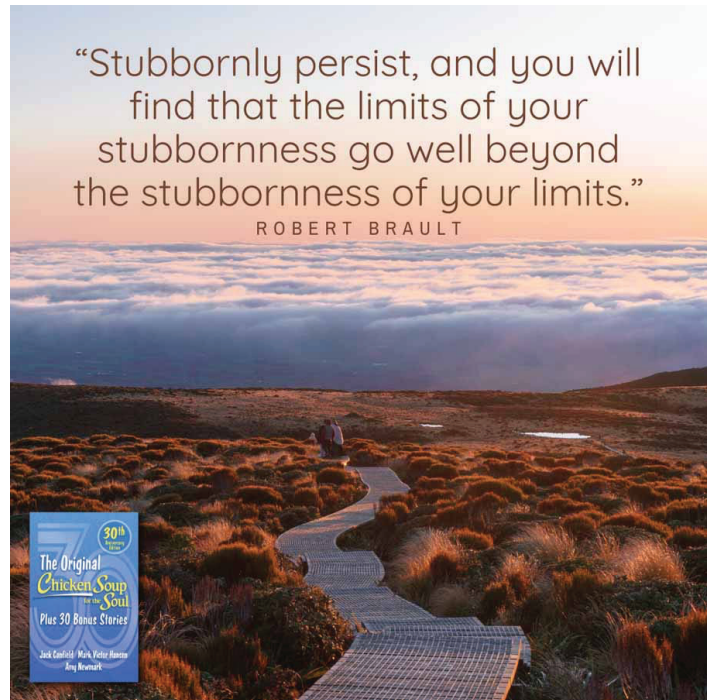


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Groton Community Calendar

Monday, July 3

Senior Menu: Chicken and rice casserole, mixed vegetables, chocolate pudding with bananas, whole wheat bread.

Food Pantry Closed

Tuesday, July 4

Olive Grove: His/Her Firecracker Tourney.

Wednesday, July 5

Senior Menu: Beef stew, biscuit, Waldorf salad, muffin, tomato juice.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Circles potluck and joint Bible study, 6 p.m.; Game/Project night, 7 p.m.

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm

Chamber Meeting, noon, at City Hall

Olive Grove: Kid's Lessons

Jr. Legion hosts Watertown, DH, 5 p.m.

U12BB hosts Borge, DH, 5:30 p.m.

U10 R/W hosts Webster, DH, 6 p.m.

Thursday, July 6

Senior Menu: Ham, au gratin potatoes, broccoli and cauliflower blend, fruit, cookie.

U8 R&B hosts Hannigan/Borge, DH, 5:30 p.m.

City Council meeting, 7 p.m.

Friday, July 7

Senior Menu: Chicken strips, tri-tators, peas and carrots, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Jr. Teeners at Vern Jark Memorial Tournament in Aberdeen

U12 State Tournament at Webster

T-Ball Scrimmage (B&G), 6 p.m.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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

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Farm Hand Wanted

Farm hand (Groton, Brown, South Dakota): Plant, cultivate & harvest crops. Apply fertilizers & pesticides. Operate, maintain and repair farm equipment. Repair fences and farm buildings. Follow all work and food safety protocols. Req: 6 mns rel exp. Mail resume to Shawn Gengerke Farms, 12702 406th Ave., Groton, SD 57445.

Help Wanted

THE GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT has openings for the following certified positions for the 23-24 school year: K-12 Vocal Music Teacher, HS Agriculture Teacher/FFA Advisor. Applicants should complete and submit the certified staff application form along with a current cover letter, resume, and three letters of recommendation. All materials should be submitted to Joe Schwan, Superintendent PO Box 410 Groton, SD 57445. EOE

For Sale

2010 Hitchhiker Discover America 345 Uk 5th wheel trailer, 36 feet long, 3 slides, \$17,000 or best offer. Can be seen at 715 N 2nd Street, Groton by calling 605-216-6468.

GROTON'S EVENTS



July 4 Firecracker
Tourney at Olive
Grove Golf Course

July 9 Summer
Fest/Car Show at
the City Park



July 20 Pro Am
Tourney at Olive
Grove Golf Course

July 20 Summer
Downtown Sip &
Shop



Aug. 4 Wine on Nine
at Olive Grove Golf
Course

Aug. 10 Family Fun
Fest

COME SPEND A WEEKEND IN GROTON!

- 5 camping spots with full-service hookups
- play centers and permanent corn hole boards
- swimming pool with slide and diving board
 - 3 diamond baseball complex
- 9-hole golf course • bowling alley

GROTON
Chamber Of Commerce

120 N Main St., Groton, SD 57445

605-397-8422

GrotonChamber.com

Weekly Vikings Recap - Mount Rushmore of Vikings

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

In the spirit of Independence Day, we thought it would be fun to put together the Mount Rushmore of the greatest Minnesota Vikings.

Bud Grant

The most important Minnesota Viking in NFL history is not a player but a head coach. Bud Grant joined the Minnesota Vikings in 1967 after a successful career as the head coach of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, where he won four Grey Cups. At the time Grant became the Vikings' head coach, the Vikings had done little to nothing in their first six seasons in the NFL. From 1961-1966, the Vikings went a combined 29-50-4 and had no playoff appearances. That would quickly change for the Vikings when Grant arrived in 1967.

After Grant's first season with the Vikings, where the team went 3-8-3, the Vikings would never look back under Grant's leadership. In 1968, the Vikings made their first playoff appearance, and in 1969, the Vikings were playing in the Super Bowl. From 1969-1976, the Vikings went 87-24-1, won seven NFC Central division championships, and went to four Super Bowls. Sadly, Grant and the Vikings were unable to achieve the ultimate accomplishment and win a Super Bowl.

Despite the lack of Super Bowls, Grant is, without a doubt, the most important person who has ever been a part of the Minnesota Vikings. He built a culture of leaders, hard work, and consistently putting a competitive team on the field in Minnesota. Since Grant became a part of the Minnesota Vikings in 1967, the Vikings have had only three seasons where they won three or fewer games, the same amount they had in their first six seasons before Grant joined. In other words, the history of the Vikings should be labeled as either "BG" for "Before Grant" or "AG" for "After Grant" because that's how much he means to Minnesota.

Alan Page

Without a doubt, the greatest player in Vikings' history is Alan Page. He was a two-time defensive player of the year, nine-time all-pro, and the first defensive player in NFL history to win the MVP award. He was the face of the Purple People Eaters and the reason the Vikings were so dominant in the early-1970s. If you look at an all-time ranking of NFL players, I would be shocked if Alan Page is not the highest-ranked Minnesota Viking on the list.

The most amazing thing about Page might not even be his NFL career but his law career. He served on the Minnesota Supreme Court from 1992-2015 and even was presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2016. Page is probably the smartest and most impressive player who has ever worn a Vikings jersey.

Fran Tarkenton

Often, a lot of young Vikings fans say that the Vikings have never truly had a franchise quarterback in the team's history. Those fans would be wrong, as the Vikings had one of the greatest quarterbacks in NFL history in Fran Tarkenton. People might not realize this, but when Fran Tarkenton retired in 1978, he was the NFL record holder in passing attempts, completions, passing yards, and passing touchdowns, which has only been done by other legendary quarterbacks like Tom Brady, Brett Favre, and Dan Marino.

Randy Moss

The fourth and final spot on the Mount Rushmore of Minnesota Vikings was a difficult one to decide. The ultimate reason we went with Randy Moss is because there has never been another player like him in the history of the NFL. When Moss stepped into the NFL in 1998, he was immediately the best wide receiver in the NFL. Thousands of Vikings fans around the country will say that Moss is the reason they became Vikings fans. And there is no other Viking that has a play named after him. You never hear of a guy getting "Randle'd" or "Peterson'd" but you will hear at least once every couple of games that a guy got "Moss'd." This might be a controversial statement, but I think Randy Moss might be the greatest athlete who has stepped on an NFL field.

“Do Not Miss the Signs of a Blood Clot”



Based on Science, Built on Trust



Andrew Ellsworth, MD.

The patient was young, healthy, and short of breath. She had not been sick recently, other than a minor cough. Her oxygen level was normal and her lungs sounded clear. Her heart rate was a little fast and she was breathing rather quickly, too. She was anxious about it, but she knew there was more to this than anxiety. Meanwhile, she was taking an antibiotic for bronchitis which did not seem to be helping. We did some additional tests, some blood work, to look for other possible causes. One test result gave us a big clue: her “d-dimer” was elevated. While not tied to a specific diagnosis, this gave us more reason to keep looking.

We proceeded to get a CT pulmonary angiogram, a special scan of the chest, specifically looking at the vessels that run from the heart to the lungs, looking for a blood clot. Sure enough, that is what it was: a pulmonary embolism. The treatment was medication to help thin the blood, which helps the clot to gradually dissolve. She was relieved to know the cause of her symptoms and within days she was feeling better.

Without treatment a pulmonary embolism, or blood clot in the lungs, can be fatal. Thus, early detection and treatment is key. Unfortunately, detecting it may be difficult, especially since the symptoms are often vague and common with numerous other illnesses.

In addition to shortness of breath, coughing, wheezing, coughing up blood, or pain with breathing can be symptoms of a blood clot. Another hallmark symptom of a blood clot may be calf pain or swelling. Unexplained swelling and pain of a limb may indicate a deep vein thrombosis (DVT), a blood clot in the leg or arm. Left untreated, a DVT can become larger and may break off and go through the heart to the lung vessels and cause a pulmonary embolism (PE).

A person may be at increased risk of a clot due to a genetic condition, an illness, pregnancy, after surgery, after an injury, because of cancer, or because of medications such as birth control pills. Covid has been a more recent cause. Sometimes a clot happens for no apparent reason. Prolonged travel is also a reason, so on a long drive or flight, take time to stop and stretch your legs. Wearing high compression socks while traveling may also be helpful.

Shortness of breath can be a symptom of numerous ailments, major or minor. No matter the reason, however, please consult your doctor if you are short of breath or have unexplained swelling of an arm or leg. It could be a blood clot.

Andrew Ellsworth, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. 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, broadcast on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

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The Bulletin by Newsweek

JULY 03, 2023

World in Brief

to "significant" evidence against the defense team.

Calls are increasing to sanction Missouri Senator Josh Hawley's wife, attorney Erin Morrow Hawley, after a man cited in the Supreme Court's decision to allow a website designer to refuse to serve LGBTQ+ customers revealed he was not involved in the case.

The State Department under President Joe Biden and Donald Trump did not plan enough to assist the U.S.-backed Afghanistan government before it collapsed in 2021, a new report released by the Biden administration found.

Viktor Bout, a Russian arms dealer who was freed in a prison swap for U.S. basketball star Brittney Griner last year, has reportedly been chosen as the candidate of Russia's far-right party for a seat in a regional legislative assembly.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky told CNN that Vladimir Putin's response to the Wagner Group mutiny was "weak", and an indication that the Russian president "doesn't control the situation" in his own country.

TALKING POINTS

"Running Twitter is hard. I don't wish that stress upon anyone. I trust that the team is doing their best under the constraints they have, which are immense. It's easy to critique the decisions from afar... which I'm guilty of... but I know the goal is to see Twitter thrive. It will." Twitter co-founder and former CEO Jack Dorsey said after Elon Musk said the social media company would limit the number of tweets users can read daily.

"Workers have been pent up and frustrated and angry about what's happened during the pandemic combined with the inability to pay their rent and stay in Los Angeles. So people feel liberated, it's Fourth of July, freedom is raining in Los Angeles and hotel workers are leading that fight." Kurt Petersen of the Unite Here Local 11 union said as hundreds of thousands of hotel workers in Southern California go on strike asking for better pay amid high cost of living, the New York Times reported.

"The Swedish government fully understands that the Islamophobic acts committed by individuals at demonstrations in Sweden can be offensive to Muslims. We strongly condemn these acts, which in no way reflect the views of the Swedish government." The Swedish foreign ministry said, condemning the burning of the Muslim holy book for Quran outside Stockholm's mosque last week, amid growing calls for measures to avoid such incidents from occurring in the future.

WHAT TO WATCH IN THE DAY AHEAD

On the economic front, it's going to be an eventful week, with minutes of Federal Reserve's latest monetary policy meeting, ISM manufacturing, nonfarm payrolls and other employment figures expected. All markets will close early today ahead of the U.S. independence day holiday.

The Wimbledon Championships, one of the most prestigious events in the tennis calendar and one of the four Grand Slam tournaments, begins at the All England Club today.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Are there any electric vehicles available that can charge up using solar power (so you don't have to plug them in to charge them)?

-- Bill Kelly, Galveston, TX

Yes, there are electric vehicles (EVs) available that can be charged using solar power. Often referred to as solar-powered EVs or solar-charging EVs, these vehicles integrate solar panels into their design to harness solar energy and convert it to electricity for the vehicle's batteries. Solar charging alone may not be enough to power an EV completely, but it can provide additional power and extend the vehicle's range.

Solar-powered EVs use photovoltaic (PV) cells, which are typically installed on the roof or other parts of the vehicle's body. These cells capture sunlight and convert it into electricity through the photovoltaic effect. The generated electricity is then used to charge the EV's battery pack or supplement its power requirements, reducing the reliance on grid electricity.

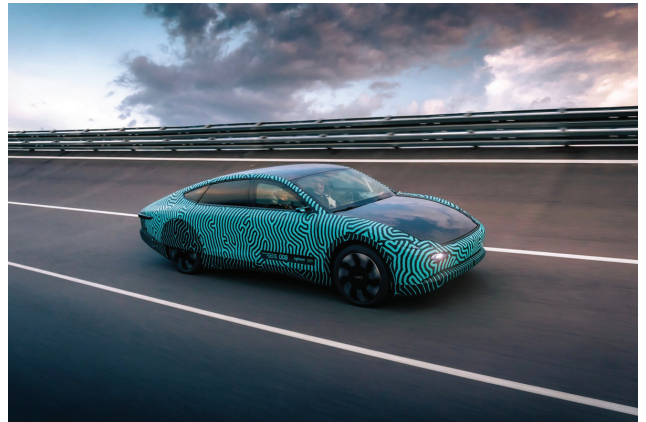
One example of a solar-powered EV is the Lightyear One, developed by a Dutch company called Lightyear. This EV is equipped with solar panels integrated into its roof and hood. Its solar panels are highly efficient, enabling them to charge the vehicle's battery while it is parked or in motion. The company claims that the solar panels can provide up to 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) of range per hour of solar charging, depending on weather conditions.

Another notable example is the Sono Sion, an EV developed by a German startup called Sono Motors. The Sion is covered with solar panels that can generate electricity to charge the vehicle's battery. The car also features bidirectional charging, allowing it to share its excess energy with other devices or even power another EV. The Sono Sion's solar panels are expected to provide approximately 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) of additional range per day through solar charging, according to the company.

It's worth noting that the efficiency and range added by solar charging depend on various factors such as the size of the solar panels, the weather conditions, the amount of sunlight available and the energy requirements of the vehicle. While solar charging can be a convenient and eco-friendly way to extend the range of an EV, it is not intended to replace traditional charging methods entirely.

In addition to solar-powered EVs, there are also aftermarket solutions available for existing electric vehicles. These solutions involve retrofitting solar panels onto the roofs or other parts of the vehicle to enable solar charging. These aftermarket options may not provide as seamless an integration as purpose-built solar-powered EVs, they can still offer an opportunity to harness solar energy and reduce the reliance on grid electricity.

Solar-powered EVs and solar charging technologies are continually evolving as researchers and manufacturers explore ways to improve efficiency and integration. The combination of renewable energy generation through solar power and the increasing adoption of electric vehicles represents a promising step towards a sustainable and clean transportation future..

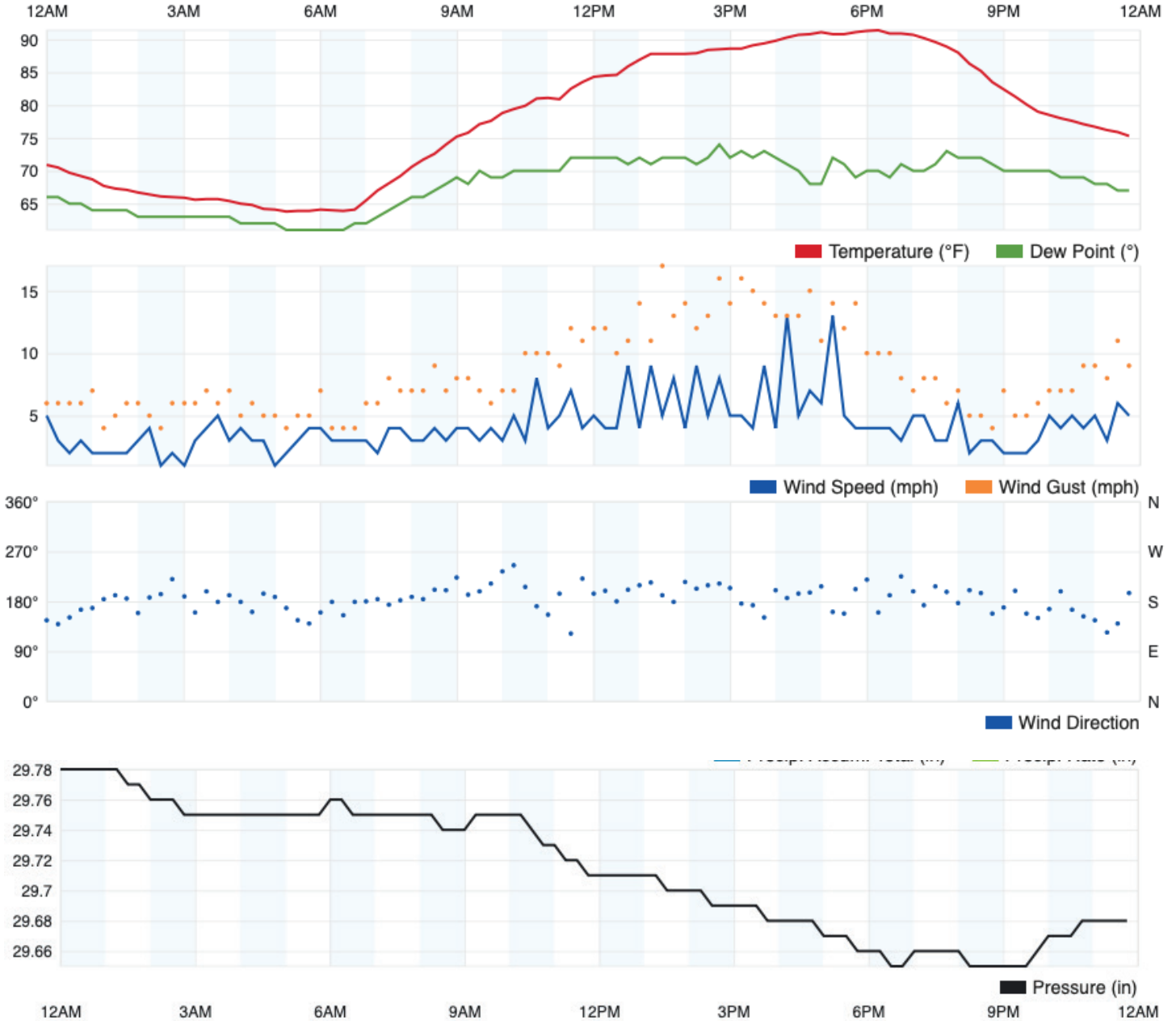


The Lightyear One charges up from its own rooftop solar panels.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Independence Day	Tuesday Night	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
						
Sunny	Chance T-storms	T-storms Likely	Slight Chance T-storms	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 85 °F	Low: 60 °F	High: 74 °F	Low: 50 °F	High: 70 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 78 °F



Severe Weather Threat Overview

July 3, 2023
2:58 AM

Monday evening into the overnight

Timing/Location

- Isolated to scattered storms expected Monday evening into the overnight hours.
- Increasing confidence that several of these storms could become severe, therefore, a slight risk is in place for our entire forecast area.

Tornado Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High

Max Hail Size

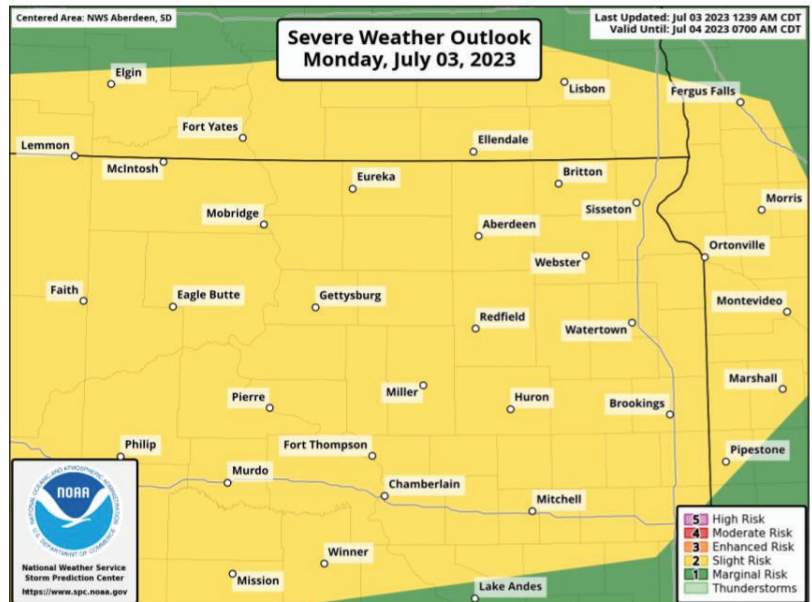
Dimes **Quarters** **Golfball** Baseball

Max Wind Speed

< 60 mph **60-70 mph** 70-80 mph > 80mph

Heavy Rain/Flooding Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Isolated to scattered storms are expected this evening into the overnight hours. A slight risk for severe weather is in place over our entire forecast area. Please have multiple ways to receive warnings.

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Probability of Precipitation Forecast

	7/3 Mon						7/4 Tue							
	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm
	Aberdeen	0	0	0	5	25	40	25	45	60	60	60	45	45
Britton	0	0	0	5	15	35	35	45	60	60	60	50	50	15
Brookings	5	0	5	15	30	30	45	25	45	45	70	70	45	45
Chamberlain	5	0	10	20	30	45	30	50	40	35	35	20	25	25
Clark	5	0	5	10	40	45	30	35	65	65	70	70	70	20
Eagle Butte	5	5	10	35	50	25	40	65	55	55	55	25	25	20
Ellendale	0	0	0	10	25	35	30	40	55	55	55	45	45	10
Eureka	0	0	5	10	40	40	40	50	60	60	60	35	35	10
Gettysburg	0	0	0	10	50	45	30	55	60	60	60	40	40	15
Huron	5	0	5	20	35	45	30	35	45	45	45	40	30	25
Kennebec	0	0	5	20	55	45	25	35	35	35	35	35	35	20
McIntosh	15	20	30	40	50	25	50	60	50	50	50	30	30	15
Milbank	5	0	0	5	10	30	35	30	60	60	75	75	75	30
Miller	0	0	0	20	45	50	25	40	65	65	65	50	50	20
Mobridge	0	0	10	20	50	40	40	60	60	60	60	25	25	10
Murdo	0	0	5	15	55	30	30	35	30	30	35	35	35	15
Pierre	0	0	0	20	55	35	30	50	45	45	45	35	35	10
Redfield	0	0	0	10	35	50	25	40	65	65	65	50	50	20
Sisseton	5	0	0	5	10	30	35	45	60	60	60	60	60	20
Watertown	5	0	5	10	30	40	35	30	60	60	75	75	75	30
Webster	5	0	0	5	25	35	30	45	65	65	65	60	60	20
Wheaton	5	0	0	5	5	25	30	40	60	60	65	65	65	20

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Have multiple ways to get warnings [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov)



INTERNET



**LOCAL TV
AND RADIO**



**WIRELESS EMERGENCY ALERTS
AND WEATHER APPS**



**OUTDOOR
SIRENS**



**NOAA
WEATHER
RADIO**



**FROM YOUR FAMILY,
FRIENDS, AND COWORKERS**

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 91 °F at 5:53 PM

Low Temp: 64 °F at 5:14 AM

Wind: 17 mph at 1:29 PM

Day length: 15 hours, 38 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 107 in 1949

Record Low: 39 in 1917

Average High: 84

Average Low: 59

Average Precip in July.: 0.35

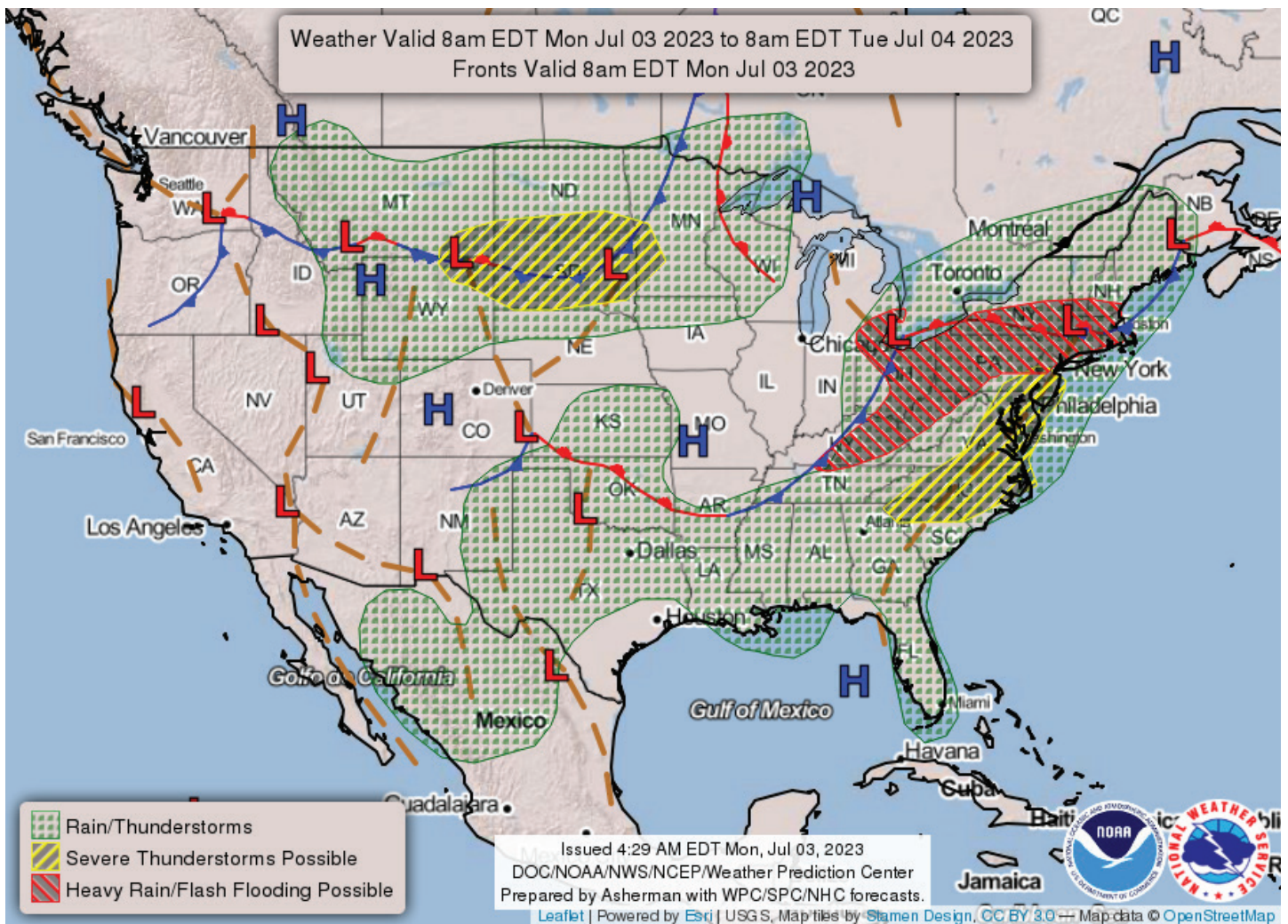
Precip to date in July.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 11.36

Precip Year to Date: 11.35

Sunset Tonight: 9:26:02 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:47:57 AM



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Today in Weather History

July 3, 1959: An estimated F2 tornado moved northeast after destroying a farm building at the western edge of Java, Walworth County. Elsewhere in the area, high straight line winds caused property damage while hail damaged crops. The largest hailstone was 2.75 inches in diameter and was observed 9 miles NNW of Timber Lake.

July 3, 2003: A supercell thunderstorm moved southeastward across western Jackson County and Bennett County. The storm dropped up to golf ball sized hail and produced an F2 tornado north of Tuthill in Bennett County. The tornado touched down about a mile north of the junction of highways 18 and 73, where it destroyed a garage. The tornado moved south-southeast and destroyed a mobile home just to the southeast of the highway intersection and then dissipated just north of Tuthill. No one was injured.

Also on this day, a line of severe thunderstorms with hail up to the size of golf balls and winds over 80 mph at times brought widespread property and crop damage to far northeast Brown, across Marshall and Roberts counties. The wind and hail caused the most damage to crops in a 20 mile to a 70-mile long area from north of Britton over to Sisseton and into west central Minnesota. Much of the plants were shredded to the ground. In fact, approximately 30 percent (70,000 acres) of Marshall County's 227,000 acres of crops were damaged or destroyed. Cities receiving the most damage from the line of storms were, Hecla, Andover, Britton, Kidder, Veblen, Roslyn, Langford, Lake City, Claire City, Sisseton, Waubay, Rosholt, and Wilmot. Storm damage mostly included trees and branches down, power lines and poles down, roof and siding damage from hail and fallen trees, some farm outbuildings damaged or destroyed, and many windows broke out of homes and vehicles. Also, many boats, docks, and campers received some damage in the path of the storms. An aerial crop spraying plane at the Sisseton airport was picked up and thrown 450 feet and landed upside down. In Claire City, a 55,000-bushel grain bin was blown off of its foundation and flattened. On a farm five miles north of Amherst, three large grain bins were blown over and damaged.

July 3, 2010: Severe thunderstorms brought damaging winds to parts of central South Dakota, especially to Lyman County. Eighty mph winds moved a building off the foundation at the Presho Municipal Airport. Eighty mph winds also destroyed or damaged many grain bins and caused damage to several other buildings in and around Presho. A large sign, twenty power poles, along with many trees were downed in Presho. There were also several broken houses and car windows from hail and high winds. Seventy mph winds tore a garage door loose, bent a flagpole over, and downed many large tree branches in Kennebec. The winds also caused some damage to homes, sheds, and grain bins in Kennebec.

1873: A tornado in Hancock County, in far west central Illinois, destroyed several farms. From a distance, witnesses initially thought the tornado was smoke from a fire. A child was killed after being carried 500 yards; 10 other people were injured. Click [HERE](#) for more information from Illinois Genealogy Trails.

1975: Up to 3 inches of rain caused flash flooding throughout Las Vegas, NV. The main damage occurred to vehicles at Caesars Palace with approximately 700 damaged or destroyed with several cars found miles away. North Las Vegas was hardest hit with \$3.5 million in damage. Two people drowned in the flood waters.

2000: There is a certain irony about one of the driest places getting the greatest rainfall, and yet that is what happened at usually rain-sparse Vanguard, Saskatchewan on July 3 when a carwash-like down-pour flooded the community of 200 people, some 65 km southeast of Swift Current. As much as 375 mm (14.76") of rain fell in eight hours, the greatest storm for that duration on the Canadian Prairies and one of the most substantial rainfall intensities ever recorded in Canada.

The spectacular thunderstorm produced more cloud-to-ground lightning strikes than that part of southern Saskatchewan would expect in two years. A year's amount of rain left crops in the field drowning and rotting, and roads and rail lines under water. The force of the water crushed cars and farm implements swept away grain bins and soaked large bales. Stranded residents had to be rescued by boat, which rapidly became the carrier of choice on the main street in Vanguard. The flash flood also carried away herds of cattle and drowned dozens of deer and antelope. Some further irony, when millions of liters of contaminated water submerged the water-treatment plant and backed up into homes and businesses, officials had to ship in bottled water from Swift Current.

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

MOP, PLEASE

A fierce storm was raging. It was dark and cold, and Jim's mother was busy cleaning the kitchen. Nearing the end of her work, she said, "Please go outside and get me the mop, would you?"

"But Mom," he pleaded, "I'm afraid of the dark."

"Don't be afraid, son," she said. "Jesus is there to help you."

He opened the door, peered into the darkness, stuck one hand outside and said, "Jesus, would you please hand me the mop?" Is that really one of Jesus' responsibilities?

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul said, "I can do everything with the help of Christ." Most of us wonder what he meant by "everything." So, it's fair to ask: what did he mean?

As we live in Christ, with Christ, through Christ, and for Christ, we can do "everything" with the help of Christ as long as we are doing His will: following His teachings and being obedient to His commands. His power is always available, and His strength is certainly sufficient to meet, face and overcome any challenge that may confront us. But we must abide in His Word, be obedient to His teachings, and follow the directions He gives us in His Word.

Prayer: Father, we know that we can do everything You have called us to do with Your help. Be with us, empower us, and enable us to be faithful and obedient to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: I can do all this through him who gives me strength. Philippians 4:13



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

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2023 Community Events

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

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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

06.30.23

13 22 47 51 55 9

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$400,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 13

DRAW: Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.01.23

13 16 23 43 52 2

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$4,950,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 28 Mins 7

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.02.23

1 16 17 31 46 11

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 43 Mins 6

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.01.23

14 19 20 26 27

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$130,000

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 43

DRAW: Mins 6 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.01.23

13 24 49 54 60 17

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 12 Mins 6

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.01.23

4 17 35 49 61 8

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$522,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 12 Mins 6

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Israel targets a West Bank militant stronghold with drones and troops, killing 8 Palestinians

By NASSER NASSER and JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JENIN, West Bank (AP) — Israel used drones to strike targets in a militant stronghold in the occupied West Bank early Monday and deployed hundreds of troops in the area, in an incursion that resembled the wide-scale military operations carried out during the second Palestinian uprising two decades ago. Palestinian health officials said at least eight Palestinians were killed and dozens wounded.

Troops remained inside the Jenin refugee camp at midday Monday, pushing ahead with the largest operation in the area during more than a year of fighting. It came at a time of growing domestic pressure for a tough response to a series of attacks on Israeli settlers, including a shooting attack last month that killed four Israelis.

Black smoke rose from the crowded streets of the camp, exchanges of fire rang out and the buzzing of drones could be heard overhead as the military pressed on. Residents said electricity was cut off in some parts and military bulldozers plowed through narrow streets, damaging buildings as they cleared the way for Israeli forces. The Palestinians and neighboring Jordan condemned the violence.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant huddled with top military commanders and said the operation was “proceeding as planned.” He said Israel had dealt “a tough blow” to local militant groups but gave no indication when the incursion would end.

Lt. Col. Richard Hecht, an army spokesman, said the goal of the operation was to destroy and confiscate weapons. “We’re not planning to hold ground,” he said. “We’re acting against specific targets.”

He said that a brigade-size force — roughly 2,000 soldiers — was taking part in the operation, and that military drones had carried out a series of strikes to clear the way for the ground forces. Although Israel has carried out isolated airstrikes in the West Bank in recent weeks, Hecht said Monday’s series of strikes was an escalation unseen since 2006 — the end of the Palestinian uprising.

Smoke billowed from within the crowded camp, with mosque minarets nearby. Ambulances raced toward a hospital where the wounded were brought in on stretchers.

Lynn Hastings, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator in the Palestinian areas, said on Twitter that she was “alarmed by scale of Israeli forces operation,” noting the airstrikes in a densely populated refugee camp. She said the U.N. was mobilizing humanitarian aid.

According to the official Palestinian news agency Wafa, the military blocked roads within the camp, took over houses and buildings and set up snipers on rooftops. The tactics signaled the operation could drag on for some time.

“There are bulldozers destroying the streets, snipers are inside and on roofs of houses, drones are hitting houses and Palestinians are killed in the streets,” said Jamal Huweil, a political activist in the camp, predicting the operation would fail.

“They can destroy the refugee camp but will fail again because the only solution is the political solution in which a Palestinian state is established and the occupation ends,” he said.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said at least eight Palestinians were killed and 50 people were wounded — 10 critically.

In a separate incident, a 21-year-old Palestinian was killed by Israeli fire near the West Bank city of Ramallah, the ministry said.

“Our Palestinian people will not kneel, will not surrender, will not raise the white flag, and will remain steadfast on their land in the face of this brutal aggression,” Nabil Abu Rudeineh, a spokesperson for the Palestinian president, said in a statement.

Jordan called for Israel to halt its raids into the West Bank.

The Jenin camp and an adjacent town of the same name have been a flashpoint as Israeli-Palestinian

violence escalated since spring 2022.

Israel's foreign minister, Eli Cohen, praised the efforts of the military during an address to foreign journalists and accused archenemy Iran of being behind the violence by funding Palestinian militant groups.

"Due to the funds they receive from Iran, the Jenin camp has become a center for terrorist activity," he said, adding that the operation would be conducted in a "targeted manner" to avoid civilian casualties.

Palestinians reject such claims, saying the violence is a natural response to 56 years of occupation since Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war.

Jenin has long been a bastion for armed struggle against Israel and was a major friction point in the last Palestinian uprising.

In 2002, days after a Palestinian suicide bombing during a large Passover gathering killed 30 people, Israeli troops launched a massive operation in the Jenin camp. For eight days and nights they fought militants street by street, using armored bulldozers to destroy rows of homes, many of which had been booby-trapped.

Monday's raid came two weeks after another violent confrontation in Jenin and after the military said a pair of rockets were fired from the area last week. The rockets exploded shortly after launch, causing no damage in Israel, but marked an escalation that has raised concerns in Israel.

But there also may have been political considerations at play. Leading members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government, which is dominated by West Bank settlers and their supporters, have been calling for a broader military response to the ongoing violence in the area.

"Proud of our heroes on all fronts and this morning especially of our soldiers operating in Jenin," tweeted National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, an ultranationalist who recently called for Israel to kill "thousands" of militants if necessary. "Praying for their success."

More than 130 Palestinians have been killed this year in the West Bank, part of more than a yearlong spike in violence that has seen some of the worst bloodshed in the area in nearly two decades.

The outburst of violence escalated last year after a spate of Palestinian attacks prompted Israel to step up its raids in the West Bank.

Israel says the raids are meant to beat back militants. The Palestinians say such violence is inevitable in the absence of any political process with Israel and increased West Bank settlement construction and violence by extremist settlers.

Israel says most of those killed have been militants, but stone-throwing youths protesting the incursions and people uninvolved in confrontations have also been killed.

Palestinian attacks against Israelis since the start of this year have killed 24 people.

Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians seek those territories for their hoped-for independent state.

Federman reported from Jerusalem. AP writer Omar Akour contributed to this report from Amman, Jordan.

French rioting appears to slow on 6th night after teen's killing by police in Paris suburb

PARIS (AP) — Unrest across France sparked by the police shooting of a 17-year-old appeared to slow on its sixth night, but fires and vandalism continued to target public buildings, cars and municipal trash cans overnight into Monday.

The riots appeared driven by a teenage backlash. The interior minister said the average age of those arrested was 17 and that children as young as 12 or 13 had been detained for attacking law enforcement and setting fires.

In all, according to the Interior Ministry, there were 157 arrests overnight out of a total of 3,354 since last Tuesday, and that two law enforcement stations were attacked, among other damage.

"We all have to ask ourselves about the responsibility of families," Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said.

There has been little in the way of organized protests beyond a march last week for Nahel, the teenager

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killed last Tuesday. But many activists say the nighttime riots are a lashing out against a French state that many young people with immigrant roots say routinely discriminates against them.

Nahel was of Algerian descent and was shot in the Paris suburb of Nanterre.

About 45,000 officers were deployed nationwide to counter violence fueled by anger over discrimination against people who trace their roots to former French colonies and live in low-income neighborhoods.

Across France, 297 vehicles were torched overnight along with 34 buildings, many of them linked to the government. In all, a total of 99 city halls have been attacked, according to the Interior Ministry.

A 24-year-old firefighter died of a heart attack while responding to a blaze in an underground garage that spread to the apartment building above, according to Paris police. The cause of the fire was under investigation, they said in a statement.

A burning car stuck the home of the mayor of the Paris suburb of L'Hay-les-Roses over the weekend, an unusually personal attack amid the backdrop of fires and vandalism targeting police stations and town halls.

French President Emmanuel Macron has blamed social media for the spread of the unrest and called on parents to take responsibility for their teenagers. Justice Minister Eric Dupond-Moretti told France Inter radio that parents who abdicated that responsibility "either through disinterest or deliberately" would be prosecuted.

He was cautious when asked whether he thought the protests had eased definitively.

Mayor Vincent Jeanbrun said his wife and one of his children were injured and criticized the government for doing too little, too late — and said blaming social media or parents was papering over a bigger problem.

"The base ingredients are still there. For several years now, all summer long, explosives go off that keep people from sleeping, that make them crazy," he told BFM television on Monday. "We are powerless summer after summer."

Democrats' new primary calendar remains unresolved. The party insists that's OK

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — New Hampshire is in open rebellion. Georgia is all but out.

South Carolina and Nevada are on board but face stiff Republican pushback. Michigan's compliance may mean having to cut the state legislative session short, despite Democrats controlling both chambers and the governor's mansion.

Then there's Iowa, which is looking for ways to still go first without violating party rules.

Months after the Democratic Party approved President Joe Biden's plan to overhaul its primary order to better reflect a deeply diverse voter base, implementing the revamped order has proven anything but simple. Party officials now expect the process to continue through the end of the year — even as the 2024 presidential race heats up all around it.

"Despite the fact that it looked like relatively smooth sailing for the president when he proposed it ... the kind of backlash you're hearing, the reactions, are exactly what we would have expected," said David Redlawsk, chair of the political science department at the University of Delaware and co-author of the book "Why Iowa? How Caucuses and Sequential Elections Improve the Presidential Nominating Process."

The DNC says it prepared for an arduous process, but is not too concerned by the uncertainty, in part because Biden faces only minor primary challengers in self-help author Marianne Williamson and anti-vaccine activist Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

Biden's political advisers say the president doesn't expect to campaign extensively in the Democratic primary and instead will focus on the general election. But the primary calendar drama might nonetheless prove a headache for Democrats who want to project unity ahead of 2024 and might spell trouble for 2028 — when the party has promised to revisit its primary calendar anew.

Jim Roosevelt, co-chairman of the DNC's Rules and Bylaws Committee, said he "was not surprised" at the objections of Iowa and New Hampshire since they are losing their leadoff spots, and that the committee is "definitely able to work around" the protests of Republicans in places adjusting to new rules or

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new slots on the calendar.

"I think having a sitting president is the most likely time to make a fundamental change to make the process more representative," said Roosevelt, who also noted that the party last enforced a reordering of its primary calendar ahead of a competitive presidential primary in 2008.

It will get that chance again, though, since a potential reorder next cycle will come when, no matter what happens in 2024, there won't be an incumbent Democratic president seeking reelection.

Another long, contentious new calendar process then might mean uncertainty with real electoral consequences — perhaps even making it difficult for Democrats running in a competitive presidential primary to know where to campaign, hire staff and advertise. The party can try and mitigate that by starting its 2028 calendar discussions early, potentially even weeks after next year's election.

The prospect of another drawn-out fight won't deter the party, though: "Definitely we'll see this again in 2028," Roosevelt said.

In the meantime, the DNC isn't planning to alter the 2024 plan it approved in February stripping Iowa's caucus of the leadoff spot it held since 1972, and replacing it with South Carolina, which is set to have its primary Feb. 3. Going second, three days later, were supposed to be New Hampshire and Nevada, which is scrapping its caucus in favor of a primary.

The new order had them being followed by Georgia's primary on Feb. 13 and Michigan's two weeks after that. Those states would precede most of the rest of the country, which would vote on Super Tuesday in early March — giving them enormous influence on deciding which primary candidates can make it that far.

But New Hampshire responded by pointing to its state law mandating that it hold the nation's first presidential primary — which Iowa only circumvented for five decades because it held a caucus — and threatening to jump ahead.

Georgia, meanwhile, likely won't take its place in the new top 5 because the state's Republicans rejected calls to move their party's primary to comply with Democrats' new date.

While South Carolina Democrats are set to go first, the state's Republicans delayed their party's primary until three weeks later, on Feb. 24. In Nevada, Republicans have sued to maintain their party-run presidential caucus, even as the state shifts to a primary system. Michigan has also approved its new date, but its Legislature may adjourn early to make that work.

And Iowa has proposed holding a caucus before anyone else, yet may not release the results of its presidential contest until later in deference to new party rules.

This year's shakeup followed the 2020 Iowa caucus meltdown. Iowa responded by proposing new rules allowing Democrats to submit their presidential choices by mail, breaking with past caucus rules requiring in-person participation.

Scott Brennan, an Iowa attorney and member of the DNC's rules committee, said his state "knew the deck was stacked against us" from the start of the primary calendar shakeup — but its Democrats have since attempted to avoid open defiance of national party plans.

"We're trying to remain flexible as long as we can," Brennan said, "to see if there's a way to fix this."

Republicans are still leading off their 2024 primary with Iowa's caucus, and the Iowa GOP could set its caucus date next month. That would then allow Iowa Democrats to tell the DNC when it plans to hold its caucus, even if the presidential results aren't released until later.

Iowa Democrats hope their more flexible attitude could see the state let back into the Democratic primary's top 5, if Georgia and New Hampshire vacate their spots. That would mean Iowa filling a potential gap between when Nevada votes on Feb. 6 and Michigan does on Feb. 27 — through Roosevelt said such a scenario is unlikely.

"I give Iowa a lot of credit for trying to work flexibly," he said. "If Iowa were to find a way to fully comply with the new rules, that would be considered. Frankly I think it's too late for that."

Roosevelt also noted that one of the reasons the largely white state was moved out of the No. 1 spot "was demographics, and that's not going to change."

New Hampshire has struck a harsher tone, saying its Republican governor and GOP-controlled Legislature

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won't change state law requiring it to hold the nation's first primary.

"We don't have a choice to delay the primary. Maybe Iowa's different," said New Hampshire Democratic National Committeeman Bill Shaheen.

If New Hampshire presses forward with its plan to go first, and Biden opts not to campaign there, one of his challengers could see a bump in support. That would be potentially embarrassing to the president, though the DNC has pointed to polling showing Biden with a substantial lead in the state's primary.

"I don't think the DNC is going to do anything that's going to change what we're going to do," Shaheen said of the national party's continuing work to overhaul its primary. "We just don't like getting pushed around much."

Biden's reelection campaign has refused to discuss his primary challengers or whether they might be buoyed by success in an unsanctioned New Hampshire primary. Iowa Democrats, by contrast, have suggested they'll list Biden among the presidential preferences in their caucus whether he campaigns there or not — potentially sparing the president embarrassment there.

Redlawsk said the fact that Democrats have made it this far in their calendar shakeup means "the battle will continue, but I think it's far more likely that change will now happen" and that the impact could be profound.

"These early states really do condition the campaign. The early states don't guarantee a winner, but they tell us who is going to lose, at least in the first rounds," Redlawsk said. "The winnowing is very likely to be different if the first state is South Carolina, or Nevada, or some combination, than if it were Iowa or New Hampshire."

Flooding displaces 10,000 around China as Beijing gets a relative respite from sweltering heat

BEIJING (AP) — Heavy flooding has displaced thousands of people around China as the capital had a relative respite from sweltering heat.

Beijing reported 9.8 straight days when the temperature exceeded 35 C (95 F), the National Climate Center said Monday.

Such a streak was last recorded in 1961 — decades before most Beijing residents had air conditioning or even fans. A lack of rainfall may be contributing to the heat, with the typically dry capital receiving even less than usual this year.

While temperatures have since moderated — Monday's temperature at midday was 33 C (91 F) — they are expected to rise again this week to as high as 39.6 Celsius (103 Fahrenheit) in Beijing and other parts of the country, authorities said.

Meanwhile, more than 10,000 people were urgently moved to safety due to flooding in the central province of Hunan, the Xiang'xi Emergency Management Bureau on Sunday.

Around 70 houses collapsed, 2,283 were damaged and farm fields were flooded. Losses so far have been estimated at least 575 million yuan (\$79 million).

To the north in Shaanxi province's Zhenba county, authorities reported the worst flooding in 50 years had washed out roads and damaged homes.

No deaths have been reported from the floods thus far.

The heat this year has been unusual, although China has regular summer flooding. Eleven provinces — around half of China's land area — were expected to receive heavy rains in coming days, mainly in the humid south.

In 2021, more than 300 people died in the central province of Henan. Record rainfall inundated the provincial capital of Zhengzhou on July 20 that year, turning streets into rushing rivers and flooding at least part of a subway line.

China's worst floods in recent history were in 1998, when 4,150 people died, most of them along the Yangtze River.

Car crashes into a New Hampshire restaurant and injures several customers, fire department says

LACONIA, N.H. (AP) — A car crashed into a busy restaurant and injured several patrons in a lakeside town in New Hampshire Sunday afternoon, emergency officials said.

The vehicle struck the Looney Bin Bar & Grill a little after 12:40 p.m. Firefighters who arrived on the scene found the car inside the restaurant, the Laconia Fire Department said in a statement.

Emergency responders treated several customers at the scene and transported 14 people to area hospitals with non-life-threatening medical issues including significant lower leg injuries, lacerations and contusions, the fire department said.

Another 20 people were evaluated at the scene by emergency personnel but did not require transport to hospitals from the community about 27 miles (43 kilometers) north of Concord on Lake Winnepesaukee.

"There were a lot of people inside due to it being lunchtime and a holiday weekend," Laconia Fire Capt. Chad Vaillancourt said in the statement.

The building sustained significant damage.

The fire department said the cause of the accident is under investigation.

Grandmother of French teen shot dead by police officer pleads with rioters to stop the violence

By CARA ANNA, NICOLAS GARRIGA and SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The grandmother of the French teenager shot dead by police during a traffic stop pleaded Sunday for rioters to stop after five nights of unrest, while authorities expressed outrage at an attack on a suburban mayor's home that injured family members.

The grandmother of 17-year-old Nahel, identified only as Nadia, said in a telephone interview with French news broadcaster BFM TV, "Don't break windows, buses ... schools. We want to calm things down."

She said she was angry at the officer who killed her grandson but not at the police in general and expressed faith in the justice system as France faces its worst social upheaval in years. Nahel, whose full name hasn't been disclosed, was buried on Saturday.

The violence appeared to be lessening. Still, the office of Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said 45,000 police officers would again be deployed in the streets to counter anger over discrimination against people who trace their roots to former French colonies and live in low-income neighborhoods. Nahel is of Algerian descent and was shot in the Paris suburb of Nanterre.

President Emmanuel Macron held a special security meeting Sunday night and plans to meet Monday with the heads of both houses of parliament and Tuesday with the mayors of 220 towns and cities affected by the protests, said a participant in the meeting, who spoke anonymously in line with French government practices. Macron also wants to start a detailed, longer-term assessment of the reasons that led to the unrest, the official said.

Highlighting the seriousness of the rioting, Macron delayed what would have been the first state visit to Germany by a French president in 23 years, which had been scheduled to start Sunday evening.

The interior ministry said police made 78 arrests nationwide Sunday, French media reported, down significantly from 719 arrests the day before. More than 3,000 people have been detained overall following a mass security deployment. Hundreds of police and firefighters have been injured in the violence, although authorities haven't said how many protesters have been hurt.

French authorities were appalled on Sunday after a burning car struck the home of the mayor of the Paris suburb of L'Hay-les-Roses. Several police stations and town halls have been targeted by fires or vandalism in recent days, but such a personal attack on a mayor's home is unusual.

Mayor Vincent Jeanbrun said his wife and one of his children were injured in the 1:30 a.m. attack while they slept and he was in the town hall monitoring the violence. Jeanbrun, of the conservative opposition

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Republicans party, said the attack represented a new stage of "horror and ignominy" in the unrest.

Regional prosecutor Stephane Hardouin opened an investigation into attempted murder, telling French television that a preliminary investigation suggests the car was meant to ram the house and set it ablaze. He said a flame accelerant was found in a bottle in the car.

Macron has blamed social media for fueling violence. France's justice minister has warned that young people who share calls for violence on Snapchat or other apps could face prosecution.

The mass police deployment has been welcomed by some frightened residents of targeted neighborhoods, but it has further frustrated those who see police behavior as the core of the crisis.

On a public square in Nanterre, a young man of Senegalese descent said France would learn little from the latest unrest. Faiez Njai said of police: "They're playing on our fears, saying that 'If you don't listen to us,'" — and then he pointed a finger at his temple and fired.

Video of the killing showed two officers at the window of the car, one with his gun pointed at the driver. As the teenager pulled forward, the officer fired once through the windshield. The officer accused of killing Nahel was given a preliminary charge of voluntary homicide.

Thirteen people who didn't comply with traffic stops were fatally shot by French police last year, and three this year, prompting demands for more accountability.

"Nahel M.'s death first reflects the rules and practices for how police officers use weapons during roadside checks and, more broadly, the flawed relations between the police and young people from working-class neighborhoods," the newspaper Le Monde said in an editorial on Saturday.

Amid the unrest, a World War II monument in Nanterre commemorating Holocaust victims and members of the French Resistance was vandalized on the sidelines of a silent march Thursday to pay tribute to Nahel. The slogans included "Don't forgive or forget" and "Police, rapists, assassins." The European Jewish Congress denounced the vandalism as a "shameful act of disrespect for the memory of the victims of the Holocaust."

Life in some parts of France went on as usual. In the capital, tourists thronged to the Eiffel Tower, where workers set up a clock counting down to next year's Paris Olympics. A short walk from Nanterre, a shopping mall bustled Sunday with customers from all walks of life. But in the empty square where Nahel was shot, someone had painted "The police kill" on a bench.

At the foot of a bridge near the Eiffel Tower where generations of couples have attached padlocks to symbolize lasting love, a Senegalese man selling cheap locks and keys shook his head when asked if Nahel's killing and the ensuing violence would change anything.

"I doubt it," he said, giving only his first name, Demba, for fear of retaliation. "The discrimination is too profound."

Anna reported from Nanterre. Jade le Deley in Clichy-sous-Bois, France; Angela Charlton in Paris; Jocelyn Noveck in New York; and Helena Alves in Paris contributed.

The wait for US passports is creating travel purgatory and snarling summer plans

By LAURIE KELLMAN, REBECCA SANTANA and DAVID KOENIG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Seeking a valid U.S. passport for that 2023 trip? Buckle up, wishful traveler, for a very different journey before you step anywhere near an airport.

A much-feared backup of U.S passport applications has smashed into a wall of government bureaucracy as worldwide travel rebounds toward record pre-pandemic levels — with too few humans to handle the load. The result, say aspiring travelers in the U.S. and around the world, is a maddening pre-travel purgatory defined, at best, by costly uncertainty.

With family dreams and big money on the line, passport seekers describe a slow-motion agony of waiting, worrying, holding the line, refreshing the screen, complaining to Congress, paying extra fees and following incorrect directions. Some applicants are buying additional plane tickets to snag in-process passports

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where they sit — in other cities — in time to make the flights they booked in the first place.

So grim is the outlook that U.S. officials aren't even denying the problem or predicting when it will ease. They're blaming the epic wait times on lingering pandemic -related staffing shortages and a pause of online processing this year. That's left the passport agency flooded with a record-busting 500,000 applications a week. The deluge is on-track to top last year's 22 million passports issued, the State Department says.

Stories from applicants and interviews by The Associated Press depict a system of crisis management, in which the agencies are prioritizing urgent cases such as applicants traveling for reasons of "life or death" and those whose travel is only a few days off. For everyone else, the options are few and expensive.

So, 2023 traveler, if you still need a valid U.S. passport, prepare for an unplanned excursion into the nightmare zone.

'PLENTY OF TIME' TO 'WE'LL STILL BE OK' TO BIG PROBLEMS

It was early March when Dallas-area florist Ginger Collier applied for four passports ahead of a family vacation at the end of June. The clerk, she said, estimated wait times at eight to 11 weeks. They'd have their passports a month before they needed them. "Plenty of time," Collier recalled thinking.

Then the State Department upped the wait time for a regular passport to as much as 13 weeks. "We'll still be okay," she thought.

At T-minus two weeks to travel, this was her assessment: "I can't sleep." This after months of calling, holding, pressing refresh on a website, trying her member of Congress — and stressing as the departure date loomed. Failure to obtain the family's passports would mean losing \$4,000, she said, as well as the chance to meet one of her sons in Italy after a study-abroad semester.

"My nerves are shot, because I may not be able to get to him," she said. She calls the toll-free number every day, holds for as much as 90 minutes to be told — at best — that she might be able to get a required appointment at passport offices in other states.

"I can't afford four more plane tickets anywhere in the United States to get a passport when I applied in plenty of time," she said. "How about they just process my passports?"

THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT HAS A CULPRIT: COVID

By March, concerned travelers began asking for answers and then demanding help, including from their representatives in the House and Senate, who widely reported at hearings this year that they were receiving more complaints from constituents on passport delays than any other issue.

The U.S. secretary of state had an answer, of a sort.

"With COVID, the bottom basically dropped out of the system," Antony Blinken told a House subcommittee March 23. When demand for travel all but disappeared during the pandemic, he said, the government let contractors go and reassigned staff that had been dedicated to handling passports.

Around the same time, the government also halted an online renewal system "to make sure that we can fine tune it and improve it," Blinken said. He said the department is hiring agents as quickly as possible, opening more appointments and trying to address the crisis in other ways.

Passport applicants lit up social media groups, toll-free numbers and lawmakers' phone lines with questions, appeals for advice and cries for help. Facebook and WhatsApp groups bristled with reports of bewilderment and fury. Reddit published eye-watering diaries, some more than 1,000 words long, of application dates, deposits submitted, contacts made, time on hold, money spent and appeals for advice.

It was 1952 when a law required, for the first time, passports for every U.S. traveler abroad, even in peacetime. Now, passports are processed at centers around the country and printed at secure facilities in Washington, D.C. and Mississippi, according to the Government Printing Office.

But the number of Americans holding valid U.S. passports has grown at roughly 10% faster than the population over the past three decades, according to Jay Zagorsky, an economist at Boston University's Questrom School of Business.

After passport delays derailed his own plans to travel to London earlier this year, Zagorsky found that the number of U.S. passports per American has soared from about three per 100 people in 1989 to nearly 46 per 100 people in 2022. Americans, it turns out, are on the move.

"As a society gets richer," says Zagorsky, "the people in that society say, 'I want to visit the rest of the

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world.”

FOR AMERICANS AND OTHERS ABROAD, IT'S NO PICNIC EITHER

At U.S. consulates overseas, the quest for U.S. visas and passports isn't much brighter.

On a day in June, people in New Delhi could expect to wait 451 days for a visa interview, according to the website. Those in Sao Paulo could plan on waiting more than 600 days. Aspiring travelers in Mexico City were waiting about 750 days; in Bogota, Colombia, it was 801 days.

In Israel, the need is especially acute. More than 200,000 people with citizenship in both countries live in Israel. It's one appointment per person, even for newborns, who must have both parents involved in the process, before traveling to the United States.

Batsheva Gutterman started looking for three appointments immediately after she had a baby in December, with an eye toward attending a family celebration in July, in Raleigh, N.C.

Her quest for three passports stretched from January to June, days before travel. And it only resolved after Gutterman payed a small fee to join a WhatsApp group that alerted her to new appointments, which stay available for only a few seconds. She ultimately got three appointments on three consecutive days — bureaucracy embodied.

“We had to drive the entire family with three small children, an hour-and-a-half to Tel Aviv three days in a row, taking off work and school,” she said. “This makes me incredibly uneasy having a baby in Israel as an American citizen, knowing there is no way I can fly with that baby until we get lucky with an appointment.”

Recently, there appeared to be some progress. The wait for an appointment for a renewed U.S. passport stood at 360 days on June 8. On July 2, the wait was down to 90 days, according to the web site.

FRUSTRATING TALES EMERGE FROM THE TRENCHES

Back in the U.S., Marni Larsen of Holladay, Utah, stood in line in Los Angeles, California, on June 14, in hopes of snagging her son's passport. That way, she hoped, the pair could meet the rest of their family, who had already left as scheduled for Europe, for a long-planned vacation.

She'd applied for her son's passport two months earlier and spent weeks checking for updates online or through a frustrating call system. As the mid-June vacation loomed, Larsen reached out to Sen. Mitt Romney's office, where one of four people he says is assigned full-time to passport issues were able to track down the document in New Orleans.

It was supposed to be shipped to Los Angeles, where she got an appointment to retrieve it. That meant Larsen had to buy new tickets for herself and her son to Los Angeles and reroute their trip from there to Rome. All on a bet that her son's passport was indeed shipped as promised.

“We are just waiting in this massive line of tons of people,” Larsen said. “It's just been a nightmare.”

They succeeded. But not everyone has been so lucky.

Miranda Richter applied in person to renew passports for herself and her husband, as well as apply a new one on Feb. 9 for a trip with their neighbors to Croatia on June 6. She ended up canceling, losing more than \$1,000.

Her timeline went like this: Passports for her husband and daughter arrived in 11 weeks, while Richter's photo was rejected. On May 4, she sent in a new one via priority mail. Then she paid a rush fee of \$79, which was never charged to her credit card. Between May 30 and June 2, four days before travel, Richter and her husband spent more than 12 hours on the national passport line while also calling their congressman, senators and third-party couriers.

Finally, she showed up in person at the federal building in downtown Houston, 30 minutes before the passport office opened. Richter said there were at least 100 people in line.

“The security guard asked when is my appointment, and I burst out in tears,” she recalls. She couldn't get one. “It didn't work.”

FINALLY: A HAPPY ENDING

“I just got my passports!” Ginger Collier texts.

She ended up showing up at the passport office in Dallas with her daughter-in-law at 6:30 a.m. and being sorted into groups and lined up against walls. Finally they were called to a window, where the agent

was "super nice" and pulled all four of the family's applications — paperwork that had been sitting in the office since March 17. More than seven hours later, the two left the office with directions to pick up their passports the next day.

They did — with four days to spare.

"What a ridiculous process," Collier says. Nevertheless, the reunion with her son in Italy was sweet. She texted last week: "It was the best hug ever!"

Kellman reported from Tel Aviv, Israel, Santana reported from Washington, and Koenig reported from Dallas. Follow Kellman on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/APLaurie>, Kellman, Santana at <http://twitter.com/rusksygal> and Koenig at <http://twitter.com/airlinewriter>.

Putin will speak with leaders of China and India in his first summit since the Wagner insurrection

By KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — President Vladimir Putin will participate this week in his first multilateral summit since an armed rebellion rattled Russia, as part of a rare international grouping in which his country still enjoys support.

Leaders will convene virtually on Tuesday for a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a security grouping founded by Russia and China to counter Western alliances from East Asia to the Indian Ocean.

This year's event is hosted by India, which became a member in 2017. It's the latest avenue for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to showcase the country's growing global clout.

The group so far has focused on deepening security and economic cooperation, fighting terrorism and drug trafficking, tackling climate change and the situation in Afghanistan after the Taliban took over in 2021. When the foreign ministers met in India last month, Russia's war on Ukraine barely featured in their public remarks but the fallout for developing countries on food and fuel security remains a concern for the group, analysts say.

The forum is more important than ever for Moscow, which is eager to show that the West has failed to isolate it. The group includes the four Central Asian nations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, in a region where Russian influence runs deep. Others include Pakistan, which became a member in 2017, and Iran, which is set to join on Tuesday. Belarus is also in line for membership.

"This SCO meeting is really one of the few opportunities globally that Putin will have to project strength and credibility," said Michael Kugelman, director of the Wilson Center's South Asia Institute.

None of the member countries has condemned Russia in U.N. resolutions, choosing instead to abstain. China has sent an envoy to mediate between Russia and Ukraine, and India has repeatedly called for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

For Putin personally, the summit presents an opportunity to show he is in control after a short-lived insurrection by Wagner mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin.

"Putin will want to reassure his partners that he is very much still in charge, and leave no doubt that the challenges to his government have been crushed," said Tanvi Madan, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.

India announced in May that the summit would be held online instead of in-person like last year in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, where Putin posed for photographs and dined with other leaders.

For New Delhi at least, the optics of hosting Putin and China's leader Xi Jinping just two weeks after Modi was honored with a pomp-filled state visit by U.S. President Joe Biden would be less than ideal.

After all the fanfare Modi received from American leaders on his recent visit, "it would have been too soon (for India) to be welcoming Chinese and Russian leaders," Kugelman said.

India's relationship with Moscow has stayed strong throughout the war; it has scooped up record amounts of Russian crude and relies on Moscow for 60% of its defense hardware. At the same time, the U.S. and

its allies have aggressively courted India, which they see as a counterweight to China's growing ambitions.

A key priority for India in the forum is to balance its ties with the West and the East, with the country also hosting the Group of 20 leading economies' summit in September. It's also a platform for New Delhi to engage more deeply with Central Asia.

"India glorifies in this type of foreign policy where it's wheeling and dealing with everybody at the same time," said Derek Grossman, an Indo-Pacific analyst at the RAND Corporation.

New Delhi, observers say, will be looking to secure its own interests at the summit. It will likely emphasize the need to combat what it calls "cross-border terrorism" — a dig at Pakistan, whom India accuses of arming and training rebels fighting for independence of Indian-controlled Kashmir or its integration into Pakistan, a charge Islamabad denies.

It may also stress the need to respect territorial integrity and sovereignty — a charge often directed towards its other rival, China. India and China have been locked in an intense three-year standoff involving thousands of soldiers stationed along their disputed border in the eastern Ladakh region.

Analysts say China, seeking to posture itself as a global force, is becoming a dominant player in forums like the SCO, where interest for full membership from countries like Myanmar, Turkey and Afghanistan has grown in recent years.

"The limitation with the SCO is that China and Russia are trying to turn it into an anti-Western grouping, and that does not fit with India's independent foreign policy," said Madan.

The SCO could also prove challenging for Washington and its allies in the long run.

"For countries uncomfortable with the West and their foreign policies, the SCO is a welcome alternative, mainly because of the roles Russia and China play. ... I think that highlights just how relevant and concerning this group could be for a number of Western capitals, especially if it keeps expanding," said Kugelman.

The aftermath of mass shootings infiltrates every corner of survivors' lives

By CLAIRE SAVAGE Associated Press/Report for America

CHICAGO (AP) — More than a year after 11-year-old Mayah Zamora was airlifted out of Uvalde, Texas, after being critically injured in the Robb Elementary school shooting that killed 19 children and two teachers, the family is still reeling.

Knocks on the door startle Mayah into a panic. The family is skipping Fourth of July celebrations to avoid booming fireworks. An outing to the Little Mermaid movie requires noise-canceling headphones.

Since 2016, thousands of Americans have been wounded in mass shootings, and tens of thousands by gun violence, with that number continuing to grow, according to the Gun Violence Archive. Beyond the colossal medical bills and the weight of trauma and grief, mass shooting survivors and family members contend with scores of other changes that upend their lives.

Survivors talked to The Associated Press about the mental and physical wounds that endure in the aftermath of shootings in Uvalde, Las Vegas, Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the Chicago suburb of Highland Park, Illinois, during a July Fourth parade last year.

UVALDE

Mayah suffered wounds to her chest, back, both hands, face and ear, and needed so many surgeries her parents said they stopped counting. The family relocated to San Antonio, where Mayah spent 66 days in the hospital and still needs care.

"Her hospital bill is insane," said Mayah's mother, Christina Zamora. "It reaches close to \$1,000,000, maybe over," not including rehabilitation, follow-up visits and counseling.

A year later, Christina and Mayah's father, Ruben, said they don't know what bills will be covered by insurance and how much they will need to pay. When Mayah was discharged, they realized one parent needed to stay home to care for her.

Christina quit her job. Facing daunting bills with one income instead of two is scary, she said. The reloca-

Her lingering PTSD and need to control her environment also has affected Christiansen's relationships with her friends and family.

"My personality changes. I get very short tempered, and I get very judgmental. I'm quick to be snippy," she said. "That is heavy energy to be around."

Christiansen, who is based in South Deerfield, Massachusetts, turned to spending. She bought a new bed to try to find more comfort and relied on delivered meals to avoid leaving her home.

"The financial aspect of it is crushing, absolutely crushing," she said. "I don't know how many years it's gonna take to pay that off."

Now Christiansen is part of a mentorship program for the Everytown Survivors Network, which connects thousands of gun violence survivors to resources and aims to end gun violence.

"The trauma doesn't go away," she said. "Even if you're not wounded in the moment, there is injury."

HIGHLAND PARK

Leah Sundheim, 29, was a night manager at a hotel in Las Vegas when she got "the worst phone call you can ever receive."

Her mother, Jacquelyn Sundheim, had been killed at a shooting during Highland Park's 2022 Fourth of July parade, along with six other people.

"That flight home broke me," Sundheim said.

She then moved back to Highland Park to be close to her father.

"I couldn't be away from my family," Sundheim said. "I can't do another flight like that ever."

Mass shootings cause a variety of trauma, she said. Her experience is different from that of her aunt and cousins, who were sitting next to Jacquelyn Sundheim when she died.

"They have the visual and sound... of watching her be murdered, and my dad has the trauma of receiving the phone call and then subsequent hours trying to get to her body. My trauma is waking up to my phone ringing and hearing that my mom was killed," she said.

Whichever type of trauma survivors experience, she said, "it shatters the sense of security that you have in the world."

Savage 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.

Deep sea mining permits may be coming soon. What are they and what might happen?

By VICTORIA MILKO Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — The International Seabed Authority — the United Nations body that regulates the world's ocean floor — is preparing to resume negotiations that could open the international seabed for mining, including for materials critical for the green energy transition.

Years long negotiations are reaching a critical point where the authority will soon need to begin accepting mining permit applications, adding to worries over the potential impacts on sparsely researched marine ecosystems and habitats of the deep sea.

Here's a look at what deep sea mining is, why some companies and countries are applying for permits to carry it out and why environmental activists are raising concerns.

WHAT IS DEEP SEA MINING?

Deep sea mining involves removing mineral deposits and metals from the ocean's seabed. There are three types of such mining: taking deposit-rich polymetallic nodules off the ocean floor, mining massive seafloor sulphide deposits and stripping cobalt crusts from rock.

These nodules, deposits and crusts contain materials, such as nickel, rare earths, cobalt and more, that are needed for batteries and other materials used in tapping renewable energy and also for everyday

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technology like cellphones and computers.

Engineering and technology used for deep sea mining are still evolving. Some companies are looking to vacuum materials from seafloor using massive pumps. Others are developing artificial intelligence-based technology that would teach deep sea robots how to pluck nodules from the floor. Some are looking to use advanced machines that could mine materials off side of huge underwater mountains and volcanoes.

Companies and governments view these as strategically important resources that will be needed as onshore reserves are depleted and demand continues to rise.

HOW IS DEEP SEA MINING REGULATED NOW?

Countries manage their own maritime territory and exclusive economic zones, while the high seas and the international ocean floor are governed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas. It is considered to apply to states regardless of whether or not they have signed or ratified it. Under the treaty, the seabed and its mineral resources are considered the “common heritage of mankind” that must be managed in a way that protects the interests of humanity through the sharing of economic benefits, support for marine scientific research, and protecting marine environments.

Mining companies interested in deep sea exploitation are partnering with countries to help them get exploration licenses.

More than 30 exploration licenses have been issued so far, with activity mostly focused in an area called the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone, which spans 1.7 million square miles (4.5 million square kilometers) between Hawaii and Mexico.

WHY IS THERE PRESSURE ON THE ISA TO ESTABLISH REGULATIONS NOW?

In 2021 the Pacific island nation of Nauru — in partnership with mining company Nauru Ocean Resources Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Canada-based The Metals Company — applied to the ISA to exploit minerals in a specified deep sea area.

That triggered a clause of the U.N. treaty that requires the ISA to complete regulations governing deep sea exploitation by July 2023. If no regulations are finalized, Nauru can submit an application to conduct the mining without any governing regulations.

Other countries and private companies can start applying for provisional licenses if the U.N. body fails to approve a set of rules and regulations by July 9. Experts say its unlike it will since the process will likely take several years.

WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS?

Only a small part of the deep seabed has been explored and conservationists worry that ecosystems will be damaged by mining, especially without any environmental protocols.

Damage from mining can include noise, vibration and light pollution, as well as possible leaks and spills of fuels and other chemicals used in the mining process.

Sediment plumes from the some mining processes are a major concern. Once valuable materials are taken extracted, slurry sediment plumes are sometimes pumped back into the sea. That can harm filter feeding species like corals and sponges, and could smother or otherwise interfere with some creatures.

The full extent of implications for deep sea ecosystems is unclear, but scientists have warned that biodiversity loss is inevitable and potentially irreversible.

“We’re constantly finding new stuff and it’s a little bit premature to start mining the deep sea when we don’t really understand the biology, the environments, the ecosystems or anything else,” said Christopher Kelley, a biologist with research expertise in deep sea ecology.

WHAT’S NEXT?

The ISA’s Legal and Technical Commission, which oversees the development of deep sea mining regulations, will meet in early July to discuss the yet-to-be mining code draft.

The earliest that mining under ISA regulations could begin is 2026. Applications for mining must be considered and environmental impact assessments need to be carried out.

In the meantime, some companies — such as Google, Samsung, BMW and others — have backed the World Wildlife Fund’s call to pledge to avoid using minerals that have been mined from the planet’s oceans. More than a dozen countries—including France, Germany and several Pacific Island nations— have of-

ficially called for a ban, pause or moratorium on deep sea mining at least until environmental safeguards are in place, although it's unclear how many other countries support such mining. Other countries, such as Norway, are proposing opening their waters to mining.

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.

Heavy rains flood Chicago roads and force NASCAR to cut short a downtown street race

CHICAGO (AP) — Heavy rains flooded Chicago streets Sunday, trapping cars and forcing NASCAR officials to cancel the last half of an Xfinity Series race set to run through the city's downtown.

The National Weather Service warned the flooding could be "life-threatening," with numerous impassable roads, overflowing creeks and streams and flooded basements across the Chicago area. Up to 6 inches of rain fell in suburban Cicero and Berwyn by midday, according to the NWS website. Flood warnings had mostly expired by evening.

The Illinois State Police said parts of Interstate 55 and Interstate 290 have been closed because of flooding, with at least 10 cars trapped in water on Interstate 55 near Pulaski Road, a major north-south thoroughfare in the city. Trains were stopped in some parts of the city as well.

Katera Fisher's car "just started floating" when she tried to drive through high water.

"So, my first reaction was to try and get out of the car. I opened the door, and the water started flooding my feet," Fisher told WLS-TV.

NASCAR officials had planned to complete the last half of an Xfinity Series race through the city's downtown on Sunday morning after suspending action on Saturday due to lightning. They announced around midday Sunday they had decided to cancel the race because of the rain and declared Cole Custer the winner.

NASCAR's Cup Series race started running through downtown Sunday afternoon.

The start of the Chicago Cubs' afternoon game against the Cleveland Guardians at Wrigley Field remains delayed.

Ricky Castro, a meteorologist in the NWS' Chicago office in suburban Romeoville, said a storm system was pinwheeling over the area rather than moving east, giving it time to pull moisture from the atmosphere and leading to heavy rainfall. All of the concrete in the metropolitan area prevents the rain from seeping into the earth, resulting in flooding, he said.

Baltimore block party shooting victims include more than a dozen minors, police say

By JULIO CORTEZ and HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Gunfire erupted at a block party in Baltimore on Sunday — killing two people, wounding 28 and leaving an extensive crime scene that marred the U.S. holiday weekend, police said. Three of the wounded were in critical condition and more than a dozen were under 18.

The shooting took place just after 12:30 a.m. when at least two people opened fire at a block party in the Brooklyn Homes area in the southern part of the city, said Richard Worley, Baltimore's acting police commissioner. No arrests had been made by late afternoon. It wasn't clear if the shooting was targeted or random, Worley said.

The shooting comes amid gatherings around the country leading up to the July Fourth holiday. Elsewhere, a shooting in Kansas left seven people with gunshot wounds and two more victims hospitalized after being trampled as people rushed out of a nightclub early Sunday morning, police there said.

The violence in Baltimore occurred as federal prosecutors there this week touted their efforts to reduce violent crime in the city. Police have reported nearly 130 homicides and close to 300 shootings so far this year, though that's down from the same time last year. Authorities have vowed to crack down aggressively

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on repeat violent offenders.

Nine of Sunday's victims were taken by ambulance and 20 walked into area hospitals with injuries from the shooting, Worley said. Nine remained hospitalized Sunday afternoon.

The deceased victims were identified as 18-year-old Aaliyah Gonzales and 20-year-old Kylis Fagbemi, police said Sunday. Gonzales died at the scene, and Fagbemi died at the hospital. The 28 injured ranged in ages from 13 to 32, with more than half of them being younger than 18, officials said.

"I want those who are responsible to hear me, and hear me very clearly," Mayor Brandon Scott said at the scene. "We will not stop until we find you, and we will find you. Until then, I hope that every single breath you take, that you think about the lives that you took, think about the lives that you impacted here tonight."

Scott asked anyone with information to come forward to assist investigators locate the "cowards" who were responsible for the shooting.

Gov. Wes Moore said his "heart breaks for these victims, their families, and the Baltimore community that is coping with the loss."

"Maryland has had enough of watching gun violence continue to ravage our state and our nation," Moore said in a statement. "The fact that these horrific shootings continue to take place is abominable. We as a state will continue to do everything we can to prevent senseless acts of violence like the one we saw last night."

Authorities said the crime scene was extensive and that it took some time for detectives to work it.

Hours after the shooting, a number of officers remained working behind police tape amid densely packed two-story housing blocks. Folding tables and plastic cups were scattered on the street, apparently left behind when people ran from the gunshots.

Lakell Nelson said there had been several false alarms of people mistaking the sounds of fireworks for gunfire earlier in the night while she was at the block party. The actual shooting started as she was getting to her car.

"The shots were just going on and on and on," she said.

That's when two young women approached her and said they had been shot, with one woman showing how a bullet had gone through her shorts.

Nelson said she told the women to get in the car, and she sped through red lights to get to the nearest hospital.

"When I pulled up to the door of the hospital, my car was almost getting ready to be inside the hospital, because I was determined to get those babies in that hospital," Nelson said.

A police union official said in an email Sunday there were no officers specifically assigned to the gathering.

"There were only three officers assigned to the Brooklyn area of Baltimore City's Southern District. This is a large area, and to police it safely and effectively you need about seven to eight officers per shift," said Mike Mancuso, president of the Baltimore City Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 3.

Mancuso said about 2,800 officers are needed to effectively police the city, but staffing is down to about 2,100.

Worley said Sunday afternoon that the department hadn't been aware in advance that the event was happening, and he said organizers hadn't received a permit. He said that the department would examine its response.

Ramer reported from Concord, New Hampshire. Kimberlee Kruesi in Nashville, Tennessee, contributed to this report.

Cleanup begins after asphalt binder spill into Montana's Yellowstone River after train derailment

By AMY BETH HANSON Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — Globes of asphalt binder that spilled into Montana's Yellowstone River during a bridge collapse and train derailment could be seen on islands and riverbanks downstream from Yellowstone National Park a week after the spill occurred, witnesses report.

Officials with the Environmental Protection Agency said cleanup efforts began on Sunday, with workers cooling the gooey material with river water, rolling it up and putting the globs into garbage bags. It will probably be recycled, said Paul Peronard with the EPA.

Alexis Bonogofsky, whose family's ranch was impacted by an oil spill on the Yellowstone River near Billings in 2011, took pictures Saturday of the refined petroleum product covering rocks and sandbars. She also snapped an image of a bird that had died in the black substance.

"This killdeer walked across the asphalt, which had heated up in the sun, and it got stuck and died with its head buried in the asphalt," Bonogofsky wrote in the caption of an image she posted on social media. "You could tell where it had tried to pull itself out."

A bridge over the river collapsed as a train crossed it early on June 24 near the town of Columbus and 10 cars fell into the water, spilling liquid asphalt and molten sulfur, officials said. Both materials were expected to cool and harden when exposed to the cold water, and officials said there was no threat to the public or downstream water supplies, officials said.

However, the asphalt binder behaved differently.

"This stuff is not sinking in this water," Peronard said Sunday. "It adheres really well to rock, and we can roll it up like taffy on the sand."

Bonogofsky, in another of her photos, captured a sheen on the water. She said the spilled material heated up with warmer temperatures and "you can smell it."

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality, the EPA and Montana Rail Link — the entities managing the cleanup — said more asphalt product was released Friday as a rail car was being removed from the river.

"Initial assessments indicate the release was minimal based on the amount of material believed to still be remaining in the impacted car," the statement said.

Professor Kayhan Ostovar with the Yellowstone River Research Center at Rocky Mountain College also took pictures Friday of the petroleum product that had washed onto the riverbank about 6 miles (10 kilometers) downstream from the spill.

Ostovar's team has been conducting turtle surveys below the derailment and is sharing the GPS locations of sensitive sites that are near areas where the asphalt binder has come to rest.

Turtles are particularly vulnerable to this type of spill, Ostovar said, because they are leaving the water right now to seek out nesting sites on gravel bars and basking in the sun.

The center was created after the 2011 ExxonMobil pipeline breach to gather better baseline information on species of concern that live in and around the Yellowstone River.

Statements from the agencies and the railroad over the past week have asked people to report the sighting of asphalt materials on the riverbank via email to rpderailment@mtrail.com, and have listed a phone number — 888-275-6926 — for the Oiled Wildlife Care Network to report animals with oil on them.

No reports from the public had been received, Peronard said.

Bonogofsky argued it shouldn't have taken more than a week to develop a cleanup plan, especially since it's known what materials the trains haul through Montana, as well as the damage the 2011 oil pipeline spill caused.

"We should have plans in place for this and we should have learned our lesson in 2011," she said, arguing that work to clean up the asphalt binder could have happened at the same time they were removing rail cars from the water.

The last of the rail cars was expected to be removed from the water on Sunday, Peronard said, while

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tion also has separated the family: Ruben works seven days on, seven off in Uvalde. The couple's oldest son, Ruben Jr., stayed in Uvalde to attend college and work. Zach, 12, "misses him. He misses our old normal life."

Mayah is terrified to return to Uvalde.

"It's heartbreaking when your little one can't enjoy the things that she did before, and all these other kids are able to do," the elder Ruben said. "It tears you up."

COLORADO SPRINGS

Ashtin Gamblin was working the front door at Club Q in Colorado Springs on Nov. 19 when a person armed with a semiautomatic rifle shot and killed five people and injured 17 more, including Gamblin.

"I was shot nine times. Five to my left arm. Twice to my right arm. Twice to my left breast. Both of my humerus were shattered. So two broken arms," the 30-year-old said. Six months later, "my right arm is still fractured. My left hand, we're still working on function."

Tasks that were once simple, such as walking her dogs, are now challenging and the loss of autonomy has been difficult, Gamblin said.

She has battled with health insurance, the hospital and worker's compensation officials to figure out who would foot the \$300,000 medical bill.

Gamblin also no longer felt safe in her apartment, where she could sometimes hear gunshots outside. She bought a house in a quieter neighborhood: "a house I wasn't prepared to buy," she said. "I bought a \$380,000 safe space."

She lists other unexpected post-shooting costs: a flooded basement, a service animal, a new car to get to doctor's appointments.

Half a year later she is not mentally recovered enough to return to work.

"I just can't be there... I don't feel safe going to the grocery store. I don't feel safe being in public," she said. "I have no idea what I'm doing with my life currently."

So far in 2023, nearly 400 people in the U.S. have been wounded in mass shootings, according to the Gun Violence Archive. And 140 people have died in mass killings this year, which is on track to surpass 2019, the deadliest year on record for mass killings since 2006, according to a database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in a partnership with Northeastern University.

"There is a lot of focus on the people that are killed. And I'm grateful for that. Those are my friends and they deserved all of the attention and more," Gamblin said. "The downfall is the rest of us are still suffering."

LAS VEGAS

Tia Christiansen had worked in the music industry for more than 20 years when a gunman unleashed the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history at a Las Vegas music festival she helped organize in October 2017.

The shooter rained gunfire from the windows of a high-rise casino hotel into an outdoor concert crowd, killing 58 people and injuring more than 850.

Christiansen was scheduled to be at the festival that day. But she felt ill and stayed in her room, two doors down from where the gunman fired.

"The room was shaking. It was incredibly loud. There was actually a moment when the gunfire was so loud that I literally instinctively ducked and put my hands over my head because I thought that the walls or the ceiling would come crumbling down," Christiansen said. "I completely reconciled my life and thought, 'Am I ready to die?'"

She was physically unscathed. But her life turned upside down. After the shooting, she worked a few more festivals, until she "had a complete, total breakdown on site crying."

"What I came to understand about myself in that moment was, I don't know if I can do this anymore," she said.

At concerts, Christiansen no longer focused on fans' joy, instead fixating on emergency exits and whether people could get to safety. She has since given up her career in the music industry, letting go of her dreams.

agricultural users were notified that they could resume using river water for irrigation. Their irrigation canals had been shut down as a precaution.

Cleaning up spills of petroleum products is "somewhat of a losing game," Peronard said. "We are never going to recover all of the oil here ... and there's likely to be impacts when we are done. That is unavoidable."

As far as the cleanup delay, he said the response to any accident starts with protecting human lives, controlling the source of the spill and then protecting the environment. He said the agency also had to make sure its cleanup plan did not cause more harm than good for bird and turtle nests in the area.

Cleanup crews also have to stay at least a half mile away from eagles nesting in the area, Peronard said. The spilled asphalt material is not water soluble, he said.

Thousands of hotel workers in Southern California are on strike, demanding better pay and benefits

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Thousands of hotel workers in Southern California walked off the job on Sunday, demanding higher pay and better benefits in what the union is calling the largest strike in its history.

Cooks, room attendants, dishwashers, servers, bellmen and front desk agents at hotels were picketing outside major hotels in Los Angeles and Orange counties just as the summer tourist is ramping up.

Last month, members of Unite Here Local 11 voted 96% in favor of authorizing the strike. The union is seeking better wages, improved health care benefits, higher pension contributions and less strenuous workloads.

In addition, the union wants to create a "hospitality workforce housing fund" to help workers deal with the soaring costs of living in greater Los Angeles. Many employees report commuting hours to work because they can't afford to live near their jobs.

"Our members were devastated first by the pandemic, and now by the greed of their bosses," union co-president Kurt Petersen said in a statement. "The industry got bailouts while we got cuts."

Contracts expired midnight on Friday at more than 60 hotels, including properties owned by major chains such as Marriott and Hilton. The strike affects about half of the 32,000 hospitality workers the union represents across Southern California and Arizona.

Last week, a deal was reached with its biggest employer, the Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites in downtown Los Angeles, which has more than 600 union workers. Union officials described the tentative agreement, which provides higher pay and increased staffing levels, as a major win for workers.

Talks with other hotels were at a stalemate. A coalition of more than 40 hotels involved in talks accused union leaders of canceling a scheduled bargaining session and refusing to come to the table. The hotels have offered wage increases of \$2.50 per hour in the first 12 months and \$6.25 over four years, the group said.

"From the outset, the Union has shown no desire to engage in productive, good faith negotiations with this group," the hotel coalition said in a statement Sunday. "The Union has not budged from its opening demand two months ago of up to a 40% wage increase and an over 28% increase in benefit costs."

The work stoppage was expected, and the properties are "fully prepared to continue to operate these hotels and to take care of our guests as long as this disruption lasts," said Keith Grossman, a spokesperson for the coalition.

10 states plan to sue EPA over standards for residential wood-burning stoves

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — Attorneys general from 10 states plan to sue the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, saying its failure to review and ensure emissions standards for residential wood-burning stoves has allowed the continued sale of appliances that could worsen pollution.

That means programs that encourage people to trade in older stoves and other wood-burning appliances, such as forced-air furnaces, haven't necessarily improved air quality, the states say.

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"If newer wood heaters do not meet cleaner standards, then programs to change out old wood heaters may provide little health benefits at significant public cost," the states wrote Thursday in a 60-day notice of intent to sue.

The states involved are Alaska, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Vermont and Washington, as well as the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency.

They allege that the EPA's current standards aren't good enough and that even if they were, the agency's testing and certification program is so ineffective that it has failed to ensure those standards.

The EPA declined to comment on pending litigation.

The states allege that the EPA's current standards must be reviewed and that its testing and certification program is so ineffective, it has failed to ensure the existing standards.

The EPA's Office of Inspector General, in a report released in February, found the EPA's 2015 performance standards for residential wood heaters was flawed and said the agency has "approved methods that lack clarity and allow too much flexibility."

"As a result, certification tests may not be accurate, do not reflect real-world conditions, and may result in some wood heaters being certified for sale that emit too much particulate-matter pollution," the report said.

The agency supports programs aimed at replacing older, dirtier wood heaters with newer, cleaner models and distributed about \$82 million in grants for residential exchanges between fiscal years 2015 and 2021, the report said.

"However, if the replacement models do not meet emission standards because of the reasons described above, millions of federal, state, and local dollars could be wasted," it said.

EPA officials, in response to a draft of the report, said they take the concerns seriously and would continue to take steps to address testing and certification issues.

The report also noted that about 39% of households in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, in Alaska's Interior, use wood-fired heaters in the winter, when temperatures can plunge well below zero degrees F (minus 18 degrees C).

The area is susceptible to inversions that trap layers of cold air close to the ground, and that in turn traps pollution for days or weeks at a time.

More than 3,000 wood-burning appliances were replaced in the region between 2010 and 2021 through a changeout program supported by federal, state and local money, but the report said local residents "do not know whether wood heaters in their homes meet standards" and poor air quality continues to be a concern.

Olympic champion Warholm boos protesters on track who disrupted his 400-meter hurdles race

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP) — Olympic champion Karsten Warholm won his 400-meter hurdles race on Sunday and then turned to join in the crowd booing environmental protesters who disrupted the Diamond League event near the finish.

Three people knelt on the track about eight meters (yards) from the line holding two banners that spanned from lanes one to six, forcing runners to break through them. No athlete appeared to be hurt.

Warholm running in lane eight had no barrier in his way though seemed distracted, with a fourth apparent protester squatting in lane seven seeming to photograph the incident.

He was visibly angry with the protesters as they were led away while spectators booed.

The Norwegian star later told national broadcaster NRK the protest was disrespectful to athletes doing their job.

Warholm's winning time on a cool, rainy evening was 47.57 seconds, well outside his 45.94 world record set at the Tokyo Olympics two years ago.

An unusual evening's work for Warholm included warming up in a parking garage in downtown Stockholm

so that, he said later, he could arrive "dry and warm coming to the start."

AP sports: <https://apnews.com/hub/apf-sports> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Bishop named to Vatican office handling sex abuse complaints discounted some victims, US group says

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — A U.S.-based group that tracks how the Catholic hierarchy deals with allegations of sexual abuse by clergy says Pope Francis made a "troubling" choice in appointing an Argentine prelate to a powerful Vatican office that handles such cases.

On Saturday, the Vatican announced the pontiff had picked Monsignor Victor Manuel Fernández, archbishop of La Plata, Argentina, to head the Holy See's watchdog office for doctrinal orthodoxy. Its mandate includes handling sex abuse allegations lodged against clergy.

BishopAccountability.org, a 20-year-old Massachusetts organization that maintains an online archive of abuse in the Roman Catholic Church, said in a statement that the prelate in 2019 refused to believe victims who accused a priest in the La Plata archdiocese of sexually abusing boys.

Francis "made a baffling and troubling choice," the group said in statement emailed late Saturday in the U.S., citing how Fernández handled the case.

"In his response to allegations, he stoutly supported the accused priest and refused to believe the victims," BishopAccountability.org said. Fernández "should have been investigated, not promoted to one of the highest posts in the global church."

Telephone calls to the La Plata archdiocese office went unanswered on Sunday. The archdiocese didn't immediately respond to an emailed request for comment from the archbishop.

As a leader of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, the 60-year-old archbishop, who will take up his Vatican post in September, "will have immense power, especially when it comes to judging and punishing priests who abuse children," BishopAccountability.org said.

A trusted adviser to the pontiff, Fernández has been nicknamed the "pope's theologian" because he is widely believed to have helped author some of Francis' most important documents. The pope named him to head the La Plata archdiocese in 2018.

BishopAccountability.org said after a 2008 child abuse complaint against a La Plata parish priest resurfaced in 2019, the archbishop published a letter from the priest on the archdiocese's website. In it, the clergyman denied the abuse allegation and said he was slandered.

The archbishop later went to the accused priest's parish and celebrated a Mass with him, according to BishopAccountability.org.

Despite more allegations surfacing, Fernández allowed the priest to continue work. The archbishop eventually removed him, saying priest requested to leave for "health reasons." In December 2019, the priest took his own life hours after a judge issued an order for his arrest, according to the watchdog group and Argentine media reports at the time.

"Nothing about his performance suggests that he is fit to lead the pope's battle against abuse and cover-up," BishopAccountability.org said of Fernández.

Francis has pledged that the Catholic Church will adhere to a zero-tolerance policy on clergy sexual abuse.

Trump's South Carolina rally attracted a massive crowd in heavily Republican area

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

PICKENS, S.C. (AP) — Former President Donald Trump marked a return to the large-scale rallies of his previous presidential campaigns, speaking to a massive crowd gathered in the streets of a small South Carolina city on a blazing summer weekend.

"There's nowhere else I'd rather be to kick off the Fourth of July weekend than right here on Main Street, with thousands of hardworking South Carolina patriots who believe in God, family and country," Trump said Saturday to a roaring crowd in downtown Pickens as temperatures climbed into the 90s.

Randal J. Beach, the police chief in the conservative Upstate community of about 3,400 residents, told The Associated Press on Sunday that his estimates of the crowd "were somewhere between 50-55,000."

The heavily Republican area is a popular one for GOP hopefuls as they aim to attract support for South Carolina's first-in-the-South presidential primary. In recent months, other candidates including Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, former Vice President Mike Pence and biotech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy have all held events in the Upstate, as well as the two South Carolinians in the race: former Gov. Nikki Haley and Sen. Tim Scott.

But none drew an audience like Trump, whose appearance effectively shuttered Pickens' quintessential Southern downtown.

Contrasted with his 2016 and 2020 campaigns, which drew thousands to rallies in states across the country, Trump's 2024 effort has been markedly different. Earlier this year, instead of addressing voters in a gymnasium or airplane hangar, Trump held his first South Carolina campaign event inside the Statehouse in Columbia, rolling out his state leadership team at an invitation-only gathering in an ornate lobby between the House and Senate chambers.

In other states, the former president has focused his efforts on smaller events, including a series of speeches before state party organizations, as he works to bolster his standing with delegates and local officials.

This was only Trump's second large rally of the 2024 campaign. In March, he rallied in Waco, Texas, disparaging the prosecutors then investigating him on hush-money charges — on which he was later indicted — and predicting his vindication. A planned outdoor rally in Iowa in May was canceled due to tornado warnings.

The rallies are also expensive to put on, although Trump has continued to bring in millions in fundraising, after both the New York indictment and also federal charges related to his retention of classified documents after leaving the White House. Last month, senior Trump aide Chris LaCivita told the conservative Ruthless podcast that the rallies "are half a million bucks a pop."

Trump's campaign has also leaned in on unannounced stops at restaurants — such as at a celebrated Philadelphia cheesesteak restaurant Friday or Versailles, a famous Cuban eatery in Miami — in a bid to showcase his strong appeal among supporters despite the multiple legal challenges.

In a broad GOP field that has continued to grow, Trump's campaign has pointed to polls showing him with a considerable lead over his rivals, despite a campaign schedule that is far less robust than many of his rivals. He has also given frequent media interviews and appeared at many of the multi-candidate events of the primary season so far, including this past week's Moms for Liberty gathering in Philadelphia.

Still, the chance to see the former president in person drew thousands from across the Southeast for Saturday's rally, with attendees beginning to line up the night before, and coming from as far as Florida. Greg Pressley and his wife, Robin, said they drove more than three hours from their home in eastern Tennessee to see the candidate they've supported since his first run in 2016.

"Donald Trump's the best president in history," Greg Pressley said. "I love his policies. I love the man. I'm here to support him getting back to where he needs to be, to begin with."

Shelley Fox of Spartanburg, who said she has supported Trump since he entered the 2016 race, said she didn't feel it necessary to even think about any other candidates for next year's election.

"I'd write him in," she said, when asked what she would do if forced to consider another hopeful. "No question — I'd write him in."

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

Russia launches the first drone strike on Kyiv in 12 days and all are shot down

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — After a relative lull, Russia launched a drone attack early Sunday on Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, officials said. It was the first such attack of the war in 12 days.

All of the Iranian-made Shahed exploding drones were detected and shot down, according to Serhii Popko, the head of the Kyiv city administration. In addition to the city itself, the surrounding Kyiv region was targeted. Kyiv regional Gov. Ruslan Kravchenko reported that one person was wounded by falling debris from a destroyed drone.

Officials in the Ukrainian capital didn't provide an exact number of drones that attacked the city. But Ukraine's air force said that across the country, eight Shaheds and three Kalibr cruise missiles were launched by the Russians.

Further south, a 13-year-old boy was wounded in overnight shelling of Ukraine's partially occupied southern Kherson province, said Oleksandr Tolokonnikov, spokesman for the Ukrainian administration of the province.

The child was wounded when the Russian army shelled the village of Mylove on the banks of the Dnieper River in the Beryslav district, Tolokonnikov said.

"The child was hospitalized, there is no threat to his life," Tolokonnikov added," he said on state TV.

Shelling of Kherson province continued Sunday morning, wounding four people in the regional capital, also called Kherson. The regional prosecutor's office said that a residential area of the city was targeted by Russian troops operating in the Russia-occupied part of the Kherson province. "

"At least four citizens were wounded, two of them due to a targeted strike on a high-rise building," the office wrote on Telegram.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's military reported that the most intense fighting continued in Ukraine's industrial east, with attacks focused around Bakhmut, Marinka and Lyman in the country's Donetsk province, where 46 combat clashes took place.

Ukrainian forces were advancing amid a "massive offensive" on the southern and northern flanks of the destroyed city of Bakhmut, Ukraine's Eastern Group of Forces spokesman Serhii Cherevaty told Ukrainian state television. But he didn't mention how much progress they made. The details, he said, would be disclosed once Ukrainian forces had analyzed the situation and consolidated their positions.

In its regular update Sunday morning, the General Staff said that over the previous 24 hours, Russia had carried out 27 airstrikes, one missile strike and around 80 attacks from multiple rocket launchers, targeting regions in the north, northeast, east and south of the country.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the Black Sea port city of Odesa on Sunday — the day the country honors its navy — to hear a report from the navy commander, discuss prospects for the development of a naval drone and missile program, as well as present awards to service members.

In Russia, local officials reported that air defense systems shot down a drone over the Belgorod region, which borders Ukraine, while the neighboring Kursk region faced shelling attacks. No casualties or damage were reported.

Following the drama of Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin's rebellion last week, Russian authorities remained defiant. Vyacheslav Volodin, speaker of Russia's lower house of parliament, the State Duma, said Sunday that Russian President Vladimir Putin came out of this situation "having strengthened his position even more both in the country and in the world."

Russian society, he said, "having passed this test, has shown its maturity." According to Volodin, there was "not a single example of someone supporting the rebellion."

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But Gen. Sergei Surovikin, the deputy commander of the Russian group of forces fighting in Ukraine, was believed to have been detained days after the mutiny. It's not clear whether Surovikin, who has longtime links to Prigozhin, faces any charges or where he is being held, reflecting the opaque world of the Kremlin's politics and uncertainty after the revolt.

Writing on Telegram, Volodin said that the Russian president "did everything to prevent bloodshed and confusion," including explaining to Wagner fighters "the real state of affairs." "(Putin) suggested that those who want to defend Russia continue their service with weapons in their hands. As far as I know, many of them agreed to this," Volodin said.

In addition, the speaker of the State Duma said that he had analyzed the "challenges" Russia faced in the past, affirming that if "someone like Putin" had been leading the country in 1917 and 1991, there wouldn't have been a revolution in Russia, and the USSR wouldn't have collapsed.

But independent observers and analysts say that Putin may come out politically weakened after first announcing that Wagner would face harsh repercussions, only to later say that the group's forces wouldn't face prosecution. Prigozhin was also allowed to leave Russia for Belarus.

Polish Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski said Sunday that Poland would send 500 police officers to join 5,000 border guards and 2,000 soldiers already on the country's border with Belarus. It follows an announcement earlier this week that Poland would strengthen defenses on its eastern border after the relocation of Wagner fighters to Belarus.

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

Israel's air force attacks Syria and Syrian air defense missile explodes over northern Israel

BEIRUT (AP) — Israel carried out airstrikes on areas near the central Syrian city of Homs early Sunday causing material damage but no casualties, the Syrian military said in a statement.

A Syrian anti-aircraft missile exploded over Israeli territory, the Israeli military said, prompting another round of strikes.

Syrian state media quoted an unnamed military official as saying the air defenses shot down some of the missiles fired by Israeli warplanes flying over neighboring Lebanon.

Israeli authorities did not comment on the airstrike on Homs. But the military said one of the Syrian air defense missiles exploded over Israeli territory without causing any damage. Israeli police said the rocket's remains landed in the southern Israeli city of Rahat.

In response to the rocket, Israeli jets struck the air defense battery from where the anti-aircraft rocket was launched. The military said it also struck other targets, without elaborating.

Israel, which has vowed to stop Iranian entrenchment next door, has carried out hundreds of strikes on targets in government-controlled parts of neighboring Syria in recent years, but it rarely acknowledges them.

The last suspected Israeli airstrike on Syria was on June 14, near the capital Damascus that left one soldier wounded.

Israel has also targeted the international airports in Damascus and the northern Syrian city of Aleppo several times over the past few years, often putting it out of commission.

Indiana Jones' box office destiny? A lukewarm \$60 million debut in North America

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Indiana Jones, and executives at the Walt Disney Co. and Lucasfilm, made a somewhat dispiriting discovery this weekend. Moviegoers didn't rush to the theater in significant numbers to see "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" and say goodbye to Harrison Ford as the iconic archaeologist.

The film, reportedly budgeted north of \$250 million, came in on the lower end of projections with \$60

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million in ticket sales from 4,600 North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Including \$70 million from international showings in 52 markets, "Dial of Destiny" celebrated a \$130 million global opening. It easily earned the No. 1 title but was not the high-rolling sendoff for one of modern cinema's most iconic actor/character pairings that anyone hoped. Disney is projecting that it will make \$82 million domestically through the fourth of July holiday and \$152 million globally.

"Dial of Destiny" is the long-delayed fifth installment in the Steven Spielberg/George Lucas-created adventure series that began in 1981, and the first Spielberg himself hasn't directed. Veteran James Mangold stepped in to take the reins overseeing the Spielberg-approved script, which finds an older Dr. Jones retiring from his university job and swept up on a new adventure with his goddaughter Helena (Phoebe Waller-Bridge).

"It's impressive that a franchise that's over 40 years old is No. 1 at the box office. But there's no question there were higher hopes for the debut of this movie," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "This is Indiana Jones. This is a summer movie icon."

The film made its splashy premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in May, with a fitting celebration of Ford, who has said this was his last time playing the character.

But then it was hit with lukewarm reviews. This was an unexpected and unwelcome hurdle, considering it was coming after the maligned fourth film, 2008's "Indiana Jones and Kingdom of the Crystal Skull." Another contributing snag was that a significant portion of the target audience, older viewers, don't tend to buy many tickets on opening weekend for big blockbusters. But even "Crystal Skull," budgeted at a reported \$185 million, managed to gross over \$790 million.

"Sometimes reviews don't matter, but the sentiment coming out of Cannes was very powerful," Dergarabedian said. "It set off a narrative where people were already feeling disappointed and they hadn't even seen it."

Second place went to "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse" with \$11.5 million, bringing its domestic total to around \$340 million. "Elemental" landed in third place with \$11.3 million.

Aside from "Dial of Destiny," the weekend's other main new opener was the animated "Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken," which debuted in sixth place with \$5.2 million.

"Dial of Destiny's" underwhelming debut comes just a few weeks after both Warner Bros.' "The Flash" and Disney/Pixar's "Elemental" had lackluster openings in North America. "Elemental," like Indy 5, also premiered at Cannes to middling reception.

And yet, "Elemental" in its three weeks in theaters has held on much better than "The Flash," which plummeted again to \$5 million, bringing its domestic total to \$99.3 million. Disney also saw similarly promising holds with "The Little Mermaid," now at over \$280 million domestically and "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3" which has grossed over \$345 million. After the holiday, Disney will be responsible for nearly half of the summer box office earnings.

"The entire story isn't told on the opening weekend," Dergarabedian said.

Disney has a "clear weekend" ahead with no competing blockbusters, when studio heads can reasonably hope for more families and older audiences to buy tickets. But things will only get more challenging for "Dial of Destiny" in the coming weeks with a crowded July. "Mission: Impossible-Dead Reckoning Part I" opens on July 12, followed by "Oppenheimer" and "Barbie" on July 21.

"The ups and downs at the box office are giving us whiplash," Dergarabedian said. "And we're still on the cusp of some of the biggest movies of the summer."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," \$60 million.
2. "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse," \$11.5 million.
3. "Elemental," \$11.3 million.
4. "No Hard Feelings," \$7.5 million.
5. "Transformers: Rise of the Beasts," \$7 million.
6. "Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken," \$5.2 million.

7. "The Little Mermaid," \$5.2 million.
8. "The Flash," \$5 million.
9. "Asteroid City," \$3.8 million.
10. "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3," \$1.8 million.

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Follow AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr on Twitter: www.twitter.com/ladbahr.

Rickie Fowler wins Rocket Mortgage Classic in playoff over Morikawa and Hadwin, ends 4-year drought

By LARRY LAGE AP Sports Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Rickie Fowler tilted his head back, exhaled and smiled.

He finally did it, holding on for a win after so many have slipped away.

Refusing to crumble and collapse again, Fowler made a 12-foot birdie putt on the first playoff hole of the Rocket Mortgage Classic and outlasted Collin Morikawa and Adam Hadwin on Sunday, two weeks after squandering a chance at the U.S. Open.

"It's just nice to have this one out of the way," Fowler said after winning for the first time in four years. "I'm obviously going to soak this one in and celebrate a bit.

"Yeah, it's just been a long road."

Fowler ended a career-long, 96-start championship drought after missing out on two chances to win in June, closing with a 75 at the U.S. Open to tie for fifth and with a 69 last week at the Travelers Championship to drop into a tie for 13th.

Followed all day by a sea of orange at Detroit Golf Club, Fowler was knocked down on the leaderboard by a near record-tying-round from Morikawa. He responded on his 72nd hole of the tournament with an approach from 145 feet that left him with a 3-foot birdie putt to pull into a three-way tie with Morikawa and Hadwin at 24 under.

Fowler hit an errant tee shot way right in the playoff and after a drop, his approach from 184 landed 12 feet from the cup. Morikawa was inches long on his approach and instead of having the ball spin back to the hole, it bounced into the rough.

"I truly thought I hit the perfect shot," Morikawa said. "It just was a little juiced, went a little far and just didn't have the putter in the hand. Not that the chip wasn't possible, but would have been nice to have the putter in the hand."

Hadwin missed a 22-foot putt and Morikawa his chip, opening the door for Fowler to close out the tournament before thunderstorms rolled over Detroit.

"I knew it was just a matter of time with how I've been playing," said Fowler, who has eight top-10 finishes this season. "I've had a couple tough weekends where I had a chance."

Even though Morikawa was disappointed in coming up short on a victory he has been shooting for since winning the 2021 British Open, he was happy for Fowler.

"He's been playing phenomenal golf, it's great to see," he said. "People love him."

Morikawa's 8-under round put him one shot back from the course record of 63. Hadwin shot a 67 and Fowler a 68.

Fowler had a share of the 54-hole lead last month at Los Angeles Country Club with an opportunity to win his first major and was at least a co-leader after three rounds in one tournament in each of the previous two years.

Before his breakthrough in Detroit, he had won just two of the 10 times he was the third-round leader or co-leader.

The 34-year-old Fowler physically and mentally did what was needed to earn his sixth PGA Tour victory and his first since winning the 2019 Waste Management Phoenix Open.

The fan favorite Fowler, a longtime ambassador for Rocket Mortgage, was cheered with chants of "Rickie! Rickie!" as clusters of people gathered around the 18th green hoping he would win it.

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While Fowler faltered, going 10 straight holes settling for pars on a relatively easy course, Morikawa had four birdies on both the front and back nine. Morikawa made a 10-foot putt at No. 12, his fourth birdie in a six-hole stretch that put him within a shot of Fowler, and his 9-footer for birdie at No. 14 pulled him into a tie with Fowler at 23 under.

Monday qualifier Peter Kuest (65), Lucas Glover (65) and Taylor Moore (67) were tied for fourth at 21 under. Kuest, who started the week ranked 789th in the world, did well enough to earn a spot in this week's John Deere Classic in Illinois.

Play was suspended Saturday for 1 hour, 42 minutes because of lightning and the schedule for the final round was adjusted due to inclement weather in the forecast. The leaders teed off Sunday morning about 5 hours before the original schedule with threesomes starting on both the front and back nine.

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

Drug cartel violence flares in western Mexico after vigilante leader's killing

APATZINGAN, Mexico (AP) — The drug cartel violence that citizen self-defense leader Hipolito Mora gave his life fighting flared anew on Sunday, just one day after he was buried, as shootings and road blockades hit the city of Apatzingan, a regional hub in Mexico's hot lands.

Roads in and out of Apatzingan were blocked Sunday morning by trucks and buses pulled across the road by cartel gunmen, as the vehicles' owners stood by helplessly.

"They told me to park my truck across the road. They said if I moved it, they would burn it," said one truck driver, who asked his name not be used for fear of reprisals.

And in the city of Apatzingan, the regional hub where the area's agricultural products are traded, gunmen carjacked a family, took their auto at gun point and used it to shoot another driver to death just a few blocks away.

The victim's car was left dangling from a bridge as he lay dead inside, slumped onto the passenger's side seat.

The execution was so quick that his car continued on for a few yards, the front end climbed onto the guard rail of the bridge, and came to rest almost turned on its side.

A friend of the man said he worked at a car dealership and had gone on a pizza run for a family get-together a few moments before he died. The friend blamed the Jalisco cartel for the killing, despite the fact that Apatzingan has long been dominated by the rival Viagras cartel.

The theory is not so wild. The Jalisco cartel, from the neighboring state of the same name, has been fighting an years-long offensive to enter Michoacan. The roadblocks Sunday might have been because the Viagras gang feared such an attack.

The front lines in the battles now lie along the ill-named Rio Grande, a small river that runs about 15 miles (23 kilometers) south of Apatzingan.

Residents of Las Bateas, a riverside village, had to flee their homes about a month ago after raging gunbattles between the Jalisco cartel and the Viagras broke out in the fields outside the homes. Jalisco gunmen have crossed the river, seeking to take over territory farther north, on the southern outskirts of Apatzingan.

Residents recounted cowering behind the brick walls of their homes as bullets whizzed through the night.

The Mexican government sent in army and National Guard reinforcements, part of an unspoken, years-long policy of keeping Jalisco from advancing, while tolerating the Viagras.

Residents say they feel a bit safer now, and have largely returned to their homes, at least for now.

But the status quo is clearly unsustainable. Because of systematic extortion by the Viagras cartel, many common items in Apatzingan are far more expensive than in the rest of Mexico. A soda that costs 80 cents elsewhere costs \$1.40 here. An coconut popsicle that costs 90 cents in the rest of Mexico costs \$1.75 in

Apatzingan.

Those price differences — and direct extortion that wrings protection payments directly from farmers, ranchers and businessmen — is slowly strangling the rich farmlands.

That is what Hipolito Mora, one of the last leaders of Mexico's anti-gang citizens' movement, died fighting. He was buried Saturday alongside two of his faithful followers who were killed with him Thursday. Along him died practically any hope of reviving an armed civilian resistance to drug cartels.

While some angry relatives talked of reviving the 2013-2014 armed farmers' movement that kicked out one cartel — only to see it replaced by others — many doubted that chapter could ever be repeated.

"He looked out for his town, for his people, and that is something none of us is going to do," his sister, Olivia Mora, said in a tearful address in front of his coffin.

"We all think first about our own families," she said. "None of us are going to have the courage to do what he did."

The Biden administration guaranteed attorney access for all migrant screenings. Most don't have it

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — As the Biden administration prepared to launch speedy asylum screenings at Border Patrol holding facilities this spring, authorities pledged a key difference from a Trump-era version of the policy: Migrants would be guaranteed access to legal counsel.

Nearly three months and thousands of screenings later, the promise of attorney access appears largely unfulfilled, based on advocacy group reports and interviews with people directly involved, some of whom spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the effort publicly.

A coterie of involved attorneys estimate that perhaps 100 migrants have secured formal representation, and only hundreds more have received informal advice through one-time phone calls ahead of the expedited screenings.

Jones Day, one of the world's largest law firms, has partnered with the administration to provide free legal advice to migrants. Its phone bank handled 460 informal phone consultations, each one typically lasting about two hours, as of June 21, according to one of the people who spoke to AP on condition of anonymity. Jones Day itself had only two formal clients, the person said.

Four other advocacy groups that offer free advice and whose names are posted on the immigration court system's website have handled far fewer phone consultations, partly because they started much later, the person said. Representatives from those four groups declined to comment or did not respond to requests from the AP.

That represents a mere fraction of the thousands of expedited screenings since early April, though a precise percentage couldn't be determined. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, whose asylum officers conduct the interviews, didn't answer questions about attorney representation.

U.S. authorities aim to complete screenings in 72 hours — the limit on holding someone under Border Patrol policy. The Homeland Security Department said the accelerated timeline is meant "to provide relief more quickly to those who are eligible and to more quickly remove those who are not." AP has repeatedly requested to visit a screening facility to better understand the process.

During the screenings, known as "credible fear interviews," migrants must convince an asylum officer that they have a "significant possibility" of convincing a judge that they face persecution in their home countries on grounds of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a social group. If they pass, they are typically released in the U.S. while their case winds through the system.

The percentage of people who passed asylum screenings fell to 52% during the second half of May as the fast-track process picked up, down from 77% the second half of March, just before it began.

The government figures give no explanation and do not say how many expedited screenings occurred in Border Patrol custody without access to legal counsel. Administration officials have attributed lower

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approval rates in part to a new policy that severely limits asylum for people who travel through another country, like Mexico, to reach the U.S. border.

A lawsuit filed last month in federal court in Washington seeks to end the screenings in Border Patrol custody, noting that applicants get as little as 24 hours to find attorneys after often-harrowing journeys. The lawsuit contends that “leaves virtually no time or ability for noncitizens to consult with anyone or meaningfully prepare for these often life-or-death interviews.”

Even migrants who pass are reluctant to discuss their experiences as they to continue pursuing asylum cases. U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla, a California Democrat, said in a statement that reports of lacking attorney access at Border Patrol facilities are “troubling and disappointing.”

The administration won't say how many of the screenings it has done at Border Patrol facilities, which prohibit in-person attorney visits, though it is easily thousands. The Homeland Security Department said June 5 that asylum officers did more than 11,500 screenings on the border in the first three weeks after pandemic-related asylum restrictions ended, though some may have been at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement centers, which do allow attorney visits.

Normally, about three in four migrants pass credible fear interviews, though far fewer eventually win asylum. But the results roughly flipped during the five months of the Trump-era program of expedited screenings: Only 23% passed, while 69% failed and 9% withdrew, according to the Government Accountability Office.

Biden ended Trump's fast-track reviews within a month of Democrats occupying the White House, part of an executive order aimed at “restoring and enhancing asylum processing at the border.”

Renewed screenings began in Texas' Rio Grande Valley and expanded the following week to similarly sprawling tent complexes in Laredo and El Paso in Texas; Yuma, Arizona; and San Diego — all temporary Border Patrol detention centers built since 2021 with hundreds of phone booths for interviews.

For about three weeks in April, Jones Day attorneys were able to prepare all migrants who sought informal legal advice by phone but were soon overwhelmed, according to one person with direct knowledge of the effort.

Some legal service providers wrestled with whether to participate in the “Enhanced Expedited Removal” program as the screenings process is called. They don't get paid and some worried it might imply approval and lend legitimacy.

Americans for Immigrant Justice joined the Jones Day-led effort because the interviews carry “life-and-death” stakes, said Cindy Woods, national policy counsel.

“It's a difficult situation to be in, especially because the way that this new iteration has been laid out,” she said.

Calls that come in at night or on weekends are missed, and attorneys say they have no reliable way to respond to messages.

Obtaining formal representation for the screening may require a signature, which requires assistance from agents who may be unavailable. One of Woods' clients was on the phone for five hours while waiting for an agent to print a consent form and fax it back to the attorney with the migrant's signature.

The National Immigrant Justice Center, which takes clients through the Jones Day-led phone bank, said in a report that only six of 23 clients had access to pen and paper to take notes.

Jones Day attorneys occupied the highest ranks of the Trump administration, including White House counsel Don McGahn. Despite ties to the former president, who called asylum “a sham,” the firm built a robust practice representing asylum-seekers for free known as the “Border Project,” operating from an office it opened in 2017 on the banks of the Rio Grande in Laredo.

Jones Day says it has provided legal education to more than 10,000 migrants. More than 1,100 lawyers have spent more than 280,000 hours on their cases — an unrivaled investment among major firms.

The firm has declined to comment publicly on its role providing legal advice for the expedited screenings.

What to know about Fourth of July holiday origins and traditions

By JIM SALTER Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — The Fourth of July is Americana at its core: parades and cookouts and cold beer and, of course, fireworks.

Those pyrotechnics also make it an especially dangerous holiday, typically resulting in more than 10,000 trips to the emergency room. Yet fireworks remain at the center of Independence Day, a holiday 247 years in the making.

Here are five things to know about July Fourth, including the origin of the holiday and how fireworks became part of the tradition.

WHAT'S THE ORIGIN OF INDEPENDENCE DAY?

The holiday celebrates the Second Continental Congress' unanimous adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, a document announcing the colonies' separation from Great Britain.

One year later, according to the Library of Congress, a spontaneous celebration in Philadelphia marked the anniversary of American independence.

But across the burgeoning nation, observations didn't become commonplace until after the War of 1812. It quickly took off: The Library of Congress notes that major historic events in the 19th century, such as groundbreaking ceremonies for the Erie Canal and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, were scheduled to coincide with Fourth of July festivities.

HOW DID FIREWORKS BECOME A JULY FOURTH TRADITION?

The display of pyrotechnics has been a big part of Independence Day from the outset. Founding Father John Adams saw it coming.

Commemoration of America's independence "ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more," Adams wrote in a letter to his wife, Abigail, dated July 3, 1776.

Fireworks were around centuries before America became a nation. The American Pyrotechnics Association says many historians believe fireworks were first developed in the second century B.C. in ancient China by throwing bamboo stalks into fires, causing explosions as the hollow air pockets overheated.

By the 15th century, fireworks were widely used for religious festivals and public entertainment in Europe and early U.S. settlers carried on those traditions, the association said.

HAS A PRESIDENT EVER REFUSED TO CELEBRATE?

Presidents from George Washington to Joe Biden have celebrated the nation's birth on the Fourth of July, with one exception: Adams.

His letter to his wife aside, Adams refused to celebrate the holiday on July 4 because he felt July 2 was the real Independence Day. Why? It was on July 2, 1776, that the Continental Congress voted in favor of the resolution for independence, though the Declaration of Independence wasn't formally adopted until two days later.

Adams was so adamant that he turned down invitations to festivals and other events, even while serving as the nation's second president. Ironically, Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, both died on the 50th anniversary of the document's formal adoption, July 4, 1826.

HOW POPULAR ARE FIREWORKS?

Consumer sales of fireworks have grown rapidly over the past two decades.

Statistics from the American Pyrotechnics Association show that in 2000, American consumers spent \$407 million on fireworks. By 2022, that figure rose to \$2.3 billion. The biggest jump came during the COVID-19 pandemic, when public fireworks displays were shut down. Consumer sales jumped from \$1 billion in 2019 to \$1.9 billion in 2020.

"People went to the fireworks store beginning Memorial Day weekend and they just didn't stop," said Julie Heckman, executive director of the American Pyrotechnics Association. "They were firing off fireworks all of 2020. It shocked the industry, to be quite honest with you."

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Sales are expected to rise another \$100 million this year, the association said. It helps that the Fourth of July is on a Tuesday, creating essentially a four-day weekend.

ARE FIREWORKS DANGEROUS?

Despite widespread education efforts, thousands of Americans are badly injured by fireworks each year, and this year is no exception.

Late Saturday night, firefighters and medics were called to Lexington Township, a suburb of Kansas City, Kansas, for reports of a shed on fire and arrived to find fireworks actively exploding from the burning shed and several people lying injured on the ground. Firefighters, medics and local police dragged the victims from the area to safety, and four people were taken to hospitals — two with serious injuries, Northwest Consolidated Fire District Chief Todd Maxton said in a statement.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that in 2022, 10,200 people were treated at emergency rooms and 11 deaths were blamed on fireworks. About three-quarters of injuries happened in the period around the Fourth of July.

About one-third of the injuries were to the head, face, ears or eyes. Finger, hand and leg injuries are common, too.

"I have seen people who have blown off fingers," said Dr. Tiffany Osborn, an emergency room physician at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis. "I've seen people who have lost eyes. I've seen people who have significant facial injuries."

Children under 15 make up nearly one-third of those injured by fireworks. Sparklers often are blamed for burns to children under age 5. Osborn suggested giving small children glow sticks or colorful streamers instead.

For those planning to shoot off fireworks, Heckman urged finding a flat, hard, level surface away from structures and other things that could catch fire. The person responsible for the fireworks should avoid alcohol. Children should never ignite them.

Osborn encouraged having a bucket or hose nearby in case of fire or explosion. Shoot off one at a time and walk away quickly after igniting, she said, and never relight or handle a malfunctioned firework. When done, shovel up the remains and soak them before disposing.

The 2024 Republican presidential field keeps growing. So why aren't there more women?

By SARA BURNETT Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — As Republicans keep jumping into the 2024 race for president, one demographic group seems notably lacking: women.

More than a dozen candidates are seeking the nomination, including several long shots who announced their bids in recent weeks, in what is the party's most diverse presidential field ever. Yet Nikki Haley, a former U.N. ambassador and South Carolina governor, is the only woman in the bunch.

America has never had a female commander in chief and Republicans historically have focused less on electing female candidates in general than the Democratic Party. And while women make up more than 50% of the population, they are underrepresented in public office, whether at city halls, state legislatures or in Washington.

In recent years, multiple organizations have helped women win election in higher numbers and capture races at the same rate as men. But they are still much less likely than men to run for office, even if they are equally qualified, research shows.

Women accounted for roughly 21% of the major party candidates for U.S. Senate last year and about 31% of U.S. House candidates, according to the Center for American Women and Politics. That follows election cycles in which each party had a record number of women elected. Women constitute less than one-third of the U.S. House and Senate and 31% of statewide elected offices, even with a record 12 female governors after last year's midterms.

When it comes to the presidency, only five Republican women, including Haley, have undertaken promi-

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ment campaigns this century, compared with 12 among Democrats, including six in 2020.

Former tech executive Carly Fiorina was the lone top female candidate in the last open GOP presidential primary, in 2016. Republicans have taken steps to encourage more women to run for federal office since then, but the 2024 contest is unique in that it includes a former president, Donald Trump, who has not hesitated to make sexist attacks against women who challenge him, including Fiorina.

Trump's presence, along with the increasingly toxic and violent sexism that women face as candidates, may be the biggest deterrent.

"It really takes a particular personality to be willing to have that kind of fortitude, and I'm not sure that there are any examples of it being worth it," said Lauren Leader, the founder of All in Together, which works to get more women involved in the political process.

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, who was seen as a potential 2024 Republican candidate, said in a radio interview that she is focused on her job and that with Trump in the race, "right now I don't see a path for victory with anybody else."

That sentiment has not prevented long shots such as Miami Mayor Francis Suarez and North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum from running.

Regardless of party, female presidential candidates face sexist assumptions about who is tough enough — or masculine enough — for the office, a theme that has surfaced repeatedly during the primary.

In the run-up to the Faith & Freedom Coalition gathering of conservatives last month, evangelical Christian leader Ralph Reed suggested that GOP presidential candidates need to take stronger positions on abortion restrictions, saying they need "a little bit of a testosterone booster shot."

Trump continues to be the favorite for the nomination despite his history of sexism toward women, a recent civil court verdict ordering him to pay \$5 million to a woman for sexual assault and defamation, and his other legal troubles.

Haley has both played down and leaned into her gender and race — she is of Indian descent and the daughter of immigrants — saying it is time to put a "badass woman" in the White House and that electing the first female president is not front of mind.

Asked during a June CNN town hall what it would mean to achieve that historic first, Haley responded that she does not think about it much. If it happens, she said, "it will be nice to have that out of the way." She said that when she was elected the first female governor of South Carolina, she was "just kind of relieved that everybody would quit talking about it."

At a Friday gathering of conservative women, Haley praised women as results-oriented, able to prioritize and balance and not having "near the drama that the guys have." She repeated a campaign line about why Americans should elect a woman.

"Personally, I think to save the country we need to send a badass Republican woman to this White House," Haley said during the Moms for Liberty event.

When women do not run or even consider it, that's now the biggest challenge to more gender parity in public office, according to researchers and advocates. So some groups are trying new recruiting approaches.

One organization, She Should Run, conducted research about what might motivate more women to seek office. The group found that it was not enough to simply encourage women to run in order to close the gender gap. Instead, women were more motivated by the idea of shaping policy around issues that were disproportionately affecting them, such as reproductive rights and climate change, said Erin Loos Cutraro, the founder and CEO.

The group has held webinars for people who are passionate about those issues and worked to help them see how they might get involved, including by running for office. So far, a record number of people have participated in the sessions, the group said, with many attendees not having considered running for office when they registered. The goal is to help some of them see an opportunity, whether that is in 2024 or years from now.

"That's really the goal, is how do we find these women where they are and then bring them into the conversation?" Loos Cutraro said. She said it is often a yearslong process for women from the time they

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first think about running for office until they actually do so. The group, which has encouraged some 40,000 women to run for office since forming in 2011, has a goal of reaching 250,000 by 2030.

Republicans have long shunned so-called identity politics, while Democrats have worked for decades to see more women elected, through groups such as EMILY's List. That has meant GOP women's ranks are smaller in federal office, though there are organizations that formed in recent years and had success in both 2020 and 2022 in electing Republican women to Congress.

"There has definitely been much more energy and focus on supporting conservative women running. And they've had real successes," Leader said. "I think at the national level, it's just so much more complicated."

Elon Musk imposes daily limits on reading posts on Twitter

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Twitter owner Elon Musk has limited the number of tweets that users can view each day — restrictions he described as an attempt to prevent unauthorized scraping of potentially valuable data from the social media platform.

The site is now requiring people to log on to view tweets and profiles — a change in its longtime practice to allow everyone to peruse the chatter on what Musk has frequently touted as the world's digital town square since buying it for \$44 billion last year.

The restrictions could result in users being locked out of Twitter for the day after scrolling through several hundred tweets. Thousands of users complained Saturday of not being able to access the site.

In a Friday tweet, Musk described the new restrictions as a temporary measure that was taken because "we were getting data pillaged so much that it was degrading service for normal users!"

Musk has pushed back on what he calls misuse of Twitter data to train popular artificial intelligence systems like ChatGPT. They scour reams of information online to generate human-like text, photos, video and other content.

Musk elaborated on the limits Saturday, saying unverified accounts will temporarily be restricted to reading 600 posts per day, while verified accounts will be able to scroll through up to 6,000.

After facing backlash, he tweeted that the thresholds would be raised to 800 posts for unverified accounts and 8,000 for verified accounts before later settling on 1,000 and 10,000 tweets, respectively.

The crackdown began to have ripple effects, causing more than 7,500 people at one point Saturday to report problems using the social media service, based on complaints registered on Downtdetector, a website that tracks online outages.

Although that's a relatively small number of Twitter's more than 200 million worldwide users, the trouble was widespread enough to cause the #TwitterDown hashtag to trend in some parts of the world.

The higher threshold allowed on verified accounts is part of an \$8-per-month subscription service that Musk rolled out earlier this year in an effort to boost Twitter revenue. It has fallen sharply since the billionaire Tesla CEO took over the company and laid off roughly three-fourths of the workforce to cut costs and stave off bankruptcy.

Advertisers have since curbed their spending on Twitter, partly because of changes that have allowed more sometimes-hateful and prickly content that offends a wider part of the service's audience.

Musk recently hired longtime NBC Universal executive Linda Yaccarino as Twitter's CEO to try to win back advertisers.

An Associated Press inquiry about Saturday's access problems triggered a crude automated reply that Twitter sends to most media queries without addressing the question.

Fanfare, golf and boos have marked July Fourth for US presidents. Zachary Taylor's was the worst

By CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Through history, the Fourth of July has been a day for some presidents to declare their independence from the public. They've bailed to the beach, the mountains, the golf course, the farm, the ranch. In the middle of the Depression, Franklin Roosevelt was sailing to Hawaii on a fishing and working vacation.

It's also been a day for some presidents to insert themselves front and center in the fabric of it all.

Teddy Roosevelt drew hundreds of thousands for his July Fourth oratory. In 2019, Donald Trump marshaled tanks, bombers and other war machinery for a celebration that typically avoids military muscle.

Richard Nixon enraged the anti-war masses without even showing up. As the anti-Nixon demonstrations of 1970 showed, Independence Day in the capital isn't always just fun and games. It has a tradition of red, white and boo, too.

In modern times, though, presidents have tended to stand back and let the people party.

George W. Bush had a ceremony welcoming immigrants as new citizens. Barack Obama threw a South Lawn barbecue for troops. Bill Clinton went to the shores of Chesapeake Bay to watch a young bald eagle named Freedom be released to the wild.

In 2021, Joe Biden gathered more than 1,000 people on the White House South Lawn to eat burgers and watch fireworks. That event was noteworthy because such gatherings were unthinkable in the first year of the pandemic. Many wished Biden had not thought of doing it even then — the rampage of the omicron COVID-19 variant was still to come.

Still, the burgers were an improvement from July 4, 1850, when Zachary Taylor wolfed down apparently spoiled cherries and milk (and died five days later.)

A look at what some presidents have done on the Fourth of July:

1777: On the first anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, with the Revolutionary War underway, a future president, John Adams, describes a day and night of spontaneous celebration in Philadelphia in a letter to his wife, Abigail. After hours of parading troops, fireworks, bonfires and music, he tells her he strolled alone in the dark.

"I was walking about the streets for a little fresh air and exercise," he writes, "and was surprised to find the whole city lighting up their candles at the windows. I walked most of the evening, and I think it was the most splendid illumination I ever saw; a few surly houses were dark; but the lights were very universal. Considering the lateness of the design and the suddenness of the execution, I was amazed at the universal joy and alacrity that was discovered, and at the brilliancy and splendour of every part of this joyful exhibition."

1791: Two years after becoming the first president, George Washington celebrates in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, "with an address, fine cuisine, and walking about town," says the National Park Service . Philadelphia was the interim capital as the city of Washington was being readied. Lancaster had hosted the Continental Congress for a quick, on-the-run session during the revolution.

1798: Now president, Adams reviews a military parade in Philadelphia as the young nation flexes its muscle.

1801: Thomas Jefferson presides over the first Fourth of July public reception at the White House.

1822: James Monroe hangs out at his farm in Virginia.

1826: Adams, the second president, and Jefferson, the third, both die on this July Fourth.

1831: James Monroe, who was the fifth president, dies on this July Fourth.

1848: James Polk witnesses the laying of the cornerstone of the Washington Monument with Abraham Lincoln, then an Illinois congressman, attending. A military parade follows.

1850: Taylor attends festivities at the grounds of the Washington Monument and falls ill with stomach cramps after eating cherries and drinking iced milk and water. He dies July 9. A theory that someone poisoned him with arsenic was debunked in 1991 when his body was exhumed and tested.

1861: Lincoln sends a message to Congress defending his invocation of war powers, appealing for more

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troops to fight the South and assailing Virginia for allowing "this giant insurrection to make its nest within her borders." He vows to "go forward without fear."

1868: Postwar, Andrew Johnson executes a proclamation granting amnesty to those who fought for the Confederacy.

1902: Teddy Roosevelt speaks to 200,000 people in Pittsburgh.

1914: "Our country, right or wrong," Woodrow Wilson declares at Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

1928: Calvin Coolidge (born July 4, 1872) goes trout fishing in Wisconsin.

1930: Herbert Hoover vacations by the Rapidan River in Virginia.

1934: Franklin Roosevelt is in or near the Bahamas after leaving Annapolis, Maryland, on a monthlong voyage and visit to Hawaii via the Panama Canal. On July 4, the U.S.S. Houston's log refers to the "fishing party" leaving the ship for part of the day.

1946: With World War II over the year before, Harry Truman relaxes in Maryland's Catoctin Mountains at Roosevelt's Shangri-La retreat, later renamed Camp David.

1951: With the U.S. at war in Korea, Truman addresses a huge crowd at the Washington Monument grounds, on the 175th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

1953 and 1957: Dwight Eisenhower = golf.

1968: Lyndon Johnson, who favored his Texas ranch on the holiday, speaks in San Antonio about the lack of independence for the poor, minorities, the ill, people "who must breathe polluted air" and those who live in fear of crime, "despite our Fourth of July rhetoric."

1970: Nixon, in California, tapes a message that is played to crowds on the National Mall at an "Honor America Day" celebration organized by supporters and hotly protested by anti-war masses and civil rights activists. Tear gas overcomes protesters and celebrants alike, Viet Cong flags mingle with the Stars and Stripes, and demonstrators — some naked — plunge into the Reflecting Pool.

1976: As the United States turns 200, Gerald Ford speaks at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, then Independence Hall, and reviews the armada of tall ships in New York harbor.

1987: Ronald Reagan, at Camp David, makes a straight political statement in his holiday radio address, pitching an economic "bill of rights" and Robert Bork for the Supreme Court. On a Saturday, it served as his weekly radio address, which he and other modern presidents used for their agendas.

2008: Bush, like several presidents before him, hosts a naturalization ceremony. More than 70 people from 30 countries are embraced as new citizens.

2010: Obama brings 1,200 service members to the South Lawn for a barbecue. The father of a July Fourth baby, Malia, he would joke that she always thought the capital fireworks were for her.

2012: Obama combines two Fourth of July traditions — celebrating troops and new citizens — by honoring the naturalization of U.S. military members who came to the country as immigrants.

2017: Trump goes to his golf club, then hosts a White House picnic for military families.

2021: Biden tells a crowd on the South Lawn that "we're closer than ever to declaring our independence from a deadly virus." It was the largest event of his presidency since taking office. COVID-19 cases and deaths had dipped to or near record lows at that point but would rebound as the omicron variant spread.

2023: Biden plans to host a barbecue and holiday celebration at the White House for members of the military, veterans and their families.

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

Moms for Liberty's focus on school races nationwide sets up political clash with teachers unions

By ALI SWENSON Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Moms for Liberty, a “parental rights” group that has sought to take over school boards in multiple states, is looking to expand those efforts across the country and to other education posts in 2024 and beyond. The effort is setting up a clash with teachers unions and others on the left who view the group as a toxic presence in public schools.

The group's co-founder, Tiffany Justice, said during its annual summit over the weekend in Philadelphia that Moms for Liberty will use its political action committee next year to engage in school board races nationwide. It also will “start endorsing at the state board level and elected superintendents.”

Her comments confirm that Moms for Liberty, which has spent its first two years inflaming school board meetings with aggressive complaints about instruction on systemic racism and gender identity in the classroom, is developing a larger strategy to overhaul education infrastructure across the country.

As the group has amassed widespread conservative support and donor funding, its focus on education ensures that even as voters turn their attention to the 2024 presidential race, school board elections will remain some of the most contentious political fights next year.

Moms for Liberty started with three Florida moms fighting COVID-19 restrictions in 2021. It has quickly ascended as a national player in Republican politics, helped along the way by the board's political training and close relationships with high-profile GOP groups and lawmakers. The group's support for school choice and the “fundamental rights of parents” to direct their children's education has drawn allies such as Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, a leading GOP presidential contender, and the conservative Heritage Foundation.

The group has been labeled an “extremist” organization by the Southern Poverty Law Center for allegedly harassing community members, advancing anti-LGBTQ+ misinformation and fighting to scrub diverse and inclusive material from lesson plans.

Justice said in an interview that she and her co-founder, Tina Descovich, were two moms who “had faith in American parents to take back the public education system in America” and that they “fully intend on reclaiming and reforming” that system.

So far, the group has had mixed success at getting its preferred candidates elected. In 2022, slightly more than half of the 500 school board candidates it endorsed across the country won. In the spring of 2023, fewer than one-third of the nearly 30 candidates it endorsed in Wisconsin were elected.

Focusing on state-level candidates could give Moms for Liberty an opportunity to assert its influence on some of the positions that have more control in determining curriculum, said Jon Valant, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who has studied education policy.

A close partnership with the conservative training organization the Leadership Institute and added money from a growing donor base also could help the Moms for Liberty run more electable candidates and help them win in 2024.

Monty Floyd, vice chair of the Moms for Liberty chapter in Hernando County, Florida, knows what it's like to have the group's support in a political campaign. He ran for school board in 2022 and received the group's endorsement, as well as \$250 from its Florida-based PAC.

Floyd lost that race but plans to run again in 2026, he told The Associated Press at the summit. He looks forward to seeing how the group's political influence grows and said that even more than the money, the national network of Moms for Liberty provides a “great resource” to a candidate.

“The wealth of knowledge they have and the network of support and just the advocacy tips that we're learning from the speakers today,” he said. “They have good advice to give. So you kind of learn a lot about what you can improve in your messaging.”

Moms for Liberty may face obstacles, however, as its rising national presence has driven a countermovement of activists who oppose it, Valant said.

Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, said she thinks groups such as Moms for Liberty have “created more action and more energy” among teachers unions.

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"We have 41 new units that we have organized as the AFT this year. We've never had that," she said. She said the union would "do what we have to do" during elections to show the contrast between its endorsed candidates and Moms for Liberty candidates.

Beyond unions, Moms for Liberty is likely to face opposition from grassroots groups and voters who "just don't agree with their vision of what public education should be," Valant said.

Martha Cooney, a Pennsylvania educator who was one of about 100 protesters dancing and holding signs outside the summit Saturday afternoon, agreed. She said that as Moms for Liberty tries to assert more political power, she and others will continue to stand in its way.

"They are a very small minority who are trying to act like they represent this whole nation, and they do not," Cooney said.

Moms for Liberty did not answer questions on which races it would focus on in 2024, besides making it clear that it would not endorse in legislative races or the presidential election.

But even as the group says it will not get involved in the White House race, Republican candidates have tried to harness Moms for Liberty's influence and broad network of more than 120,000 members in 45 states to woo its voting bloc and benefit their primary campaigns.

Five GOP candidates gave speeches during the gathering in Philadelphia, which ended Sunday. They included DeSantis and former President Donald Trump. The rivals tried to outflank each other with claims that "woke ideology" had overtaken education and that pronouns and "critical race theory" needed to be struck from classrooms.

"I think moms are the key political force for this 2024 cycle," DeSantis said in his address to attendees Friday.

Other Republican presidential candidates who appeared at the summit included former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, former Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson and biotech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy, who brought his wife and two children to the stage Saturday. He pledged to prioritize parents' rights and shutter the U.S. Department of Education if elected.

"The membership of this organization is just a small tip of the iceberg of a broader pro-parent movement, pro-children movement in our country," Ramaswamy told reporters at the summit. "And so how important is that? You better believe it's pretty darn important."

The Associated Press receives support from several private foundations to enhance its explanatory coverage of elections and democracy. See more about AP's democracy initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

An ailing Thai elephant returns home for medical care after years of neglect in Sri Lanka

By JINTAMAS SAKSORNCHAI Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — An ailing elephant that Thailand had presented to Sri Lanka more than two decades ago returned to his native land for medical treatment Sunday following allegations that the animal was badly abused while living at a Buddhist temple.

The male elephant, known in Sri Lanka as Muthu Raja, or Pearly King, and as Sak Surin, or Mighty Surin, in Thailand, was flown directly from the South Asian island nation's capital to Chiang Mai province in northern Thailand on a Russian Ilyushin IL-76 cargo plane.

A six-person team, including two veterinarians and four mahouts, or professional elephant trainers, accompanied the elephant on the flight, which took about six hours.

A special container was built to hold the 275-centimeter- (9-foot-) tall, 4-ton pachyderm. Several mahouts went to Sri Lanka in advance to accustom the animal to being caged so he wouldn't panic during the trip to Thailand.

Video footage of his arrival in Chiang Mai showed the elephant conscious and appearing calm.

Thai Environment Minister Varawut Silpa-archa was at the airport and said the elephant landed in perfect

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condition. He said earlier that Thailand spent at least 19 million baht (\$540,000) for the animal's repatriation.

The pachyderm could be heard trumpeting from inside the container that was loaded onto a truck's flatbed trailer to transport him to the government's Thai Elephant Conservation Center in nearby Lampang province, where he will be quarantined for at least 30 days and stay for rehabilitation.

The elephant was sent to Sri Lanka in 2001 when he was around 10 years old as a gift from the Thai royal family. He was one of three elephants that Thailand gave to Sri Lanka's government for training as a carrier of religious relics. Mathu Raja was placed in the care of a Buddhist temple.

A Sri Lanka-based animal rights group, Rally for Animal Rights and Environment group, alleged in 2020 that the animal was in bad health due to years of hard labor and abuse, and needed urgent medical care. The group started a petition calling for him to be rescued and later called for the elephant's return to Thailand after the Sri Lankan government allegedly ignored the activists' complaints.

Thailand's Foreign Affairs Ministry released a statement in November 2022 saying a preliminary investigation was conducted by the Thai Embassy in Sri Lanka concluded that the elephant "was not in good health and was in poor living conditions." The statement said Thailand would seek Sri Lanka's approval to bring the elephant back for treatment.

The elephant was reported to be underweight, have rough skin and abscesses on both hips, thinning foot pads, and a stiff left foreleg, making it difficult for him to walk and stand.

He was moved from the Buddhist temple to Sri Lanka's National Zoological Garden for preliminary treatment and appeared healthier before his flight to Thailand.

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena told members of Parliament last month that while visiting Thailand in May he had expressed his regret to his Thai counterpart over what had happened to the elephant.

Thai officials have said the main purpose of bringing the animal back was for medical care and whether he returns to Sri Lanka remains a subject to be discussed with the Colombo government.

During a press conference in Bangkok last month, Thai Environment Minister Varawut Silpa-archa said authorities would start surveying the health condition of other Thai elephants in foreign countries. He said exporting Thai elephants was already banned for conservation reasons.

Are you confronting a big medical bill? Attack it with a plan — and these tips

By TOM MURPHY AP Health Writer

An enormous medical bill can trigger a wave of panic, but try to resist.

That startling invoice that arrived in the mail may not be what you wind up paying. Errors or slow insurance payments may have inflated the total. Even if it's accurate, financial aid or other assistance might help pare it.

Sometimes a simple phone call clears up a problem. Other times, reinforcements are necessary.

Debt experts say patients should attack medical bills with a plan. Here are key steps to take.

CHECK THE NUMBERS

Don't stash the bill in a pile of mail and hope it goes away, but don't rush to pay it without first understanding the amount.

"Especially if it's a really high bill, consider it like an opening offer," says Caitlin Donovan, a spokesperson for the nonprofit Patient Advocate Foundation, which helps critically or chronically ill patients deal with debt and insurance problems.

Medical bills can be rife with errors. They also may have been sent before insurance coverage was sorted out.

Donovan recommends comparing the bill with your insurer's explanation of benefits. That's a document the insurer sends that explains how your coverage will apply to the care you received. It can give you a sense for what you may still owe based on your deductible or the plan's out-of-pocket maximum.

If something looks weird, call both the insurer and hospital for an explanation.

Someone at the hospital may have mistakenly entered the wrong code for the care you received or

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duplicated it. Request an itemized bill from the hospital to see if that happened.

But be aware that those bills also can be hard to interpret or contain errors that have little to do with the charge, Donovan said.

KNOW THE LAW

The No Surprises Act debuted last year and offers a layer of protection. Patients should check to make sure their care provider is following that law.

It prevents doctors or hospitals in many situations from billing insured patients higher rates when the care providers are not in their insurer's coverage network.

The law offers protection for most emergency care by basically requiring that patients receive in-network coverage with no additional billing from the provider. It also protects patients from huge bills for lab work or an out-of-network anesthesiologist when the patient was treated at an in-network hospital.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has established a "No Surprises Help Desk" for people who have questions about whether their bill complies with the law. They can call (800) 985-3059 or submit a complaint online.

SEEK OUTSIDE HELP

There are a host of for-profit and nonprofit organizations that can help people navigate medical bills.

The Patient Advocate Foundation helped David White recoup more than \$2,000 he paid for routine lab work after his kidney transplant.

A case manager told White that a government database was causing complications with the claim, and this sort of thing had happened before to people with his condition. She also helped him file paperwork to correct the mistake.

"Every single penny that I paid out was refunded," said the 61-year-old White, a volunteer foundation board member. "There's just no way I could figure this out on my own."

The foundation offers an online directory of potential resources for medical or prescription bill help.

Outside help might also include a state attorney general's office, which may have a health advocacy unit or a consumer protection division.

Be very wary of any sort of medical credit card a provider may offer, said John McNamara, a principal assistant director with the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Those cards may come with high interest rates or terms that can hurt the patient financially if the debt isn't fully paid in a certain time frame.

Plus patients who jump at that offer may miss out on other financial assistance, or their insurer may not be billed, McNamara noted.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Once you have checked for errors, ask for financial assistance. Some hospital systems may provide help for people with income levels as high as six figures.

"People a lot of times assume they won't qualify," Donovan said.

Patients should be persistent in asking for help or finding out why an application was denied. That may have happened due to a mistake. Applications can ask for a lot of supporting documentation.

Many hospitals don't do a great job letting patients know about available help, said Marceline White, executive director of Economic Action Maryland, a non-profit that helps people in that state apply for financial assistance.

"The onus is on the patient to apply for the assistance and do the work," she said.

Ask for a discount if no financial assistance is available.

BARGAIN AND BUDGET

You've checked for errors and asked about discounts and financial assistance. Now you may have to confront a final invoice.

Ask about a payment plan. Many hospitals will offer options with no interest or a very low rate.

But before committing to that, go over your budget to get a sense for what sort of payment you can handle. Consider looking for income-based programs that may be able to help with rent or utility bills.

Donovan noted that people who agree to a monthly bill that turns out to be too high may wind up hav-

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ing that debt land in collections if they can't make payments.

"Then you're in a whole new problem," she said.

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Today in History: July 3, Union wins pivotal Civil War Battle of Gettysburg

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, July 3, the 184th day of 2023. There are 181 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 3, 1976, Israel launched its daring mission to rescue 106 passengers and Air France crew members being held at Entebbe (en-TEH'-bee) Airport in Uganda (yoo-GAHN'-dah) by pro-Palestinian hijackers; the commandos succeeded in rescuing all but four of the hostages.

On this date:

In 1775, Gen. George Washington took command of the Continental Army at Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In 1863, the pivotal three-day Civil War Battle of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania ended in a major victory for the North as Confederate troops failed to breach Union positions during an assault known as Pickett's Charge.

In 1944, during World War II, Soviet forces recaptured Minsk from the Germans.

In 1950, the first carrier strikes of the Korean War took place as the USS Valley Forge and the HMS Triumph sent fighter planes against North Korean targets.

In 1971, singer Jim Morrison of The Doors died in Paris at age 27.

In 1979, Dan White, convicted of voluntary manslaughter in the shooting deaths of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone (mahs-KOH'-nee) and Supervisor Harvey Milk, was sentenced to seven years and eight months in prison. (White served only 5 years of his sentence and killed himself in October 1985.)

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan presided over a gala ceremony in New York Harbor that saw the re-lighting of the renovated Statue of Liberty.

In 1988, the USS Vincennes shot down an Iran Air jetliner over the Persian Gulf, killing all 290 people aboard.

In 1996, Russians went to the polls to re-elect Boris Yeltsin president over his Communist challenger, Gennady Zyuganov (geh-NAH'-dee zhoo-GAH'-nahf), in a runoff.

In 2011, Novak Djokovic (NOH'-vak JOH'-kuh-vich) won his first Wimbledon, beating defending champion Rafael Nadal 6-4, 6-1, 1-6, 6-3.

In 2020, speaking at the foot of Mount Rushmore on the eve of Independence Day, President Donald Trump asserted that protesters pushing for racial justice were engaging in a "merciless campaign to wipe out our history."

Ten years ago: Egypt's first democratically elected president, Mohammed Morsi, was overthrown by the military after just one year by the same kind of Arab Spring uprising that had brought the Islamist leader to power. The death toll rose to 16 from a United States drone strike on a militants camp in Pakistan's North Waziristan area. Pakistan condemned the strike as a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Five years ago: The Trump administration said it would not encourage schools to use race as a factor in the admissions process, rescinding guidance from the Obama era that was meant to promote diversity. Authorities in Indonesia called off a search for 164 missing people two weeks after the sinking of a ferry in Lake Toba. All were presumed dead. The bodies of three others were recovered, and 21 were rescued alive.

One year ago: A large chunk of a glacier in Italy's Alps broke loose, killing at least six hikers and injuring

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eight others. Hershel W. "Woody" Williams, the last remaining Medal of Honor recipient from World War II, was remembered at a memorial for his courage, humility and selflessness. U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin announced during the service that Williams would lie in state at the U.S. Capitol. Officials closed a Long Island beach to swimming after what they described as an unprecedented shark attack that injured a lifeguard.

Today's Birthdays: Playwright Tom Stoppard is 86. Writer-producer Jay Tarses is 84. Actor Michael Cole (TV: "The Mod Squad") is 83. Attorney Gloria Allred is 82. Actor Kurtwood Smith is 80. Country singer Johnny Lee is 77. Humorist Dave Barry is 76. Actor Betty Buckley is 76. Actor Jan Smithers is 74. Actor Bruce Altman is 68. Talk show host Montel Williams is 67. Country singer Aaron Tippin is 65. Rock musician Vince Clarke (Depeche Mode, Yaz, Erasure) is 63. Actor Tom Cruise is 61. Actor Thomas Gibson is 61. Actor Hunter Tylo is 61. Actor Connie Nielsen is 59. Actor Yearley Smith is 59. TV chef Sandra Lee is 57. Singer Ishmael Butler is 54. Rock musician Kevin Hearn (Barenaked Ladies) is 54. Actor-singer Shawnee Smith is 54. Actor-singer Audra McDonald is 53. WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is 52. Actor Patrick Wilson is 50. Country singer Trent Tomlinson is 48. Actor Andrea Barber is 47. Singer Shane Lynch (Boyzone) is 47. Actor Ian Anthony Dale is 45. Actor/comedian Julie Klausner is 45. Actor Elizabeth Hendrickson is 44. Country singer-songwriter Sarah Buxton is 43. Actor Olivia Munn is 43. Actor Shoshannah Stern is 43. Rock singer-songwriter Elle King is 34. Actor Grant Rosenmeyer is 32.