

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Tuesday, July 25

St. John's Lutheran Church Vacation Bible School  
Senior Menu: Ranch chicken bread, rice pilaf, cauliflower and pea salad, blushing pears, whole wheat bread, fruit.

Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Groton Community Center

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

Olive Grove: Bridge, Ladies League at 6 p.m.  
Amateur District in Groton

Jr. Legion Region Tourney, at Northville (Sisseton vs. Redfield at noon; Redfield vs. W.I.N. at 2:30 p.m., W.I.N. vs. Groton at 5 p.m. Top two teams advance to state.)

## Wednesday, July 26

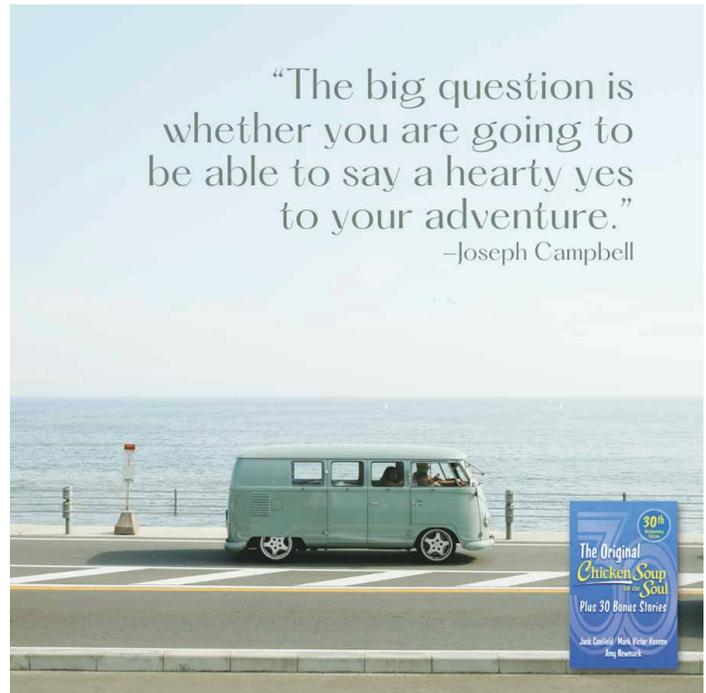
St. John's Lutheran Church Vacation Bible School  
Senior Menu: Baked cod, parsley buttered potatoes, coleslaw, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Project/Game night, 7 p.m.  
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

Groton Golf Association fundraiser, 11:30 a.m. to

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

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



“The big question is whether you are going to be able to say a hearty yes to your adventure.”

—Joseph Campbell

1 p.m., at the golf course

Olive Grove: Kid's Lessons; Men's League  
Amateur District in Groton

## Thursday, July 27

St. John's Lutheran Church Vacation Bible School  
Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, tossed salad with dressing, apple juice, mandarin oranges, whole wheat bread.

Amateur District in Groton

## Friday, July 28

Senior Menu: Ham salad croissant, tomato spoon salad, pineapple tidbits, cookie.

Olive Grove: BAE Tournament  
State Legion Tournament in Redfield

## Saturday, July 29

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. ago 1 p.m.

State Legion Tournament in Redfield

**OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton**  
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## The Bulletin by Newsweek

JULY 24, 2023

### World in Brief

a statement to the police.

The dangerous heatwaves in the U.S. and Europe would be "virtually impossible" without human-caused climate change, a new report found. Meanwhile, meteorologists say that the ongoing U.S. heatwave will extend to the southern tip of Florida by Wednesday.

Tafari Campbell, the personal chef for former President Barack Obama and former first lady Michelle Obama, has been identified as the paddleboarder whose body was found in an apparent drowning near the Obamas' Martha's Vineyard residence.

Unilever's decision to remain in the Russian market is facing fresh criticism from anti-war campaigners, with some calling a boycott of its brands, particularly after the consumer-goods giant said it would comply with Moscow's conscription laws.

The Philippines won their first ever Women's World Cup game with a surprise 1-0 victory over co-host New Zealand.

The IRS is stopping its decades-old policy of making unannounced visits to taxpayers, attributing the change in part to safety concerns. Instead, the agency will send letters to schedule meetings with people.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Kyiv is set to receive new military aid packages from international backers amid its counteroffensive against Russian forces. The new tranche from the U.S. is expected to be worth about \$400 million, which will include 32 additional Stryker armored vehicles, missiles for HIMARS, Stinger anti-aircraft systems, among other things.

### TALKING POINTS

"I would support him. Because I am not going to have a President Kamala Harris. We can't afford that. That is not going to happen. But I will tell you, you look at these indictments, there's probably going to be a fourth indictment. We can't have, as Republicans, him as the nominee. He can't win a general election. That's the problem: We've got to go and have someone who can actually win," 2024 GOP presidential candidate Nikki Haley said of former President Donald Trump while on CNBC's Squawk Box.

### WHAT TO WATCH IN THE DAY AHEAD

President Joe Biden is expected to sign a proclamation creating a national monument in Illinois and Mississippi that will honor Civil Rights Movement icon Emmett Till.

First Lady Jill Biden will speak at a UNESCO flag-raising ceremony in Paris. The event is taking place to recognize the U.S. for rejoining the United Nations agency after withdrawing under former President Donald Trump.

The Senate Judiciary Committee is scheduled to hold a hearing on artificial intelligence oversight this afternoon.

Civil rights attorney Ben Crump will be holding a press conference at 11:30 a.m. ET to address "bombshell developments" in the death of Malcolm X.

Attorney David Weiss of Delaware, a Donald Trump-appointed prosecutor who oversaw the investigation into President Joe Biden's son Hunter, has offered to testify publicly before the House Judiciary Committee this fall.

Former New York Police Commissioner Bernie Kerik, a Donald Trump ally who worked with Rudy Giuliani, handed over thousands of documents to Special Counsel Jack Smith as part of an investigation into efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

Carlee Russell admitted that she was not kidnapped and did not see a toddler walking alone along an Alabama interstate earlier this month, her attorney said in



*American Legion Post 39 Groton would like to thank the following contributors to the painting of the US Flag on the new Groton Water Tower.*

- Bierman Farm Service
- Dacotah Bank Groton
- Flihs Farms - Larry & Val Flihs
- Groton Chamber of Commerce
- James Valley Telecommunications
- Pharis Farms
- Rix Farms Inc
- Sippel Farms
- Strom Johnson Farms - Johnson Family
- Strom Johnson Farms – Strom Family
- Voss Farms Inc



## AVANTARA



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has the following positions open:

- part-time house-keeping
- cook
- resident concierge

Apply at [www.avantaragroton.com](http://www.avantaragroton.com).

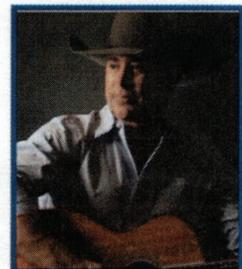
## 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL **COLUMBIA FEST** & PARKS DEDICATION “A BLAST FROM THE PAST” **JULY 29, 2023**



### **COME FOR A FULL DAY OF FUN!**

- 10:00 AM.....PARADE!
- 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM.....Vendors
- 11:00 AM.....Parks Dedication
- 12:00 - 3:00 PM.....Ballgames
- 3:00 - 4:00 PM.....Home Run Derby
- 4:00 - 5:00 PM.....Harry Luge Performs
- 5:00 PM.....Duck Race
- 6:00 - 8:00 PM.....Karaoke
- 9:00 PM.....Harry Luge

Lots of **GREAT ENTERTAINMENT, DELICIOUS FOOD** and **FUN ACTIVITIES**. Bring your lawn chairs and picnic blanket.



## Lifeguard training pays off in swimming incident

by Elizabeth Varin

A recent scare at the Groton swimming pool highlights the training lifeguards are continuously doing to keep people safe.

During a busy afternoon open-swimming session on Thursday, July 13, lifeguard Emma Schinkel was monitoring the lap pool and deep end from the lifeguard chair. She remembers a young boy and his grandmother were swimming around near the water slide. He was swimming fine, and his grandmother went to the other side of the pool with her granddaughter.

After a bit, Schinkel said, the young boy started waving his hands, as many kids have done in the pool. Then he called for help.

"I don't even remember going from the chair into the pool," she said. "It was an adrenaline rush."

Schinkel jumped in and got the boy out. He hurried to his grandmother after the close call. He had gotten tired while swimming, but was too far from the edge of the pool and the ropes to grab a hold of anything, she said.

Schinkel credits the continuous training the Groton lifeguards receive for her quick response.

"I'm sometimes nervous when I have to lifeguard," she said. "But it makes me feel okay because I know I can do it."

Throughout the summer, the lifeguards have in-service sessions where they practice saving swimmers and talk through different situations they may face, said swimming pool co-manager Tricia Keith. Staff are also trained to prevent situations from getting to the point that a save is needed.

"I am very proud of the way all my guards handled the situation," she said. "They handled it so well most people didn't know it happened."

The boy, who is not a regular at the Groton pool, also did what he was supposed to do: called for help, she said. Many kids at the pool have done their swimming lessons with the lifeguards in Groton, so the guards know at what level many of the kids can swim.

"Even people that are good swimmers can get tired and get in a situation where they're not comfortable," Keith said. "And that's why we're here."



**Emma Schinkel saves boy at the Groton Swimming Pool.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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## **Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion Beat Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U**

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion were triumphant over Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U 8-6 on Monday in regional action being played in Northville.

Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U got on the board in the first inning after Micah Zastrow doubled, scoring two runs.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion made the score 4-2 in the bottom of the second after Gavin Englund doubled, scoring one run, Jarrett Erdmann drew a walk, scoring one run, and two runs scored on another play.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion committed an error, which helped Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U tie the game at four in the top of the fifth.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion took the lead in the bottom of the fifth inning after Caden Mcinerney singled, Brevin Flihs walked, Braxton Imrie walked, and Teylor Diegel was struck by a pitch, each scoring one run.

Englund earned the win for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. The right-handed pitcher gave up three hits and four runs (one earned) over five innings, striking out four and walking five. Hunter Binger took the loss for Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U. They went four and one-third innings, allowing eight runs on seven hits, striking out none and walking six. Mcinerney pitched one inning of scoreless ball for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion in relief. The reliever gave up one hit, striking out none and walking one.

Flihs, Nicholas Morris, Diegel, Englund, Imrie, Mcinerney, and Lincoln Krouse each collected one hit for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. Flihs, Diegel, Englund, Imrie, and Mcinerney each drove in one run for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. Morris led Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion with two walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, tallying seven walks for the game. Morris and Imrie each stole multiple bases for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion ran wild on the base paths, amassing six stolen bases for the game. Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion turned one double play in the game.

Zastrow and Eli Morrissette each collected two hits for Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U. Zastrow drove the middle of the lineup, leading Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U with three runs batted in. The infielder went 2-for-3 on the day. Kellan Hurd led Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U with three walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, piling up six walks for the game. Kevin Weller stole two bases.

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Redfeild Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U **6 - 8** Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
RDFL	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	6	5	2
GRTN	0	4	0	0	4	0	X	8	7	4

## BATTING

Redfeild Clay Kiser	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
K Hurd (CF, P)	1	1	0	0	3	0
K Weller (3B)	2	2	0	0	0	0
E Morrissette (C)	4	0	2	0	0	0
N Johnson (LF)	3	1	0	0	0	0
M Zastrow (1B)	3	2	2	3	1	0
J Schmitt (SS)	3	0	0	0	1	2
J Ethridge (RF)	4	0	0	0	0	1
K Hansen (DH)	1	0	0	0	1	1
J Rude (DH)	2	0	0	0	0	2
C Odland (2B)	4	0	1	0	0	1
H Binger (P, CF)	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>

**2B:** M Zastrow, **TB:** M Zastrow 3, E Morrissette 2, C Odland, **HBP:** K Weller 2, N Johnson, **SB:** M Zastrow, K Hurd, K Weller 2, N Johnson, **LOB:** 9

## PITCHING

Redfeild Clay	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
H Binger	4.1	7	8	8	6	0	0
K Hurd	1.2	0	0	0	1	2	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

**L:** H Binger, **P-S:** K Hurd 28-17, H Binger 90-47, **WP:** H Binger, **HBP:** K Hurd, H Binger 3, **BF:** K Hurd 7, H Binger 28

Groton Post 39 Jr.	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
B Fliehs (CF, P)	3	1	1	1	1	0
B Imrie (1B, RF, LF)	2	0	1	1	1	0
K Kucker (SS)	3	0	0	0	1	0
T Diegel (LF, CF)	3	1	1	1	0	0
G Englund (P, 1B)	2	2	1	1	0	0
N Morris (C)	2	1	1	0	2	0
J Erdmann (RF)	1	1	0	0	1	0
C Mcinerney (RF...)	2	1	1	1	0	1
C Simon (3B)	3	1	0	0	0	1
L Krouse (2B)	2	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>

**2B:** G Englund, **TB:** N Morris, G Englund 2, B Fliehs, L Krouse, C Mcinerney, T Diegel, B Imrie, **SAC:** B Imrie, **HBP:** G Englund 2, C Simon, T Diegel, **SB:** N Morris 2, G Englund, C Mcinerney, B Imrie 2, **LOB:** 9

Groton Post 39 Jr.	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
G Englund	5.0	3	4	1	5	4	0
C Mcinerney	1.0	1	0	0	1	0	0
B Fliehs	1.0	1	2	1	0	3	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>

**W:** G Englund, **P-S:** G Englund 109-59, B Fliehs 20-17, C Mcinerney 18-9, **HBP:** G Englund 2, B Fliehs, **BF:** G Englund 26, B Fliehs 6, C Mcinerney 4

## Braxton Imrie's Clutch Hitting Propels Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion To Victory Over Sisseton Post 50

Braxton Imrie drove in four runs on three hits to lead Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion past Sisseton Post 50 21-2 on Monday in regional action in Northville. Imrie doubled in the fourth inning, scoring three runs, and singled in the first inning, scoring one.

Sisseton Post 50 got on the board in the first inning after Hayden Hellwig singled, scoring one run.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion took the lead in the bottom of the first inning after Imrie singled, Korbin Kucker doubled, Teylor Diegel singled, and Gavin Englund doubled, each scoring one run.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion scored five runs on five hits in the bottom of the second inning. Diegel singled, scoring one run, an error scored one run, Nicholas Morris singled, scoring two runs, and Jarrett Erdmann singled, scoring one run.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion extended their early lead with four runs in the bottom of the third thanks to RBI doubles by Morris and Brevin Fliehs.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion scored eight runs on four hits in the bottom of the fourth inning. An error scored two runs, Nick Groeblichhoff drew a walk, scoring one run, Fliehs drew a walk, scoring one run, Imrie doubled, scoring three runs, and Diegel singled, scoring one run.

Imrie earned the win for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. The right-handed pitcher allowed five hits and two runs (one earned) over five innings, striking out five and walking five. LJ Crooks took the loss for Sisseton Post 50. The starting pitcher went three and one-third innings, giving up 18 runs (12 earned) on 15 hits, striking out two and walking four.

Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion tallied 17 hits in the game. Diegel went 4-for-5 at the plate to lead Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion in hits. Kucker, Morris, Fliehs, and Carter Simon each collected multiple hits for Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion. Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion had a strong eye at the plate, piling up six walks for the game. Karsten Fliehs and Fliehs led the team with two free passes each. Imrie stole two bases. Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion turned one double play in the game. Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion didn't commit a single error in the field. Fliehs had the most chances in the field with five.

Owen Ceroll, Max Dahlen, Bradley Hansen, Hellwig, and Carter Stickland each collected one hit for Sisseton Post 50. Hellwig went 1-for-2 at the plate as they led the team with one run batted in. Sisseton Post 50 turned one double play in the game.

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## Sisseton Post 50 2 - 21 Groton Post 39 Jr. Legion

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	1	2	3	4	5	R	H	E
SSST	1	1	0	0	0	2	5	8
GRTN	4	5	4	8	X	21	17	0

### BATTING

Sisseton Post 50	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
C Stickland (SS)	3	0	1	0	0	1
B Hansen (1B, P)	2	0	1	0	1	0
M Dahlen (2B)	2	1	1	0	1	0
B Iverson (CF)	2	0	0	0	1	1
H Hellwig (C, P)	2	0	1	1	1	0
N Tasa (RF)	2	0	0	0	0	0
C Opsal (3B, 1B)	2	0	0	0	0	1
O Ceroll (LF)	2	1	1	0	0	1
L Crooks (P, 1B, 3B)	1	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

**2B:** O Ceroll, **TB:** M Dahlen, C Stickland, B Hansen, O Ceroll 2, H Hellwig, **LOB:** 6

Groton Post 39 Jr.	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
B Flihs (CF, C)	3	2	2	3	2	0
B Imrie (P)	5	3	3	4	0	0
K Kucker (SS)	4	3	2	1	0	1
T Diegel (LF, CF)	5	3	4	3	0	0
G Englund (1B)	4	3	1	0	0	1
N Morris (2B, RF)	4	3	2	3	0	0
J Erdmann (RF)	3	0	1	0	0	0
C Mcinerney (LF)	0	1	0	0	1	0
C Simon (3B)	3	2	2	0	0	1
K Flihs (C)	0	0	0	0	2	0
N Groeblichhoff...	0	1	0	1	1	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

**2B:** B Imrie, N Morris, K Kucker 2, B Flihs, G Englund, **TB:** C Simon 2, B Imrie 4, N Morris 3, K Kucker 4, B Flihs 3, J Erdmann, T Diegel 4, G Englund 2, **HBP:** C Simon, K Flihs, K Kucker, G Englund, **SB:** C Simon, B Imrie 2, K Kucker, B Flihs, **LOB:** 8

### PITCHING

Sisseton Post	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
L Crooks	3.1	15	18	12	4	2	0
<b>H Hellwig</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
B Hansen	0.2	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

**L:** L Crooks, **P-S:** L Crooks 103-61, B Hansen 8-5, H Hellwig 14-3, **WP:** L Crooks, **HBP:** L Crooks 4, **BF:** L Crooks 35, B Hansen 3, H Hellwig 3

Groton Post	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
B Imrie	5.0	5	2	1	5	5	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

**W:** B Imrie, **P-S:** B Imrie 103-53, **BF:** B Imrie 23

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## Groton Locke Electric Falls To Northville

Groton Locke Electric fell to Northville 9-5 on Monday.

Groton Locke Electric jumped out to the lead in the top of the second inning after Wyatt Locke doubled, scoring two runs, and Ryan Groenlinghoff singled, scoring one run.

Northville jumped back into the lead in the bottom of the fourth inning after Remly singled, Maxfield singled, and Groton Locke Electric committed an error, each scoring one run.

Groton Locke Electric tied the game in the top of the fifth thanks to a sacrifice fly by Brian Hansen, and a single by Dalton Locke.

Northville took the lead, 9-5, in the bottom of the eighth thanks to singles by Maxfield, M Waltman, and Fischbach.

Maxfield earned the win for Northville. The reliever allowed one hit and zero runs over three innings, striking out two and walking none. Alex Morris took the loss for Groton Locke Electric. The right-handed pitcher went eight innings, surrendering nine runs (seven earned) on 17 hits, striking out nine and walking two. Weber led things off on the mound for Northville. They allowed eight hits and five runs over six innings, striking out three and walking one.

Groton Locke Electric tallied nine hits in the game. Locke, Dylan Frey, and Locke each collected two hits for Groton Locke Electric. Locke seized on their opportunities, leading Groton Locke Electric with two runs batted in from the number eight spot in the lineup. They went 2-for-4 on the day.

Northville piled up 17 hits in the game. Fischbach went 4-for-5 at the plate to lead Northville in hits. Maxfield, Heyne, and Waltman each drove in two runs for Northville. Josh and Fischbach each collected multiple hits for Northville. Simes stole two bases. Northville turned one double play in the game.

## Groton Locke Electric Falls To Miller Outlaws

Groton Locke Electric fell to Outlaws 5-3 on Tuesday in district competition being played in Groton.

A triple by Layne Cotton put Outlaws on the board in the top of the second.

Gunnar Brueggeman earned the win for Outlaws. The starting pitcher gave up three hits and one run over six and one-third innings, striking out three and walking four. Ryan Groenlinghoff took the loss for Groton Locke Electric. The starting pitcher went six innings, allowing four runs on six hits, striking out four and walking seven.

Brian Hansen drove the middle of the lineup, leading Groton Locke Electric with two runs batted in. They went 2-for-4 on the day. Groton Locke Electric turned one double play in the game.

Cotton led Outlaws with two hits in five at bats. Rafael Clemente paced Outlaws with three walks. Overall, the team had patience at the plate, collecting seven walks for the game.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Criminal cases point to troubling spread of computer-generated child pornography**

**SD attorney general plans to seek state-level ban as AI image generation grows**

**BY: JOHN HULT - JULY 24, 2023 5:33 PM**

A Rapid City man was recently sentenced to six years in federal prison for the possession of computer-generated child pornography.

Less than a month before that, another man was found guilty of the same crime, and still another was sentenced to five years for it last October. One other case involving artificial depictions of child exploitation remains pending in the U.S. District of South Dakota.

The cases were prosecuted through a statute used rarely in the state until last year. Each represents state-level evidence of a growing concern for law enforcement around the country as image generation tools that use artificial intelligence (AI) proliferate. Last month, The Washington Post reported on federal officials' concerns that a flood of computer-generated child pornography threatens to complicate law enforcement's ability to locate and identify real victims, who might be found somewhere in the virtual mountain of lifelike-but-simulated imagery shared across the internet.

Each of the recent cases in South Dakota landed in federal court, because it's the only option for prosecutors who uncover electronic imagery of child exploitation.

State law doesn't prohibit the possession of child pornography unless it depicts a real person. Comics, videos and photos of child pornography — whether drawn, painted, produced with electronic software like Photoshop or generated by AI image engines — are technically legal under state law.

Attorney General Marty Jackley may work to change that in the coming legislative session, and he expects to ask for additional funding for the law enforcement agencies tasked with sifting through AI or otherwise artificial pornographic content to search for real victims.

The issue came up at the last conference of the U.S. Attorney General's Alliance, a multi-state group of prosecutors for which Jackley serves as chair.

In South Dakota, as in other states, concerns are rising as to whether law enforcement has the tools it needs to address the new wave of exploitative imagery.

"There's a federal statute on this that's being utilized, but we need to be asking, 'Should we in South Dakota be doing something to get ahead of this and pass our own statute?'" Jackley told South Dakota Searchlight.

#### **South Dakota cases grow in 2022**

The federal case against 38-year-old Michael David Quincy, sentenced to six years in prison earlier this month, was built with the help of local law enforcement in Pennington County but ultimately prosecuted by the office of U.S. Attorney Alison Ramsdell.

On March 9, Quincy inked a factual basis statement admitting his criminal behavior. Twenty days later, he pleaded guilty to federal charges of receipt of child pornography and obscene visual representations of the sexual abuse of children.

According to court documents, Quincy's personal electronics were searched in February after a tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children that came in December of 2021.

Rapid City investigators found images of nude child sex dolls, a history of web searches for child pornography terms and an image-sharing program called "Pixiv" on Quincy's phone in their initial meeting with him on Feb. 14, and brought the phone back with them to the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force

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office in Rapid City. While there, they saw that the device's search history was being remotely deleted.

The detectives returned a few days later to execute a search warrant, at which point Quincy admitted to deleting his search history from afar. He also "admitted he looked for child sex dolls out of 'curiosity and stupidity' and said he did not know animated CP [child pornography] and child sex dolls were illegal," according to court documents.

The investigators found hundreds of images of "computer-generated" child pornography on Quincy's phone and laptop, as well as two images of real child pornography.

The sources and origins of the computer-generated imagery are unclear from the court record. Pixiv, the program found on Quincy's phone, is a Japanese art-sharing platform. The company recently announced a new policy that disallows the sharing of AI-generated imagery in "response to growing issues surrounding the misuse of AI technology," according to the gaming news website Automation Media.

The case is relatively novel for South Dakota's federal court system. The "visual depiction" law used to pursue charges against Quincy has only been applied eight times in South Dakota since 2000, according to a docket search of publicly available federal cases.

By contrast, another federal statute relating to child pornography with real-life victims was tied to at least 94 cases in that time period.

The proliferation of computer-generated pornography is reflected in the eight recent cases. Four were filed in 2022, with two others filed in 2017 and 2018, and the remaining two filed against a single defendant in 2003. The recent cases involve computer-generated imagery; some of the older cases involved comics and drawings.

Quincy pleaded guilty to the visual depiction charge, as did another 2022 defendant named Dean Russell Schallenkamp of Deadwood, who had 10 computer-generated child porn images and one video in addition to more than 81,100 images of child pornography. Schallenkamp was sentenced to five years in April.

Rapid City's Michael Raymond Holst, meanwhile, was found guilty of the computer-generated imagery charge by a jury in late June and awaits sentencing, while a man named William White Eyes awaits trial on similar charges.

## State law enforcement role

The intermixing of imagery involving real victims with computer-generated ones in the Schallenkamp case speaks to one reason such investigations involve local, state and federal officers, according to Sioux Falls Police Department spokesman Sam Clemens.

Sioux Falls officers are among those assigned to the state's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force, which cooperates across jurisdictions in cases of child sexual exploitation.

A case may ultimately need to be prosecuted under federal law, Clemens said, but each tip to ICAC is investigated across agencies to determine the extent of the potential criminal activity.

"If there's AI-generated pornography, there's a good chance they'll find real pornography," Clemens said.

Jackley, who served as U.S. attorney for South Dakota until 2009, said computer-generated imagery can fuel predation and feed an addiction to the kind of pornography tied to real victimization. He compared it to alcoholism or drug addiction, which take a toll even when there are no legally recognized victims.

"When you look at addiction, that holds in relation to this topic. It affects families, it affects spouses, it affects society," Jackley said. "And it affects prosecution as we try to sort out AI from real victims, and there are costs to that."

Jackley said he's working with lawmakers to decide what form a pitch to criminalize AI- or computer-generated child pornography might take, with consideration given to the stiffness of penalties in such cases compared to those with child victims.

He also aims to ask supportive lawmakers to re-introduce a bill he proposed last year. That bill would have assessed fees to convicts whose cases required a digital investigation of items — like cell phones — to help pay for the technology that ICAC detectives will need as more AI-generated imagery is created and distributed.

Senate Bill 54 died on the Senate floor. Jackley expects it to return in another form, and he hopes the

Legislature gives it additional consideration in light of an AI future.

"We came to them pretty early," Jackley said. "We were with this in January, and this is evolving. So as these cases come up federally, and as attorney generals get a better grasp of this, I think the Legislature will be in a better position next session to evaluate, number one, is there a need for this, and two, who's going to pay for it?"

*John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux falls Argus Leader.*

## Federal commission wants public input on missing and murdered Indigenous people

**BY: GRACE TERRY - JULY 24, 2023 5:10 PM**

The South Dakota-based leader of the Native Women's Society of the Great Plains is encouraging people to provide input during a federal commission's upcoming hearings on missing and murdered Indigenous people and human trafficking.

Carmen O'Leary, Cheyenne River Lakota, of Eagle Butte, is the executive director of the society.

"It is important to our community that the people have input, whether it is by contributing a personal story, offering a possible solution to address the problem, or helping to identify gaps in the system," O'Leary said.

The Not Invisible Act Commission will conduct a public hearing Tuesday and Wednesday in Billings, Montana, and virtual hearings Aug. 2-3. The commission is also accepting written testimony, recommendations and questions by email.

The commission is an outgrowth of a federal law, the Not Invisible Act. U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, of the Laguna Pueblo, led the effort to create the law in 2020 when she was in Congress. The purpose of the act is to increase coordination to identify and combat violent crime within American Indian lands and against Indian people.

In a June 8 letter to tribal leaders, Haaland said, "Only with the collective participation of all our communities will our missing, murdered, or trafficked relatives and friends no longer be invisible."

The act was a response to the longstanding crises of missing and murdered Indigenous people (MMIP) and human trafficking. The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs estimates there are 4,200 unsolved MMIP cases, attributable in part to layered jurisdiction, a lack of collaboration between law enforcement agencies, and systemic apathy.

The Not Invisible Act Commission is a cross-jurisdictional advisory committee composed of law enforcement, tribal leaders, federal partners, service providers, family members of missing and murdered individuals, and survivors.

Since April, the commission has conducted field hearings in some of the communities most affected by the MMIP crisis, including Tulsa, Anchorage, Flagstaff, Minneapolis and Albuquerque.

Findings from hearings and written testimony will shape the commission's final report to Haaland, Attorney General Merrick Garland and Congress. The report is required by October and will include recommendations for how to improve intergovernmental coordination, bolster resources, and establish best practices for state/tribal/federal law enforcement to address MMIP violence and human trafficking.

### Meeting info

The Billings event is the final field hearing, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mountain on Tuesday and Wednesday at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center. Attendees must register at <https://web.cvent.com/event/aa88101b-072b-406e-be21-9d30cf62a008/summary>.

The Billings event will provide a forum for those who wish to offer testimony directly. Trauma-informed mental health support will be available onsite with optional follow-up support as needed.

The virtual hearings will be from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Eastern on Aug. 2-3. Those who wish to attend or

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comment must register at <https://tinyurl.com/33twawtk> for the first day and <https://tinyurl.com/5ehdwjcx> for the second day.

The commission asks that comments be limited to 15 minutes due to the high volume of interest in the hearings. According to the registration page for the virtual hearings, "The Commission's desire is to hear the stories of all who want to share."

Those who prefer may email written testimony, recommendations or questions to the Not Invisible Act Commission at [NIAC@ios.doi.gov](mailto:NIAC@ios.doi.gov). Include "NIAC Testimony" or "NIAC Question" in the subject line.

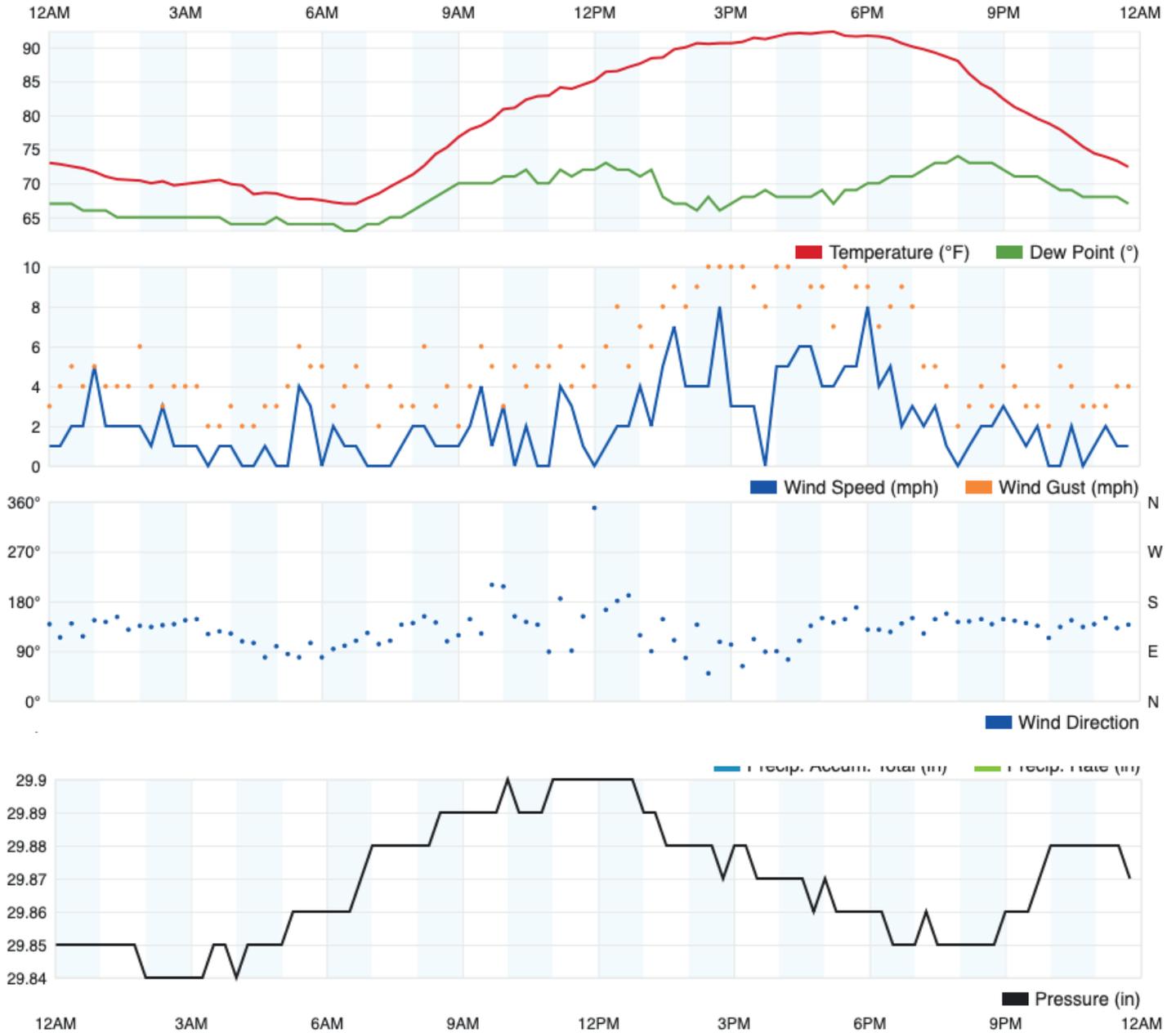
*– This story was originally published by the West River Eagle, a newspaper based in Eagle Butte.*

*Grace Terry is a freelance journalist who regularly contributes to the West River Eagle newspaper in Eagle Butte and the Native Sun News Today in Rapid City.*

# Groton Daily Independent

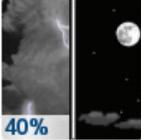
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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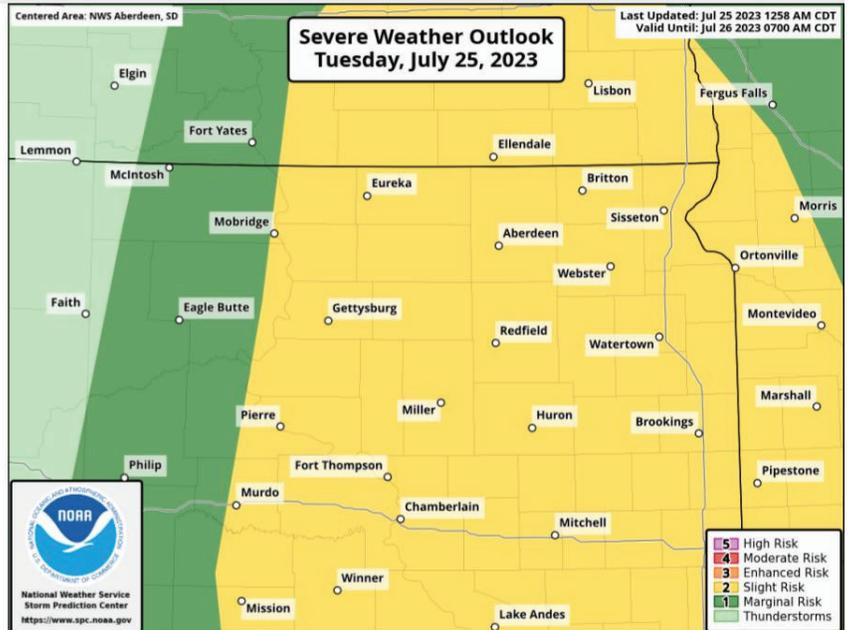
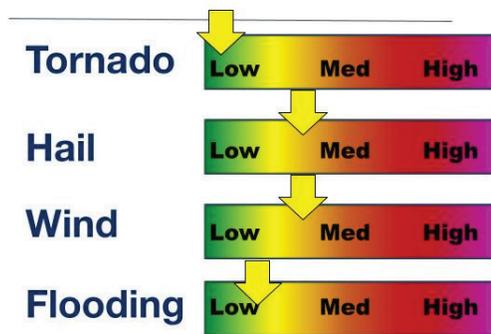
Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
						
40%	40%		20%	30%	30%	20%
Partly Sunny then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms then Mostly Clear	Hot	Slight Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Slight Chance Showers
High: 92 °F	Low: 64 °F	High: 98 °F	Low: 66 °F	High: 92 °F	Low: 64 °F	High: 86 °F

## Severe Weather Threat Overview- Tuesday Morning Update July 25, 2023 4:16 AM

### Hazards/Timing

Isolated to scattered storms to develop this afternoon/evening with the main threats being large hail and strong winds.

### Primary Threats for the **YELLOW** areas



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

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Isolated to scattered storms expected to develop this afternoon into the evening timeframe. A few of these storms could be severe with the main threats being large hail and strong winds.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 93 °F at 4:36 PM

Low Temp: 67 °F at 6:20 AM

Wind: 11 mph at 1:32 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 15 hours, 03 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 111 in 1931

Record Low: 44 in 1911

Average High: 85

Average Low: 60

Average Precip in July.: 2.60

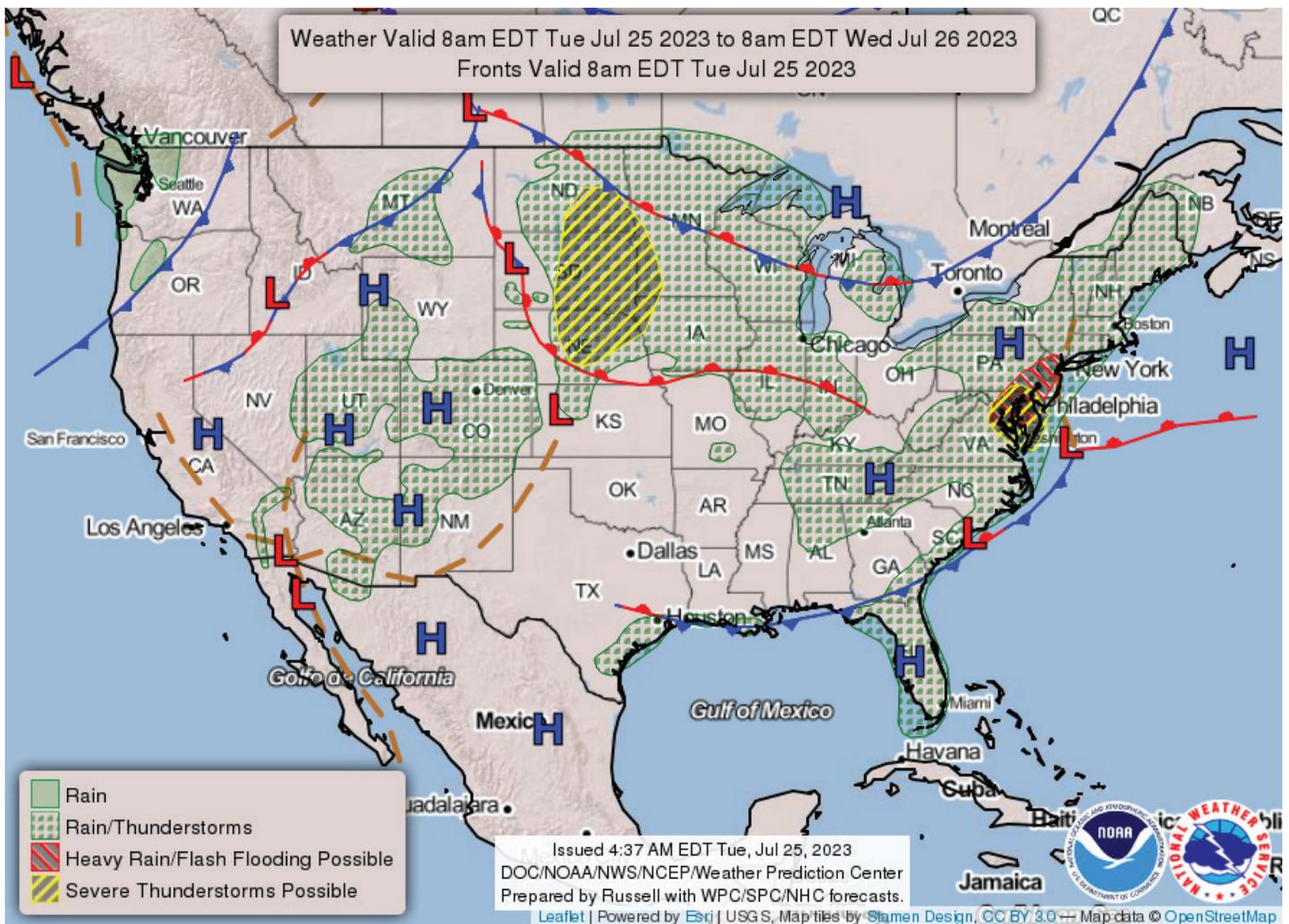
Precip to date in July.: 1.32

Average Precip to date: 13.61

Precip Year to Date: 12.67

Sunset Tonight: 9:10:49 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:08:10 AM



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## Today in Weather History

July 25, 1961: A thunderstorm started late in the evening on the 25th and went into the early morning hours of the 26th. A sizeable area suffered 50 to 100 percent loss of crops resulting from hail over the following counties, Bison, Perkins, Faulk, Sully, and western Hand. Corn was stripped of leaves and broken off. Oats and wheat were flattened. High winds with recorded gusts of 75 to 80 miles per hour cause numerous power failures and damaged trees in Pierre.

July 25, 1972: Unofficial rainfall amounts of 8 inches caused flash flooding in Ferney and surrounding area in Brown County. Water, over two feet depth was reported in a parking area. Basements were flooded, and foundations were damaged. The torrential rains caused extensive damage to crops in the area.

July 25, 1984: Severe thunderstorms caused considerable damage to the Pierre area. Winds were gusting to 83 mph at the Pierre airport, where thirteen planes, as well as several hangars, were destroyed. In town, a home and three businesses lost their roofs, and a trailer home was destroyed. Rains of four inches in thirty minutes produced flash flooding with some streets closed for some time. Some basements were reported to have 6 to 8 inches of water in them. At Dupree, high winds caused extensive damage to the grandstand roof at the fairgrounds. Along the entire path of the thunderstorms, hail and high winds broke windows, damaged cars, downed trees, damaged crops, and caused power outages.

July 25, 1993: Lake Kampeska, near Watertown, reached near record level at 37 inches over full mark due to runoff from heavy rains in previous days. Dozens of homes and two businesses were flooded out. About 100,000 sandbags were distributed to help prevent more flood damage to lakeside property owners.

July 25, 2000: A powerful F4 tornado hit the city of Granite Falls in Minnesota. The tornado first touched down in rural parts of the county west-northwest of Granite Falls. The tornado struck the city at 6:10 pm. After tearing through the residential sections of town, the tornado lifted at approximately 6:25 PM after being on the ground for over nine miles. The tornado caused one fatality and injured more than a dozen.

1891 - The mercury hit 109 degrees at Los Angeles, CA, marking the peak of a torrid heat wave. (David Ludlum)

1936: Lincoln, Nebraska saw an all-time high temperature of 115 degrees. The low only dropped to 91 degrees and the average temperature was 103. Many people spent the night sleeping outside to escape the heat.

1956 - The Andrea Doria sank in dense fog near Nantucket Lightship, MA. The ship was rammed by the Swedish-American liner, Stockholm, forty-five miles off the coast of Massachusetts. Fifty-two persons drowned, or were killed by the impact. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1986 - Tremendous hailstones pounded parts of South Dakota damaging crops, buildings and vehicles. Hail piled two feet deep at Black Hawk and northern Rapid City. Hail an inch and a quarter in diameter fell for 85 minutes near Miller and Huron, piling up to depths of two feet. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Sixteen cities in the eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Beckley, WV, equalled their all-time record high of 91 degrees, established just the previous day. It marked their fourth day in a row of 90 degree heat, after hitting 90 degrees just twice in the previous 25 years of records. The water temperature of Lake Erie at Buffalo, NY, reached 79 degrees, the warmest reading in 52 years of records. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from central Kansas to western Kentucky and southern Illinois during the day. Thunderstorms produced tennis ball size hail at Union, MO, and winds gusts to 65 mph at Sedalia, MO. Five cities in Washington and Oregon reported record high temperatures for the date. Medford, OR, hit 107 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Early afternoon thunderstorms over west central Missouri drenched the town of Ferguson with four inches of rain. Early evening thunderstorms in Pennsylvania produced more than two inches of rain north of Avella in one hour. (The National Weather Summary)

2005: The citizens of Sand Point, Alaska saw a rare tornado touchdown on two uninhabited islands. Sand Point is part of the Aleutian Chain and is located about 570 miles southwest of Anchorage.

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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### "I CERTAINLY HOPE SO"

He had been dating JoAnn for nearly a year. One evening he decided that it was time he proposed to her and ask her to marry him and become his wife. His plea was passionate, his voice sincere, and his eyes filled with expectation. After listening to his carefully chosen words, she said softly and with feeling, "I can't become your wife!"

"You can't? Why?" he asked. "Is there someone else?"

"I certainly hope so," came the reply.

Hope is the confident optimism that fills the hearts of Christians who know that God has good things in store for them. Those whose hope is outside of Christ may be "hoping" for things that may ultimately disappoint them or lead them into trouble. Some look expectantly for things to change and life to improve "hoping" that it is possible to find joy and peace with what the world has to offer. Hope, true Christian hope, is knowing God's greatest gifts will come to them at the right time, in the right way, in the right place. If we place our "hope" in ourselves and desire the things of this world, we will become frustrated, disappointed and confused. This world, nor the things it has to offer, can ever provide a reason for hope or happiness. True "hope" only comes from the Lord. The Psalmist made it clear when he wrote that our "only hope is in You."

Remember: God's character is unchanging, His promises dependable, His love enduring, His care continuous, and His faithfulness never waivers. Hope in the Lord!

Prayer: Father, we claim Your Word as the only true and reliable source for hope as the anchor for our lives. Give us Your peace as we await Your love, mercy, and grace. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: And so, Lord, where do I put my hope? My only hope is in you. Psalm 39:7



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
- 08/10/2023 Family Fun Fest, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- 08/11/2023 GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
- 09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/10/2023 Couples Sunflower Golf Tournament
- 10/14/2023 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
- 10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
- 10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
- 11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
- 12/02/2023 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
- 12/09/2023 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9-11am

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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.21.23

29 40 47 50 57 25

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$820,000,000**

NEXT 16 Hrs 6 Mins 32

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.24.23

6 13 20 29 51 7

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$6,360,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 21

DRAW: Mins 32 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.24.23

3 17 31 35 42 12

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 15 Hrs 36 Mins 31

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.22.23

4 5 12 23 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$20,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 36

DRAW: Mins 31 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.24.23

3 6 32 58 68 25

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 5

DRAW: Mins 31 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.24.23

3 4 12 28 49 25

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$41,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 5

DRAW: Mins 31 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### Mountain lion sighting prompts warning from eastern South Dakota sheriff

HOWARD, S.D. (AP) — A sheriff's office in South Dakota is urging residents to keep an eye out for mountain lions after one was seen lurking near a golf course.

The Miner County Sheriff's Office said in a Facebook post Saturday that the animal was seen on the edge of the town of Howard, a community of about 850 people on the eastern side of the state. South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks officials are investigating.

The sheriff's office urged people to keep their children and animals out of harm's way and to be aware of their surroundings, especially from evening to early morning.

South Dakota Game Fish and Parks has estimated the state's mountain lion population at 277.

### Pathward Publishes 2022 Environmental, Social and Governance Report

SIOUX FALLS, S.D.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jul 24, 2023--

Pathward®, N.A., a U.S.-based financial empowerment company, today published its 2022 Environmental, Social and Governance Report. The report documents Pathward's progress over the 2022 fiscal year, ending Sept. 30, 2022, in implementing plans, programs and policies that build upon the company's culture and purpose to power Financial Inclusion for All™.

"From our rebrand, which aligned our brand, mission and mindset, to the restatement of our values, with four key touchstones that help define our work, Pathward reaffirmed our commitment to responsible business practices and providing a path forward for those who use our solutions," said Pathward CEO Brett Pharr.

Over the last year, Pathward advanced its ESG strategy with several initiatives, including:

**Environmental:** Launching the first company-wide environmental assessment to help track and disclose information on energy consumption and GHG emissions as Pathward develops programs and future goals to reduce these impacts. Reducing operational emissions by 4% year over year. Originating \$302 million in renewable energy financing for businesses, particularly solar and biogas projects. **Social:** Achieving 19% employee participation in one or more of its five active employee resource groups. Meeting the "Outstanding" goal in all but one performance category of the Community Reinvestment Act evaluation, as Pathward continues to help low- and moderate-income individuals and small businesses. Launching Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion curriculum to provide regular educational and engagement opportunities for employees. **Governance:** Establishing the Enterprise Risk Management program's Center of Excellence. Updating Pathward's Code of Business Conduct while engaging a third-party group to benchmark the Code to best practices. Creating new training on the Code of Business Conduct. Internally, Pathward's Talent Anywhere policy has contributed to a more diverse, expansive and flexible workforce. The company also continues to offer opportunities for personal career growth and fulfillment.

Externally, Pathward's Community Impact Program, launched in 2021, continued to help provide resources for unbanked, underbanked and historically marginalized populations through corporate giving, employee volunteer activities and charitable investments. For its efforts, Pathward was named a winner of the 2022 Community Commitment Award by the American Bankers Association Foundation.

"Over the past year, Pathward has made a significant, purposeful impact in the communities where we live and serve," said Pathward President Anthony Sharett. "We continued to provide funding for alternative and renewable energy projects, which are poised to make a meaningful environmental impact and reduce carbon emissions for years to come. And, on the social impact front, we are pleased to see that our employees are modeling our values and stepping up community service involvement across the country."

## Anger grows in Ukraine's port city of Odesa after Russian bombardment hits beloved historic sites

By HANNA ARHIROVA and LORI HINNANT Associated Press

ODESA, Ukraine (AP) — Tetiana Khlapova's hand trembled as she recorded the wreckage of Odesa's devastated Transfiguration Cathedral on her cellphone and cursed Russia, her native land.

Khlapova was raised in Ukraine and had always dreamed of living in the seaside city. But not as the war refugee that she has become.

In only a week, Russia has fired dozens of missiles and drones at the Odesa region. None struck quite as deeply as the one that destroyed the cathedral, which stands at the heart of the city's romantic, notorious past and its deep roots in both Ukrainian and Russian culture.

"I am a refugee from Kharkiv. I endured that hell and came to sunny Odesa, the pearl, the heart of our Ukraine," said Khlapova, who has lived in the country for 40 of her 50 years.

Her neck still has a shrapnel scar from the third day of the war, when her apartment was hit. On Day 4, she fled to Odesa.

Now, she's making a quick trip back to her place in Kharkiv to grab winter clothes so she can wait out the war in Ireland, "because here we are not protected for a single second, in any city."

"At any moment, you can just be hit and your whole body will be torn apart," she said. "After the war ends — and I believe that Ukraine will defeat this filth, these vampires — I will come back home. I will return, no matter what."

Ever since Ukraine gained independence from Moscow in 1991, Odesa viewed itself differently than the country's other major cities because of its long, conflicted history and an outlook that stretched far beyond its borders.

Odesa's past is intertwined with some of Russia's most revered figures, including Catherine the Great, author Leo Tolstoy and poet Anna Akhmatova.

Its ports were key to last year's international agreement that let Ukraine and Russia ship their grain to the rest of the world. Its Orthodox cathedral belongs to Moscow's patriarchate. Its residents largely speak Russian. And — at least until the Kremlin illegally annexed the nearby Crimean Peninsula in 2014 — its beaches were beloved by Russian tourists.

In the war's early weeks, rumors seeded by Kremlin propaganda flew around the city: Moscow would never hit the historic center, the mayor had loaded a boat filled with roses to greet Russian soldiers, a silent majority of residents were waiting for a Russian "liberation."

They were false.

"To this day, if you read and monitor Russian channels, all of them are absolutely convinced that we are waiting for them here," said Hanna Shelest, a political and security researcher raised in Odesa whose father is a harbormaster.

Odesa's regional infrastructure was hit repeatedly by Russia over the winter, unlike its port, which was key to the Black Sea Grain Initiative that allowed agricultural products to be shipped safely from both countries to feed people around the world.

The region's silos were full when Russia pulled out of the agreement in mid-July. Missiles and drones struck the next day, taking aim at storage sites, transportation infrastructure and random buildings. Ukraine's air defenses deflected most of the hits, but every day a handful made it through.

Last week's attacks marked the first time Odesa's historic city center was hit since the war started.

Mayor Hennadii Trukhanov was unequivocal in a furious video message directed to Russians after Sunday's strike on the cathedral, showing rescue workers carefully removing a damaged icon from the ruins.

"If you only knew how much Odesa hates you. Not only hates you. Despises you. You're fighting small children, the Orthodox church. Your rockets even fall on cemeteries," he said. "You must hardly know us Odessans. You will not break us, just make us angrier."

Another missile crashed into the House of Scientists, a mansion that once belonged to the Tolstoy family and was transformed into an institution to unite scholars and researchers. A third hit administrative and

apartment buildings.

The targets were within 200 meters (yards) of the port. Shelest believes the cathedral was hit by accident, but that's little consolation amid the destruction.

Since Catherine the Great transformed Odesa into an international seaport in 1794, the city's identity has as its foundations the sea, cosmopolitan tolerance and an innate sense of humor. It had one of Europe's largest concentrations of Jews, who before a series of pogroms made up about a quarter of the population, and large communities of Greek and Italian sailors whose descendants remain to this day.

A week of attacks shook those foundations for Iryna Grets, who counts at least three generations of family in the city.

"Every morning, I go to the sea, to witness the sunrise. But today, I didn't have the strength to go to the sea because we didn't sleep all night. You see, we haven't been sleeping all week," said Grets, who decided instead to visit each site bombarded on Sunday.

She started at the cathedral, at the center of life in Odesa. The original structure was destroyed under Josef Stalin in 1936 as part of his campaign against religion. When Ukraine gained independence, residents took up a fund to restore it to its original condition. In 2010, the new building was consecrated by Patriarch Kirill, leader of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Kirill, whose church has aligned itself with Russian President Vladimir Putin, has since repeatedly justified the war in Ukraine.

"Each rocket that today arrives on the territory of Ukraine is perceived by its inhabitants as your 'blessing' on their children," Archbishop Viktor Bykov, the vicar of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's Odesa Diocese, wrote in an open letter to Kirill.

The bitter pilgrimage by Grets had less to do with religion than with mourning, and many others made the same trip on Sunday. Some attended a service outside the damaged cathedral. Even more came to clear debris, instead of enjoying the famed beaches despite the beckoning summer sun.

"This is my city, it's a part of me, it's my soul, it's my heart," Grets said.

Then, fury overcoming her, she abruptly switched to Ukrainian: "Odesa will never be part of Russia."

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Hinnant reported from Paris.

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

## Study finds climate change fingerprints on July heat waves in Europe, China and America

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

The fingerprints of climate change are all over the intense heat waves gripping the globe this month, a new study finds. Researchers say the deadly hot spells in the American Southwest and Southern Europe could not have happened without the continuing buildup of warming gases in the air.

These unusually strong heat waves are becoming more common, Tuesday's study said. The same research found the increase in heat-trapping gases, largely from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas has made another heat wave — the one in China — 50 times more likely with the potential to occur every five years or so.

A stagnant atmosphere, warmed by carbon dioxide and other gases, also made the European heat wave 4.5 degrees Fahrenheit (2.5 degrees Celsius) hotter, the one in the United States and Mexico 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit (2 degrees Celsius) warmer and the one in China one 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (1 degree Celsius) toastier, the study found.

Several climate scientists, using tree rings and other stand-ins for temperature records, say this month's heat is likely the hottest Earth has been in about 120,000 years, easily the hottest of human civilization.

"Had there been no climate change, such an event would almost never have occurred," said study lead author Mariam Zachariah, a climate scientist at Imperial College of London. She called heat waves in Europe

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and North America “virtually impossible” without the increase in heat from the mid 1800s. Statistically, the one in China could have happened without global warming.

Since the advent of industrial-scale burning, the world has warmed 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit (1.2 degrees Celsius), so “they are not rare in today’s climate and the role of climate change is absolutely overwhelming,” said Imperial College climate scientist Friederike Otto, who leads the team of volunteer international scientists at World Weather Attribution who do these studies.

The particularly intense heat waves that Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua and Coahuila are now roasting through are likely to happen about once every 15 years in the current climate, the study said.

But the climate is not stabilized, even at this level. If it warms a few more tenths of a degree, this month’s heat will become even more common, Otto said. Phoenix has had a record-shattering 25 straight days of temperatures at or above 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43.3 degrees Celsius) and more than a week when the nighttime temperature never dropped below 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32.2 Celsius)

The heat in Spain, Italy, Greece and some Balkan states is likely to reoccur every decade in the current climate, the study said.

Because the weather attribution researchers started their analysis of three simultaneous heat waves on July 17, the results are not yet peer reviewed, which is the gold standard for science. But it used scientifically valid techniques, the team’s research regularly gets published and several outside experts told The Associated Press it makes sense.

The way scientists do these rapid analyses is by comparing observations of current weather in the three regions to repeated computer simulations of “a world that might have been without climate change,” said study co-author Izidine Pinto, a climate scientist at the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute.

In Europe and North America, the study doesn’t claim human-caused climate change is the sole cause of the heat waves, but it is a necessary ingredient because natural causes and random chance couldn’t produce this alone.

Texas state climatologist John Nielsen-Gammon said the study was reasonable, but looks at a broad area of the U.S. Southwest, so it may not be applicable to every single place in the area.

“In the United States, it’s clear that the entire southern tier is going to see the worst of the ever-worsening heat and this summer should be considered a serious wake-up call,” said University of Michigan environment dean Jonathan Overpeck.

With heat waves, “the most important thing is that they kill people and they particularly kill and hurt and destroy lives and livelihoods of those most vulnerable,” Otto said.

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

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Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears

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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.

## **For Emmett Till’s family, national monument proclamation cements his inclusion in the American story**

By AARON MORRISON AP National Writer

When President Joe Biden signs a proclamation on Tuesday establishing a national monument honoring Emmett Till and his mother, Mamie Till-Mobley, it will mark the fulfillment of a promise Till’s relatives made after his death 68 years ago.

The Black teenager from Chicago, whose abduction, torture and killing in Mississippi in 1955 helped propel the civil rights movement, will be seen as more than just a cause of that movement, said Till’s cousin the Rev. Wheeler Parker Jr.

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"We are resolute that it now becomes an American story and not just a civil rights story," Parker told The Associated Press, ahead of a planned proclamation signing ceremony at the White House.

With the stroke of Biden's pen, the Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument, located across three sites in two states, will be federally protected places. But Till's family members, along with a national organization seeking to preserve Black cultural heritage sites, say their work protecting the Till legacy continues.

They hope to raise money to restore the sites and develop educational programming to support their inclusion in the National Park System.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters Monday that the Till national monument will be the Biden-Harris administration's fourth designation that reflects their "work to advance civil rights." The move comes as conservative leaders, mostly at the state and local levels, push legislation that limits the teaching of slavery and Black history in public schools.

The Democratic president's administration "will continue to speak out against hateful attempts to rewrite our history and strongly oppose any actions that threaten to divide us and take our country backwards," Jean-Pierre said.

Brent Leggs, executive director of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, said the federal designation is a milestone in a yearslong effort to preserve and protect places tied to events that have shaped the nation and that symbolize national wounds.

"We believe that not until Black history matters will Black lives and Black bodies matter," he said. "Through reckoning with America's racist past, we have the opportunity to heal."

The African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund provided an initial \$750,000 grant in 2017 to help rescue sites important to the Till legacy. With its partners, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the Fund II Foundation, Leggs said an additional \$5 million in funding has been secured for specialized preservation of the sites.

Biden's proclamation protects places that are central to the story of Emmett Till's life and death at age 14, the acquittal of his white killers by an all-white jury and his late mother's activism.

In the summer of 1955, Mamie Till-Mobley put her son Emmett on a train to her native Mississippi, where he was to spend time with his uncle and his cousins. In the overnight hours of Aug. 28, 1955, Emmett was taken from his uncle's home at gunpoint by two vengeful white men.

Emmett's alleged crime? Flirting with the wife of one of his kidnappers.

Three days later, a fisherman on the Tallahatchie River discovered the teenager's bloated corpse — one of his eyes was detached, an ear was missing, his head was shot and bashed in.

Till-Mobley demanded that Emmett's mutilated remains be taken back to Chicago for a public, open casket funeral that was attended by tens of thousands of people. Graphic images taken of Emmett's remains, sanctioned by his mother, were published by Jet magazine and propelled the civil rights movement.

At the trial of his killers in Mississippi, Till-Mobley bravely took the witness stand to counter the perverse image of her son that defense attorneys had painted for jurors and trial watchers.

Altogether, the Till national monument will include 5.7 acres (2.3 hectares) of land and two historic buildings. The Mississippi sites are Graball Landing, the spot where Emmett's body was pulled from the Tallahatchie River just outside of Glendora, Mississippi, and the Tallahatchie County Second District Court-house in Sumner, Mississippi, where Emmett's killers were tried.

There is already the Emmett Till Interpretive Center in Sumner, which received philanthropic funding to expand programming and pay staff who interface with visitors.

At Graball Landing, a memorial sign installed in 2008 had been repeatedly stolen and was riddled with bullets. An inch-thick bulletproof sign was erected at the site in October 2019.

The Illinois site is Roberts Temple Church of God in Christ in Chicago, where Emmett's funeral was held in September 1955.

In a statement emailed to the AP, Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin saluted Mamie Till-Mobley's courage to have the nation and the world bear witness to the scourge of racial hatred. The monument, he said, helps

“ensure that Emmett Till’s story is not forgotten.”

The Till national monument will join dozens of federally recognized landmarks, buildings and other places in the Deep South, in the north and out west that represent historical events and tragedies from the civil right movement. For example, in Atlanta, sites representing the life and legacy of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., including his birth home and Ebenezer Baptist Church, are all part of the National Park Service.

The designation often requires public and private entities to work together on developing interpretation centers at each of the sites, so that anyone who visits can understand the site’s significance. The hiring of park rangers is supported through partnerships with the National Park Foundation, the park service’s official nonprofit, and the National Parks Conservation Association.

Increasingly, the park service includes sites “that are part of the arc of justice in this country, both telling where we’ve come from, how far we’ve come, and frankly, how far we have to still go,” said Will Shafroth, the president and CEO of the National Park Foundation.

That’s where Leggs’ African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund and the Till family’s work remains — to raise enough money so that the sites are properly maintained and have the staffing needed to educate the public.

For Parker, who was 16 years old when he witnessed Emmett’s abduction, the Till monument proclamation begins to lift the weight of trauma that he has carried for most of his life. Tuesday is the anniversary of Emmett’s birth in 1941. He would have been 82.

“I’ve been suffering for all these years of how they’ve portrayed him — I still deal with that,” Parker, 84, said of his cousin Emmett.

“The truth should carry itself, but it doesn’t have wings. You have to put some wings on it.”

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Associated Press writers Josh Boak and Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

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Aaron Morrison is a New York-based member of AP’s Race and Ethnicity team. Follow him on social media.

## Heat wave returns as Greece grapples with more wildfire evacuations

RHODES, Greece (AP) — A third successive heat wave in Greece pushed temperatures back above 40 C (104 F) across parts of the country Tuesday following more nighttime evacuations from fires that have raged out of control for days.

The latest evacuations orders were issued on the islands of Corfu and Evia, while a blaze on the island of Rhodes continued to move inland, torching mountainous forest areas, including part of a nature reserve.

Desperate residents, many with wet towels around their necks to stave off the scorching heat, used shovels to beat back flames approaching their homes, while firefighting planes and helicopters resumed water drops at first light.

Authorities said that more than 20,000 people has been involved in successive evacuations on the island, mostly tourists over the weekend, when fire swept through two coastal areas on the southeast of Rhodes.

The European Union has sent 500 firefighters, 100 vehicles and seven planes from 10 member states, while Turkey, Israel, Egypt and other countries have also sent help.

“For the 12th day, under extreme conditions of heat and strong winds, we are fighting nonstop on dozens of forest fire fronts ... The Greek Fire Service has battled more than 500 fires — more than 50 a day,” said Vassilis Kikilias, the minister for climate crisis and civil protection.

In Athens, authorities resumed afternoon closing hours at the ancient Acropolis, as part of broader measures to cope with the high heat.

EU officials have blamed climate change for the increasing frequency and intensity of wildfires across the European continent, noting that 2022 was the second-worst year for wildfire damage on record after 2017.

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

## **The Biden administration proposes new rules to push insurers to boost mental health coverage**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's administration on Tuesday is announcing new rules meant to push insurance companies to increase their coverage of mental health treatments.

The new regulations, which still need to go through a public comment period, would require insurers to study whether their customers have equal access to medical and mental health benefits and to take remedial action, if necessary. The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act requires that insurers provide the same level of coverage for both mental and physical health care — though the administration and advocates argue insurers' policies restrict patient access.

The rules, if finalized, would force insurers to study patient outcomes to ensure the benefits are administered equally, taking into account their provider network and reimbursement rates and whether prior authorization is required for care.

The Democratic president's administration says it's aiming to address issues such as insurers enabling nutritional counseling for diabetes patients but making it more difficult for those with eating disorders.

By measuring outcomes, the White House says, it will force insurers to make modifications to come into compliance with the law.

## **Two teachers called out far-right activities at their German school. Then they had to leave town.**

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER Associated Press

BURG, Germany (AP) — Two teachers in eastern Germany tried to counter the far-right activities of students at their small town high school. They counseled bullies who threatened to beat up immigrant classmates. They gave more lessons about their country's Nazi past. They invited in a Black rapper to talk about mutual respect.

None of it helped. In desperation, Laura Nickel and Max Teske wrote a public letter in which they described an atmosphere of intimidation at Mina Witkojc School in Burg. They reported students greeting each other with the Nazi salute, scratching swastikas on their desks and playing music with racist lyrics in the hallways.

"Teachers and students who openly fight against far-right students and teachers fear for their safety," the two said in the letter they sent to local newspapers. "The problem has to be recognized and openly fought. Schools should be places free of fear, full of open-mindedness and safety for everyone and cannot provide a home for the enemies of democracy."

Even so, Nickel, who taught English and history at the high school, and Teske, a math and geography teacher, were unprepared for the backlash their call to action produced. A letter from an anonymous group of parents demanded their dismissals. Stickers with their pictures and the caption "Piss off to Berlin" plastered light poles near campus. On social media, someone declared a desire to "hunt them down."

Further disheartened by what they say was a lack of support from colleagues, the principal and local administrators, Nickel and Teske announced when the academic year ended two weeks ago that they were leaving the school and the town located 116 kilometers (72 miles) southeast of Berlin.

"Far-right extremist statements, actions, slogans, homophobia and sexism were and are the order of the day at this school," Nickel, 34, who worked at Mina Witkojc for four years, told The Associated Press in a joint interview with Teske, 31, who taught there for three years.

Neither the school nor the local school authority responded to the AP's requests for comment on the teachers' resignations.

But Teske and Nickel's experience has aroused fears in the German capital that the far right has gained a greater foothold in some parts of the former East Germany than many thought. Experts say that especially in the south of Brandenburg state, where Burg is located, an entire network of tattoo parlors, nightclubs,

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youth groups and fan clubs of the FC Energie Cottbus soccer team spread the messaging of the far-right Alternative for Germany, or AfD, party.

Earlier this month, Brandenburg state's domestic intelligence service declared Young Alternative for Germany, the AfD's wing for supporters age 14 and above, as particularly radical and put it under official surveillance as a "proven right-wing extremist" group.

The state education ministry, which was criticized for not supporting the teachers enough, announced last week that authorities had identified a teenager suspected of originally posting the "hunt them down" post on Instagram.

Amadeu Antonio Foundation Executive Director Timo Reinfrank, whose organization promotes human rights while working against right-wing extremism, racism and antisemitism in Germany, told the AP that southern Brandenburg state has become "a zone of fear which the Nazis have declared as their home zone."

Reinfrank said that's not really a surprise for those familiar with the area, where the far right was active even before AfD's founding a decade ago. The foundation he leads was named for an Angolan contract worker who in 1990 was beaten to death when a group of about 50 youths with baseball bats went looking for Black people to attack in the Brandenburg town of Eberswalde.

AfD was founded in 2013 and first entered Germany's parliament four years later after campaigning on an anti-migrant platform. Recent polls show the party with a record level of support nationally, about 20%.

The reasons for its particular appeal in eastern Germany are manifold. East Germany was a communist dictatorship until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and many people there lost their jobs after Germany's 1990 reunification. Residents still speak of feeling like second-class citizens compared to Germans in the country's west.

AfD has used the coronavirus pandemic and the influx of 1.2 million Ukrainian refugees since Russia invaded Ukraine as opportunities to promote an "us vs. them" narrative and to offer what seem like simple answers to complex problems, experts say.

Many think AfD could emerge as the strongest party when Brandenburg and the fellow eastern states of Saxony and Thuringia hold elections next year. In Thuringia, the AfD candidate last month won the county administrator's post in Sonneberg, the first time since the Nazi era that a far-right party placed first at the county level.

Meanwhile, Chancellor Olaf Scholz's center-left governing coalition with the environmentalist Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats has a reputation for infighting and faces strong headwinds over immigration, an environmental plan to replace millions of home heating systems and inflation that remains high.

For people like Nickel and Teske, standing up against right-wing populists comes at a steep personal price. After the teachers announced their withdrawal from Burg, the head of the AfD chapter in Cottbus, Brandenburg state's second-largest city, cheered on Twitter that Teske, whom he called a "leftist radical informer," and his "accomplice" were gone.

The police are investigating threats against the teachers, and officers patrol past their homes frequently. When Teske goes out, he often looks over his shoulder to see if somebody might be following him. Recently, a man approached him in a grocery store from behind and whispered, "Get out of here," into his ear, he said.

Yet he refuses to see the decision to leave town as a defeat. By calling out the dire conditions at the school, he and Nickel sparked a much-needed national debate about the rise of the far right in Germany, Teske said.

"We will continue to be loud, we will continue to make a political impact, and won't let the far right win," he said.

Germany, where the Nazi party was elected to power 90 years ago and led the country into World War II and the Holocaust, has a special responsibility to fight far-right populism, Nickel added.

"History repeats itself, and I believe that we must definitely do something now to put a stop to anti-democratic parties in Germany," she said.

## Japan police arrest woman, parents in beheading of man at hotel in Hokkaido entertainment district

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese police said they arrested a woman and her parents in a beheading case in a popular night entertainment district in Japan's northern city of Sapporo, where a headless man was found in a hotel room three weeks ago.

Hokkaido police on Japan's northern main island said Tuesday they arrested Runa Tamura, 29, and her father Osamu Tamura, a 59-year-old psychiatrist, the day before on suspicion of conspiring in beheading the victim at a hotel room and relocating his severed head in the middle of the night between July 1 and July 2.

The head of the victim, Hitoshi Ura, 62, has been missing since then.

Police raided the suspects' home Tuesday and arrested the prime suspect's mother Hiroko Tamura, a 60-year-old parttime worker, on suspicion of conspiring with her family in transporting and keeping the head at home.

Police did not say exactly how the daughter and the father collaborated. Police are still investigating the motive and refused to say if the woman and the victim knew each other.

Police also noted that Runa is a possible mental patient. Media reports quoted neighbors as saying that she has had difficulty attending school and had been reclusive since childhood.

Kyodo News and other media reported the victim and another individual believed to be Runa Tamura checked into the hotel in the Susukino area known for short-stay "love hotels." About three hours later only one of them was seen leaving, carrying a large suitcase.

The person accompanying the victim was wearing light-colored women's clothing and a wide-brimmed hat when entering the hotel, but was dressed in black when leaving, Kyodo said, quoting unnamed investigative sources.

Ura's body was discovered later on July 2 by a hotel worker who went to check on the room because no one had checked out from it by the afternoon. The worker found the victim slumped in a bathtub, according to news reports. None of his belongings had been left in the room and the bed appeared unused.

## Extremist attacks wounded Paris. Here's why the city turned to the 2024 Olympics to heal

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — For the mayor of Paris, the city's journey to next year's Olympic Games included an epiphany born of brutality: the slaughter of 17 people by gunmen acting in the names of al-Qaida and the Islamic State group.

Anne Hidalgo says the 2015 attacks at a provocative satirical newspaper and a kosher Parisian supermarket were "truly fundamental" in steering her to the idea of bringing the Games back to the French capital for the first time since 1924. With the country outraged and hurting from the bloodshed, she saw the Olympics as an opportunity for France to rebound and heal.

"What really scared me at that moment was to hear young people, even children, explain that the terrorists were heroes and that Charlie was guilty of having pushed freedom of expression too far," Hidalgo says, referring to Charlie Hebdo, the newspaper that repeatedly caricatured the Muslim Prophet Muhammad.

"I said to myself that things were really, really, really bad, and that we absolutely had to find something that also provides perspective, momentum, to young people, to the country. And the Games can be this unifying moment."

Rarely has that need been more pressing for France, a country that has lurched from crisis to crisis since 2017, when Paris was chosen to host the Games. And seldom have the Olympics been as eagerly anticipated, coming after the global losses and separations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and against

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the backdrop of war in Ukraine.

The picture-postcard city aims to use its charms to wow audiences, starting with an unprecedented waterborne opening extravaganza on July 26, 2024.

But the context, in France and beyond, is tricky.

Rioting across France last month, triggered by the fatal police shooting of a teenager in the Paris suburbs, laid bare social, racial and political divides that undercut the image of a confident, can-do France that Games organizers want to project.

Before those six nights of violence, there were also sustained protests this year against President Emmanuel Macron's pension reforms. Taken together, the unrest raised fears of more turbulence during the Games. Also concerning are investigations by French anti-corruption police into the awarding of a small number of Olympic contracts.

Organizers insist they remain on track to deliver safe and inclusive Games that also aim to be greener than ever, in part by using existing or temporary venues instead of building new ones.

With projected spending of 8.8 billion euros (\$9.7 billion), the Games should cost considerably less than Tokyo's \$15.4 billion splurge on the pandemic-delayed 2021 Olympics.

Paris also needs dice to roll its way.

Its Games will be reliant on crowded public transport networks and on transport workers not seizing the golden opportunity to strike for better conditions.

Using Paris monuments as outdoor venues will offer striking visuals. But athletes and spectators could suffer if France endures another of its worsening heat waves.

And the planned opening ceremony for half a million spectators, most watching for free, along the River Seine has eye-popping security needs.

"The image of France is at stake," chief Games organizer Tony Estanguet acknowledged in an exclusive Associated Press interview.

The Olympics have a lot riding on Paris, too.

With Ukrainian athletes saying they would rather stay away than face competitors from aggressor Russia and its military ally Belarus, the International Olympic Committee's ideal of sport as a vector for human togetherness is under duress.

Hidalgo is among Ukraine's international supporters pushing for a ban on Russian athletes. But that would go against the grain for Thomas Bach, the IOC president whose fencing career was hurt by a boycott of the 1980 Moscow Games after the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. Bach could not defend his Olympic team title with West Germany.

The IOC president has sought to tiptoe through the geopolitical minefield with a pathway that could see Russians and Belarusians qualify as neutral competitors.

But that could sour the mood in Paris.

"Were Paris to pretend that nothing is happening, lots of countries, lots of Europeans, have said they will boycott," Hidalgo warns. "There is still one year to go. I really hope that Ukraine wins. I really hope the war will be behind us."

For global TV audiences, the marriage of sports and Parisian landmarks promises compelling viewing: Beach volleyball played by the Eiffel Tower. Skateboarding, breakdancing, BMX freestyle and three-on-three basketball unfolding at Place de la Concorde, where France's last king, Louis XVI, was beheaded in 1793. Horse riding at the former royal palace in Versailles. The list goes on.

"They will not be Games that we're used to seeing," Estanguet promised.

The first post-pandemic Olympics also mark the return of full-size crowds. Nearly 70% of the 10 million tickets flew off shelves in the two first rounds of sales.

"Knowing that everyone from around the world is flocking to one place to watch sport, it will be so cool to have that back," says British rower Helen Glover, a two-time Olympic champion aiming for her fourth Summer Games.

Paris is also the test bed for a new IOC model of Olympic hosting.

After decades of excess in other host cities, which sank billions into venues that quickly outlived their

usefulness, the Games now aim to adapt better to their hosts, and less the other way around. The only competition venues that Paris has purpose-built are an aquatics center and a climbing facility. Both are in disadvantaged northern outskirts that lack sports facilities.

The IOC hopes Paris' experience will revive appetites in other cities to bid for future Olympics. Rome, Hamburg, Germany, and Budapest, Hungary, all dropped out when Paris was bidding, leaving the committee embarrassingly short of suitors. Paris only wanted 2024. The other remaining bidder, Los Angeles, agreed to host in 2028.

The 10,500 Olympians — for the first time evenly split between men and women — now have one year left to ready themselves for 18 days of competition.

And France has a year to conjure up a celebration that would complete its journey since 2015 and emphatically respond to the extremism that sought to silence Charlie Hebdo. Paris was also attacked again later that year with follow-up assaults on the Bataclan concert hall and other sites that killed another 130 people.

"For us, the Games have been a way of looking ahead and also of sending a message, I think, to the whole world that, 'Yes, we were attacked. Yes, we suffered perhaps some of the cruelest things,'" says Deputy Mayor Pierre Rabadan, in charge of Olympic planning at City Hall.

"But voilà," he adds. "We're not giving up — not in our way of thinking, nor in the way that we are and nor in welcoming the world."

More AP coverage of the Paris Olympics: <https://apnews.com/hub/2024-paris-olympic-games> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Safety net with holes? Programs to help crime victims can leave them fronting bills

By MIKE CATALINI and CLAUDIA LAUER Associated Press

Pamela White stared at the silver tree with twinkling lights while she cleaned out her son's apartment, wondering how in a matter of days she went from celebrating Christmas to having to think about headstones and burial plots.

Her son, Dararius Evans, was an Army reservist and veteran who had survived a deployment in Iraq. A few days after Christmas 2019, the 28-year-old was killed in a shooting outside of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The shooter was sentenced to life in prison last year.

White and her family, who live outside of New Orleans, turned to Louisiana's victim compensation board for help paying for the unexpected funeral. She was met with administrative hurdles, a denial that blamed her son for his own death, a lengthy appeal — all while paying up front through a personal loan that gathered interest as she waited.

Thousands of crime victims each year are confronted with the difficult financial reality of state compensation programs that are billed as safety nets to offset costs like funerals, medical care, relocation and other needs. Many programs require victims to pay for those expenses first and exhaust all means of payment before they reimburse costs, often at rates that don't fully cover expenses.

The programs also struggle under often unstable funding mechanisms that leave their budgets vulnerable to shortages and the changing priorities of lawmakers. Well-intentioned prison and criminal justice reforms aimed at reducing incarceration have caused shortfalls in some states that rely heavily on court or prison fines and fees for funding.

Advocates say most states' requirement that victims pay upfront can leave out people living on the edge of financial disaster who are often most vulnerable to a crime.

"So many families often can't rely solely on that reimbursement model. ... Those funds take months to arrive to families," said Aswad Thomas, vice president of the Alliance for Safety and Justice, a nonprofit working to reform victim compensation and other aspects of the criminal justice system.

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During her appeal hearing, White pleaded with the board, saying that even if a fight had led to her son's killing, he was still a person who didn't deserve to die.

"I made them think about it. That was a life taken — that wasn't an animal," she said. "It doesn't matter if they were arguing. It doesn't matter if they got in a fistfight. ... It doesn't warrant a person losing their life."

The board reversed its decision and gave White \$5,000 — the most offered for funeral assistance at the time. But the loan White had taken out was for \$6,000 and gained interest as she made the monthly payments.

White was able to weather those payments, but she knows many people can't.

Elizabeth Ruebman, a New Jersey-based victims advocate and former adviser on compensation to the state attorney general, said compensation programs currently are not designed for emergency needs.

"It's slow, it's bureaucratic. We're talking about people who have a crisis right now," she said.

Many states do offer emergency awards to help victims through the immediate aftermath of crime, but advocates say those awards are flawed. They often are restrictive, capped as low as \$500, and are deducted from any later award. About a dozen states don't offer emergency awards at all.

The AP found the maximum awards programs offer ranged from \$10,000 to \$190,000 in individual states. Many programs haven't increased those amounts for decades: North Dakota, Montana and Rhode Island last raised their caps in the 1970s.

Programs have lagged less in raising limits on individual expenses like funerals. But many states don't offer enough money to cover the actual cost of burying a loved one. The National Funeral Directors Association estimated the median cost of a funeral with burial vault was more than \$9,400 in 2021. Only a dozen states offer enough to cover that median cost.

Over the years, some states have increased the amount available for medical bills for people who suffer catastrophic injuries due to a crime. But in some states even those catastrophic amounts only add up to an extra \$10,000, which doesn't cover the lifelong costs of injuries like losing the ability to walk.

New York's program is unique because it doesn't cap reimbursements for medical expenses. That includes lifelong help with replacement prosthetics, extended physical therapy needs or equipment not always covered by medical insurance. Some payouts have reached millions of dollars, administrators said.

Kingsley Joseph was 20 years old and living in New York City when he was shot in the back and paralyzed from the waist down in 2007. His college career was put on hold. He couldn't continue to live with his parents in their walk-up apartment. He couldn't keep his job as a ramp agent at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

Joseph's best option was a nursing facility where many of the other patients were decades older than him. A staff member there told Joseph about New York's victim compensation program.

Joseph applied and was approved for lost wages — money that helped him get an accessible apartment. The program has paid for medical equipment like a therapy bike that helps maintain leg muscle.

New York's program also includes sometimes overlooked expenses, like training for a new career after a catastrophic injury. Joseph received an occupational therapy award that helped him get his advanced medical physics degree.

The 36-year-old now works in cancer care.

"They invested in me as a person," he said. "And I am incredibly grateful for that."

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Catalini reported from Trenton, New Jersey. Lauer reported from Philadelphia.

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This is the third in an occasional Associated Press series examining crime victim compensation programs. Send confidential tips to [ap.org/tips](https://ap.org/tips). The Associated Press receives support from the Public Welfare Foundation for reporting focused on criminal justice. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **IRS is ending unannounced visits to taxpayers to protect worker safety and combat scammers**

By FATIMA HUSSEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Internal Revenue Service said Monday it is ending its decades-old policy of making unannounced home and business visits, in an effort to help keep its workers safe and to combat scammers who pose as IRS agents.

Effective immediately, revenue agents will no longer make unplanned visits to taxpayers' homes and businesses "except in a few unique circumstances," the Treasury Department said in a statement. The agency will instead mail letters to people to schedule meetings.

"Today's announcement is the right thing to do, at the right time," new IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel told reporters on a call Monday.

The change ends "an era at the IRS," he said, reversing a practice by revenue officers whose duties include visiting homes and firms to resolve taxpayers' liabilities by collecting unpaid taxes and unfiled tax returns.

The agency in recent years has experienced more threats, in part tied to conspiracy theories that agents were going to target middle-income taxpayers more aggressively after the passage of a climate, health care and tax bill that provided \$80 billion to step up tax collections.

In response, the agency last August announced a comprehensive review of safety at its facilities. And in May, the agency said it would begin limiting workers' personal identifying information on communications with taxpayers.

The Treasury Department's inspector general for tax administration said in a report that it was "concerned that taxpayers and anti-government or anti-tax groups with malevolent intent may use the Internet or social media to track down and identify IRS employees, their families, their homes, and personal information to threaten, intimidate, or locate them for physical violence."

The National Treasury Employees Union, which represents IRS workers, commended the agency for ending unannounced visits.

"The officers we represent will continue to efficiently and effectively carry out their mission of helping taxpayers meet their lawful tax obligations through other means of communication," union leader Tony Reardon said in an emailed statement.

The issue of home visits has been politically contentious this year.

Ohio House Republican Jim Jordan sent a letter to Werfel and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in March, asking why journalist Matt Taibbi received an unannounced home visit from an IRS agent shortly he gave testimony on Capitol Hill regarding his research into Twitter records.

Werfel said he thinks "the issues raised by unannounced visits, including ones that have been raised to us by the U.S. Congress, will be significantly mitigated" by the policy change.

The agency said an increase in scam artists posing as IRS agents also had created confusion about unannounced home visits.

## **Wildfires across Algeria have killed 25 people, including 10 soldiers who were battling the flames**

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP) — Wildfires raging across Algeria have killed 25 people, including 10 soldiers trying to get the flames under control in the face of high winds and scorching summer temperatures, government ministries said Monday.

At least 1,500 people were evacuated, the Interior Ministry said, without providing details.

The Interior Ministry announced 15 deaths and 24 injuries. In addition, the Defense Ministry later announced 10 soldiers were killed and 25 injured as they fought fires in the resort area of Beni Ksila east of the capital Algiers.

It wasn't immediately clear over what period of time the casualties happened, but the fires have been

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burning for several days.

Wildfires, some spread by strong winds, moved across forests and agricultural areas in 16 regions causing 97 blazes in the north African country. The largest and deadliest fires ravaged parts of Bejaia and Jijel — in the Kabyle region east of Algiers — and Bouira, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) southeast of Algiers, the Interior Ministry said.

Operations to tamp down the fires included some 7,500 firefighters and 350 trucks on the ground as well as air support.

Algeria is no stranger to summer wildfires.

At least 37 people were killed last August after wildfires blazed near Algeria's northern border with Tunisia.

A year earlier, authorities said dozens were killed in blazes — including soldiers called in to help fight the fires in the mountainous Kabyle region that is dotted with villages.

Strong winds and successive heat waves have fueled vicious fires in Greece and elsewhere around the Mediterranean this summer.

## In 'Barbie,' 'Oppenheimer' smash success, audiences send message to Hollywood: Give us something new

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In the massive movie weekend of "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer," there were many winners. Greta Gerwig, who made history for female directors. Christopher Nolan, who set a non-Batman career high. Movie theaters, more crowded than anytime post-pandemic. Lovers of unlikely double features. The color pink. Matchbox Twenty.

But one of the most important triumphs in the moviegoing monsoon of "Barbenheimer" was originality. Here are two movies that are neither sequels nor reboots pushing the box office to highs not seen in years. "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer" became a meme because of their worlds-apart differences but they're each indelibly the work of those filmmakers.

"Barbie," based on the Mattel doll, had some extremely well-known intellectual property going for it. And the story of J. Robert Oppenheimer and the atomic bomb comes from no small moment in history. Nolan is himself a brand, too.

But Hollywood's biggest zeitgeist in years was propelled by a pair of movies without a roman numeral, a Jedi or a superhero in sight. At the same time, some of the most dependable franchises in movies, from Marvel to "Fast and the Furious," are no longer leading the pack.

The movie business may be shifting. Audiences are showing a renewed taste for something fresh. "Barbenheimer" could, just maybe, be a turning point.

"I've always joked that if there's a tornado movie that works that the next year there will be three tornado movies. There's an internal prejudice to doing what works," says Richard Gelfond, IMAX chief executive. "I'm hopeful that these movies were original by noted filmmakers will convince studios to lean into that direction rather than doing what's safe.

"The numbers don't lie," added Gelfond.

And the numbers are eyepopping. The total box office in U.S. and Canadian theaters on the weekend was more than \$300 million, the fourth highest ever. Warner Bros.' "Barbie" grossed \$162 million domestically, the best opening of the year. Universal's "Oppenheimer" took in \$82.4 million. Those results, riding critical acclaim and months of a viral double-feature drum beat, nearly doubled expectations and astonished Hollywood.

In the wake of "Barbenheimer," many are hoping Hollywood will draw a lesson other than greenlighting more toy adaptations and the inevitable "Barbie" sequel.

"Everyone came out this weekend for two ORIGINAL, smart, quality movies," wrote Clare Binns, managing director of indie distributor Picturehouse, on Twitter. "It's what audiences want. Reboots, superheroes and films with bloated budgets that often cover a lack of ideas -- time to take stock. No algorithms this

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weekend.”

Lately, some of the movies’ biggest franchises have shown signs of wear and tear.

“Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny,” coming 42 years after “Raiders of the Lost Ark,” has failed to ignite in theaters. It’s made \$335 million worldwide with a budget more than double that of “Barbie,” which cost \$145 million.

The 10th “Fast and the Furious” movie, “Fast X,” was a dud domestically, though international sales have been robust. In three days, “Barbie” already surpassed its total North American haul of \$145.9 million.

The seventh “Mission: Impossible” film, “Dead Reckoning Part One,” fell shy of expectations before getting blown away by “Barbenheimer.” It declined 64% in its second weekend.

Meanwhile, recent Marvel films and DC movies haven’t approached the kinds of grosses once assured of comic-book adaptations. Marvel’s “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3,” with \$843 million worldwide, has been a big seller but movies like “Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania” and “The Flash” have fallen well shy of expectations.

The nostalgia business isn’t going anywhere, nor is Hollywood’s dependence on remakes and sequels. In last year’s top 10 films at the box office, one movie was a reboot (“The Batman”) and the rest were sequels.

But such overdependence on more-of-the-same was sure to run out of steam one day — and this year’s best performers are coming from some new places.

“The Super Mario Bros. Movie” (\$1.3 billion worldwide) isn’t anyone’s idea of cutting-edge cinema but it reflects Hollywood’s new embrace of the giant gaming industry.

The year’s second-biggest hit, “Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse” (\$375.2 million domestically) is yet one more “Spider-Man” movie. But it and its predecessor, “Into the Spider-Verse,” are hellbent on upending comic-book convention and expanding the notion of who can be a superhero.

Originality can be riskier for studios, but the payoff can be immense — just ask James Cameron. His reigning franchise goliath, “Avatar,” reached \$2.3 billion with “Avatar: The Way of Water,” a futuristic, sci-fi epic that essentially created its own IP.

What else is working? Movies that appeal to audiences that have historically been underserved. “Creed III,” starring Michael B. Jordan, blew past expectations in March and ended up with more than \$275 million globally on a \$75 million budget. “Sound of Freedom,” from the faith-based distributor Angel Studios, has made \$124 million in three weeks — though its distributor is using an unusual “Pay it Forward” purchasing program.

And of course, horror remains the easiest money. “Insidious: The Red Door” is just the latest in long, bloody line of low-budget, high-performance Blumhouse titles. It’s made \$156 million worldwide on a \$16 million budget.

“Barbie” and “Oppenheimer” are widely expected to play strongly for weeks. They’ve reminded everyone of the limitless cultural potency of the movies. When stars, marketing muscle and filmmaking vision collide, anything can happen. And, sure, it doesn’t hurt when their names make a funny smushed-together nickname.

Whether that momentum will dissipate in the waning weeks of the summer will be left up to a series of releases — “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem,” “Haunted Mansion,” “Gran Turismo,” “Strays,” “Blue Beetle” — that may struggle to keep the spark alive. Meanwhile, the ongoing strike by actors and screenwriters has begun to play havoc with the fall movie schedule. Hollywood remains locked in battle over its future.

Since the pandemic, studios and theater owners have tried various ways to bring back moviegoers to cinemas after the rush to streaming platforms — everything from Tom Cruise jumping off a cliff to \$3 tickets for a day. But it could be that what moviegoers are most craving is the chance to see something new.

Mark Harris, author of the Hollywood history “Pictures at a Revolution: Five Movies and the Birth of the New Hollywood,” believes a developing shift has “become undeniable.”

“In ‘Pictures at a Revolution’ I wrote that an unexpected big hit is much more disruptive to the Hollywood

system than a big flop is," Harris wrote on Twitter. "That's where we are: TWO surprise smashes that suggest you get people back to the movies by giving them what they haven't seen, not what they have."

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

## Israeli parliament takes first major step in Netanyahu's contentious overhaul, deepening divisions

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's parliament on Monday approved the first major law in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's contentious plan to overhaul the country's justice system, triggering a new burst of mass protests and drawing accusations that he was pushing the country toward authoritarian rule.

The vote, passed unanimously by Netanyahu's governing coalition after the opposition stormed out of the hall, deepened the fissures that have tested the delicate social ties that bind the country, rattled the cohesion of its powerful military and repeatedly drew concern from Israel's closest ally, the United States.

It came just hours after Netanyahu was released from the hospital, where he had a pacemaker implanted, adding another dizzying twist to an already dramatic series of events.

As Netanyahu's allies celebrated their victory and vowed to press ahead with more changes, thousands of protesters took to the streets of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv and opponents said they would challenge the new law in the Supreme Court.

"It's a sad day," opposition leader Yair Lapid said after the vote. "This is not a victory for the coalition. This is the destruction of Israeli democracy."

The overhaul calls for sweeping changes aimed at curbing the powers of the judiciary, from limiting the Supreme Court's ability to challenge parliamentary decisions to changing the way judges are selected.

Netanyahu and his allies say the changes strengthen democracy by limiting the authority of unelected judges and giving elected officials more powers over decision-making.

But protesters see the overhaul as a power grab fueled by personal and political grievances of Netanyahu — who is on trial for corruption charges — and his partners.

His allies, who include ultra-nationalist and ultra-religious parties, have called for increased West Bank settlement construction, annexation of the occupied territory, perpetuating military draft exemptions for ultra-Orthodox men, and limiting the rights of LGBTQ+ people and Palestinians.

The White House, which has repeatedly urged Netanyahu to pause his overhaul plan until he has a broad consensus, expressed regret. "It is unfortunate that the vote today took place with the slimmest possible majority," it said.

Under the Israeli system, the prime minister governs through a majority coalition in parliament — in effect giving him control over the executive and legislative branches of government.

As a result, the Supreme Court plays a critical oversight role. Critics say that by seeking to weaken the judiciary, Netanyahu and his allies are trying to erode the country's checks and balances and consolidate power over the third, independent branch of government.

In a televised address Monday night, Netanyahu rejected such criticism. "Today we did a necessary democratic act, an act that is intended to return a measure of balance between the branches of government," he said.

He vowed to seek renewed dialogue with the political opposition and called for national unity. "Let us reach agreements," he said. "I extend my hand in a call for peace and mutual respect between us."

As he spoke, Israel's Channel 13 TV showed a split screen with a police water cannon spraying crowds of protesters.

In Monday's vote, lawmakers approved a measure that prevents judges from striking down government decisions on the basis they are "unreasonable."

The government's critics say removing the standard of reasonability opens the door to corruption and improper appointments of unqualified cronies to important positions. The Supreme Court, for instance, this

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Some programs do offer to directly pay funeral homes or medical providers. But for victims in places that don't, the expense can mean not being able to pay rent or having to decline services like counseling because the grocery bill is more pressing.

Programs also require victims to exhaust other payment options first, like insurance, lawsuit awards or even crowdfunding. If a family member or friend starts a GoFundMe drive, it could cause some programs to reduce an award or claw back already granted money.

The wait for help also causes financial strain. While some states report claims are processed within days, others take months or even years. The average processing time in 2022 was three months, according to federal data collected from states.

Andrew LeFevre, the executive director of the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, which oversees victim compensation and other state programs, said more stable funding sources would mean faster payments and more victims having access to help.

About a dozen states get most or all of their funding from recurring state budget dollars. But many states have put the onus of paying for the programs on people in the criminal justice system – court fines, taking a percentage of prisoner wages or prison commissary fees.

Those funding streams can fluctuate greatly. Temporary court closures early in the pandemic, sentencing reforms and changes to how some prosecutors charge misdemeanor crimes have all meant fewer dollars for many state programs.

LeFevre has been talking to Arizona lawmakers for years about the need for stable funding. Over the last decade, revenue dropped 38% in the state's Criminal Justice Enhancement fund, largely gathered through surcharges on criminal and civil penalties, that pays for compensation and other programs.

Last year, Arizona lawmakers bolstered the program with \$10 million in one-time American Rescue Plan money and supplemented its budget with a recurring \$2 million in general funds. But even that is considerably less than the about \$14 million annually LeFevre estimates the program needs to serve all victims in the state without using criminal justice funds.

"We didn't advertise the program (to victims) ourselves," LeFevre said. "Because the last thing we wanted was to have twice as many victims coming forward and not be able to help them."

Hawaii's program has relied primarily on fines and fees since 1998. But chronic shortfalls nearly forced the program to close in 2022. An influx of general funds from the legislature to pay staff "saved" the program, according to an annual report.

A handful of state legislatures have used one-time general fund infusions to plug budget holes created by the downstream effects of criminal justice reforms.

California's restitution fund fell by about 27% from fiscal year 2021 to 2022. State lawmakers boosted general fund dollars to cover the gap and for the following budget year. But the program still relies partly on the unstable restitution fund, which advocates say makes lawmakers hesitant to expand the program or remove hurdles.

Many states rely heavily on matching dollars they get from the U.S. Justice Department's Office for Victims of Crime. But even its Crime Victims Fund depends on fluctuating criminal fines, penalties, forfeited bail and other special assessments, which has also meant financial uncertainty.

Less money was going to the federal fund after a shift in legal strategy led to more deferred federal prosecutions, usually in white-collar crime cases, which means those cases don't go to court if fines or other conditions are met. Congress addressed that in 2021 by redirecting fines from those pre-prosecution agreements into the fund. Lawmakers also increased the percentage of matching funds states receive annually.

In Louisiana, past funding shortages had left victims approved for compensation waiting sometimes more than a year to receive help. The state started clearing the backlog in 2017 by transferring money saved by lower incarceration costs created through prison reform, which also increased its federal reimbursement.

White's application filed in 2020 wasn't part of the backlog, but it still took close to two years for her case to be settled. Each Christmas, she put up the silver tree from Dararius' apartment. And she waited.

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year struck down Netanyahu's appointment of a key ally for interior and finance minister as unreasonable because of past convictions for bribery and tax cheating.

With the opposition out of the hall, the measure passed by a 64-0 margin.

Justice Minister Yariv Levin, the architect of the plan, said parliament had taken the "first step in an important historic process."

"This is just the beginning," added National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir.

Opposition lawmakers chanted "shame" and "government of destruction" before leaving the chamber.

The chant was a reference to the upcoming Jewish day of mourning, the Ninth of Av, which marks the destruction of two ancient Temples in Jerusalem. According to Jewish tradition, the Roman Empire succeeded in destroying the Second Temple because of Jewish infighting.

The grassroots protest movement, which has regularly drawn tens of thousands of people into the streets for the past seven months, condemned Monday's vote by Netanyahu's "government of extremists" and vowed to press ahead.

"No one can predict the extent of damage and social upheaval that will follow the passage of the legislation," it said.

Thousands of people, many waving blue-and-white Israeli flags, gathered outside the Knesset, or parliament, and the Supreme Court, and jammed Jerusalem's main highway. Walls and fences were plastered with stickers reading "we won't serve a dictator," "democracy or rebellion" and "save Israel from Netanyahu."

Police tried to clear the crowds with water cannons spraying skunk-scented water. Many protesters put plugs in their noses or held up sprigs of rosemary plucked from nearby bushes to try to control the stench.

"This puts us on the way to dictatorship," said protester Danny Kimmel, a 55-year-old program manager. "You don't do this to people who are protesting. It's their right."

Thousands of people also demonstrated in central Tel Aviv – the epicenter of months of anti-government protests. Scuffles took place between police and protesters, with at least eight people arrested and protesters lighting bonfires. Police said they arrested a driver who hit a group of protesters in central Israel, injuring three people

The overhaul has exposed deep divisions in Israeli society — much of it along religious, ethnic and class lines.

While protesters represent a cross section of society, they come largely from the country's secular middle class, while Netanyahu's supporters tend to be poorer, more religious and live in West Bank settlements or outlying rural areas.

Many of his supporters are working-class Mizrahi Jews, with roots in Middle Eastern countries, and have expressed hostility toward what they say is an elitist class of Ashkenazi, or European, Jews.

Israel's Palestinian Arab minority has largely stayed away from the protests, with many saying they do not feel like they have a stake.

The protests have largely avoided Israel's 56-year occupation of lands the Palestinians seek for their hoped-for-independent state, fearing the issue might alienate supporters. Critics accuse the protesters of harboring a significant blind spot.

Further ratcheting up the pressure on Netanyahu, thousands of military reservists have declared their refusal to serve under a government they see as setting the country on a path to dictatorship — prompting fears that the military's preparedness could be compromised.

In his address, Netanyahu urged reservists to continue to serve and "leave army service out of the political debate."

Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute, a Jerusalem think tank, said Monday's vote had exposed long-running weaknesses in Israel's system of government.

"The immediate outcome will be to escalate internal divisions within Israeli society and undermine Israeli security," he said. Increased uncertainty, he added, "will also have a negative economic impact."

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Associated Press writers Ilan Ben Zion, Sam McNeil and Julia Frankel contributed to this report.

## Elon Musk reveals new 'X' logo to replace Twitter's blue bird

By KELVIN CHAN and BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Business Writers

Goodbye, Twitter. Hello, X.

Elon Musk has unveiled a new "X" logo to replace Twitter's famous blue bird as he follows through with a major rebranding of the social media platform he bought for \$44 billion last year.

The X started appearing at the top of the desktop version of Twitter on Monday, but the bird was still dominant across the smartphone app. At Twitter's headquarters in San Francisco, meanwhile, workers were seen removing the iconic bird and logo Monday until police showed up and stopped them because they didn't have the proper permits and didn't tape off the sidewalk to keep pedestrians safe if anything fell.

As of early afternoon, the "er" at the end of Twitter remained visible.

The haphazard erasure of both the physical and virtual remnants of Twitter's past were in many ways typical of the chaotic way Musk has run the company since his reluctant purchase.

"It's the end of an era, and a clear signal that the Twitter of the past 17 years is gone and not coming back," said Jasmine Enberg, an analyst with Insider Intelligence. "But the writing was on the wall: Musk has been vocal about transforming Twitter into platform X from the start, and Twitter was already a shell of its former self."

It's yet another change that Musk has made since acquiring Twitter that has alienated users and turned off advertisers, leaving the microblogging site vulnerable to new threats, including rival Meta's new text-based app Threads that directly targets Twitter users.

Musk had asked fans for logo ideas and chose one, which he described as minimalist Art Deco, saying it "certainly will be refined." He replaced his own Twitter icon with a white X on a black background and posted a picture of the design projected on Twitter's San Francisco headquarters.

"And soon we shall bid adieu to the twitter brand and, gradually, all the birds," Musk tweeted Sunday.

The X.com web domain now redirects users to Twitter.com, Musk said.

"I can't say I'm surprised, but I think it's a very selfish decision," said Hannah Thoreson of Baltimore, Maryland, who's used Twitter since 2009 for work and personal posts.

"There are so many small businesses and so many nonprofits and so many government agencies and things like that all around the world that have relied on Twitter for many years to push their message and reach people," she said. "And they all have the Twitter icon on everything from their website to their business cards."

Changing all this costs time and money, she added, not to mention the confusion that comes with a previously unknown brand name.

"I mean, do you want to get rid of the Coca-Cola brand if you're Coca-Cola? Why would you do that?" said Thoreson, who now primarily uses Mastodon.

Musk, CEO of Tesla, has long been fascinated with the letter X and had already renamed Twitter's corporate name to X Corp. after he bought it in October. In response to questions about what tweets would be called when the rebranding is done, Musk said they would be called Xs.

The billionaire is also CEO of rocket company Space Exploration Technologies Corp., commonly known as SpaceX. And he started an artificial intelligence company this month called xAI to compete with ChatGPT. In 1999, he founded a startup called X.com, an online financial services company now known as PayPal.

Additionally, he calls one of his sons, whose mother is singer Grimes, "X." The child's actual name is a collection of letters and symbols.

Musk's Twitter purchase and rebranding are part of his strategy to create what he's dubbed an "everything app" similar to China's WeChat, which combines video chats, messaging, streaming and payments. Musk has made a number of drastic changes since taking over Twitter, including a shift to focusing on paid subscriptions, but he doesn't always follow through on his attention-grabbing new policy pronouncements.

Linda Yaccarino, the longtime NBC Universal executive Musk tapped to be Twitter CEO in May, posted the new logo and weighed in on the change, writing on Twitter that X would be "the future state of unlimited interactivity — centered in audio, video, messaging, payments/banking — creating a global marketplace

for ideas, goods, services, and opportunities.”

But ad industry analysts were less certain about X’s prospects.

“Musk supporters will likely celebrate the rebrand, but it’s a gloomy day for many Twitter users and advertisers,” Enberg said. “Twitter’s corporate brand is already heavily intertwined with Musk’s personal brand, with or without the name X, and much of Twitter’s established brand equity has already been lost among users and advertisers.”

Some predicted the new name will confuse much of Twitter’s audience, which has already been souring on the social media platform following Musk’s other modifications, including limiting the number of tweets users can read each day. The new threshold is part of an \$8-per-month subscription service Musk rolled out earlier this year in an attempt to boost Twitter revenue.

Whether advertisers will ever return depends on how successful the rebranding is and whether Musk is able to accomplish his goal of creating an “everything app.” That remains to be seen, said ad expert Mark DiMassimo.

“Advertisers care about what they’re buying. So if his strategies work, I don’t think advertisers could care less about what he calls it,” DiMassimo said.

“I think changing the name is just a way for him to say, ‘Stop having Twitter expectations, this is a new thing, judge it as a new thing,’” he added. “And you know, that only works if the new thing works.”

Twitter users also pointed out that few people refer to Alphabet, Google’s parent company since 2015. Facebook renamed itself Meta in 2021, but its collection of apps — Instagram, WhatsApp and Facebook — still retain their own brands and logos.

Twitter’s recognizable blue bird logo went live more than a decade ago in 2012, replacing an earlier bird logo ahead of the company’s Wall Street debut as a publicly traded company.

“I’m sad to see it go. It had a great run,” said the logo’s designer, Martin Grasser. “But 11 years, 12 years is really long for a corporate identity to stick around. It feels like the platform is changing and they have a new direction and it makes sense” that they would pick a new logo to signal those changes.

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AP Technology Writer Matt O’Brien in Providence, Rhode Island, AP Business Writer Mae Anderson in New York and AP Video Journalist Haven Daley in San Francisco contributed to this story.

## Ohio investigates why a police dog was deployed on a surrendering truck driver

CIRCLEVILLE, Ohio (AP) — Several Ohio agencies are investigating why an officer allowed his police dog to attack a truck driver who was surrendering with his hands raised, despite State Highway Patrol troopers urging the officer to hold the dog back.

The lengthy pursuit on July 4 and the ensuing attack were captured on a police body camera. The chase began on state highway 35, when state troopers tried to stop a commercial semitruck that was missing a mudflap and failed to halt for an inspection, according to a Ohio State Highway Patrol incident report made available to The Associated Press.

The nearby Circleville Police Department was called in to assist, including a K9 police dog, authorities said. The truck driver, Jadarrius Rose, 23, of Memphis, Tennessee, who is Black, initially refused to get out of the truck and later defied instructions to get on the ground, according to the Highway Patrol incident report and the body cam video.

“The suspect failed to stop for marked patrol units with lights and sirens activated,” the report said. Rose eventually got on his knees and raised his hands in the air.

A Circleville police statement does not say if the officer will face any disciplinary action, and does not identify him. A person who answered the phone at the police department on Monday declined to comment and wouldn’t give their name.

However, the State Highway Patrol incident report identifies the K9 officer as Officer Ryan Speakman

of the Circleville Police Department.

The body camera video shows Speakman holding back the K9, and a trooper can be heard off-camera repeatedly yelling, "Do not release the dog with his hands up!" However, Speakman deploys the dog, and it can be seen in the video attacking Rose.

The trooper can be heard yelling: "Get the dog off of him!" Rose appears to be in pain and yells "Get it off! Please! Please!" before the attack ends. Rose was treated at a hospital for dog bites.

Rose was charged with failure to comply, and he did not respond to an emailed request for comment. Messages were also left with attorney Benjamin Partee, who was identified in media reports as Rose's lawyer.

It's not yet clear why he refused to stop for the inspector and police. He told The Columbus Dispatch that he couldn't talk about why he didn't stop but, when asked about the video, told the newspaper: "I'm just glad that it was recorded. What you saw is what, pretty much, happened."

Audio recordings of 911 calls that were released by the Ross County Sheriff's Office show Rose told emergency dispatchers that the officers pursuing him were "trying to kill" him and he didn't feel safe pulling over. He also said he was confused about why the officers were trying to stop him and why they had their guns drawn after he briefly stopped the truck before driving away.

The dispatcher repeatedly told Rose he should stop and comply with police, and also told him the officers were not trying to harm him.

Ross County Prosecutor Jeffrey Marks said Monday that Rose was charged there "based on the events that happened" in the county. Marks' office is now reviewing materials in the case and will ultimately decide whether any charges should be brought before a county grand jury. However, Marks said his office has no say in whether the Circleville officer is charged since that episode didn't happen in Ross County.

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This story has been updated to correct that the pursuit was initiated by the Ohio State Highway Patrol, not the Circleville Police Department.

## **After decades of delays and broken promises, coal miners hail rule to slow rise of black lung**

By LEAH WILLINGHAM and MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — A half-century ago, the nation's top health experts urged the federal agency in charge of mine safety to adopt strict rules protecting miners from poisonous rock dust.

The inaction since — fueled by denials and lobbying from coal and other industries — has contributed to the premature deaths of thousands of miners from pneumoconiosis, more commonly known as "black lung." The problem has only grown in recent years as miners dig through more layers of rock to get to less accessible coal, generating deadly silica dust in the process.

One former regulator called the lack of protection from silica-related illnesses "stunning" and one of the most "catastrophic" occupational health failures in U.S. history.

Now the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration has proposed a rule that would cut the current limit for silica exposure by half — a major victory for safety advocates. But there is skepticism and concern about the government following through after years of broken promises and delays.

James Bounds, a retired coal miner from Oak Hill, West Virginia, said nothing can be done to reverse the debilitating illness he was diagnosed with at 37 in 1984. But he doesn't want others to suffer the same fate.

"It's not going to help me — I'm through mining," said Bounds, 75, who now uses supplemental oxygen to breathe. "But we don't want these young kids breathing like we do."

The rule, published in the Federal Register this month, cuts the permissible exposure limit for silica dust from 100 to 50 micrograms per cubic meter of air for an 8-hour shift in coal, metal and nonmetal mines such as sand and gravel.

The proposal is in line with exposure levels imposed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on construction and other non-mining industries. And it's the standard the Centers for Disease Control

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and Prevention was recommending as far back as 1974.

Silicosis is an occupational pneumoconiosis caused by the inhalation of crystalline silica dust present in minerals like sandstone. The U.S. Department of Labor began studying silica and its impact on workers' health in the 1930s, but the focus on stopping exposure in the workplace largely bypassed coal miners.

Instead, regulations centered on coal dust, a separate hazard created by crushing or pulverizing coal rock that also contributes to black lung.

In the decades since, silica dust has become a major problem as Appalachian miners cut through layers of sandstone to reach less accessible coal seams in mountaintop mines where coal closer to the surface has long been tapped. Silica dust is 20 times more toxic than coal dust and causes severe forms of black lung disease even after a few years of exposure.

An estimated one in five tenured miners in Central Appalachia has black lung disease; one in 20 has the most disabling form of black lung.

Miners are also being diagnosed at younger ages — some in their 30s and others with the advanced kind in their 40s. "That's just nuts," said Dr. Carl Werntz, a West Virginia physician who conducts black lung examinations and described cases as "skyrocketing."

United Mine Workers of America President Cecil Roberts said there's no reason a 35-year-old miner should be diagnosed with a disease "that's going to cost him his life."

"Nobody should be dying because of a job they have," Roberts said.

The federal mine safety agency's existing silica standards were developed in the 1970s, around the time of the U.S. Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 and the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977.

Chris Williamson, assistant labor secretary for mine safety and health, said the proposed rule would protect miners' health. "Miners should never be forced to choose between preserving their health and providing for themselves and their families," he said.

West Virginia University law professor Pat McGinley, who was part of a state team investigating the 2010 Upper Big Branch mining disaster that killed 29 miners, called the resurgence of black lung "unparalleled" when it comes to occupational health failures. In the Upper Big Branch mine, 71% of the 24 miners who received autopsies were found to have black lung.

"I can't think of any occupation where there has been such devastation that's been ignored" by corporations and the government, he said. "It's stunning."

The new rule is supported by Democratic Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia, Sherrod Brown of Ohio, Bob Casey and John Fetterman of Pennsylvania, and Mark Warner and Tim Kaine of Virginia, who pushed for the change and released a joint statement saying protecting miners from "dangerous levels of silica cannot wait."

The Mine Safety and Health Administration will be collecting comments on the proposal through Aug. 28, with a final rule expected next year. Three hearings scheduled in Arlington, Virginia, Beckley, West Virginia, and Denver.

One issue expected to come up: the use of respiratory protection equipment.

The National Mining Association, which represents mine operators, wants workers to be permitted to use respirators as a method of compliance with the rule.

"These are recognized industrial hygiene practices utilized by" federal regulators in other industries, "but not in mining," spokesman Conor Bernstein said, adding that better ventilation controls, safety awareness and regulations on coal dust have all contributed to "exponentially lower dust levels" inside U.S. mines in recent years.

The mine workers' union and others, however, say respirators are ineffective while performing heavy labor in hot, confined spaces common in mines. The proposed rule allows for the use of respirators on a temporary basis while operators are implementing engineering controls. But advocates say inspectors aren't present often enough to ensure they don't become a permanent solution.

"The history of miner safety and health enforcement teaches us that exceptions become the rule," said Sam Petsonk, a West Virginia attorney who represented miners who were diagnosed with black lung after operators knowingly violated regulations.

The proposed rule also includes a provision that allows companies to self-report silica levels. Federal inspectors conduct spot checks to ensure accuracy, but mine operators still have leeway to manipulate reporting data, said Willie Dodson, Central Appalachian field coordinator for Appalachian Voices, an advocacy group.

Ideally, federal inspectors should take samples day after day in a given mine to determine compliance, he said.

A coal dust examiner who worked for a Kentucky mining company was sentenced to six months in prison last month for falsifying dust samples and lying to federal officials.

In rural Nickelsville, Virginia, near the Tennessee line, Vonda Robinson says miners and their families are owed more accountability from the federal government and mine operators. Her husband John was diagnosed with black lung about a decade ago at 47. Now, his doctors say he will need a lung transplant.

Vonda Robinson said her husband doesn't know what to say when his 5-year-old granddaughter asks why he can't run and play with her, why even walking down the end of the driveway leaves him physically spent.

"He'll tell her 'Honey, papaw can't do that,'" she said.

During his 28 years mining, John Robinson would come home with his face covered with dust. But she tried not to worry. Everyone in the community mined coal.

"He was one of those that wanted to go in the mines to give his family the American dream — the nice house, vehicles, put our kids through college," she said. "And this is what he got."

Daly reported from Washington.

## Texas is using disaster declarations to install buoys and razor wire on the US-Mexico border

By VALERIE GONZALEZ and ACACIA CORONADO Associated Press

EAGLE PASS, Texas (AP) — Wrecking ball-sized buoys on the Rio Grande. Razor wire strung across private property without permission. Bulldozers changing the very terrain of America's southern border.

For more than two years, Texas Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has escalated measures to keep migrants from entering the U.S., pushing legal boundaries with a go-it-alone bravado along the state's 1,200-mile (1,930-kilometer) border with Mexico. Now blowback over the tactics is widening, including from within Texas.

A state trooper's account of officers denying migrants water in 100-degree Fahrenheit (37.7 Celsius) temperatures and razor wire leaving asylum-seekers bloodied has prompted renewed criticism. The Mexican government, some Texas residents along the border and the Biden administration are pushing back. On Monday, the U.S. Justice Department sued Abbott over the buoy barrier that it says raises humanitarian and environmental concerns, asking a federal court to require Texas to dismantle it.

Abbott, who cruised to a third term in November while promising tougher border crackdowns, has used disaster declarations as the legal bedrock for some measures.

Critics call that a warped view.

"There are so many ways that what Texas is doing right now is just flagrantly illegal," said David Donatti, an attorney for the Texas American Civil Liberties Union.

Abbott did not respond to requests for comment. He has repeatedly attacked President Joe Biden's border policies, tweeting Friday that they "encourage migrants to risk their lives crossing illegally through the Rio Grande, instead of safely and legally over a bridge."

The Biden administration has said illegal border crossings have declined significantly since new immigration rules took effect in May.

### ALTERED BORDER

Under the international bridge connecting Eagle Pass, Texas, with Piedras Negras, Mexico, protesters gathered at Shelby Park this month, chanting "save the river" and blowing a conch shell in a ceremony. A few yards away, crews unloaded neon-orange buoys from trailers parked by a boat ramp off the Rio Grande.

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Jessie Fuentes stood with the environmental advocates, watching as state troopers restricted access to the water where he holds an annual kayak race. Shipping containers and layers of concertina wire lined the riverbank.

The experienced kayaker often took clients and race participants into the water through a shallow channel formed by a border island covered in verdant brush. That has been replaced by a bulldozed stretch of barren land connected to the mainland and fortified with razor wire.

"The river is a federally protected river by so many federal agencies, and I just don't know how it happened," Fuentes told the Eagle Pass City Council the night before.

Neither did the City Council.

"I feel like the state government has kind of bypassed local government in a lot of different ways. And so I felt powerless at times," council member Elias Diaz told The Associated Press.

The International Boundary of Water Commission says it was not notified when Texas modified several islands or deployed the massive buoys to create a barrier covering 1,000 feet (305 meters) of the middle of the Rio Grande, with anchors in the riverbed.

Abbott on Monday sent a letter to Biden that defended Texas' right to install the barrier. He accused Biden of putting migrants at risk by not doing more to deter them from making the journey to the U.S.

The floating barrier also provoked tension with Mexico, which says it violates treaties. Mexico's secretary of foreign relations asked the U.S. government to remove the buoys and razor wire in a June letter.

Fuentes sued over the buoys, arguing that border crossings are not covered by the Texas Disaster Act.

As for the river islands, the Texas General Land Office gave the state Department of Public Safety access starting in April "to curb the ongoing border crisis."

"Additionally, the General Land Office will also permit vegetation management, provided compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations is upheld," said a letter from the office's commissioner, Dawn Buckingham.

The Texas Military Department cleared out carrizo cane, which Buckingham's office called an "invasive plant" in its response to questions from the AP, and changed the landscape, affecting the river's flow.

Environmental experts are concerned.

"As far as I know, if there's flooding in the river, it's much more severe in Piedras Negras than it is in Eagle Pass because that's the lower side of the river. And so next time the river really gets up, it's going to push a lot of water over on the Mexican side, it looks like to me," said Tom Vaughan, a retired professor and co-founder of the Rio Grande International Study Center.

Fuentes recently sought special permission from the city and DPS to navigate through his familiar kayaking route.

"Since they rerouted the water on the island, the water is flowing differently," Fuentes said. "I can feel it."

The state declined to release any records that might detail the environmental impacts of the buoys or changes to the landscape.

Victor Escalon, a DPS regional director overseeing Del Rio down to Brownsville, pointed to the governor's emergency disaster declaration. "We do everything we can to prevent crime, period. And that's the job," he added.

## TRESPASSING TO STOP TRESPASSERS

For one property owner, the DPS mission cut him out of his land.

In 2021, as Eagle Pass became the preferred route by migrants crossing into the U.S., Magali and Hugo Urbina bought a pecan orchard by the river that they called Heavenly Farms.

Hugo Urbina worked with DPS when the agency built a fence on his property and arrested migrants for trespassing. But the relationship turned acrimonious a year later after DPS asked to put up concertina wire on riverfront property that the Urbinas were leasing to the U.S. Border Patrol to process immigrants.

Hugo Urbina wanted DPS to sign a lease that would release him from liability if the wire caused injuries. DPS declined but still installed concertina wire, moved vehicles onto the property and shut the Urbinas' gates. That cut off the Border Patrol's access to the river, though it still leases land from Urbina.

"They do whatever it is that they want," Urbina said this month.

The farmer, a Republican, calls it "poison politics." Critics call it déjà vu.

"I also really see a very strong correlation to the Trump and post-Trump era in which most of the Trump administration's immigration policy was aggressive and extreme and very violative of people's rights, and very focused on making the political point," said Aron Thorn, an attorney with the Texas Civil Rights Project. "The design of this is the optics and the amount of things that they sacrifice for those optics now is quite extraordinary."

DPS works with 300 landowners, according to Escalon. He said it is unusual for the department to take over a property without the landowner's consent, but the agency says the Disaster Act provides the authority. Urbina said he supports the governor's efforts, "but not in this way."

"You don't go out there and start breaking the law and start making your citizens feel like they're second-hand citizens," he added.

## Abortion messaging roils debate over Ohio ballot initiative.

### Backers said it wasn't about that

By JULIE CARR SMYTH and ALI SWENSON Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The fraught politics of abortion have helped turn an August ballot question in Ohio that would make it harder to change the state constitution into a cauldron of misinformation and fear-mongering.

State Issue 1, the sole question on the ballot, calls for raising the threshold for passing future changes to the Ohio Constitution from a simple majority to 60%. Starting next year, it also would double the number of counties where signatures must be gathered, from 44 to all 88, and do away with the 10-day grace period for closing gaps in the total valid signatures submitted.

Republican state lawmakers and the GOP elections chief urgently advanced the proposal as an abortion rights question was working its way toward the ballot this fall. However, they insisted it had nothing to do with thwarting that measure.

But early summer messaging on social media and in churches has consistently urged a yes vote on the August amendment "to protect life" — and that's just one example of the loaded messages confronting voters during the campaign.

Protect Women Ohio, the campaign against the fall abortion issue, is airing pro-Issue 1 ads suggesting that abortions rights proponents at work in the state "encourage minors to get sex change surgeries and want to trash parental consent." The fall abortion amendment would protect access to various forms of reproductive health care but makes no mention of gender surgery, and the attorneys who wrote it say Ohio's parental consent law would not be affected.

Groups opposing Issue 1 also have played on voters' fears with their messaging against the 60% threshold. One spot by the Democratic political group Progress Action Fund shows a couple steamily groping in their bedroom, then interrupted by a white-haired Republican congressman who has come to take their birth control. It closes with a caption: "Keep Republicans Out of Your Bedroom. Vote No On Aug. 8."

While the ad is based in fears that the U.S. Supreme Court could limit rights to at-home contraception and Issue 1 would make it harder to enshrine those in Ohio's state constitution, "the direct, immediate issue is abortion," said Susan Burgess, a political science professor at Ohio University.

The divergent abortion communications around Issue 1 reflects a big problem Republicans in Ohio must confront: holding an increasingly diverse voting bloc together, Burgess said.

"That is a complicated coalition that includes evangelicals; it includes people on the far right, it includes libertarians and includes, you know, old-time Reagan Republicans," she said. "They need to be able to talk about abortion to hold a certain part of their coalition together, but it's not a political winner at this time for them to stick to a hard-line abortion argument."

Issue 1 supporters' conversations in more targeted settings reflect that duality.

Republican Secretary of State Frank LaRose, who supports the measure, has previously called Issue 1 a "win for good government" that protects Ohioans from out-of-state special interests.

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But he had a different tone at a Seneca County dinner for Lincoln Day in May, when he said that the August measure "is 100% about keeping a radical, pro-abortion amendment out of our constitution." In an Associated Press interview, LaRose said that comment — now featured in ads around the state — was clipped from a lengthy speech and taken out of context.

Aaron Baer, president of the Center for Christian Virtue, said on a radio show this month that his organization is only connecting Issue 1 to abortion with certain segments of Ohio voters.

"When we go up on TV, is the ad going to be on abortion? Probably not," he told host Bob Frantz on "Always Right Radio." But, Baer said, when talking to conservative audiences, "we're hitting the life issue hard because it really exemplifies why you have to be fired up and go vote."

That two-track approach is reflected in the pro-Issue 1 campaign's first statewide ad, which debuted Monday and steers clear of abortion. Instead, it highlights that amendments to the U.S. Constitution require a two-thirds vote while Ohio's requires a simple 50%-plus-one majority. Ohioans overwhelmingly voted to set the lower threshold in 1912, in a Progressive-era response to rampant political corruption.

Kimberly Inez McGuire, executive director of Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity, an advocacy group, said she believes Issue 1 supporters are playing down abortion in their statewide messaging because they know public opinion isn't on their side.

"We're seeing more and more legislators and opponents of abortion who understand that their agenda is extremely unpopular with the American people," she said. "We're seeing special sessions, we're seeing anti-abortion bills passed in the dead of night, and we're seeing these denials from those who are pushing a measure that is designed to undercut democracy with the intention of hurting Ohio's abortion measure."

Mark Caleb Smith, a political science professor at southwest Ohio's Cedarville University, said abortion is emotionally charged and easy to understand — and can therefore engage Ohioans to donate, volunteer and vote when they otherwise wouldn't bother with an off-season election about something as esoteric as how to amend the state's constitution.

Calling Issue 1 abortion-related also reflects the truth that its passage is pivotal to whether November's abortion ballot issue passes in Ohio, Smith said. Amendments protecting access to abortion in other states have typically passed — but with less than 60% of the vote. AP VoteCast polling last year found 59% of Ohio voters say abortion should generally be legal.

Kayla Griffin, Ohio state director of All Voting Is Local Action and an opponent of Issue 1, said her side wants to keep the messaging on Issue 1 broader than just abortion.

"While abortion is on the ballot right now, minimum wage is on the ballot next," she said. "We are bigger and our democracy is far bigger than a single issue, and we have to be able to navigate that when we go to the ballot box."

Voting rights groups and Ohio's former chief justice also are at work on a constitutional amendment to change Ohio's broken redistricting system.

As both supporters and opponents of Issue 1 seek voter buy-in, some of their messaging has strayed into misinformation.

"Ohio Should Vote for Issue 1 to Help Stop Abortions Up to Birth," read a headline last week on LifeNews.com.

But the November abortion initiative wouldn't stop the state's lawmakers from restricting abortions after the fetus is viable outside the womb, around 23 or 24 weeks.

Medical experts dispute the concept of abortions "up to birth," saying that pregnancy terminations at that stage are very rare — only 0.7% of abortions in Ohio in 2021 occurred after 21 weeks — and typically involve medication that induces birth early, which is different from a surgical abortion. The procedure, which is also referred to as an induction abortion, typically happens only if the fetus has a low probability of survival.

An email from Right to Life of Greater Cincinnati went a step farther, claiming without evidence that sex traffickers and abortion providers were "evil twins" working together to "aid and abet" one another.

Democrat Teresa Fedor, a former state lawmaker who championed Ohio's sex trafficking crackdown in

the legislature, said she didn't find a prominent connection between sex trafficking and forced abortion during her 20 years working on the issue.

"My perspective is the anti-reproductive health care advocates are so desperate to pass Issue 1, they will unfortunately use a false narrative to influence their supporters," she said in an email.

\_\_\_ Swenson reported from Seattle. 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.

## **How David Bowie, long thought ambivalent to country music, became a writer on a Chris Young song**

By MARIA SHERMAN AP Music Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Country star Chris Young's latest single, "Young Love & Saturday Nights," is a vivid love letter to summertime weekends, old trucks, dive bar bands, and crushes. And it might sound immediately familiar: The guitar lick that opens the track is lifted directly from David Bowie's 1974 hit "Rebel Rebel."

Bowie is credited posthumously as a songwriter on the track, making it one of the genre-melding icon's few forays into country music — noteworthy, because Bowie himself was not quite a fan of the genre.

"I think the only music I didn't listen to was country and western, and that holds to this day," Bowie told NPR's Terry Gross in 2002. "It's much easier for me to say that, the kind of music I didn't listen to was pretty much that."

So how did Bowie, who died in 2016, end up on the track?

Warner Chappell Music became the custodian of Bowie's musical legacy — acquiring the worldwide rights to over 400 of his songs, including "Rebel Rebel" — when the company purchased his extensive music catalog in 2022.

Ben Vaughn, president and chief executive officer of Warner Chappell Music Nashville, says his team asked songwriter Jesse Frasure to "get creative using elements from Bowie's catalog to write a new country song. He ended up doing an interpolation of 'Rebel Rebel' and the demo he turned in was an instant smash."

"Getting the call from Bowie's estate and Warner Chappell to creatively explore his catalog was an exciting day," Frasure said in a statement. "Interpolations to me are a way of tipping a hat to my heroes and maybe even introducing their music to a new audience."

He added that it is an honor to have Bowie's music "be heard in the country genre."

WCM A&R executive Spencer Nohe then pitched the song to Young's team while their legal counsel, Steve Butler, negotiated the deal.

Young writes many of his own songs, but when he first heard the demo written by Ashley Gorley, Josh Thompson and Frasure, he knew he wanted to record it.

"It tackles universal themes that a lot of people can relate to. That's the end goal of the song: to make you feel like you're in it," Young told The Associated Press. "And the fact that David Bowie's catalog got picked up and they decided to do something special like this, and list him as a songwriter on the song, is a really cool thing."

But how would Bowie himself feel about the posthumous collaboration?

"Hate is a strong word," said Tiffany Naiman, UCLA's director of music industry programs and an expert on Bowie, of the icon's feelings toward the genre. "I think he had a very difficult relationship with certain parts of America including country music."

It might have not been his thing, she said, but that didn't mean he never listened to country music. She urges listeners to consider Bowie's documented love of Elvis Presley, who began his career as a country star, and Bowie's cover of the country track "It Ain't Easy" by Ron Davis, recorded during his 1971 "Hunky Dory" sessions and released on 1972's "The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars."

Young himself told the AP that he doesn't think his song is "introducing David Bowie to a new genre."

Bowie might not have leaned into country music, Young says, but "if you asked country fans, 'Hey, do you know who David Bowie is?' they're going to name a song. And even if they don't, they're going to

recognize the weight of the name.”

## **Russia says Moscow and Crimea hit by Ukrainian drones while Russian forces bombard Ukraine’s south**

By FELIPE DANA and DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian authorities accused Ukraine of launching a drone attack on Moscow early Monday that saw one of the aircraft fall near the Defense Ministry’s main headquarters, while the Russian military unleashed new strikes on port infrastructure in southern Ukraine.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said there were no casualties when the drones struck two nonresidential buildings in Moscow. Separately, a Ukrainian drone struck an ammunition depot in Russian-annexed Crimea, forcing a halt in traffic on a major highway, Russian authorities said.

In Moscow, Russian media reported that one of the drones fell on the Komsomolsky highway near the capital’s center, shattering shop windows and damaged the roof of a house just about 200 meters (just over 200 yards) away from the towering riverside Defense Ministry building. The ministry’s main headquarters has Pantsyr air defense systems placed on the roof.

It wasn’t immediately clear whether the drone targeted the Defense Ministry’s headquarters, which is located 2.7 kilometers (1.7 miles) away from the Kremlin, or was heading to some other target in central Moscow.

Another drone hit an office building in southern Moscow, gutting several upper floors — more visible damage compared to earlier drone strikes on the Russian capital.

Emergency workers were inspecting the damage and traffic was halted on sections of highways where the drones fell.

Ukrainian authorities didn’t immediately claim responsibility for the strike, which was the second drone attack on the Russian capital this month.

In the previous attack on July 4, the Russian military said four of the five drones were downed by air defenses on the outskirts of Moscow and the fifth was jammed by electronic warfare means and forced down. The raid prompted authorities to temporarily restrict flights at Moscow’s Vnukovo airport and divert flights to two other Moscow airports.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov noted Monday that “the intensity of attempts to attack our regions with drones has grown.”

“So measures are being taken, a very intense daily 24-hour work is underway,” Peskov said, without offering any details about whether Russia’s air defence systems have been enhanced because of the increased attacks.

Russian authorities said that another Ukrainian drone attack early Monday struck an ammunition depot in northern Crimea and forced a halt in traffic on a major highway and a railway crossing the Black Sea peninsula that was illegally annexed by Moscow in 2014. Railway traffic was restored several hours later.

The Moscow-appointed head of Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, said that authorities also ordered the evacuation of several villages within a five-kilometer (three-mile) radius of the depot that was hit.

Aksyonov said the military shot down or jammed 11 attacking drones, while the Defense Ministry claimed later that 11 of the 17 attacking drones were jammed and crashed into the Black Sea and another three were shot down.

Mykhailo Fedorov, Ukraine’s digital transformation minister, noted on his messaging app channel that Monday’s drone attacks on Moscow and Crimea signaled that Russia’s electronic warfare means and air defenses are “less and less able to protect the skies of the invaders,” adding that “there will be more of it.”

Ukrainska Pravda reported that the drone attack on Moscow was a special operation by Ukrainian military intelligence.

On Saturday, a previous drone attack on Crimea hit another ammunition depot, sending huge plumes of black smoke skyward and also forcing the evacuation of residents,

Russian forces, meanwhile, struck port infrastructure on the Danube River in southern Ukraine with

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exploding drones early Monday, wounding seven people and destroying a grain hangar and storage for other cargo, Ukrainian officials said. Ukraine's military reported downing three of the attacking drones.

French international news agency Agence France-Presse said one of its video journalists was wounded by a drone attack Monday while reporting at a Ukrainian artillery position near Bakhmut.

Dylan Collins, a U.S. citizen based in Beirut, Lebanon and working on assignment in Ukraine, sustained multiple shrapnel injuries and was evacuated to a nearby hospital where he was being treated. The agency said Collins, 35, is conscious and speaking to colleagues. Doctors say his condition is not life-threatening, the agency said.

Collins' colleague, AFP video journalist Arman Soldin, was killed by Russian rocket fire near Bakhmut in May.

Romanian President Klaus Iohannis on Monday "strongly condemned" the attack on civilian port infrastructure on Ukraine's side of the Danube river which he said was "very close to Romania." Iohannis said on Twitter that the incident poses "serious risks" to security in the Black Sea region.

The strike was the latest in a barrage of attacks that has damaged critical port infrastructure in southern Ukraine in the past week. The Kremlin has described the strikes as retribution for last week's Ukrainian strike on the crucial Kerch Bridge linking Russia with Crimea.

Since Moscow canceled a landmark grain deal a week ago, Russia has launched repeated attacks on Odesa, a key hub for exporting grain.

Wheat prices rose more than 8.5% on Monday after the attack on the Danube, which is a key thoroughfare for Ukraine's grain exports amid the war. It shows the market's anxiety about Moscow expanding its targeting of Ukrainian grain shipments.

The attack also raises questions about a crucial alternate route after Russia exited the accord that provided protections for grain ships in a bid to ease a global food crisis. Russia and Ukraine are two of the world's major wheat, barley and vegetable oil suppliers.

Other routes by road and rail through Europe will heap on transportation costs and likely lead to lower production by Ukrainian farmers, analysts say.

On Sunday, at least one person was killed and 22 others wounded in an attack on Odesa that severely damaged 25 landmarks across the city, including the Transfiguration Cathedral.

UNESCO strongly condemned the attack on the cathedral and other heritage sites and said it will send a mission in coming days to assess damage. Odesa's historic center was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site earlier this year, and the agency said the Russian attacks contradict Moscow's pledge to take precautions to spare World Heritage sites in Ukraine.

The Russian military denied that it targeted the Transfiguration Cathedral, claiming without offering evidence that it was likely struck by a Ukrainian air defense missile. Peskov on Monday echoed that claim, insisting without any evidence that the accusations against Russia "are an absolute lie."

Litvinova reported from Tallinn, Estonia. Associated Press writer Yuras Karmanau contributed to this report from Tallinn, Estonia.

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

## How Trump is gaining an advantage in the nitty-gritty battle for delegates

By MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Set aside the polls, the fundraising numbers or Donald Trump's name recognition as metrics of his early dominance of the Republican presidential contest. He has what could prove to be the most important advantage in the race: a leg up in winning the delegates needed to clinch the GOP nomination.

While the delegate count won't begin taking shape until voting begins next January, Trump's edge in

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the race to win their votes is years in the making. Many state Republican parties made changes to their rules ahead of the 2020 election by adding more winner-take-all contests and requiring candidates to earn higher percentages of the vote to claim any delegates. Those changes all benefit a frontrunner, a position Trump has held despite his mounting legal peril, blame for his party's lackluster performance in the 2022 elections and the turbulent years of his presidency.

As Trump makes another run for the White House, he has been focused on the looming battle for delegates, according to people with knowledge of his effort who requested anonymity to discuss strategy. He's had regular discussion with state party chairs, many of whose leadership races he got involved in, and has hosted delegations from Republican parties in Nevada, Louisiana and Pennsylvania at his homes in Florida and New Jersey.

The moves are a sign of how Trump's team is focused on the crucial, if less glamorous, aspects of winning the GOP nomination. That's a notable change from his first bid for the White House in 2016, when his team of relatively novice operatives weren't familiar with the minutia of the delegate contest and sometimes found themselves outflanked by better-prepared rivals, particularly Texas Sen. Ted Cruz.

That doesn't appear to be happening this time as election experts say it appears few other campaigns have been able to match Trump's yearslong work.

"They've been asleep at the switch," election lawyer Benjamin Ginsberg said.

More than 2,000 party activists, insiders and elected officials make up the pool of delegates who will cast votes at the Republican National Convention next summer to formally select a nominee. The rules governing how delegates are selected are determined by state parties, which have until October to submit their plans for next year's elections.

Many of the proposed changes that are starting to emerge in state parties appear to benefit the former president.

In Michigan, where the state GOP has become increasingly loyal to Trump, the party's leadership this year voted to change the state's longtime process of allocating all its presidential delegates based on an open primary election. Under a new plan widely expected to benefit Trump, 16 of the state's 55 delegates will be awarded based on the results of a Feb. 27 primary. The other 39 will be distributed four days later in closed-door caucus meetings of party activists.

Other Republican parties are looking to shift away from primary elections toward party-run caucuses, where Trump's support among the party's grassroots activists could put his rivals at a disadvantage.

In Idaho, one of the country's most Republican states, a new law passed by the state legislature earlier this year eliminated the presidential primary process by moving the state elections to May as lawmakers tried to consolidate the voting calendar. The party's state central committee decided last month to instead hold caucuses on March 2.

In Nevada, the state Republican Party is mounting a legal battle to try to hold a party-run caucus instead of a state-run primary election. The party chair, Michael McDonald, said he had spoken with Trump's team about the process and ongoing lawsuit but had not heard from the campaign of his strongest rival, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Other changes in the works would reduce the potential of any last-minute maneuvering at the convention.

At least two states, Louisiana and Colorado, are proposing changes this year that would bind delegates to vote for their assigned candidate during a second round of voting the national convention in the unlikely event that no candidate has a majority on the first ballot.

Trump senior advisor Chris LaCivita said the campaign has had conversations with state parties all over the country about their delegate selection plans and is keeping close tabs on what its opponents are doing—or not doing.

As an example of the effort, LaCivita cited a single-day trip he made to Las Vegas in May to speak to a gathering of hundreds of Nevada Republicans.

"We are aggressive on every level and on every front," he said. "We don't let anything stand a chance."

In 2016, Trump barreled his way to nab the GOP nomination despite his campaign being being out-

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organized by Cruz's team. When Cruz swept all 34 of Colorado's delegates after a process where party insiders vote at a series of caucus meetings, Trump wrote an op-ed complaining about a "rigged" system. He threatened to sue after the primary in Louisiana, where he won a greater percentage of votes, but Cruz was poised to pick up more delegates.

This time around, Trump is taking steps to cultivate ties with party insiders who might end up serving as delegates in 2024, making phone calls, or in some cases schmoozing at big private dinners, like one he hosted in Iowa in May attended by the state's attorney general, local lawmakers and precinct organizers. A similar Trump reception in South Carolina saw 75 people, including state Gov. Henry McMaster, state legislators and party activists packed in a sweltering tent.

"From a tactical perspective," LaCivita said, "Where we are today is leaps and bounds from where the campaign, a similar campaign, was in 2016."

DeSantis has veterans from Cruz's 2016 campaign working on his behalf.

Jeff Roe, who served as campaign manager to Cruz's campaign, is advising Never Back Down, a super PAC supporting DeSantis' campaign, but the organization is not involved in delegate strategy and is not currently planning to be, according to a person familiar with the effort who wasn't authorized to disclose internal strategy.

Sam Cooper, the political director of DeSantis' campaign and another veteran of Cruz's 2016 bid, said the Florida governor's team is closely monitoring developments in the states around delegate selection plans.

The DeSantis campaign is working to identify local party activists who could serve as delegates but also is specifically courting state lawmakers, who are typically active in their local GOP groups.

"They're surrogates for us on the ground," Cooper said. "But also they're close to the process."

The campaign boasts that more than 250 state lawmakers have endorsed DeSantis. The governor himself is very involved, Cooper said, and speaks to legislators directly either in one-on-one calls or, as he did in June, in a Zoom call with more than 100 lawmakers around the country.

Cooper noted that DeSantis has made his own trips to speak before state and local GOP officials, appearing at 10 events in eight states since March and headlining fundraisers for Republican groups.

The DeSantis campaign declined to specify any states where the campaign provided feedback on a delegate selection plan, but Cooper said, the campaign feels "very good about the map."

"We haven't seen a state party or a state make a move that's so off the wall that could only support one candidate or the other," he said.

One potential opening for a challenger like DeSantis could be California, which has 169 delegates to dole out, more than any other state.

Thanks to changes passed by Democrats in the state Capitol, California's primary contest will be on March 5, requiring the state GOP to change its delegate plan in order to comply with national GOP rules for early contests.

The changes, which the state's Republican Party is set to consider and approve late this month, are set to award delegates proportionately to the candidate's share of the vote, rather than award all delegates to the winner.

That could give a candidate trailing in second place a chance to make up ground—especially someone like DeSantis, who has made a point of campaigning in the state.

Bryan Watkins, the chief operating officer and executive director of the California GOP, said the organization has been in touch with Republican campaigns about the proposed change.

"As the state with the most delegates in the country, the CAGOP wants California to be a place where Republican presidential candidates will invest their time speaking to our voters and earning their support," he said in a statement. "So we appreciate the campaigns' feedback and perspectives on the best way to accomplish that goal."

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Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Steve Peoples in New York, Joey Cappelletti in Lansing, Michigan, Gabe Stern in Carson City, Nevada and Adriana Gómez Licón in Miami contributed to this report.

## With 'Barbie,' Greta Gerwig breaks a box office record for female directors

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

"Barbie" didn't just break the opening weekend record for 2023; It also shattered the first weekend record for a film directed by a woman.

With \$162 million in ticket sales from North American theaters, according to studio totals Monday, "Barbie" catapulted past both "Captain Marvel," which was co-directed by Anna Boden and opened to \$153.4 million in 2019, and "Wonder Woman," Patty Jenkins' 2017 film that debuted to \$103.3 million. Boasting a reported price tag of \$145 million, "Barbie" also cost less to produce than "Captain Marvel" (\$152 million) and "Wonder Woman" (\$200 million).

Globally, it far surpassed "Wonder Woman's" debut with over \$337 million versus \$228.3 million, though "Captain Marvel's" global launch was higher at \$455 million.

"Barbie's" debut, \$7 million higher than estimated on Sunday, is also significant because its audience was 65% women — not a surprise in and of itself, but as far as box office history is concerned, movies that open over \$100 million often have a majority male audience (including both "Captain Marvel" and "Wonder Woman"). This, many have noted, is perhaps less a rule and more of a lack of big films that have been made and promoted with a blockbuster female audience in minds.

A close, but imperfect comparison is "Fifty Shades of Grey," which was directed by Sam Taylor-Johnson, and made \$85 million in its first three days. The R-rated adaptation opened on Presidents Day weekend in 2017 for a five-day haul of \$93 million.

"Barbie" also earned the title of the third biggest July debut ever, surpassing Christopher Nolan's "The Dark Knight" and "The Dark Knight Rises" — not adjusted for inflation — and trailing only the live-action "The Lion King" and "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2."

Gerwig co-wrote and directed "Barbie" which is intended to be the first of many Mattel-inspired spinoffs. And in just one weekend it's already surpassed the domestic grosses her last two films, "Little Women," which earned \$108.1 million and "Lady Bird," with \$49 million. In 2018, Gerwig also made history by becoming the fifth woman to be nominated for the best director Oscar (for "Lady Bird"). As of 2023, there have now been seven women nominated for best director, and some are already predicting that Gerwig will notch another nod for next year's ceremony.

"Barbie" and Gerwig's success was celebrated widely online with many in Hollywood pausing to reflect on the moment. Reese Witherspoon posted "way to go, GG!" on Instagram, while director Ry Russo-Young wrote that "'Barbie' and its success looms as a beacon of hope" amid the strikes and widely shut-down productions.

"It's wildly original, feminist, giant in scope and swing, and feels singular to a perspective," Russo-Young wrote. "These are rare qualities for big movies these days. I hope to see more made like this in the coming years."

Filmmaker Nancy Meyers also celebrated the "triumph" on Instagram, but bristled at the focus on the glass ceiling aspect asking if "Christopher Nolan has ever once in his life been referred to as a male director." Meyers and Nolan are among only a handful of writer-directors who have had two or more of their original films gross over \$100 million domestically.

"Greta Gerwig's 'Barbie' accomplished something so profound," Melissa Silverstein, the founder of the blog Women and Hollywood and the artistic director of the Athena Film Festival, wrote in an email Monday. "The fact that she made a funny, entertaining feminist critique and broke so many box office records with a movie about a doll that has been such a lightning rod in our culture is a monumental feat that should not be underestimated."

Now it's a question of how high "Barbie" can go and if it can outgross other top films directed by women. In North America, to get the No. 1 spot, "Barbie" will have to earn more than "Frozen II," co-directed by Jennifer Lee, which tallied out with \$477.4 million. "Captain Marvel" is in second place with \$426.8 million.

With good reviews and audience scores in its arsenal, word-of-mouth enthusiasm and watercooler buzz,

as well as no direct new competition on the calendar, it's likely that "Barbie" will have "long legs," a common phrase in the exhibition business that means a movie will continue selling significant numbers of tickets far past its opening weekend.

"This film is working everywhere," said Jeff Goldstein, Warner Bros.' head of domestic distribution. "This historic result reflects the intense heat, interest and enthusiasm for 'Barbie.'"

## **They're the names you don't know. Hollywood's 'journeyman' actors explain why they are striking**

By JOCELYN NOVECK and R.J. RICO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Jason Kravits gets a lot of this: People recognize him — they're just not sure how. "I'm that guy who looks like the guy you went to high school with," says Kravits. "People think they've just seen me somewhere."

Actually, they have — on TV, usually as a lawyer or a doctor. "I've had enough roles that I've been in your living room on any given night," the veteran actor says. "But mostly people don't know my name."

Kravits is one of those actors union leaders refer to as "journeymen" — who tend to work for scale pay, and spend at least as much time lining up work as working. They can have a great year, then a bad one, without much rhyme or reason. "We're always on the verge of struggling," says Kravits.

And they, not the big Hollywood names joining the picket lines, are the heart of the actors strike.

Many say they fear the general public thinks all actors get paid handsomely and are doing it for love of the craft, almost as a hobby. Yet in most cases it's their only job, and they need to qualify for health insurance, pay rent or a mortgage, pay for school and college for their kids.

"All of us aren't Tom Cruise," says Amari Dejoie, 30, who studies acting, does background jobs (as an extra) and modeling to keep afloat, and is considering waitressing during the strike. "We have to pay rent and bills, and they're due on the first. And your apartment does not care that your check wasn't as high as you expected it to be."

In interviews, a few journeyman actors at different stages of their careers discussed their lives and their reasons for striking.

### **THAT ONE-PENNY CHECK**

Recently Jennifer Van Dyck got a couple residual checks in the mail — one for 60 cents, one for 72 cents. But she's seen worse.

"The joke is when you get the one-cent check that cost 44 cents to be mailed to you," says the veteran New York actor, referring to payments for reruns and other airings of a film or TV show after the initial release.

Still, Van Dyck counts herself lucky. With many appearances on network shows like "The Blacklist," "Madam Secretary" and especially "Law & Order," where she's appeared as a guest star 13 times, plus voiceover work, she's been able to make a living for more than 30 years without having to take a job outside the industry.

"You just keep jumping around," she says. "When things get dry in one area you move to the next. It's keeping all the balls in the air: theater, film, television, voiceover, audiobooks. Call us journeypeople: Half the job requirement is looking for work."

Van Dyck says the emergence of streaming has cut into an actor's income alarmingly, because streamers give tiny residuals, if that. And when it comes to negotiating a rate to appear on a show, the studios don't seem to care if you have 37 years of experience. "They say, 'This is what we're offering, take it or leave it.'"

She's still struck by the common misperception that actors must be rich and famous. "The majority of us aren't," she says. "But all those other parts (in a hit show), and all those other shows that get sidelined or disappear — that's work, too. And those stories can't be told without (us)."

"No one wants to strike," Van Dyck adds. But she feels the industry is at an inflection point. And, "at a certain point you have to say, 'No Mas.'"

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## THIS IS NOT A HOBBY

Growing up in the Washington, D.C., area, Kravits was bitten by the theater bug early, performing in community theater by the time he was 10 or 11. He studied theater in college, and eventually made his way to New York and then Los Angeles.

In LA, he got lucky, winning a recurring role on David E. Kelley's "The Practice."

Kravits quips he'd make a lot more money as an actual lawyer, but enjoys playing them. "I like to say I play a lot of lawyers, but never the same lawyer. I play a mean lawyer, a dumb lawyer, a funny lawyer, a hateful lawyer, an incompetent lawyer. Every role is different to me." Most of the time, he's on a show for one or two episodes.

Kravits says there used to be room for negotiation on everything, including billing and dressing rooms, but no longer: "You're negotiating with Wall Street. And Wall Street is all bottom line."

The toughest change has been with the all-important residuals. "I don't think people realize outside the business how important residuals are to being able to afford being an actor," he says.

And because of how meager streaming residuals are, Kravits says he has network shows he did 10, 15 even 20 years ago that still yield more residuals than buzzy shows he's done for streamers the last few years — like HBO's "The Undoing" or Netflix's "Halston."

"I didn't get into this as a hobby," Kravits says. "I can't afford to do it as a hobby."

## PUTTING OUR MONEY WHERE OUR MOUTHS ARE

The series finale of the show that transformed actor Diany Rodriguez's career — NBC's "The Blacklist" — aired the same day Hollywood came to a standstill.

Rodriguez, who played Weecha, bodyguard of star James Spader's character, would have loved to take to social media and celebrate her character's final appearance, but the strike made that impossible. She had several new projects booked, but is now throwing herself into her duties as a strike captain.

She sees the strike as part of a larger labor movement in the country: "I'm so in favor of this because it feels overwhelmingly (like) we are ready to put our money where our mouths are for the greater good."

Rodriguez, 41, was born in Puerto Rico, grew up in Alabama, and moved from New York to Atlanta in 2009 for theater work. Around that time, Georgia lawmakers passed generous film tax credits — incentives that brought in business but ensured a lengthy strike would be acutely felt there.

"Atlanta's economy is funded in large part based on the film and TV tax breaks," she says.

Rodriguez feels financially secure, thanks largely to her two-season stint on "The Blacklist," the network residuals and the roles the show has helped her book since then.

But she says she could easily have been in the same situation as so many of her fellow actors who are on the verge of losing their health coverage, unable to earn enough in recent months to be eligible for SAG-AFTRA insurance plans.

## WHAT WILL THIS MEAN FOR ACTING?

Amari Dejoie's father didn't want her to follow him into the entertainment business. "They never do," she quips.

But Dejoie, growing up in Los Angeles, got the bug, and started pursuing acting and modeling at 17. Now 30, she studies acting, paying \$400 a month for classes, and takes whatever side jobs she can, including working as an extra on sets. She's appeared in music videos, and at events as a booth model. She's considering a waitress job to tide her over during the strike.

"My dad was part of SAG back in the day and his residuals paid for a home," says Dejoie, who was manning the picket lines in Los Angeles last week. "It's the same business, and (yet) it's completely different now."

Her father, Vincent Cook, was a boxing double for Will Smith on "Ali," and had a role in "B.A.P.S.," with Halle Berry. "He was not a main character, but his residuals were great and they still are," Dejoie says, nothing that recently, after undergoing a medical issue, he discovered that SAG had a check waiting for him. "If it's up to the studio, they're not going to hunt you down to pay you. SAG will," Dejoie says.

Dejoie also is concerned about how artificial intelligence will affect the industry and her work as an

extra, where she makes about \$150 a day to be available for background shots. Actors fear studios want to scan their images and use them repeatedly after paying for just one day of work.

"Also, if I'm not present on the set, I'm not there making connections for other jobs," Dejoie says.

More broadly, the idea of actors' images being replicated artificially makes her afraid for the future of the industry she is just getting started in.

"What will this mean for acting?" she says. "Did I just spend all this time and money for a craft that will one day be obsolete?"

Rico reported from Atlanta. AP journalists Krysta Fauria and John Carucci contributed to this report.

## Why is Israel's judicial overhaul so divisive?

By JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — For seven months, tens of thousands of Israelis have taken to the streets to protest Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plans to overhaul the judiciary and weaken the Supreme Court.

On Monday, the first piece of that legislative package passed: Lawmakers approved a measure that prevents judges from striking down government decisions on the basis that they are "unreasonable."

Here's a look at what the overhaul is — and why it has drawn the most sustained and intense demonstrations the country has ever seen.

WHAT'S IN THE OVERHAUL?

### The overhaul calls for sweeping changes aimed at curbing the powers of the judiciary.

The proposals include a bill that would allow a simple majority in parliament to overturn Supreme Court decisions. Another would give parliament the final say in selecting judges.

Netanyahu's ultranationalist and ultra-Orthodox religious allies say the package is meant to restore power to elected officials — and reduce the powers of unelected judges.

Protesters, who make up a wide cross section of Israeli society, fear the overhaul will push Israel toward autocracy. They say it is a power grab fueled by various personal and political grievances by Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption charges, and his allies.

On Monday, parliament approved a bill that takes away the Supreme Court's power to override government decisions that the court finds "unreasonable."

Proponents say the current "reasonability" standard gives judges excessive powers over decision making by elected officials. But critics say that removing the standard, which is invoked only in rare cases, would allow the government to pass arbitrary decisions, make improper appointments or firings and open the door to corruption.

Protesters say Netanyahu and his allies want to change the law so they can appoint cronies to government posts — and particularly so that they can fire the country's independent attorney general, according to Amir Fuchs, a senior researcher at the Israel Democracy Institute, a Jerusalem think tank.

The measures "make it more difficult to conduct oversight" over arbitrary decisions of elected officials, said Yohanan Plesner, the institute's president. "This is one chapter of a broader plan and program of the government to weaken the checks and balances."

Netanyahu has dismissed accusations that the plan would destroy Israel's democratic foundations as absurd. "This is an attempt to mislead you over something that has no basis in reality," he said.

WHY ARE PROTESTERS SO DETERMINED TO PROTECT THE JUDICIARY?

## **Given Israel's relatively weak system of checks and balances, the judiciary plays a large role in checking executive power in the country.**

In the U.S. for example, Congress has two houses that operate independently of the president and can limit his power. But in Israel, the prime minister and his majority coalition in parliament work in tandem.

That leaves the judiciary as "the only check on governmental power," according to constitutional law professor Amichai Cohen.

Israel also has minimal local governance and lacks a formal constitution. This means that most of the power is centralized in parliament, Cohen said. The "basic laws" — foundational laws that experts describe as a sort of informal constitution — can be changed at any time by a bare majority.

With the overhaul, Cohen said, the Israeli parliament now threatens to further consolidate its power by weakening the judiciary.

"The government can do whatever it wants, because it controls the ability to change even the basic laws," Cohen said.

Historically, the Israeli judiciary has played a role in protecting the rights of minorities, from Palestinian citizens of Israel to noncitizens and African asylum seekers, Cohen said.

By weakening the judiciary, critics say, Israel's government — led by a male-dominated coalition whose members have advocated full annexation of the occupied West Bank, discriminating against LGBTQ+ people and Palestinian citizens of Israel, and limiting the rights of women — will be granted near-total control.

"It will be a hollow democracy," said Fuchs.

DIDN'T NETANYAHU PUT THIS PLAN ON PAUSE?

In the months since Netanyahu unveiled his plan, protests sprang up in major cities, business leaders balked at the plan and, perhaps most critically, military reservists in Israel's air force and other key units threatened to stop reporting for duty if it passed.

The protests prompted Netanyahu to pause the overhaul in March and enter talks with opposition lawmakers. But talks broke down last month, and Netanyahu announced in June the overhaul would move forward.

Protesters accuse Netanyahu of changing tactics, but not his broader goals, by moving forward in a slower and more measured way in a bid to dull opposition.

"The government got smarter," said Josh Drill, a spokesman for the protest movement. "They saw the fallout of trying to ram the overhaul through, and they decided instead to do it piece by piece."

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

## **A civil society group announced it would challenge the new law in the Supreme Court.**

Fuchs said the court could issue a "temporary writ" preventing the law from taking effect until it can conduct a proper review.

He said the government would likely honor any such order. "But if they won't, we will have a constitutional crisis right away."

In the meantime, the protests that have rocked the country will likely grow in intensity.

## Key question as Federal Reserve meets: Can the central bank pull off a difficult 'soft landing'?

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — When Chair Jerome Powell and other Federal Reserve officials gather this week for their latest decision on interest rates, they will do so on the cusp of achieving an elusive “soft landing” — the feat of curbing inflation without causing a deep recession.

After the Fed began aggressively raising borrowing costs early last year, most economists predicted it would send the economy crashing as consumers cut spending and businesses slashed jobs and expansion plans.

Yet even though the Fed is poised to raise its key rate on Wednesday for the 11th time since March 2022, to its highest point in 22 years, no one is panicking. Economists and financial traders have grown more optimistic that what some call “immaculate disinflation” — a steady easing of inflation pressures without an economic downturn — can be achieved. Most economists think this week’s hike in the Fed’s benchmark rate, to about 5.3%, will be the last, though they caution that that rate, which affects many consumer and business loans, will likely stay at a peak until well into 2024.

“I would have been not super-optimistic about a soft landing a few months ago,” said Jeremy Stein, a Harvard University economist who served on the Fed’s Board of Governors from 2012 through 2014. “Now, I think the odds are clearly going up.”

Economists at Goldman Sachs, who have sketched a more optimistic outlook than most others, have downgraded the likelihood of recession to just 20%, from 35% earlier this year.

Even economists at Deutsche Bank, among the first large banks to forecast a recession, have been encouraged by the economy’s direction, though they still expect a downturn later this year.

“We have greater resiliency within the economy than I would have anticipated at this point in time, given the extent of rate increases we’ve gotten,” said Matthew Luzzetti, Deutsche Bank’s chief U.S. economist.

Luzzetti points to durable consumer spending as a key driver of economic growth. Many Americans still have extra savings stemming from the pandemic, when the government distributed several stimulus checks and people saved by spending less on travel, restaurant meals and entertainment.

Hiring has remained healthy, with employers having added 209,000 jobs in June and the unemployment rate declining to 3.6%. That’s near the lowest rate in a half-century and about where it was when the Fed began raising rates 16 months ago — a sign of economic resilience that almost no one had foreseen.

At the same time, inflation has steadily declined. In June, prices rose just 3% from a year earlier, down from a peak of 9.1% in June 2022 though still above the Fed’s 2% target.

Even more encouragingly, measures of underlying inflation have dropped. “Core” prices, which exclude volatile food and energy costs, rose just 0.2% from May to June, the slowest monthly rise in nearly two years. Compared with a year ago, core inflation was still a relatively high 4.8%, though down sharply from 5.3% in May.

Some economists warn that a recession cannot yet be ruled out. The Fed’s rate hikes, they note, have made the cost of buying a home, financing a car purchase or expanding a business much more burdensome.

And with inflation still not fully contained, Fed officials have yet to sound the all-clear. One day after the government reported unexpectedly mild inflation, Christopher Waller, a key member of the Fed’s board, said he needed to see further evidence of smaller price increases before he would be sure inflation is slowing. Until then, Waller said, two more quarter-point rate hikes would likely be “necessary to keep inflation moving toward our target.”

Waller expressed concern that the Fed might be “head-faked” by temporary slowdowns in inflation, only for prices to resurge again, which previously occurred in mid-2021 and the fall of 2020.

Likewise, Lorie Logan, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, said she favored a rate hike at last month’s meeting, when the Fed kept rates unchanged after 10 straight increases. Speaking before the latest inflation report, Logan suggested that more increases were needed.

Some economists caution that inflation’s drop from above 9% to 3% was the relatively easy part. Getting it down to 2% will be harder and take longer. Average incomes haven’t kept up with rising prices for

the past two years, and workers may keep pushing for sharp wage increases. Higher pay would boost Americans' ability to spend and potentially perpetuate inflation.

Yet many other experts say they think the recent mild inflation readings can be sustained. Rental cost increases, which have already fallen, should decline further as more apartment buildings are completed.

Even though the Fed's policymakers collectively predicted in June that they would raise their benchmark rate twice more this year, many economists think that after this week's hike, the officials will hold rates steady when they next meet in September. And after that, inflation may be moving close enough to the Fed's target that they forgo any further hikes.

In a question-and-answer session last week, Waller held out the possibility that a second rate hike could be skipped if inflation came in as low in the next two months as it had in the most recent government report.

Used car prices, while still much higher than before the pandemic, fell in June and are expected to ease further. The costs of furniture, appliances and clothing are slowing, too. Restaurant prices, while still high, are rising more slowly.

"The breadth of disinflation is starting to broaden out," said Omair Sharif, chief economist at Inflation Insights. "This is kind of what you have been hoping to see for a while."

Sung Won Sohn, an economics professor at Loyola Marymount University, said he still worries that the Fed will have to clamp down harder on the economy to slow inflation all the way to 2% and in the process ultimately cause a recession and higher unemployment.

"The 2% inflation target... is an unrealistic target which can only be reached at huge cost," Sohn said. "There's a growing risk of the Fed overreacting, as they often have in the past, and pushing the economy into an overall real recession, which is not necessary."

Other economists have also expressed concerns. A potential strike at UPS could slow freight shipping and revive shortages and lift prices. Workers in other industries, such as airlines and automakers, are also pushing for higher pay, which could keep wage pressures elevated.

And achieving a soft-landing, after inflation had spiked so high, is notoriously difficult. But the economy has broken new ground many times since the pandemic.

"We are in uncharted territory," said Riccardo Trezzi, founder of Underlying Inflation, a consulting firm, and former economist at the Fed and European Central Bank. "We have to be able to say, 'We don't know.'"

## **Russians can qualify for Olympic spots in some sports. That doesn't mean they'll be allowed in Paris**

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH AP Sports Writer

DUESSELDORF, Germany (AP) — A year before the Paris Olympics, and nearly a year-and-a-half since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, officials governing many of the sports on the 2024 program are still split on how to treat Russian athletes.

Increasingly, various governing bodies are allowing them back into Olympic qualifying competitions as neutral competitors without national flags or anthems. Most sports initially barred Russians from competing soon after last year's full-scale invasion.

The International Olympic Committee strongly backs those moves even as the body itself says it hasn't decided if athletes from Russia and ally Belarus can compete at the Paris Games. However, the IOC has delayed action on the one sport whose qualification it runs in-house, boxing.

Most of the sports which have allowed Russians to return also followed IOC advice on its preferred name — "individual neutral athletes" — and to keep barring those who are under contract with the military or who have supported the war publicly. The IOC also recommends blocking Russia from team sports like soccer or basketball.

Ukraine is opposed to any Russians competing. Since last year, Ukrainian athletes and national teams have been boycotting competitions which allow Russians back in, a policy enforced in April by a government decree. Activists from Ukraine have been trawling Russian athletes' social media for pro-war posts

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that could disqualify them from competing.

Here is a look at the situation for Russian and Ukrainian athletes in key sports on the Olympic program:

## TRACK AND FIELD

World Athletics excluded athletes from Russia and Belarus from competitions after the invasion of Ukraine. That remains in place “for the foreseeable future,” after a vote of the World Athletics council in March. President Sebastian Coe said at the time that deaths and destruction in Ukraine have only “hardened” his resolve to keep a ban in place.

## SWIMMING

World Aquatics is one of the sports taking Russia’s return slowly. It has said it favors Russia and Belarus returning to its sports — swimming, diving, water polo, artistic swimming — but set up a task force that won’t report back with suggestions until late July. That means no Russians at the world championships this month in Japan.

## TENNIS

The big exception among Olympic sports in tennis. The men’s and women’s tours didn’t exclude Russian or Belarusian players when Russia launched its invasion. They even fined tournaments including Wimbledon which did impose restrictions.

Ukrainian players continued competing but often refuse to shake hands with Russians or Belarusians. Aryna Sabalenka, who is from Belarus and won the Australian Open in January, has been questioned about her past support for Belarus’ authoritarian leader, President Alexander Lukashenko. She has said she does not support the war.

Russian and Belarusian players still can’t enter national team competitions like the Davis Cup and Billie Jean King Cup. The International Tennis Federation hasn’t made a final decision on the Olympics but has plenty of time because qualification is decided by the June 2024 world rankings.

## GYMNASTICS

Gymnasts from Russia and Belarus will be allowed to take part in sanctioned competitions as “individual neutral athletes” from the start of 2024.

That timetable pushed their return beyond the world championships in early October in Belgium.

Russian gymnasts have been some of the most vocal supporters of the war. Days after the invasion, Ivan Kuliak wore a pro-war “Z” symbol on a competition podium while standing next to a Ukrainian athlete. He was suspended for a year. Other Russian gymnasts appeared on stage at a rally in support of the war, and Olympic gold medalist Nikita Nagornyy heads a military youth organization in Russia.

## BOXING

This is the one sport the IOC has total control over, but that doesn’t mean a quick decision. The IOC is running Olympic boxing in Paris and qualifiers in-house after a long-running feud with the International Boxing Association and its Russian president. Qualifiers were held at the European Games in June but the host nation, Poland, refused to allow any Russian athletes. A plan to qualify Russians via the Asian Games has been suggested but not confirmed. That could mean any Russian return only happens at two last-chance qualifying tournaments in early 2024.

## COMBAT SPORTS

Sports like fencing, judo and taekwondo have seen some of the bitterest disputes. Ukraine boycotted the world championships in both judo and taekwondo, taking a big hit to its Olympic qualifying hopes, after Russians were allowed to compete. In judo the “neutral” delegation of Russian athletes included some previously listed by the Defense Ministry as holding military ranks. The International Judo Federation, which had last year opposed excluding any Russians, said all the Russian competitors were employed at a state sports training facility.

Ukraine is also boycotting some events at the fencing world championships in Italy, another key Olympic qualifier. The International Fencing Federation — whose former president, Russian billionaire Alisher Usmanov, said last year he was stepping aside from his duties — has been a strong supporter of reintroducing Russian and Belarusian fencers this year. Competition organizers in several European countries canceled

their events in protests, disrupting the Olympic qualifying calendar, and the European Championships were stripped of their status as a qualifier when Poland refused to allow Russians to compete.

## TEAM SPORTS

Don't expect to see Russian teams competing in soccer, volleyball, basketball or handball at the Paris Olympics. The IOC still backs excluding Russia from team sports and no Olympic sport has yet defied that regulation. In some events, like men's basketball and soccer, Russia has already missed its last chance to qualify. The IOC also recommends a ban on "team events in individual sports" like relay races or the team all-around in gymnastics.

## OTHER SPORTS

Russia is boycotting weightlifting events after its team refused to sign a waiver accepting the conditions for "neutral" status, including a promise to "continue to abstain from expressing any support to the war." Belarusian athletes signed and are competing.

Some sports like archery have delayed things further. World Archery is exploring plans for a Russian return but said in February it would be "very unlikely" this year, potentially restricting Russia to a limited number of events in the months just before the Olympics.

Canoeing is planning to allow Russians back in some Olympic qualifiers but is giving the local organizers of each competition a veto. Rowing will only allow single sculls and pairs, no larger Russian crews.

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AP Sports Writer Graham Dunbar in Geneva contributed to this report.

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AP coverage of the Paris Olympics: <https://apnews.com/hub/2024-paris-olympic-games> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## **An Arizona woman died after her power was cut over a \$51 debt. That forced utilities to change**

By ANITA SNOW Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Stephanie Pullman died on a sweltering Arizona day after her electricity was cut off because of a \$51 debt.

Five years later, the 72-year-old's story remains at the heart of efforts to prevent others in Arizona from having their power cut off, leaving them without life-saving air conditioning in temperatures that have topped 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43 degrees Celsius) on every day this month.

"Stephanie Pullman was the face of the fight that helped put the disconnect rules in place for the big, regulated utilities in Arizona," said Stacey Champion, an advocate who pushed for new regulations. "But we need more."

Arizona Public Service, known as APS, disconnected Pullman's power in September 2018 at a time when outside temperatures in her retirement community west of Phoenix reached 107 degrees Fahrenheit (41.6 Celsius). Just days before, a \$125 payment was made toward Pullman's past-due bill of \$176.

Her body was found inside her home during a subsequent wellness check.

The medical examiner's office said Pullman died from "environmental heat exposure" combined with cardiovascular disease after the shutoff.

Like many older residents of Phoenix-area retirement communities, Pullman was a native Midwesterner, living alone after moving from Ohio, where her family remains.

Details about Pullman's life are sketchy because her family cannot discuss the case under a private legal settlement with APS.

"I can't talk," Pullman's son, Tim Pullman, said when reached by telephone in Ohio.

Champion said the family also suddenly stopped talking to her after the 2019 settlement.

APS didn't address the settlement when contacted last week, but said in a statement it "is here to help customers and we are making sure they stay connected during the summer months."

Pullman's death prompted Champion and others to demand new rules to prevent shutoffs. The case

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raised awareness about extreme heat dangers, and it did spark change.

"People are now more cognizant that low-income people can lose the power in their home at any time," said Phoenix attorney Tom Ryan, a consumer advocate familiar with the Pullman case. "Couldn't someone have spared her the \$51?"

In 2019, the Arizona Corporation Commission, which regulates most of the state's utilities, issued a moratorium on summertime shutoffs by APS and other power companies it oversees.

Last year, the commission permanently banned electricity cutoffs during the hottest months.

Electric utilities can choose to pause disconnections from June 1 through October 15, or pause them on days forecasted to be above 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 Celsius) or below 32 degrees Fahrenheit (0 Celsius). APS; Tucson Electric Power, which serves Arizona's second largest city; and UniSource, which provides power in Mohave and Santa Cruz counties, chose the date-based option.

"There will be no disconnections for past due residential accounts through mid-October," with late fees waived during that period, APS confirmed. "We urge customers who are struggling with overdue bills to contact us so we can work with them to get their account in good standing and try to keep balances from continuing to build."

APS is the principal subsidiary of publicly traded Pinnacle West Capital Corp., and has about 1.2 million customers. It gives a discount of up to 25% on energy bills for people who qualify, like a family of three with a gross monthly income under \$4,143, or a single person in a home with a gross monthly income of up to \$2,430.

Arizona's second largest provider of electricity, Salt River Project, or SRP, is known as a power and irrigation district rather than a utility and has around 1.1 million customers. It additionally supplies water in parts of metro Phoenix. As a community based, not-for-profit district, SRP is not overseen by the state commission but is governed by a publicly elected Board and Council.

SRP says it halts shutoffs during excessive heat warnings issued by the National Weather Service. But Champion noted that people have died on hot days without such warnings.

Amid the current heat wave, SRP announced Friday it was halting all cutoffs for nonpayment for residential and commercial customers through July, and would not disconnect for failure to pay anyone on its economy price plan for customers with limited income through August.

"SRP's priority is to maintain reliable and affordable power for our customers, and we understand the significance of keeping customers in service during Arizona's hot summer days," the utility said in a response to a query. "We value our customers' safety and have programs in place to assist those in need."

"We urge customers who are having difficulty paying their bill for any reason to contact us as quickly as possible so we can offer solutions to help them avoid a worsening financial situation," the company said in a separate statement.

Gov. Katie Hobbs sent a letter to Arizona's power companies on Friday, demanding that they spell out in writing their plans during the current hot spell for disconnections of service, how they will handle possible grid outages, and how they will react in the event of an emergency outage.

Champion said she thinks state legislation would help ensure stricter rules against power company shutoffs, but nothing is before the state Legislature.

Within Phoenix city limits, an ordinance requires landlords to ensure that their air conditioning units will cool to 82 degrees Fahrenheit (28 degrees Celsius) or below and that evaporative coolers bring the temperature down to 86 degrees Fahrenheit (30 degrees Celsius). Both types of cooling units must be kept in good working order.

Maricopa County, home to Phoenix, reported Wednesday that as of July 15, there were 18 heat-associated deaths confirmed this year going back to April 11. Another 69 deaths remain under investigation.

Just four of the heat-associated deaths confirmed in 2023 occurred inside. Three involved non-functioning air conditioners and one that had access to electricity but wasn't turned on.

Maricopa County confirmed 425 heat-associated deaths for 2022 during the region's hottest summer on record, more than half of them occurring in July. Eighty percent of the deaths occurred outside.

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Like Pullman, most of the 30 people who died indoors in the county last year were isolated and had mobility issues or medical problems. One was an 83-year-old woman with dementia who died in a home with an air conditioner that had not been switched on. She was living alone after her husband entered hospice care.

There have long been utility assistance programs for homeowners and renters across the state, but advocates say efforts to protect people from shutoffs in America's hottest big metro increased after Pullman died.

Local governments and nonprofit agencies often pay utility bills without a requirement for repayment and the Arizona Department of Economic Security also helps with bills.

Efforts to help repair and replace faulty cooling systems were also ramped up.

Maricopa County in April used federal funds to allocate another \$10 million to its air conditioner replacement and repair program for people who qualify, bringing total funding to \$13.7 million.

In greater Phoenix and several rural Arizona counties, older low-income people can get free repair or replacement of air conditioners through the Healthy Homes Air Conditioning Program, run by the nonprofit Foundation for Senior Living. Last summer, it helped about 30 people get new air conditioners or repairs.

Demonstrating the dangers for older people, two sisters were rescued from their home in the Phoenix suburb of Surprise earlier this month after police found them sweltering in 114 degrees Fahrenheit (45.5 Celsius) with a faulty cooling system.

"I don't like the heat over here," Paula Martinez, 93, told Fox 10 news. The officers took her and her sister Linda, 87, to a senior center to cool off and bought a new air conditioner with the department's community grant funds.

Surprise Police Sgt. Richard Hernandez said he and fellow officers still remember Pullman's death in a community just 5 miles (8 kilometers) away.

"There certainly is more awareness now than there used to be," said Hernandez. "We kept saying, 'If we had only known, maybe we could have helped.'"

## **Saudi Arabian soccer team Al-Hilal makes record \$332 million bid for France striker Kylian Mbappe**

By JAMES ROBSON AP Soccer Writer

SYDNEY (AP) — After missing out on Lionel Messi, Saudi Arabian soccer team Al-Hilal made a record 300 million euro (\$332 million) bid for Kylian Mbappe on Monday, an offer which could see the France striker join Cristiano Ronaldo in the oil-rich kingdom.

Paris Saint-Germain confirmed the offer for its player and has given Al-Hilal permission to open negotiations directly with Mbappe.

The 2018 World Cup winner is in a contract standoff with PSG after his decision not to take up the option of a 12-month extension on his deal. Instead, he plans to walk away as a free agent at the end of the upcoming season when he is widely expected to join Real Madrid.

PSG cut Mbappe from its preseason tour of Japan on Saturday, with the French club determined to sell him unless he can be convinced to sign a new contract.

A new deal now looks highly unlikely with relations between the 24-year-old Mbappe and PSG becoming increasingly tense.

Saudi Arabia has sought in recent years to buy its way into international sports. Besides Ronaldo, whose contract reportedly earns him up to \$200 million a year, Saudi-funded LIV Golf has shaken up professional golf.

The moves are part of efforts by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to leverage the kingdom's oil wealth to provide new jobs and opportunities for Saudi Arabia's youth. However, critics have dismissed the efforts as "sportswashing," attempting to leverage professional sports to clean up the kingdom's image as it remains one of the world's top executioners and waging a yearslong war in Yemen.

U.S. intelligence agencies also believe Prince Mohammed ordered the killing and dismemberment of

Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi in 2018.

Earlier this year, Al-Hilal failed in an attempt to sign Messi, with the Argentina great choosing to join Inter Miami instead.

The bid for Mbappe would make him the most expensive soccer player in history, overtaking the \$262 million PSG paid for Neymar, who joined from Barcelona in 2017.

The offer represents Saudi Arabia's most ambitious move yet as part of a determined recruitment drive to lure the game's biggest players to the country.

After Ronaldo agreed to join Al-Nassr in December, Saudi teams have gone into overdrive by targeting leading names from Europe's top leagues. Real Madrid great and current Ballon d'Or holder Karim Benzema signed for Saudi champion Al-Ittihad last month and has been joined by 2018 World Cup winner N'Golo Kante.

Roberto Firmino, Kalidou Koulibaly and Marcelo Brozovic are among other big names to head to the lucrative Saudi league, which is making mega-money offers to players in a bid to raise the profile and quality of soccer in the country.

While that was not enough to convince Messi to join Al-Hilal after leaving PSG, more stars are expected to follow in the footsteps of Ronaldo and Co.

Premier League players like Riyad Mahrez and Jordan Henderson have recently been linked with moves from Manchester City and Liverpool, respectively.

The reported salaries and commercial deals for Ronaldo, Benzema and Kante could earn them a combined figure of nearly \$1 billion.

Mbappe has said he plans to see out the final year of his contract, which would leave PSG powerless to prevent him from leaving for nothing next year.

The French champions, who are owned by Qatar Sports Investments, have already seen Messi leave for nothing in return and are determined to earn a fee for a player who is widely considered one of the few capable of taking over from Messi and Ronaldo as soccer's biggest star.

His omission from PSG's touring squad in Japan raises the possibility that he could be benched next season if he refuses to sign a contract or agree to leave during this transfer window.

Al-Hilal are said to be among a host of clubs that have been alerted to his potential availability, but it is unlikely any could match the bid that has been put forward.

There has been an expectation that he would join Madrid, which had a bid of \$190 million rejected by PSG in 2021. Madrid is in need of a top class forward after losing Benzema at the end of the season.

Mbappe had until July 31 to trigger a one-year extension on his contract. He has been at the club since 2017 after signing from Monaco in a transfer worth a reported \$190 million.

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James Robson is at <https://twitter.com/jamesalanrobson>

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

## **Election leaves Spain in political disarray with no party having an easy path to form a government**

By CIARÁN GILES Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Spaniards woke up Monday to find their country in political disarray after a general election a day earlier left no party with a clear path to forming a government.

The uncertainty deepened as both of Spain's two main parties indicated that they hope to take power. The only sure thing seems to be that the country faces weeks, perhaps months, of political negotiations and possibly a new election to sort out the mess.

Here's a look at what happened and what might unfold in the next few months.

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A BITTER VICTORY FOR THE OPPOSITION

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Alberto Nuñez Feijóo 's right-of-center Popular Party, or PP, won the most votes and finished with 133 seats. But contrary to nearly every preelection opinion poll, it fell far short of the 176 seats a party needs to secure a majority in the 350-seat Spanish parliament.

Even if it joins forces with the extreme right party Vox, which garnered 33 seats, it won't reach that threshold.

In a nutshell, the PP's decision to consider forming a coalition with Vox didn't pay off with voters.

With its stated intention of ousting Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez now far from certain, the PP insists that as the first-placed party in the ballot it has the right to form a government.

The PP has urged the Socialists to abstain in a parliamentary vote and allow the party to take power. But such a scenario is highly unlikely given the traditional animosity between the two groups.

Taking office as a minority government would also leave the PP fighting for its survival on nearly every piece of legislation it introduces.

Besides Vox, the PP has few friends in parliament.

COULD THERE BE ANOTHER LEFTIST COALITION?

Despite all predictions, Sánchez has an outside chance of staying in office. His Socialist party won 122 seats and his main potential partner, Sumar, has 31.

Since 2019, his leftist minority coalition government has relied on the support of small regional parties in the Basque and Catalonia regions. He could try to repeat that balancing act.

But even if he managed to round up the regional troops again, one major hurdle looms: He would need the support or abstention of the Catalan secessionist party Junts.

The party's leader, Carles Puigdemont, is a member of the European Parliament, living in Belgium. But he is also a fugitive from Spanish justice and faces possible extradition to stand trial for staging an independence push in 2017.

Junts officials have already said they will want something in return for doing a deal with Sánchez. The specter of them demanding an independence referendum for Catalonia as their price would open up a Pandora's box for both Spain and Sánchez.

WHO ARE THE OTHER MAIN PLAYERS?

Besides the conservative Popular Party and the center-left Socialists, the two other principle players are Vox, led by Santiago Abascal, and the leftist Sumar movement, headed by acting second deputy prime minister, Yolanda Díaz.

The prospect of Spain having a far-right party in power for the first time since Gen. Francisco Franco's dictatorship has diminished for the moment after Vox lost 19 of its parliamentary seats to finish with a total of 33. Even so, it remains the country's third political force.

Sumar, with 31 seats, failed to pip Vox for third place, but has said it will seek to form another leftist progressive government with Sánchez.

WILL THERE BE ANOTHER ELECTION?

Spain's new parliament will meet in a month. In accordance with official procedure, King Felipe VI is then expected to invite one of the party leaders, Feijóo or Sánchez, to try to form a government.

That leader would then put his candidacy to parliamentary votes. Any candidate getting sufficient support can form a government.

The 350 lawmakers have up to three months to reach an agreement. Otherwise, a new election would be triggered.

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Barry Hatton contributed to this report from Lisbon, Portugal.

## A UPS strike could be just around the corner. Here's what you need to know

The Associated Press undefined

NEW YORK (AP) — The clock is ticking. As the deadline to reach a new contract nears, a potential UPS strike feels closer than ever.

Negotiations broke down earlier this month and unionized workers have been holding rallies and practice pickets across the country. The Teamsters, which represent more than half of the company's workforce, will resume talks with UPS on Tuesday.

That leaves less than a week to come to an agreement before the current contract expires at the end of the day on Monday, July 31. The union has authorized a strike and Sean M. O'Brien, a fiery leader elected last year to lead the union, has vowed to do so if their demands aren't met.

"We're sending a message... all 340,000 of our members are united and ready to fight," O'Brien told The Associated Press at a practice picket Friday in Atlanta, where UPS is based.

UPS's unionized workers still seethe about a contract they feel was forced on them in 2018, and say that the company delivers millions more packages every day than it did just five years ago. The Teamsters are calling for better pay, particularly for part-time employees, and improved working conditions.

UPS has maintained that it already offers "industry-leading pay and benefits," but says it's prepared to increase that compensation. In a Friday update, the company said it aimed "quickly to finalize a fair deal that provides certainty for our customers, our employees and businesses across the country."

If negotiations are unsuccessful the deliveries that Americans have come to rely on, particularly since the pandemic began in 2020, could be vastly disrupted. Such an impasse hasn't been seen since 1997, well before delivery of everyday items from dog food to prescription drugs became the norm, when a walkout by 185,000 workers crippled UPS. Here's what you need to know.

### WHAT ARE THE TEAMSTERS ASKING FOR?

Much on the union's demands comes down to better pay and improved working conditions.

Annual profits at UPS in the past two years are close to three times what they were before the pandemic. The company returned about \$8.6 billion to shareholders in the form of dividends and stock buybacks in 2022, and forecast another \$8.4 billion for shareholders this year.

The Teamsters say frontline UPS workers deserve some of that windfall. A sticking point in negotiations has been wage increases for part-time workers, who make a minimum of \$16.20 an hour.

"People want their packages yesterday with the emergence of the e-commerce. So it's a very demanding job," O'Brien said, pushing back on the salary statistics that UPS shares. "Everybody doesn't realize what it takes to get these packages on the truck. And a lot of our part timers... work for poverty wages."

In addition to addressing part-time pay, the union wants to eliminate a contract provision that created two separate hierarchies of workers with different pay scales, hours and benefits. Driver safety, particularly the lack of air conditioning in delivery trucks, is also in the mix.

### HAS UPS AGREED TO ANY DEMANDS?

Before contract talks broke down on July 5, with both sides blaming each other for walking away from the bargaining table, tentative agreements were made on several issues — including installing air conditioning in more trucks. UPS said it would add air conditioning to U.S. small delivery vehicles purchased after January 1, 2024. Existing vehicles wouldn't get that upgrade, but the union said they will have other additions like fans and air vents.

The union also said it has reached tentative agreements to establish Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a full holiday for the first time, end unwanted overtime on drivers' days off and get rid of the two-tier wage system for drivers who work weekends and earn less money.

### COULD A STRIKE BE AVOIDED? CAN THE GOVERNMENT INTERVENE?

The strike can be avoided if UPS and the Teamsters agree to a new contract before the July 31 deadline. There's also a possibility of government intervention.

O'Brien said Sunday that he has asked the White House on numerous occasions not to intervene if work-

ers end up going on strike. Last year, President Joe Biden intervened to avert a railroad strike to avoid disrupting the nation's supply chain, and workers had accept an agreement that wasn't broadly supported by union members.

WHAT IMPACT WOULD A STRIKE HAVE?

The 24 million packages UPS ships on an average day amounts to about a quarter of all U.S. parcel volume, according to the global shipping and logistics firm Pitney Bowes. As UPS puts it, that's the equivalent of about 6% of nation's gross domestic product.

Higher prices and long wait times are all but certain if there is an impasse. A strike also threatens to extend lingering supply chain troubles.

"Something's got to give," Thomas Goldsby, logistics chairman in the Supply Chain Management Department at the University of Tennessee, told The Associated Press. "The python can't swallow the alligator, and that's going to be felt by all of us."

UPS said this month that it will temporarily begin training nonunion employees in the U.S. to step in should there be a strike.

Beyond shipping and supply implications, a union win at UPS could have significance for organized labor across industries. UPS's contract talks arrive amid other prominent labor campaigns at Apple, Starbucks, Trader Joe's and other companies — as well as the current writers and actors' strikes seen in Hollywood.

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Videojournalist Sharon Johnson contributed from Atlanta

## **Specter of right wing entering Spanish government fades after inconclusive national election**

By JOSEPH WILSON and CIARÁN GILES Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Spain may be facing political gridlock and possibly a new election, but a national ballot produced one result that will be welcomed across the capitals of Europe: a far-right party aiming to get its hands on the levers of power was thwarted.

Spain's Vox party, with its ultranationalist bent, lost support among voters in Sunday's election, dashing its hopes to be a kingmaker and enter a governing coalition that would have given the far right its first share of power in Spain since Francisco Franco's 20th century dictatorship.

The mainstream conservative Popular Party won the election, but performed well below polling data that had forecast it could oust Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez if it formed a government with Vox as a junior partner.

Even though Sánchez's Socialists finished second, they and their allied parties celebrated the outcome as a victory since their combined forces gained slightly more seats than the Popular Party and Vox. The bloc that would likely support Sánchez totaled 172 seats, while parties on the right had 170.

"This is a major victory for the left," Dr. Jason Xidias, a lecturer in Political Science at New York University's Madrid campus, said Monday.

Political horse-trading in coming weeks, when smaller regional parties could offer their support for a government in return for concessions, will be "very complicated," Xidias said.

The closer-than-expected outcome placed a question mark over Spain's future leadership. But the Popular Party insisted it could not be denied its shot at forming a government.

"Nobody would understand it now if (other parties) all came together to prevent the party that won the elections from becoming the government," the PP's deputy secretary Miguel Tellado told public broadcaster RTVE on Monday.

Sánchez put together Spain's first ever coalition government, which took power in Jan. 2020. Sánchez has been Spain's prime minister since 2018.

Socialist voter Delphine Fernández said she hopes Sánchez can stay in power. She is crossing her fingers that she and the 37 million Spaniards called to vote don't have to do it all over again like in 2019, when Sánchez had to score back-to-back election victories before he was able to forge a coalition government.

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"It was always going to be difficult. Now we are (practically) tied, but let's see if we can still govern," said Fernández, a lawyer. "I don't want to vote again in a few weeks. It's now or never."

But the chances of Sánchez picking up the support of the 176 lawmakers needed to have an absolute majority in the Madrid-based Lower House of Parliament are not great.

The divided results have made the Catalan separatist party Junts (Together) key to Sánchez forming a government. But if Junts asked for a referendum on independence for northeast Catalonia, that would likely be far too costly a price for Sánchez to pay.

"We won't make Pedro Sánchez PM in exchange for nothing," Míriam Nogueras of Junts said.

With all votes counted, the Popular Party collected 136 seats of the 350 up for grabs. Even with the 33 seats that the far-right Vox got and the one seat going to an allied party, the PP was still seven seats short of a majority.

The Socialists gathered 122 seats, two more than they previously held. Sánchez could likely call on the 31 seats of its junior coalition partner Sumar (Joining Forces) and several smaller parties to at least total more than the sum of the right-wing parties, but also would fall four short of a majority unless Junts joined them.

"Spain and all the citizens who have voted have made themselves clear. The backward-looking bloc that wanted to undo all that we have done has failed," Sánchez told a jubilant crowd gathered at Socialists' headquarters in Madrid.

After his party took a beating in regional and local elections in May, Sánchez could have waited until December to face a national vote. Instead, he stunned his rivals by moving up the vote in hopes of gaining a bigger boost from his supporters.

Sánchez can add this election night to yet another comeback in his career that has been built around beating the odds. The 51-year-old had to mount a mutiny among rank-and-file Socialists to return to heading his party before he won Spain's only no-confidence vote to oust his Popular Party predecessor in 2018.

PP leader Alberto Núñez Feijóo seemed even more unlikely to put together a majority.

Feijóo focused the PP's campaign on what he called the lack of trustworthiness of Sánchez. The Socialists and other leftist parties, meanwhile, drummed on the fear of having Vox in power as a junior partner in a PP-led coalition.

A PP-Vox government would have meant another EU member moved firmly to the right, a trend seen recently in Sweden, Finland and Italy. Countries such as Germany and France are concerned about what such a shift would portend for EU immigration and climate policies.

Vox, however, lost 19 seats from four years earlier. The election took place during Spain's six-month rotating presidency of the European Union, and a strong Vox showing would have sent shockwaves through EU politics.

Feijóo sought to distance the PP from Vox during the campaign. But Sánchez, in moving up the election, made the campaign coincide with the PP and Vox striking deals to govern together in town halls and regional governments following the May ballots.

Vox campaigned on rolling back gender violence laws. And both the PP and Vox agreed on wanting to repeal a new transgender rights law and a democratic memory law that seeks to help families wanting to unearth the thousands of victims of Franco's regime still missing in mass graves.

"PP has been a victim of its expectations, and the Socialists have been able to capitalize on the fear of the arrival of Vox. Bringing forward the elections has turned out to be the right decision for Pedro Sánchez," said Manuel Mostaza, director of Public Policy at the Spanish consulting firm Atravia.

Spain's new Parliament will meet in a month. King Felipe VI then appoints one of the party leaders to submit him or herself to a parliamentary vote to form a new government. Lawmakers have a maximum period of three months to reach an agreement. Otherwise, new elections would be triggered.

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Wilson reported from Barcelona. AP journalists Aritz Parra, Renata Brito, David Brunat, Iain Sullivan, María Gestoso, Alicia León and José María García contributed to this report.

## Gene therapy eyedrops restored a boy's sight. Similar treatments could help millions

By LAURA UNGAR and FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Dr. Alfonso Sabater pulled up two photos of Antonio Vento Carvajal's eyes. One showed cloudy scars covering both eyeballs. The other, taken after months of gene therapy given through eyedrops, revealed no scarring on either eye.

Antonio, who's been legally blind for much of his 14 years, can see again.

The teen was born with dystrophic epidermolysis bullosa, a rare genetic condition that causes blisters all over his body and in his eyes. But his skin improved when he joined a clinical trial to test the world's first topical gene therapy. That gave Sabater an idea: What if it could be adapted for Antonio's eyes?

This insight not only helped Antonio, it also opened the door to similar therapies that could potentially treat millions of people with other eye diseases, including common ones.

Antonio's mom, Yunielkys "Yuni" Carvajal, teared up thinking about what Sabater did for her son.

"He's been there through everything," she said in Spanish during a visit to the University of Miami Health System's Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. "He's not only a good doctor but such a good human being and provided us with hope. He never gave up."

The family came to the U.S. from Cuba in 2012 on a special visa allowing Antonio to get treatment for his condition, which affects around 3,000 people worldwide. He had surgeries to remove scar tissue from his eyes, but it grew back. Antonio's vision kept getting worse, eventually deteriorating so much that he didn't feel safe walking around.

Sabater had no answers then, and tried to reassure the boy: "I'll find a solution. I just need some time. I'm working on it."

"Yeah, I know you're going to do it," Sabater recalled Antonio saying. "That gave me the energy to continue."

At one point, Carvajal told Sabater about the experimental gene therapy gel for Antonio's skin lesions. He contacted drugmaker Krystal Biotech to see if it could be reformulated for the boy's eyes.

Suma Krishnan, co-founder and president of research and development for the Pittsburgh-based company, said the idea made sense and "it didn't hurt to try it."

Antonio's condition is caused by mutations in a gene that helps produce a protein called collagen 7, which holds together both skin and corneas. The treatment, called Vyjuvek, uses an inactivated herpes simplex virus to deliver working copies of that gene. The eyedrops use the same liquid as the skin version, just without the added gel.

After two years, which included testing the drug in mice, the team got "compassionate use" approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and permission from university and hospital review boards. Last August, Antonio had surgery on his right eye, after which Sabater started treating him with the eyedrops.

Krishnan said they were cautious, frequently watching to see that it was safe.

Antonio's eye recovered from the surgery, the scarring didn't return and there was significant improvement each month, Sabater said. Doctors recently measured the vision in Antonio's right eye at a near-perfect 20/25.

This year, Sabater began treating Antonio's left eye, which had even more scar tissue. That one is also steadily improving, measuring close to 20/50, which Sabater said "is pretty good vision."

Antonio comes to the eye institute for checkups almost weekly and gets the drops once a month. During visits, Antonio must wear protective clothing covering his arms, hands, legs and feet. Like other kids with the condition — who are sometimes called "butterfly children" — his skin is so fragile that even a touch can wound him.

Antonio still uses the skin gel, which was approved by the FDA in May and can also be used off-label on eyes. It doesn't modify DNA, so it's not a one-time treatment like many gene therapies.

Sabater, director of the Corneal Innovation Lab at the eye institute, said gene therapy eyedrops could potentially be used for other diseases by changing the gene delivered by the virus. For example, a different gene could be used to treat Fuchs' dystrophy, which affects 18 million people in the U.S. and accounts

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for about half the nation's corneal transplants.

The prospect of treating more conditions this way is "exciting," said Dr. Aimee Payne, a dermatology professor at the University of Pennsylvania who isn't involved in the research. The approach "delivers gene therapy that really addresses the root cause of disease."

With his vision restored, Antonio has enjoyed a typical teen pastime he's wanted to do for quite a while: playing video games with his friends. And he finally feels safe walking around.

Sabater said the two-year journey seeking government and hospital approvals "was worth it. Just for Antonio, it was worth it ... but also because it opens the space to treat other patients in the future."

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Ungar reported from Louisville, Kentucky.

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## Today in History: July 25, Concorde crashes near Paris, killing 109

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, July 25, the 206th day of 2023. There are 159 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 25, 1972, the notorious Tuskegee syphilis experiment came to light as The Associated Press reported that for the previous four decades, the U.S. Public Health Service, in conjunction with the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, had been allowing poor, rural Black male patients with syphilis to go without treatment, even allowing them to die, as a way of studying the disease.

On this date:

In 1866, Ulysses S. Grant was named General of the Army of the United States, the first officer to hold the rank.

In 1943, Benito Mussolini was dismissed as premier of Italy by King Victor Emmanuel III, and placed under arrest. (He was later rescued by the Nazis and re-asserted his authority.)

In 1946, the United States detonated an atomic bomb near Bikini Atoll in the Pacific in the first underwater test of the device.

In 1956, the Italian liner SS Andrea Doria collided with the Swedish passenger ship Stockholm off the New England coast late at night and began sinking; 51 people — 46 from the Andrea Doria, five from the Stockholm — were killed. (The Andrea Doria capsized and sank the following morning.)

In 1960, a Woolworth's store in Greensboro, North Carolina that had been the scene of a sit-in protest against its whites-only lunch counter dropped its segregation policy.

In 1978, Louise Joy Brown, the first "test tube baby," was born in Oldham, England; she'd been conceived through the technique of in-vitro fertilization.

In 1994, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein signed a declaration at the White House ending their countries' 46-year-old formal state of war.

In 2000, a New York-bound Air France Concorde crashed outside Paris shortly after takeoff, killing all 109 people on board and four people on the ground; it was the first-ever crash of the supersonic jet.

In 2010, the online whistleblower Wikileaks posted some 90,000 leaked U.S. military records that amounted to a blow-by-blow account of the Afghanistan war, including unreported incidents of Afghan civilian killings as well as covert operations against Taliban figures.

In 2016, on the opening night of the Democratic national convention in Philadelphia, Bernie Sanders robustly embraced his former rival Hillary Clinton as a champion for the same economic causes that enlivened his supporters, signaling it was time for them to rally behind her in the campaign against Republican Donald Trump.

In 2019, President Donald Trump had a second phone call with the new Ukrainian president, Volodymyr