 eviction filings statewide in 2022.

Advocates were hoping the state Legislature might provide relief, directing some of the \$32 billion budget surplus into rental assistance. But that hasn't happened.

"It's a huge mistake to miss our shot here," said Ben Martin, a research director at nonprofit Texas Housers. "If we don't address it, now, the crisis is going to get worse."

Still, some pandemic protections are being made permanent, and having an impact on eviction rates. Nationwide, 200 measures have passed since January 2021, including legal representation for tenants, sealing eviction records and mediation to resolve cases before they reach court, said the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

These measures are credited with keeping eviction filings down in several cities, including New York City and Philadelphia — 41% below pre-pandemic levels in May for the former and 33% for the latter.

A right-to-counsel program and the fact that housing courts aren't prosecuting cases involving rent arrears are among the factors keeping New York City filings down.

In Philadelphia, 70% of the more than 5,000 tenants and landlords who took part in the eviction diversion program resolved their cases. The city also set aside \$30 million in assistance for those with less than \$3,000 in arrears, and started a right-to-counsel program, doubling representation rates for tenants.

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The future is not so bright for Williams and his daughter, who remain stuck in their dimly-lit hotel room. Without even a microwave or nearby grocery stores, they rely on pizza deliveries and snacks from the hotel vending machine.

Williams used to love having his six grandchildren over for dinner at his old apartment, but those days are over for now.

"I just want to be able to host my grandchildren," he said, pausing to cough heavily. "I just want to live somewhere where they can come and sit down and hang out with me."

Casey reported from Boston. AP writer Rio Yamat in Las Vegas contributed.

## A beginner's guide to Juneteenth: How can all Americans celebrate?

By TERRY TANG Associated Press

For more than one-and-a-half centuries, the Juneteenth holiday has been sacred to many Black communities.

It marks the day in 1865 enslaved people in Galveston, Texas found out they had been freed — after the end of the Civil war, and two years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

Since it was designated a federal holiday in 2021, Juneteenth has become more universally recognized beyond Black America. Many people get the day off work or school, and there are a plethora of street festivals, fairs, concerts and other events.

People who never gave the holiday on June 19 more than a passing thought may be asking themselves, is there a "right" way to celebrate Juneteenth?

For beginners and those brushing up history, here are some answers:

**IS JUNETEENTH A SOLEMN DAY OF REMEMBRANCE OR MORE OF A PARTY?**

It just depends on what you want. Juneteenth festivities are rooted in cookouts and barbecues. In the beginnings of the holiday celebrated as Black Americans' true Independence Day, the outdoors allowed for large, raucous reunions among formerly enslaved family, many of whom had been separated. The gatherings were especially revolutionary because they were free of restrictive measures, known as "Black Codes," enforced in Confederate states, controlling whether liberated slaves could vote, buy property, gather for worship and other aspects of daily life.

Alan Freeman, 60, grew up celebrating Juneteenth every year in Houston, 50 miles (80 kilometers) north of Galveston. A comedian who is producing Galveston's first ever Juneteenth Comedy Festival on Saturday, he has vivid memories of smoke permeating his entire neighborhood because so many people were using their barbecue pits for celebratory cookouts. You could go to anyone's house and be welcomed to join in the feast, which could include grilled chicken and beef and other regional cuisines — jerk meats, fried fish, Jamaican plantains.

"It's where I began to really see Black unity because I realized that that was the one day that African Americans considered ours," Freeman said. "The one holiday that was ours. We didn't have to share with anybody. And it was about freedom because what we understood is that we were emancipated from slavery. But, there was so many beautiful activities."

Others may choose to treat Juneteenth as a day of rest and remembrance. That can mean doing community service, attending an education panel or taking time off.

The important thing is to make people feel they have options on how to observe the occasion, said Dr. David Anderson, a Black pastor and CEO of Gracism Global, a consulting firm helping leaders navigate conversations bridging divides across race and culture.

"Just like the Martin Luther King holiday, we say it's a day of service and a lot of people will do things. There are a lot of other people who are just 'I appreciate Dr. King, I'll watch what's on the television, and I'm gonna rest,'" Anderson said. "I don't want to make people feel guilty about that. What I want to do is give everyday people a choice."

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WHAT IF YOU'VE NEVER CELEBRATED JUNETEENTH?

Anderson, 57, of Columbia, Maryland, never did anything on Juneteenth in his youth. He didn't learn about it until his 30s.

"I think many folks haven't known about it — who are even my color as an African American male. Even if you heard about it and knew about it, you didn't celebrate it," Anderson said. "It was like just a part of history. It wasn't a celebration of history."

For many African Americans, the farther away from Texas that they grew up increased the likelihood they didn't have big Juneteenth celebrations regularly. In the South, the day can vary based on when word of Emancipation reached each state.

Anderson has no special event planned other than giving his employees Friday and Monday off. If anything, Anderson is thinking about the fact it's Father's Day this weekend.

"If I can unite Father's Day and Juneteenth to be with my family and honor them, that would be wonderful," he said.

WHAT KIND OF PUBLIC JUNETEENTH EVENTS ARE GOING ON AROUND THE COUNTRY?

Search online and you will find a smorgasbord of gatherings in major cities and suburbs all varying in scope and tone. Some are more carnival-esque festivals with food trucks, arts and crafts and parades. Within those festivals, you'll likely find access to professionals in health care, finance and community resources. There also are concerts and fashion shows to highlight Black excellence and creativity. For those who want to look back, plenty of organizations and universities host panels to remind people of Juneteenth's history.

ARE THERE SPECIAL FOODS SERVED ON JUNETEENTH?

Aside from barbecue, the color red has been a through line for Juneteenth food for generations. Red symbolizes the bloodshed and sacrifice of enslaved ancestors. A Juneteenth menu might incorporate items like barbecued ribs or other red meat, watermelon and red velvet cake. Drinks like fruit punch and red Kool-Aid may make an appearance at the table.

DOES HOW YOU CELEBRATE JUNETEENTH MATTER IF YOU AREN'T BLACK?

Dr. Karida Brown, a sociology professor at Emory University whose research focuses on race, said there's no reason to feel awkward about wanting to recognize Juneteenth because you have no personal ties or you're not Black. In fact, embrace it.

"I would reframe that and challenge my non-Black folks who want to lean into Juneteenth and celebrate," Brown said. "It absolutely is your history. It absolutely is a part of your experience. ... Isn't this all of our history? The good, the bad, the ugly, the story of emancipation and freedom for for your Black brothers and sisters under the Constitution of the law."

If you want to bring some authenticity to your recognition of Juneteenth, educate yourself. Attending a street festival or patronizing a Black-owned business is a good start but it also would be good to "make your mind better," Anderson said.

"That goes longer than a celebration," Anderson said. "I think Black people need to do it too because it's new for us as well, in America. But for non-Black people, if they could read on this topic and read on Black history beyond Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks, that would show me that you're really serious about growing in this area."

If you're struggling with how to "ethically" mark the day, Brown also suggested expanding your knowledge of why the holiday matters so much. That can be through reading, attending an event or going to an African American history museum if there's one nearby.

"Have that full human experience of seeing yourself in and through the eyes of others, even if that's not your own lived experience," she said. "That is a radical human act that is awesome and should be encouraged and celebrated."

WHAT ARE OTHER NAMES USED TO REFER TO JUNETEENTH?

Over the decades, Juneteenth has also been called Freedom Day, Emancipation Day, Black Fourth of July and second Independence Day among others.

"Because 1776, Fourth of July, where we're celebrating freedom and liberty and all of that, that did not include my descendants," Brown said. "Black people in America were still enslaved. So that that holiday always comes with a bittersweet tinge to it."

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IS THERE A PROPER JUNETEENTH GREETING?

It's typical to wish people a "Happy Juneteenth" or "Happy Teenth," said Freeman, the comedian.

"You know how at Christmas people will say 'Merry Christmas' to each other and not even know each other? You can get a 'Merry Christmas' from everybody. This is the same way," Freeman said.

No matter what race you are, you will "absolutely" elicit a smile if you utter either greeting, he said.

"I believe that a non-Black person who celebrates Juneteenth ... it's their one time to have a voice, to participate."

Tang, who reported from Phoenix, is a member of The Associated Press' Race and Ethnicity team. Follow her on Twitter at @ttangAP.

## Today in History: June 18, first U.S. woman in space

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, June 18, the 169th day of 2023. There are 196 days left in the year. This is Father's Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 18, 1983, astronaut Sally K. Ride became America's first woman in space as she and four colleagues blasted off aboard the space shuttle Challenger on a six-day mission.

On this date:

In 1778, American forces entered Philadelphia as the British withdrew during the Revolutionary War.

In 1812, the War of 1812 began as the United States Congress approved, and President James Madison signed, a declaration of war against Britain.

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte met defeat at Waterloo as British and Prussian troops defeated the French in Belgium.

In 1940, during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill urged his countrymen to conduct themselves in a manner that would prompt future generations to say, "This was their finest hour."

In 1971, Southwest Airlines began operations, with flights between Dallas and San Antonio, and Dallas and Houston.

In 1979, President Jimmy Carter and Soviet President Leonid I. Brezhnev signed the SALT II strategic arms limitation treaty in Vienna.

In 1986, 25 people were killed when a twin-engine plane and helicopter carrying sightseers collided over the Grand Canyon.

In 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Georgia v. McCollum*, ruled that criminal defendants could not use race as a basis for excluding potential jurors from their trials.

In 2003, baseball Hall-of-Famer Larry Doby, who broke the American League's color barrier in 1947, died in Montclair, New Jersey, at age 79.

In 2010, death row inmate Ronnie Lee Gardner died in a barrage of bullets as Utah carried out its first firing squad execution in 14 years. (Gardner had been sentenced to death for fatally shooting attorney Michael Burdell during a failed escape attempt from a Salt Lake City courthouse.)

In 2011, Clarence Clemons, the saxophone player for the E Street Band who was one of the key influences in Bruce Springsteen's life and music, died in Florida at age 69.

In 2020, the Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, rejected President Donald Trump's effort to end legal protections for 650,000 young immigrants.

Ten years ago: The Taliban and the U.S. said they would hold talks on finding a political solution to ending nearly 12 years of war in Afghanistan, as the international coalition formally handed over control of the country's security to the Afghan army and police. Declaring "the days of Rambo are over," Maj. Gen. Bennet Sacolick, director of force management for U.S. Special Operations Command, said that cultural, social and behavioral concerns might be bigger hurdles than tough physical fitness requirements for women looking to join the military's special operations units.

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Five years ago: President Donald Trump announced that he was directing the Pentagon to create the "Space Force" as an independent service branch. Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton described as a "moral and humanitarian crisis" the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" policy that had separated children from their parents at the southern U.S. border. Trump defended his administration's border policies, saying the country "will not be a migrant camp" on his watch. The Supreme Court allowed electoral maps that were challenged as excessively partisan to remain in place for now, declining to rule on the bigger issue of whether to limit redistricting for political gain. Troubled rapper-singer XXXTentacion was shot and killed in Florida in what police called an apparent robbery attempt.

One year ago: The price of bitcoin fell below \$20,000 for the first time since late 2020, in a fresh sign that the selloff in cryptocurrencies was deepening. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said the Group of Seven leading democracies will make clear at their upcoming summit that Ukraine can expect to receive the support it needs amid the Russian invasion "for as long as necessary." An anonymous bidder shelled out a record \$19 million for a private lunch with billionaire Warren Buffet at a steakhouse in New York City. Columnist and political commentator Mark Shields, who shared his insight into American politics and wit on "PBS NewsHour" for decades, died at age 85.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., is 86. Sir Paul McCartney is 81. Actor Constance McCashin is 76. Actor Linda Thorson is 76. Former Sen. Mike Johanns, R-Neb., is 73. Actor Isabella Rossellini is 71. Actor Carol Kane is 71. Actor Brian Benben is 67. Actor Andrea Evans is 66. Rock singer Alison Moyet is 62. Rock musician Dizzy Reed (Guns N' Roses) is 60. Figure skater Kurt Browning is 57. R&B singer Nathan Morris (Boyz II Men) is 52. Actor Mara Hobel is 52. Singer-songwriter Ray LaMontagne is 50. Rapper Silkk the Shocker is 48. Actor Alana de la Garza is 47. Country singer Blake Shelton is 47. Rock musician Steven Chen (Airborne Toxic Event) is 45. Actor David Giuntoli is 43. Drummer Josh Dun (Twenty One Pilots) is 35. Actor Renee Olstead is 34. Actor Jacob Anderson is 33. Actor Willa Holland is 32.