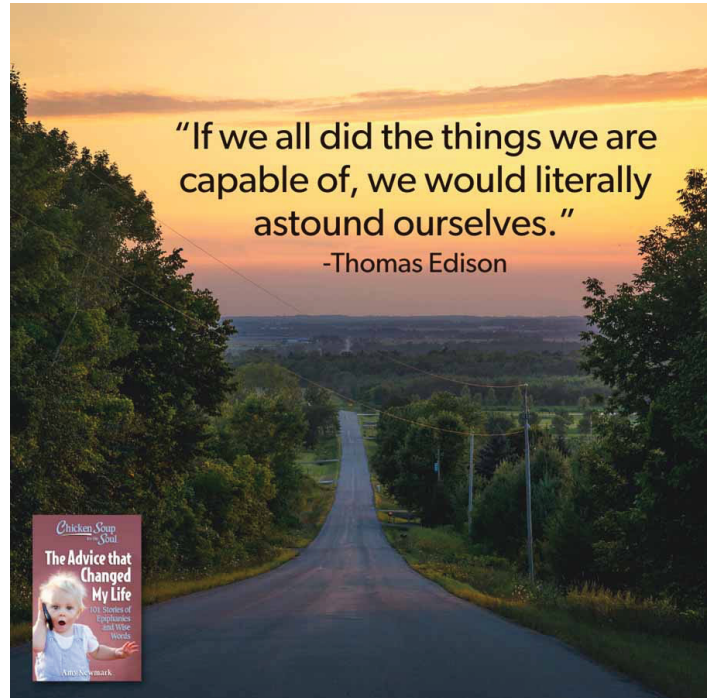


Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 1 of 63

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Newsweek Bulletin](#)
- [3- Prairie Doc: Coping with the "out of our control" reality of Agriculture](#)
- [4- That's Life by Tony Bender](#)
- [6- Weekly Vikings Recap](#)
- [7- Jr. Teeners split with Smittys](#)
- [8- SD News Watch: Rising caseloads lead to first new magistrate position for Sioux Falls area in 20 years](#)
- [8- SD News Watch: Seeking election integrity behind closed doors](#)
- [9- SD News Watch: A year after Dobbs: Congress takes a back seat on federal abortion policy](#)
- [13- Weather Pages](#)
- [17- Daily Devotional](#)
- [18- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [19- Subscription Form](#)
- [20- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [21- News from the Associated Press](#)



"If we all did the things we are capable of, we would literally astound ourselves."

-Thomas Edison

Groton Community Calendar

Tuesday, June 20

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

Pantry, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Groton Community Center

Senior Menu: Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, oriental blend vegetables, peaches, whole wheat bread.

U12BB at Doland, 8 p.m.; U10B/W at Webster, 2 games, 6 p.m.; U8 R&B at Webster, 6 p.m., 2 games; T-Ball scrimmage, 6 p.m.

Wednesday, June 21

Senior Menu: Turkey sub sandwich, lettuce and tomato, macaroni salad, watermelon.

Jr. Legion hosts Hamlin, 1 game, 8 p.m.; Legion hosts Hamlin, 1 game, 6 p.m.; June 21: U10R/W hosts Borge, 2 games, 5:30 p.m.; U8 Red hosts Borge, 5:30 p.m., 2 games; Softball at Clark (U8 at 6 p.m.)

Thursday, June 22

Senior Menu: Tater tot hot dish, corn, apple juice, mandarin oranges, whole wheat bread.

Jr. Teener host Webster, 2 games, 5:30 p.m.; June 22: U12BB vs. Borge 12 at Aberdeen North Complex, 2 games, 5:30 p.m.; Softball hosts Mellette (U10 6:00 DH (Pink/White); U12 6:00 DH)

Friday, June 23

Senior Menu: Tuna salad croissant, pea and cheese salad, mixed fruit.

Softball at Webster (U12 6:00 DH); T-Ball Gold hosts Andover, 6 p.m.; Jr. Legion at Lake Norden, 1 game, 7 p.m.; Legion at Lake Norden, 1 game, 5 p.m.

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.
© 2023 Groton Daily Independent

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 2 of 63

The Bulletin by Newsweek

JANUARY 24, 2023

World in Brief

review the material under "the direct supervision of Defense Counsel or a member of Defense Counsel's staff," Judge Bruce Reinhart specified.

Alibaba Group said its chairman Daniel Zhang will step down in September in a major executive overhaul at the Chinese e-commerce giant since its restructuring. Eddie Yongming Wu, chairman of Alibaba's e-commerce division, will succeed Zhang.

Tropical Storm Bret is expected to intensify into a hurricane later this week, and is on a collision course with the Lesser Antilles, according to the National Hurricane Center. It is not yet known if the storm will reach Florida.

Spotify executive and podcaster Bill Simmons lashed out at Prince Harry and Meghan Markle following their departure from the streaming platform, calling them "grifters."

Four people were injured after a man entered three Chinese restaurants in Auckland, New Zealand, and attacked diners with an axe. Local media said the man was carrying several other weapons.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Russia launched widespread overnight air strikes on Ukraine, targeting key infrastructure and agricultural and farming properties. The strikes come after Ukraine said its forces had pushed Russian soldiers and retaken the eighth village of Piatykhvatky in the southern settlement.

TALKING POINTS

"Antony Blinken flatly said he doesn't support Taiwanese independence. No surprise that these cowards fully support Communist China. I still remember when Pelosi visited Taiwan, and Biden begged her not to go. Even she had more courage on the issue. One day we'll find out what they really have on Joe and the Parmesan Pornstar... and I'm sure it won't be pretty." Rep. Lauren Boebert lashed out at the secretary of state, calling him a "coward" while praising former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi over Taiwanese independence.

"The people living in these mountains who have contributed next to nothing to global warming are at high risk due to climate change. Current adaptation efforts are wholly insufficient, and we are extremely concerned that without greater support, these communities will be unable to cope," says Amina Maharjan, author of a report that found that glaciers in the Himalayas are melting at unprecedented rates and could lose up to 75% of their current volume by the century's end, threatening the lives of about two billion people downstream.

WHAT TO WATCH IN THE DAY AHEAD

John Eastman, a conservative attorney and former adviser for Donald Trump, is expected to testify before the State Bar of California in a proceeding that could potentially lead to him losing his license to practice law in the state.

On the economic radar, data on housing starts for May is expected at 8:30 ET.

FedEx Corp, Freedom Holding and La-Z-Boy Inc are among major companies set to report their quarterly results.

Indian Prime Minister embarks on a four-day visit to the U.S. He arrives in New York today before heading to Washington to meet with President Joe Biden for bilateral talks.

Controversial influencer Andrew Tate, his brother Tristan and two other suspects have been charged with human trafficking, rape and forming a criminal gang to sexually exploit women in Romania.

At least 6 teenagers, including four minors, were shot and injured in Milwaukee after Juneteenth celebrations had just finished.

A judge in Florida has ordered Donald Trump's lawyers not to release evidence in the classified documents case to the media or the public. Trump "shall not retain copies" and

Coping with the “out of our control” reality of Agriculture

Marrying a farm kid has shown me the immense amount of pride in being part of the Ag community. It is prevalent that the agricultural profession, while rewarding, is challenging. Running big dollar operations that are both physically and mentally demanding creates some serious strain on our mental health. Whether it's a co-op employee spraying chemicals or spreading fertilizer for 70+ hours a week or a farmer during planting or harvest, the demand never truly stops.

In my practice I talk a lot about focusing on what is within our control. I can control the way I cope in a situation, but I cannot control how someone else chooses to cope. Likewise, I can control my choices on what products I utilize in my operation, but some things are simply out of my control, like grain and livestock prices, or the unpredictable weather of the Midwest. The livelihood of Ag operations and families balances on influences out of our control. We are forced to leave many factors up to chance, and that creates a lot of pressure.

When we focus on things out of our control, we can start to experience negative mental health impacts. During times of stress, our body releases hormones to help regulate our stress responses. We experience toxic stress when our body is constantly releasing stress hormones into our body, which can create negative effects on our health. Starting in childhood and throughout our life, we learn mechanisms to help ourselves cope during stressful experiences.

In Agriculture there are many things outside of our control. So, what can we control? We can control how we choose to take care of ourselves and whether we use healthy coping mechanisms to manage stress. Healthy mechanisms might include exercise, healthy diets, spending time outside, mindfulness, relaxation, quality time with loved ones, or taking time to do things we enjoy. Likewise, when we are experiencing high stress moments, it is okay to step away from machinery, our phone, or other people for short periods of time. This is an example of one healthy coping skill to take care of ourselves in those moments.

There is no shame in seeking support. If you or someone you know is struggling, please reach out:

- Avera Farm and Rural Stress Hotline at 1-800-691-4336.
- Dial 2-1-1 to be connected to the Helpline Center for additional resources based on your community.
- Call or text 9-8-8 anytime to be connected to a professional crisis counselor for free.

The old adage goes, “pull yourself up by your bootstraps and deal with it.” Mental health stigma still exists, but how wonderful would life be if we learned to pair our Midwestern resilience with taking care of ourselves and showing others it's okay to need and accept support? Don't wait to take care of yourself. Your family, your legacy, and YOU deserve a healthy you.

Curstie Konold, MPH, CSW, QMHP is the Outpatient Clinical Mental Health Therapist Avera Medical Group Behavioral Health Brookings Clinic. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show based on science, built on trust for 21 seasons, streaming live on Facebook and SDPB most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



Based on Science, Built on Trust



Curstie Konold, MPH, CSW, QMHP

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 4 of 63

This column is gay

I caught an interview last weekend with author Juno Dawson about the recent banning of "This Book is Gay," which they wrote in 2015 as a sex education book focused on helping LGBTQ and straight kids understand each other and themselves. Dawson is transgender.

I can hear some of you now. "Hold it, Tony, can't you write about your grandpa's horse, the weather, or that one time at band camp...?"

Sure. But hang with me. I describe this weekly missive as "a human interest column," and this topic must interest a lot of people. Books are being banned and a chunk of society that's always been with us faces increasing, even legislated, discrimination.

As a writer, I'm concerned when people in power decide that words are a threat. It got me wondering when society decided that diversity, differences, and sex, even, were a threat.

Spoiler alert: We're all here because somebody did it. And it's OK.

I think it's OK, necessary, actually, to examine our societal hang-ups from time to time. When the aliens get here who's going to explain to them why men can go topless on an American beach and women can't? And why do some people view the personal relationships of others as a threat?

Sexual diversity has always been with us. After a local politician railed against it in a political reorganization meeting, I talked with him. "You love who you love," I said.

"You know," I said in a conversation with a conservative employee, "Same sex relationships are like any marriage. It's not all about sex." ("You got that right," many of you are saying.) Like all relationships, it's primarily about companionship.

In Native American communities, the term "two-spirits" reflects such natural societal diversity.

I haven't read Dawson's book, but as an ally, I think I will. You don't have to understand diversity to accept it, but it helps. Education is the key to everything.

We've been fumbling around with sex education for a long time. In sixth grade, in a very clandestine manner, the girls were pulled out of the classroom and herded to a dimly-lit basement room to talk about "girl things." There was a slide show and everything. (I peeked.) It must have been horrible—they may have been sworn to secrecy—because they never talked about it.

When I became the single parent of a freshman girl, however, I become well-acquainted those mysteries. It's been as natural as any discussion about anything, and I still remember India calling me her "best friend," because it meant we could talk about anything. And do.

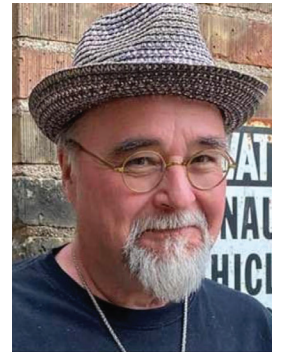
But give educators credit. Coming out of the free love 60's, they knew it had to be done. They just didn't know how.

I remember the county nurse's first attempts to explain to a room full of junior high boys why a light breeze produced an turgidity worthy of four-hour Viagra warnings. Ah, the good old days. When we submitted written, anonymous questions to the young woman, some of us wondered if she could help us with that. Her solution was a good hard slap to the offending appendage, thus, our introduction to S&M.

There was enormous pressure on educators and parents to educate children, and years later, my father's cold sweats at the breakfast table finally made sense when he worked up the courage to have "the talk." By then, I was no longer a virgin. "Thanks, Dad. Got it covered." I didn't, but neither of us were willing to surrender the enormous relief that sentence provided.

Like most boys of the era, I was small-town provincial. "Anyone ever offers me drugs," I'm gonna punch 'em in the schnoz," I declared. "Any (gay slur) every comes on to me, I'll kick their a--."

So much for that. On the second count, I was in a Denver nightclub when a musician in Jill Sobule's band politely approached me. I let him down easy. "I'm sorry, I don't swing that way, but I'm flattered." I really was, but I had an enormous crush on Jill—everyone who saw her sing did—but she turned out to be gay, too! We became friends, though.



That's Life

by Tony Bender

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 5 of 63

I had Black, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and gay friends and coworkers. Still do. Everyone knows someone who is gay. Even if you think you don't.

One night, the biggest, burliest disc jockey in town—a big star—confided in me the difficulties he faced as a gay man. It was a surprise and a revelation. A very human moment. If it was tough for him in the diversity of the city, imagine what it's like living in a small town where provincial attitudes still percolate. But even in small North Dakota towns, we've come a long way. Our communities are more diverse. We even have Finlanders.

We evolve. I don't think the politics of the day reflect the hearts of most people.

It's not a choice. We are who we are. We love who we love.

Live and let live.

Weekly Vikings Recap - Greatest Moments in Metrodome History

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

Since the release of Dalvin Cook, it's been a slow news week for the Minnesota Vikings. There is speculation that Danielle Hunter might get traded, but until it happens, Hunter is still under contract for this upcoming season. That will be something to monitor over the few weeks until training camp starts.

As the offseason continues, the fun articles will do so as well. This week, we thought it would be fun to look back at the greatest Vikings moments in Metrodome history as this will mark 10 years since the final season in that historic stadium.

Adrian Peterson rushes for 296 yards (2007)

Not often was the Metrodome home to record-breaking performances, but on November 4, 2007, the Vikings fans got to witness the greatest rushing performance in NFL history. Adrian Peterson, in just the eighth game of his hall-of-fame career, rushed for a record-breaking 296 yards against a very good San Diego Chargers defense. From that moment on, Adrian Peterson became the face of the Minnesota Vikings over the next decade.

Brett Favre to Greg Lewis (2009)

In Brett Favre's first home game as a Minnesota Viking, the team found themselves trailing the San Francisco 49ers with only 12 seconds remaining. However, the magic of Brett Favre, (a thing that Vikings fans had become familiar with over the years), came out as Favre found Greg Lewis in the back of the endzone to secure the Vikings' victory. The Vikings would go on to have an incredible season, thanks in part to the jolt of electricity that Favre's throw gave to the team and the Vikings' fanbase.

The Vikings blowout Dallas Cowboys in NFC Divisional Round (2009)

The Vikings entered their first game of the 2009 NFL playoffs against a Dallas Cowboys team that many experts predicted would beat the Vikings. However, the Vikings quickly quieted those doubters as the team destroyed the Cowboys, 34-3, thanks to Sidney Rice's three-touchdown performance. The Vikings' performance against the Cowboys was so impressive that they got accused of running up the score late in the game by some Cowboys' players.

Randy Moss's First Game in the NFL (1998)

After drafting Randy Moss in the first round of the 1998 NFL Draft, the Vikings opened the 1998 season against their former division rival, Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Immediately, Moss put himself on the NFL map as he went for two touchdowns in the game. Not since Jim Brown had a player come in as a rookie and become the best player at his position, but that's what Moss did with his Week 1 performance.

Adrian Peterson Comes Up Nine Yards Short of Eric Dickerson's Record (2012)

Needing to win to get into the playoffs, the Vikings faced off against the Green Bay Packers in the final game of the 2012 season. However, the storyline coming to that game was not about the Vikings' playoff implications but rather that Adrian Peterson was 208 yards away from breaking Eric Dickerson's single-season rushing record. Given that Peterson had run for 210 yards against the Packers just four games earlier, many thought Peterson would break the record. However, Peterson fell nine yards short as he finished the game with 199 rushing yards and 2,097 rushing yards on the season.

Herschel Walker's First Game as a Viking (1989)

After the Vikings made the historic Herschel Walker trade, Walker quickly suited up to play in the Vikings' next game against the Green Bay Packers. Walker's performance in that game was impressive as he ran for 148 yards on only 18 carries. In Walker's first two touches, he had an electrifying 51-yard kickoff return that got called back on a holding penalty and a 47-yard run where he lost his shoe in the process. Sadly, this would be Walker's finest moment as a Viking and now the trade is known more for the Cowboys' successes from it rather than the Vikings'.

Barring some big Vikings news, we will continue this article next week with the worst moments in Metrodome history.

Groton Jr. Teeners Can't Quite Erase 5-Run Deficit in Loss to Aberdeen Smittys

Groton Jr. Teeners fought back after falling down by five runs in the fourth inning. The comeback fell just short though, in a 7-5 defeat to Aberdeen Smittys on Monday. Groton Jr. Teeners scored three runs in the failed comeback on a walk by Ethan Kroll, a groundout by Alex Abeln, and a double by Ryder Schelle.

Groton Jr. Teeners got things started in the first inning when Austin Fisher induced Braeden Flihs to hit into a fielder's choice, but one run scored.

Aberdeen Smittys pulled away for good with three runs in the second inning. In the second Wheeler Malsam singled on a 2-1 count, scoring one run, Jamison Opp singled on a 2-2 count, scoring one run, and Bennett Eisenbeisz doubled on a 1-0 count, scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Teeners notched three runs in the sixth inning. Kroll, Abeln, and Schelle all moved runners across the plate with RBIs in the inning.

Fisher earned the victory on the mound for Aberdeen Smittys. The fireballer went three innings, allowing two runs on two hits and striking out two. Joe Cogley threw three innings in relief out of the bullpen.

TC Schuster took the loss for Groton jr. Teeners 14U. The righthander went four innings, allowing seven runs on eight hits and striking out two.

Kroll, Easton Weber, and Schelle all had one hit to lead Groton jr. Teeners 14U.

Aberdeen Smittys tallied eight hits in the game. Malsam and Eisenbeisz each racked up multiple hits for Aberdeen Smittys. Aberdeen Smittys didn't commit a single error in the field. Thomas Severson had seven chances in the field, the most on the team.

Groton Jr. Teeners Clinches Lead in Fourth Inning for Victory Over Aberdeen Smittys

Groton Jr. Teeners snagged a late lead and defeated Aberdeen Smittys 7-5 on Tuesday. The game was tied at four with Groton Jr. Teeners batting in the top of the fourth when Ethan Kroll doubled on a 2-2 count, scoring one run.

Aberdeen Smittys scored four runs in the second inning, but Groton Jr. Teeners still managed to pull out the victory. Joe Cogley, Cowboy Haskell, Bradon Heuer, and Bennett Eisenbeisz all moved runners across the plate with RBIs in the inning.

In the top of the third inning, Groton Jr. Teeners tied things up at four when Drake Soderlund induced TC Schuster to hit into a fielder's choice, but one run scored.

Karson Zak was the winning pitcher for Groton jr. Teeners 14U. The pitcher went four innings, allowing five runs on five hits. Alex Abeln threw one inning in relief out of the bullpen. Abeln recorded the last three outs to earn the save for Groton jr. Teeners 14U.

Soderlund took the loss for Aberdeen Smittys. The hurler surrendered seven runs on six hits over three innings, striking out three.

Groton Jr. Teeners collected seven hits. Ryder Schelle and Kroll all had multiple hits for Groton jr. Teeners 14U. Schelle went 3-for-3 at the plate to lead Groton Jr. Teeners in hits. Groton Jr. Teeners didn't commit a single error in the field. Schuster had five chances in the field, the most on the team.

Heuer led Aberdeen Smittys with two hits in three at bats.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Rising caseloads lead to first new magistrate position for Sioux Falls area in 20 years

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JUNE 19, 2023 2:20 PM

The Second Circuit, serving Minnehaha and Lincoln counties, handles over one-third of the state's court cases, according to Second Circuit Presiding Judge Robin Houwman.

The growth of the Sioux Falls metro area, adding nearly 50,000 residents to Minnehaha and over 40,000 to Lincoln since 2000, has led to a rising caseload — with Houwman expecting the circuit to top 60,000 cases this year.

The state Supreme Court added a new magistrate judge to the circuit Friday — making it the first new magistrate judge position added to the circuit in nearly 20 years.

The addition of the new magistrate judge will help meet the demands of the growing area, Houwman said in an emailed statement.

"In the first year of operation for the new courtroom in the expanded Minnehaha County Jail facility (2020), the magistrate judges conducted over 6,500 initial appearances on new arrests booked at the Minnehaha County Jail, held every single working day of the year," Houwman said.

Attorney Jonathan Leddige was appointed as the new judge, bringing the number of full-time magistrate judges in the Second Circuit from four to five. Magistrate judges assist the circuit court in processing minor criminal cases, like speeding tickets, and less serious civil actions. There are 12 circuit judges in the circuit who handle major criminal and civil cases.

Leddige has been a public defender at the Minnehaha County Public Defender's Office for nine years and spent a year teaching criminal defense at the University of South Dakota. Prior to that, he was a public defender for Hennepin County in Minnesota and practiced immigration law.

Originally from Reynolds, North Dakota, Leddige graduated with a degree in political science from the University of North Dakota. He graduated in 2011 from the North Dakota School of Law.

Leddige will take the bench on July 10.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.

COMMENTARY

Seeking election integrity behind closed doors

Secretary of state conducts meetings in private after promising transparency

DANA HESS

JUNE 19, 2023 2:19 PM

The shouting about the mishandling of the 2020 presidential election has been long-winded and false. However, it has led a number of states, including South Dakota, to make moves designed to increase election integrity. One move was the passage in the last legislative session of Senate Bill 160 which requires county auditors to conduct a post-election audit within 15 days after an election in 5% of the precincts in the county.

Post-election audits will be one of the topics when Secretary of State Monae Johnson convenes a 15-member group to conduct a summer study of election audits and draft legislation. The group includes

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 9 of 63

four county auditors, one former county auditor, three lawmakers, two county commissioners, two city finance officers, a board of elections member, a city mayor and a citizen from Sioux Falls.

The Secretary of State's Office told KELO that the plan for the committee is discussion on June 21, a draft on July 20 and finalization of the draft on Aug. 22. As far as what's said in the discussion or drafted by the group, we'll all have to wait to find out. Johnson has said she will conduct her summer study away from public view. In other words, the group will do its work in secret.

Johnson is likely within her rights to close the door on the public as she conducts those meetings. Unlike a legislative summer study, the secretary of state's ad hoc committee meeting isn't required to be held in public. However, just because Johnson can close the meeting doesn't mean that she should.

In the KELO story, Hand County Auditor Doug DeBoer explained that the meetings should be closed so that any disagreements among study group members are kept among themselves. He thinks it's best if the study group members can speak freely.

Rep. Kameron Nelson, a Sioux Falls Democrat, is also one of the study group members. He calls having the meetings closed to the public "inappropriate." He's right. Elections should be transparent, as should be any discussion about election integrity, how to enhance it and how to legislate it.

Most of the people in the study group are elected officials or former elected officials. They know all about conducting the people's business in public. It's the way they live their professional lives. It's doubtful that any of them need to shut out the public to comfortably say what they think in a meeting. Let's hope that, like Nelson, more of them express their displeasure about doing their work in secret.

The irony here is that Senate Bill 160, which calls for the post-election audits, mandates that they be held in full view of the public. The auditor will post the time and place of the audit in the same manner as the posting of the time and place of a public meeting. That's transparency in government and that's the way the secretary of state's study group meetings should be conducted.

While South Dakota isn't a hotbed of election malfeasance, the bill calling for post-election audits was something everyone in the Legislature could agree on. It sailed through the Senate and House unanimously. A Senate vote to comply with an amendment placed on the bill in the House garnered one no vote. It's obvious that lawmakers want to ensure election integrity at the South Dakota ballot box.

One of South Dakota Searchlight's first commentaries was about an interview with Johnson in which she skillfully danced around answering questions about the integrity of the 2020 presidential election, solidifying her standing as an election denier. At one point she dodged the question by saying: "I want to move forward and bring that trust forward. The way to do that is more transparency."

Well, conducting her study group meetings in secret is the exact opposite of transparency. Like the post-election audits themselves, Johnson's meetings should be held in public. That would be a good first step toward ensuring election integrity.

Dana Hess spent more than 25 years in South Dakota journalism, editing newspapers in Redfield, Milbank and Pierre. He's retired and lives in Brookings, working occasionally as a freelance writer.

A year after Dobbs: Congress takes a back seat on federal abortion policy

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - JUNE 19, 2023 2:38 PM

WASHINGTON — One year after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the constitutional right to an abortion, the courts rather than a divided Congress are leading the way on decisions on reproductive rights that would affect the entire nation.

Congress has not enacted federal legislation to either preserve reproductive rights or to restrict abortion in the year since the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization ruling nullified the landmark Roe v. Wade decision. And that's unlikely to change anytime soon.

Despite many Republicans campaigning for the U.S. House on promises of a nationwide abortion ban,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 10 of 63

the chamber hasn't brought such a bill to the floor six months after the GOP took control.

And in the U.S. Senate, Democrats who control that chamber don't have the 60 votes needed to overcome the legislative filibuster, leading to a stalemate on abortion legislation as well as protections for birth control access.

The next nationwide policy on abortion is much more likely to be written by the same U.S. Supreme Court that wrote one year ago "the authority to regulate abortion is returned to the people and their elected representatives." That court is dominated 6-3 by conservative justices.

"To the extent that Congress continues to be inept in many regards in legislating, it falls to the courts," said Suzanne Bell, assistant professor in the Department of Population, Family and Reproductive Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

The stalemate within Congress is in sharp contrast to new laws from dozens of state legislatures, where lawmakers have moved to either restrict abortion access or solidify it within the last year. But many of those proposals have landed in the state court systems, with some ending up at a state's Supreme Court.

Abortion pill case

The nine justices on the U.S. Supreme Court are expected to take up a case late this year or next spring on access to the abortion pill, known as mifepristone or its brand name Mifeprex, after a federal circuit court in New Orleans rules on the appeal. It likely will be the highest-profile court case on reproductive rights since Dobbs to reach the Supreme Court.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved mifepristone in 2000 as part of a two-drug regimen that's currently used up to 10 weeks in a pregnancy.

Alliance Defending Freedom, an anti-abortion legal organization, filed a lawsuit in November seeking to have that authorization overturned nationwide.

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas Judge Matthew Joseph Kacsmaryk, who was nominated by former President Donald Trump, found their arguments compelling and stayed the FDA's approval in early April.

The U.S. Justice Department appealed the case to the 5th Circuit Court, which heard oral arguments in May and could rule any day.

That ruling will likely move to the U.S. Supreme Court after that.

Bell said in an interview that it's odd to see the case in the courts system, calling it "disheartening," though she expects that could become more common.

"This is such a strange overreach of the courts or even Congress, if Congress were to be involved in this mifepristone case," she said.

Bell also cautioned that as politicians increasingly focus on winning or losing the debate — whether in the courts or in the legislature — they often lose sight of the impact of their decisions, and the effect changes in access have on Americans' actual lives as well as public health.

"We get caught up in some of the politics and the legislation and the litigation around this issue. But in the meantime it's having real impacts on birthing people and families," Bell said.

Cascade of bill introductions

In the year since Dobbs, Republicans and Democrats in Congress have introduced dozens of bills that would either expand reproductive rights or restrict access to abortion, though none stand a chance of becoming law anytime soon.

Republicans have introduced more than 80 bills that address abortion in some way, including a proposal from Missouri Rep. Ann Wagner that would require health care providers to give the same level of care "to preserve the life and health of the child" if an abortion were to result in a live birth.

House Republicans passed the bill in January, though it's highly unlikely that it would move through the Democratically controlled Senate. House Republicans, however, have opted not to bring up any of the bills proposing a nationwide ban on abortion.

Democrats have reintroduced legislation that would provide nationwide protection for abortion access, though it hasn't gotten a vote in the Senate this Congress and would be unlikely to secure the votes

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 11 of 63

needed to move past the legislative filibuster.

The so-called Women's Health Protection Act would bar local, state or federal governments from restricting access to abortion before viability, roughly 22 to 24 weeks gestation. After that threshold, governments couldn't implement restrictions when "in the good-faith medical judgment of the treating health care provider, continuation of the pregnancy would pose a risk to the pregnant patient's life or health."

Spending bills

The nature of a divided Congress has led some members to turn their attention toward the annual government funding process as one way to change nationwide policy on abortion.

Attempts to do that in the past have been unsuccessful at shaking up the status quo, but Republicans in the House are attempting to bar the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments from providing abortions — even in cases of rape, incest or the life of the pregnant patient.

The House GOP also added language to the annual funding bill for the FDA that would bar it from allowing pharmacies, including mail-order pharmacies, to apply to dispense abortion medication the same way they dispense other prescriptions. The FDA proposed that change in January and some pharmacy chains have begun the process.

Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America praised House Republican appropriators for adding "strong language in the Agriculture Appropriations Bill that protects women and girls from the dangers of chemical abortion."

On barring female troops and veterans from having access to abortion in the case of rape, incest or their lives, SBA Pro-Life America thanked Republicans on the committee "for standing up for longstanding law and for the unborn by prohibiting funding for Biden's illegal rule that would force taxpayers to pay for abortions at Veterans hospitals."

Federal spending laws have barred the use of taxpayer dollars to pay for abortions with exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the patient since the 1970s. The provision is generally referred to as the Hyde amendment and applies to dozens of federal programs, including federal employee health care, Medicaid, Medicare and foreign aid.

The House Republicans' decision is a change from September 2022, when numerous Republicans on the spending panels said they didn't anticipate changing how the provisions were applied.

While the House GOP proposals are unlikely to become law, they could throw a wrench into the annual government funding process, increasing the odds of a partial government shutdown later this year.

When Democrats were in control of the U.S. House during the first two years of the Biden administration they removed the language that limited when the federal government could pay for abortion from all of their bills.

But, the limitation that the federal government would only pay for abortions under the three exceptions was added back into the final bills at the insistence of Republicans.

'Not sticking its head in the sand'

Autumn Katz, managing senior counsel of U.S. Litigation at the Center for Reproductive Rights, said that while Congress may not be able to enact legislation protecting reproductive rights at the moment, the hearings, bill introductions and debate are "important work."

"There's the filibuster issue in the Senate, and things have changed in the House, so enacting protection for abortion I think is difficult right now," Katz said. "But I do think it's important to emphasize that Congress is not sticking its head in the sand."

Katz said she expects cases will continue in the federal courts system, especially given that some states are seeking to restrict when and how residents travel to access reproductive healthcare.

"The idea it's now settled and will be resolved in individual states is really kind of a cynical view because there are so many questions," Katz said. "And so I think there is bound to continue to be litigation and confusion and chaos."

Access to medication abortion is one of the areas of ongoing confusion amid a patchwork of state laws, an ongoing federal court case and the FDA announcing in January that pharmacies could apply to dispense mifepristone like other prescription drugs.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 12 of 63

More than 50 Democrats in Congress wrote to five major pharmacy chains earlier this month, encouraging them to apply to dispense mifepristone like other prescription drugs.

"We are concerned that your respective companies have not yet indicated plans to seek certification to dispense mifepristone, consistent with federal guidelines and regulations, as this could help increase access to needed medication," they wrote. "Your continued silence is unacceptable as it is misaligned with your publicly stated values in support of equal access to health care and of gender equality."

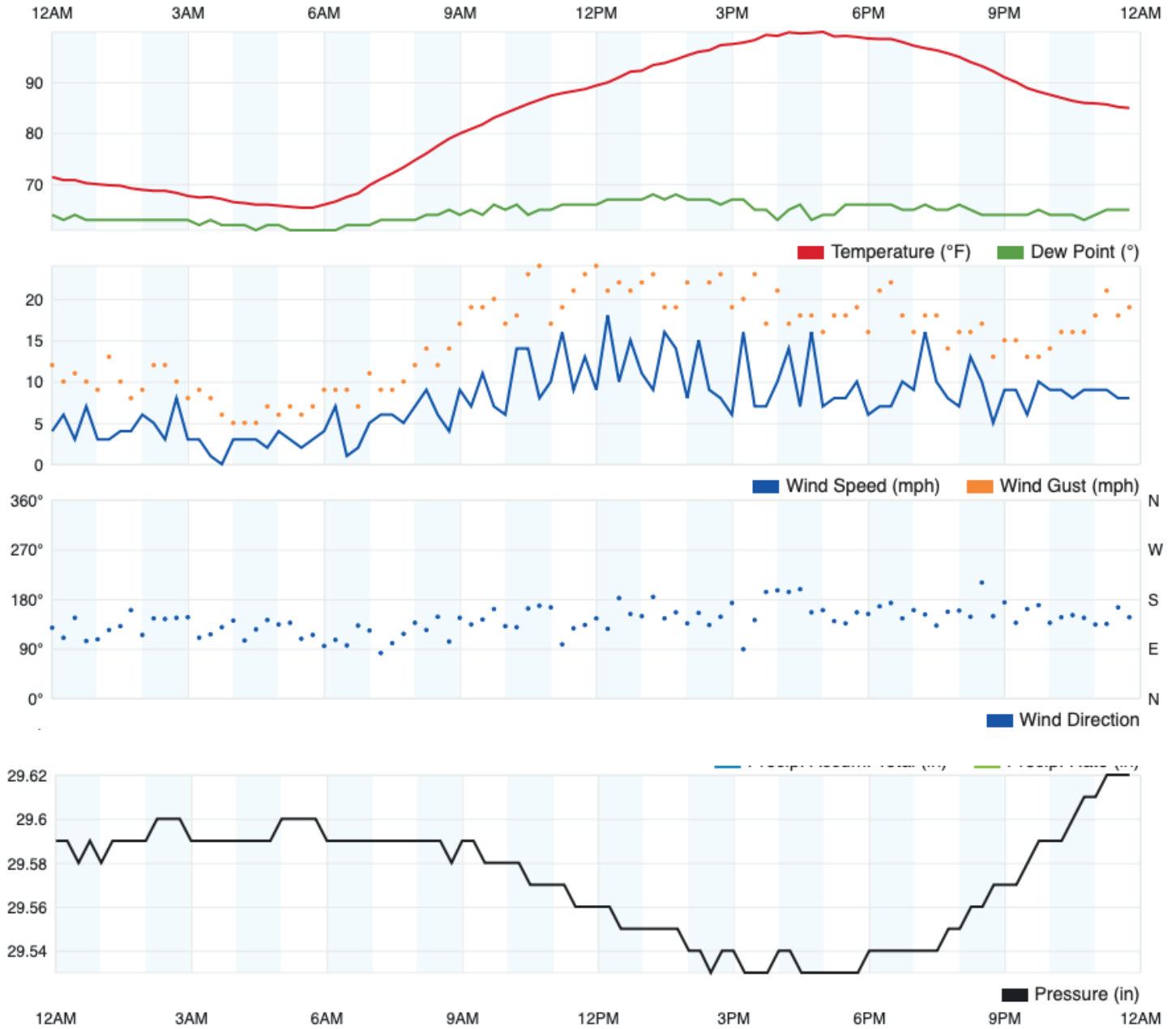
A possible U.S. Supreme Court opinion on access to mifepristone could decide the issue if the justices rule to overturn its 2000 approval, or revert to prescribing and dosage instructions that were in place before 2016.

Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 13 of 63

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 14 of 63

Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
Hot and Breezy	Partly Cloudy and Breezy then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms then Showers Likely	Showers Likely	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms
High: 98 °F	Low: 71 °F	High: 90 °F	Low: 66 °F	High: 82 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 84 °F



Severe Storm Possible

June 20, 2023
3:55 AM

Hazards

Thunderstorms capable of producing golf ball size hail, 60 mph winds, and locally heavy rainfall. Cannot rule out a tornado threat this evening.

Timing/Location

Storms should develop along and west of the Missouri River after 3 pm this afternoon. The storms slowly progress eastward tonight into the morning hours on Wednesday.

Tornado



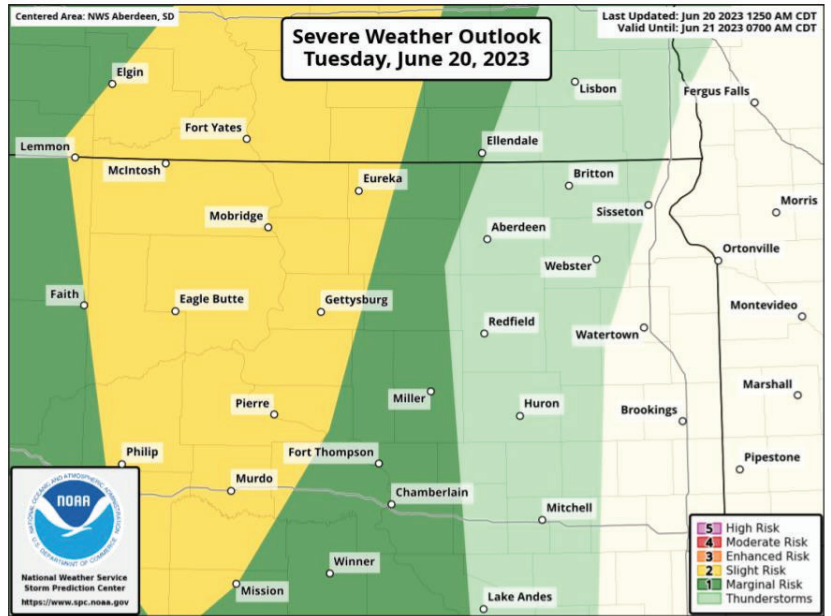
Hail



Wind



Flooding



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Strong to severe thunderstorms should develop later this afternoon along a cold front over the Missouri River valley. The threats will be large hail, gusty winds, and locally heavy rainfall. Cannot rule out a tornado threat.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 15 of 63

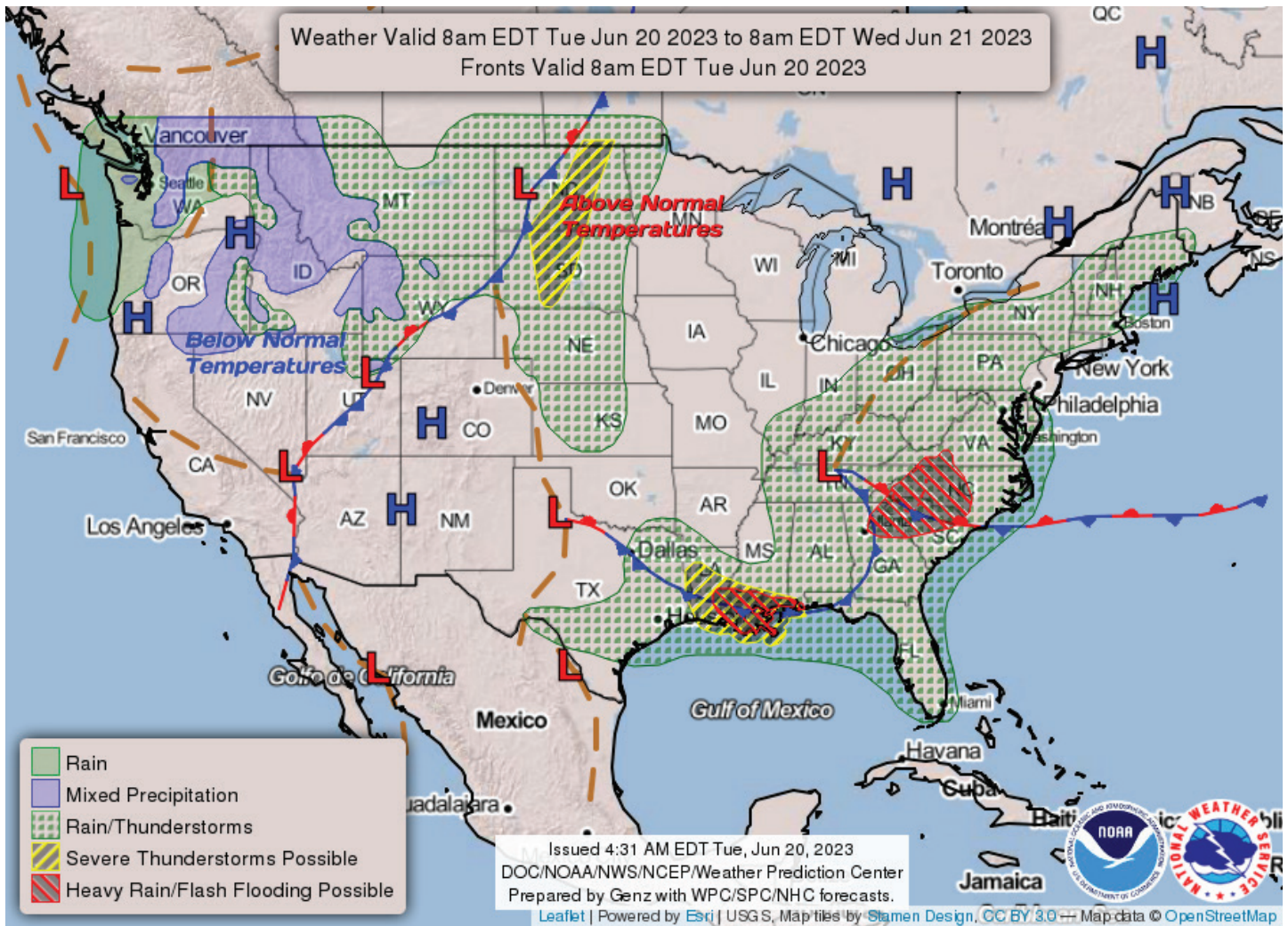
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 100 °F at 4:23 PM
Low Temp: 65 °F at 5:39 AM
Wind: 26 mph at 3:21 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 15 hours, 44 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 101 in 1988
Record Low: 34 in 1969
Average High: 82
Average Low: 56
Average Precip in June.: 2.42
Precip to date in June.: 0.51
Average Precip to date: 9.67
Precip Year to Date: 8.42
Sunset Tonight: 9:26:07 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:42:04 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 16 of 63

Today in Weather History

June 20, 1957: An F2 tornado moved ENE from near Rockham to near Athol and Ashton. One person was killed as a mobile home was destroyed near the start of the path. Four barns were destroyed, and one house was unroofed.

Also on this day, an F5 tornado cut a swath through Fargo, North Dakota killing 10 and injuring at least 103 people. This tornado was the northernmost confirmed F5 tornado until the Elie, Manitoba tornado on June 22, 2007.

June 20, 1989: A meteorological "hot flash" hit Pierre. Descending air from collapsing thunderstorms caused the temperature in Pierre to warm from 86 degrees at midnight to 96 at one a.m. and to 104 at 2 a.m. Pierre's record high for the date of 105 degrees in 1974.

1682 - A major tornado ripped through southwestern Connecticut, passing through Stratford, Milford, and New Haven, and then into Long Island Sound. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1921 - Circle, MT, received 11.5 inches of rain in 24 hours, a record for the state. The town of Circle received a total of 16.79 inches of rain that month to establish a rainfall record for any town in Montana for any month of the year. (The Weather Channel)

1928 - A farmer near Greensburg, KS, looked up into the heart of a tornado. He described its walls as rotating clouds lit with constant flashes of lightning and a strong gassy odor with a screaming, hissing sound. (The Weather Channel)

1964 - A squall line producing large hail swept through central Illinois. A second squall line moved through during the early morning hours of the 21st, and a third one moved through shortly after dawn. The series of hailstorms caused nine million dollars damage. Hailstones as large as grapefruit caused heavy damage to trees, utility lines, crops and buildings. The thunderstorms also produced as much as five inches of rain in an eight hour period. (David Ludlum)

1970: Nesbyen, Norway reached 96 degrees on this day, becoming the warmest temperature recorded in Norway.

1987 - Thunderstorms prevailed east of the Rockies, producing severe weather in the Central High Plains Region. Thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes in Colorado, and produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Goodland, KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thirty-eight cities in the central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Afternoon highs of 97 degrees at Flint, MI, and 104 degrees at Chicago, IL, equalled records for the month of June. Thunderstorms in North Dakota produced baseball size hail near Kief, and wind gusts to 100 mph near McGregor. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - An early morning thunderstorm produced wind gusts to 61 mph at Pierre, SD, and the hot thunderstorm winds raised the temperature from 86 degrees at midnight to 96 degrees by 1 AM, and 104 degrees by 2 AM. Butte, MT, and Yellowstone Park, WY, reported snow that afternoon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2001: Large hail driven by strong thunderstorm winds raked Denver International and front-range airports. Wind gusting to 54 mph along with hail as large as 2 inches in diameter punched at least 14 thousand holes and cracks in the flat roofs of several buildings at Denver International Airport. Also, 93 planes and hundreds of cars were damaged. About 100 flights had to be canceled stranding 1500 travelers. The Airport was completely shut down for about 20 minutes. The storm also damaged ground avoidance radar used to track planes on the ground to prevent collisions. Damage was estimated at 10 million dollars not counting the cost to the 93 airliners. The storm moved south and struck Watkins Colorado with hail as large as 2 1/2 inches in diameter and winds gusting to 60 mph.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 17 of 63

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

A BRIGHT EXAMPLE

Did you know that street lighting was first introduced in Antioch, Greece in the fourth century? Other countries had streetlights in their cities as early as the eighth century. But it was Benjamin Franklin, the great American inventor, who introduced them to America.

While serving as the postmaster in Philadelphia, Franklin urged the city fathers to install streetlights in their city. However, they refused because it seemed too costly and had no value.

Franklin would not give up and hung a beautiful lantern on a bracket in the front of his home. As the people walked by, they realized the difference it made. They no longer stumbled or fell because it provided light for their path. It was not long before his neighbors recognized the value of his light and soon the entire neighborhood, and then the city had lights in dark places. Franklin achieved his goal, not by argument, but by becoming a "living example."

People everywhere are looking for "living examples," and ideas that work. If what they see makes sense, people will adopt "what works" and apply them to their lives. That's why Paul encouraged Timothy to "set an example in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity."

God's Word works! And, when we apply it in our lives, people will see the difference it makes and want that same Light in their lives to guard and guide them.

Prayer: Lord, whenever our lives fail to live up to Your standards, we ask that You trouble our hearts and minds until we turn from our sinful ways and live Godly lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12



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

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 18 of 63

2023 Community Events

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

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 19 of 63

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

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

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

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent

www.397news.com

Subscription Form

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

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

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

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

E-mail _____

Password _____

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

paypal.me/paperpaul



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 20 of 63



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
06.16.23

4 24 34 45 57 19

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$300,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 10 Mins 11
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
06.19.23

1 14 20 30 33 7

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$4,300,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 25
DRAW: Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
06.19.23

15 17 22 43 45 10

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 40 Mins 11
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
06.17.23

7 8 16 21 29

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$107,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 40
DRAW: Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
06.19.23

14 15 39 57 69 7

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 9
DRAW: Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
06.19.23

36 39 52 57 69 1

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$400,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 9
DRAW: Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

French investigators search the offices of Paris Olympic organizers in corruption probe

PARIS (AP) — French investigators searched the headquarters of Paris Olympic organizers on Tuesday in a probe into suspected corruption, according to the national financial prosecutor's office.

The Paris organizing committee said in a statement that a search was under way at their headquarters in the suburb of Saint-Denis, and that "Paris 2024 is cooperating with the investigators to facilitate their investigations." It would not comment further.

Paris becomes the third straight Summer Games organizer implicated in investigations led by anti-corruption authorities in the French capital.

Vote-buying allegations linked to the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics and the Tokyo Games in 2021 previously removed several members of the International Olympic Committee from that organization.

An official with the financial prosecutor's office said Tuesday the searches are linked to two preliminary investigations related to the Paris Olympics that had not previously been made public. The official was not authorized to be publicly named according to prosecutor's office policy.

According to Le Monde newspaper, raids also took place at the offices of the public body in charge of Olympic infrastructure, and at the headquarters of several companies and consultants linked to the organization of the games.

Paris organizers declined to comment.

One of the probes was opened in 2017 — the year Paris was picked by the IOC as the 2024 host — into suspected embezzlement of public funds and favoritism, and concerns about an unspecified contract reached by Paris organizers, the prosecutor's office said.

The other was opened in 2022 following an audit by the French Anti-corruption Agency. The prosecutor's office said that case targets suspected conflict of interest and favoritism involving several contracts reached by the organizing committee and Solideo, the company in charge of Olympic facilities.

The Paris Olympics are scheduled for July 26-Aug. 11, 2024.

The raids unfolded at the same time as the IOC executive board began a two-day meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland, expecting to praise Paris organizers for their progress.

IOC president Thomas Bach told reporters early Monday the meeting "of course will be about Paris, where we have some good news after the visit of the coordination mission and after my visit to France, to President Macron, and also the organizing committee."

The IOC said it expected to release a statement Tuesday about the raids in Paris ahead of a previously scheduled online news briefing once its meeting closed for the day.

While French sports have triumphed on the fields of play, led notably by victory in the 2018 soccer World Cup, they've been rocked by multiple leadership changes in the run-up to the Paris Olympics.

Noël Le Graët resigned as president of the French soccer federation in February after a government audit found he no longer had the legitimacy to lead because of his behavior toward women and his management style.

Bernard Laporte resigned as president of the French Rugby Federation in January after he was convicted of corruption and illegally acquiring assets and handed a suspended prison sentence.

Last October, Claude Atcher was fired as chief executive of the Rugby World Cup. That event opens in France in September, and also will serve as a test of France's security preparations for the Olympics. Atcher's removal followed an investigation by French labor inspectors into his workplace conduct.

Ukraine downs Russian drones but some get through due to gaps in air protection

By SUSIE BLANN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian air defenses downed 32 of 35 Shahed exploding drones launched by Russia early Tuesday, most of them in the Kyiv region, officials said, in a bombardment that exposed gaps in the country's air protection after almost 16 months of war.

Russian forces mostly targeted the region around the Ukrainian capital in a nighttime drone attack lasting around three hours, officials said, but Ukrainian air defenses in the area shot down about two dozen of them.

The attack was part of a wider bombardment of Ukrainian regions that extended as far as the Lviv region in the west of the country, near Poland.

The Shahed drones made it all the way to Lviv because of the inability of air defense assets to cover such a broad area, Ukrainian air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said.

Air defense systems are mostly dedicated to protecting major cities, key infrastructure facilities, including nuclear power plants, and the front line, he said.

"There is a general lack of air defense assets to cover a country like Ukraine with a dome like Israel has," he said, in a reference to Israel's Iron Dome aerial defense system.

In the Lviv region, the Russian strike hit a critical infrastructure facility, starting a fire, according to Lviv Gov. Maksym Kozytskyi.

Russia also struck the southern Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine with ballistic missiles.

Ukraine's air defenses have been reinforced with sophisticated weapons from its Western allies, allowing it a higher success rate recently against incoming drones and missiles.

Previously, a winter bombardment by Russia damaged Ukraine's power supply, though speedy repairs blunted that Kremlin effort.

The latest aerial assaults behind Ukraine's front line coincided with the early stages of a Ukrainian counteroffensive, as it aims to dislodge the Kremlin's forces from territory occupied since Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

The counteroffensive has come up against heavily mined terrain and reinforced defensive fortifications, according to Valerii Zaluzhnyi, the commander-in-chief of Ukraine's armed forces.

Russia has also mustered a large number of reserves, he said in a post accompanying a video of him visiting front-line positions with other senior officers.

Heavy battles are taking place in eastern Ukraine, around Bakhmut, Lyman, Avdiivka and Marinka, the Ukrainian armed forces said. Russia shelled 15 cities and villages in the eastern Donetsk region, wounding five civilians, including three in Chasiv Yar near Bakhmut, according to Ukraine's presidential office.

"Despite the fierce resistance of the occupiers, our soldiers are doing everything possible to liberate Ukrainian territory. The operation continues as planned," Zaluzhnyi's post said.

In other developments, Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service, known by its acronym SVR, invited Ukrainian diplomats stationed abroad to come to Russia with their families to avoid returning to Ukraine. It claimed many Ukrainian diplomats are unwilling to return home after their tours and want refugee status in the European Union and Asian countries where they worked.

Also, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu alleged that Ukraine plans to use U.S.-made HIMARS and U.K.-provided Storm Shadow missiles to attack Russian territory, including the illegally annexed Crimean Peninsula. He warned that using those missiles on targets outside the current war zone would "trigger immediate strikes on the decision-making centers on the territory of Ukraine." He didn't elaborate.

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

Billie Jean King recalls the meeting that launched the WTA women's tennis tour 50 years ago

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

A half-century later, Billie Jean King thinks back on the landmark gathering of female tennis players at a London hotel shortly before they competed at Wimbledon and acknowledges she wasn't sure how things would go that day.

"I had no idea. Absolute toss-up. Because you never really know. What I did know was that certain players didn't like what we were trying to do," King said in an interview with The Associated Press. "And I did know it had to happen that day. Had to."

Wednesday marks the 50th anniversary of the meeting on June 21, 1973, at the Gloucester Hotel — about a mile south of Hyde Park in the heart of the British capital — where King and nearly 60 other players agreed to form what today is known as the Women's Tennis Association or WTA. They paved the way for their sport, and women's sports in general, to grow.

A reunion at that same hotel on June 30 is planned, with King, a twice-inducted member of the International Tennis Hall of Fame and an equal rights advocate, along with a dozen or so other founding members of the WTA, such as Rosie Casals, Betty Stöve, Françoise Dürr and Ingrid Löfdahl-Bentzer.

What memory stands out the most for King from that historic occasion?

"Standing at that podium and telling them, 'This is it. We have to do this. I'm not going to spend any more time on it if we don't make it happen now. But I know we're going to make it.' I said, 'This is our moment of truth. It's probably the most important decision we're ever going to make for our sport. So let's get it right,'" King recounted, rapping her right palm on a table. "I kept saying, 'We have to do this. We've got to be together.'"

It was the beginning of what King said she kept referring to at the time as a "union," but what her lawyer kept reminding her was more properly referred to as an "association," bringing all women's professional tennis players under one umbrella.

"It was difficult to get everybody to feel as if they could commit and not worry about being penalized. They looked upon us to lead them the right way — and we did," Casals said in a telephone interview. "We hoped we had done the job by convincing the women they had to be there. Some of them hemmed and hawed, but eventually they joined."

The group's name initially was the Women's International Tennis Association, but King jokes now that she insisted: "Let's not do more than three letters, please. I can't remember it if there are too many letters. Can we just do three?" Eventually, it was shortened.

Before what turned into a successful vote to move forward with the effort, King asked Stöve — a Dutch player who won 10 Grand Slam titles in women's or mixed doubles and later served three terms as WTA president — to block the conference room's exit.

"I had Betty back there. I said, 'Don't let anybody out until we have an association,'" King said. "But nobody left. Not one person even got up. It was amazing. We had their attention."

King was elected president, Virginia Wade was chosen vice president, Lesley Hunt was assistant vice president, Dürr and Löfdahl Bentzer were co-secretaries, Stöve was treasurer, and Casals chaired a committee to examine the rankings system.

This was nearly three years after the Original 9 group of King, Casals and seven other female players — Peaches Bartkowicz, Judy Dalton, Julie Heldman, Kerry Melville Reid, Kristy Pigeon, Nancy Richey and Valerie Ziegenfuss — signed \$1 contracts with World Tennis Magazine publisher Gladys Heldman on Sept. 23, 1970, to participate in the first women-only tennis tournament.

That set the stage for the Virginia Slims circuit and, eventually, the WTA.

"Probably the two happiest days of my life — my tennis life, not my real life — were the Original 9 and the WTA," said King, whose 39 Grand Slam trophies include 12 in singles. "To get people to change. To get people to be together. To get people to have one voice and have power."

A few years later, Chris Evert surpassed \$1 million in career earnings, the first female athlete to do so.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 24 of 63

A decade later, Martina Navratilova made that in one season.

"To look back and to look forward and to see where women's tennis is today? I would love to play now," said Casals, who won eight Grand Slam titles in women's or mixed doubles and twice was the singles runner-up at the U.S. Open.

These days, the WTA has more than 50 tournaments at its top level, along with about 20 others on a lower tier and, including Grand Slam tournaments — which now all pay equal amounts to women and men — more than \$180 million available in prize money each season.

"The sport is still not where we want it, but 50 years has just gone like that," King said, clapping her hands for emphasis. "I like the fact we've helped other sports, too, because we're teeing up a culture of women's sports. I know we started it. We're the ones. I don't know how long we'll be the leaders, but we're still the leaders."

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

Germany, China hold high-level meeting amid tensions over trade, Ukraine

BERLIN (AP) — Trade, climate change and the war in Ukraine are on the agenda Tuesday as German Chancellor Olaf Scholz meets Chinese Premier Li Qiang, who is on his first foreign trip since taking office.

The meeting in Berlin is the seventh time Germany and China have held high-level government consultations and comes a day after Chinese President Xi Jinping met with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, indicating an effort by Beijing to reach out to the West and improve frosty relations.

Li, a former Communist Party secretary for Shanghai who took office in March as China's No. 2 official, met Monday with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and had dinner with Scholz at the Chancellery before the start of formal talks.

Germany is keen to maintain good ties with China, its biggest trading partner, despite wariness over Beijing's growing assertiveness and refusal to criticize the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Germany's recently published national security strategy describes China as "a partner, competitor and systemic rival."

Scholz has said he wants to avoid overreliance on Chinese trade and diversify Germany's supply of key goods — an approach he called "derisking" — while rejecting the idea of "decoupling" from China. The position was echoed last month by the Group of Seven leading industrial powers, most of which are heavily dependent on trade with China.

Still, Germany has acknowledged that major global problems such as climate change can only be resolved together with China, and the official motto of Tuesday's meeting is "Acting sustainably together."

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said last week that the choice of Germany as Li's first stop "fully reflects the high importance China attaches to China-Germany relations." He said China looked forward to "sending positive signals to the world to strengthen dialogue and cooperation" and joining to address challenges "so as to promote the prosperity and development of the world economy."

After visiting the European Union's biggest economy Li travels to France — the second-biggest — where he will attend the "Summit for a New Global Financing Pact," which is being held at French President Emmanuel Macron's initiative.

Rescuers race against time to find the missing sub in the Atlantic bound for the Titanic site

By BEN FINLEY and HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

Rescuers in a remote area of the Atlantic Ocean raced against time early Tuesday to find a missing submersible carrying five people on a mission to document the wreckage of the Titanic, the iconic ocean liner that sank more than a century ago.

The carbon-fiber submersible named the Titan, part of a mission by OceanGate Expeditions, carried

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 25 of 63

a pilot, a renowned British adventurer, two members of an iconic Pakistani business family and another passenger. Authorities reported the vessel overdue Sunday night about 435 miles (700 kilometers) south of St. John's, Newfoundland, according to Canada's Joint Rescue Coordination Center.

Every passing minute, however, puts the Titan's crew at greater risk. The submersible had a 96-hour oxygen supply when it put to sea at roughly 6 a.m. Sunday, according to David Concannon, an adviser to OceanGate.

"It is a remote area — and it is a challenge to conduct a search in that remote area," said Rear Adm. John Mauger, a commander for the U.S. Coast Guard, which also is searching for the Titan. "But we are deploying all available assets to make sure we can locate the craft and rescue the people on board."

The Canadian research icebreaker Polar Prince, which was supporting the Titan, reportedly lost contact with the vessel about an hour and 45 minutes after it submerged. The Polar Prince was to continue to do surface searches throughout the night and a Canadian Boeing P-8 Poseidon reconnaissance aircraft will resume their surface and subsurface search in the morning, the U.S. Coast Guard said on Twitter. Two U.S. Lockheed C-130 Hercules aircraft also have conducted overflights.

Ship-tracking satellite data from MarineTraffic.com analyzed by The Associated Press showed the Polar Prince some 430 miles (690 kilometers) southeast of St. John's on Tuesday morning. The Bahamas-flagged cable layer Deep Energy was nearby as well, likely assisting in the surface search.

In an earlier email to the AP, Concannon said he was supposed to be on the dive but could not go. He said officials were working to get a remotely operated vehicle that can reach a depth of 3.7 miles (6 kilometers) to the site as soon as possible.

OceanGate's expeditions to the Titanic wreck site include archaeologists and marine biologists. The company also brings people who pay to come along, known as "mission specialists." They take turns operating sonar equipment and performing other tasks in the five-person submersible.

The Coast Guard said Monday that there was one pilot and four "mission specialists" aboard. However, OceanGate's website suggests that the fifth person aboard may be a so-called "content expert" who guides the paying customers.

OceanGate said its focus was on those aboard and their families.

"We are deeply thankful for the extensive assistance we have received from several government agencies and deep sea companies in our efforts to reestablish contact with the submersible," it said in a statement.

British businessman Hamish Harding, who lives in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, was one of the mission specialists, according to Action Aviation, a company for which Harding serves as chairman. The company's managing director, Mark Butler, told the AP that the crew set out on Friday.

"There is still plenty of time to facilitate a rescue mission, there is equipment on board for survival in this event," Butler said. "We're all hoping and praying he comes back safe and sound."

Harding is a billionaire adventurer who holds three Guinness World Records, including the longest duration at full ocean depth by a crewed vessel. In March 2021, he and ocean explorer Victor Vescovo dived to the lowest depth of the Mariana Trench. In June 2022, he went into space on Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket.

Harding was "looking forward to conducting research" at the Titanic site, said Richard Garriott de Cayeux, the president of The Explorers Club, a group to which Harding belonged.

"We all join in the fervent hope that the submersible is located as quickly as possible," he said in a statement.

Also on board were Pakistani nationals Shahzada Dawood and his son Suleman, according to a family statement sent to the AP. The Dawoods belong to one of Pakistan's most prominent families. Their eponymous firm invests across the country in agriculture, industries and the health sector.

"We are very grateful for the concern being shown by our colleagues and friends and would like to request everyone to pray for their safety while granting the family privacy at this time," the statement said. "The family is well looked after and are praying to Allah for the safe return of their family members."

Shahzada Dawood also is on the board of trustees for the California-based SETI Institute that searches for extraterrestrial intelligence.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 26 of 63

The expedition was OceanGate's third annual voyage to chronicle the deterioration of Titanic, which struck an iceberg and sank in 1912, killing all but about 700 of the roughly 2,200 passengers and crew. Since the wreckage's discovery in 1985, it has been slowly succumbing to metal-eating bacteria. Some have predicted the ship could vanish in a matter of decades as holes yawn in the hull and sections disintegrate.

The initial group of tourists in 2021 paid \$100,000 to \$150,000 apiece to go on the trip. OceanGate's website had described the "mission support fee" for the 2023 expedition as \$250,000 a person.

Unlike submarines that leave and return to port under their own power, submersibles require a ship to launch and recover them. OceanGate hired the Polar Prince to ferry dozens of people and the submersible craft to the North Atlantic wreck site. The submersible would make multiple dives in one expedition.

The expedition was scheduled to depart from St. John's, Newfoundland, in early May and finish up at the end of June, according to documents filed by the company in April with a U.S. District Court in Virginia that oversees Titanic matters.

CBS journalist David Pogue, who went on the trip last year, noted his vessel got turned around looking for the Titanic.

"There's no GPS underwater, so the surface ship is supposed to guide the sub to the shipwreck by sending text messages," Pogue said in a segment aired on CBS Sunday Morning. "But on this dive, communications somehow broke down. The sub never found the wreck."

The submersible, named Titan, is capable of diving 2.4 miles (4 kilometers) "with a comfortable safety margin," OceanGate said in its court filing.

It weighs 20,000 pounds (9,072 kilograms) in the air, but is ballasted to be neutrally buoyant once it reaches the seafloor, the company said.

In a May 2021 court filing, OceanGate said the Titan had an "unparalleled safety feature" that assesses the integrity of the hull throughout every dive.

During its expedition in 2022, OceanGate reported that the submersible had a battery issue on its first dive, and had to be manually attached to its lifting platform, according to a November court filing. More missions, however, followed. OceanGate has described the submersible as a "state-of-the-art vessel" that "is lighter, more spacious and more comfortable than any other deep-diving submersible exploring the ocean today."

But the custom-built, titanium-domed Titan represented a risk. Pogue and another passenger, a writer and producer for the cartoon series "The Simpsons" named Mike Reiss, noted how the liability waiver for the trip included stark safety warnings. Pogue in his CBS piece also highlighted how much of the "improvised" submersible, about the size of a minivan, operated with a single button, a video game-style controller, a makeshift toilet and material from an RV retailer.

Experts said Monday that rescuers face steep challenges.

Alistair Greig, a professor of marine engineering at University College London, said submersibles typically have a drop weight, which is "a mass they can release in the case of an emergency to bring them up to the surface using buoyancy."

"If there was a power failure and/or communication failure, this might have happened, and the submersible would then be bobbing about on the surface waiting to be found," Greig said.

Another scenario is a leak in the pressure hull, in which case the prognosis is not good, he said.

"If it has gone down to the seabed and can't get back up under its own power, options are very limited," Greig said. "While the submersible might still be intact, if it is beyond the continental shelf, there are very few vessels that can get that deep, and certainly not divers."

Even if they could go that deep, he doubts they could attach to the hatch of OceanGate's submersible.

Associated Press writers Danica Kirka, Jill Lawless and Sylvia Hui in London, Robert Gillies in Toronto, Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco, Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and Munir Ahmed in Islamabad contributed to this report.

Inside the deepening rivalry between Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and California Gov. Gavin Newsom

By STEVE PEOPLES and MICHAEL R. BLOOD Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California Gov. Gavin Newsom says there's no chance "on God's green earth" he's running for president in 2024, but he wants to make clear that Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who is running, is "weak" and "undisciplined" and "will be crushed by Donald Trump."

DeSantis, meanwhile, likes to mock Newsom's apparent "fixation" on Florida while insisting that the Democratic governor's "leftist government" is destroying California.

Welcome to one of the fiercest rivalries in U.S. politics, featuring dueling term-limited governors who represent opposite ends of the ideological spectrum and lead two of the nation's largest and most influential states. Newsom and DeSantis will not face each other on any ballot in 2024, but in many ways, they are defining the debate from their corners of America as the presidential primary season gets underway.

Newsom addressed his contempt for DeSantis and his loyalty to President Joe Biden in a recent interview just as the Florida governor launched a two-day fundraising trek spanning at least five stops across California. The Golden State has become one of DeSantis' favorite punching bags as he tries to avoid a direct confrontation with his chief Republican presidential rival, Trump, and the former president's escalating legal challenges.

"He's taking his eye off the ball," Newsom said of DeSantis' escalating attacks against him. "And that's not inconsistent with my own assessment of him, which is he is a weak candidate, and he is undisciplined and will be crushed by Donald Trump, and will soon be in third or fourth in national polls."

Representatives for DeSantis did not make the governor available for an interview. Beneath the war of words, however, strategists in both parties suggest there may be a mutually beneficial dynamic at play. As they jab at each other's policies and personalities through comments in the press and on social media, the governors are scoring points with their respective political bases, raising money and expanding their national brands.

Both men issued fundraising appeals Monday going after the other by name.

But it's not all helpful.

Newsom, in particular, is facing nagging questions about his presidential ambitions less than a week after DeSantis dared him to "stop pussyfooting around" and launch a primary challenge against Biden.

The California governor, whose second and final term concludes at the end of 2026, has seen his national profile grow since he easily beat back a recall attempt in 2021 and cruised to reelection last fall. He finished the midterm campaign with roughly \$16 million in the bank. And in March, he channeled \$10 million to a new political action committee he's calling the Campaign for Democracy.

All the while, Newsom's team has been moving deliberately to avoid the perception that he's running a shadow presidential campaign just as Biden ramps up his political activities.

For example, Newsom's new PAC is initially focusing on challenging Republican leaders in deep-red states that are largely irrelevant in the 2024 presidential race. He campaigned in Alabama, Arkansas and Mississippi in April on his first trip associated with the PAC.

Newsom is expected to avoid battleground states or key presidential primary states for the foreseeable future, his allies say.

At the same time, the California governor and his team have been in regular contact with Biden and his top aides, including Jen O'Malley Dillon, who managed the president's 2020 campaign and serves as deputy White House chief of staff. A Biden campaign official said the president's team coordinates closely with Newsom.

"Newsom is not going to run against Joe Biden and never would. But life is long, and Newsom is one of the prominent national Democrats. It's part of that role to have these big national battles," longtime Newsom adviser and friend Nathan Ballard said of the feud with DeSantis.

"There is the 2024 election, and then there is a 2028 election," Ballard added.

Indeed, veteran Democratic consultant Roy Behr, whose clients included former California Sen. Barbara

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 28 of 63

Boxer, said the two governors are engaged in what could become an early preview of the 2028 presidential contest.

"It's not inconceivable that four years from now, these two guys could be their respective parties' nominees," he said. In tangling with DeSantis, who is 44, the 55-year-old Newsom is building his national brand and visibility and is "certainly trying to create opportunities for himself."

Sacramento-based Democratic consultant Andrew Acosta said he expected the ongoing rivalry to continue given that it's beneficial for both politicians with their core supporters. He described Newsom and DeSantis as "frenemies."

"They both get points off it," Acosta said. "There is a hard core of voters on both sides who think this is great."

While polling shows that many Democrats don't want the 80-year-old Biden to seek a second term, Newsom said there are no circumstances in which he would challenge the sitting president of his own party.

"Not on God's green earth, as the phrase goes," Newsom said in the weekend interview, adding that he would be with Biden on Monday and hosting a fundraiser for him Tuesday. "I have been pretty consistently — including recently on Fox News — making the case for his candidacy."

DeSantis did not plan to make any public appearances during his California fundraising tour, which included stops in Sacramento and the Bay Area on Monday and continues Tuesday with events planned for San Diego, Orange County and Los Angeles.

Over the weekend in Nevada, DeSantis noted that he's seen a surge of "disgruntled Californians" moving to Florida.

"Why would you leave like a San Diego to come to say, Jacksonville, Florida? I see people doing that," DeSantis told thousands of conservative activists at a weekend gathering close to the California border. "It's because leftist government is destroying that state. Leftist government is destroying cities all over our country. It's destroying other states."

Former Nevada attorney general Adam Laxalt, who hosted the weekend event and leads the pro-DeSantis super PAC, said the policy contrast between the leaders of Florida and California is "a debate that our whole country needs to have."

"California has been the model for many leftist policies. I would take the contrast between Florida's policies and its results led by Gov. DeSantis and the California policies, any day of the week," Laxalt said in an interview. "We can already see what leftist policies do."

Both DeSantis and Newsom took office in 2019 and won reelection for their second and final terms in 2022. While in office, both have been buoyed by multiple billion-dollar budget surpluses and the help of statehouses controlled by their own party that supercharged their agendas.

In California, Newsom expanded the state's Medicaid program to cover all eligible adults, regardless of their immigration status. He signed a raft of legislation to make it easier to get an abortion, including authorizing \$20 million in state spending to help people from other states travel to California. When the U.S. Supreme Court declined to strike down an abortion law in Texas that was enforced by private lawsuits, Newsom signed a similar law in California — only he made it about guns.

And earlier this month, he proposed amending the U.S. Constitution to institute what he called a "reasonable" waiting period for all gun purchases, a ban on so-called assault rifles, universal background checks and raising the minimum age to buy a firearm to 21.

"I think Gavin Newsom is a very useful foil for Ron DeSantis, quite frankly," said Lanhee Chen, a California Republican who attended one of DeSantis' five California fundraisers this week. "The more kinds of crazy things that Newsom does — at least, crazy in the eyes of Republican voters — the more I think Ron DeSantis frankly benefits as somebody who is seen as a counterweight to that."

In Florida, DeSantis has leaned into cultural conservative issues in what he calls his "war on woke."

Earlier this month, his administration flew groups of migrants from Texas to Sacramento to draw attention to the influx of Latin American immigrants trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border. He did the same last fall, sending dozens of immigrants from Texas to Martha's Vineyard, which he often highlights during his stump speeches.

DeSantis also signed and then expanded the Parental Rights in Education bill — known by critics as the “Don’t Say Gay” law, which bans instruction or classroom discussion of LGBTQ+ issues in Florida public schools for all grades. He seized control of Disney World’s governing body after the company publicly opposed the law.

The Florida governor this year also signed a law banning abortions at six weeks, which is before most women realize they’re pregnant. And he took control of a liberal arts college that he believed was indoctrinating students with leftist ideology.

While DeSantis does not have the legal entanglements that Trump faces, Newsom said Democrats may be wrong to assume the former president would be an easier candidate to defeat in the 2024 general election.

“I see deep weakness — I refer to it often — weakness with DeSantis masquerading as strength,” Newsom said. “I think he’d be a more favored candidate. But I’ll leave that judgment to more objective minds.”

Associated Press writers Adam Beam in Sacramento and Michelle Price in New York contributed.

Disciplinary hearing against Trump attorney John Eastman begins in California

By STEFANIE DAZIO AND MICHAEL R. BLOOD Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — An effort to disbar conservative attorney John Eastman, who devised ways to keep President Donald Trump in the White House after his defeat in the 2020 election, will begin Tuesday in Los Angeles.

Eastman is expected to spend the day testifying before the State Bar of California in a proceeding that could result in him losing his license to practice law in the state. He faces 11 disciplinary charges stemming from his development of a dubious legal strategy that was aimed at helping Trump remain in power by disrupting the counting of state electoral votes.

The State Bar’s counsel will seek Eastman’s disbarment during a hearing before the State Bar Court that’s expected to last at least eight days. If the court finds Eastman culpable of the alleged violations it can recommend a punishment such as suspending or revoking his law license. The California Supreme Court makes the final decision.

Eastman is scheduled to testify in his own defense Tuesday. The proceedings will feature witnesses such as Greg Jacob, a former attorney for then-Vice President Mike Pence who pushed back against Eastman’s plan to have Pence stop the certification of Joe Biden’s victory.

Eastman was one of Trump’s lawyers during the election. He argued, in a memo, that Pence could keep Trump in power by overturning the results of the election during a joint session of Congress convened to count electoral votes. Critics have likened that to instructions for staging a coup.

Eastman violated California’s business and professions code by making false and misleading statements that constitute acts of “moral turpitude, dishonesty, and corruption,” the State Bar alleges, and in doing so he “violated this duty in furtherance of an attempt to usurp the will of the American people and overturn election results for the highest office in the land — an egregious and unprecedented attack on our democracy.”

Eastman’s attorney previously said his client disputes “every aspect” of the allegations.

The State Bar’s action “is part of a nationwide effort to use the bar discipline process to penalize attorneys who opposed the current administration in the last presidential election. Americans of both political parties should be troubled by this politicization of our nation’s state bars,” Eastman’s attorney, Randall A. Miller, said in a statement when the charges were announced in January.

Eastman has been a member of the California Bar since 1997, according to its website. He was a law clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and a founding director of the Center for Constitutional Jurisprudence, a law firm affiliated with the Claremont Institute. He ran for California attorney general in 2010, finishing second in the Republican primary.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 30 of 63

Eastman retired as dean of the Chapman University law school in Southern California last year after more than 160 faculty members signed a letter calling for the university to take action against him.

The California State Bar is a regulatory agency and the only court system in the U.S. that is dedicated to attorney discipline.

Eastman's disciplinary hearing comes as special counsel Jack Smith continues his investigation into efforts by Trump and his Republican allies to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

A federal grand jury in Washington has been meeting behind closed doors for months to hear testimony from witnesses, including Pence, who has publicly described a pressure campaign by Trump aimed at getting him to halt Congress' certification of the election results and the win by Biden, a Democrat.

Federal agents seized Eastman's cellphone last summer as he was leaving a restaurant, he said in a court filing. That day, law enforcement officials conducted similar activity around the country as part of their probe.

Since Smith's appointment in November, he has cast a broad net in demanding interviews and testimony related to fundraising, Trump's rally that preceded the U.S. Capitol riot on Jan. 6, 2021, and communications between Trump associates and election officials in battleground states. Eastman spoke at the rally.

In December, Smith subpoenaed local election officials in Wisconsin, Michigan, Arizona and Pennsylvania, asking for communications with or involving Trump, his 2020 campaign aides and a list of allies — including Eastman — who were involved in his efforts to try to overturn the results of the election.

The investigation is separate from another probe by Smith into classified documents found at Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida, that led this month to felony charges against Trump. Trump pleaded not guilty last week to 37 felony counts, including conspiracy to obstruct justice.

Associated Press writer Alanna Durkin Richer contributed from Boston.

At least 6 teens shot after Milwaukee Juneteenth celebration ends

MILWAUKEE (AP) — At least six teenagers were shot Monday afternoon around where Milwaukee's Juneteenth celebration had just wrapped up, according to police and fire officials.

The shooting happened about 4:20 p.m. outside Greater Philadelphia Church of God in Christ, according to witnesses and a Facebook Live video taken by a bystander in the immediate aftermath of the shooting, according to local media outlets.

Milwaukee Police Chief Jeffrey Norman said six teens were shot, including a 17-year-old who may have been a gunman himself and is in custody. Police were still seeking additional suspects who hadn't yet been identified.

Police said the victims, four girls and two boys, ranged in age from 14-19.

Norman said the shooting may have stemmed from a fight among a number of girls and young women, but he didn't know what sparked the dispute. The injuries of those wounded varied but did not appear life-threatening, the chief said.

"Milwaukee, what's going on with our children?" Norman wondered aloud at a news conference. He noted that he has taken part in the city's Juneteenth celebrations for eight years without any such bloody aftermath.

"Parents, guardians, elders, we need to engage in ensuring that this violence that our children are bringing these streets ceases. No handgun, no weapons of destruction, should be in the hands of our young ones."

"This is a story that plays out too often, and it's getting really old. Really old," Norman said.

The violence followed a bloody weekend of shootings across the United States.

Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson stressed that Monday's Juneteenth observance itself was a safe and growing event, calling the subsequent violence "totally, totally unacceptable."

"We had thousands and thousands of people here celebrating and bringing themselves together and having a sense of community. That's a powerful thing. That's the true story about what this day is," said Johnson, a Democrat.

A man who identified himself as T. Jenkins told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that a fight between two women preceded the shooting. A young man pulled out a gun and everyone scattered, Jenkins said. The man did some of the shooting, he said.

Jenkins provided aid to a young woman with a neck wound. There was blood coming out of the left side of her neck, he said. "I applied pressure to her neck," he said. "I tried to keep everyone calm around me."

A Facebook Live video taken in the immediate aftermath of the shooting shows at least two young people with gunshot wounds being treated by paramedics on the pavement.

The person who filmed the Facebook Live said in the video that a teenage girl or young woman had suffered a gunshot wound to the neck. The Facebook user tried to comfort her sobbing friend, who was trying to contact her mother. Only about 20 minutes after the festival had officially ended, hundreds of people were still walking along the street.

Thousands of people packed King Drive for the festival, which ran from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Vendors selling food and wares lined the street along with community organizations offering resources, snacks and free giveaways.

Music thumped from booths and food trucks offering refreshing treats in the heat drew long lines. Youth dance groups, marching bands and drill teams entertained crowds in a parade along King Drive earlier in the day. Police officers were stationed in several places along the route.

Keith Caldwell, another vendor, described the scene this way: "I just heard commotion, gunshots, people screaming."

On security at the event, Caldwell talked of the need for gun control.

"Right now, it's like an uncontrollable situation," he said.

Multiple tornadoes leave 1 dead and nearly 2 dozen injured in Mississippi

By MICHAEL GOLDBERG and ROGELIO SOLIS Associated Press/Report for America
LOUIN, Miss. (AP) — Multiple tornadoes swept through Mississippi overnight, killing one and injuring nearly two dozen, officials said Monday.

State emergency workers were still working with counties to assess the damage from storms in which high temperatures and hail in some areas accompanied tornadoes. The death and injuries were reported by officials in eastern Mississippi's Jasper County.

The small, rural town of Louin bore the brunt of the damage. Drone footage and photos showed wide expanses of debris-covered terrain, decimated homes and mangled trees. At least one person was lifted from the wreckage in a stretcher.

Standing in front of his damaged home on Monday, Lester Campbell told The Associated Press that his cousin, 67-year-old George Jean Hayes, is the person who died. Reached by phone Monday, Jones County Coroner Don Sumrall said Hayes was pronounced dead at 2:18 a.m. from "multisystem trauma."

Campbell fell asleep in his recliner Sunday evening. He was awakened around midnight after the lights went out. After he walked to the kitchen to grab something from the refrigerator, the tornado struck.

"It happened so fast," Campbell said. "It was like a train sound, a 'roar, roar, roar.'"

He dropped to the floor and crawled to his bedroom closet, where his wife had already taken shelter. By the time he reached the closet, the tornado had passed.

Campbell said he heard calls for help across the street, where Hayes lived in a trailer home. He emerged from his home to find emergency workers carrying his cousin, with a bloodied forehead and leg, into an ambulance. She was conscious and talking when he saw her but died before reaching the hospital, he said.

Most of the people injured in Jasper County, including Hayes, were transported to the South Central Regional Medical Center in Laurel between 2 and 3 a.m., said Becky Collins, a spokesperson for the facility. About 20 people had bruises and cuts. Most were in stable condition Monday morning.

Eric Carpenter, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Jackson, said an unseasonably

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 32 of 63

says that in addition to environmental impacts, the Thacker Pass mine would desecrate a site where the U.S. Cavalry massacred their ancestors after the Civil War.

"Lithium mines and this whole push for renewable energy — the agenda of the Green New Deal — is what I like to call green colonialism," Hinkey said. "It's going to directly affect my people, my culture, my religion, my tradition."

Protests near the mining site have flared up for more than two years, and the project has sparked legal challenges, including an appeal that a federal court will hear this month.

Hinkey had hoped Interior Secretary Deb Haaland — the first Native American Cabinet member — might rally to the side of opponents. But that has not happened.

Haaland, whose department oversees Thacker Pass, said that while she supports the right to peaceful protests, her agency is in favor of the mine because "the need for our clean energy economy to move forward is definitely important."

The project was approved in the waning days of the Trump administration but is central to Biden's goal for half of all new vehicles sold in the U.S. to be electric by 2030. Lithium batteries are also used to store wind and solar power.

Haaland told The Associated Press that when her agency inherits a project from a previous administration, "It's our job to make sure we're doing things according to the science, to the law."

Hinkey sees her activism as a continuation of her leadership on basketball teams in high school and in college, where she guided her Southern Oregon Raiders to a 20-win season as a senior point guard.

"Corporations are scared of an educated Indian," said Hinkey, who hopes to become a teacher. Her athletic experience, education and tribal background make her "someone who can stand up against them," she said.

Hinkey said she is especially disappointed because she voted for Biden and expected his administration to slow down the project that was fast-tracked under President Donald Trump. She and other tribal members "feel very lost, very shoved underneath the carpet," Hinkey said.

The project does have the support of some leaders of Hinkey's tribe, who point to the promise of jobs and development on a reservation where unemployment is far above the national average.

"This could help our tribe," said Fort McDermitt Tribal Chairman Arlo Crutcher, who recently went to Washington with company executives to meet with the Interior Department. Still, he is skeptical about how many jobs will go to impoverished tribe members.

Lithium Americas, the Canadian company that is developing the project, signed an agreement with the Fort McDermitt tribe — the closest to the mine among more than two dozen federally recognized tribes and bands in Nevada — to ensure local hiring, job training and other benefits. It also agreed to build a community center that includes a preschool and playground for the reservation, where close to half the population lives in poverty.

The October 2022 agreement "is a testament to our company's commitment to go beyond our regulatory requirements and to form constructive relationships with the communities closest to our projects," Lithium Americas President and CEO Jonathan Evans said in a statement. General Motors has pledged \$650 million to help develop Thacker Pass, which holds enough lithium to build 1 million electric vehicles annually.

Opponents, including other tribes and environmental groups, argue that the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, an Interior Department agency, violated at least three federal laws in approving the mine.

BLM Director Tracy Stone-Manning defended her agency's actions, saying the Biden administration allowed construction to begin "because the proposal is solid, and the country needs that lithium."

The National Historic Preservation Act requires tribal consultation in all steps of a project on or near tribal land. But Hinkey and other mine opponents say the mine was hastily approved when tribal governments were largely shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In its 2021 decision approving the project, the agency said it wrote letters in late 2019 to at least three tribes — including Fort McDermitt — inviting comments. Two online meetings were conducted in August 2020, but no objections were raised by the end of an environmental review in December 2020, the agency

said.

Michon Eben, historic preservation officer for the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, said the agency's actions fell far short of genuine consultation.

"This is the biggest (lithium) mine in the country — and there's 28 federally recognized tribes and bands in the state of Nevada that all have relationships — and you only send a letter to three tribes? There's something wrong with that," Eben said.

"The consultation kind of skipped us," said Gary McKinney, a spokesman for People of Red Mountain and a member of the nearby Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribe. "Nobody knew about the lithium. They taped a notice on the door and called that 'adequate notice,'" he said.

Asked about those claims, Stone-Manning replied: "I regret if people feel that way. I can't control how people feel."

In an interview near the mine site, where workers were installing a water pipeline, McKinney said the project will cause irreparable damage. The mine will require large amounts of water, and conservationists say groundwater and soil could become contaminated with heavy metals. The area is also a nesting ground for the dwindling sage grouse.

"The water will be lower. Life will be scared away," he said. "Our culture, our sacred sites will be gone. We're facing the annihilation of our identity."

He and other opponents say the BLM office in Nevada failed to assess the project's likely impact on the massacre site near Sentinel Rock, which juts above sagebrush and high grass used by roaming cattle herds.

"What happens to those who were massacred and buried here?" Eben said in an interview at Sentinel Rock.

The exact location of the massacre, where federal soldiers killed at least 31 Paiute men, women and children, is unknown, although it is generally recognized to be within a few miles of the mine. Tribes call the site Peehee Mu'huh, or "Rotten Moon" in the Paiute language.

A federal judge in February said construction could begin while also ruling that BLM violated federal law regarding disposal of mine waste. Conservationists have appealed, and the San Francisco-based 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals scheduled oral arguments for June 26.

Eben said she is putting her faith in Haaland, a member of New Mexico's Laguna Pueblo.

"From one Native woman to another, what I am going to say is, 'Please come and walk this land with us. Come and listen to our side of the story, our oral histories. A massacre did occur here. ... Our people were killed.'"

And, she added, "you can't mine your way out of a climate crisis."

Associated Press writers Scott Sonner in Reno, Nevada and Susan Montoya Bryan in Albuquerque, New Mexico contributed to this story.

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

New study says high housing costs, low income push Californians into homelessness

By JANIE HAR Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Homeless people in California are already a vulnerable group, often struggling with poor health, trauma and deep poverty before they lose their housing, according to a new study on adult homelessness.

The study released Tuesday by the University of California, San Francisco attempts to capture a comprehensive picture of how people become homeless in California, and what impeded their efforts at finding permanent housing. The representative survey of nearly 3,200 homeless people found that when they lost housing, their median household income was \$960 a month, and for renters on leases it was \$1,400

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 34 of 63

a month, of which on average half went to rent.

Homelessness is a national crisis, and all too pervasive in California, where an estimated 171,000 people — or 30% of all homeless people in the U.S. — are homeless. Political leaders are divided over how to address the crisis, with some, including Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom, favoring tent encampment sweeps and a tough-love approach toward those with mental health and addiction issues.

It is not groundbreaking news that the state's exorbitant housing costs are a major driver behind homelessness, but researchers at the UCSF's Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative hope that the study will strengthen public support for policies that focus on offering housing and emergency rental assistance — rather than policies emphasizing punishment or stigma.

"People are homeless because their rent is too high. And their options are too few. And they have no cushion," said Dr. Margot Kushel, initiative director and lead investigator. "And it really makes you wonder how different things would look if we could solve that underlying problem."

Kushel's team surveyed nearly 3,200 adults around California, and followed up to conduct in-depth interviews with 365 people, between October 2021 and November 2022.

The study found that Black people made up 26% of the homeless population in a state where they are only 6% of the general population. About 90% of participants were living in California when they became homeless. Half reported an inability to work due to age, health or disability. The median length of homelessness was a little under two years.

More than a third of adults surveyed met the criteria for chronic homelessness, meaning they had a disabling condition and were homeless for at least 1 year — or were homeless four times in the previous three years totaling more than 12 months.

In Los Angeles in 2015, Sage Johnson's mother was evicted from their apartment when she was unable to meet rent that had increased to \$1,200. In disability pay, she received about \$1,340 a month. She bounced around, from LA's notorious Skid Row to various convalescent homes while her daughter lived at a shelter.

Later, Johnson, 28, was able to place her mother in a home, where she stayed for about two years. In 2018 though, her mother died from a debilitating stroke.

Johnson, who now has stable housing, wishes she could have done more.

"But in the end, she did have a bed. She was inside. She didn't have any more strokes outside. And she was able to regenerate and rejuvenate and restore some of her life while in the convalescent home," said Johnson, a co-chair for one of the study's advisory boards.

Among study participants, substance abuse and issues with mental health were common and predated becoming homeless. Of those surveyed, 45% reported current, regular use of cocaine, amphetamines and opioids or heavy episodic drinking. Participants described how heavy substance use contributed to losing their homes, but also how methamphetamine usage allowed them to stay alert to protect themselves from assault or theft.

Nearly half of the adults surveyed were not on a lease in the six months prior to becoming homeless, and had likely moved in with family or friends, contributing to rent when they could. Nearly a quarter cited conflict among housemates, desire for more space or not wanting to impose any longer on family and friends as primary reasons they left.

On average, people surveyed who were not on leases received only one day of warning before needing to move out.

Among people on rental lease agreements, more than 20% cited income loss or reduction as the primary reason they lost housing. "So it wasn't so much that their housing costs increased, it's that they could no longer keep up with it," said Kushel.

California ranks as the most unaffordable state when it comes to housing, according to an annual report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition. A person earning an hourly minimum wage of \$15.50 would have to work nearly 90 hours a week to afford the statewide average for a modest one-bedroom rental, which is nearly \$1,800 a month, the coalition states.

The study was requested by Newsom's administration, which has made addressing homelessness a

priority, but the state did not fund it so didn't play a role in analyzing data or interpreting the findings.

The report makes many recommendations, including deep expansion of rental assistance and pilot programs to facilitate shared housing for people seeking to get out of homelessness — and a rental stipend program for people living temporarily with family or friends.

Johnson said she hopes the public will find the report's findings to be evidence that tax dollars are being put to good use in social safety net spending. She also hopes that people will support robust mental health and addiction treatment services along with affordable housing options.

"I don't want to set anyone up for failure," she said. "And I'm sure many of my peers can agree that folks need time to practice going back to, like, regular society life."

Young crown prince is meant to embody Jordan's future, but his generation faces bleak prospects

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — Visitors to Jordan this month noticed a new addition to the royal portraits over highways and hospitals. The 28-year-old Crown Prince Hussein and his glamorous Saudi bride, Rajwa Alseif, now beam down at motorists stuck in Amman traffic.

Their royal wedding represented the pinnacle of the monarchy's efforts to establish Hussein as the face of Jordan's next generation — a future king who can modernize the country, slash the red tape and set loose the talents of its bulging young population. Of nearly 10 million people in Jordan, almost two-thirds are under 30.

But in the dilapidated streets of the poorer districts in the capital, Amman, and in the dusty villages of the countryside, there is little hope for change. Almost half of all young Jordanians are jobless. Those with means dream of lives abroad. Many grumble but few speak out — the government is quick to quash hints of dissent.

The story of economic pressure and political repression is common across the Middle East. Like in Egypt, Iraq and Tunisia, Jordan's once-bloated public sector has left the state with little to spend on health and education. Efforts to slow public hiring and cut subsidies have eroded the social contract that kept citizens compliant. Many blame corrupt officials — and, increasingly, the palace — for their misery.

"The base of support is fraying," said Tariq Tell, a Jordanian professor of political science at the American University of Beirut. "Hussein has a difficult task on his hands."

While June's royal wedding generated momentary excitement in Jordan, its luxurious setting and VIP guests also highlighted the vast gulf between the prince's life of privilege and the daily struggles of most Jordanians of his age.

Here are some of the young faces of Jordan, a country central to the future of the Middle East.

THE ENTREPRENEUR

For 28-year-old Jaser Alharasis, public school was a disappointment. There weren't enough teachers. Students were aimless. Alharasis would have been, too, he said, if not for a scholarship that trained him in artificial intelligence.

It struck him as absurd that Jordanian schools were teaching by rote, turning curious kids into disciplined subjects at a time of dizzying technological change. He and some friends began developing a program to teach robotics in Jordan's failing public schools.

Their company, called "Robotna," now trains thousands of students nationwide. To fund the free high-tech classes in impoverished areas, Robtona delivers the same courses to elite private schools for a fee — earning it the nickname, "Robthood."

"Jordan is already behind, and if we don't catch up, we'll lose more and more jobs," Alharasis said from the Robotna office in working-class east Amman. Over a dozen staffers tapped away at computers, developing a high-tech curriculum they'll soon pitch to the Ministry of Education. "I want things to be different for people like me, for the next generation," he added.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 36 of 63

But obstacles stand in the way. In a country with no bankruptcy law, failure can mean a prison sentence if debts are not paid. Jordanian tax authorities treat social enterprises as major corporations — Robotna loses 36% of its revenue to taxes each year, Alharasis said.

Old-fashioned officials routinely block Alharasis and his colleagues from entering schools. They can't comprehend "why robotics is important, why technology is the future," he said.

Faced with the challenges of innovating in Jordan, his peers are studying German and applying to universities there or moving to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. But Alharasis promises to stay and keep finding workarounds.

"If you can start a company in Jordan, you can start one anywhere," he said.

THE UNEMPLOYED

With his coffee habit and thrifted jeans, 20-year-old Saif al-Bazaiah could be a university student anywhere. But after watching his cousins spend years and fortunes in university only to end up jobless, he got straight to work after high school. His father's steel factory salary barely covered the family's costs.

"You look at all these people studying to become engineers and doctors but at the end of the day, they have nothing," al-Bazaiah said from his hometown of Al Qatraneh, some 95 kilometers (59 miles) south of Amman.

When work dried up in his desert village, he tried his luck in Amman, where 40% of all Jordanians live. It was grueling. Twelve-hour shifts in gas stations, restaurants and supermarkets bought him a few packs of cigarettes.

His former classmates fared no better. Instead of reckoning with the country's problems and pushing for a brighter future, he said, they sought safety in religion and social conformity.

"The greatest dream for the average Jordanian is just to buy a car, settle down, get married," al-Bazaiah said. "It's the only way people can live under pressure."

This month's royal wedding fever offered the country a brief diversion from that pressure. But a week later, al-Bazaiah and others in Al Qatraneh described feeling left behind — a world away from the pomp of palace life. "It's clear that Jordan has two classes — the tippity top with money and very very low without," he said.

In a tribal leader's sitting room on the outskirts of town, a photograph of the controversial Prince Hamzah, King Abdullah II's half-brother, hung from the wall beside the requisite royals. Hamzah, an unseated crown prince placed under house arrest in 2021 after alleging high-level corruption, still enjoys strong support from Jordan's disaffected tribes. Since the palace crisis, the monarchy has ramped up efforts to burnish Hussein's public image and cement his role as the rightful heir.

"More than anything, the challenge to the future of the crown prince as king comes from within the family and the Jordan tribes," said Labib Kamhawi, a political analyst.

THE TEACHER

From his front porch in northern Jordan, the gangly 27-year-old Arabic teacher gazed across the valley toward a forbidding citadel of concrete and steel. The view is a dark reminder of the threats against him and his colleagues — some of whom have landed there, in the local prison, in recent months.

"Teaching used to be a respectable position," the teacher said, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals. "Now it's terrifying. The pressures are getting tighter and tighter," he said, grabbing his throat as if choking himself.

Jordan's autocratic government has cracked down on teachers' spirited protests for better pay — a trend increasingly at odds with the monarchy's image of having embraced liberal, Western values.

In 2020, authorities dissolved their union and sentenced leading activists to prison. Now, no one dares complain. They know a wayward word in a classroom or on Facebook can ruin their lives.

The newly established government-aligned teachers' union polices its members, they say, denying promotions to outspoken teachers and pushing the politically minded into early retirement.

Meanwhile, the faltering economy has taken a toll, the Arabic instructor said, looking exhausted and unkempt after his café shift. His salary of just 400 dinars (\$564) a month can't keep pace with soaring prices, he said, forcing him to work odd jobs just to make ends meet.

strong jet stream blew through the area. A tornado emerged near Louin before traveling at least 7 miles (11 kilometers) south to Bay Springs.

Tornadoes typically hit Mississippi in early to mid-spring. Carpenter called the timing of the tornadoes, along with persistent thunder and hail as well as high temperatures, "a very unusual situation."

"This is a whole different game here," Carpenter said. "What we would typically see in March and April, we're seeing in June."

On March 24, a vicious tornado carved a path of destruction through parts of western and northern Mississippi, killing at least 26 and damaging thousands of homes. Some towns in the rural, poverty-stricken Mississippi Delta face a daunting task to rebuild.

Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves said Monday's tornadoes also struck Rankin County, which borders the capital city of Jackson. Emergency crews were doing search and rescue missions and damage assessments, deploying drones in some areas because they were impossible to reach by vehicle due to downed power lines.

On Monday afternoon, another possible tornado struck the south Mississippi town of Moss Point. Photos showed homes with obliterated roofs and tilted power lines. As high winds and heavy rain blanketed Jackson County, WLOX-TV reported that eight people were trapped inside a bank in downtown Moss Point. They were later rescued uninjured. The county remained under a flash flood warning Monday.

In a Monday news release, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency said more than 49,000 homes in central Mississippi were without power. Tens of thousands of people in Hinds County, the most populous area of the state, were still without power Monday morning after high winds pummeled the state early Friday.

Reeves said the state is opening command centers and shelters for those displaced by the severe weather.

After fleeing his home Monday morning, Campbell returned to survey the damage. He arrived to find that half of the roof was gone, the garage destroyed and the windows shattered. He felt lucky compared to his neighbors.

"Most of the houses are gone. They are demolished. They're done," Campbell said.

Goldberg is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues. Follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/mikergoldberg.

Tribal activists reject the Nevada mine Biden hails as a key to clean energy

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

OROVADA, Nevada (AP) — Just 45 miles (72 kilometers) from the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation where Daranda Hinkey and her family corral horses and cows, a centerpiece of President Joe Biden's clean energy plan is taking shape: construction of one of the largest lithium mines in the world.

As heavy trucks dig up the earth in this remote, windswept region of Nevada to extract the silvery-white metal used in electric-vehicle batteries, the \$2.2 billion project is fueling a backlash. "No Lithium. No mine!" proclaims a large hand-painted sign in Hinkey's front yard.

The Biden administration says the project will help mitigate climate change by speeding the shift away from fossil fuels. But Hinkey and other opponents say it is not worth the costs to the local environment and people.

Similar disputes are taking place around the world as governments and companies advancing renewable energy find themselves battling communities opposed to projects that threaten wildlife, groundwater and air quality.

Hinkey, 25, is a member of the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe and a leader of a group known as People of Red Mountain — named after the scarlet peak that overlooks her house. The group

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 38 of 63

"How can leaders use these slogans about progress and prosperity when the country's teachers cannot speak their minds?" he said, his voice quiet and angry. "Everything is upside down."

THE HUMANITARIAN

In the coffee shops of Amman's affluent Abdoun district, 29-year-old Mariam Hudaib leans over her laptop, compiling data on Syrian refugees.

She got "lucky," she said, recalling how she scored her dream job at an international aid organization. Her fellow English literature graduates jockey for poorly paid teaching positions, call in favors at state-run firms or compete for scarce openings in Jordan's private sector.

But the job didn't land in her lap. Foreign organizations demand fluency in English and sharp research skills. Most Jordanians don't make the cut.

A straight-A student from a well-to-do neighborhood and close-knit family, Hudaib looks like a Jordanian success story. But she can't see a future here. The public schools and hospitals she went to as a child have deteriorated. There's no relief from the grinding frustrations of daily life — the high prices and taxes, the low salaries and standard of living.

Hudaib is not alone. According to Arab Barometer, a pollster, nearly half of all young Jordanians now want to leave, raising concerns that the kingdom could be pushing away the people it needs most.

"I love Jordan," Hudaib said. "But I've seen enough."

Living la vida yoga: India's Modi will bend leaders into shape on International Yoga Day

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India's prime minister has a reputation of casting himself as an ascetic. So when Narendra Modi leads foreign dignitaries and bureaucrats in a session for International Yoga Day on Wednesday at the United Nations' Secretariat in New York, millions of Indians will take note.

Yoga, an ancient discipline first practiced by Hindu sages, is now one of India's most successful cultural exports after Bollywood. And it's become a piece of India's diplomacy. Surinder Goel, a 61-year-old yoga instructor in the capital, New Delhi, practices daily. He says the activity is "India's contribution to the world."

"Our prime minister has done a great job in spreading yoga to the world," Goel said. "Today, even the Muslim countries learn and follow it, only because of the PM."

Goel says yoga should be a daily practice worldwide, no matter how busy a person is, citing the prime minister's devotion to the practice.

Nine years ago, the Hindu nationalist leader successfully lobbied the U.N. to designate June 21 as International Yoga Day. Since then, Modi has harnessed yoga as a cultural soft power to stretch his nation's diplomatic reach and flex his country's rising place in the world.

Modi has promoted yoga so much that even foreign diplomats have been seen stretching themselves in gardens and their embassy offices. Government bureaucrats and officers have taken to social media to show themselves folding in different poses and sometimes tiredly grabbing their backs after mass outdoor yoga sessions. The Indian military has done downward dog with trained K-9 units, boat pose atop an aircraft carrier and mountain pose in the high-altitude Himalayas in bone-chilling temperatures.

Modi has also been living la vida yoga, flexing his own hardcore devotion to the practice.

In 2018 he posted a two-minute video on Twitter that showed him doing a range of yoga poses in a garden, including stretching and leaning backward on a rock in a spread-armed savasana that birthed many memes.

In 2019, after the final day of national polling, he retreated to a Himalayan mountain cave to meditate and seek isolation — with a camera crew that relayed live visuals to the entire nation.

A year later, Modi went the extra mile, tweeting videos showing an animated version of him doing yoga poses.

Now, Modi is guiding leaders from around the world in the practice of yoga to promote its benefits as part of his three-day visit to the U.S.

With over 1.42 billion people, which recently surpassed China as the most populous, India has become fragmented largely along religious lines. Despite its religious roots, Modi has used yoga to try and boost his image in the diverse nation.

Modi's ministers, following their leader in practicing yoga, have sometimes marked it with religious connotations by doing sun salutations and chanting Sanskrit verses considered holy in Hinduism. Government employees and students have been asked to practice the same, and some state administrations ruled by Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party have sought to make it mandatory in schools.

This has angered some of the prime minister's critics. In particular, some Muslims — India's largest minority, which has faced rising violence under Modi by Hindu nationalists — say they should not be forced to perform sun salutations or chant Hindu hymns.

Government ministers tried to address these concerns by guaranteeing that sun salutations would be optional, though some dissenters are not assured.

Srivalli Cherla has noticed yoga becoming more politicized in recent years.

The 30-year-old yoga instructor based in India's remote Ladakh region originally took to yoga for physical exercise in 2017. After months of consistent practice, she noticed subtle changes in her body and mental health, and realized yoga was helping her release anger she was holding on to.

"Whenever I am having a bad day, I come back home and roll out my yoga mat. It's a form of mental discipline too; you learn not to give in to certain thoughts, so it challenges you mentally," she says.

Cherla said she had signed up for a program to receive a yoga instructor certification recognized by the Indian government's Ayush Ministry, which promotes Ayurveda traditional medicine. But she quit just 10 days into training.

"The teacher passed a comment that essentially called it a Hindu — and not secular — practice, which left a bad taste in my mouth. I've never seen it as religious. It's part of India's culture, but this comment made me realize what they were teaching didn't align with my own beliefs or experience of yoga," she says.

In New Delhi, yogi Goel agrees that yoga is for everyone, regardless of religion.

"We should not connect yoga with religion or politics. Yoga is meant to benefit the common people, not ministers," Goel says.

And he believes yoga has the power to do more than just diplomacy.

"Yoga can change the person, the country and the world," he says.

Associated Press video journalist Piyush Nagpal contributed to this report.

Himalayan glaciers could lose 80% of their volume if global warming isn't controlled, study finds

By SIBI ARASU Associated Press

BENGALURU, India (AP) — Glaciers are melting at unprecedented rates across the Hindu Kush Himalayan mountain ranges and could lose up to 80% of their volume this century if greenhouse gas emissions aren't sharply reduced, according to a report.

The report Tuesday from Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development warned that flash floods and avalanches would grow more likely in coming years, and that the availability of fresh water would be affected for nearly 2 billion people who live downstream of 12 rivers that originate in the mountains.

Ice and snow in the Hindu Kush Himalayan ranges is an important source of water for those rivers, which flow through 16 countries in Asia and provide fresh water to 240 million people in the mountains and another 1.65 billion downstream.

"The people living in these mountains who have contributed next to nothing to global warming are at high risk due to climate change," said Amina Maharjan, a migration specialist and one of the report's authors. "Current adaptation efforts are wholly insufficient, and we are extremely concerned that without greater

support, these communities will be unable to cope.”

Various earlier reports have found that the cryosphere — regions on Earth covered by snow and ice — are among the worst affected by climate change. Recent research found that Mount Everest’s glaciers, for example, have lost 2,000 years of ice in just the past 30 years.

“We map out for the first time the linkages between cryosphere change with water, ecosystems and society in this mountain region,” Maharjan said.

Among the key findings from Tuesday’s report are that the Himalayan glaciers disappeared 65% faster since 2010 than in the previous decade and reducing snow cover due to global warming will result in reduced fresh water for people living downstream. The study found that 200 glacier lakes across these mountains are deemed dangerous, and the region could see a significant spike in glacial lake outburst floods by the end of the century.

The study found that communities in the mountain regions are being affected by climate change far more than many other parts of the world. It says changes to the glaciers, snow and permafrost of the Hindu Kush Himalayan region driven by global warming are “unprecedented and largely irreversible.”

Effects of climate change are already felt by Himalayan communities sometimes acutely. Earlier this year the Indian mountain town of Joshimath began sinking and residents had to be relocated within days.

“Once ice melts in these regions, it’s very difficult to put it back to its frozen form,” said Pam Pearson, director of the International Cryosphere Climate Initiative, who was not involved with the report.

She added, “It’s like a big ship in the ocean. Once the ice starts going, it’s very hard to stop. So, with glaciers, especially the big glaciers in the Himalayas, once they start losing mass, that’s going to continue for a really long time before it can stabilize.”

Pearson said it is extremely important for Earth’s snow, permafrost and ice to limit warming to the 1.5 degrees Celsius agreed to at the 2015 Paris climate conference.

“I get the sense that most policymakers don’t take the goal seriously but, in the cryosphere, irreversible changes are already happening,” she said.

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

Follow AP’s climate change coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate-and-environment>

Deep-sea craft carrying 5 people to Titanic wreckage reported missing, search underway

By BEN FINLEY and HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

A rescue operation was underway deep in the waters of the Atlantic Ocean on Monday in search of a technologically advanced submersible vessel carrying five people to document the wreckage of the Titanic, the iconic ocean liner that sank more than a century ago.

The vessel was reported overdue Sunday night about 435 miles (700 kilometres) south of St. John’s, Newfoundland, according to Canada’s Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Lt. Cmdr. Len Hickey said a Canadian Coast Guard vessel and military aircraft were assisting the search effort, which was being led by the U.S. Coast Guard in Boston.

Rear Adm. John Mauger, a commander for the U.S. Coast Guard, said additional resources would arrive in the coming days.

“It is a remote area — and it is a challenge to conduct a search in that remote area,” he said. “But we are deploying all available assets to make sure we can locate the craft and rescue the people on board.”

According to the Coast Guard, the craft submerged Sunday morning, and its support vessel, the Canadian research icebreaker Polar Prince, lost contact with it about an hour and 45 minutes later.

The Polar Prince will continue to do surface searches throughout the evening and Canadian P8 Poseidon

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 41 of 63

aircraft will resume their surface and subsurface search in the morning, the Coast Guard said on Twitter.

The submersible was operated by OceanGate Expeditions.

David Concannon, an adviser to OceanGate, said the submersible had a 96-hour oxygen supply starting at roughly 6 a.m. Sunday. In an email to The Associated Press, Concannon said he was supposed to be on the dive but could not go due to another client matter. He said officials were working to get a remotely operated vehicle that can reach a depth of 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) to the site as soon as possible.

OceanGate's expeditions to the Titanic wreck site include archaeologists and marine biologists. The company also brings people who pay to come along, known as "mission specialists." They take turns operating sonar equipment and performing other tasks in the five-person submersible. The Coast Guard said Monday that there was one pilot and four "mission specialists" aboard.

OceanGate said its focus was on those aboard and their families.

"We are deeply thankful for the extensive assistance we have received from several government agencies and deep sea companies in our efforts to reestablish contact with the submersible," it said in a statement.

U.K. businessman Hamish Harding was one of the mission specialists, according to Action Aviation, a company for which Harding serves as chairman. The company's managing director, Mark Butler, told the AP that the crew set out on Friday.

"There is still plenty of time to facilitate a rescue mission, there is equipment on board for survival in this event," Butler said. "We're all hoping and praying he comes back safe and sound."

Harding is a billionaire adventurer who holds three Guinness World Records, including the longest duration at full ocean depth by a crewed vessel. In March 2021, he and ocean explorer Victor Vescovo dived to the lowest depth of the Mariana Trench. In June 2022, he went into space on Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket.

Harding was "looking forward to conducting research" at the Titanic site, said Richard Garriott de Cayeux, the president of The Explorers Club, a group to which Harding belonged.

"We all join in the fervent hope that the submersible is located as quickly as possible," he said in a statement.

The expedition was OceanGate's third annual voyage to chronicle the deterioration of Titanic, which struck an iceberg and sank in 1912, killing all but about 700 of the roughly 2,200 passengers and crew. Since the wreckage's discovery in 1985, it has been slowly succumbing to metal-eating bacteria. Some have predicted the ship could vanish in a matter of decades as holes yawn in the hull and sections disintegrate.

The initial group of tourists in 2021 paid \$100,000 to \$150,000 apiece to go on the trip.

Unlike submarines that leave and return to port under their own power, submersibles require a ship to launch and recover them. OceanGate hired the Polar Prince to ferry dozens of people and the submersible craft to the North Atlantic wreck site. The submersible would make multiple dives in one expedition.

The expedition was scheduled to depart from St. John's, Newfoundland, in early May and finish up at the end of June, according to documents filed by the company in April with a U.S. District Court in Virginia that oversees Titanic matters.

CBS journalist David Pogue, who went on the trip last year, noted his vessel got turned around looking for the Titanic.

"There's no GPS underwater, so the surface ship is supposed to guide the sub to the shipwreck by sending text messages," Pogue said in a segment aired on CBS Sunday Morning. "But on this dive, communications somehow broke down. The sub never found the wreck."

The submersible, named Titan, is capable of diving 4 kilometers (2.4 miles) "with a comfortable safety margin," OceanGate said in its court filing.

It weighs 20,000 pounds (9,072 kilograms) in the air, but is ballasted to be neutrally buoyant once it reaches the seafloor, the company said.

The Titan is made of "titanium and filament wound carbon fiber" and has proven to "withstand the enormous pressures of the deep ocean," OceanGate stated. OceanGate told the court that Titan's viewport is "the largest of any deep diving submersible" and that its technology provides an "unrivaled view" of the deep ocean.

In a May 2021 court filing, OceanGate said the Titan had an "unparalleled safety feature" that assesses

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 42 of 63

the integrity of the hull throughout every dive.

At the time of the filing, Titan had undergone more than 50 test dives, including to the equivalent depth of the Titanic, in deep waters off the Bahamas and in a pressure chamber, the company said.

During its expedition in 2022, OceanGate reported that the submersible had a battery issue on its first dive, and had to be manually attached to its lifting platform, according to a November court filing.

"In the high sea state, the submersible sustained modest damage to its external components and OceanGate decided to cancel the second mission for repairs and operational enhancements," the filing stated.

More missions, however, followed. The company reported that 28 people visited the wreck site last year. Experts said Monday that rescuers face steep challenges.

Alistair Greig, a professor of marine engineering at University College London, said submersibles typically have a drop weight, which is "a mass they can release in the case of an emergency to bring them up to the surface using buoyancy."

"If there was a power failure and/or communication failure, this might have happened, and the submersible would then be bobbing about on the surface waiting to be found," Greig said.

Another scenario is a leak in the pressure hull, in which case the prognosis is not good, he said.

"If it has gone down to the seabed and can't get back up under its own power, options are very limited," Greig said. "While the submersible might still be intact, if it is beyond the continental shelf, there are very few vessels that can get that deep, and certainly not divers."

Even if they could go that deep, he doubts they could attach to the hatch of OceanGate's submersible.

AP reporters Danica Kirka, Jill Lawless and Sylvia Hui in London, Robert Gillies in Toronto, Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco, and Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed to this report.

Tropical Storm Bret moves west in Atlantic, with possible hurricane threat to Caribbean islands

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Tropical Storm Bret formed in the central Atlantic Ocean on Monday, with forecasters saying it could pose a hurricane threat to the eastern Caribbean by Thursday and the Dominican Republic and Haiti by the weekend.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami said Bret had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph) at 11 p.m. Monday as it moved west across the Atlantic at 18 mph (30 kph). Forecasters expect it to strengthen over the next two days, reaching Category 1 hurricane strength of 74 mph (120 kph) by Wednesday night as it nears the Lesser Antilles. Because of wind shear, the storm is not expected to strengthen into a Category 2 storm.

Bret is forecast to move across the Lesser Antilles as a hurricane on Thursday and Friday and unleash flooding, heavy rainfall and dangerous storm surge and waves, the center said. It is then expected to weaken slowly while still in the eastern Caribbean region, although the center warned that its forecast "remains a low confidence prediction."

"Everyone in the Lesser Antilles, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands should closely monitor updates to the forecast for this system and have their hurricane plan in place," the center said.

The National Hurricane Center said there's a possibility Bret could turn north or continue west into the Caribbean and threaten the Dominican Republic, Haiti and other islands.

"There continues to be larger than usual uncertainty," the center said of the storm's forecasted path.

Almost a century has gone by since a storm last strengthened into a hurricane in the tropical Atlantic in June, according to Philip Klotzbach, a meteorologist at Colorado State University. The last such storm recorded was Trinidad in 1933, he tweeted.

Tropical Storm Arlene, the first named storm of the 2023 season, formed earlier this month. It petered out after two days, never threatening landfall. Previously, a subtropical storm formed in the Atlantic Basin in January.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has forecast 12 to 17 named storms for this year's

hurricane season. It said between five and nine of those storms could become hurricanes, including up to four major hurricanes of Category 3 or higher.

A tropical disturbance that is trailing Bret has a 50% chance of formation, according to the National Hurricane Center.

Texas Sen. Angela Paxton says she will 'carry out my duties' in husband's impeachment trial

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas state Sen. Angela Paxton said Monday she will "carry out my duties" ahead of the historic impeachment trial of her husband, Republican Attorney General Ken Paxton, but did not outright say whether or not she will recuse herself on a vote to remove him from office.

Breaking weeks of public silence since her husband was impeached in May, Angela Paxton did not address the accusations in a statement released by her office.

Whether Paxton will cast a vote with her husband's job on the line has raised ethical questions ahead of the looming trial in the Senate, which is set to begin no later than August. State law compels all senators to attend, but is silent on whether she must participate.

"As a member of the Senate, I hold these obligations sacred and I will carry out my duties, not because it is easy, but because the Constitution demands it and because my constituents deserve it," Paxton said.

A spokesperson did not immediately respond Monday night when asked whether she intends to vote.

The statement was released on the eve of when rules surrounding the trial are expected to be finalized Tuesday by the Texas Senate. There are 31 senators in the chamber, which is led by Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who has declined to comment on Sen. Paxton's potential participation in the trial.

Ken Paxton is temporarily suspended from office pending the outcome of the trial.

Poor villagers risk their lives in danger zone as Philippines' most active volcano erupts

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

CALBAYOG, Philippines (AP) — Delfina Guiwan's heart was pounding as she snuck back to her village, now abandoned and eerily quiet, in the fertile foothills of gently erupting Mayon volcano in the northeastern Philippines.

When patrolling police spotted her, they warned that the village is off-limits because of the danger of a violent eruption at any time. Guiwan, 47, said she knew the risks but begged to stay a few minutes more to get her daughter's school uniform from their shack and feed her pigs.

"I'm scared. We saw lava flowing down one night and a boulder rolled down, sounding like thunder," Guiwan told The Associated Press. "I'm praying this eruption won't get worse because our livelihood is here and it's difficult to stay in the evacuation camp with few toilets for so many, and the heat. Children are getting sick there."

Her village, Calbayog, lies in Mayon's northeastern foothills and is well within the 6-kilometer (3.7-mile) radius from the volcano's crater that officials have long designated a permanent danger zone, demarcated by concrete warning signs. Entry is prohibited, but thousands of poor villagers have flouted the restrictions and made it their home for generations. Lucrative businesses such as sand and gravel quarrying and sightseeing tours have also thrived openly despite the ban and the mountain's frequent eruptions — now 53 times on record since 1616.

The 2,462-meter (8,007-foot) volcano is one of the Philippines' top tourism draws because of its near-perfect cone shape. But it's also the most active of the country's 24 volcanoes and could erupt violently at any time.

That includes pyroclastic flows, which are superheated gas and volcanic debris that suddenly race down slopes at great speed and incinerate everything in their path. Another threat is lahar, a muddy stream of water, volcanic ash and rocks that can move as fast as cars and engulf areas up to several kilometers

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 44 of 63

(miles) away.

A terrifying symbol of Mayon's deadly fury is the belfry of a 16th-century Franciscan stone church which protrudes from the ground. It's all that's left of a baroque church that was buried by lahar along with the town of Cagsawa in an 1814 eruption which killed about 1,200 people, including many who sought refuge in the church, about 13 kilometers (8 miles) from the volcano.

The thousands of villagers who live within Mayon's danger zone reflect the plight of many impoverished Filipinos who are forced to live in dangerous places across the archipelago — near active volcanoes like Mayon, on landslide-prone mountainsides, along vulnerable coastlines, atop earthquake fault lines, and in low-lying villages often engulfed by flash floods, said Richard Gordon, the longtime chairman of the Philippine Red Cross and a former senator.

Each year, about 20 typhoons and storms lash the Philippines, which also lies along the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of fault lines along the Pacific Ocean basin often hit by volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

"It's really a problem of poverty," Gordon said, adding that the government should prepare a comprehensive plan to provide poor villagers with safe housing and sustainable livelihoods that would finally allow them to abandon high-risk settlements.

"They go there because they have no choice," Gordon said in a telephone interview.

Most residents were evacuated from Guiwan's village, Calbayog, last week when Mayon started to gently expel lava after days of unrest. Only the chirps of birds and crickets, the crowing of roosters and rustling of coconut trees in the cool breeze could be heard in the village, about 4 to 5 kilometers (2.5 to 3 miles) from the volcano.

AP journalists were allowed by police to briefly join a house-to-house patrol of a Calbayog neighborhood and saw a few defiant residents still in their houses. One villager insisted to police that he had to remain because the 40 roosters he had bred for cockfights might be stolen if he left. Dance music or radio news broadcasts could be heard at two houses, and at least three others had laundry hanging on clotheslines in the sun.

At Mi-isi, another village well inside the permanent danger zone in Mayon's southeastern foothills, long-time resident Miniong Asilo laughed off warnings from authorities and volcano scientists.

"I'm not scared, but outsiders will probably have a heart attack if they live here," the 54-year-old father of nine said, adding that he has lost count of the times he has witnessed Mayon's fury.

Asilo and his family have survived for decades off the proceeds from his vegetable farm, piggery, coconut grove and on-and-off work as caretaker of a nearby gravel and sand quarry.

"I was born here. I have not seen the fire and lava reach this village," Asilo said.

As he spoke, Mayon rumbled faintly and lava flowed from its swollen crater a kilometer (more than half a mile) down a gully near the village, in what scientists have described as a "very gentle" eruption so far.

But the government isn't taking any chances.

Since the volcano began expelling lava a week ago, soldiers, police and local officials have moved more than 20,000 villagers from the danger zone in forced evacuations to 28 temporary shelters, mostly schools, according to the government's disaster-response agency.

With most classrooms now crammed with impoverished evacuees and their belongings, teachers have been forced to hold classes in school corridors, in chapels and under trees, Albay provincial education official Alvin Cruz said.

The crisis is an additional challenge for President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who took office in June last year and inherited an economy battered by the coronavirus pandemic, which deepened poverty, unemployment, hunger and the country's debt. He flew to Albay on Wednesday to hand out food packs and reassure the evacuees of government help, but warned that Mayon's gentle eruption may drag on for months, keeping them away from their homes.

The number of displaced villagers could more than double if Mayon's eruption turns violent and life-threatening, which government volcanologists say is still possible within days or weeks. That could prompt an expansion of the danger zone and the forced evacuation of many more residents.

Thousands of villagers have been given homes away from Mayon in the past, but many returned to its

fertile slopes because of inadequate livelihood options in government-established relocation sites, said Eddie Nunez, a resident of Bonga village, about 8 kilometers (5 miles) from Mayon's crater.

Nunez, 59, lost an uncle and cousin when they were hit by volcanic ash, steam and boulders in a sudden 1993 explosion while farming on Mayon's lower slopes. Dozens of other farmers were also killed, he said.

The lack of jobs and opportunities elsewhere forces people to continue risking their lives farming vegetables and scrounging for other sources of income at the foot of the volcano, Nunez said, comparing the choice to Russian roulette.

"You either get lucky or you get hit," he said.

Associated Press journalists Joael Calupitan and Aaron Favila contributed to this report.

Singer Bebe Rexha says she's OK after being hit in the face on stage by thrown phone

NEW YORK (AP) — Pop star Bebe Rexha was hit in the face and injured by a cellphone hurled from the audience at a hometown show in New York City Sunday night, and a man was arrested, police said.

The Grammy-nominated, multiplatinum-selling singer-songwriter was taken to a hospital after the phone hit her, police said. A bruise and a bandage were visible above her left eye in social media posts she made Monday.

"I'm good, yeah, I'm feelin' alright," she sang in a TikTok video, taking a line from "I'm Good (Blue)," her recent hit with DJ David Guetta.

Rexha, 33, was on stage at Pier 17, a rooftop venue in Manhattan, when the phone was thrown, police said. Video posted on social media showed the phone ricocheting off the artist's head, and then Rexha grabbing her face and sinking to her knees.

Nicolas Malvagna, 27, of New Jersey, was released without bail after being arraigned Monday on assault, aggravated harassment and other charges. Each is either a misdemeanor or a violation.

According to a court complaint, Malvagna told a third party he tried to hit Rexha with the phone at the end of the show because he thought "it would be funny."

A message seeking comment was sent to his attorney.

A three-time Grammy nominee, Rexha is known for such hits as "I'm Good (Blue)," "Meant to Be," featuring country's Florida Georgia Line, and "I Got You." Raised in New York, she was a songwriter for other artists before becoming a solo star.

"What I'm learning is that not everybody is going to connect with you and understand you, and that's OK," she told The Associated Press in April, shortly before the release of her latest album, "Bebe."

"And I feel like you have to just be your realest, truest version of yourself because, at the end of the day, if you try to change yourself to be liked by other people, you're not really being yourself," she added.

She is next scheduled to perform in Philadelphia on Tuesday.

4 people wounded by man wielding axe who attacked diners at Chinese restaurants in New Zealand

By NICK PERRY Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — A man with an axe attacked random diners at three neighboring Chinese restaurants in New Zealand, wounding four people, police and witnesses said.

Police said the man began the attack at about 9 p.m. Monday in the north Auckland suburb of Albany.

Police arrested a 24-year-old suspect at the scene and charged him with wounding, with the intention of causing grievous bodily harm. The man, a Chinese national, made a brief court appearance Tuesday. Police did not immediately offer a motive for the attack but said they had no evidence it was racially motivated.

Auckland City Hospital said Tuesday one patient from the attack remained there in a stable condition. North Shore Hospital said it had one patient with moderate injuries and a second with minor injuries, both

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 46 of 63

of whom were in a stable condition, and had earlier discharged a third patient.

A diner told the New Zealand Herald newspaper he was eating dinner with a friend when the man walked in and started attacking his friend, who was seriously injured.

"I was in shock. When I realized what was happening, he tried to target me," the man, who asked not to be named, told the Herald. "I blocked his axe with my hand. He was also trying to target my head, so I blocked the axe with my hand."

The diner said the man with the axe chased them out of the restaurant and then turned around and walked into another restaurant.

The Herald posted an image of what appeared to be a wood-splitter style of axe lying on the sidewalk.

Surveillance footage posted by news website Stuff showed people fleeing from one of the restaurants, including one person who ran out backward holding a chair as a barricade followed closely by another person holding a weapon.

Police said Montana officials downplay first-of-its-kind climate trial

By MATTHEW BROWN and AMY BETH HANSON Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — Montana officials sought to downplay a first-of-its-kind trial taking place over the state's obligations to protect residents from climate change, saying Monday that a victory by the young plaintiffs would not change approvals for fossil fuel projects.

Attorneys for Montana's Republican attorney general laid out their defense following a week of often emotional testimony in state court from young people who sued the state in 2020.

The 16 plaintiffs, ranging in age from 5 to 22 years old, say they're being harmed by wildfire smoke, excessive heat and other effects of climate change. They're asking a judge to declare unconstitutional a state law that prevents agencies from considering the impacts of greenhouse gases when issuing permits for fossil fuel development.

Final arguments were expected Tuesday — days earlier than scheduled after the state did not call one expert witness who was expected to testify and sharply limited the testimony of a second expert. Plaintiffs' attorneys had questioned the credibility of the two witnesses, who said Montana's greenhouse gas contributions were of little significance versus global totals.

Scientists say greenhouse gas emissions from coal, oil and natural gas are making Earth hotter and that every additional ton makes a difference.

Montana has never denied a permit for a fossil fuel project, according to the plaintiffs' attorneys. The state's lead environmental regulator said Monday that permitting practices would not change if the young environmentalists win their case.

"We do not have the authority to not permit something that fully complies with the law," said Department of Environmental Quality Director Chris Dorrington. "We are the ones that implement the law. We are not the ones that create the law."

State officials also drew a distinction between the law being challenged — a provision of the Montana Environmental Protection Act that they characterized as "procedural" — and regulatory acts such as the Clean Air Act of Montana.

Only regulatory acts can be used as the basis for permit rejections, and those don't allow permits to be denied in Montana based on climate impacts, said DEQ Air, Energy and Mining Division Administrator Sonja Nowakowski.

The plaintiffs testified over five days last week that climate change was marring their lives, with smoke from worsening wildfires choking the air they breathe. Drought is drying up rivers that sustain agriculture, fish, wildlife and recreation.

Olivia Vesovich, 20, a student at the University of Montana who grew up in Missoula, said she suffers from breathing problems that make wildfire smoke nearly unbearable.

As her respiratory reactions grew worse during smoke events that have shrouded Missoula, Vesovich said her mother in recent years started taking them on trips during fires in search of cleaner air — to Washington state, Idaho and elsewhere in Montana.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 47 of 63

"It feels like it's suffocating me, like if I'm outside for minutes," Vesovich said. "Climate change is wreaking so much havoc on our world right now and I know that will only be getting worse."

Attorneys for the state did not closely question any of the plaintiffs' claims about the physical and psychological harms they've suffered.

An expert for the state who was expected to downplay the severity of climate change — Judith Curry with the Climate Forecast Applications Network — was not called to testify.

The plaintiffs alleged Curry has cherry-picked scientific data to minimize global warming. Emily Flower, a spokeswoman for Attorney General Austin Knudsen, said the decision not to put Curry on the stand was due to "strategy changes."

In prior rulings, State District Judge Kathy Seeley significantly narrowed the scope of the case. Even if the plaintiffs prevail, Seeley has said she would not order officials to formulate a new approach to address climate change.

Instead, the judge could issue what's called a "declaratory judgment," saying officials violated the state constitution. That would set a new legal precedent of courts weighing in on cases typically left to the government's legislative and executive branches.

The plaintiffs are represented by attorneys for Our Children's Trust, an Oregon environmental group that's filed similar lawsuits in every state since 2011. None had previously reached trial. A climate case filed by the group in Montana a decade ago was rejected by the state Supreme Court.

Carbon dioxide, which is released when fossil fuels are burned, traps heat in the atmosphere and is largely responsible for the warming of the climate. Carbon dioxide levels in the air this spring reached the highest they've been in over 4 million years, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration said this month. Greenhouse gas emissions also reached a record last year, according to the International Energy Agency.

Brown reported from Billings, Mont.

UK lawmakers back scathing report that slammed Boris Johnson over 'partygate'

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's House of Commons on Monday resoundingly endorsed a report that found Boris Johnson lied to lawmakers about lockdown-flouting parties in his office, a humiliating censure that strips the former prime minister of his lifetime access to Parliament.

Lawmakers backed the finding that Johnson was in contempt of Parliament by 354 votes to 7, after a debate in which many argued it was crucial to show voters that politicians are obliged to follow the rules and tell the truth.

"It is important to show the public that there is not one rule for them and another for us," said Conservative Party lawmaker Theresa May, Johnson's predecessor as prime minister.

Opening the five-hour debate, House of Commons Leader Penny Mordaunt urged lawmakers to "do what they think is right." Mordaunt, a Conservative like Johnson, said she would vote to endorse the report by the Commons' Privileges Committee.

"This matters because the integrity of our institutions matter. The respect and trust afforded to them matters," she said. "This has real-world consequences for the accountability of members of Parliament to each other and the members of the public they represent."

A handful of Johnson allies spoke up to defend the former leader. Legislator Lia Nici said that "I cannot see where the evidence is where Boris Johnson misled Parliament knowingly, intentionally or recklessly."

But more Conservatives, and all opposition lawmakers who spoke, said they would back the report. Many Conservative lawmakers were absent from the debate — including Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. Wary of riling Johnson's remaining supporters, he stayed away.

Max Blain, Sunak's spokesman, said the prime minister had "a number of commitments," including a meeting with Sweden's leader.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 48 of 63

Johnson, who turned 59 on Monday, was not there either. He stepped down as prime minister in September 2022, but remained a lawmaker until June 9, when he quit after receiving notice of the Privileges Committee's findings.

Monday's debate was the latest aftershock from the "partygate" scandal over gatherings in the prime minister's Downing Street headquarters and other government buildings in 2020 and 2021.

The revelation that political staffers held birthday gatherings, garden parties and "wine time Fridays" during the pandemic sparked anger among Britons who had followed rules imposed to curb the spread of the coronavirus, unable to visit friends and family or even say goodbye to dying relatives in hospitals.

Labour Party lawmaker Chris Bryant said "there is visceral anger" among voters about partygate.

Memories were revived this week by the Sunday Mirror newspaper's publication of video showing staffers drinking and dancing at an event at Conservative Party headquarters in December 2020, when people from different households were banned from mixing indoors.

London's Metropolitan Police force said that it was examining footage of the event, which the BBC reported was billed as a "jingle and mingle" Christmas party.

Johnson initially denied that any parties took place at the prime minister's office, and then repeatedly assured lawmakers that pandemic rules and guidance were followed at all times. The committee concluded that those assurances were misleading and that Johnson failed to correct the record when asked to do so.

It said Johnson "misled the House on an issue of the greatest importance to the House and to the public, and did so repeatedly."

The panel — made up of four Conservatives and three opposition legislators — said Johnson compounded the offense with his attacks on the committee, which he called a "kangaroo court" engaged in a "witch hunt."

It concluded that Johnson's actions were such a flagrant violation of the rules that they warranted a 90-day suspension from Parliament, one of the longest ever imposed. A suspension of 10 days or more would have allowed his constituents to remove him from his seat in the House of Commons.

Johnson responded with fury to the report, branding its conclusions "deranged" and accusing its members of "a protracted political assassination."

He escaped being suspended from Parliament by resigning — "at least for now," he said, hinting at a potential comeback. That could prove difficult. As a result of Monday's vote, he will be stripped of the lifetime pass to Parliament's buildings customarily given to former lawmakers.

While some Conservatives still laud Johnson as the charismatic populist who led the party to a landslide victory in 2019, others recall how his government became so consumed by scandals that he was forced out by his own party less than three years later.

"I am so over Boris," Conservative legislator Bob Seely said in the House of Commons.

Johnson's legacy is a headache for Sunak, a fellow Conservative who took office in October with a promise to restore professionalism and integrity to government.

The Conservatives, who have been in power since 2010, trail the main opposition Labour Party in opinion polls, with an election due by the end of 2024.

The party faces electoral tests before that in four special elections for seats vacated by Johnson, two of his allies and a fourth Tory lawmaker who quit over sex and drugs allegations.

LGBTQ+ pride flags vandalized at Stonewall National Monument 3 times during Pride month

NEW YORK (AP) — Dozens of LGBTQ+ pride flags were damaged and ripped down at the Stonewall National Monument over the weekend, the third such bout of vandalism at the LGBTQ+ landmark during this Pride month, police said.

The latest occurrence happened Sunday, after others on June 9 and last Thursday. No arrests have been made in any of the incidents, and it's unclear whether they were connected. The New York Police Department's Hate Crimes Task Force is investigating.

On Sunday, officers were called around 8 a.m. and found about 33 pride flags broken and tossed to the ground, police said.

Park volunteer Steven Menendez told New York's Fox 5 News that, in all, 68 flags — nearly a quarter of those displayed — were damaged in some way.

"We have so much hatred and anger in the air right now," Menendez told the station. "We really need to reverse that and replace it with love compassion and acceptance."

The Stonewall National Monument, the first U.S. national monument dedicated to LGBTQ+ history, was dedicated in 2016. It encompasses a park across the street from the Stonewall Inn, a bar where patrons fought back against a police raid on June 28, 1969, and helped spark the contemporary LGBTQ+ rights movement.

The Stonewall rebellion is commemorated every year with pride marches in cities across the U.S. and the world.

Giorgio Armani, Zegna present fluid elegance for the next hot season as Milan Fashion Week wraps up

By COLLEEN BARRY AP Fashion Writer

MILAN (AP) — Milan Fashion Week opened and closed under a beating early summer sun.

Zegna wrapped up four days of shows Monday with an outdoor event set among bales of raw linen behind Milan's City Hall, allowing city workers a view out of their windows. For the sweltering fashion crowd, Zegna fashion offered iced coffee and linen baseball caps to keep things cool.

With temperatures rising, Milan designers focused on fluidity in dressing, allowing the body to move without constrictions. With one notable dissenter, runways offered thigh-revealing Bermuda shorts as an alternative to trousers even for city dressing. Gone are the long shorts of streetwear brands.

Some highlights from the final day of Milan Fashion Week of mostly menswear previews for next spring and summer:

ARMANI PRESENTS SIGNATURE ELEGANCE

Giorgio Armani's signature collection was meant to show the fashion public how the urban man ought to dress, even in the heat of summer.

"I didn't do any Bermudas," Armani noted after the runway show in his central Milan villa. "Bermudas imply being at the beach, and going around on vacation."

Still, he conceded that a front-row influencer wearing Bermuda shorts at his morning show had done so elegantly.

The 88-year-old designer said his designs start with a pencil and a blank piece of paper — a work process that was underlined by a large sharpened pencil that served as a backdrop for the runway show. His Giorgio signature was cast on the back wall.

Jackets finished most looks, soft and hanging loosely, which Armani said was a nod to Asian elegance. Prints on silken shirts, jackets and trousers recalled weaving, echoed in the espadrilles and fishermen sandals. Straw brimmed Panama hats, meant for holidays, were more often carried than worn. The color palate progressed from washed out cream, tan and sage to black and navy — at times offset by flashes of red.

Armani defused the formality of the tailoring with linen, and by keeping jackets and blazers mostly unbuttoned, so a double-breasted jacket "is no longer a double-breasted jacket," Armani said.

"It is a way of dressing that is at once both elegant and comfortable," he said. "That is why the jackets."

The collection closed with four boardroom looks: formal dark suits, white shirts and ties. "This is to remind everyone that this is how a man dresses," Armani said.

DHRUV KAPOOR'S AWAKENING

Indian designer Dhruv Kapoor's collections are not just about style, they are about elevating the wearer's emotions, helping them to dream bigger. It's a lofty ambition, fitting with Kapoor's notion that apparel, with a tweak here and there, can tap the universe's energy.

To point, Kapoor showed spring-summer 2024 runway collection in a blue room, meant to have a calming effect.

A red jacket fires up emotions. Prints are inspired by crop circles, "which I read recently just by looking at that pattern will imprint certain things in your head, which you are going to use when the time is right for you," Kapoor said backstage.

The co-ed collection was modular with a loose, easy-to-wear silhouette. For him, a pleated kilt is worn over trousers, worn with a beaded star-burst studded jacket. The same star-burst appeared on a straight skirt for her, worn with a sci-fi print sweatshirt. Three bowling-style shirts are inspired by the covers of 1970s science fiction book

"We want you to feel good when you put it on," he said. "They won't even know what has happened. But we have done a little tweak from the back."

ZEGNA OFFERS MINIMALIST SEPARATES

Alessandro Sartori's collection for Zegna was a meditative study of minimalist separates, in natural shades that easily mix and match.

The new Zegna "basics" included sleeveless tops and tunics, zipped collared jackets with three-quarter sleeves, notch lapel jackets with sleeves worn rolled up to show silken lining, boxy jerseys as well as jackets with neither lapel or collar. Occasionally styled with a wrapped foulard, these tops were worn with crisply creased loose trousers, or Bermuda short. Looks were finished with dark socks and rubber-soled footwear.

"There are new shapes for a wardrobe of simple garments, but inside they are very technical," Sartori said.

For the color palette, ivory faded into a fleeting mint; a faded rose contrasted with bright flamingo, followed by Zegna mainstays ebony and khaki.

Linen is at the heart of the collection, as testified by the nearly 200 bales of raw linen transported from fields in Normandy, and which are destined to be transformed into Zegna's Oasi Linen at the brand's Italian factories. Zegna said in press notes that it is committed to having the origin and production path of all of its linen traceable by next year.

ASPESI'S MILITANT BEAUTY

U.S. designer Lawrence Steele's design language for the Italian brand Aspesi is "militant beauty."

Aspesi is known for its classic aesthetic is more about timeless wardrobe building than presenting a collection. Steele is taking that process one step further by proposing a way of dressing to find a common humanity.

Instead of concentrating on clothes that make the individual, feeding the ego, Steele said he is exploring "what can clothes to make us realize we are more the same."

To that end, he is softening military looks with nylon and taffeta. A Cuban floral print dress is layered with a earth-tone military vest. The same print in a bowling shirt is layered with a white T-shirt, olive green pants and a jacket.

His own outfit is an expression of that same concept: His father's military trousers and an Aspesi blazer, mixing the formal and the informal.

"My goal is to make the ordinary, extraordinary," Steele said.

Former student opens fire in Brazilian school, killing teen and wounding other, official says

Associated Press undefined

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A former student entered a school and then began shooting in Brazil's southern Parana state Monday, killing a 16-year-old girl and severely wounding another teen, a spokesperson for the city of Cambé told The Associated Press by phone.

The gunman, aged 20 or 21, entered the Professora Helena Kolody state school purportedly to retrieve some documents, spokesperson Thiago Mossini said.

Once inside the building, the man fired at least a dozen shots before being restrained by a school employee, Mossini said. The alleged shooter was later arrested by police, Mossini said.

The wounded student, a 17-year-old, remains in critical condition, the University Hospital of Londrina said in a statement Monday evening. The medical team said that while it was necessary to place a catheter, the patient's critical state did not allow for him to be transported to the surgery room at the moment.

The boy's father, Rodrigo Augusto, told TV network Globo News earlier Monday the bullet was still lodged in his son's head. "It's my birthday today, we usually stay together all day on my birthday, and then... today I couldn't in the morning," Augusto said.

Images circulating on TV and social media showed dozens of students gathered outside the school, some crying, as an ambulance approached the gate.

Brazil has seen almost two dozen attacks or violent episodes in schools since 2000, half of them in the last 14 months.

On April 5, an attack at a daycare center killed four children and prompted the government to launch an unprecedented crackdown. Some 3,400 police officers carried out a nationwide sweep to round up several hundred people accused of spreading hate speech or stoking school violence.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said on his official Twitter account Monday: "Yet another young life taken away by the hatred and violence we can no longer tolerate within our schools and society."

Blinken and Xi pledge to stabilize deteriorated US-China ties, but China rebuffs the main US request

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

BEIJING (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met on Monday with Chinese President Xi Jinping and said they agreed to "stabilize" badly deteriorated U.S.-China ties, but America's top diplomat left Beijing with his biggest ask rebuffed: better communications between their militaries.

After meeting Xi, Blinken said China is not ready to resume military-to-military contacts, something the U.S. considers crucial to avoid miscalculation and conflict, particularly over Taiwan.

Still, China's main diplomat for the Western Hemisphere, Yang Tao, said he thought Blinken's visit to China "marks a new beginning."

"The U.S. side is surely aware of why there is difficulty in military-to-military exchanges," he said, blaming the issue squarely on U.S. sanctions, which Blinken said revolved entirely around threats to American security.

Yet Blinken and Xi pronounced themselves satisfied with progress made during the two days of talks, without pointing to specific areas of agreement beyond a mutual decision to return to a broad agenda for cooperation and competition endorsed last year by Xi and President Joe Biden at a summit in Bali.

And, it remained unclear if those understandings can resolve their most important disagreements, many of which have international implications. Still, both men said they were pleased with the outcome of the highest-level U.S. visit to China in five years.

The two sides expressed a willingness to hold more talks, but there was little indication that either is prepared to bend from positions on issues including trade, Taiwan, human rights conditions in China and Hong Kong, Chinese military assertiveness in the South China Sea, and Russia's war in Ukraine.

Blinken said later that the U.S. set limited objectives for the trip and achieved them. He told reporters before leaving for a Ukraine reconstruction conference in London that he had raised the issue of military to military communications "repeatedly."

"It is absolutely vital that we have these kinds of communications," he said. "This is something we're going to keep working on."

Speaking to reporters Monday during a campaign fundraising trip to California, Biden said Blinken did a "hell of a job." The president said "you know" progress was made with relations between the U.S. and China because of the meeting.

The U.S. has said that, since 2021, China has declined or failed to respond to over a dozen requests from the Department of Defense for top-level dialogues.

According to a transcript of the meeting with Blinken, Xi said he was pleased with the outcome of Blinken's

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 52 of 63

earlier meetings with top Chinese diplomats and said restarting the Bali agenda were of great importance. "The Chinese side has made our position clear, and the two sides have agreed to follow through the common understandings President Biden and I had reached in Bali," Xi said.

That agenda had been thrown into jeopardy in recent months, notably after the U.S. shot down a Chinese surveillance balloon over its airspace in February, and amid escalated military activity in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea. Combined with other disputes over human rights, trade and opiate production, the list of problem areas is daunting.

But also Xi suggested the worst could be over.

"The two sides have also made progress and reached agreement on some specific issues," Xi said without elaborating, according to a transcript of the remarks released by the State Department. "This is very good."

In his remarks to Xi during the 35-minute session at the Great Hall of the People, a meeting that was expected but not announced until an hour before it started, Blinken said "the United States and China have an obligation and responsibility to manage our relationship."

"The United States is committed to doing that," Blinken said. "It's in the interest of the United States, in the interests of China, and in the interest of the world."

Blinken described his earlier discussions with senior Chinese officials as "candid and constructive."

Despite the symbolism of his presence in China, Blinken and other U.S. officials had played down the prospects for any significant breakthroughs on the most vexing issues facing the planet's two largest economies.

Instead, these officials have emphasized the importance of the two countries establishing and maintaining better lines of communication.

Thus, China's refusal to resume the military-to-military contacts was a hitch.

"Progress is hard," Blinken told reporters. "It takes time, it takes more than one visit."

Blinken's trip is expected to herald a new round of visits by senior U.S. and Chinese officials to each other's countries, possibly including a meeting between Xi and Biden in India or the U.S. in the coming months.

Before meeting with Xi, Blinken met earlier Monday with China's top diplomat Wang Yi for about three hours, an encounter that produced a harsh assessment of the talks.

China's foreign ministry said "it is necessary to make a choice between dialogue or confrontation, cooperation or conflict." It blamed the "U.S. side's erroneous perception of China, leading to incorrect policies towards China" for the current "low point" in relations.

And, it said the U.S. bore responsibility for halting "the spiraling decline of China-U.S. relations to push it back to a healthy and stable track." It added that Wang had "demanded that the U.S. stop hyping up the 'China threat theory,' lift illegal unilateral sanctions against China, abandon suppression of China's technological development, and refrain from arbitrary interference in China's internal affairs."

In its readout of the meeting, the State Department said Blinken "underscored the importance of responsibly managing the competition between the United States and the PRC through open channels of communication to ensure competition does not veer into conflict," using the acronym for the People's Republic of China.

In the first round of talks on Sunday, Blinken met for nearly six hours with Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang, after which both countries said they had agreed to continue high-level discussions.

Both the U.S. and China said Qin had accepted an invitation from Blinken to visit Washington but Beijing made clear that "the China-U.S. relationship is at the lowest point since its establishment." That sentiment is widely shared by U.S. officials.

Blinken's visit came after his initial plans to travel to China were postponed in February after the shoot-down of a Chinese surveillance balloon over the U.S.

In his meetings, Blinken also pressed 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.

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 senior Chinese foreign policy adviser Wang Yi in Vienna in May.

But those have been punctuated by bursts of angry rhetoric from both countries 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.

Associated Press writer Emily Wang contributed.

Ancient Roman temple complex, with ruins of building where Caesar was stabbed, opens to tourists

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Four temples from ancient Rome, dating back as far as the 3rd century B.C. stand smack in the middle of one of the modern city's busiest crossroads.

But until Monday, practically the only ones getting a close-up view of the temples were the cats that prowl the so-called "Sacred Area," on the edge of the site where Julius Caesar was assassinated.

With the help of funding from Bulgari, the luxury jeweler, the grouping of temples can now be visited by the public.

For decades, the curious had to gaze down from the bustling sidewalks rimming Largo Argentina (Argentina Square) to admire the temples below. That's because, over the centuries, the city had been built up, layer by layer, to levels several meters above the area where Caesar masterminded his political strategies and was later fatally stabbed in 44 B.C.

Behind two of the temples is a foundation and part of a wall that archaeologists believe were part of Pompey's Curia, a large rectangular-shaped hall that temporarily hosted the Roman Senate when Caesar was murdered.

What leads archaeologists to pinpoint the ruins as Pompey's Curia? "We know it with certainty because latrines were found on the sides" of Pompey's Curia, and ancient texts mentioned the latrines, said Claudio Parisi Presicce, an archaeologist and Rome's top official for cultural heritage.

The temples emerged during the demolition of medieval-era buildings in the late 1920s, part of dictator Benito Mussolini's campaign to remake the urban landscape. A tower at one edge of Largo Argentina once topped a medieval palace.

The temples are designated A, B, C and D, and are believed to have been dedicated to female deities. One of the temples, reached by an imposing staircase and featuring a circular form and with six surviving columns, is believed to have been erected in honor of Fortuna, a goddess of chance associated with fertility.

Taken together, the temples make for "one of the best-preserved remains of the Roman Republic," Parisi Presicce said after the Mayor of Rome Roberto Gualtieri cut a ceremonial ribbon Monday afternoon. On display in a corridor near the temples is a black-and-white photograph showing Mussolini cutting the ribbon in 1929 after the excavated ruins were shown off.

Also visible are the travertine paving stones that Emperor Domitian had laid down after a fire in 80 A.D. ravaged a large swath of Rome, including the Sacred Area.

On display are some of the artifacts found during last century's excavation. Among them is a colossal stone head of one of the deities honored in the temples, chinless and without its lower lip. Another is a stone fragment of a winged angel of victory.

Over the last decades, a cat colony flourished among the ruins. Felines lounged undisturbed, and cat lovers were allowed to feed them. On Monday, one black-and-white cat sprawled lazily on its back atop the stone stump of what was once a glorious column.

Bulgari helped pay for the construction of the walkways and nighttime illumination. A relief to tourists who step gingerly over the uneven ancient paving stones of the Roman Forum. The Sacred Area's wooden walkways are wheelchair- and baby-stroller-friendly. For those who can't handle the stairs down from the sidewalk, an elevator platform is available.

The attraction is open every day except for Mondays and some major holidays, with general admission tickets priced at 5 euros (\$5.50).

Curiously, the square owes its name not to the South American country but to the Latin name of Strasbourg, France, which was the home seat of a 15th-century German cardinal who lived nearby and who served as master of ceremonies for pontiffs, including Alexander VI, the Borgia pope.

More than 1 million people are dropped from Medicaid as states start a post-pandemic purge of rolls

By DAVID A. LIEB and ANDREW DeMILLO Associated Press

More than 1 million people have been dropped from Medicaid in the past couple months as some states moved swiftly to halt health care coverage following the end of the coronavirus pandemic.

Most got dropped for not filling out paperwork.

Though the eligibility review is required by the federal government, President's Joe Biden's administration isn't too pleased at how efficiently some other states are accomplishing the task.

"Pushing through things and rushing it will lead to eligible people — kids and families — losing coverage for some period of time," Daniel Tsai, a top federal Medicaid official recently told reporters.

Already, about 1.5 million people have been removed from Medicaid in more than two dozen states that started the process in April or May, according to publicly available reports and data obtained by The Associated Press.

Florida has dropped several hundred thousand people, by far the most among states. The drop rate also has been particularly high in other states. For people whose cases were decided in May, around half or more got dropped in Arkansas, Idaho, Kansas, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah and West Virginia.

By its own count, Arkansas has dropped more than 140,000 people from Medicaid.

The eligibility redeterminations have created headaches for Jennifer Mojica, 28, who was told in April that she no longer qualified for Medicaid because Arkansas had incorrectly determined her income was above the limit.

She got that resolved, but was then told her 5-year-old son was being dropped from Medicaid because she had requested his cancellation — something that never happened, she said. Her son's coverage has been restored, but now Mojica says she's been told her husband no longer qualifies. The uncertainty has been frustrating, she said.

"It was like fixing one thing and then another problem came up, and they fixed it and then something else came up," Mojica said.

Arkansas officials said they have tried to renew coverage automatically for as many people as possible and placed a special emphasis on reaching families with children. But a 2021 state law requires the post-pandemic eligibility redeterminations to be completed in six months, and the state will continue "to swiftly disenroll individuals who are no longer eligible," the Department of Human Services said in statement.

Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders has dismissed criticism of the state's process.

"Those who do not qualify for Medicaid are taking resources from those who need them," Sanders said on Twitter last month. "But the pandemic is over — and we are leading the way back to normalcy."

More than 93 million people nationwide were enrolled in Medicaid as of the most recent available data in February — up nearly one-third from the pre-pandemic total in January 2020. The rolls swelled because federal law prohibited states from removing people from Medicaid during the health emergency in exchange for providing states with increased funding.

Now that eligibility reviews have resumed, states have begun plowing through a backlog of cases to

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 55 of 63

determine whether people's income or life circumstances have changed. States have a year to complete the process. But tracking down responses from everyone has proved difficult, because some people have moved, changed contact information or disregarded mailings about the renewal process.

Before dropping people from Medicaid, the Florida Department of Children and Families said it makes between five and 13 contact attempts, including texts, emails and phone calls. Yet the department said 152,600 people have been non-responsive.

Their coverage could be restored retroactively, if people submit information showing their eligibility up to 90 days after their deadline.

Unlike some states, Idaho continued to evaluate people's Medicaid eligibility during the pandemic even though it didn't remove anyone. When the enrollment freeze ended in April, Idaho started processing those cases — dropping nearly 67,000 of the 92,000 people whose cases have been decided so far.

"I think there's still a lot of confusion among families on what's happening," said Hillarie Hagen, a health policy associate at the nonprofit Idaho Voices for Children.

She added, "We're likely to see people showing up at a doctor's office in the coming months not knowing they've lost Medicaid."

Advocates fear that many households losing coverage may include children who are actually still eligible, because Medicaid covers children at higher income levels than their parents or guardians. A report last year by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services forecast that children would be disproportionately impacted, with more than half of those disenrolled still actually eligible.

That's difficult to confirm, however, because the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services doesn't require states to report a demographic breakdown of those dropped. In fact, CMS has yet to release any state-by-state data. The AP obtained data directly from states and from other groups that have been collecting it.

Medicaid recipients in numerous states have described the eligibility redetermination process as frustrating.

Julie Talamo, of Port Richey, Florida, said she called state officials every day for weeks, spending hours on hold, when she was trying to ensure her 19-year-old special-needs son, Thomas, was going to stay on Medicaid.

She knew her own coverage would end but was shocked to hear Thomas' coverage would be whittled down to a different program that could force her family to pay \$2,000 per month. Eventually, an activist put Talamo in contact with a senior state healthcare official who confirmed her son would stay on Medicaid.

"This system was designed to fail people," Talamo said of the haphazard process.

Some states haven't been able to complete all the eligibility determinations that are due each month. Pennsylvania reported more than 100,000 incomplete cases in both April and May. Tens of thousands of cases also remained incomplete in April or May in Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa, New Mexico and Ohio.

"If states are already behind in processing renewals, that's going to snowball over time," said Tricia Brooks, a research professor at the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. "Once they get piles of stuff that haven't been processed, I don't see how they catch up easily."

Among those still hanging in the balance is Gary Rush, 67, who said he was notified in April that he would lose Medicaid coverage. The Pittsburgh resident said he was told that his retirement accounts make him ineligible, even though he said he doesn't draw from them. Rush appealed with the help of an advocacy group and, at a hearing this past week, was told he has until July to get rid of about \$60,000 in savings.

Still, Rush said he doesn't know what he will do if he loses coverage for his diabetes medication, which costs about \$700 a month. Rush said he gets \$1,100 a month from Social Security.

In Indiana, Samantha Richards, 35, said she has been on Medicaid her whole life and currently works two part-time jobs as a custodian. Richards recalled receiving a letter earlier this year indicating that the pandemic-era Medicaid protection was ending. She said a local advocacy group helped her navigate the renewal process. But she remains uneasy.

"Medicaid can be a little unpredictable," Richards said. "There is still that concern that just out of nowhere, I will either get a letter saying that we have to reapply because we missed some paperwork, or

I missed a deadline, or I'm going to show up at the doctor's office or the pharmacy and they're going to say, 'Your insurance didn't go through.'"

Lieb reported from Jefferson City, Missouri, and DeMillo from Little Rock, Arkansas. Also contributing were AP reporters Anthony Izaguirre in Tallahassee, Florida; Marc Levy in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; and Arleigh Rodgers in Bloomington, Indiana. Rodgers is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

Fiercest fighting in years erupts in West Bank camp of Jenin, at least 5 Palestinians killed

By ILAN BEN ZION and MAJDI MOHAMMED Associated Press

JENIN REFUGEE CAMP, West Bank (AP) — Israeli military forces raided a refugee camp in the northern West Bank on Monday, igniting the fiercest day of fighting in years as Palestinian militants detonated roadside bombs and Israeli helicopter gunships struck Palestinian gunmen to rescue troops trapped in the hourslong firefight.

At least five Palestinians were killed, including a 15-year-old boy, and over 90 others were wounded, Palestinian health officials said. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad group claimed three of those killed as its militants. Eight Israeli soldiers were also wounded, the army said.

The Israeli military said forces stormed into the Jenin refugee camp in the early morning to arrest two wanted militants. They faced fierce resistance. Palestinian militants said they ambushed Israeli armored vehicles with explosive devices, disabling several vehicles with troops trapped inside.

Israeli military spokesman Lt. Col. Richard Hecht described Palestinian militants' use of powerful roadside bombs as "very unusual and dramatic." Five mangled vehicles were stuck in the firefight for hours, requiring the military to dispatch helicopters as part of an elaborate evacuation operation.

It was the first such use of a helicopter gunship in the occupied West Bank since the second Palestinian uprising around two decades ago, Israeli media reported. The highly militarized Jenin refugee camp witnessed some of the biggest battles at the time.

At least one Apache helicopter fired missiles at Palestinian gunmen to try to clear the area while security forces worked to extract the trapped vehicles, the Israeli army said. The local branch of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad based in Jenin said its fighters opened fire at the combat helicopter. The group praised the militants and warned Israel to "reconsider its calculations before its soldiers set foot on Jenin's land."

The Israeli army said that the Palestinian gunfire caused minor damage to the spinning tail rotor of a helicopter.

Witnesses described the nearly 10 hours of fighting as a bedlam of gunfire and explosions.

"They were shooting at anything and everything that moved," hospital director Tawfik al-Shobaki said of Israeli forces.

As the Israeli military eventually withdrew its damaged vehicles from the camp in the late afternoon, Palestinians ventured out to assess the heavy damage and bury their dead.

The Palestinian Health Ministry identified those killed as Khaled Asasa, 21, Qassam Abu Sariya, 29, Qais Jabarin, 21, Ahmed Daraghmeh, 19, and 15-year-old Ahmed Saqr. Of the 91 Palestinians wounded, at least 12 were in critical condition, hospital officials said. Wissam Bakar, director of Jenin Government Hospital, said a 15-year-old girl was among the critically wounded.

Islamic Jihad claimed three of the dead as its fighters — Qais Jabarin, Qassam Abu Sariya and Ahmed Daraghmeh.

A Palestinian cameraman, Hazem Nasser, wearing a clearly marked press vest, was among those seriously wounded in the fighting. His colleagues said he was shot when a building — where journalists had camped out to cover the clashes — came under Israeli fire.

"Of course there was a lot of shooting and explosions, but everyone knew we were journalists covering

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 57 of 63

it," fellow freelance journalist Alaa Badarneh said. "All of a sudden we were surrounded and the army started shooting toward us."

An Associated Press journalist at the scene said that he saw the military shoot directly at Nasser.

When asked about the shooting, the Israeli military said it was "unaware of fire aimed at medics and journalists" and was looking into the incident. It said that soldiers used live fire as a last resort "to deal with the threat before them."

Last year, prominent Palestinian-American Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was shot and killed while covering an Israeli military raid into the Jenin refugee camp. The army has said Abu Akleh was likely killed by Israeli fire.

The Israeli military said that eight members of the paramilitary border police and the army suffered light and moderate wounds. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu paid a visit to wounded troops in the hospital. He praised the forces and said that Israel was "striking terror with strength and determination."

The Palestinian leadership and Arab states sharply condemned the Israeli raid.

Hussein al-Sheikh, a senior Palestinian official, accused Israel of waging "a fierce and open war" against the Palestinian people.

Egypt's Foreign Ministry denounced what it called Israel's "continued escalation against the Palestinians," saying the violence undermined efforts to reduce regional tensions.

The escalation was the latest in more than a year of near-daily violence that has wracked the West Bank.

Later on Monday, the Israeli military said that two suspected Palestinian assailants rammed their car into troops manning a checkpoint near Jenin, lightly wounding two soldiers. Israeli forces opened fire at the vehicle, wounding the two Palestinians, health officials said. One of the men was in critical condition.

Israel and the Palestinians have been gripped by months of violence, focused mainly in the West Bank, where over 120 Palestinians have been killed this year, according to a tally by The Associated Press. The city of Jenin has been a hotbed of Palestinian militancy.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians seek those territories for a future independent state.

Israel has been staging near-nightly raids in the West Bank in response to a spasm of Palestinian violence early last year. Palestinian attacks against Israelis have surged during that time. Israel says most of the dead were militants, but stone-throwing youths protesting the incursions and others not involved in confrontations have also been killed.

Palestinian attacks against Israelis have killed at least 20 people this year.

Ben Zion reported from Jerusalem. Associated Press writer Isabel DeBre in Jerusalem contributed to this report.

Houston rapper Big Pokey dies after collapsing at show in Texas

HOUSTON (AP) — Milton Powell, a Houston rapper who performed under the name Big Pokey and is credited with elevating the city's hip-hop scene, died after collapsing during a show in Texas, a local official said Monday.

Tom Gillam III, a justice of the peace in Jefferson County, where Powell was performing when he collapsed Sunday, said an autopsy to determine the cause of death was pending. He said Powell was 48.

Powell was a member of Houston's rap collective Screwed Up Click that was formed by the late DJ Screw. Powell was performing at a bar in Beaumont called Pour09, whose owner, Min Dai, told the Houston Chronicle that police were on onsite and able to provide medical help "instantly" before emergency responders rushed the rapper to a hospital.

A statement on Powell's official Instagram page said he was "well loved by his family, friends, and his loyal fans."

Tributes from other artists poured in across social media.

Rapper Bun B called Powell "one of the most naturally talented artists" in Houston.

"He'd pull up, do what he had to do and head home. One of the pillars of our city," Bun B said on Ins-

tagram.

Trump faces questions about whether he'll drag down the Republican Party after his indictments

By SARA BURNETT Associated Press

Donald Trump's grip on the Republican faithful was evident from the moment he left the federal courthouse in Miami last week.

Fresh off becoming the first former president to face criminal charges levied by the government he once oversaw, Trump's motorcade moved through a crowd of hundreds of mostly adoring fans. He met more supporters at a Cuban restaurant in Little Havana, a Miami neighborhood that, like much of south Florida, has swung toward Republicans in recent years.

A federal indictment on charges of mishandling the nation's most sensitive national security secrets would doom any other White House hopeful. But Trump's reception in Miami — and the more than \$7 million he raised after the indictment — was a reminder of the central tension coursing through the Republican Party as the 2024 presidential primary gets underway.

For now, no one comes close to Trump in his command of the voters who will decide the GOP's nominee next year. But Trump's path beyond the primary is far more perilous as he faces significant and growing questions about his ability to appeal to a broader, more moderate set of voters in a possible general election matchup against President Joe Biden. If Trump fails, he risks not just losing the White House contest but also dragging down other Republican candidates on the ballot as the party aims to retake the U.S. Senate and keep the House.

Former Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan is among those warning Republicans that what is popular in a primary may not carry the general election. The frequent Trump critic backed a moderate Republican to succeed him in last year's governor's race. But Trump's preferred candidate carried the primary and was soundly defeated in the general election, a result that played out in key races across the country.

"We had three losing cycles in a row," Hogan said. "It's pretty hard to lose the White House, but we did it. It's pretty hard to lose the House, the Senate and the White House, but we did that also. And in the last election when we should have won the Senate back, picked up governor seats and picked up 50 seats in the House ... Republicans did not make gains really."

Trump is not the only GOP contender facing such concerns. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' national electability has been called into question after he signed into law a state ban on abortions performed after six weeks, delighting conservatives but leaving him as an outlier among broader voters. While many Americans back some restrictions on abortion, especially after the first trimester, many do not agree with the most extreme measures pushed in Republican-led states such as Florida, according to polling that also showed most Americans support a federal law allowing access to abortion nationwide.

DeSantis also alienated some Republicans when he appeared to dismiss Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine as a "territorial dispute," comments he later had to walk back.

No one in the race, however, carries the same level of baggage as Trump, particularly after the latest indictment, which follows charges in New York City that he paid hush money to porn actor Stormy Daniels to cover up an affair. He's unlikely to attract new support after the allegations in Florida, which center on allegations that he took and refused to return boxes of classified documents, including some that could put military members and other sources at risk if disclosed.

The hand-wringing over the GOP's future began well before Trump's latest indictment.

In announcing her presidential campaign in February, former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, who was Trump's ambassador to the United Nations, was blunt in addressing the party's general election challenge.

"We've lost the popular vote in seven of the last eight presidential elections," she said. "Our cause is right, but we have failed to win the confidence of a majority of Americans."

Since Trump's federal indictment in Miami, some of his rivals have begun to test how far they can go in

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 59 of 63

criticizing him, positioning themselves in a way that may be helpful in a general election but also tempering their remarks by blasting the Department of Justice for bringing charges.

While Trump's rivals may not be ready to fully take him on, the party establishment is increasingly active in trying to block his acolytes from being nominated in down ballot races or encouraging hopefuls to change the subject from its losing messages of the past.

The Republican National Committee, for example, conducted a review of the GOP's recent performance. A draft report, which did not mention Trump by name, concluded that the party needs to move beyond "relitigating previous elections," an apparent allusion to the incessant but debunked claims he won the 2020 presidential contest.

The National Republican Senatorial Committee, the campaign arm of the Senate GOP, also has said it's shifting tactics after opting to sit out last year's primary elections and let voters decide the nominees. After failing to retake Senate control the organization now says it will play in primaries if needed, providing money and other resources to candidates it believes have the best chance to win a general election.

The organization already got news it hoped for when Doug Mastriano, a far-right Pennsylvania lawmaker who was endorsed by Trump last year and lost badly to the Democratic governor candidate, opted not to run for the Senate in 2024. Republicans are hopeful that former hedge fund CEO David McCormick, who lost last year's primary to another Trump-backed candidate, will run again and take on Democratic Sen. Bob Casey.

Trump, who has falsely called the charges against him a political prosecution, insists that he had redefined the GOP, saying earlier this year that "the old Republican Party is gone, and it's never coming back." The former president and his supporters point to his 2016 victory as evidence of his ability to win, noting he won Ohio and Florida when the GOP nominees in 2012 and 2008 could not and was the first Republican presidential candidate to win Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania in decades.

"We forever revolutionized the electoral map for Republicans," Trump said. "We paved a path to victory."

That argument ignores the facts that Trump lost all three states in 2020 and that all three elected Democratic governors in 2018 and again last fall. In all three states, Trump's endorsed candidates lost.

Republicans' losses in competitive races like those are a big part of former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's pitch to voters about why it's time for Trump to go. Christie, who also is running for the GOP nomination for president, noted in a recent appearance on Fox News Channel that even before the latest charges, the party under Trump struggled in those contests.

"We're tired of losing," Christie said. "And look, if the person at the top gets all the credit when things go well, they also must be accountable for what happens when things go badly."

Russian opposition leader Navalny urges anti-Kremlin campaign as his new trial begins

MELEKHOVO, Russia (AP) — Imprisoned Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny urged his supporters Monday to begin a broad campaign against Moscow's actions in Ukraine as he went on trial on new charges of extremism that could keep him behind bars for decades.

The trial began inside a maximum security penal colony in Melekhovo, 250 kilometers (150 miles) east of Moscow, where Navalny, 47, is serving a nine-year sentence for fraud and contempt of court — charges he says are politically motivated. Soon after it started, the judge closed the trial despite Navalny's demand to keep it open.

In a statement posted on social media by his allies, Navalny declared that the decision to close the trial was a sign of fear by President Vladimir Putin, and he announced the start of a campaign against Moscow's decision to send troops to Ukraine.

Navalny said the effort must reach out to millions to explain the disastrous impact of the fighting and "combat Putin's lies and the Kremlin's hypocrisy." He argued that despite a relentless crackdown on dissent, such a campaign could be efficiently conducted on messaging apps outside the authorities' control.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 60 of 63

"No one but us could enter this fight for our citizens' hearts and minds, so we need to do it and win," Navalny said.

Navalny, who exposed official corruption and organized major anti-Kremlin protests, was arrested in January 2021 upon returning to Moscow after recuperating in Germany from nerve agent poisoning that he blamed on the Kremlin.

Wearing his prison garb, Navalny looked gaunt at the session but spoke emphatically about the weakness of the state's case and gestured energetically.

Navalny has said the new extremism charges, which he rejected as "absurd," could keep him in prison for another 30 years. He said an investigator told him that he would also face a separate military trial on terrorism charges that potentially carry a life sentence.

The Moscow City Court, which opened the hearing at Penal Colony No. 6, didn't allow reporters in the courtroom and they watched the proceedings via video feed from a separate building. Navalny's parents also were denied access to the court and followed the hearing remotely.

Navalny and his lawyers urged the judge to hold an open trial, arguing that authorities are eager to suppress details of the proceedings to cover up the weakness of the case.

"The investigators, the prosecutors and the authorities in general don't want the public to know about the trial," Navalny said.

Prosecutor Nadezhda Tikhonova asked the judge to conduct the trial behind closed doors, citing security concerns. The judge agreed and reporters were asked to leave the premises.

Asked about the decision to close the trial, Navalny's father, Anatoly, told reporters it showed "the utter lack of shame, conscience and dignity."

Russia's state news agencies and other media reported on the trial, but the most-watched government-controlled TV stations didn't cover it.

The new charges relate to the activities of Navalny's anti-corruption foundation and statements by his top associates. His allies said the charges retroactively criminalize all the activities of Navalny's foundation since its creation in 2011.

One of Navalny's associates, Daniel Kholodny, was relocated from a different prison to face trial alongside him.

Navalny has spent months in a tiny, one-person cell, also called a "punishment cell," for purported disciplinary violations such as an alleged failure to properly button his prison clothes, properly introduce himself to a guard or to wash his face at a specified time.

Navalny's associates and supporters have accused prison authorities of failing to provide him with proper medical assistance and voiced concern about his health.

As Navalny's trial began, the Prosecutor General's office declared the Bulgaria-based Agora human rights group to be an "undesirable" organization. It said the group poses a "threat to the constitutional order and national security" by alleging human rights violations and offering legal assistance to members of the opposition movement.

Russian authorities have banned dozens of domestic and foreign nongovernmental organizations on similar grounds.

In Berlin, the German government criticized the trial of Navalny and reiterated its call for his immediate release.

"In case of of the opposition politician Alexei Navalny, the Russian authorities keep looking for new excuses to extend his imprisonment," government spokesman Wolfgang Buechner told reporters.

"The German government continues to demand of the Russian authorities that they release Navalny without delay," he added. "Navalny's imprisonment is based on a politically motivated verdict, as the European Court of Human Rights concluded back in 2017."

Asked whether Germany could provide any assistance to Navalny or observe the trial, Foreign Ministry spokesman Christian Wagner said German officials were doing what they could "on the few channels that we have," but acknowledged it was "very difficult at the moment" given the current state of relations with Russia.

Associated Press writer Frank Jordans in Berlin contributed.

Wyndham Clark's US Open win on Father's Day is also a tribute to his late mom

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The U.S. Open wrapped up, as it always does, on Father's Day. Golf's newest champion would be the first to tell people he's always been a mama's boy.

Wyndham Clark's victory Sunday will be remembered for how a 29-year-old newcomer to the big time held off some of the biggest names in the game to stamp a poignant exclamation mark on a U.S. Open that had been, to that point, kind of hard to love.

Clark's mother, Lise, died of breast cancer in 2013 — a family tragedy that sent him spiraling. The win brought with it a chance to share memories, and a chance to reflect on the long road between then and now.

"I didn't show any emotion off the course, but when I was on the golf course I couldn't have been angrier," Clark said of his state of mind when he first learned of his mom's diagnosis. "I was breaking clubs when I didn't even hit that bad of a shot. I was walking off golf courses."

The road back led him to leave college at Oklahoma State for a fresh start at Oregon. It involved a relatively quick rise for an aspiring pro golfer, but one pushed off course by typical slumps and close calls that led to more than one crisis in confidence.

"I've had many times where I've gone home and was yelling in my car and punching things and just so mad that I'm like, 'Why can't I do what my peers are doing?'" Clark said.

Through it all, he kept in mind what his mother used to tell him about his golf game: Play big.

"She called me 'Winner' when I was little, so she would just say, 'I love you, Winner,'" Clark said.

Becoming a winner Sunday meant holding off the first- and third-ranked players in the world: Rory McIlroy and Scottie Scheffler. All three leaders shot even-par 70 in the final round. Clark's 70 was good enough to beat McIlroy by one and Scheffler by three.

"I guess you're just hoping for the other guy to slip up or make a mistake or give you a glimmer of hope," McIlroy said. "Wyndham was pretty much rock-solid all day."

Clark stayed cool when trouble beckoned as it always does at what's known as golf's most exacting test, even when it isn't. He saved bogey after whiffing his third shot from the heavy greenside rough on the par-5 eighth. He made an up-and-down par save on No. 9 from a knee-high lie in the rough.

He hit big shots under pressure, nailing a 228-yard fairway metal to 20 feet to set up birdie for a three-shot lead over McIlroy on the par-5 14th. Then, with his lead down to one, he hit the green from 200 yards on No. 18 and two-putted from 60 feet to seal the deal.

"An up-and-coming star," his caddie and onetime assistant coach at Oregon, John Ellis, called him. "If he wasn't one before, he is one now. First time he has actually competed in a major for a chance to win and he shows he can handle the heat."

Clark handled Los Angeles Country Club, a first-time host that he got an early look at thanks to a friend who is a member and who invited Clark over for a round about a week before the show came to town.

Not everyone loved this place.

The U.S. Open's first return to Los Angeles in 75 years got roundly criticized for its small galleries, its wide-but-crooked fairways, its blind tee shots and an overall feeling that it did not live up to the U.S. Open's exacting standards.

There were two record rounds of 62 (Rickie Fowler and Xander Schauffele) on opening day and a 63 that felt ho-hum (Tommy Fleetwood) on Sunday.

There were two record-tying nine-hole scores of 29 (Tom Kim on Saturday, Austin Eckroat on Sunday).

Fowler, who shared the third-round lead with Clark, needed only 62 holes to tie a U.S. Open record with

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 62 of 63

22 birdies, but he did nothing over the final 10 holes to get back into the hunt.

The four-day scoring average was 71.76, which broke the record for a tournament that dates to 1895.

Even Clark was less than pleased after the third round, which ended in near darkness — a scheduling call that placed the weekend action on prime-time TV on the East Coast.

The Denver native said playing in the dark reminded him of when he was a kid and he would practice in the twilight at Cherry Hills Country Club — the course where Arnold Palmer put the U.S. Open in the American conscience with his stirring comeback in 1960.

Cherry Hills and Denver have another champion to celebrate. Clark's win came six days after the Nuggets wrapped up the NBA title.

But the action was in LA on Sunday. With the sun setting on the year's third major, Clark had nothing to gripe about. He was near the 18th green holding the trophy and taking pictures — with his caddie, Ellis, and also his sister, his girlfriend and dozens more friends and family who have been along for this ride.

All in all, a perfect way to celebrate Father's Day.

Well, almost perfect.

"All I really wish is that my mom could be here and I could just hug her and we could celebrate together," Clark said "But I know she's proud of me."

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

Today in History: June 20, Victoria takes the throne

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, June 20, the 171st day of 2023. There are 194 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 20, 1837, Queen Victoria acceded to the British throne following the death of her uncle, King William IV.

On this date:

In 1782, Congress approved the Great Seal of the United States, featuring the emblem of the bald eagle.

In 1863, West Virginia became the 35th state.

In 1893, a jury in New Bedford, Massachusetts, found Lizzie Borden not guilty of the ax murders of her father and stepmother.

In 1943, race-related rioting erupted in Detroit; federal troops were sent in two days later to quell the violence that resulted in more than 30 deaths.

In 1944, during World War II, Japanese naval forces retreated in the Battle of the Philippine Sea after suffering heavy losses to the victorious American fleet.

In 1947, Gangster Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel was shot dead at the Beverly Hills, California, home of his girlfriend, Virginia Hill, apparently at the order of mob associates.

In 1967, boxer Muhammad Ali was convicted in Houston of violating Selective Service laws by refusing to be drafted and was sentenced to five years in prison. (Ali's conviction was ultimately overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court).

In 1972, three days after the arrest of the Watergate burglars, President Richard Nixon met at the White House with his chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman; the secretly made tape recording of this meeting ended up with the notorious 18 1/2-minute gap.

In 1974, the film noir "Chinatown," starring Jack Nicholson and Faye Dunaway, was released by Paramount Pictures.

In 1990, South African Black nationalist Nelson Mandela and his wife, Winnie, arrived in New York City for a ticker-tape parade in their honor as they began an eight-city U.S. tour.

In 2014, the Obama administration granted an array of new benefits to same-sex couples, including those living in states where gay marriage was against the law; the new measures ranged from Social Security

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ Vol. 31 - No. 334 ~ 63 of 63

and veterans benefits to work leave for caring for sick spouses.

In 2016, a divided U.S. Supreme Court bolstered police powers, ruling 5-3 that evidence of a crime in some cases may be used against a defendant even if the police did something wrong or illegal in obtaining it.

Ten years ago: Lightning began sparking more than 2,000 fires across northern and central California, eventually burning more than a million acres. Model Naomi Campbell was sentenced in London to 200 hours of community service and fined 2,300 pounds (\$4,600) after she pleaded guilty to kicking, spitting and swearing at two police officers during an argument over lost luggage while aboard a plane at Heathrow Airport.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump abruptly reversed himself and signed an executive order halting his administration's policy of separating children from their parents when they are detained illegally crossing the border; Trump had been insisting wrongly that there was no alternative to the policy because of federal law and a court decision. The Vatican announced that Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the retired Roman Catholic archbishop of Washington, D.C., had been removed from public ministry and would face further punishment over "credible" allegations that he sexually abused a teenager more than 40 years earlier. (Pope Francis accepted McCarrick's resignation as a cardinal on July 28.) A suspect was arrested and charged with murder in the killing of rising Florida rap star XXXTentacion.

One year ago: The nation's youngest children got their first chance at vaccines for COVID-19. Roughly 18 million kids under 5 became eligible, and shots began at a few locations. Two Florida deputies were suspended for leaking news about actor and comedian Bob Saget's death before his family was alerted. Clela Rorex, a former Colorado county clerk considered a pioneer in the gay rights movement for being the first public official to issue a same-sex marriage license in 1975, died at age 78.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Bonnie Bartlett is 94. Actor James Tolkan is 92. Director Stephen Frears is 82. Singer-songwriter Brian Wilson is 81. Actor John McCook is 80. Singer Anne Murray is 78. TV personality Bob Vila is 77. Musician Andre Watts is 77. Actor Candy Clark is 76. Producer Tina Sinatra is 75. R&B singer Lionel Richie is 74. Actor John Goodman is 71. Rock musician Michael Anthony is 69. Rock musician John Taylor is 63. Rock musician Mark degli Antoni (de-gee-an-toh-nee) is 61. Christian rock musician Jerome Fontamillas (Switchfoot) is 56. Actor Nicole Kidman is 56. Country/bluegrass singer-musician Dan Tyminski is 56. Movie director Robert Rodriguez is 55. Actor Peter Paige is 54. Actor Josh Lucas is 52. Rock musician Jeordie White (AKA Twiggy Ramirez) is 52. Rock singer Chino Moreno (Deftones) is 50. Country-folk singer-songwriter Amos Lee is 46. Country singer Chuck Wicks is 44. Actor Tika Sumpter is 43. Actor-singer Alisan Porter is 42. U.S. Olympic beach volleyball gold medalist April Ross is 41. Christian rock musician Chris Dudley (Underoath) is 40. Rock singer Grace Potter (Grace Potter & the Nocturnals) is 40. Actor Mark Saul is 38. Actor Dreama Walker is 37. Actor Chris Mintz-Plasse (plahs) is 34. Actor Maria Lark is 26.