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Thursday, Aug. 10

Senior Menu: Chicken Alfredo, California blend, peaches, whole wheat bread.

Family Fun Fest, Downtown Groton, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Summer Splash, Downtown Groton, 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Groton CM&A: Vacation Bible School (Keepers of the Kingdom), 6:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 11

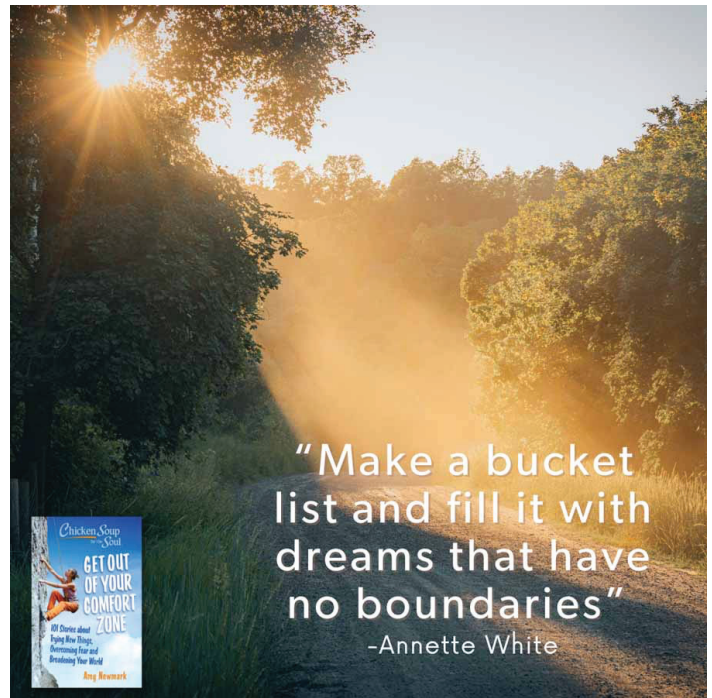
Senior Menu: Taco salad with chips, Mexican rice with black beans, Mandarin oranges, pineapple, breadstick.

Girls soccer hosts West Central: Varsity at 11 a.m., JV at 1 p.m.

Baseball Golf Tourney Fundraiser at Olive Grove Golf Course

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

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.



Saturday, Aug. 12

Girls Soccer hosts Dakota Valley: Varsity at 1 p.m., JV at 2:30 p.m.

Boys Soccer at Freeman Academy, 1 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

Sunday, Aug. 13

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

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

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

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The Bulletin by Newsweek

World in Brief

incident.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un fired his top military general and told his armed forces to "gird for a war."

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, a total of 83 explosions occurred in Russia in 2022, when President Vladimir Putin launched an invasion of Ukraine, more than four times the number (20) recorded in 2021, a Russian news outlet reported.

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TALKING POINTS

"Unlike a law enforcement officer who gets suspended for misconduct with pay while an investigation ensues about his misconduct, as of today, I will no longer be paid. As of today, I will no longer have benefits for my family. My husband and I work to support our three children. A substantial portion of that support has now been stripped away as a result of political gamesmanship," State Attorney Monique Worrell said in reaction to Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' decision to suspend her for allegedly under-prosecuting criminals.

"Extreme heat linked to climate change threatens our health and well-being, but it does not impact everyone equally. These threats are faced most acutely by communities of color, our youngest and oldest community members, and low-income households across the country," Assistant Secretary for Health Rachel Levine said as the Department of Health and Human Services launched a new nationwide tracker for heat-related illnesses.

"I'm really excited as they are my friends. It only makes the competition more fun when it's that stacked. I'm excited to compare myself with all those women," defending New York City Marathon champion Sharon Lokedi told The Associated Press after the New York City Marathon announced its packed professional runner lineup for the November 5 race..

WHAT TO WATCH IN THE DAY AHEAD

The consumer price index for July is due at 8:30 a.m. ET. Forecasts are that the readings may not necessarily be as encouraging as the report last month. On a month-on-month basis, inflation likely rose 0.2%, while it is expected to increase 3.3% on a yearly basis. Weekly initial jobless claims and the Treasury budget for July are also on the calendar.

President Joe Biden is expected to discuss the PACT Act one year after signing it into law during a visit to Salt Lake City.

The FIFA Women's World Cup quarter-finals begin in New Zealand, with Spain taking on the Netherlands at 6 p.m. ET. Another match between Japan and Sweden is scheduled to begin at 12:30 a.m. ET on Friday.

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The Perfect DOG

This search is gonna be ruff!

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY
DAVID ABBINANTI

BOOK BY
JILL ABBINANTI

INSPIRED BY THE BOOK
"THE PERFECT DOG"
BY JOHN O'HURLEY

When: Thursday, August 10, 2023

Time: 1:00pm

Where: Groton Community Center – 109 N 3rd St

Entry Fee: \$0



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U.S. Highway 12

Please remove vehicles from the blue shaded streets for the chip seal project which will be done Thursday or Friday



2023

2023 STREET CHIP SEAL PROJECT

Olive Grove Golf Course

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Highway Patrol Sturgis Rally Daily Information

**Compiled from 6 a.m. Saturday August 5,
2023, to 6 a.m. Wed., August 09, 2023**

Fatal Crashes: None to report.

Injury Crashes:

At 11:14am, Tuesday, Interstate 90, mile marker 17: A 2003 Harley Davidson motorcycle was traveling eastbound, entered the gore of Exit 17, and tipped the motorcycle. The driver was wearing a helmet and received minor injuries.

At 12:03pm, Tuesday, South Dakota Highway 87, mile marker 74: A 2017 Harley Davidson motorcycle was traveling southbound, hit some debris on the roadway, left the roadway, and tipped over. The driver and passenger were wearing helmets. The driver was not injured, and the passenger received serious non-life-threatening injuries.

At 2:12pm, Tuesday, Nemo Road, and Erskine Gulch Road: A 2002 Harley Davidson motorcycle was traveling northbound, left the roadway and tipped over. The driver was wearing a helmet and received minor injuries.

At 2:29pm, Tuesday, South Dakota Highway 87, mile marker 75: A 2021 Indian motorcycle was traveling northbound, failed to negotiate the curve, tipped, and came to rest on the shoulder. The driver was wearing a helmet and received serious non-life-threatening injuries.

At 2:34pm, Tuesday, Interstate 90, mile marker 30: A 2005 Harley Davidson motorcycle was eastbound on the Exit 30 on ramp. The driver lost control, entered the south ditch, and crashed. The driver and passenger were not wearing helmets and received minor injuries.

At 8:01pm, Tuesday, US Highway 16385, mile marker 28: A 2000 Harley Davidson motorcycle was traveling southbound, failed to negotiate a curve and left the roadway. The driver was separated from the motorcycle. The driver was not wearing helmet and received serious non-life-threatening injuries.

Item	Sturgis	Rapid City District	District Total	Last Year to Date
DUI Arrests	59	12	71	77
Misd Drug Arrests	80	38	118	80
Felony Drug Arrests	52	16	68	50
Total Citations	493	300	793	721
Total Warnings	1356	936	2292	2602
Cash Seized	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Vehicles Seized	0	0	0	0
For Drug Poss.	0	0	0	0
For Serial No.	0	0	0	0
Non-Injury Accidents	9	18	27	22
Injury Accidents	10	22	32	30
Fatal Accidents	2	0	2	3
# of Fatalities	2	0	2	3

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Family Fun Fest, Downtown Groton, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.



Suggested Donation: \$4



Walking Taco or Taco Salad and a drink

Free Will Donation

Proceeds go to Groton's Angel Tree

15 N Main, Ste. 103

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2023 Sturgis Rally Vehicle Count – Through Day Five

STURGIS, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) will provide daily traffic counts for vehicles entering Sturgis for the 83rd Annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally which runs from Aug. 4-13, 2023. The traffic counts to date at nine locations entering Sturgis for the 2023 Rally are as follows:

Friday, Aug. 4: 45,652 vehicles entered

Down 13.4% from the previous five-year average

Saturday, Aug. 5: 38,126 vehicles entered

Down 37.3% from the previous five-year average

Sunday, Aug. 6: 60,586 vehicles entered

Up 4.4% from the previous five-year average

Monday, Aug. 7: 50,487 vehicles entered

Down 16.9% from the previous five-year average

Tuesday, Aug. 8: 55,848 vehicles entered

Down 4.2% from the previous five-year average

2023 Total to Date: 250,699 Vehicles

Previous Five-Year Average to Date: 290,671 Vehicles

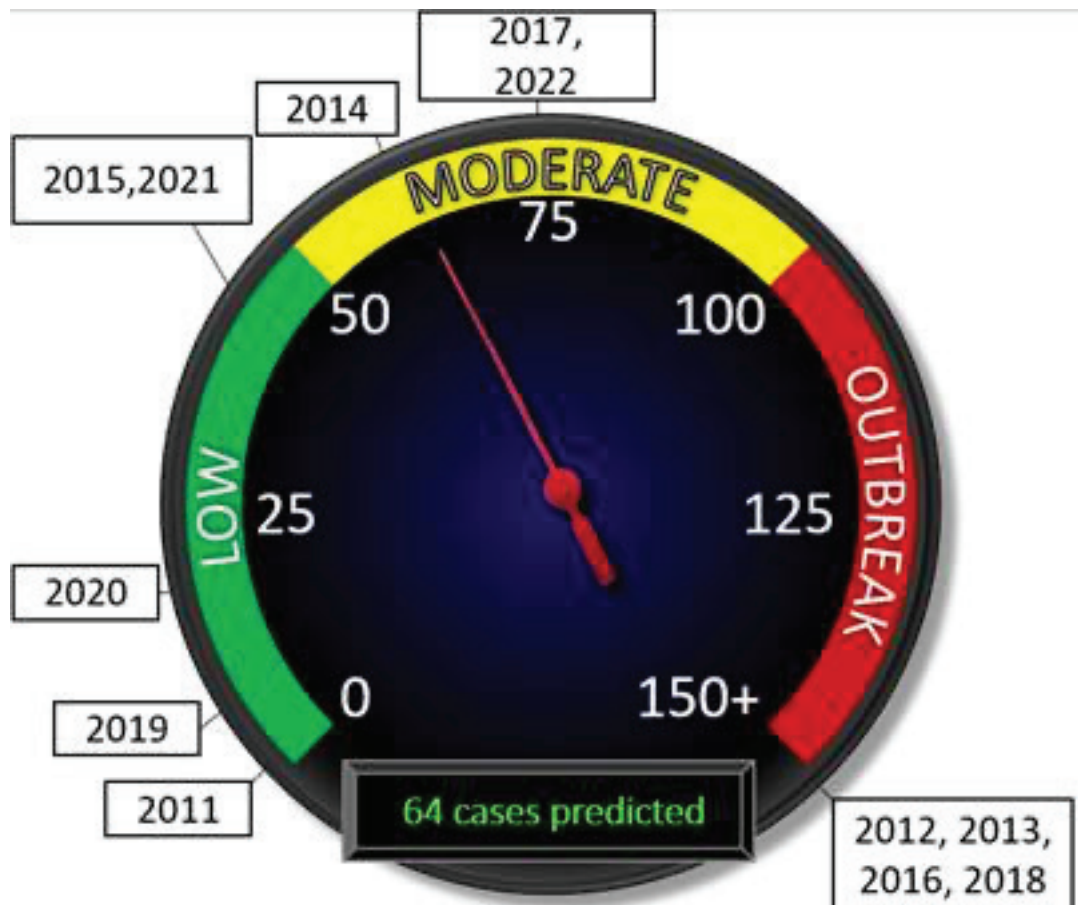
West Nile Update – South Dakota, August 9, 2023

10 human cases reported (Beadle, Campbell, Hughes, Davison, Jerauld, Kingsbury, Minnehaha, Sanborn, Walworth)

8 counties with positive mosquito pools (Beadle, Brown, Brookings, Codington, Hand, Hughes, Lincoln, Minnehaha)

US WNV (as of August 8): 126 cases (Al, AR, AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, IA, KS, LA, MO, NE, NM, OR, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY)

WNV Prediction Model – Total Number of Cases Projected for 2023, South Dakota (as of August 9)



Accessibility builds personal and community connections

By Jim Speirs, Executive Director, Arts South Dakota

We all know about the power of the arts to change lives—my own life as a performer and arts advocate has created opportunity, forged friendships and shaped my personality. The arts lift us, transform us, save us—but are we doing all we can to ensure that the power of the arts is available to people of all abilities across South Dakota?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a major step towards physical and programmatic accessibility for differently abled people in our country. But somehow, although 25% of all Americans live with some form of disability, this community is represented in just 3% of film, television and media. While we're making our concert halls and art galleries accessible to everyone, are we making our planning committees, governing boards and program-building groups open to input from people of all abilities in our communities?

We need to not just include people of all abilities, but also welcome everyone. Open doors provide learning and growing for all people, and sharing arts experiences—as well as planning and creating those arts experiences—builds community in exciting new ways.

Most of all, our approach to inclusion and accessibility must be intentional. That means factoring all-ability programming and participation into our community and organizational planning from the beginning—and making sure that there is a place in the budget for the unexpected extras that true accessibility requires. Listening to everyone, including the 176,000 South Dakotans who live with some form of disability, should be part of our missions as arts providers and arts advocates.

Arts South Dakota has recently been part of three webinars on accessibility, from the national perspective, the state perspective and the personal, welcoming, human perspective. You can view these thought-provoking webinars on our website, artssouthdakota.org. Please check them out to learn more about the dramatic work being done to share the arts with people of all abilities here in South Dakota.





SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

State investigating officer-involved shooting in Sturgis

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - AUGUST 9, 2023 5:14 PM

State officials are investigating an officer-involved shooting that happened Wednesday in Sturgis, according to Attorney General Marty Jackley.

One person was injured, Jackley's office said in a news release, but officers were unharmed. The state Division of Criminal Investigation is conducting the investigation at the request of the state Highway Patrol.

The timing of the shooting places it during the city's annual motorcycle rally, which began Aug. 4 and continues through Sunday. The news release did not say whether the injured person was a rally-goer, and spokesman Tony Mangan told South Dakota Searchlight, "those details are part of the investigation."

The DCI is working with state, local and federal law enforcement on the investigation. Jackley said the Highway Patrol is cooperating.

The DCI will process the crime scene, conduct a forensic examination of all collected evidence, interview officers and witnesses, and review all video cameras from the area, the news release said.

After the investigation is complete, the DCI will issue a case report and shooting summation to be reviewed by Jackley. The release of the summary is anticipated within 30 days.

The Trump indictments: a seven-year timeline of key developments

BY: JACOB FISCHLER - AUGUST 9, 2023 3:55 PM

Former President Donald Trump is a defendant in three criminal proceedings.

Two cases are federal, brought after investigations by Special Counsel Jack Smith. The other case is in New York state court and is being prosecuted by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg.

A fourth indictment, on state charges in Georgia related to Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election results there, could come in the near future.

The indictments lay out the alleged crimes by Trump, the first person who has served as president of the United States to face felony charges. In months to come, the legal proceedings in courts from New York to Florida to D.C. will demand Trump's time and attention as he wages his campaign for the 2024 GOP nomination for president.

To help readers keep track, States Newsroom put together a timeline showing the accusations and legal battles that have swirled around the ex-president, from Trump's first presidential campaign in 2016 until today.

There are three separate indictments:

Hush money payments, New York state court: Trump is accused of breaking state law against falsifying business records by reporting hush money payments as legal expenses. According to the prosecution led by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, Trump's attorney and personal fixer, Michael Cohen, paid adult film star Stormy Daniels \$130,000 to stay silent about an alleged affair between her and Trump. Trump then repaid Cohen through his business, but recorded the transactions as legitimate legal expenses.

Classified documents, U.S. District Court in Fort Pierce, Florida: Trump is accused of taking classified materials from the White House when he left office, improperly storing them in his South Florida estate and refusing to return them to official record keepers with the National Archives and Records Administration.

Election interference, U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C.: Trump is accused of seeking to overturn

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the 2020 presidential election. The alleged conspiracy involved using slates of fraudulent electors in seven states, and it culminated in the Jan. 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Trump has pleaded not guilty to all criminal charges. He has also denied having an affair with Daniels.

Timeline

June 2015-November 2016: Trump's first presidential campaign.

Oct. 7, 2016: The "Access Hollywood" tape is published showing Trump, years before, bragging about sexually assaulting women. The negative publicity is part of what prompts the Trump campaign to try to limit other negative attention about Trump's relationships with women, including alleged affairs, according to the New York state court indictment.

Oct. 26, 2016: Cohen wires \$130,000 to an attorney for Daniels. In return for that payment, Daniels was to remain silent about an alleged sexual relationship she and Trump had while Trump was married, according to the indictment.

Nov. 8, 2016: Election Day. Trump is elected the 45th president of the United States.

Throughout 2017: Trump makes monthly payments to Cohen to reimburse him for the payment to Daniels, according to the New York indictment. The payments are recorded as legal expenses, according to the indictment.

Nov. 3, 2020: Election Day. Trump appears likely to lose reelection to Democratic former Vice President Joe Biden, but several states remain uncalled for days.

Nov. 7, 2020: News outlets project Biden wins Pennsylvania, reaching the threshold to win the presidential election.

Biden ultimately wins five states Trump had secured in the previous election: Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Those states, along with Nevada and New Mexico, would become the focus of Trump's efforts to overturn the election by recruiting fraudulent slates of electors, according to the election indictment.

November 2020-January 2021: Trump and a group of at least six co-conspirators conceive and attempt a plan to reverse his election loss, according to the indictment of Trump.

Dec. 14, 2020: State electors certify their votes. Slates of false electors in seven states Trump lost attempt to fraudulently certify votes for Trump.

Jan. 2, 2021: Trump calls Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, attempting to have Raffensperger alter the state's vote count. Trump asks Raffensperger to "find" enough votes to swing the state to him.

Jan. 3, 2021: Trump meets in the Oval Office with U.S. Justice Department leadership and Jeffrey Clark, then the acting head of the DOJ Civil Division, who had drafted a letter to states implying that federal investigations into election fraud were ongoing.

Trump considered firing the top two DOJ officials, who disapproved of the plan and encouraged Trump to accept the election results, and appointing Clark to lead DOJ. He ultimately declined to elevate Clark. Details of the meeting were described in one of the U.S. House hearings on the Jan. 6 attack and in the election indictment.

Jan. 6, 2021: Trump holds a rally on the White House Ellipse in which he tells supporters to "fight like hell" and implied Vice President Mike Pence could reverse the election result as he certified the state electors, a formality to finalize the 2020 presidential election results.

A large group of Trump supporters violently storm the U.S. Capitol after Trump's speech to disrupt the certification. Five people died that day or shortly after. Four Capitol Police officers on the scene died by suicide later that year.

According to the prosecutors, the riot was the last step in a multipart plan by Trump to overturn the election results.

Jan. 7, 2021: Congress eventually certifies Biden's victory at 3:24 a.m.

Jan. 20, 2021: Biden is inaugurated the 46th president of the United States.

Trump leaves the White House for Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida. He takes hundreds of classified documents with him, according to a federal grand jury in Florida.

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June 9, 2021: The U.S. House votes to form the Select Committee to Investigate the Jan. 6, 2021 Attack on the U.S. Capitol.

July 2021: Trump shows "highly confidential" materials to a writer, publisher and two staff members who lacked security clearance to view the materials, according to the federal indictment.

August or September 2021: Trump shows a classified map of a military operation to a political aide who lacked security clearance, according to the indictment.

Jan. 17, 2022: Trump responds to months of demands from the National Archives and Records Administration to provide missing presidential records by sending 15 boxes of documents containing 197 documents with classification markings, according to the indictment.

March 30, 2022: The FBI opens a criminal investigation into unlawful retention of classified documents at Mar-a-Lago.

June 3, 2022: In response to a grand jury subpoena, Trump provides 38 more documents with classification markings.

June-December 2022: The U.S. House committee investigating Jan. 6 holds 10 livestreamed hearings documenting its findings. The panel focuses on Trump's efforts to overturn the election.

Aug. 8, 2022: The FBI searches Mar-a-Lago and recovers 108 more classified documents.

Nov. 15, 2022: Trump announces he is a candidate for president in 2024.

Nov. 18, 2022: Attorney General Merrick Garland appoints former federal and international prosecutor Jack Smith to be special counsel overseeing federal investigations into Trump. With Trump a candidate and Biden likely to seek reelection, the move is meant to insulate the investigation from the perception that the Biden administration is targeting a political rival.

Dec. 19, 2022: The U.S. House committee releases a report of its findings and makes criminal referrals to the U.S. Justice Department for Trump and attorney John Eastman.

April 4, 2023: Bragg announces the 34-count indictment against Trump in New York. It's the first time a former president has been indicted.

April 4, 2023: Trump appears in state court in Manhattan and pleads not guilty.

June 8, 2023: A federal grand jury in Florida indicts Trump on 37 charges in the documents case. The case is assigned to U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon, a Trump appointee. The indictment is issued under seal and is unsealed the following day.

June 13, 2023: Trump appears in federal court in Miami and pleads not guilty in the documents case.

July 19, 2023: A New York judge denies Trump's request to move the hush money case to federal court.

July 27, 2023: A superseding indictment adds three charges in the classified documents case, alleging Trump and co-conspirators sought to delete potentially incriminating security footage.

Aug. 1, 2023: A federal grand jury in Washington, D.C., indicts Trump on four counts related to his efforts to undermine the 2020 presidential election. The case is assigned to U.S. District Court Judge Tanya Sue Chutkan, who was appointed by President Barack Obama.

Aug. 3, 2023: Trump appears in federal court in Washington, D.C., and pleads not guilty to charges in the election case, appearing before Magistrate Judge Moxila A. Upadhyaya .

Aug. 4, 2023: Trump pleads not guilty to the new charges in the documents case.

UPCOMING

Jan. 15, 2024: The Iowa caucuses are the first nominating contest in the Republican presidential primary.

March 25, 2024: Trial in the New York state case scheduled to begin. Subject to change.

May 14, 2024: Trial in the classified documents case scheduled to begin. Subject to change.

Jacob covers federal policy as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.

USDA's climate grants for farms and forests run into Republican buzzsaw

BY: ALLISON WINTER - AUGUST 9, 2023 11:09 AM

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is spending more than \$3 billion to cultivate more American farmers and forest landowners as partners to mitigate climate change — even while some Republicans on Capitol Hill try to stop the program entirely.

The administration launched a new farm program, Partnerships for Climate Smart Commodities, this year. It is the USDA's largest-ever investment in climate-smart agriculture and part of a larger effort to advance the administration's priority of addressing climate change.

Agriculture Department officials say they hope the program will be transformational and help create markets that could eventually bring "climate-smart" products to grocery shelves.

The program disburses grants for pilot programs that will pay landowners to try new practices to improve the carbon footprint of their operations — with a special focus to recruit traditionally underserved landowners to participate.

Even more ambitiously, the Agriculture Department wants to use the program to help create new markets and revenue streams for "climate-smart" practices for those producing commodities like corn, soybeans, almonds, pork or beef. In total, 52 projects mention building or expanding markets and 26 mention some form of branding or certification process, according to an analysis from the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.

"Through these projects, our partners are working to create new markets for climate-smart commodities, while developing the tools needed to quantify impacts and help producers implement climate-smart practices on their land," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in a statement announcing the implementation phase of the grants in April.

But Republican lawmakers have criticized the program — both for its emphasis on climate change and because of its funding source. Lawmakers have introduced bills to stop the program, and the GOP-controlled House Appropriations Committee voted to block spending for it next year.

Meanwhile, the Agriculture Department has been moving forward steadily, approving grants and rolling out the \$3.1 billion in projects, 141 of them in total, some of which have funding from other sources as well. USDA has finished negotiations with partners for most of the bigger budget grants and 60 projects across 53 states and territories are currently active.

The new initiative has won support from many agriculture, farm cooperative, forestry and research groups, including the National Farmers Union and the American Farm Bureau Federation. It has participants from major universities and farm corporations.

USDA estimates the program will reach more than 60,000 farms, encompassing more than 25 million acres of working lands. The agency's preliminary estimates are that it will provide a reduction of over 50,000 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent. Climate activists say they hope the agency releases data as the projects roll out to show if those estimates become a reality.

Republicans try to block spending

Republican critics of the bill say the Biden administration overstepped its authority when it created the climate program and used the USDA's financing institution, the Commodity Credit Corporation, known as the CCC, to pay for it.

The Commodity Credit Corporation began during the Great Depression as a bailout program for cotton farmers. Over the years, Congress and presidential administrations have directed CCC to fund an increasingly broad array of programs, including farm bill programs, export and commodity programs, conservation and disaster assistance.

For years there was little conflict over the Agriculture Department's broad discretion for the account. But Vilsack, a former governor of Iowa, also came under fire for his use of the fund in 2010, when he was head of the USDA under President Barack Obama.

At issue then was \$600 million in disaster assistance for Arkansas farmers who had been hit by wet

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weather. Republicans saw that aid as an attempt to shore up more support for Arkansas Democrat Blanche Lincoln, who was the chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee at the time and was in a tough reelection fight.

Her opponent, Republican John Boozman, criticized the bailout, later went on to win the election and now is the ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee. The Republican Congress placed restrictions on the use of the CCC in its appropriations bills from 2012 to 2017.

The House Appropriations Committee tried the same maneuver this year and included language in its 2024 agriculture spending bill that would bar the agriculture secretary from using the CCC for any discretionary programs — which would bring the climate program to a screeching halt.

The Appropriations Committee approved the bill but it has not yet made it to the House floor for a vote, one of several spending bills tied up in disputes over how much the government should spend and whether the bills should include far-right policy objectives.

On the Senate side, the Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously approved a bill in June that would not limit USDA's discretionary use of CCC. But Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Roger Marshall (R-Kan.) and Mike Braun (R-Ind.) also introduced a bill in July that would limit the disbursement of funds through the CCC to only those authorized by Congress.

"I'm concerned that the CCC is at risk of becoming a slush fund for politically-driven pet projects," Grassley said in a statement announcing the bill.

But Senate Democrats, who hold a thin majority in that chamber, are unlikely to agree to a bill that would limit the department's use of the fund. The chair of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that oversees USDA, New Mexico Democrat Sen. Martin Heinrich, also has his own proposal, the Agriculture Resilience Act, that would fund regenerative agriculture projects. It has 12 cosponsors.

From cotton bailouts to trade wars

The Biden administration's climate program is unique, but the dispute over the Commodity Credit Corporation to advance pet projects for a presidential administration is not new.

Indeed, the account itself was first created in an act of executive authority, during the Great Depression. President Franklin Roosevelt authorized the CCC in 1933 through an executive order he issued while Congress was out of session.

Creating a separate account for farm support gave the government more leeway to deal with the variable nature of farm payments. Congress appropriated \$3 million to capitalize it and stock was acquired to raise it to \$100 million.

In its early years, the CCC gave millions of dollars in non-recourse loans to struggling cotton farmers. It later added corn, wheat, tobacco and other crops. In 1939, Roosevelt signed another executive order that transferred ownership and management of the CCC to the secretary of agriculture.

The possibilities opened further when the Truman administration reconfigured the CCC in 1948 and gave the secretary of agriculture even more discretion to use the funds for a variety of purposes. Under that charter, USDA can use it to make loans, purchases or payments to help agriculture producers, support the sale of commodities to other agencies and assist in the development of new markets for agricultural commodities. A board of directors oversees the corporation.

Since then, the CCC has essentially become USDA's bank and served as the primary financing source for many farm bill programs, including commodity supports and conservation programs.

The broad mandate and borrowing authority allow USDA to carry out "almost any operation required to meet the objectives of supporting U.S. agriculture," according to an analysis from the Congressional Research Service, a nonpartisan research group within the Library of Congress.

President Donald J. Trump's administration took that to a new level in response to the administration's trade war with China, using the CCC in dollar amounts that exceeded other administrations before or since.

"The Trump administration's use of it was beyond creative, it was completely unprecedented," said Ferd Hoefner, a Washington, D.C.-based consultant on farm and food policy. "It has been used frequently

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throughout history for all sorts of things, but they tended to be much lower-dollar amounts.”

The Trump administration directed \$28 billion in aid to farmers in 2018-2019, when U.S. exports of agricultural goods dropped significantly in response to tariff increases.

USDA spent another \$20 billion from the CCC in 2020 for producers who had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In total, the Trump administration authorized over \$51 billion from the CCC between 2018 and 2020, according to an analysis by the current USDA.

New payments, new markets

While some Republicans dislike the Biden administration’s use of the fund, the requests to participate in the Climate Smart Agriculture Program demonstrate the idea has some traction.

Initially USDA announced it would invest \$1 billion in the partnerships but tripled its commitment because of the overwhelming requests for funding. USDA officials say they received more than 1,000 proposals from more than 500 groups — which would have totaled over \$20 billion if they had funded them all.

They settled on \$3.1 billion in grants to universities, agribusiness groups and nonprofits that will run climate projects. Many of the programs will help connect farmers or landowners with consultants or land managers that can help them make environmental plans and pay them to implement practices like cover crops, no-till farming or planting trees.

The voluntary nature of the program and the incentives to participate will be key to getting farmers on board, according to Rob Larew, president of the National Farmers Union.

“It is important to remember that farmers are often trying to make sure that they stay financially solvent and are operating too often on really thin margins or in some cases negative margins,” said Larew. “If someone is trying to tell you to improve your soil health with a cover crop, if you are not currently doing that and operating on such thin margins, it is a huge leap of faith and a real financial risk in order to make that move.”

Programs across the country will enroll farmers and collect data. For instance, an alliance led by Virginia Tech will enroll over 4,000 producers in Arkansas, Minnesota, North Dakota and Virginia for practices that include a pilot program to test new feed design and additives for livestock. Their project also plans to prototype a climate-smart certificate that can be sold in the private market.

Blue Diamond almond growers will offer no-cost seed and payments to farmers to put in conservation cover crops on their land.

The Climate Smart Partnerships are not a carbon bank or certification process — at least not yet. But many of them are working on ways to market climate-smart products.

For instance, the food processing giant Archer-Daniels Midland Company (ADM) received a \$90 million grant to expand climate-smart corn, soybeans, wheat and peanut markets in 22 states (Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin).

ADM will offer incentive payments to producers for climate-savvy improvements. They plan to develop climate-smart products with partners including Costco and Keurig-Dr. Pepper.

American Forest Foundation received \$35 million to help create forest management plans with landowners of private forests in 13 states (Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia). The group also plans to develop a new tracking system for third-party verification of climate benefits with wood products that come from participating properties.

“What we are delighted by through this opportunity is seeing USDA step up in a big way to incentivize this and say really both people and the planet matter,” said Beth Riley, director of public climate finance and philanthropy at American Forest Foundation.

Private landowners are responsible for 39 percent of the nation’s forests but fewer than 13 percent of them have a land management plan, according to the American Forest Foundation.

Allison Winter is a Washington D.C. correspondent for States Newsroom, a network of state-based nonprofit news outlets that includes the Alaska Beacon.

High schoolers suffer rising mental health challenges, report shows

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - AUGUST 9, 2023 6:32 PM

YANKTON — South Dakota high school students are suffering increased mental health problems, according to a presentation heard Wednesday by the state's Behavioral Health Advisory Council at the Human Services Center.

Colleen Hannum, an epidemiologist with the state Department of Social Services, presented numerous data points to the board as part of an update.

The data show a growing number of South Dakota students expressing prolonged feelings of sadness. In 2013, 22% of high school students reported feeling "sad almost every day for two or more weeks in a row to the extent that they ceased some of their usual activities." By 2019, the most recent year of data for the indicator, the number had climbed to 35.7% – nearly catching up with the national average of 36.7%.

Female students were 1.7 times more likely to feel sad or hopeless than males, and Native American students were nearly two times more likely than white students. The rate among Native American students was 55.6%, and the rate among white students was 30.9%.

High school and suicide

On suicide, Hannum said, "we were higher for all our measures" than the national average. The survey data showed the number of South Dakota high schoolers suffering a serious injury from an attempted suicide grew by 100% between 2009 and 2019. The state had the second-highest suicide rate in the U.S. for teens ages 15 to 19 from 2018 to 2020, according to data in Hannum's presentation.

In 2019, 23% of South Dakota high schoolers "seriously considered suicide," 19% planned an attempt, and 12% made an attempt (compared to a 9% national average).

Among Native American students, 31% attempted suicide and 10% were seriously injured in an attempt. For white students, those numbers were 8% and 3%, respectively.

The U.S. surgeon general and others say the rise in youth mental health challenges can be traced to multiple causes, including increased screen time that can result in less sleep, sedentary living, diminishing social ties and a sense of inadequacy or hopelessness.

Tiffany Wolfgang, who runs the Department of Social Services' Division of Behavioral Health Services, said heightened awareness and reporting are also contributing to the rising numbers.

"Sometimes that 'why' is just so hard to capture and grab," Wolfgang said in response to questions from council members about what's driving the changes.

"We get so caught up in looking at the numbers and the data, and we tend to focus on the 'doomsday' of what that information is telling us, but we also see some good things happening as well," she said. "But we very rarely focus on that, and that's OK, because we should be striving to address the areas we're not doing so well at."

The broader presentation included numbers on the behavioral health indicators of South Dakotans of all ages. Among other data, adult binge drinking in the state decreased from 2011 to 2021. And as of 2019, the number of adults with a substance abuse disorder was lower.

The Behavioral Health Advisory Council advises the state's Division of Behavioral Health with planning, and evaluates and recommends services. Some members have experienced behavioral health problems themselves or have cared for someone who does.

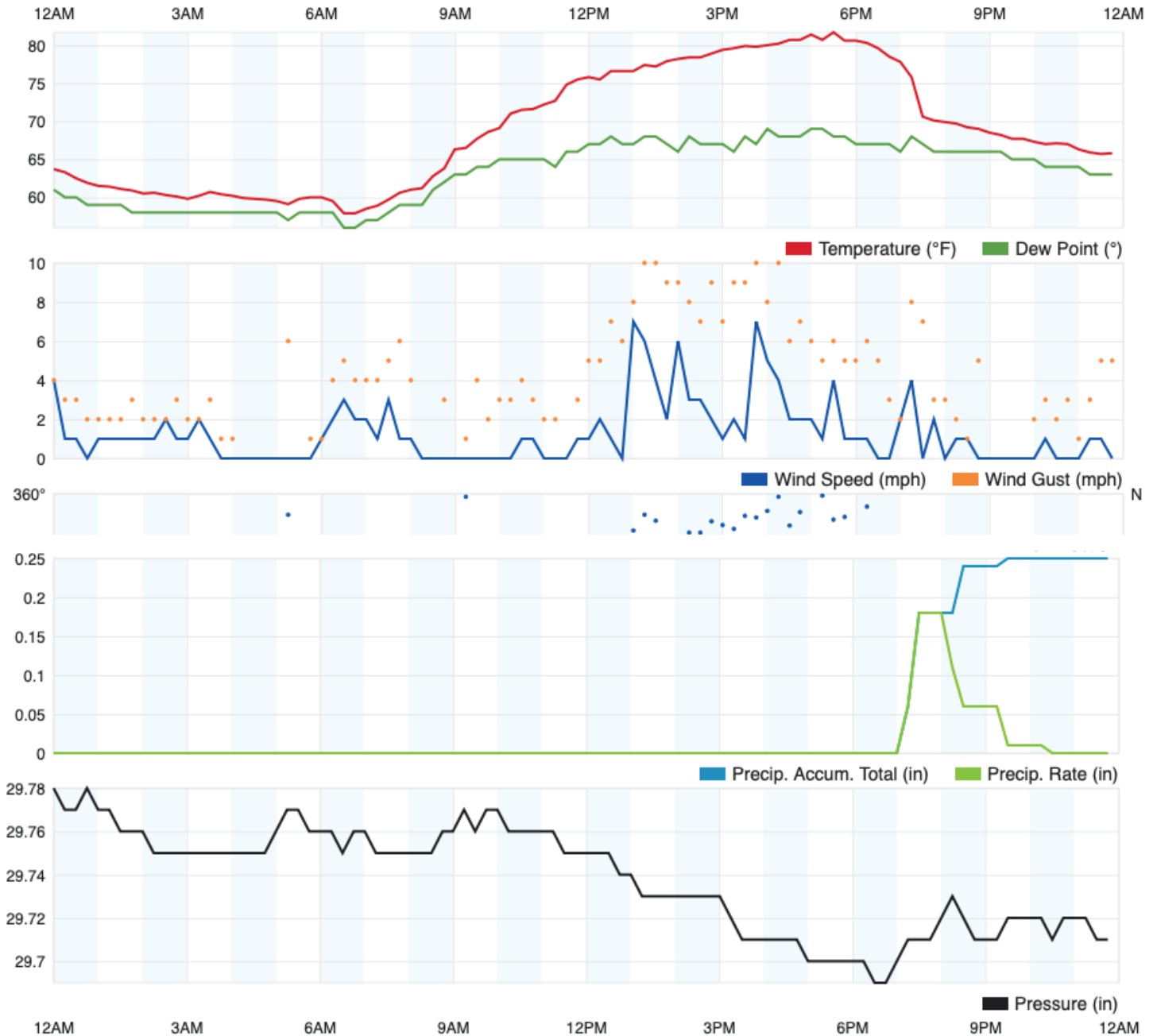
If you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts, help is available anytime by dialing 988. The service is free and confidential.

Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

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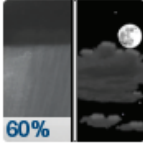



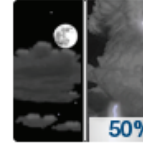

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
Mostly Sunny then Chance T-storms	Heavy Rain then Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Clear	Sunny	Partly Cloudy then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms
High: 86 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 85 °F	Low: 55 °F	High: 83 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 76 °F



Severe Weather This Afternoon/Evening

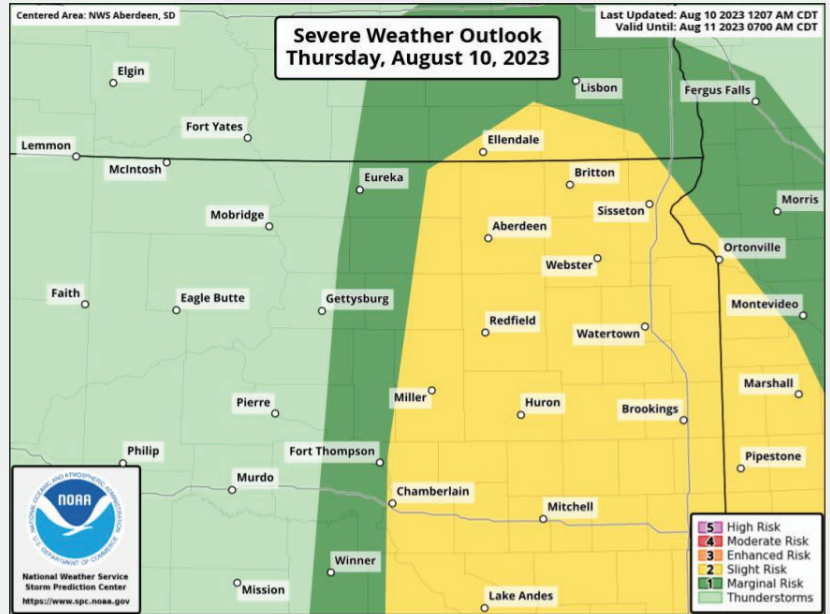
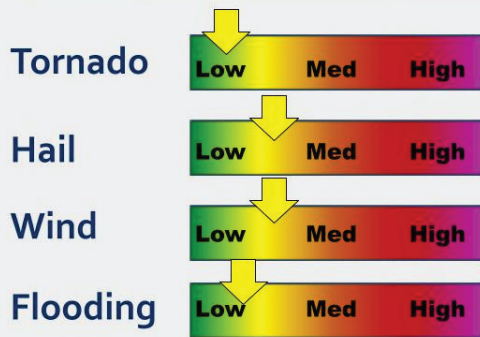
August 10, 2023
1:01 AM

Hazards

Hail to golf balls and wind gusts to 60 mph will be the main threats. An isolated tornado is also possible.

Timing/Location

A broken line of storms should form by late afternoon over the James River valley, and then move east during the late afternoon and evening hours.



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Storms, some severe, could bring hail and gusty winds to eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota late this afternoon and evening.

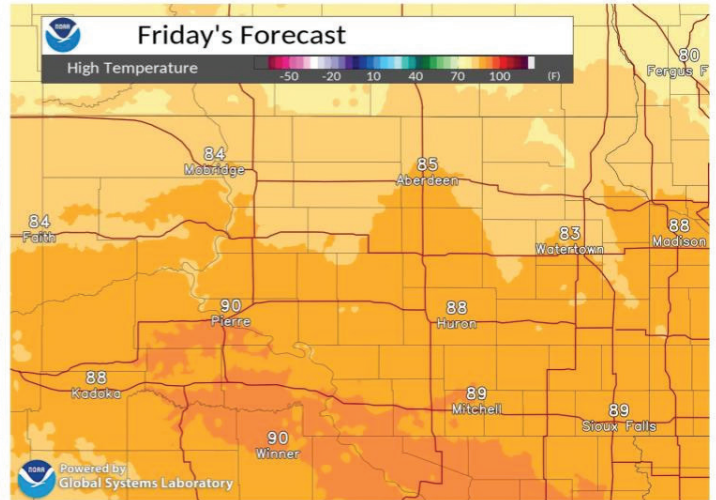
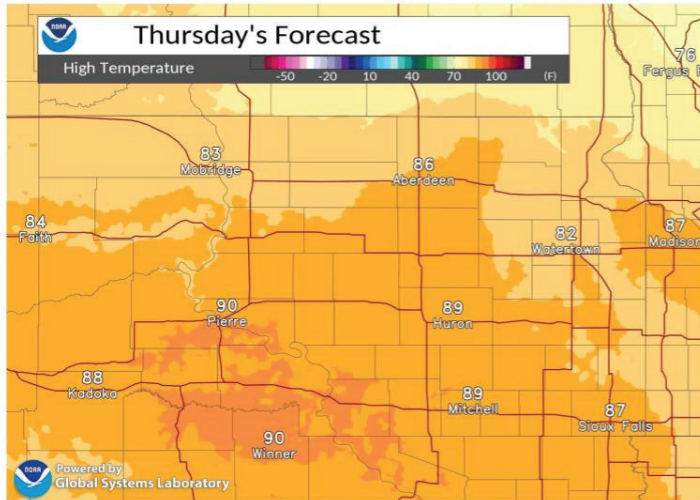
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Warm the Next Couple Days

August 10, 2023
3:55 AM



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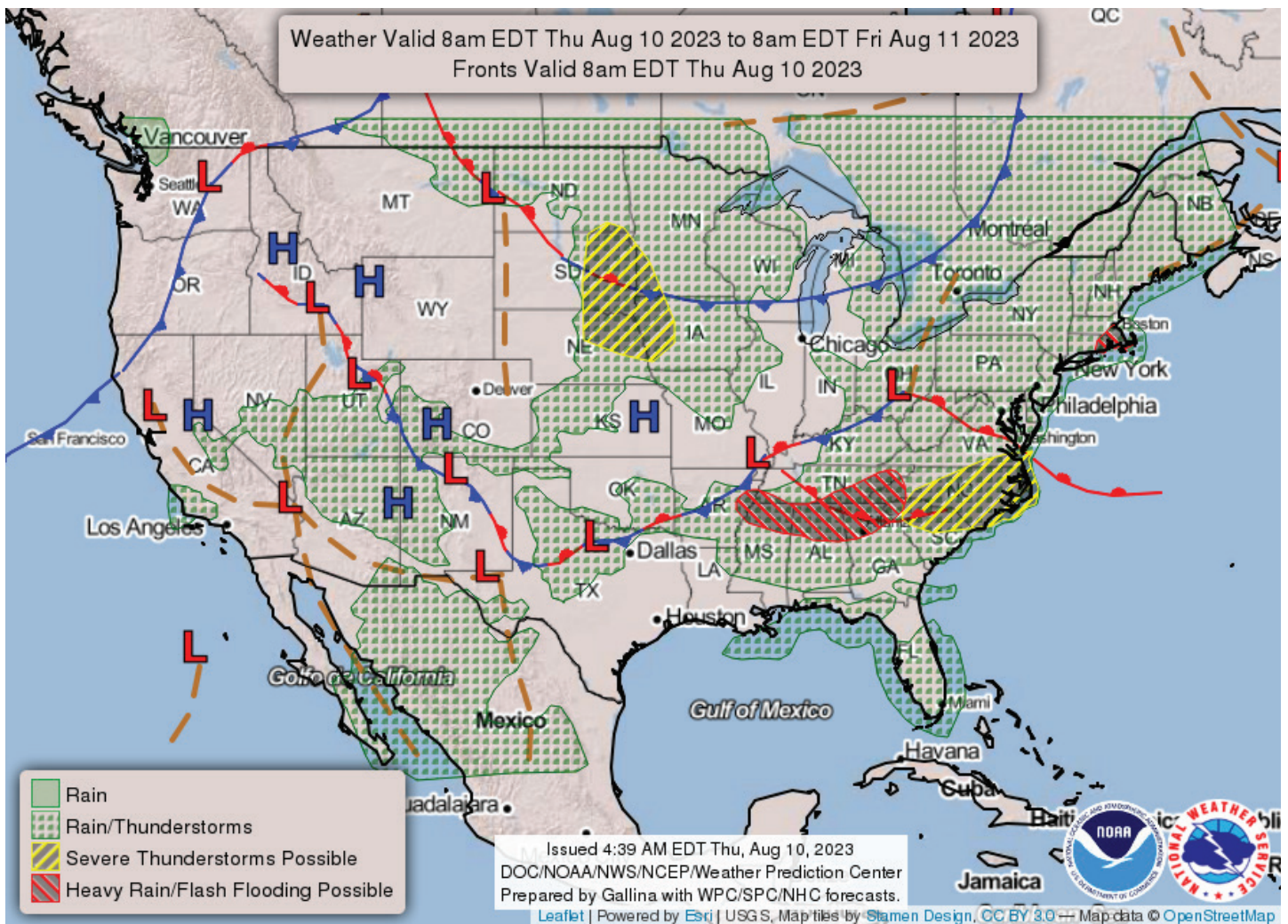
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 82 °F at 5:29 PM
Low Temp: 58 °F at 6:36 AM
Wind: 11 mph at 2:02 PM
Precip: : 0.25

Day length: 14 hours, 24 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 106 in 1947
Record Low: 42 in 1985
Average High: 84
Average Low: 58
Average Precip in Aug.: 0.73
Precip to date in Aug.: 2.38
Average Precip to date: 14.83
Precip Year to Date: 15.05
Sunset Tonight: 8:49:51 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:26:53 AM



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Today in Weather History

August 10, 1886: An estimated F3 tornado moved southeast from 10 miles northwest of Aberdeen. This massive tornado destroyed four homes and a dozen barns. This is the earliest significant tornado on record for Brown County.

August 10, 2007: Several supercell thunderstorms developed along a frontal boundary during the evening bringing large hail, damaging winds, along with a couple of tornadoes. An EF0 tornado touched down north of Timber Lake with no damage reported. Another EF0 tornado touched down briefly north of Trail City with no damage occurring. Wakpala, in Corson County, and Mobridge saw golf ball sized hail. The hail broke some windows and damaged the siding on several houses in the Mobridge area.

1884: An earthquake, centered near New York City and registering a magnitude 5.5, hit the region a little after 2 PM. The tremor made houses shake, chimneys fall, and residents wonder what the heck was going on, according to a New York Times article two days later. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the USGS.

1856: A hurricane destroyed Isle Dernieres or Last Island, a pleasure resort south-southwest of New Orleans on this day. The highest points of the island were under five feet of water. The resort hotel was destroyed, along with the island's gambling establishments. Over 200 people perished, and the island lost all its vegetation and split in half. Only one cow remained on the island after the catastrophe. The Last Island is now just a haven for pelicans and other seabirds. The steamer Nautilus foundered during the storm. The lone survivor clung to a bale of cotton and washed ashore sometime later.

1856 - The Isle Derniere (Last Island) disaster occurred off the coast of Louisiana. A storm tide drowned 140 vacationers as a five foot wave swept over Low Island during a hurricane. (The Weather Channel)

1882 - Sandusky OH noted a four minute snow squall during the morning, frost was reported in the suburbs of Chicago, and a killing frost was reported at Cresco IA. (The Weather Channel)

1898 - The temperature at Pendleton OR climbed all the way to 119 degrees at set a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1924 - Colorado's deadliest tornado killed a woman and nine children in one house along its twenty-mile path east southeast of Thurman. Mennonite men had left the farm to provide possible aid, as the 200-yard wide storm was first seen while far away.(The Weather Channel)

1936 - The temperature soared to 114 degrees at Plain Dealing, LA, and reached 120 degrees at Ozark AR, to establish record highs for those two states. (The Weather Channel)

1980 - Hurricane Allen came ashore above Brownsville, TX, dropping fifteen inches of rain near San Antonio, and up to 20 inches in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Tidal flooding occurred along the South Texas coast. Hurricane Allen packed winds to 150 mph, and also spawned twenty-nine tornadoes. Total damage from the storm was estimated at 750 million dollars. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Unseasonably hot weather continued in the southeastern U.S. Ten cities in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina reported record high temperatures for the date. Macon GA hit 101 degrees. A tropical depression deluged southeastern Texas and southwestern Louisiana with torrential rains. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Citizens of Bluefield, WV, where the Chamber of Commerce provides free lemonade on days when the temperature warms into the 90s, were able to celebrate their record high of 90 degrees. Eight other cities also reported record high temperatures for the date,including Bismarck ND with a reading of 102 degrees.(The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thirty-eight cities in the south central and southeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Asheville NC with a reading of 48 degrees, and Victoria TX with a low of 63 degrees. Oklahoma City OK reported a record cool afternoon high of 71 degrees, and the daily high of 64 degrees at Raleigh NC established a record for August. In Arizona, a record sixty-four day streak of 100 degree days at Phoenix came to an end.(The National Weather Summary)

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

THE JOY OF GIVING

It was their first anniversary, and the husband wanted to make it one that his wife would remember for years to come. Speaking to a clerk in a greeting card store, he said, "I'd like a beautiful card for my wife to show her how much I truly love her."

Leading him to the Anniversary Section, the clerk selected a card and presented it to him saying, "Here's a lovely card, Sir, one of our most beautiful. And the message is most appropriate."

"How much is it?" asked the husband.

"It's a little less than \$7.00," he replied.

"Wow!" he gasped. "Got anything for about a buck?"

The church at Macedonia was going through troubling times and difficult days. But when it came to giving, Paul said "They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity."

Giving, for the Christian, is the good and right thing to do. It reflects our attitude about trust and our dependence on God. It is never about God, but about us and does not depend on the day or the time, but on the joy we find and the peace we have in Christ. We limit God's blessings when we limit our giving.

Prayer: We pray, Father, that we will find the source and satisfaction of life in what we do with what we give. May we understand that all that we have is Yours and that we cannot out-give You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. 2 Corinthians 8:1-8



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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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.08.23

13 19 20 32 33 14

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 25
DRAW: Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.09.23

1 10 12 33 39 5

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$7,750,000

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 40
DRAW: Mins 56 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.09.23

13 19 26 27 43 9

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 55 Mins 56
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.09.23

13 15 25 27 29

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 55
DRAW: Mins 56 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.09.23

1 42 51 61 63 17

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 24
DRAW: Mins 56 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.09.23

10 15 21 67 69 3

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$194,000,000

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 24
DRAW: Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Person shot and wounded by South Dakota trooper in Sturgis, authorities say

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities are investigating the shooting of a person by a South Dakota Highway Patrol trooper at a convenience store Wednesday in Sturgis, where a big annual motorcycle rally is underway.

Sturgis Police Chief Geody VanDewater issued a brief statement confirming that one person was shot and wounded by a trooper, and said more information would be released later, the Black Hills Pioneer reported.

“We’re not releasing details at this time other than all the officers are safe and there is no threat to public safety,” he said at his daily briefing.

The Sturgis Police Department said the shooting happened around 10 a.m. Wednesday at a gas station just off Interstate 90. There was no immediate word on the condition of the person who was shot or what led to the shooting.

Initial statements from authorities did not say whether the incident might be linked to the 10-day Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, which draws hundreds of thousands of motorcycle enthusiasts to the Black Hills city every year.

The Division of Criminal Investigation is leading the investigation at the request of the Highway Patrol. The Patrol is cooperating in the investigation, according to a news release from South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley.

Authorities asked for any photos or videos connected to the incident to be shared with law enforcement.

A daily update from the South Dakota Department of Public Safety said two people had died in fatal accidents associated with this year’s rally as of 6 a.m. Wednesday, with 59 arrests on charges of driving under the influence and 132 misdemeanor or felony drug arrests.

Researchers dig deep underground in hopes of finally observing dark matter

Hugh Lippincott University of California, Santa Barbara

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

Hugh Lippincott, University of California, Santa Barbara

(THE CONVERSATION) Physicists like me don’t fully understand what makes up about 83% of the matter of the universe — something we call “dark matter.” But with a tank full of xenon buried nearly a mile under South Dakota, we might one day be able to measure what dark matter really is.

In the typical model, dark matter accounts for most of the gravitational attraction in the universe, providing the glue that allows structures like galaxies, including our own Milky Way, to form. As the solar system orbits around the center of the Milky Way, Earth moves through a dark matter halo, which makes up most of the matter in our galaxy.

I’m a physicist interested in understanding the nature of dark matter. One popular guess is that dark matter is a new type of particle, the Weakly Interacting Massive Particle, or WIMP. “WIMP” captures the particle’s essence quite nicely — it has mass, meaning it interacts gravitationally, but it otherwise interacts very weakly — or rarely — with normal matter. WIMPs in the Milky Way theoretically fly through us on Earth all the time, but because they interact weakly, they just don’t hit anything.

Searching for WIMPs

Over the past 30 years, scientists have developed an experimental program to try to detect the rare interactions between WIMPs and regular atoms. On Earth, however, we are constantly surrounded by low, nondangerous levels of radioactivity coming from trace elements — mainly uranium and thorium — in the environment, as well as cosmic rays from space. The goal in hunting for dark matter is to build as sensi-

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tive a detector as possible, so it can see the dark matter, and to put it in as quiet a place as possible, so the dark matter signal can be seen over the background radioactivity.

With results published in July 2023, the LUX-ZEPLIN, or LZ, collaboration has done just that, building the largest dark matter detector to date and operating it 4,850 feet (1,478 meters) underground in the Sanford Underground Research Facility in Lead, South Dakota.

At the center of LZ rests 10 metric tons (10,000 kilograms) of liquid xenon. When particles pass through the detector, they may collide with xenon atoms, leading to a flash of light and the release of electrons.

In LZ, two massive electrical grids apply an electric field across the volume of liquid, which pushes these released electrons to the liquid's surface. When they breach the surface, they are pulled into the space above the liquid, which is filled with xenon gas, and accelerated by another electric field to create a second flash of light. Two large arrays of light sensors collect these two flashes of light, and together they allow researchers to reconstruct the position, energy and type of interaction that took place.

Reducing radioactivity

All materials on Earth, including those used in WIMP detector construction, emit some radiation that could potentially mask dark matter interactions. Scientists therefore build dark matter detectors using the most "radiopure" materials – that is, free of radioactive contaminants – they can find, both inside and outside the detector.

For example, by working with metal foundries, LZ was able to use the cleanest titanium on Earth to build the central cylinder – or cryostat – that holds the liquid xenon. Using this special titanium reduces the radioactivity in LZ, creating a clear space to see any dark matter interactions. Furthermore, liquid xenon is so dense that it actually acts as a radiation shield, and it is easy to purify the xenon of radioactive contaminants that might sneak in.

In LZ, the central xenon detector lives inside two other detectors, called the xenon skin and the outer detector. These supporting layers catch radioactivity on the way in or out of the central xenon chamber. Because dark matter interactions are so rare, a dark matter particle will only ever interact one time in the entire apparatus. Thus, if we observe an event with multiple interactions in the xenon or the outer detector, we can assume it's not being caused by a WIMP.

All of these objects, including the central detector, the cryostat and the outer detector, live in a large water tank nearly a mile underground. The water tank shields the detectors from the cavern, and the underground environment shields the water tank from cosmic rays, or charged particles that are constantly hitting the Earth's atmosphere.

The hunt continues

In the result just published, using 60 days of data, LZ recorded about five events per day in the detector. That's about a trillion fewer events than a typical particle detector on the surface would record in a day. By looking at the characteristics of these events, researchers can safely say that no interaction so far has been caused by dark matter. The result is, alas, not a discovery of new physics – but we can set limits on exactly how weakly dark matter must interact, as it remains unseen by LZ.

These limits help to tell physicists what dark matter is not – and LZ does that better than any experiment in the world. Meanwhile, there's hope for what comes next in the search for dark matter. LZ is collecting more data now, and we expect to take more than 15 times more data over the next few years. A WIMP interaction may already be in that data set, just waiting to be revealed in the next round of analysis.

This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article here: <https://theconversation.com/researchers-dig-deep-underground-in-hopes-of-finally-observing-dark-matter-211075>.

At least 36 people have died on Maui as fires burn through Hawaii, county reports

By AUDREY MCAVOY, JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER and NICK PERRY Associated Press

WAILUKU, Hawaii (AP) — Several thousand Hawaii residents raced to escape homes on Maui as the Lahaina fire swept across the island, killing at least 36 people and burning parts of a centuries-old town.

The fire took the island of Maui by surprise, leaving behind burned-out cars on once busy streets and smoking piles of rubble where historic buildings had stood. Flames roared throughout the night, forcing adults and children to dive into the ocean for safety.

Maui county announced the updated death toll on its website late Wednesday, writing that no other details were currently available on the deaths. Officials said earlier that 271 structures were damaged or destroyed and dozens of people injured.

On Wednesday, Maui crews continued to battle blazes in several places on the island. Authorities urged visitors to stay away.

Lahaina residents Kamuela Kawaakoa and Iulia Yasso described a harrowing escape under smoke-filled skies Tuesday afternoon. The couple and their 6-year-old son got back to their apartment after a quick dash to the supermarket for water, and only had time to grab a change of clothes and run as the bushes around them caught fire.

"We barely made it out," Kawaakoa said at an evacuation shelter on Wednesday, still unsure if anything was left of their apartment.

As the family fled, a senior center across the road erupted in flames. They called 911, but didn't know if the people got out. Fire alarms blared. As they drove away, downed utility poles and fleeing cars slowed their progress.

Kawaakoa, 34, grew up in the apartment building, called Lahaina Surf, where his dad and grandmother also lived. Lahaina Town dates back to the 1700s and has long been a favorite destination for tourists.

"It was so hard to sit there and just watch my town burn to ashes and not be able to do anything," Kawaakoa said. "I was helpless."

The Hawaiian fires were whipped by strong winds from Hurricane Dora passing far to the south. It's the latest in a series of disasters caused by extreme weather around the globe this summer. Experts say climate change is increasing the likelihood of such events.

As winds eased somewhat on Maui, some flights resumed Wednesday, allowing pilots to view the full scope of the devastation. Aerial video from Lahaina showed dozens of homes and businesses razed, including on Front Street, where tourists once gathered to shop and dine. Smoking heaps of rubble lay piled high next to the waterfront, boats in the harbor were scorched, and gray smoke hovered over the leafless skeletons of charred trees.

"It's horrifying. I've flown here 52 years and I've never seen anything come close to that," said Richard Olsten, a helicopter pilot for a tour company. "We had tears in our eyes."

About 14,500 customers in Maui were without power early Wednesday. With cell service and phone lines down in some areas, many people were struggling to check in with friends and family members living near the wildfires. Some were posting messages on social media.

Tiare Lawrence was frantically trying to reach her siblings who live near where a gas station exploded in Lahaina.

"There's no service, so we can't get ahold of anyone," she said from the Maui community of Pukalani.

Maj. Gen. Kenneth Hara, from the Hawaii State Dept. of Defense, told reporters Wednesday night that officials were working to get communications restored, to distribute water, and possibly adding law enforcement personnel. He said National Guard helicopters had dropped 150,000 gallons of water on the Maui fires.

State Department of Education Superintendent Keith Hayashi said in a statement that a team was working on contingency plans and preparing for the possible loss of the King Kamehameha III elementary school that had been in Lahaina for more than a century.

"The department is striving to maintain regular school schedules to provide a sense of normalcy, but will

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keep most Maui schools closed for the remainder of this week," he said.

The Coast Guard said it rescued 14 people who jumped into the water to escape flames and smoke, including two children.

Among those injured were three people with critical burns who were flown to Straub Medical Center's burn unit on the island of Oahu, officials said. At least 20 patients were taken to Maui Memorial Medical Center, officials said, and a firefighter was hospitalized in stable condition after inhaling smoke.

Richard Bissen Jr., the mayor of Maui County, said at a Wednesday morning news conference that he didn't have details on how or where on the island the six deaths occurred. He said officials hadn't yet begun investigating the immediate cause of the fires, but officials did point to the combination of dry conditions, low humidity and high winds.

More than 2,100 people spent Tuesday night in evacuation centers. Another 2,000 travelers sheltered at Kahului Airport after many flights were canceled. Officials were preparing the Hawaii Convention Center in Honolulu to take in thousands of displaced tourists and locals.

Mauro Farinelli, of Lahaina, said the winds had started blowing hard on Tuesday, and then somehow a fire had started up on a hillside.

"It just ripped through everything with amazing speed," he said, adding it was "like a blowtorch."

The winds were so strong they blew his garage door off its hinges and trapped his car in the garage, Farinelli said. So a friend drove him, along with his wife Judit and dog Susi, to an evacuation shelter. He had no idea what had happened to their home.

"We're hoping for the best," he said, "but we're pretty sure it's gone."

President Joe Biden said he'd ordered all available federal assets to help with the response. He said the Hawaii National Guard had mobilized Chinook helicopters to help with fire suppression as well as search and rescue efforts on Maui.

"Our prayers are with those who have seen their homes, businesses and communities destroyed," Biden said in a statement.

Former President Barack Obama, who was born in Hawaii, said on social media that it's tough to see some of the images coming out of a place that is so special to many.

Alan Dickar, who owns a poster gallery and three houses in Lahaina, said most tourists who come to Maui visit Front Street.

"The central two blocks is the economic heart of this island, and I don't know what's left," he said.

Dickar took video of flames engulfing the main strip before escaping with three friends and two cats.

"Every significant thing I owned burned down today," he said. "I'll be OK. I got out safely."

Wildfires were also burning on Hawaii's Big Island, Mayor Mitch Roth said, although there had been no reports of injuries or destroyed homes there. Roth said firefighters had needed to extinguish some roof fires and there were continuing flareups of one fire near the Mauna Kea Resorts.

Acting Gov. Sylvia Luke said the flames had wiped out communities and urged travelers to stay away.

"This is not a safe place to be," she said.

Luke issued an emergency proclamation on behalf of Gov. Josh Green, who was traveling. Green's office said he'd cut short his trip and was returning Wednesday evening.

Fires in Hawaii are unlike many of those burning in the U.S. West. They tend to break out in large grasslands on the dry sides of the islands and are generally much smaller than mainland fires. A major fire on the Big Island in 2021 burned homes and forced thousands to evacuate.

The 2018 Camp Fire in the Sierra Nevada foothills of California killed at least 85 people and destroyed nearly 19,000 homes.

Yasso, who fled her home with boyfriend Kawaakoa, said residents are going to need time to regroup and that people shouldn't plan to visit right now.

"It's everybody losing their memories of growing up," she said. "It's the memories for everybody. We all lost our homes with this."

Paper exams, chatbot bans: Colleges seek to 'ChatGPT-proof' assignments

By JOCELYN GECKER Associated Press

When philosophy professor Darren Hick came across another case of cheating in his classroom at Furman University last semester, he posted an update to his followers on social media: "Aaaaand, I've caught my second ChatGPT plagiarist."

Friends and colleagues responded, some with wide-eyed emojis. Others expressed surprise.

"Only 2?! I've caught dozens," said Timothy Main, a writing professor at Conestoga College in Canada. "We're in full-on crisis mode."

Practically overnight, ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence chatbots have become the go-to source for cheating in college.

Now, educators are rethinking how they'll teach courses this fall from Writing 101 to computer science. Educators say they want to embrace the technology's potential to teach and learn in new ways, but when it comes to assessing students, they see a need to "ChatGPT-proof" test questions and assignments.

For some instructors that means a return to paper exams, after years of digital-only tests. Some professors will be requiring students to show editing history and drafts to prove their thought process. Other instructors are less concerned. Some students have always found ways to cheat, they say, and this is just the latest option.

An explosion of AI-generated chatbots including ChatGPT, which launched in November, has raised new questions for academics dedicated to making sure not only that students can get the right answer, but also understand how to do the work. Educators say there is agreement at least on some of the most pressing challenges.

— Are AI detectors reliable? Not yet, says Stephanie Laggini Fiore, associate vice provost at Temple University. This summer, Fiore was part of a team at Temple that tested the detector used by Turnitin, a popular plagiarism detection service, and found it to be "incredibly inaccurate." It worked best at confirming human work, she said, but was spotty in identifying chatbot-generated text and least reliable with hybrid work.

— Will students get falsely accused of using artificial intelligence platforms to cheat? Absolutely. In one case last semester, a Texas A&M professor wrongly accused an entire class of using ChatGPT on final assignments. Most of the class was subsequently exonerated.

— So, how can educators be certain if a student has used an AI-powered chatbot dishonestly? It's nearly impossible unless a student confesses, as both of Hicks' students did. Unlike old-school plagiarism where text matches the source it is lifted from, AI-generated text is unique each time.

In some cases, the cheating is obvious, says Main, the writing professor, who has had students turn in assignments that were clearly cut-and-paste jobs. "I had answers come in that said, 'I am just an AI language model, I don't have an opinion on that,'" he said.

In his first-year required writing class last semester, Main logged 57 academic integrity issues, an explosion of academic dishonesty compared to about eight cases in each of the two prior semesters. AI cheating accounted for about half of them.

This fall, Main and colleagues are overhauling the school's required freshman writing course. Writing assignments will be more personalized to encourage students to write about their own experiences, opinions and perspectives. All assignments and the course syllabi will have strict rules forbidding the use of artificial intelligence.

College administrators have been encouraging instructors to make the ground rules clear.

Many institutions are leaving the decision to use chatbots or not in the classroom to instructors, said Hiroano Okahana, the head of the Education Futures Lab at the American Council on Education.

At Michigan State University, faculty are being given "a small library of statements" to choose from and modify as they see fit on syllabi, said Bill Hart-Davidson, associate dean in MSU's College of Arts and Letters who is leading AI workshops for faculty to help shape new assignments and policy.

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"Asking students questions like, 'Tell me in three sentences what is the Krebs cycle in chemistry?' That's not going to work anymore, because ChatGPT will spit out a perfectly fine answer to that question," said Hart-Davidson, who suggests asking questions differently. For example, give a description that has errors and ask students to point them out.

Evidence is piling up that chatbots have changed study habits and how students seek information.

Chegg Inc., an online company that offers homework help and has been cited in numerous cheating cases, said in May its shares had tumbled nearly 50% in the first quarter of 2023 because of a spike in student usage of ChatGPT, according to Chegg CEO Dan Rosensweig. He said students who normally pay for Chegg's service were now using the AI platform for free.

At Temple this spring, the use of research tools like library databases declined notably following the emergence of chatbots, said Joe Lucia, the university's dean of libraries.

"It seemed like students were seeing this as a quick way of finding information that didn't require the effort or time that it takes to go to a dedicated resource and work with it," he said.

Shortcuts like that are a concern partly because chatbots are prone to making things up, a glitch known as "hallucination." Developers say they are working to make their platforms more reliable but it's unclear when or if that will happen. Educators also worry about what students lose by skipping steps.

"There is going to be a big shift back to paper-based tests," said Bonnie MacKellar, a computer science professor at St. John's University in New York City. The discipline already had a "massive plagiarism problem" with students borrowing computer code from friends or cribbing it from the internet, said MacKellar. She worries intro-level students taking AI shortcuts are cheating themselves out of skills needed for upper-level classes.

"I hear colleagues in humanities courses saying the same thing: It's back to the blue books," MacKellar said. In addition to requiring students in her intro courses to handwrite their code, the paper exams will count for a higher percentage of the grade this fall, she said.

Ronan Takizawa, a sophomore at Colorado College, has never heard of a blue book. As a computer science major, that feels to him like going backward, but he agrees it would force students to learn the material. "Most students aren't disciplined enough to not use ChatGPT," he said. Paper exams "would really force you to understand and learn the concepts."

Takizawa said students are at times confused about when it's OK to use AI and when it's cheating. Using ChatGPT to help with certain homework like summarizing reading seems no different from going to YouTube or other sites that students have used for years, he said.

Other students say the arrival of ChatGPT has made them paranoid about being accused of cheating when they haven't.

Arizona State University sophomore Nathan LeVang says he doublechecks all assignments now by running them through an AI detector.

For one 2,000-word essay, the detector flagged certain paragraphs as "22% written by a human, with mostly AI voicing."

"I was like that is definitely not true because I just sat here and wrote it word for word," LeVang said. But he rewrote those paragraphs anyway. "If it takes me 10 minutes after I write my essay to make sure everything checks out, that's fine. It's extra work, but I think that's the reality we live in."

West African leaders plan to meet on Niger but options are few as a military junta defies mediation

By SAM MEDNICK and CHINEDU ASADU Associated Press

NIAMEY, Niger (AP) — West African heads of state are scheduled to meet Thursday after Niger's military junta defied their deadline to reinstate the nation's deposed president, but analysts say the Economic Community of West African States may be running out of options as support fades for a military intervention.

As Niger's junta turns away most efforts at mediation, one analyst asserted that Russian meddling in the country has spiked in the two weeks since mutinous soldiers overthrew democratically elected President

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Mohamed Bazoum, who has refused to step down and is under house arrest.

The junta announced a new government on Wednesday night. More than half of the 21 positions were filled by civilians. The rest were military appointments.

Niger was seen as the last country in the Sahel region south of the Sahara Desert that Western nations could partner with to counter jihadi violence linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group that has killed thousands and displaced millions of people. The international community is scrambling to find a peaceful solution to the country's leadership crisis.

"Let me tell you, any coup that has succeeded beyond 24 hours has come to stay. So, as it is, they are speaking from the point of strength and advantage," Oladeinde Ariyo, a security analyst in neighboring Nigeria, said. "So, negotiating with them will have to be on their terms."

Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is leading the ECOWAS push. On Wednesday, a Nigerian delegation led by the Emir of Kano, Khalifa Muhammad Sanusi, met the junta's leader, Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani. The emir was one of few people allowed to meet Tchiani.

Acting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Victoria Nuland met with the coup leaders earlier this week but was denied access to both Tchiani and Bazoum. A separate delegation comprised of ECOWAS, the United Nations and the African Union was barred from coming at all.

West Africa's regional bloc has failed to stem past coups throughout the region. Niger is the fourth country in the 15-member state bloc to have experienced a coup in the last three years.

The bloc imposed harsh economic and travel sanctions and threatened to use military force if Bazoum was not reinstated by Sunday, a deadline the junta ignored. There is no indication the coup leaders are willing to budge on reinstating Bazoum, who says he is being held hostage in his residence with his wife and son.

An advisor to Bazoum who was not authorized to speak about the situation due to the sensitivity of it told The Associated Press on Wednesday that the family is without water and electricity and subsisting on rice and canned goods because food is running out.

U.N. deputy spokesman Farhan Haq said he was very concerned about reports of the "deplorable living conditions" Bazoum and his family were in and called for the president's immediate release.

But as the junta becomes more entrenched, the options for negotiations are becoming limited, said Andrew Lebovich, a research fellow with the Clingendael Institute.

"It's very difficult to say what might come out of it, but the fact that the initial deadline passed without intervention and that the (junta) has continued to hold a fairly firm line, indicate that they think they can outlast this pressure," he said.

The main parties' positions are dangerously far apart, according to the International Crisis Group, which said that if dialogue is going to succeed, each side is going to have to make concessions, which they've so far refused to do.

Since seizing power, the junta has cut ties with France and exploited popular grievances toward its former colonial ruler to shore up its support base. It also has asked for help from the Russian mercenary group Wagner, which operates in a handful of African countries and has been accused of committing human rights abuses.

Moscow is using Wagner and other channels of influence to discredit Western nations, Lou Osborn, an investigator with All Eyes on Wagner, a project focusing on the Wagner group, asserted to The Associated Press.

Tactics include using social media to spread rumors about Wagner's upcoming arrival to Niger and employing fake accounts to mobilize demonstrations and spread false narratives, Osborn said. "Their objective is not to support the junta or an alternative political approach but to sow discord, create chaos, destabilize," she said.

She pointed to a Telegram post on Wednesday by an alleged Wagner operative, Alexander Ivanov, asserting that France had begun the "mass removal of children" likely to be used for slave labor and sexual exploitation.

It was not immediately possible to verify the allegations. Wagner's media arm is effectively disbanded and hasn't replied to requests for comment since Niger's coup.

While there's no reason to believe Russia was behind the coup, it will leverage the opportunity to gain a stronger foothold in the region, something Western nations were trying to avoid, Sahel experts say.

France and the United States have more than 2,500 military personnel in Niger and along with other European nations have poured hundreds of millions of dollars of military assistance into propping up the country's forces. Much of that aid was suspended after members of the presidential guard overthrew Bazoum.

Meanwhile, Niger's approximately 25 million people are feeling the impact of the sanctions.

Some neighborhoods in the capital, Niamey are living in the dark with little access to electricity and there are frequent power cuts across the city. The country gets up to 90% of its power from Nigeria, which has cut off some of the supply.

Since the coup, Hamidou Albade, 48, said he's been unable to run his shop on the outskirts of Niamey because there's been no electricity. He also works as a taxi driver but lost business there, too, because a lot of his foreign clients have left the city.

"It's very difficult, I just sit at home doing nothing," he said. Still, he supports the junta. "We're suffering now, but I know the junta will find a solution to get out of the crisis," he said.

Anti-corruption Ecuadorian presidential candidate assassinated at campaign event

By GONZALO SOLANO and MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — An Ecuadorian presidential candidate known for speaking up against cartels and corruption was shot and killed Wednesday at a political rally in the capital, amid a startling wave of gang-driven violence in the South American country.

President Guillermo Lasso confirmed the assassination of Fernando Villavicencio and suggested organized crime was behind his slaying, less than two weeks before the Aug. 20 presidential election.

"I assure you that this crime will not go unpunished," Lasso said in a statement. "Organized crime has gone too far, but they will feel the full weight of the law."

Ecuador's attorney general's office said that one suspect died in custody from wounds sustained in a firefight after the killing, and police detained six suspects following raids in Quito.

In his final speech before he was killed, Villavicencio promised a roaring crowd that he would root out corruption and lock up the country's "thieves."

Prior to the shooting, Villavicencio said he had received multiple death threats, including from affiliates of Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel, one of a slew of international organized crime groups that now operate in Ecuador. He said his campaign represented a threat to such groups.

"Here I am showing my face. I'm not scared of them," Villavicencio said in a statement, naming detained crime boss José Adolfo Macías by his alias "Fito."

Villavicencio was one of eight candidates, though not the front-runner. The politician, 59, was the candidate for the Build Ecuador Movement.

Supporter Ida Paez said that Villavicencio's campaign had given her hope that the country could overcome the gangs. At the rally, she said, "We were happy. Fernando even danced. His last words were, if someone messes with the people, he is messing with my family."

As drug traffickers have begun to use the country's coastal ports, Ecuadorians have reeled from violence not seen for decades. The sounds of gunfire ring in many major cities as rival gangs battle for control, and gangs have recruited children. Just last month, the mayor of the port city of Manta was shot and killed. On July 26, Lasso declared a state of emergency covering two provinces and the country's prison system in an effort to stem the violence.

Former vice president and candidate Otto Sonnenholzner said in a news conference following Wednesday's killing, "We are dying, drowning in a sea of tears and we do not deserve to live like this. We demand

that you do something.”

Videos of the rally on social media appear to show Villavicencio walking out of the event surrounded by guards. The video then shows the candidate getting into a white pickup truck before gunshots are heard, followed by screams and commotion around the truck. This sequence of events was confirmed to The Associated Press by Patricio Zuquilanda, Villavicencio’s campaign adviser.

Lasso said “the murderers” threw a grenade into the street to cover their flight, but it didn’t explode. Police later destroyed the grenade with a controlled explosion, he added.

Zuquilanda said the candidate had received at least three death threats before the shooting, which he had reported to authorities, resulting in one detention. He called on international authorities to take action against the violence, attributing it to rising violence and drug trafficking.

“The Ecuadorian people are crying and Ecuador is mortally wounded,” he said. “Politics cannot lead to the death of any member of society.”

Villavicencio was one of the country’s most critical voices against corruption, especially during the 2007-2017 government of President Rafael Correa.

He was also an independent journalist who investigated corruption in previous governments, later entering politics as an anti-graft campaigner.

Villavicencio filed many judicial complaints against high-ranking members of the Correa government, including against the ex-president himself. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison for defamation over his criticisms of Correa, and fled to Indigenous territory in Ecuador, later receiving asylum in neighboring Peru.

Edison Romo, a former military intelligence colonel, said the anti-corruption complaints made Villavicencio “a threat to international criminal organizations.”

Lasso, a conservative former banker, was elected in 2021 on a business-friendly platform and clashed from the start with the left-leaning majority coalition in the National Assembly.

A snap election was called after Lasso dissolved the National Assembly by decree in May, in a move to avoid being impeached over allegations that he failed to intervene to end a faulty contract between the state-owned oil transport company and a private tanker company.

Ecuador’s constitution includes a provision that allows the president to disband the assembly during a political crisis, but then requires new elections for both the assembly and the presidency.

Diana Atamaint, the president of the National Electoral Council, said the election date, Aug. 20, was “unalterable” due to constitutional and legal mandates, as well as electoral activities that have already been approved by the council.

The country has faced a series of political upheavals in recent years.

Authorities said that at least nine others were injured in the Wednesday shooting, including officers and a congressional candidate, in what they described as a “terrorist act.”

The killing was met with an outcry by other candidates who demanded action, with presidential front-runner Luisa González of the Citizen Revolution party saying “when they touch one of us, they touch all of us.”

Villavicencio was married and is survived by five children.

Tropical Storm Khanun pours intense rain on South Korea and heads toward its urban centers

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, YONG JUN CHANG and AHN YOUNG-JOON Associated Press

BUSAN, South Korea (AP) — Tropical Storm Khanun was pouring intense rain on South Korea on Thursday, turning roads into chocolate-colored rivers as it advanced north toward major urban centers near the capital.

More than a foot of rain has already fallen in southern areas from the storm that made landfall on the mainland during the morning. Emergency workers were responding to growing reports of flooding and landslides by afternoon.

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More than 10,000 people, mostly in southern coastal areas, were forced to evacuate from their homes and the number was expected to grow as the heavy rains continue and rivers and streams rise.

No storm-related deaths or injuries have been reported so far, according to the Ministry of the Interior and Safety.

Officials shut down hundreds of motorways, streets and public parks and sent text alerts warning about the perils posed by Khanun, which is hitting South Korea just weeks after torrential rains caused flash floods and landslides that killed at least 47 people.

After making landfall around 9:30 a.m. near the southeastern port city of Geoje, Khanun was approaching the southeastern inland city of Andong as of 2:30 p.m., showing slightly diminished strength, with its maximum winds blowing at 104 kph (64 mph) while moving at 38 kph (23 mph).

Forecasters say Khanun will pound the country with powerful rains and winds while slowly moving through the Korean Peninsula for hours, with its eye brushing the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area where half of South Korea's 51 million people live. It will move into North Korea early Friday, but forecasters said the greater Seoul area would still feel its force until Friday afternoon.

Since Wednesday, the storm dumped nearly 35 centimeters (14 inches) of rain in the southern mainland cities of Changwon and Yangsan.

In Changwon, emergency workers used ropes to rescue pedestrians trapped in huge zones of flooded roads, and responded to landslides that spilled dirt and other debris over motorways. Residents and shop owners blocked their doors with sandbags while workers established flood shields to protect a major seafood market. In Geoje, emergency workers in helmets examined a parking lot where vehicles were smashed or damaged by bricks and other debris apparently flown by forceful winds.

In coastal Busan, South Korea's second-largest city, several motorways were closed because of flooding. Emergency workers cleared uprooted trees that collapsed over roads and responding to destroyed walls and fences, broken windows, and other damage. A public park in the Yeonje district was submerged.

The neighboring cities and towns of Gimhae, Ulsan, Pohang, Gimcheon issued flood warnings for areas near rivers and streams that flow through its urban districts.

In Gangwon province, a mountainous region on the east coast where the KMA forecast more than 50 centimeters (20 inches) of rain in places, officials in the seaside county of Yangyang alerted residents who lived near an at-risk stream to seek shelter and workers were repairing the embankment of another stream that crumbled and was spilling water on a major motorway.

More than 380 flights were grounded around South Korea, ferry services were halted and more than 60,000 fishing vessels sent to port.

Khanun already had meandered around southern Japanese islands for more than a week, knocking out power and disrupting transit. The Japan Meteorological Agency warned of possible mudslides and flooding in the areas affected. It also said Typhoon Lan in the Pacific was growing in strength and forecast to affect Japan's main islands next week.

Khanun already forced South Korea to evacuate the World Scout Jamboree that had been taking place at a coastal campsite. The 37,000 Scouts were transferred to university dormitories, government and corporate training centers and hotels in Seoul and nearby areas.

Despite the storm, organizers were proceeding with plans to hold a K-Pop concert Friday to go with the Jamboree's closing ceremony.

Workers dressed in raincoats were working on scaffolding at the Seoul World Cup Stadium to set up lights and other stage preparations, even as winds started to pick up in the city.

Putin profits off global reliance on Russian nuclear fuel

By MARTHA MENDOZA and DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. and its European allies are importing vast amounts of nuclear fuel and compounds from Russia, providing Moscow with hundreds of millions of dollars in badly needed revenue as it wages war on Ukraine.

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The sales, which are legal and unsanctioned, have raised alarms from nonproliferation experts and elected officials who say the imports are helping to bankroll the development of Moscow's nuclear arsenal and are complicating efforts to curtail Russia's war-making abilities. The dependence on Russian nuclear products — used mostly to fuel civilian reactors — leaves the U.S. and its allies open to energy shortages if Russian President Vladimir Putin were to cut off supplies. The challenge is likely to grow more intense as those nations seek to boost production of emissions-free electricity to combat climate change.

"We have to give money to the people who make weapons? That's absurd," said Henry Sokolski, executive director of the Washington-based Nonproliferation Policy Education Center. "If there isn't a clear rule that prevents nuclear power providers from importing fuel from Russia — and it's cheaper to get it from there — why wouldn't they do it?"

Russia sold about \$1.7 billion in nuclear products to firms in the U.S. and Europe, according to trade data and experts. The purchases occurred as the West has leveled stiff sanctions on Moscow over its 2022 invasion of Ukraine, blocking imports of such Russian staples as oil, gas, vodka and caviar.

The West has been reluctant to target Russia's nuclear exports, however, because they play key roles in keeping reactors humming. Russia supplied the U.S. nuclear industry with about 12% of its uranium last year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Europe reported getting about 17% of its uranium in 2022 from Russia.

Reliance on nuclear power is expected to grow as nations embrace alternatives to fossil fuels. Nuclear power plants produce no emissions, though experts warn that nuclear energy comes with the risk of reactor meltdowns and the challenge of how to safely store radioactive waste. There are about 60 reactors under construction around the world — 300 more are in the planning stages.

Many of the 30 countries generating nuclear energy in some 440 plants are importing radioactive materials from Russia's state-owned energy corporation Rosatom and its subsidiaries. Rosatom leads the world in uranium enrichment, and is ranked third in uranium production and fuel fabrication, according to its 2022 annual report.

Rosatom, which says it is building 33 new reactors in 10 countries, and its subsidiaries, exported around \$2.2 billion worth of nuclear energy-related goods and materials last year, according to trade data analyzed by the Royal United Service Institute, a London-based think-tank. The institute said that figure is likely much larger because it is difficult to track such exports.

Rosatom's CEO Alexei Likhachyov told the Russian newspaper Izvestia the company's foreign business should total \$200 billion over the next decade. That lucrative civilian business provides critical funds for Rosatom's other major responsibility: designing and producing Russia's atomic arsenal, experts say.

Ukrainian officials have pleaded with world leaders to sanction Rosatom to cut off one of Moscow's last significant funding streams and to punish Putin for launching the invasion. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy again pressed Western leaders to target Rosatom after Russian forces captured the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. Rosatom is running the partially shutdown plant, and the International Atomic Energy Agency has repeatedly warned that a radiation leak at the Russian-occupied facility could be a major disaster.

"Ukraine does not understand why sanctions have not yet been introduced against Rosatom and its leadership," Zelenskyy said in May, "when representatives of this company continue to occupy Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and put our general security at risk."

Nuclear energy advocates say the U.S. and some European countries would face difficulty in cutting off imports of Russian nuclear products. The U.S. nuclear energy industry, which largely outsources its fuel, produces about 20% of U.S. electricity.

The value of Russian nuclear fuel and products sent to the U.S. hit \$871 million last year, up from \$689 million in 2021 and \$610 million in 2020, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In terms of weight, U.S. imports of uranium products from Russia nearly doubled from 6.3 tons in 2020 to 12.5 tons in 2022, according to trade data from ImportGenius.

The reasons for that reliance goes back decades. The U.S. uranium industry took a beating following a 1993 nonproliferation deal that resulted in the importation of inexpensive weapons-grade uranium from

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Russia, experts say. The downturn accelerated after a worldwide drop in demand for nuclear fuel following the 2011 meltdown of three reactors at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi power plant.

American nuclear plants purchased 5% of their uranium from domestic suppliers in 2021, the last year for which official U.S. production data are available, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. The largest source of uranium for such plants was Kazakhstan, which contributed about 35% of the supply. A close Russian ally, Kazakhstan is the world's largest producer of uranium.

The Biden administration says it is trying to revive uranium mining and the production of nuclear fuel, and lawmakers have introduced legislation to speed up the process. This week, however, President Joe Biden announced the formation of a national monument to preserve land around Grand Canyon National Park that would prevent new uranium mining in the region.

"It is critical that we stop funding Russia's state-owned nuclear monopoly, Rosatom," said Sen. John Barrasso, the Wyoming Republican who introduced legislation earlier this year to fund America's nuclear fuel supply chain. "We also need to give America's nuclear fuel suppliers market certainty."

Europe is in a bind largely because it has 19 Russian-designed reactors in five countries that are fully dependent on Russian nuclear fuel. France also has a long history of relying on Russian-enriched uranium. In a report published in March, Greenpeace, citing the United Nations' Comtrade database, showed that French imports of enriched uranium from Russia increased from 110 tons in 2021 to 312 tons in 2022.

Europe spent nearly \$828 million (almost €750 million) last year on Russian nuclear industry products — including fuel elements, nuclear reactors, and machinery — according to Eurostat, the EU's statistics office.

Some European nations are taking steps to wean themselves off Russian uranium. Early on in the Ukraine conflict, Sweden refused to purchase Russian nuclear fuel. Finland, which relies on Russian power at two out of its five reactors, scrapped a trouble-ridden deal with Rosatom to build a new nuclear power plant. Finnish energy company Fortum also announced an agreement with the U.S. Westinghouse Electric Company to supply fuel for two reactors after its contracts with Rosatom subsidiary Tvel expire over the next seven years.

The Czech Republic has sought to wean itself off Russian supplies completely and turned to Westinghouse and the French company Framatome for future shipments of fuel assemblies for its only nuclear power plant, currently supplied by Tvel, with the new supplies expected to begin in 2024. Slovakia and Bulgaria, two other countries that rely on Tvel for nuclear fuel, have also turned to different suppliers.

Despite the challenges, experts believe political pressure and questions over Russia's ability to cut off supplies will eventually spur much of Europe to abandon Rosatom. "Based on apparent prospects (of diversification of fuel supplies), it would be fair to say that Rosatom has lost the European market," said Vladimir Slivyak, co-chair of the Russian environmental group Ecodefense.

What remains unclear, Slivyak said, are how Hungary and France will address the issue. France has not expressed a willingness to shut off Russia's uranium spigot. Hungary, which maintains close ties to Russia, is fully dependent on Moscow to provide fuel for its four-reactor nuclear power plant. It has plans to expand that plant by two Rosatom reactors — a project that is financed by a 10 billion euro line of credit from a Russian bank.

Those reactors, experts said, will be fully reliant on Russian nuclear fuel for years, if not decades, to come.

A billion-dollar coastal project begins in Louisiana. Will it work as sea levels rise?

By KEVIN MCGILL Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — It's a nearly \$3 billion attempt to mimic Mother Nature: Massive gates will be incorporated into a section of a flood protection levee southeast of New Orleans to divert some of the Mississippi River's sediment-laden water into a new channel that will guide it into southeast Louisiana's Barataria Basin.

If the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion project works as intended, the solids in the river water will settle

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out in the basin and gradually restore land that has been steadily disappearing for decades. State coastal officials call it a first-of-its-kind project they are certain will work, even as climate change-induced rising sea levels threaten the disappearing coast.

A groundbreaking ceremony with Gov. John Bel Edwards was set for Thursday morning in Plaquemines Parish, where Louisiana's close associations with commercial seafood harvests, recreational fishing and the offshore oil industry are all on display — as is the vulnerability to land loss.

Flat, sparsely populated and split lengthwise by the river, the parish juts into the Gulf of Mexico at Louisiana's southeastern tip. It's marbled by bayous and bays. Highways paralleling the river as it nears its endpoint at the Gulf pass farmland and fishing camps, shrimp boats, offshore oil rig supply vessels and industrial storage yards.

"Without question, we are confident that this project will build land within the Barataria Basin," Bren Haase, chair of Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, said Tuesday.

He estimates the diversion will build anywhere from 20 square miles (52 square kilometers) to 40 square miles (104 square kilometers) over the next 30 to 50 years.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which permitted the project last year, projected creation of as much as 21 square miles (54 square kilometers) by 2070. Subsidence — the natural sinking of land — and sea level rise will diminish the returns, so much so that a net loss of land remains likely. But that can be seen as a factor increasing the importance of the effort.

"As land loss accelerates due to sea-level rise and subsidence, more of the remaining wetland area would be attributed to diversion operations," the statement's executive summary said.

Coastal experts say south Louisiana was built by sediment deposited as the powerful river continuously altered its own crooked, meandering course over thousands of years.

Human efforts to constrain the river with flood protection levees and huge flow-control structures safeguarded cities and communities that developed along the banks as the river became a medium of navigation and commerce. But the development also stopped the millennia-old process of building land naturally.

That is a major reason Louisiana's marshy coastal wetlands have given way to growing swaths of open water, posing a myriad of environmental concerns. Those concerns include worry about the erosion of land that serves as a natural hurricane buffer for New Orleans.

Channeling water from the Mississippi into the basin poses environmental and economic problems, too. Even as it granted permits for the project, the Corps noted the environmental costs of introducing non-salty river water into coastal areas where aquatic animals thrive in salty or brackish water. The changes will likely kill bottlenose dolphins and have varying effects on fish and sea turtles. Fishermen have long opposed the project because of its expected effects on shrimp and oysters as well.

Kerri Callais, a board member for the Save Louisiana Coalition, which opposes the diversion, is among opponents who favor other coast-building methods, including rebuilding barrier islands and using pipelines to pump sediment to land-depleted areas.

"These are projects that we know will build land, will not take decades, and will not take the livelihoods, culture, and heritage of our citizens away," Callais, a member of the governing council in neighboring St. Bernard Parish, said in an email.

Opposition has remained despite state promises of efforts to mitigate harm. On Tuesday, for instance, coastal officials outlined \$10 million in planned spending on a variety of projects to aid fishers and oyster harvesters who will have to change the areas where they work or make other adjustments as a result of the project. Millions more in spending is planned to help communities near the river that might see increased flood threats from the project, including elevation of roadways.

Some environmental groups see the potential benefits. Matt Rota, senior policy director for the nonprofit Healthy Gulf, said the project will use less energy than sediment pumping, and he acknowledged the need to work with the river on its natural ability to build land.

"This diversion, if it's successful, is more passive," Rota said in a phone interview, "which means it can keep going, whether or not we have money or the fuel."

Still, Rota said, Healthy Gulf wants to see more done to help locals who depend on fisheries and oysters

for their livelihoods. He said state and federal governments must also work harder to limit pollution upriver that flows south.

A year ago, an Iranian woman's death sparked hijab protests. Now businesses are a new battleground

By NASSER KARIMI and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — For months, Iranian authorities did little to enforce the law on women covering their hair but now the country's theocracy is pushing to make businesses the new battleground over the mandatory headscarf.

The effort comes ahead of the first anniversary of nationwide protests that erupted after the Sept. 16 death of Mahsa Amini in the custody of the country's morality police. A crackdown by security forces that followed saw more than 530 people killed and over 22,000 arrested.

These days, with uncovered women a common sight on Tehran streets, authorities have begun raiding companies where women employees or customers have been seen without the headscarf, or hijab. Iran's parliament is discussing a law that would increase punishments on uncovered women and the businesses they frequent.

The developments could foment new unrest as parliamentary elections loom next year and the country's economy struggles under the weight of international sanctions imposed over Iran's nuclear program.

"If I face penalties and punishment, I will wear the headscarf since I am in a ... prominent position," said Parvaneh, a doctor who treated protesters injured during demonstrations last year. Like several other women who spoke to The Associated Press, she asked that only her first name be used for fear of reprisals.

"But the young people I treated during the protests will not pull back," she added.

For observant Muslim women, the head covering is a sign of piety before God and modesty in front of men outside their families. In Iran, the hijab — and the all-encompassing black chador worn by some — has long been a political symbol as well, particularly after becoming mandatory in the years following the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

After the death of Amini, who was picked up for her allegedly loose headscarf, police were hesitant to strictly enforce the Islamic dress code — possibly to avoid even wider demonstrations and displays of defiance. But in recent weeks, the tone has changed.

"I'm telling you that this lack of hijab will be definitely put an end to," hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi said Wednesday.

Authorities have started sending warning text messages to women seen without the veil in cars: around 1 million messages were sent. In time, some 2,000 cars were confiscated and over 4,000 women referred to prosecutors.

Next, security forces scoured social media for companies with images of uncovered women in the workplace. One of the offices of Digikala, a hugely popular digital retail websites with more than 40 million active monthly users, was closed. Also briefly shut were the online bookstore Taghcheh and insurance marketplace Azki.

The crackdown extended beyond the capital of Tehran. In the northern city of Lahajjan, local health officials ordered hospitals and clinics to stop providing services to uncovered woman. In Damavand, a town some 60 kilometers (40 miles) east of Tehran, prosecutors ordered the arrest of a bank manager and a teller over serving a woman not wearing the hijab.

Outdoor café seating is now banned in the northeastern city of Mashhad and hard-liners in Isfahan want to ban the mixed working of men and women in shops.

The entertainment industry is also being watched. Police have threatened to shut down film productions that have women without headscarves working behind cameras.

Judges also have also sentenced female celebrities convicted of not wearing the veil to work in morgues as a public service, in lieu of prison time. They also have to obtain a mental health certificate from a psy-

chologist before they can go back to their regular jobs.

"Instead of addressing people's legitimate grievances, the regime continues to obsess over the hijab and act as if its very survival depends on whether women dress modestly," said Haleh Esfandiari, a fellow at the Washington-based Wilson Center and an Iranian-American dual national who was held by Tehran in 2007.

A new bill before Iran's parliament could make penalties for women even more serious. It calls for fines of up to 360 million Iranian rials (\$720) and prison sentences for women without the headscarf. The draft legislation also calls for more strictly segregating the sexes in schools, parks, hospitals and other locations.

It also envisages fines on businesses with female staff and customers who do not wear the hijab with up to three months of their income, while offending celebrities can be banned from leaving the country and performing.

The bill would also empower intelligence agencies and the Basij — the all-volunteer force of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard that has violently suppressed nationwide protests in the past — to confront women without hijabs.

Hard-liners have long demanded that the Basij enter the fight over the hijab, with some chanting at at Friday prayers in Tehran, "Guard, come to the street, put an end to hijab removal!"

"This is what Islam orders," said Rahele Kargarnejad, 29, a firm supporter of wearing the hijab. Her two daughters, ages 9 and 11, wear the chador, she added.

But criticism of the proposed bill is already simmering.

Ezzeatollah Zarghami, a hard-line former Guard commander and the current minister for cultural heritage, warned that harsh sentences such as the mandatory morgue work "will cause more and significant problems instead of solving the hijab problem."

Iran's Supreme Court overturned a court order impounding an uncovered woman's car for a year and revoking her license, setting a precedent.

Even if it passes, prominent lawyer Mahmoud Alizadeh Tabatabaei described the draft law as meaningless since "the majority of women do not believe in it."

"They will find out that the law is not enforceable," Tabatabaei said.

Meanwhile, politicians known in Iran as reformists have seized on the hijab dispute as they seek to change Iran's theocracy from within the system. Former President Mohammad Khatami, one of the country's most prominent reformists, has questioned whether enforcing the hijab was "wise and productive."

With hard-liners dominating the parliament and elections coming up in March, the hijab could become a contested topic ahead of the polls.

But anti-hijab comments may not be enough as reformists have seen their popularity wane following the collapse of the 2015 nuclear deal under then-President Hassan Rouhani, also considered a moderate.

On the streets, many Iranian women and girls still forgo the headscarf despite possible consequences.

"After hearing about the bill I made my decision — I will go to my school with the full hijab but I encourage my students to remove it whenever it is possible," said Mojgan, a 37-year-old secondary school teacher.

"My students are already ahead of me on that," she added.

Biden issues an executive order restricting US investments in Chinese technology

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden signed an executive order Wednesday to block and regulate high-tech U.S.-based investments going toward China — a move the administration said was targeted but it also reflected an intensifying competition between the world's two biggest powers.

The order covers advanced computer chips, micro electronics, quantum information technologies and artificial intelligence. Senior administration officials said that the effort stemmed from national security goals rather than economic interests, and that the categories it covered were intentionally narrow in scope. The order seeks to blunt China's ability to use U.S. investments in its technology companies to upgrade

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its military while also preserving broader levels of trade that are vital for both nations' economies.

The Chinese Ministry of Commerce responded in a statement early Thursday that it has "serious concern" about the order and "reserves the right to take measures."

The United States and China appear to be increasingly locked in a geopolitical competition with a conflicting set of values. Biden administration officials have insisted that they have no interest in "decoupling" from China, yet the U.S. also has limited the export of advanced computer chips and kept the expanded tariffs set up by President Donald Trump. And in its response, China accused the U.S. of "using the cover of 'risk reduction' to carry out 'decoupling and chain-breaking.'" China has engaged in crackdowns on foreign companies.

Biden has suggested that China's economy is struggling and its global ambitions have been tempered as the U.S. has reenergized its alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia and the European Union. The administration consulted with allies and industry in shaping the executive order.

"Worry about China, but don't worry about China," Biden told donors at a June fundraising event in California.

The officials previewing the order said that China has exploited U.S. investments to support the development of weapons and modernize its military. The new limits were tailored not to disrupt China's economy, but they would complement the export controls on advanced computer chips from last year that led to pushback by Chinese officials. The Treasury Department, which would monitor the investments, will announce a proposed rulemaking with definitions that would conform to the presidential order and go through a public comment process.

The goals of the order would be to have investors notify the U.S. government about certain types of transactions with China as well as to place prohibitions on some investments. Officials said the order is focused on areas such as private equity, venture capital and joint partnerships in which the investments could possibly give countries of concern such as China additional knowledge and military capabilities.

J. Philip Ludvigson, a lawyer and former Treasury official, said the order was an initial framework that could be expanded over time.

"The executive order issued today really represents the start of a conversation between the U.S. government and industry regarding the details of the ultimate screening regime," Ludvigson said. "While the executive order is limited initially to semiconductors and microelectronics, quantum information technologies, and artificial intelligence, it explicitly provides for a future broadening to other sectors."

The issue is also a bipartisan priority. In July by a vote of 91-6, the Senate added as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act requirements to monitor and limit investments in countries of concern, including China.

Yet reaction to Biden's order on Wednesday showed a desire to push harder on China. Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, D-Ill., said the order was an "essential step forward," but it "cannot be the final step." Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, said Biden should be more aggressive, saying, "we have to stop all U.S. investment in China's critical technology and military companies — period."

Biden has called Chinese President Xi Jinping a "dictator" in the aftermath of the U.S. shooting down a spy balloon from China that floated over the United States. Taiwan's status has been a source of tension, with Biden saying that China had become coercive regarding its independence.

China has supported Russia after its 2022 invasion of Ukraine, though Biden has noted that the friendship has not extended to the shipment of weapons.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce said it met a number of times with the White House and federal agencies as the order was being prepared and said its goal during the comment period will be "to ensure the measure is targeted and administrable."

U.S. officials have long signaled the coming executive order on investing in China, but it's unclear whether financial markets will regard it as a tapered step or a continued escalation of tensions at a fragile moment.

"The message it sends to the market may be far more decisive," said Elaine Dezenski, a senior director at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. "U.S. and multinational companies are already reexamining

ing the risks of investing in China. Beijing's so-called 'national security' and 'anti-espionage' laws that curb routine and necessary corporate due diligence and compliance were already having a chilling effect on U.S. foreign direct investment. That chilling now risks turning into a deep freeze."

In its statement, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce said the executive order "seriously deviates from the market economy and fair competition principles the United States has always advocated. It affects the normal business decisions of enterprises, disrupts the international economic and trade order and seriously disrupts the security of global industrial and supply chains."

China's strong economic growth has stumbled coming out of pandemic lockdowns. On Wednesday, its National Bureau of Statistics reported a 0.3% decline in consumer prices in July from a year ago. That level of deflation points to a lack of consumer demand in China that could hamper growth.

Separately, foreign direct investment into China fell 89% from a year earlier in the second quarter of this year to \$4.9 billion, according to data released by the State Administration of Foreign Exchange.

Most foreign investment is believed to be brought in by Chinese companies and disguised as foreign money to get tax breaks and other benefits, according to Chinese researchers.

However, foreign business groups say global companies also are shifting investment plans to other economies.

Foreign companies have lost confidence in China following tighter security controls and a lack of action on reform promises. Calls by Xi and other leaders for more economic self-reliance have left investors uneasy about their future in the state-dominated economy.

COVID-19 took a toll on heart health and doctors are still grappling with how to help

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Firefighter and paramedic Mike Camilleri once had no trouble hauling heavy gear up ladders. Now battling long COVID, he gingerly steps onto a treadmill to learn how his heart handles a simple walk.

"This is, like, not a tough-guy test so don't fake it," warned Beth Hughes, a physical therapist at Washington University in St. Louis.

Somehow, a mild case of COVID-19 set off a chain reaction that eventually left Camilleri with dangerous blood pressure spikes, a heartbeat that raced with slight exertion, and episodes of intense chest pain. Doctors were stumped until Camilleri found a Washington University cardiologist who'd treated patients with similar post-COVID heart trouble.

"Finally a turn in the right direction," said the 43-year-old Camilleri.

He started to see a little improvement — only to have a recent reinfection knock him down again.

Well into the pandemic's fourth year, how profound a toll COVID-19 has taken on the nation's heart health is only starting to emerge.

"We are seeing effects on the heart and the vascular system that really outnumber, unfortunately, effects on other organ systems," said Dr. Susan Cheng, a cardiologist at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

For up to a year after a case of COVID-19, people may be at increased risk of developing a new heart-related problem, anything from blood clots and irregular heartbeats to a heart attack — even if they initially seem to recover just fine.

Among the unknowns: Who's most likely to experience these aftereffects? Are they reversible — or a warning sign of more heart disease later in life?

"We're about to exit this pandemic as even a sicker nation" because of virus-related heart trouble, said Washington University's Dr. Ziyad Al-Aly, who helped sound the alarm about lingering health problems. The consequences, he added, "will likely reverberate for generations."

Heart disease has long been the top killer in the nation and the world. But in the U.S., heart-related

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death rates had fallen to record lows in 2019, just before the pandemic struck.

COVID-19 erased a decade of that progress, Cheng said.

Heart attack-caused deaths rose during every virus surge. Worse, young people aren't supposed to have heart attacks but Cheng's research documented a nearly 30% increase in heart attack deaths among 25- to 44-year-olds in the pandemic's first two years.

An ominous sign the trouble may continue: High blood pressure is one of the biggest risks for heart disease and "people's blood pressure has actually measurably gone up over the course of the pandemic," she said.

Some of these patients have what's known as long COVID, the catchall term for dozens of symptoms that often include fatigue and brain fog. The National Institutes of Health is beginning small studies of a few possible treatments for certain long COVID symptoms, including a heartbeat problem.

But Cheng said patients and doctors alike need to know that sometimes, cardiovascular trouble is the first or main symptom of damage the coronavirus left behind.

"These are individuals who wouldn't necessarily come to their doctor and say, 'I have long COVID,'" she said.

Camilleri first developed shortness of breath and later a string of heart-related and other symptoms after a late 2020 bout of COVID-19. He tried different treatments from multiple doctors to no avail, until winding up at Washington University's long COVID clinic.

There, he saw Dr. Amanda Verma for worsening trouble with his blood pressure and heart rate. Verma is part of a cardiology team that studied a small group of patients with perplexing heart symptoms like Camilleri's, and found abnormalities in blood flow may be part of the problem.

How? Blood flow jumps when people move around and subsides during rest. But some long COVID patients don't get enough of a drop during rest because the fight-or-flight system that controls stress reactions stays activated, Verma said.

Some also have trouble with the lining of their small blood vessels not dilating and constricting properly to move blood through, she added.

Hoping that helped explain some of Camilleri's symptoms, Verma prescribed some heart medicines that dilate blood vessels and others to dampen that fight-or-flight response.

Back in the gym, Hughes, a physical therapist who works with long COVID patients, came up with a careful rehab plan after the treadmill test exposed erratic jumps in Camilleri's heart rate.

"We'd see it worse if you were not on Dr. Verma's meds," Hughes said, showing Camilleri exercises to do while lying down and monitoring his heart rate. "We need to rewire your system" to normalize that fight-or-flight response.

Camilleri said he noticed some improvement as Verma mixed and matched prescriptions based on his reactions. Then he developed even more health problems after a second bout of COVID-19 in the spring, a disability that forced him to retire.

How big is the post-COVID heart risk? To find out, Al-Aly analyzed medical records from a massive Veterans Administration database. People who'd survived COVID-19 early in the pandemic were more likely to experience abnormal heartbeats, blood clots, chest pain and palpitations, even heart attacks and strokes up to a year later compared to the uninfected. That includes even middle-aged people without prior signs of heart disease

Based on those findings, Al-Aly estimated 4 of every 100 people need care for some kind of heart-related symptom in the year after recovering from COVID-19.

Per person, that's a small risk. But he said the pandemic's sheer enormity means it added up to millions left with at least some cardiovascular symptom. While a reinfection might still cause trouble, Al-Aly's now studying whether that overall risk dropped thanks to vaccination and milder coronavirus strains.

More recent research confirms the need to better understand and address these cardiac aftershocks.

An analysis this spring of a large U.S. insurance database found long COVID patients were about twice as likely to seek care for cardiovascular problems including blood clots, abnormal heartbeats or stroke in the year after infection, compared to similar patients who'd avoided COVID-19.

A post-infection link to heart damage isn't that surprising, Verma noted. She pointed to rheumatic fever, an inflammatory reaction to untreated strep throat -- especially before antibiotics were common -- that scars the heart's valves.

"Is this going to become the next rheumatic heart disease? We don't know," she said.

But Al-Aly says there's a simple take-home message: You can't change your history of COVID-19 infections but if you've ignored other heart risks -- like high cholesterol or blood pressure, poorly controlled diabetes or smoking -- now's the time to change that.

"These are the ones we can do something about. And I think they're more important now than they were in 2019," he said.

Wildfire on Maui kills at least 6, damages over 270 structures as it sweeps through historic town

By AUDREY MCAVOY, JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER and CHRISTOPHER WEBER Associated Press KAHULUI, Hawaii (AP) — A wildfire tore through the heart of the Hawaiian island of Maui in darkness Wednesday, reducing much of a historic town to ash and forcing people to jump into the ocean to flee the flames. At least six people died, dozens were wounded and 271 structures were damaged or destroyed.

The fires continued to burn Wednesday afternoon, fueled by strong winds from Hurricane Dora as it passed well south of the Hawaiian islands. Officials feared the death toll could rise.

"This is a deeply somber day," Maui Mayor Richard Bissen said. "The gravity of losing any life is tragic. As we grieve with their families, we offer prayers for comfort in this inconsolable time."

As winds diminished somewhat, some aircraft resumed flights, enabling pilots to view the full scope of the devastation. Flyovers of the coastal town of Lahaina by U.S. Civil Air Patrol and the Maui Fire Department showed the extent of the loss, said Mahina Martin, a spokesperson for Maui County.

Aerial video showed dozens of homes and businesses in Lahaina flattened, including on Front Street, a favorite spot for tourists to shop and dine. Smoking heaps of rubble lay piled high next to the waterfront, boats in the harbor were scorched, and gray smoke hovered over the leafless skeletons of charred trees.

"It's horrifying. I've flown here 52 years and I've never seen anything come close to that," said Richard Olsten, a helicopter pilot for a tour company. "We had tears in our eyes, the other pilots on board and the mechanics, and me."

Acting Gov. Sylvia Luke said the flames "wiped out communities," and urged travelers to stay away.

"This is not a safe place to be," she said.

Maui officials urged visitors to leave Lahaina, and the island was organizing a "mass bus evacuation" Wednesday afternoon to take people directly to the airport, according to an update from the county.

West Maui remained without cell or landline phone service or electricity, the county said.

The exact cause of the blaze couldn't be determined, but a number of factors, including high winds, low humidity and dry vegetation, likely contributed, said Maj. Gen. Kenneth Hara, adjutant general for Hawaii State Department of Defense. Experts also said climate change is increasing the likelihood of more extreme weather.

"Climate change in many parts of the world is increasing vegetation dryness, in large part because temperatures are hotter," said Erica Fleishman, director of the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute at Oregon State University. "Even if you have the same amount of precipitation, if you have higher temperatures, things dry out faster."

The wind-driven conflagration swept into the area with alarming speed and ferocity, blazing through intersections and leaping across wooden buildings in the Lahaina town center, which dates to the 1700s and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

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"It was apocalyptic from what they explained," Tiare Lawrence said of 14 cousins and uncles who fled the town and took refuge at her home in Pukalani, east of Lahaina.

Lahaina resident Ke'eaumoku Kapu was tying down loose objects in the wind at the cultural center he runs in Lahaina when his wife showed up Tuesday afternoon and told him they needed to evacuate. "Right at that time, things got crazy, the wind started picking up," said Kapu, who added that they got out "in the nick of time."

Two blocks away they saw fire and billowing smoke. Kapu, his wife and a friend jumped into his pickup truck. "By the time we turned around, our building was on fire," he said. "It was that quick."

Crews were battling three fires in Maui: in Lahaina, south Maui's Kihei area and the mountainous, inland communities known as Upcountry, said Mahina Martin, spokesperson for Maui County.

In the Upcountry community of Kula, at least two homes were destroyed Tuesday in a fire that engulfed about 1.7 square miles (4.5 square kilometers), County of Maui Mayor Richard Bissen Jr. said.

There have been no reports of injuries or homes lost to three wildfires burning on Hawaii's Big Island, Mayor Mitch Roth said Wednesday. Firefighters did extinguish a few roof fires.

The National Weather Service said Hurricane Dora, which was passing to the south of the island chain at a safe distance of 500 miles (805 kilometers), was partly to blame for gusts above 60 mph (97 kph) that knocked out power, rattled homes and grounded firefighting helicopters on Maui.

The Coast Guard on Tuesday rescued 14 people, including two children, who had fled into the ocean to escape the fire and smoky conditions, the county said in a statement.

Fires killed six people on Maui, but search and rescue operations continued and the number could rise, Bissen said.

Six patients were flown from Maui to the island of Oahu on Tuesday night, said Speedy Bailey, regional director for Hawaii Life Flight, an air-ambulance company. Three of them had critical burns and were taken to Straub Medical Center's burn unit, he said. The others were taken to other Honolulu hospitals. At least 20 patients were taken to Maui Memorial Medical Center, he said.

Authorities said earlier Wednesday that a firefighter in Maui was hospitalized in stable condition after inhaling smoke.

Luke issued an emergency proclamation on behalf of Gov. Josh Green, who is traveling, and activated the Hawaii National Guard to assist.

"Certain parts of Maui, we have shelters that are overrun," Luke said. "We have resources that are being taxed."

President Joe Biden said in a statement Wednesday evening that he has ordered "all available Federal assets" to help Hawaii. The president said the Coast Guard and Navy are supporting response and rescue efforts, while the Marines are providing Black Hawk helicopters to fight the fires.

There was no count available for the number of people who have evacuated, but officials said there were four shelters open housing 2,100 people.

Kahului Airport, the main airport in Maui, was sheltering 2,000 travelers whose flights were canceled or who recently arrived on the island, the county said. Officials were preparing the Hawaii Convention Center in Honolulu to take in up to 4,000 displaced tourists and locals.

"Local people have lost everything," said James Tokioka, director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. "They've lost their house, they've lost their animals."

Former President Barack Obama, who was born in Hawaii, said on social media Wednesday evening that it's tough to see some of the images coming out of a place that is so special to many.

"Michelle and I are thinking of everyone who has lost a loved one, or whose life has been turned upside down," he said.

Kapu, the owner of the Na Aikane o Maui cultural center in Lahaina, said he and his wife didn't have time to pack up anything before being forced to flee. "We had years and years of research material, artifacts," he said.

Alan Dickar said he's not sure what remains of his Vintage European Posters gallery, which was a fixture on Front Street in Lahaina for 23 years. Before evacuating with three friends and two cats, Dickar recorded

video of flames engulfing the main strip of shops and restaurants frequented by tourists.

"Every significant thing I owned burned down today," he said.

Lahaina is often thought of as just a Maui tourist town, Lawrence said, but "we have a very strong Hawaiian community."

"I'm just heartbroken. Everywhere, our memories," she said. "Everyone's homes. Everyone's lives have tragically changed in the last 12 hours."

Biden in Utah to mark anniversary of PACT Act expanding veterans benefits

By CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — President Joe Biden will mark the first anniversary of a law that is delivering the largest expansion of veterans benefits in decades on Thursday by showcasing the bipartisan PACT Act in the company of Utah's Republican Gov. Spencer Cox.

The Democratic president and GOP governor will visit the George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center to promote a law that is intended to improve health care and disability compensation for exposure to toxic substances, such as burn pits that were used to dispose of trash on military bases in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 348,000 veterans have had their claims approved in the last year, and about 111,000 who are believed to have toxic exposure have enrolled in health care.

The president is winding up a three-state western swing in which he has been combining events focused on achievements from his first term with campaign fundraisers aimed at helping him win a second. Both Biden and Cox have stressed the need to find common ground by reaching across party lines.

The issue of veterans' care is also personal for Biden. He's long believed that his eldest son's fatal brain cancer was caused by exposure to burn pits while he served overseas in the Delaware National Guard. At a fundraiser in Albuquerque on Tuesday, Biden said his son Beau had died "because of Iraq."

The expansion of benefits has pleased advocates but tested the Department of Veterans Affairs, which has been racing to add staff to handle the influx of applications. The backlog of disability claims, meaning they've lingered for at least four months without a decision, is expected to grow from about 266,000 now to 730,000 in April.

VA Secretary Denis McDonough told The Associated Press in a recent interview that the department is ahead of its internal projections and is working to process veterans' claims faster.

"Now that we've urged them to come in and file their claims, we want them to continue to have a good experience with us by getting a timely response back to those claims," he said. "That's the biggest challenge."

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Although there's no deadline to apply, anyone who files a claim or simply signals the intent to do so by Monday could collect payments retroactive to last year if the claim is approved.

The original cutoff date was Wednesday, but officials extended it because of technical difficulties with the VA website.

Biden was also scheduled to hold a reelection fundraiser Thursday before returning to Washington.

His visit to Utah was shadowed by violence. Only hours before Biden arrived in the state on Wednesday, FBI agents fatally shot a man suspected of threatening to kill Biden as they tried to serve a search warrant at his home in Provo, about an hour's drive south of Salt Lake City. The man had posted online Monday that he had heard Biden was coming to Utah and made fresh threats against the president, according to court documents.

A White House official, who requested anonymity to discuss the matter, said Biden was briefed after

the incident.

Utah is Biden's third and final stop on his trip this week. He started in Arizona, where he declared a new national monument near the Grand Canyon on Tuesday.

His next stop was Albuquerque, N.M., which included a fundraiser and a visit to the future site of a factory for building wind towers. The facility had previously produced Solo cups and plastics, but has been shuttered in recent years.

Biden is trying to convince voters that his economic policies, which include tax credits for clean energy, have resulted in new jobs and lower inflation as he asks for a second term in office.

Indictment shows White House lawyers struggling for control as Trump fought to overturn election

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A few hours after rioters laid siege to the Capitol, overpowering police in a violent attack on the seat of American democracy on Jan. 6, 2021, the White House's top lawyer, Pat Cipollone, called his boss with an urgent message.

It's time to end your objections to the 2020 election, Cipollone told Donald Trump, and allow Congress to certify Joe Biden as the next president. Trump refused.

Trump was no longer listening to his White House counsel, the elite team of attorneys who take an oath to serve the office of the president. But by all accounts, he hadn't been listening to them for some time.

The extraordinary moment — fully detailed for the first time in the latest federal indictment against Trump unsealed last week — vividly illustrates the extent to which the former president's final weeks in office were consumed by a struggle over the law, with two determined groups of attorneys fighting it out as the future of American democracy hung in the balance.

Trump's attempts to remain in power, according to the indictment and evidence compiled in congressional investigations, were firmly rejected by Cipollone and his top deputy, Pat Philbin. So Trump turned to outside allies including Rudy Giuliani, John Eastman and Kenneth Chesebro, among other legal advisers, to launch what federal prosecutors have called a "criminal scheme" to fraudulently overturn the election.

Cipollone and Philbin had been heard from before, as both testified to the House Jan. 6 committee under subpoena. But they were unable to disclose to Congress their interactions with Trump, citing the executive privilege that customarily shields their work in the White House.

Special counsel Jack Smith, who brought the indictment against Trump, faced no such barrier. A federal judge ruled the lawyers had to testify about their interactions with Trump in the chaotic weeks before the Jan. 6 insurrection.

As a result, prosecutors were able to obtain extraordinary new details that were used in the indictment of the former president. And Cipollone and Philbin seem likely to become important witnesses in Trump's upcoming trial.

Requests for comment from them were not returned.

The breakdown of the relationship between Trump and his White House counsel — a lawyer-president arrangement that dates back to Franklin D. Roosevelt — began in the weeks after the 2020 presidential election. Cipollone and Philbin at the time were providing "candid" advice to Trump that there was no evidence of fraud that could change the results of the election.

Despite this advice, Trump began to parade outside advisers into the White House for a series of long, contentious and at times nasty meetings about steps he could take to challenge the election.

In a now infamous Dec. 18, 2020 session in the Oval Office, Trump allies including Sidney Powell and Michael Flynn, the former national security adviser, proposed ordering the military to seize voting machines in crucial states Trump had lost.

Cipollone was blindsided by the meeting, having learned of it just as he was about to leave the White House for the night. He recalled in testimony to the Jan. 6 committee that Trump's advisers "forcefully" verbally attacked him and other White House lawyers when they shot down the idea of seizing voting

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machines.

"It was being brought to the president by people who I don't believe had his best interest in mind," Cipollone told lawmakers in June 2022. "They were doing the country and the president, both in his capacity as president and his personal capacity, a disservice."

Attorneys who have served as White House counsel said they were dumbfounded by what they read in the Trump indictment, calling the situation "unbelievable" and unlike anything they experienced in office.

"You cannot be effective as a lawyer, not just as White House Counsel, as a lawyer to any client, if you cannot have candid conversations about legal requirements," said Alberto Gonzales, who served as President George W. Bush's White House counsel. "In the case of the presidency, to protect them from engaging in conduct, that while it may not turn out to be criminal, will have serious political consequences."

And that is exactly what prosecutors say White House lawyers attempted to do. By January, when it was clear that they could not get Trump to listen, the lawyers began warning others about the grave consequences of continuing to deny the results of the election.

Three days before Jan. 6, Philbin told Jeffrey Clark, a Justice Department lawyer, that if Trump remained in office despite no evidence of fraud there would be "riots in every major city in the United States."

To which Clark, according to prosecutors, responded: "That's why there's an Insurrection Act," referring to the specific statute that gives the president the power, in rare circumstances, to use military force inside the United States.

In a meeting that evening, Trump met with leadership at the Justice Department as well as Cipollone and Philbin to express his frustration that the Justice Department was "failing to do anything to overturn the election results," the indictment stated.

Clark, a low-level Justice Department attorney who had positioned himself as an eager advocate for election fraud claims in the weeks after the election, was in attendance. He was pushing to send a letter to key state legislatures stating falsely that the Justice Department had identified problems in the election results.

In that contentious Jan. 3 Oval Office meeting, Trump toyed with replacing acting Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen with Clark but backed down after he was told that it would result in mass resignations at the Justice Department and his own White House counsel's office. Cipollone scathingly called Clark's draft letter a "murder-suicide pact."

"There is no world, there is no option in which you do not leave the White House on January 20th," Philbin told Trump that day, according to the indictment.

By Jan. 4, Trump, tired of hearing no from his White House lawyers, began to convene meetings behind their backs, according to the indictment.

Kathryn Ruemmler, who served as Barack Obama's White House counsel, said that if she had ever been "intentionally excluded" from meetings where the president was being given contrary legal advice, she would have resigned.

"You really can't operate at all under those circumstances and conditions," she said.

That day Trump also met with then-Vice President Mike Pence and his chief of staff and legal counsel. The point of the meeting was for Trump — who at that point had lost numerous lawsuits and failed to identify evidence of widescale fraud — to convince Pence to use his ceremonial role overseeing the counting of the Electoral College votes on Jan. 6 to prevent Biden from becoming president.

Pence, both in that meeting and days later on Jan. 6, refused to do so. Since the indictment, he has said Trump was led astray by a group of "crackpot lawyers" who wanted to violate the Constitution.

But even in the hours after the Jan. 6 riot, as police struggled to clear the Capitol, Trump wasn't done trying to stop the certification of the election.

Trump and Giuliani began to make calls to Republican lawmakers in the House and Senate after the riot, according to the indictment, seeking to "exploit" the violence of the day to convince them they should delay naming Biden the winner.

Amid it all, Cipollone made his own final plea to Trump in a phone call at 7:01 p.m. asking him to withdraw his objections and allow the certification to move forward.

"I expressed what I needed to express," Cipollone told lawmakers last year, when describing the call. He declined at the time to reveal what was said.

Mar-a-Lago property manager and Trump's aide are due back in court in the classified documents case

By CURT ANDERSON and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (AP) — The property manager of Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate and an aide to the former president are due back in federal court in Florida on Thursday to face charges in the case accusing Trump of illegally hoarding classified documents at his resort after leaving the White House.

Carlos De Oliveira, the property manager, is scheduled to be arraigned in Fort Pierce before a magistrate judge on charges including conspiracy to obstruct justice in the case brought by special counsel Jack Smith. De Oliveira made an initial appearance in court late last month but didn't enter a plea because he hadn't yet found a Florida-based attorney to represent him, as is required under court rules.

Walt Nauta, a Trump aide, is expected to enter a plea for a second time in the case — this time on a new indictment with additional charges recently handed down. Nauta pleaded not guilty last month after the case was first brought in June.

The former president was also scheduled to be arraigned Thursday on the new indictment, which includes allegations that Trump schemed with De Oliveira and Nauta to try to delete Mar-a-Lago security footage sought by investigators.

But Trump filed court papers last week saying that he is not guilty of the charges and waived his right to appear at the hearing. The indictment includes new counts of obstruction and willful retention of national defense information.

Trump has pleaded not guilty to criminal charges in three different cases this year as he tries to reclaim the White House in 2024. The Republican has denied any wrongdoing and has characterized all the cases against him as politically motivated.

Trump pleaded not guilty in Washington's federal court last week in a second case brought by Smith that accuses Trump of conspiring with allies to overturn his 2020 election loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

The updated indictment in the documents case centers on surveillance footage at Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach. Trump is alleged to have asked for the footage to be deleted after FBI and Justice Department investigators visited in June 2022 to collect classified documents he took with him after leaving the White House.

Video from Mar-a-Lago would ultimately become vital to the government's case because, prosecutors said, it shows Nauta moving boxes in and out of a storage room — an act alleged to have been done at Trump's direction and in an effort to hide records not only from investigators but also from Trump's own lawyers.

Days after the Justice Department sent a subpoena for video footage at Mar-a-Lago to the Trump Organization in June 2022, prosecutors say, De Oliveira asked an information technology staffer how long the server retained footage and told the employee "the boss" wanted it deleted. When the employee said he didn't believe he was able to do that, De Oliveira insisted the "boss" wanted it done, asking, "What are we going to do?"

Prosecutors allege that De Oliveira later lied in interviews with investigators, falsely claiming that he hadn't even seen boxes moved into Mar-a-Lago after Trump left the White House.

De Oliveira's attorney, John Irving, told reporters after the last hearing that he looks forward to seeing what potential evidence the Justice Department has, and declined to comment about whether De Oliveira has been asked to testify against Trump.

The new indictment also charges Trump with illegally holding on to a document he's alleged to have shown off to visitors in New Jersey.

Trump is charged separately in New York state court with falsifying business records related to hush money payments made during the 2016 election.

2 robotaxi services seeking to bypass safety concerns and expand in San Francisco face pivotal vote

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — California regulators are poised to decide whether two rival robotaxi services can provide around-the-clock rides throughout San Francisco, despite escalating fears about recurring incidents that have caused the driverless vehicles to block traffic or imperil public safety.

If the state's Public Utilities Commission approves expansions sought by robotaxi services Cruise and Waymo in a vote scheduled Thursday, San Francisco will become the first major U.S. city with two fleets of driverless vehicles competing for passengers against ride-hailing and taxi services dependent on humans to operate the cars.

It's a distinction San Francisco officials don't want, largely because of the headaches that Cruise and Waymo have been causing in the city while testing their robotaxis on a restricted basis during the past year.

Although they have so far been able to drive millions of cumulative miles without causing any major accidents, the robotaxis have come to unexpected stops that have created road blocks that have at times impeded firefighters and police, in addition to normal traffic. The robotaxis have also driven into areas where traffic is prohibited, including repeated incursions into places where firefighters and police officers have been responding to emergencies.

"They are still not ready for prime time because of the way they have impacted our operations," San Francisco Fire Department Chief Jeanine Nicholson said during a four-hour hearing held Monday in advance of Thursday's pivotal vote.

To underscore her point, Nicholson cited 55 written reports of the robotaxis interfering with emergency responses. She said she is worried the problems will get worse if Cruise and Waymo are allowed to operate their services wherever and whenever they want in San Francisco — raising the risk of their disruptions resulting in injury, death or the loss of property that could have been saved.

Officials for both Cruise, a subsidiary of General Motors, and Waymo, a spin-off from a secret project within Google, point to the mostly unblemished safety records that have proven their robotaxis are less dangerous than vehicles operated by people who can be distracted, intoxicated or just lousy drivers.

Both companies view approval of their San Francisco expansions as a major springboard to launching similar services in other congested cities that would benefit from a technology that they contend will be more reliable, convenient and cheaper than ride-hailing and taxi services reliant on human drivers.

Cruise on Monday disclosed it is currently testing 300 robotaxis during the day when it can only give rides for free, and 100 robotaxis at night when it has been allowed to charge for rides in less congested parts of San Francisco for the past 14 months. Waymo told regulators Monday that it is operating 250 robotaxis that so far have only been able to give free rides to volunteers and employees in San Francisco.

If their proposed expansions are approved, neither Cruise nor Waymo would be limited on how many robotaxis they could deploy in San Francisco. In a conference call with analysts last month, Cruise CEO Kyle Vogt suggested his service might eventually build a fleet large enough to compete against the more than 10,000 human drivers now working for ride-hailing services such as Uber and Lyft in San Francisco.

But the proposed San Francisco expansion has been facing increasingly staunch resistance, prompting regulators to postpone two previously scheduled votes on the issue in June and July.

In a May 31 letter urging state regulators to continue to restrict the operations of Cruise and Waymo, San Francisco transportation officials asserted the driverless vehicles rely on a "developmental technology that is not ready for unconstrained commercial deployment."

In a June 22 letter, the president of the union for San Francisco police officers warned of potentially dire consequences if Cruise and Waymo are allowed to expand throughout the city. Tracy McCray, the union president, cited a robotaxi obstructing emergency vehicles responding to a recent mass shooting that injured nine people as a chilling example of how the technology could imperil the public.

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"While we all applaud advancements in technology, we must not be in such a rush that we forget the human element and the effects such technology unchecked can cause in dangerous situations," McCray wrote. "Delays of even seconds in our line of work can be a matter of life or death."

Officials for both Cruise and Waymo on Monday sought to reassure regulators that they believe they have been able to fix most of the flaws that have cropping up and have set up response teams to help move stopped robotaxis within a few minutes.

Besides tinkering the technology controlling the robotaxis, Cruise and Waymo also said they have trained hundreds of San Francisco police and firefighters how to interact with the driverless vehicles. The training included instructions on how to gain manual control of the robotaxis — a process that can involve removing hundreds of pounds of equipment from the vehicles.

The training sessions haven't appeased Nicholson, the San Francisco fire chief, who expressed frustration at the notion that firefighters responding to emergency situations should be expected to "babysit" robotaxis entering places where they shouldn't be when every second counts.

"If we don't get to one person, that's one person too many we didn't get to," Nicholson said.

A yearlong slowdown in US inflation may have stalled in July

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inflation in the United States likely rose in July for the first time in 12 months, driven higher by more expensive gasoline and suggesting that the fight against rising prices may prove bumpier in the months ahead.

The inflation report the government will issue Thursday is expected to show that consumer prices increased 3.3% from 12 months earlier. That would mark an uptick from a 3% year-over-year increase in June — the lowest such figure in more than two years.

On a month-to-month basis, consumer prices are thought to have risen 0.2% from June to July, the same as in the previous month, according to a survey of forecasters by the data firm FactSet.

A jump in energy prices was likely a major contributor to higher inflation in July. Gasoline prices have surged nearly 30 cents over the past month to a national average of \$3.83 a gallon, according to AAA.

Excluding volatile food and energy costs, so-called core prices are expected to show a 4.8% rise in July over the previous year and 0.2% from a month earlier, unchanged from the previous month's increases.

Thursday's inflation data will be among the key metrics the Federal Reserve will consider in deciding whether to continue raising interest rates. In its drive to tame inflation, the Fed has raised its benchmark rate 11 times since March 2022 to a 22-year high. Those rate hikes are believed to have helped significantly slow price increases: After peaking at a four-decade high of 9.1% in June 2022, year-over-year inflation has dropped month after month.

Yet inflation remains above the Fed's 2% target. And economists say the easy progress has likely already been achieved. Gasoline prices, for example, though liable to bounce around from month to month, have already plunged from a peak national average of more than \$5 a gallon, which was reached in June of last year after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Much of the inflationary surge that began in 2021 was caused by clogged supply chains: Ports, factories and freight yards were overwhelmed by the explosive economic rebound from the pandemic recession of 2020. The result was delays, parts shortages and higher prices. But supply-chain backlogs have eased in the past year, sharply reducing upward pressure on goods prices. Prices of long-lasting manufactured goods actually dipped in June.

Now, the Fed faces a daunting problem: persistent inflationary pressures in service businesses — restaurants, hotels, entertainment venues and the like — where wages represent a substantial share of costs. Worker shortages have led many of these services companies to sharply raise pay.

Last week, for example, the Labor Department reported that average hourly wages rose 4.4% in July from a year earlier, more than expected. To cover their higher labor costs, companies have typically raised their prices, thereby fueling inflation.

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Another factor working against continued declines in year-over-year inflation rates is that prices soared in the first half of last year before slowing in the second half. So any price increase in July would have the effect of boosting the year-over-year inflation rate.

Still, economists caution against reading too much into one month of numbers. Many of them expect inflation to continue trending lower.

Used car prices, which had skyrocketed after the pandemic, have been edging down: They dropped 5.1% in July from a year earlier to \$29,198, according to Edmunds.com. July of last year was near the peak of used-car price spikes, resulting from a scarcity of new vehicles caused by a global computer-chip shortage. Buyers who wanted new vehicles but couldn't find them entered the used market, sending used prices sharply higher.

This year, though, used vehicle prices began to drop once automakers managed to acquire more chips and could produce more new vehicles. Many shoppers who were forced to buy used are now back in the new-vehicle market.

Used-vehicle prices should continue to decline through the year, but the reductions will likely be more modest than July's, said Ivan Drury, director of insights for Edmunds. Prices won't likely fall anywhere near where they were before the pandemic. The average used vehicle now costs \$29,198 — 43% more than in January 2020.

Despite chronic concerns about higher labor costs, one closely watched measure of wages and salaries — the Labor Department's employment cost index — grew more slowly from April through June. Excluding government jobs, employee pay rose 1%, less than the 1.2% increase in the first three months of 2023. Compared with a year earlier, wages and salaries grew 4.6%, down from a year-over-year increase of 5.1% in the first quarter.

Rents, which had soared after the pandemic, are also cooling. Researchers at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco wrote this week that "year-over-year shelter inflation will continue to slow through late 2024 and may even turn negative by mid-2024."

"I do think we're going to get further deceleration, even if we do get a little bit of a pickup this month," said Thomas Simons, senior U.S. economist at the investment firm Jefferies. "Looking toward the end of the year, I think it's pretty likely we'll see headline inflation closer to 2%, which at the end of the day is not the worst thing ever considering how high inflation was in the past two years and how much more tolerable 2.5% inflation is."

But the Fed, Simons suggested, may not consider its work done until inflation returns to 2%.

Fed officials will have plenty of data to absorb before deciding whether to continue raising rates. Thursday's report is the first of two CPI numbers the policymakers will see before their next meeting Sept. 19-20. In addition, their favored inflation gauge, called the personal income expenditures price index, comes out on Aug. 31. And the August jobs report will be released Sept. 1.

Many economists and market analysts think the Fed's most recent rate hike in July will prove to be its last: Nearly 87% of traders expect no Fed hike next month, according to the CME Group's FedWatch Tool.

Utah man suspected of threatening President Joe Biden shot and killed as FBI served warrant

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST and SAM METZ Associated Press

PROVO, Utah (AP) — An armed Utah man accused of making violent threats against President Joe Biden was shot and killed by FBI agents hours before the president landed in the state Wednesday, authorities said.

Special agents were trying to serve a warrant on the home of Craig Deleeuw Robertson in Provo, south of Salt Lake City, when the shooting happened at 6:15 a.m., the FBI said in a statement.

Robertson was armed at the time of the shooting, according to two law enforcement sources who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity to discuss details of an ongoing investigation.

Robertson posted online Monday that he had heard Biden was coming to Utah and he was planning to

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dig out a camouflage suit and begin “cleaning the dust off the M24 sniper rifle,” a post that came after months of graphic online threats against several public figures, according to court documents. Robertson referred to himself as a “MAGA Trumper,” a reference to former President Donald Trump’s “Make America Great Again” slogan, and also posted threats against top law enforcement officials overseeing court cases against Trump.

Neighbors described Robertson as a frail, elderly man — his online profile put his age as 74 — who walked with the aid of a hand-carved stick. Though he regularly carried guns, they said he didn’t seem a threat.

“There’s no way that he was driving from here to Salt Lake City, setting up a rifle and taking a shot at the president — 100% no way,” said neighbor Andrew Maunder outside the church across from Robertson’s street.

The attack comes as Republicans, who have traditionally touted themselves as the party of law and order, have escalated their attacks on law enforcement and especially the FBI. Trump has relentlessly attacked the agency, even though it is led by someone he appointed, Christopher Wray. Wray himself has warned of the dangers of recent rhetoric. Some officials have become increasingly alarmed as the former president has escalated his attacks on the FBI, Attorney General Merrick Garland and the local and federal prosecutors who have filed three separate criminal cases against him in recent months.

Biden flew to Utah Wednesday ahead of a visit to a Veterans Affairs hospital in Salt Lake City Thursday to talk about the PACT Act, which expanded veterans benefits. He also planned to hold a reelection fundraiser. A White House official who requested anonymity to discuss the matter said Biden was briefed after the raid.

Robertson’s posts indicated he did appear to own a long-range sniper rifle and numerous other weapons, as well as camouflage gear known as a “ghillie suit,” investigators said in court records. Robertson was charged under seal Tuesday with three felony counts, including making threats against the president and against FBI agents investigating him, court documents show.

Robertson also referenced a “presidential assassination” and also posted threats against Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland and New York Attorney General Letitia James, authorities said.

“The time is right for a presidential assassination or two. First Joe then Kamala!!!” authorities say Robertson wrote in a September 2022 Facebook post included in the filings. No attorney was immediately listed for Robertson in court documents and family members of Robertson could not be immediately reached for comment through publicly available phone numbers.

The FBI investigation began with a tip about the Bragg threat from Trump’s own social media platform Truth Social in March, after Robertson posted about “waiting in the courthouse parking garage” with a suppressed weapon and wanting to “put a nice hole in his forehead.” His account has since been suspended from the platform.

No further details were immediately released about the shooting, which is under review by the FBI.

At the Provo house where the confrontation apparently took place and which is connected with Robertson through public records, law enforcement could be seen Wednesday going in and out and removing items.

A broken window could be seen next to the door and the blinds inside were askew.

The road leading to the house was blocked by police. It is just up the street from a meeting house of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with the Wasatch Mountains rising in the background. Neighbors said authorities showed up around Robertson’s house early Wednesday and they heard a boom and possible gunshots.

Travis Lee Clark, who’s known Robertson for years from working at their church ward together, described Robertson as “frail of health,” a masterful woodworker and an “established icon” in their community. Robertson propped himself on a wood walking stick he’d carved himself, said Clark, who was surprised he was considered a serious threat.

“He was a boomer, and he was very political and sometimes made off-color jokes ... but nothing that indicated it was a threat,” said Clark, who added that he hadn’t seen Robertson’s Facebook posts until

after his death.

Clark said Robertson had a collection of perhaps 20 guns, though he noted that that wasn't unusual for the area.

Paul Searing, a businessman who lived in Provo before relocating to nearby Orem, said he had followed Robertson online for years and even warned him when he believed the other man was crossing a line in his posts.

"He believed in his right to bear arms. He believed in his right to say what he feels. When it came down to it, he knew the Lord wouldn't have approved of killing innocent people," Searing said. "Things got out of hand because he just was really frustrated."

According to court documents, two FBI agents came to Robertson's house after the initial warning about him from Truth Social in March. They found Robertson wearing a Trump cap and what one described in a search warrant affidavit as an "AR-15 style rifle lapel pin."

According to the affidavit, he told them his initial threat was just "a dream" and demanded they only return with a warrant. In a Facebook post days later cited in the affidavit, he said, "To my friends in the Federal Bureau of Idiots: I know you're reading this and you have no idea how close your agents came to 'violent eradication.'"

In another undated social media post cited in the document, Robertson wrote: "Hey FBI, you still monitoring my social media? Checking so I can have a loaded gun handy in case you drop by again." A post from July 21 unearthed by SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors online extremism, reads, "If I really told you what I'd like to do to Joe Biden Facebook would censor me and the FBI would pay me another visit."

Rita Katz, SITE's co-founder, said the social media posts attributed to Robertson show the challenges for law enforcement officials who must decide when speech rises to the level of an actual threat.

"Because you have the freedom of speech, it can be very difficult to tell what is allowed and what is not allowed," she said.

Robertson had a custom woodworking business but did not renew his license after it expired last year, according to state records. On LinkedIn, Robertson said he worked for 45 years as a structural steel and welding inspector before retiring and starting his business, saying he specialized in "custom designs."

State court records showed Robertson pleaded no contest to a disorderly conduct charge in 1998 but no details about the allegations were immediately available.

Biden, meanwhile, is in the middle of a trip to the Western United States, and flew to Salt Lake City after spending Wednesday in New Mexico, where he spoke at a factory that will produce wind towers.

Ohio vote shows enduring power of abortion rights at ballot box, giving Democrats a path in 2024

By SARA BURNETT and CHRISTINE FERNANDO Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Abortion wasn't technically on the ballot in Ohio's special election. But the overwhelming defeat of a measure that would have made it tougher to enshrine abortion rights in the state constitution this fall was the latest indicator that the issue remains a powerful force at the ballot box.

The election saw record turnout for what's typically a sleepy August election date and sets up another battle in November, when Ohio will be the only state this year to have reproductive rights on the ballot. It also gives hope to Democrats and other abortion rights supporters who say the matter could sway voters their way again in 2024. That's when it could affect races for president, Congress and statewide offices, and when places such as the battleground of Arizona may put abortion questions on their ballots as well.

Democrats described the victory in Ohio, a one-time battleground state that has shifted markedly to the right, as a "major warning sign" for the GOP.

"Republicans' deeply unpopular war on women's rights will cost them district after district, and we will remind voters of their toxic anti-abortion agenda every day until November," said Aidan Johnson, a spokesperson for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

The measure voters rejected Tuesday, known as Issue 1, would have required ballot questions to pass

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with 60% of the vote rather than a simple majority. With the count nearly completed, votes against the measure, or No votes, received 57% compared with 43% in favor, a lead of almost 430,000 votes.

Interest was unusually high, with millions spent on each side and turnout by far the highest for an August election in Ohio, which in the past have been mainly limited to local races. Turnout was even higher than the most recent off-year election in November, when voters in 2017 decided two statewide ballot measures.

Opposition to the measure, which became a kind of proxy for the November abortion vote, extended even into traditionally Republican areas. In early returns, support for the measure fell far short of Donald Trump's performance during the 2020 election in nearly every county.

The November ballot question will ask voters whether individuals should have the right to make their own reproductive health care decisions, including contraception, abortion, fertility treatment and miscarriage care.

Ohio's GOP-led state government in 2019 approved a ban on abortion after cardiac activity is detected — around six weeks, before many women know they are pregnant — but the ban was not enforced because of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, which granted a federal right to the procedure. When a new conservative majority on the high court last year overturned the nearly 50-year-old ruling, sending authority over the procedure back to the states, Ohio's ban briefly went into effect. But a state court put the ban on hold again while a challenge alleging it violates the state constitution plays out.

During the time the ban was in place, an Indiana doctor came forward to say she had performed an abortion on a 10-year-old rape victim from Ohio who could not legally have the procedure in her home state. The account became a national flashpoint in the debate over abortion rights and underscored the stakes in Ohio.

Ohio is one of about half of U.S. states where citizens may bypass the Legislature and put ballot questions directly to voters, making it an option that supporters of reproductive rights have increasingly turned to since *Roe v. Wade* fell. After abortion rights supporters said they hoped to ask voters in November to enshrine the right in the state constitution, Ohio Republicans put Issue 1 on Tuesday's ballot. In addition to raising the threshold to pass a measure, it would have required signatures to be collected in all 88 counties, rather than 44.

The 60% threshold was no accident, abortion rights supporters say, and was aimed directly at defeating the Ohio abortion measure. Since *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, six states have had elections regarding reproductive rights. In every election — including in conservative states like Kansas — voters have supported abortion rights.

In Kansas, 59% voted to preserve abortion rights protections, while in Michigan 57% favored an amendment that put protections in the state constitution. Last year, 59% of Ohio voters said abortion should generally be legal, according to AP VoteCast, a broad survey of the electorate.

Last month, a poll by the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found the majority of U.S. adults want abortion to be legal at least through the initial stages of pregnancy. The poll found that opinions on abortion remain complex, with most people believing abortion should be allowed in some circumstances and not in others.

Opponents of the Ohio abortion question ran ads that suggested the measure could strip parents of their ability to make decisions about their child's health care or to even be notified about it. Amy Natoce, spokesperson for the anti-abortion campaign Protect Women Ohio, called the ballot measure a "dangerous anti-parent amendment."

Several legal experts have said there is no language in the amendment supporting the ads' claims.

Peter Range, CEO of Ohio Right to Life, said he has been traveling across Ohio talking to people and "I've never seen the grassroots from the pro-life side more fired up to go and defend and protect the pre-born."

While the November question pertains strictly to Ohio, access to abortion there is pivotal to access across the Midwest, said Alison Dreith, director of strategic partnership for the abortion fund Midwest Access Coalition.

Nine Midwestern states — Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Ohio, Nebraska, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota

and Wisconsin — are considered restrictive, very restrictive or most restrictive of abortion rights by the Guttmacher Institute, a research and policy organization that supports legal access to abortion.

"Ohio in particular has always been a destination state for the states around it," Dreith said. "If we don't protect abortion access in Ohio, the options just continue to shrink for people seeking care in the Midwest."

Sri Thakkilapati, the executive director of the Cleveland-based nonprofit abortion clinic Preterm, said the effect of the Ohio vote will reverberate throughout the country.

"When we restrict access in one state, other states have to take up that patient load," she said. "That leads to longer wait times, more travel, higher costs for patients."

Thakkilapati called the energy around abortion rights in last year's midterms "exciting." But she said the media attention died down, and people quickly forgot "how tenuous abortion access is right now." The special election and ballot measure in Ohio are "a reminder of what's at stake," Thakkilapati said.

"Other states are watching how this plays out in Ohio, and it may give anti-abortion groups in other states another strategy to threaten abortion rights elsewhere," she said. "And for the majority who do want abortion access in their states but are seeing it threatened, the results in November could give them hope that the democratic process may give them relief."

Kimberly Inez McGuire, the executive director of Unite for Reproductive and Gender Equity, which focuses on young people of color under age 30, says the results of elections involving reproductive rights show that support doesn't come just from Democrats or in cities and states considered liberal bastions.

"There was this idea that we couldn't win on abortion in red states and that idea has really been smashed," McGuire said. So, too, she said, is the "mythology" that people in the South and Midwest won't support abortion rights.

"I think 2024 is going to be huge," she said. "And I think in many ways, Ohio is a proving ground, an early fight in the lead up to 2024."

Dreith said that since abortion hasn't been on a major ballot since last year, the Ohio vote this fall is "a good reminder" for the rest of the country.

"Abortion is always on the ballot — if not literally but figuratively through the politicians we elect to serve us," she said. "It's also a reminder that this issue isn't going away."

Florida Gov. DeSantis suspends another Democratic prosecutor as he seeks GOP presidential nomination

By BRENDAN FARRINGTON and FREIDA FRISARO undefined
TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on Wednesday suspended the top prosecutor in Orlando, again wielding his executive power over local government in taking on a contentious issue in the 2024 presidential race.

It's the second time DeSantis, a Republican, has removed a Democratic state attorney and follows an investigation that began when a teenager was charged with fatally shooting a television reporter and a 9-year-old girl.

"It is my duty as Governor to ensure that the laws enacted by our duly elected Legislature are followed," DeSantis said during a news conference in Tallahassee announcing the suspension of State Attorney Monique Worrell of the 9th Judicial Circuit, which serves Orange and Osceola counties.

Worrell vowed to seek reelection next year and said her removal was political and not about her performance. She also suggested DeSantis' timing was to distract from a stagnant presidential campaign that has faced layoffs and changes at the top as it has struggled to regain traction.

"He needed to get back in the media in some positive way that would be red meat for his base, and he will have accomplished that today," she said. "He replaced his campaign manager yesterday, and I guess today it's my turn."

DeSantis' office began investigating Worrell after 19-year-old Keith Moses was charged with first degree murder in the deaths of Spectrum News 13 reporter Dylan Lyons, Nathacha Augustin and 9-year-old T'yonna Major. The girl's mother and Spectrum News 13 photographer Jesse Walden were also shot.

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Shortly after the shooting, DeSantis' general counsel said in a letter to Worrell that she failed to hold Moses accountable despite his criminal record and gang affiliation. The governor's office sought Moses' juvenile records, which are usually protected.

In his announcement Wednesday, DeSantis cited other cases and said Worrell avoided minimum mandatory sentences on charges that included gun crimes, drug trafficking and child pornography. He also said the state attorney's office had a pattern of letting juveniles avoid serious charges or incarceration and noted the shooting over the weekend of two Orlando police officers by a 28-year-old man with a long criminal history.

But Democrats said the Worrell's suspension was politically motivated and noted she is the only Black woman in Florida elected to serve as a state attorney.

"This is absolutely disgusting," Democratic Rep. Anna Eskamani said. "Her removal is a complete slap in the face to Orange and Osceola County residents and another example of Governor DeSantis eroding our local control and democracy. This politically motivated action by the Governor in a predominantly democratic part of the state should alarm everyone."

DeSantis last year removed State Attorney Andrew Warren, a twice-elected Democrat in Tampa, over his signing of pledges that he would not pursue criminal charges against seekers or providers of abortion or gender transition treatments, as well as policies about not bringing charges for certain low-level crimes.

DeSantis is one of a number of Republicans in various jurisdictions across the U.S. who have called into question decisions from Democratic prosecutors.

The governor appointed Andrew Bain, an Orange County judge, to replace Worrell. Bain previously served as assistant state attorney in Orlando.

"The people of Central Florida deserve to have a State Attorney who will seek justice in accordance with the law instead of allowing violent criminals to roam the streets and find new victims," DeSantis said.

Bain, a Republican, said the job is quite "simple." He said, "We are here to prosecute crimes and to hold people accountable."

Worrell said she knows and respects Bain and wouldn't criticize him, adding that the issue is about DeSantis.

"Elected officials are being taken out of office for political purposes, and that should never be a thing," she said.

Members of the Congressional Black Caucus in Washington noted in a statement that Worrell had been elected with nearly two-thirds of the vote in the district.

"Make no mistake, State Attorney Worrell has done nothing wrong," they said. "This abuse of power by Gov. DeSantis is not only an attack on Democratic Black leaders in Florida, but an attack on our democracy itself."

Virginia prison officials won't divulge complaints about facility where inmate died

By DENISE LAVOIE and SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — The Virginia Department of Corrections, under scrutiny over the death of an inmate that raised broader questions about conditions at a southwest Virginia prison, is refusing to release public records documenting inmate complaints about the facility.

Allegations that multiple inmates were treated for hypothermia arose as part of a lawsuit over Charles Givens' death last year at the Marion Correctional Treatment Center. The lawsuit alleges Givens was tortured and beaten by guards off-camera.

The Department of Corrections said Wednesday that it isn't required to turn over dozens of pages of documents because they involve incarcerated people and relate to their imprisonment. The agency refused to hand over the documents even with the names of prisoners' and corrections officers redacted.

The Associated Press had asked the department for two years' worth of any inmate complaints related to topics such as uncomfortably cold temperatures at the prison, nonfunctioning or poorly functioning

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heating systems, and windows being left open during cold months. Those and other claims were made in the lawsuit filed on behalf of Givens' sister, Kym Hobbs.

Colleen Maxwell, who handles public records requests for the department, said in an email Wednesday that she had identified 46 pages of responsive records. But the agency invoked an exemption in the state's open records law that deals with "records of persons imprisoned in penal institutions" to withhold the documents.

Paul Stanley, an attorney representing Givens' sister, said the agency is likely "ashamed" of the information contained in the inmate complaints.

"If they've got 46 pages ... and they are redacting the names of the inmates, what are they afraid the public may see?" Stanley said in an interview.

The lawsuit filed against five correctional officers alleges that Givens, who was intellectually disabled, was "sadistically tortured" and beaten in an off-camera shower area of the facility before being found unresponsive in his cell on Feb. 5, 2022. In the year before his death, Givens was taken to a hospital emergency room multiple times for hypothermia treatment, according to the lawsuit and medical records reviewed by AP.

During a hospital visit in February 2021, Givens' initial body temperature was 87.2 Fahrenheit (30.6 Celsius) — well below the normal body temperature of 97.6 to 99.6 (36.4 to 37.5 Celsius). A hospital admission record states that Givens was "found down on the cold concrete and hypothermic."

A special grand jury impaneled last year found Givens' death was "suspicious" and said in a report that "nearly every witness" described living conditions in the prison sector housing mentally ill inmates as "unsuitable." The report also said that more than one witness had seen ice form on the water in toilets.

"We find these conditions to be inhumane and deplorable," the report said.

Department spokesperson Kyle Gibson did not immediately respond to a request for comment Wednesday on the decision to withhold copies of the complaints. He said the agency does not routinely comment on active litigation.

In response to the grand jury's findings, he said that department facilities are regularly inspected by a range of groups and agencies.

The AP reported last month that Givens' death is under investigation by the FBI. The bureau has declined to comment.

The Department of Corrections has also declined to comment on the FBI investigation, besides noting that the department cooperates with law enforcement probes. In an email last month, department spokesperson Carla Miles declined to comment on why Givens or any other inmate may have needed to be treated for hypothermia, but wrote "there are other triggers" that cause hypothermia including "anti-psychotic medicines."

According to the lawsuit, Givens had been incarcerated at Marion since shortly after he pleaded guilty to two felonies in connection with the fatal 2010 shooting of Misty Leann Garrett. She was employed as a home health nurse for Givens' mother, according to local news accounts.

The lawsuit said Givens suffered a traumatic brain injury after falling down a flight of stairs as a young child and he needed assistance and supervision with daily functioning for the rest of his life.

An autopsy report reviewed by the AP said that Givens' cause of death was blunt force trauma of the torso and his manner of death was undetermined.

The correctional officers named as defendants in the lawsuit have denied the allegations in their answer to the complaint, and none have been charged with a crime.

Under the open records law, the AP also sought a copy of a report pertaining to Givens' death produced by the Department of Corrections' special investigations unit and other related records.

Both the office of state Attorney General Jason Miyares — which said it had about 150 pages of records — and the department have withheld documents in their custody. The department said it identified 65 gigabytes of digital media and 6,795 pages of responsive records.

Both the attorney general's office and department cited a wide range of exemptions in withholding the documents.

Robbie Robertson, lead guitarist and songwriter of The Band, dies at 80

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

Robbie Robertson, The Band's lead guitarist and songwriter who in such classics as "The Weight" and "Up on Cripple Creek" mined American music and folklore and helped reshape contemporary rock, died Wednesday at 80.

Robertson died surrounded by family in Los Angeles "after a long illness," publicist Ray Costa said in a statement.

From their years as Bob Dylan's masterful backing group to their own stardom as embodiments of old-fashioned community and virtuosity, The Band profoundly influenced popular music in the 1960s and '70s, first by literally amplifying Dylan's polarizing transition from folk artist to rock star and then by absorbing the works of Dylan and Dylan's influences as they fashioned a new sound immersed in the American past.

"Long before we ever met, his music played a central role in my life — me and millions and millions of other people all over this world," Martin Scorsese, Robertson's close friend and frequent collaborator, said in a statement. "The Band's music, and Robbie's own later solo music, seemed to come from the deepest place at the heart of this continent, its traditions and tragedies and joys."

The Canadian-born Robertson was a high school dropout and one-man melting pot — part-Jewish, part-Mohawk and Cayuga — who fell in love with the seemingly limitless sounds and byways of his adopted country and wrote out of a sense of amazement and discovery at a time when the Vietnam War had alienated millions of young Americans. His life had a "Candide"-like quality as he found himself among many of the giants of the rock era — getting guitar tips from Buddy Holly, taking in early performances by Aretha Franklin and by the Velvet Underground, smoking pot with the Beatles, watching the songwriting team of Leiber and Stoller develop material, chatting with Jimi Hendrix when he was a struggling musician calling himself Jimmy James.

The Band began as supporting players for rockabilly star Ronnie Hawkins in the early 1960s and through their years together in bars and juke joints forged a depth and versatility that opened them to virtually any kind of music in any kind of setting. Besides Robertson, the group featured Arkansan drummer-singer Levon Helm and three other Canadians: bassist-singer-songwriter Rick Danko, keyboardist singer-songwriter Richard Manuel and all-around musical wizard Garth Hudson. They were originally called the Hawks, but ended up as The Band — a conceit their fans would say they earned — because people would point to them when they were with Dylan and refer to them as "the band."

They remain defined by their first two albums, "Music from Big Pink" and "The Band," both released in the late 1960s. The rock scene was turning away from the psychedelic extravaganzas of the Beatles' "Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" and a wave of sound effects, long jams and lysergic lyrics. "Music from Big Pink," named for the old house near Woodstock, New York, where Band members lived and gathered, was for many the sound of coming home. The mood was intimate, the lyrics alternately playful, cryptic and yearning, drawn from blues, gospel, folk and country music. The Band itself seemed to stand for selflessness and a shared and vital history, with all five members making distinctive contributions and appearing in publicity photos in plain, dark clothes.

Through the "Basement Tapes" they had made with Dylan in 1967 and through their own albums, The Band has been widely credited as a founding source for Americana — or roots music. Fans and peers would speak of their lives being changed. Eric Clapton broke up with his British supergroup Cream and journeyed to Woodstock in hopes he could join The Band, which influenced albums ranging from The Grateful Dead's "Workingman's Dead" to Elton John's "Tumbleweed Connection." The Band's songs were covered by Franklin, Joan Baez, the Staple Singers and many others. During a television performance by the Beatles of "Hey Jude," Paul McCartney shouted out lyrics from "The Weight."

Like Dylan, Robertson was a self-taught musicologist and storyteller influenced by everything American from the novels of William Faulkner to the scorching blues of Howlin' Wolf to the gospel harmonies of the

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Swan Silvertones. At times his songs sounded not just created, but unearthed. In "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down," he imagined the Civil War through the eyes of a defeated Confederate. In "The Weight," with its lead vocals passed around among group members like a communal wine glass, he evoked a pilgrim's arrival to a town where nothing seems impossible:

"I pulled into Nazareth, was feelin' about half past dead / I just need some place where I can lay my head / Hey, mister, can you tell me where a man might find a bed? / He just grinned and shook my hand, 'No,' was all he said."

The Band played at the 1969 Woodstock festival, not far from where they lived, and became newsworthy enough to appear on the cover of Time magazine. But the spirit behind their best work was already dissolving. Albums such as "Stage Fright" and "Cahoots" were disappointing even for Robertson, who would acknowledge that he was struggling to find fresh ideas. While Manuel and Danko were both frequent contributors to songs during their "Basement Tapes" days, by the time "Cahoots" was released in 1971, Robertson was the dominant writer.

They toured frequently, recording the acclaimed live album "Rock of Ages" at Madison Square Garden and joining Dylan for 1974 shows that led to another highly praised concert release, "Before the Flood." But in 1976, after Manuel broke his neck in a boating accident, Robertson decided he needed a break from the road and organized rock's ultimate sendoff, an all-star gathering at San Francisco's Winterland Ballroom that included Dylan, Van Morrison, Neil Young, Muddy Waters and many others. The concert was filmed by Scorsese and the basis for his celebrated documentary "The Last Waltz," released in 1978.

Robertson had intended The Band to continue recording together but "The Last Waltz" helped permanently sever his friendship with Helm, whom he had once looked to as an older brother. In interviews and in his 1993 memoir "Wheel on Fire," Helm accused Robertson of greed and outsized ego, noting that Robertson had ended up owning their musical catalog and calling "The Last Waltz" a vanity project designed to glorify Robertson. In response, Robertson contended that he had taken control of the group because the others — excepting Hudson — were too burdened by drug and alcohol problems to make decisions on their own.

"It hit me hard that in a band like ours, if we weren't operating on all cylinders, it threw the whole machine off course," Robertson wrote in his memoir "Testimony," published in 2016.

The Band regrouped without Robertson in the early 1980s, and Robertson went on to a long career as a solo artist and soundtrack composer. His self-titled 1987 album was certified gold and featured the hit single "Show Down at Big Sky" and the ballad "Fallen Angel," a tribute to Manuel, who was found dead in 1986 in what was ruled a suicide (Danko died of heart failure in 1999, and Helm of cancer in 2012).

Robertson, who moved to Los Angeles in the 1970s while the others stayed near Woodstock, remained close to Scorsese and helped oversee the soundtracks for "The Color of Money," "The King of Comedy," "The Departed" "The Irishman" and the upcoming "Killers of the Flower Moon." among others. He also produced the Neil Diamond album "Beautiful Noise" and explored his heritage through such albums as "Music for the Native Americans" and "Contact from the Underworld of Redboy."

The Band was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994; Robertson attended, Helm did not. In 2020, Robertson looked back and mourned in the documentary "Once Were Brothers" and in the title ballad, on which Robertson sang "When the light goes out and you can't go on / You miss your brothers, but now they're gone."

Robertson married the Canadian journalist Dominique Bourgeois in 1967. They had three children before divorcing. His other survivors include his second wife, Janet Zuccarini, and five grandchildren.

Jaime Royal Robertson was born in Toronto and spent summers at the Six Nations of the Grand River reserve where his mother Rosemarie Dolly Chrysler grew up. He never met his father, Alexander David Klegerman, who died before he was born and whose existence Robertson only learned of years later. His mother had since married a factory worker, James Robertson, whom Robbie Robertson at first believed was his biological parent.

Music was an escape from what he remembered as a violent and abusive household; his parents separated when he was in his early teens. He would watch relatives play guitar and sing at the Six Nations

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reserve, and became "mesmerized" by how absorbed they were in their own performances. Robertson was soon practicing guitar himself and was playing in bands and writing songs in his teens.

He had a knack for impressing his elders. When he was 15, his group opened for Hawkins at a club in Toronto. After overhearing Hawkins say he was in need of new material, Robertson hurried home, worked up a couple of songs and brought them over to his hotel. Hawkins recorded both of them, "Someone Like You," and "Hey Boba Lu," and Robertson would soon find himself on a train to Hawkins' home base in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Over the next few years, he toured with Hawkins in the U.S. and Canada as members left and the performers who eventually became The Band were brought in. By 1963, Robertson and the others had grown apart from Hawkins and were ready to work on their own, recording a handful of singles as the Canadian Squires and stepping into rock history when mutual acquaintances suggested they should tour behind Dylan, then rebelling against his image as folk troubadour and infuriating fans who thought he had sold out.

In 1965-66, they were Dylan's co-adventurers in some of rock's most momentous shows, with Dylan playing an acoustic opening set, then joined by the Hawks for an electric set that was booed so fiercely, Helm dropped out and was replaced on the road by Mickey Jones. As captured in audio recordings and in footage by filmmaker D.A. Pennebaker seen decades later in the Dylan documentary "No Direction Home," the music on stage for such Dylan songs as "Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues" and "Ballad of a Thin Man" more than equaled the fury of its detractors, culminating in a May 1966 show at Manchester, England, when one fan screamed out "Judas!"

"I don't believe you," Dylan snarled in response. "You're a liar!" Calling on the Hawks to "play f---ing loud," he led them through an all-out finale, "Like a Rolling Stone."

"A kind of madness was percolating," Robertson wrote in his memoir. "The whole atmosphere was heightened. I adjusted the strap on my Telecaster so I could release it with a quick thumb movement and use the guitar as a weapon. The concerts were starting to feel that unpredictable."

Later in 1966, Dylan was badly injured in a motorcycle accident and recuperated in the Woodstock area, where The Band also soon settled. Under no contractual obligations or any sort of deadlines, Dylan and his fellow musicians stepped out of time altogether. They jammed on old country and Appalachian songs and worked on such originals as "Tears of Rage" and "I Shall Be Released" that were originally intended as demo recordings for other artists. "The Basement Tapes," as they were eventually called, were among rock's first bootlegs before being released officially — in part in 1975, and in a full six-CD set in 2014.

Working and writing with Dylan encouraged The Band to try an album of its own. "Music from Big Pink" featured the Dylan-Danko collaboration "This Wheel's On Fire" and Dylan-Manuel's "Tears of Rage," along with such Band originals as Manuel's "In a Station" and Robertson's "Caledonia Mission."

In his memoir, Robertson remembered the first time their old boss listened to "Music from Big Pink."

"After each song, Bob looked at 'his' band with proud eyes. When 'The Weight' came on, he said, 'This is fantastic. Who wrote that song?'" he wrote. "'Me,' I answered. He shook his head, slapped me on the arm, and said, 'Damn! You wrote that song?'"

Special counsel got a search warrant for Twitter to turn over info on Trump's account, documents say

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

Special counsel Jack Smith's team obtained a search warrant in January for records related to former President Donald Trump's Twitter account, and a judge levied a \$350,000 fine on the company for missing the deadline to comply, according to court documents released Wednesday.

The new details were included in a ruling from the federal appeals court in Washington over a legal battle surrounding the warrant that has played out under seal for months. The court rejected Twitter's claim that it should not have been held in contempt or sanctioned.

Smith's team repeatedly mentioned Trump's tweets in an indictment unsealed last week that charges the former president with conspiring to subvert the will of voters and cling to power after he lost the 2020 election to Democrat Joe Biden.

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Trump, a Republican, has pleaded not guilty to charges including conspiracy to defraud the United States and obstruction of Congress' certification of Biden's win. He posted on his Truth Social platform on Wednesday that the Justice Department "secretly attacked" his Twitter account, and he characterized the investigation as an attempt to "infringe" on his bid to reclaim the White House in 2024.

It's unclear what information Smith may have sought from Trump's account. Possibilities include data about when and where the posts were written, their engagement and the identities of other accounts that reposted Trump's content.

The search warrant underscores the breadth of the investigation and the lengths Smith has gone to to obtain evidence to build his case. In a recent signal that Smith's investigation is continuing, former New York Police Commissioner Bernie Kerik met Monday with investigators from special counsel Smith's team.

Prosecutors obtained the search warrant on Jan. 17 directing Twitter to produce information on Trump's account after a court "found probable cause to search the account for evidence of criminal offenses," according to the ruling. The government also obtained a nondisclosure agreement that had prohibited Twitter from disclosing the search warrant, the filing says.

The court found that disclosing the warrant could risk that Trump could jeopardize the ongoing investigation by giving him "an opportunity to destroy evidence, change patterns of behavior" or notify his allies, the filing says.

Twitter objected to the nondisclosure agreement, saying four days after the compliance deadline that it would not produce any of the account information, according to the ruling. The judges wrote that Twitter "did not question the validity of the search warrant" but argued that the nondisclosure agreement violated its First Amendment right to communicate with Trump.

Twitter said if it had to turn over the records before the judge assessed the legality of the nondisclosure agreement, it would prevent Trump "from asserting executive privilege to shield communications made using his Twitter account," the document says.

The warrant ordered Twitter to provide the records by Jan. 27. A judge found Twitter to be in contempt after a court hearing on Feb. 7, but gave the company an opportunity to hand over the documents by 5 p.m. that evening. Twitter, however, only turned over some records that day. It didn't fully comply with the order until Feb. 9, the ruling says.

X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, sent an automated reply to a request for comment, saying it would respond soon.

In the broader case against Trump, his legal team has indicated it will argue that he was relying on the advice of lawyers in 2020 and had the right to challenge an election he believed was rigged.

Trump used his Twitter account in the weeks leading up to his supporters' attack on the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, to spread false statements about the election that prosecutors allege were designed to sow mistrust in the democratic process. The indictment details how Trump over Twitter encouraged his followers to come to Washington on Jan. 6, pressured his Vice President Mike Pence to reject the certification and falsely suggested that the mob at the Capitol — which beat police officers and smashed windows — was peaceful.

The warrant arrived at Twitter amid rapid changes instituted by Musk, who purchased the platform last year. Since taking over he's transformed the influential site, laying off much of its staff, including workers dedicated to ferreting out misinformation and hate speech.

He also eliminated Twitter's policy on COVID-19 misinformation and welcomed back a long list of users who had been previously banned, including neo-Nazis, COVID deniers and Trump, who was kicked off after the attack on the Capitol for glorifying violence.

Trump has yet to post to the site since being allowed back on. As Trump once did, Musk has used the platform as a partisan megaphone.

Last year Musk urged his many online followers to vote Republican in the midterm elections. This year he hosted Republican presidential candidate Ron DeSantis for a glitch-filled campaign kickoff.

The election conspiracy case is the second case Smith has brought against Trump. The former president

is also facing dozens of felony counts stemming from classified documents found at his Mar-a-Lago estate.

Trump's legal team in court papers Wednesday urged the judge to allow for the reestablishment of a secure facility at Trump's home where the former president can discuss classified evidence with his attorneys while they prepare for trial in that case.

Prosecutors say Trump should only be to do so at sensitive compartmented information facilities — or SCIFs. But Trump's lawyers say "immense practical and logistical hurdles and costs" would make traveling to government-approved locations difficult. He wants to recreate the same secure facility at Mar-a-Lago in which he was allowed to discuss classified materials as president.

2 dead in a Russian attack on a Ukrainian city while a blast near Moscow kills 1 and wounds dozens

By DASHA LITVINOVA and EMMA BURROWS Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — A Russian rocket attack on Wednesday killed two people and wounded at least seven others in the Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia, which is near Europe's largest nuclear power plant, Ukrainian officials said.

Although regional governor Yuriy Malashko initially said three people died in the attack on a residential area, Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko later said two people died and one other person had been resuscitated.

The city lies about 50 kilometers (30 miles) northeast of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, which has been occupied by Russian forces since the early weeks of the war. Shelling in the plant's surroundings have raised persistent fears of a nuclear accident.

In Russia, an explosion on the grounds of a factory that makes optical equipment for Russia's security forces north of Moscow killed one person, wounded 60 others and left at least eight people unaccounted for, officials said.

Russian officials did not provide a suspected cause of the explosion in the city of Sergiev Posad, which produced a tall plume of black smoke and added to jitters over recent nighttime drone attacks on Moscow. Earlier, officials said Russian air defenses shot down two drones aimed at the capital overnight, and they accused Ukraine of an attempted attack.

The blast occurred at a warehouse storing fireworks but was on the grounds of the Zagorsk optics manufacturing plant, said Andrei Vorobyov, the governor of the region surrounding the Russian capital. The explosion damaged 38 apartment buildings and prompted an evacuation of nearby areas, he said.

Vorobyov said the company rented out the warehouse for storage, but he later claimed the plant itself was mostly producing pyrotechnics. He said the Zagorsk Optical-Mechanical Plant "has had nothing to do with optics or mechanics for a long time."

The company's website says it still manufactures those products, as well as medical equipment. A 1995 report by the U.S. Department of Commerce described the factory as "a producer of precision optical equipment for the military."

Russian investigative news outlet Agentstvo reported Wednesday that state procurement data from recent years showed the plant supplied binoculars and dosimeters to Russia's National Guard, produced equipment for military aircraft and was involved in the development of a new fighter-bomber.

Russian authorities feared five people were missing in the aftermath of the explosion. Emergency crews with sniffer dogs walked over the rubble of low brick buildings, video from the scene showed. Firefighters hosed down the mangled industrial wreckage.

Some Russian media reported that a drone attack caused the blast at the manufacturing plant site. Multiple Russian authorities, including Vorobyov and Russia's Investigative Committee, denied that.

The Investigative Committee, Russia's top criminal investigations agency, said in a statement it has launched a criminal inquiry on charges of violating industrial safety requirements at hazardous production facilities.

Russian officials described the downed drones as Ukraine's latest attempt to strike the Russian capital

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in an alleged campaign to unnerve Muscovites and take the war in Ukraine to Russia.

The drones were intercepted on their approach to Moscow and there were no casualties, Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said. The Russian Defense Ministry described the incident as a "terrorist attack."

One of the drones came down in the Domodedovo district south of Moscow, and the other fell near the Minsk highway west of the city, according to Sobyenin. Moscow Domodedovo Airport is one of the Russian capital's busiest airports.

It wasn't clear where the drones were launched, and Ukrainian officials made no immediate comment. Ukraine usually neither confirms nor denies such attacks.

Flights were briefly halted at Moscow's Vnukovo airport on July 30 and Aug. 1, when drones smashed into Moscow's business district after being jammed by air defenses in two separate incidents.

In May, Russian authorities accused Ukraine of attempting to attack the Kremlin with two drones in an effort to assassinate President Vladimir Putin. Recent drone attacks have aimed at targets from the Russian capital to the Russia-annexed Crimean Peninsula.

In another incident that caused alarm, Ukrainian media reported social media blogs as saying that a thick plume of smoke billowed over Sevastopol, the headquarters of Russia's Black Sea Fleet.

The governor of Sevastopol, Mikhail Razvozhayev, said the smoke came from a "fleet training exercise" and urged local residents not to worry.

"Yes, the smell is unpleasant, but it is absolutely safe," he said on Telegram. "Everything is calm in the city."

Those incidents occurred against the backdrop of Ukraine's ongoing counteroffensive, which Ukrainian and Western officials have warned will be a long slog against the Kremlin's deeply entrenched forces.

Russia is pushing back against the Ukrainians in eastern areas, where tough battles are taking place, Hanna Maliar, Ukraine's deputy defense minister, said Wednesday on her official Telegram channel.

"In some parts of the front-line multiple changes in position take place within a day," she said.

She claimed that Ukraine's efforts had achieved "partial success" in the south. She gave no details.

It wasn't possible to independently verify either side's claims.

Hip-hop turns 50, reinventing itself and swaths of the world along the way

By DEEPTI HAJELA Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — It was born in the break, all those decades ago — that moment when a song's vocals dropped, instruments quieted down and the beat took the stage. It was then that hip-hop came into the world, taking the moment and reinventing it. Something new, coming out of something familiar.

At the hands of the DJs playing the albums, that break moment became something more: a composition in itself, repeated in an endless loop, back and forth between the turntables. The MCs got in on it, speaking their own clever rhymes and wordplay over it. So did the dancers, the b-boys and b-girls who hit the floor to break-dance. It took on its own visual style, with graffiti artists bringing it to the streets and subways of New York City.

It didn't stay there, of course. A musical form, a culture, with reinvention as its very DNA would never, could never. Hip-hop spread, from the parties to the parks, through New York City's boroughs and then the region, around the country and the world.

And at each step: change, adaptation, as new, different voices came in and made it their own, in sound, in lyric, in purpose, in style. Its foundations steeped in the Black communities where it first made itself known and also spreading out and expanding, like ripples in water, until there's no corner of the world that hasn't been touched by it.

Not only being reinvented, but reinventing. Art, culture, fashion, community, social justice, politics, sports, business: Hip-hop has impacted them all, transforming even as it has been transformed.

In hip-hop, "when someone does it, then that's how it's done. When someone does something different, then that's a new way," says Babatunde Akinboboye, a Nigerian-American opera singer and longtime

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hip-hop fan in Los Angeles, who creates content on social media using both musical styles.

Hip-hop "connects to what is true. And what is true, lasts."

Those looking for a hip-hop starting point have landed on one, turning this year into a 50th-birthday celebration. Aug. 11, 1973 was the date a young Clive Campbell, known as DJ Kool Herc around his Bronx stomping grounds, deejayed a back-to-school party for his younger sister in the community room of an apartment building on Sedgwick Avenue.

Campbell, who was born and spent his early years in Jamaica before his family moved to the Bronx, was still a teen himself at that time, just 18, when he began extending the musical breaks of the records he was playing to create a different kind of dancing opportunity. He'd started speaking over the beat, reminiscent of the "toasting" style heard in Jamaica.

It wasn't long before the style could be heard all over the city — and began to spread around the New York City metro region.

Among those who started to hear about it were some young men across the river in Englewood, New Jersey, who started making up rhymes to go along with the beats. In 1979, they auditioned as rappers for Sylvia Robinson, a singer turned music producer who co-founded Sugar Hill Records.

As The Sugarhill Gang, they put out "Rapper's Delight" and introduced the country to a record that would reach as high as 36 on Billboard's Top 100 chart list, and even make it to No. 1 in some European countries.

"Now what you hear is not a test: I'm rappin' to the beat/And me, the groove, and my friends are gonna try to move your feet," Michael "Wonder Mike" Wright said in one of the song's stanzas.

Wright says he had no doubt the song — and, by extension, hip-hop — was "going to be big. "I knew it was going to blow up and play all over the world because it was a new genre of music," he tells The Associated Press. "You had classical jazz, bebop, rock, pop, and here comes a new form of music that didn't exist."

And it was one based in self-expression, says Guy "Master Gee" O'Brien. "If you couldn't sing or you couldn't play an instrument, you could recite poetry and speak your mind. And so it became accessible to the everyman."

And everywomen, too, of course. Female voices took their chances on the microphone and dance floors as well, like Roxanne Shante, a native of New York City's Queens borough who was only 14 years old in 1984. That was the year she became one of the first female MCs, those rhyming over the beat, to gain a wider audience — and was part of what was likely the first well-known instance of rappers using their song tracks to take sonic shots at other rappers, in a back-and-forth song battle known as The Roxanne Wars.

"When I look at my female rappers of today, I see hope and inspiration," Shante says. "When you look at some of your female rappers today and you see the businesses that they own and the barriers that they were able to break it down, it's amazing to me and it's an honor for me to even be a part of that from the beginning."

Plenty of other women have joined her over the intervening decades, from Queen Latifah to Lil' Kim to Nicki Minaj to Megan Thee Stallion and more, speaking on their experiences as women in hip-hop and the larger world. That doesn't even begin to touch the list of women rappers hailing from other countries.

They're women like Tkay Maidza, born in Zimbabwe and raised in Australia, a songwriter and rapper in the early part of her career. She's thrilled with the diverse female company she's keeping in hip-hop, and with the variety of subjects they're talking about.

"There's so many different pockets ... so many ways to exist," she says. "It's not about what other people have done. ... You can always recreate the blueprint."

The emphasis on self-expression has also meant that over the years, hip-hop has been used as a medium for just about everything.

Want to talk about a party or how awesome and rich you are? Go for it. A cute guy or beautiful girl

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catch your eye? Say it in a verse. Looking to take that sound coming out of New York City and adapt it to a West Coast vibe, or a Chicago beat, a New Orleans groove, or an Atlanta rhythm, or these days, sounds in Egypt, India, Australia, Nigeria? It's all you, and it's all hip-hop. (Now whether anyone listening thought it was actually any good? That was a different story.)

Mainstream America hasn't always been ready for it. The sexually explicit content from Miami's 2 Live Crew made their 1989 album "As Nasty As They Want To Be" the subject of a legal battle over obscenity and freedom of expression; a later album, "Banned in the USA," became the first to get an official record industry label about explicit content.

Coming from America's Black communities, that has also meant hip-hop has been a tool to speak out against injustice, like in 1982 when Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five told the world in "The Message," that the stresses of poverty in their city neighborhoods made it feel "like a jungle sometimes/It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under."

Other figures like Common and Kendrick Lamar have also turned to a conscious lyricism in their hip-hop, with perhaps none better known than Public Enemy, whose "Fight the Power" became an anthem when it was created for filmmaker Spike Lee's 1989 classic "Do the Right Thing," which chronicled racial tension in a Brooklyn neighborhood.

Some in hip-hop pulled no punches, using the art form and the culture as a no-holds-barred way of showcasing the troubles of their lives. Often those messages have been met with fear or disdain in the mainstream. When N.W.A. came "Straight Outta Compton" in 1988 with loud, brash tales of police abuse and gang life, radio stations recoiled.

Hip-hop (mainly that done by Black artists) and law enforcement have had a contentious relationship over the years, each eyeing the other with suspicion. There's been cause for some of it. In some forms of hip-hop the ties between rappers and criminal figures were real, and the violence that spiraled out, as in high-profile deaths like that of Tupac Shakur in 1996, The Notorious B.I.G. in 1997, sometimes got very bloody. But in a country where Black people are often looked at with suspicion by authority, there have also been plenty of stereotypes about hip-hop and criminality.

As hip-hop spread over the years, a host of voices have used it to speak out on the issues that are dear to them. Look at Bobby Sanchez, a Peruvian American transgender, two-spirit poet and rapper who has released a song in Quechua, the language of the Wari people that her father came from. "Quechua 101 Land Back Please" references the killing of Indigenous peoples and calls for land restoration.

"I think it's very special and cool when artists use it to reflect society because it makes it bigger than just them," Sanchez says. "To me, it's always political, really, no matter what you're talking about, because hip-hop, in a way, is a form of resistance."

Yes, it's an American creation. And yes, it's still heavily influenced by what's happening in America. But hip-hop has found homes all over the planet, turned to by people in every community under the sun to express what matters to them.

When hip-hop first started being absorbed outside of the United States, it was often with a mimicking of American styles and messages, says P. Khalil Saucier, who has studied the spread of hip-hop across the countries of Africa.

That's not the case these days. Homegrown hip-hop can be found everywhere, a prime example of the genre's penchant for staying relevant and vital by being reinvented by the people doing it.

"The culture as a whole has kind of really rooted itself because it's been able to now transform itself from simply an importation, if you will, to now really being local in its multiple manifestations, regardless of what country you're looking at," says Saucier, a professor of critical Black studies at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania.

That's to everyone's benefit, says Rishma Dhaliwal, founder of London's I Am Hip-Hop magazine.

"Hip-hop is ... allowing you in someone's world. It's allowing you into someone's struggles," she says. "It's a big microphone to say, 'Well, the streets say this is what is going on here and this is what you might not know about us. This is how we feel, and this is who we are.'"

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The impact hasn't just been in one direction. Hip-hop hasn't just been changed; it has made change. It has gone into other spaces and made them different. It strutted through the fashion world as it brought its own sensibility to streetwear. It has revitalized companies; just ask Timberland what sales were like before its workboots became de rigueur hip-hop wear.

Or look at perhaps the perfect example: "Hamilton," Lin Manuel Miranda's groundbreaking musical about a distant white historical figure that came to life in the rhythms of its hip-hop soundtrack, bringing a different energy and audience to the theater world.

Hip-hop "has done a very good job at making culture more accessible. It has broken into spaces that we're traditionally not allowed to break into," Dhaliwal says.

For Usha Jey, freestyling hip-hop was the perfect thing to mix with the classical, formal South Asian dance style of Bharatanatyam. The 26-year-old choreographer, born in France to Tamil immigrant parents, created a series of social media videos last year showing the two styles interacting with each other. It was her training in hip-hop that gave her the confidence and spirit to do something different.

Hip-hop culture "pushes you to be you," Jey said. "I feel like in the pursuit of finding yourself, hip-hop helps me because that culture says, you've got to be you."

Hip-hop is, simply, "a magical art form," says Nile Rodgers, legendary musician, composer and record producer. He would know. It was his song "Good Times," with the band Chic, that was recreated to form the basis for "Rapper's Delight" all those years ago.

"The impact that it's had on the world, it really can't be quantified," Rodgers says. "You can find someone in a village that you've never been to, a country that you've never been to, and all of a sudden you hear its own local hip-hop. And you don't even know who these people are, but they've adopted it and have made it their own."

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Those looking for a starting point have landed on Aug. 11, 1973, when Clive Campbell, known as DJ Kool Herc around the Bronx, deejayed a party. Campbell had started extending the musical breaks of records and speaking over the beat. It wasn't long before the style could be heard all over the city.

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Thee Stallion and more.

Over the years, hip-hop has been used as a medium for just about everything. Mainstream America hasn't always been ready for it, though.

Coming from America's Black communities, that has also meant hip-hop has been a tool to speak out against injustice, like in 1982 when Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five told the world in "The Message," about the stresses of poverty in their city neighborhoods.

And Public Enemy's "Fight the Power" became an anthem when it was created for filmmaker Spike Lee's 1989 classic "Do the Right Thing," which chronicled racial tension in a Brooklyn neighborhood.

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A Mega Millions ticket sold in Florida wins \$1.58 billion jackpot, the third-largest in US history

By MARK LONG, JULIE WALKER and FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

NEPTUNE BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A single ticket sold in Florida is good for a \$1.58 billion Mega Millions jackpot, ending weeks of anticipation over who would win the eye-popping top prize.

A Publix grocery store in Neptune Beach sold the winning ticket, according to the Florida Lottery. The winning numbers drawn Tuesday night were 13, 19, 20, 32, 33 and the yellow ball 14.

A message was left seeking comment Wednesday from Publix.

James F. Davis, secretary of the Florida Lottery, said Wednesday that officials don't yet know who bought the winning ticket. He noted that the person has 180 days to present the ticket to lottery officials in Tallahassee to receive the winnings.

"These individuals are going to perhaps contact a lawyer, contact a financial adviser and make sure they get their ducks in a row," Davis told The Associated Press. "Because as you know when you are a winner you have an opportunity to be able to make such a difference in so many individual lives."

Davis was in Iowa on Wednesday for a meeting of the Multi-State Lottery Association.

"I actually walked into the meeting room and everyone proceeded to start clapping, which was pretty exciting and exhilarating all at the same time," he said.

Davis said he had been holding out hope that Florida would get a big winner in one of the multi-state lottery games, such as Mega Millions and Powerball.

"I'll just tell you the last two winners of the Powerball have been in California, and I've been keeping my fingers crossed for the next winner to be here in the state of Florida," he said.

One Publix employee arriving for work at the Neptune Beach store saw another and said "Mary, did you win the billion dollars?"

"Nope, and I assume you didn't, either," replied the other.

Neptune Beach is one of the many beachside communities along the Atlantic Ocean in northeast Florida. Like any beach town, it has a mix of affluent neighborhoods and some less-ideal spots. Several former and current players and coaches of the NFL football's Jacksonville Jaguars live in the area.

Before the big win, there had been 31 straight drawings since the last time someone won the game's jackpot on April 18. That enabled the prize to steadily grow to be the third-largest in U.S. history.

Mega Millions jackpot winners are so rare thanks to odds of one in 302.6 million.

The \$1.58 billion payout would go to the winner if they opt for an annuity, doled out over 30 years. But people usually prefer a lump sum option, which for Tuesday's jackpot was an estimated \$783.3 million.

The prize money is subject to federal taxes. Many states also tax lottery winnings.

A Florida law that went into effect last year allows the winners of lottery prizes in excess of \$250,000 to remain anonymous for 90 days. Also of note, there is no state income tax in Florida.

Mega Millions is played in 45 states, Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Neptune Beach has just over 7,000 residents and is 16 miles (25 kilometers) east of Jacksonville on Florida's Atlantic Coast.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, 90, falls at home and goes to hospital, but scans are clear, her office says

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, the oldest member of Congress, fell in her home and went to a hospital for a short time, her office said on Wednesday.

The 90-year-old California Democrat, who has faced mounting concerns about her health and her ability to perform the duties of a senator, "briefly went to the hospital yesterday afternoon as a precaution after a minor fall in her home," her office said in a statement.

All of her scans were clear, and she returned home later Tuesday, said her spokesman Adam Russell, who provided no further details.

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Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York said in a statement he spoke with Feinstein on Wednesday morning.

"She said she suffered no injuries and briefly went to the hospital as a precaution," Schumer said. "I'm glad she is back home now and is doing well."

The San Francisco hospital visit comes after Feinstein missed months of work in Washington earlier this year when she was hospitalized for the shingles virus and its side effects. Since her return to work in May, she has traveled the Capitol halls in a wheelchair and has often appeared confused and disoriented.

Feinstein has defended her ability to perform her job, though her office said in May that she was still experiencing vision and balance impairments from the shingles virus.

Feinstein, who took office in 1992, announced earlier this year that she would not seek reelection in 2024. Several Democrats have already entered the race to replace her.

During her hospitalization in the spring, some progressive House Democrats publicly called on her to resign, saying her absence had grounded the push to confirm President Joe Biden's judicial nominees. However, leading Democrats, including Biden and Schumer, publicly stood beside her.

Nonetheless, Feinstein's retirement plans have sparked a competitive Democratic contest to replace her, led by a trio of House lawmakers, U.S. Reps. Barbara Lee, Katie Porter and Adam Schiff.

If Feinstein resigns before the 2024 election, Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom would name her replacement, potentially reordering the race to succeed her. The governor said in 2021 that he would nominate a Black woman to fill the seat if Feinstein, who's white, were to step aside.

Lee is Black, and becoming the incumbent could be a decisive advantage in the contest, but it's unknown if Newsom would consider Lee, given that she is already running for the seat. Porter and Schiff are white.

Feinstein has had a storied political career that broke gender barriers as she rose from San Francisco's City Hall to leadership posts in the U.S. Senate. She played key roles in political battles over issues including reproductive rights and environmental protection, gaining a reputation as a pragmatic centrist.

In recent years, however, she has taken a step back from senior roles at the Capitol. She relinquished the top Democratic spot on the Judiciary Committee in 2020 amid criticism from liberals on how she handled the confirmation of Justice Amy Coney Barrett. And earlier this year, she declined to serve as the Senate president pro tempore, the most senior member of the majority party who daily opens the Senate chamber, even though she was in line to do so.

Feinstein had also requested to be replaced on the Senate Judiciary panel during her 10-week hospital stay earlier this year, but Republicans declined to allow the replacement. Even after she returned, concerns continued that she would not be able to make it for every crucial vote.

The Senate is expected to resume work in Washington in early September.

Niger's ousted president is said to be running low on food under house arrest, 2 weeks after coup

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

NIAMEY, Niger (AP) — Niger's deposed president is running out of food and under increasingly dire conditions two weeks after he was ousted in a military coup and put under house arrest, an adviser said Wednesday. The U.S. State Department expressed deep concern about the "deteriorating conditions" of his detention.

President Mohamed Bazoum, the West African nation's democratically elected leader, has been held at the presidential palace in Niamey with his wife and son since mutinous soldiers moved against him on July 26.

The family is living without electricity and only has rice and canned goods left to eat, the adviser said. Bazoum remains in good health for now and will never resign, according to the adviser, who wasn't authorized to discuss the sensitive situation with the media and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Bazoum's political party issued a statement confirming the president's living conditions and said the family also was without running water.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with Bazoum on Tuesday about recent diplomatic efforts,

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a statement said, and Blinken "emphasized that the safety and security of President Bazoum and his family are paramount." The State Department statement on Wednesday called for their immediate release.

This week, Niger's new military junta took steps to entrench itself in power and rejected international efforts to mediate. On Wednesday, it accused former colonizer France of trying to destabilize the country, violate its closed airspace and discredit the junta leaders. France's foreign and defense ministries in a joint statement called the allegations unfounded.

On Monday, the junta named a new prime minister, civilian economist Ali Mahaman Lamine Zeine. He is a former economy and finance minister who left office after a previous coup in 2010 toppled the government at the time. Zeine later worked at the African Development Bank.

"The establishment of a government is significant and signals, at least to the population, that they have a plan in place, with support from across the government," said Aneliese Bernard, a former State Department official who specialized in African affairs and is now director of Strategic Stabilization Advisors, a risk advisory group.

The junta also refused to admit meditation teams from the United Nations, the African Union, and the West African regional bloc ECOWAS, citing "evident reasons of security in this atmosphere of menace," according to a letter seen by The Associated Press.

ECOWAS had threatened to use military force if the junta did not reinstate Bazoum by Sunday, a deadline that the junta ignored and which passed without action from ECOWAS. The bloc is expected to meet again on Thursday to discuss the situation.

It's been exactly two weeks since soldiers first detained Bazoum and seized power, claiming they could do a better job at protecting the nation from jihadi violence. Groups linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group have ravaged the Sahel region, a vast expanse south of the Sahara Desert that includes part of Niger.

Most analysts and diplomats said the stated justification for the coup did not hold weight and the take-over resulted from a power struggle between the president and the head of his presidential guard, Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani, who now says he runs the country.

The coup comes as a blow to many countries in the West, which saw Niger as one of the last democratic partners in the region they could work with to beat back the extremist threat. It's also an important supplier of uranium.

Niger's partners have threatened to cut off hundreds of millions of dollars in military assistance if it does not return to constitutional rule.

While the crisis drags on, Niger's 25 million people are bearing the brunt. It's one of the poorest countries in the world, and many Nigeriens live hand to mouth and say they're too focused on finding food for their families to pay much attention to the escalating crisis.

Harsh economic and travel sanctions imposed by ECOWAS since the coup have caused food prices to rise by up to 5%, according to traders. Erkmann Tchiboza, a shop owner from neighboring Benin who works in Niger's capital, Niamey, said it's been hard to get anything into the country to stock his shop near the airport.

If it continues like this, the situation is going to become very difficult, he said.

The junta shut Niger's airspace this week and temporarily suspended authorization for diplomatic flights from friendly and partner countries, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Acting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Victoria Nuland met with the coup leaders but said they refused to allow her to meet Bazoum. She described the mutinous officers as unreceptive to her appeals to start negotiations and restore constitutional rule.

The United States has some 1,100 military personnel in the country and has seen Niger as a strategic and reliable partner in the region.

Still, Nuland made more headway than other delegations. A previous ECOWAS delegation was prevented from leaving the airport.

It's unclear how much coordination is involved in the various mediation efforts. Some experts have worried that if the work is not coordinated, it could undermine ECOWAS.

"I think the U.S would come to a modus vivendi with this junta, if the junta proved particularly amenable to U.S interests, but that doesn't seem to be on the table for now," said Alexander Thurston, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Cincinnati.

Analysts say the longer it takes to find a solution, the more time the junta has to dig in and the less momentum there will be to oust it. Other African nations are also divided on how to proceed.

Neighboring Mali and Burkina Faso, both of which are run by military regimes, have sided with the junta and warned that an intervention in Niger would be "tantamount to a declaration of war" against them. In a joint letter Tuesday to the U.N., the two countries appealed for the organization to "prevent by all means at its disposal, armed action against a sovereign state."

Mali and Burkina Faso also sent representatives to Niamey this week to discuss military options. Officials from all sides said the talks went well.

Singer and songwriter Sixto Rodriguez, subject of 'Searching for Sugar Man' documentary, dies at 81

By COREY WILLIAMS Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Sixto Rodriguez, who lived in obscurity as his music career flamed out early in the U.S. only to find success in South Africa and a stardom he was unaware of, died Tuesday in Detroit. He was 81.

Rodriguez's legacy would take off back home after the singer and songwriter became the subject of the Oscar-winning documentary "Searching for Sugar Man."

His death was announced on the Sugarman.org website and confirmed Wednesday by his granddaughter, Amanda Kennedy.

He died following a short illness, according to his wife, Konny Rodriguez, 72.

A 2013 Associated Press story referred to Rodriguez as "the greatest protest singer and songwriter that most people never heard of."

His albums flopped in the United States in the 1970s, but — unknown to him — he later became a star in South Africa where his songs protesting the Vietnam War, racial inequality, abuse of women and social mores inspired white liberals horrified by the country's brutal racial segregation system of apartheid.

Swedish filmmaker Malik Bendjelloul's documentary "Searching for Sugar Man" presented Rodriguez to a much larger audience. The film tells of two South Africans' mission to seek out the fate of their musical hero. It won the Academy Award for best documentary in 2013.

Rodriguez was "more popular than Elvis" in South Africa, Stephen "Sugar" Segerman said in 2013. The Cape Town record store owner's nickname comes from the Rodriguez song "Sugar Man."

As his popularity in South Africa grew, Rodriguez lived in Detroit. But his fans in South Africa believed he also was famous in the United States. They heard stories that the musician had died dramatically: He'd shot himself in the head onstage in Moscow; He'd set himself aflame and burned to death before an audience someplace else; He'd died of a drug overdose, was in a mental institution, was incarcerated for murdering his girlfriend.

In 1996, Segerman and journalist Carl Bartholomew-Strydom set out to learn the truth. Their efforts led them to Detroit, where they found Rodriguez working on construction sites.

"It's rock-and-roll history now. Who would-a thought?" Rodriguez told The Associated Press a decade ago.

Rodriguez said he just "went back to work" after his music career fizzled, raising a family that includes three daughters and launching several unsuccessful campaigns for public office. He made a living through manual labor in Detroit.

Still, he never stopped playing his music.

"I felt I was ready for the world, but the world wasn't ready for me," Rodriguez said. "I feel we all have a mission — we have obligations. Those turns on the journey, different twists — life is not linear."

Konny Rodriguez said the couple met in 1972 while both were students at Wayne State University in Detroit and married in the early 1980s. Although still married at the time of his death, the couple had been separated for a number of years, she said Wednesday while shuffling through some of Sixto Rodriguez's

memorabilia.

"He loved college. He was born to be taught, to teach himself," Konny Rodriguez said. "The music was more to bring people together. He would play anywhere, anytime. That's where I noticed him. He was walking down Cass Avenue with a guitar and a black bag. He was a really eccentric guy."

The two albums she said he recorded in 1969 and 1971 "didn't do well."

"I'm sure that was still in his head," Konny Rodriguez added. "Then in 1979, I picked up the phone and it was a guy with an Australian accent who said 'he must come to Australia because he's very famous here.'"

She said they toured Australia in 1979 and 1981 and later learned about the impact of his music in South Africa.

"Apartheid was going on," she said. "Frank Sinatra had a full-page ad, 'Do not go to South Africa.' We didn't."

After the end of apartheid, Sixto Rodriguez did travel to South Africa and perform in front of his fans there, she said.

"He did so well in South Africa. It was insane," Konny Rodriguez said.

Sixto Rodriguez later pursued royalties he did not receive from his music being used and played in South Africa.

Some of Rodriguez songs were banned by the apartheid regime and many bootlegged copies were made on tapes and later CDs.

The end-call button on your iPhone could move soon. What to know about Apple's iOS 17 change

NEW YORK (AP) — Hanging up that phone call? The location of Apple's red end-call button is set to slightly move with upcoming iOS 17 updates to the phone app, so be wary of your thumb's muscle memory.

As iPhone users know, the "End" button currently sits prominently away from other call options, in a center position towards the bottom of the screen. But with iOS 17, which officially launches this fall, the red icon will move the right — and other features will move down to join it.

While a iOS 17 preview guide from Apple showed this new setup in June, renewed attention has increased as some explore beta versions of the software upgrade. Images from iOS 17 beta versions shared by multiple news outlets this week show the small — but potentially frustrating — change.

Beyond the end button, there are additional changes to the placement of other call features seen on past iOS versions. The "Mute" and "Speaker" buttons, for example, have swapped — as have the "FaceTime" and "Keyboard" options. And it appears the feature allowing you to search for contacts has merged with the add call option.

The changes have already received reactions on social media, where some predict having some muscle memory errors — noting it could take some time to adjust.

It's unclear if the call functions will change further before iOS 17 officially rolls out. The Associated Press reached out to Apple for comment Wednesday.

As Apple notes on its website, the company's beta program allows some Apple users to test out software before it's released. Feedback from participants helps Apple identify issues and improve software programs before they're commercially released.

Beyond potential tweaks to call icon locations, iOS 17 is set to bring an array of new features to Apple customers — including improved autocorrect, a new journal app and live voicemail transcription with the ability to pick up and answer as someone is leaving a message.

How hip-hop went from being shunned by big business to multimillion-dollar collabs

By GLENN GAMBOA AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The signs of hip-hop's influence are everywhere — from Pharrell Williams becoming Louis Vuitton's men's creative director to billion-dollar brands like Dr. Dre's Beats headphones and retail mainstays like Diddy's Sean John and Jay-Z's Rocawear.

It didn't start out that way.

The music genre germinated 50 years ago as an escape from the poverty and violence of New York City's most distressed borough, the Bronx, where few wanted to invest in its businesses or its people. Out of that adversity blossomed an authentic style of expression, one that connected with the city's underserved Black and Latino teens and young adults, and filtered through to graffiti, dance and fashion.

As hip-hop spread throughout New York, so did a culture.

"Hip-hop goes beyond the music," said C. Keith Harrison, a professor and founding director for the University of Central Florida's Business of Hip-Hop Innovation & Creative Industries certificate program. "Hip-hop always knew, as Nipsey Hussle would say, how to get it out of the trunk, and so they've always had to have innovative business models."

That spirit of innovation has helped push hip-hop past big business' initial resistance to align with the genre to become the most popular music form in the United States since 2017. Hip-hop's impact on the \$16 billion music industry and beyond is now so widespread, experts say it becomes difficult to quantify.

Author Zack O'Malley Greenberg estimates that hip-hop's five wealthiest artists were worth nearly \$4 billion in 2022 by themselves. It was no idle boast when Jay-Z rapped in last year's DJ Khaled hit "God Did," "How many billionaires can come from Hov crib? Huh, I count three -- me, Ye and Rih, Bron's a Roc boy, so four, technically." Jay-Z, also known as Hov, Rihanna and NBA star LeBron James are all on the Forbes World's Billionaires List for 2023, though Ye, formerly known as Kanye West, dropped off the list after his controversial split with Adidas.

Hip-hop artists have achieved that level of success because they are much more than their music. They are tastemakers and trendsetters in lifestyle-defining products from fashion to high-end champagne.

"Hip-hop knows how to put butts in seats, no matter what context you're in, and that's what businesses want," said Harrison, who is also a professor in the University of Central Florida's DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program. "Emotion, return on emotion — that's what hip-hop does differently. They have another level of emotion."

Because rappers often tell stories fans relate to or aspire to, weaving brand shout-outs into their rhymes and product placements — sometimes paid for, sometimes not — into their videos becomes a powerful marketing tool.

In her forthcoming book "Fashion Killa: How Hip-Hop Revolutionized High Fashion," pop culture expert Sowmya Krishnamurthy addresses what people get out of "putting somebody else's name or logo across your chest or across your back."

"In America, in a capitalist society, how else do you show you've made it?" Krishnamurthy said. "One thing I kind of joke about is: People can't see your mortgage. But they can see a nice chain. They can see the clothes that you have on. That is an immediate signal."

In hip-hop, that pressure to fit in and show off is heightened.

"You have a genre that historically has a lot of people who grew up with little to nothing," Krishnamurthy said. "The aspiration is inherent."

And probably no product has been as successful at connecting with hip-hop as footwear. Consequently, rappers get their own sneaker lines without ever taking part in a sport, said Harlan Friedman, host and creator of the Sole Free podcast on sneakers and street culture.

"A seventh grader can't afford a \$20,000 rope chain and medallion, but maybe he could afford a pair of (Nike) Dunks or a pair of (Air) Jordans or a pair of Adidas," Friedman said. "That gives him that little bit of clout, that he's like his favorite artist or athlete, and it kind of gives him that feeling like, 'Oh, I'm like them.'"

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Adidas was the first major company that saw rappers as potential business partners, Friedman said. But they had to be convinced.

Even though the company had seen an unusual spike in sales of its Superstar shoes in the Northeast in 1986, it wasn't ready to attribute that to rap group Run-D.M.C. and their hit "My Adidas."

When company execs saw the group ask fans to show off their Adidas and thousands removed their shoes and waved them in the air at a Madison Square Garden performance, they were sold. They signed Run-D.M.C. to a \$1 million deal that resulted in their own shoe line in 1988.

Now that hip-hop is a multibillion dollar industry with widespread influence, it's easy to forget it wasn't always Courvoisier and Versace for its stars.

Even after Adidas' success, companies still balked at partnering with hip-hop acts because they felt that "having young Black and brown people wearing their clothing simply wasn't on brand and, in many ways, it was kind of denigrating their brand," said Krishnamurthy, whose book will be released Oct. 10.

"But when that kind of money is being spent and people really saw the power that rappers had to change what somebody might wear, ... they started taking notice," she said.

These days, singer-and-sometimes-rapper Rihanna has a deal with Puma. Travis Scott has his line of Nikes with a backward swoosh. And Cardi B has her line of Reeboks.

Companies of all sorts now court rappers and their audiences, hoping to join the ranks of Timberland — which at first resisted associating with the genre it saw as being counter to its working-class base — Hennessy cognac and anything Gucci as hip-hop approved brands.

"They think, 'We can either work with them and really embrace the culture or we're going to miss out on being young, cool, and, of course, making money,'" Krishnamurthy said.

Few events in hip-hop culture's ongoing march into the mainstream can match McDonald's introduction of Saweetie 'n Sour sauce for the fast food giant's Chicken McNuggets in 2021. Packets of the sauce are now available for \$20 apiece online.

At the time, the California rapper was far from a household name. But Jennifer Healan, McDonald's USA's vice president of brand, content, and culture, said Saweetie was a natural fit for the company's "Famous Orders" campaign, which has also featured Scott as well as one of hip-hop's biggest celebrity couples, Cardi B and her husband, Offset, for Valentine's Day.

"Saweetie is a longtime McDonald's fan, and she brought a unique twist to our campaign by mixing and matching her favorite menu items — which tapped into our fans' passion for food hacks and new flavor combinations," Healan said.

The promotion worked well for both McDonald's, which Healan said led many to try Big Macs, and Saweetie, who soon had her own Netflix show and was a musical guest on "Saturday Night Live."

Jake Bjorseth, founder and CEO of ad agency trndstrs, which focuses on connecting companies with younger audiences, said he has been trying to get longtime client McDonald's to commission an entire hip-hop album based around part of its jingle, "Ba da ba ba ba."

The partnership between brands and musicians will only grow tighter in the next 10 years because audio is a more effective way to connect on social media, Bjorseth said. And hip-hop is more versatile at making those connections.

"Hip-hop is literally built from music being repurposed and remixed from previous genres," he said. "... I feel personally connected to hip-hop and it is a seamless, authentic connection and how we express ourselves."

Khanun begins blowing into South Korea with strong winds after dumping rain on Japan for a week

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, YONG JUN CHANG and AHN YOUNG-JOON Associated Press

BUSAN, South Korea (AP) — Rains and winds were growing in southern South Korea Wednesday as a tropical storm drew closer to the Korean Peninsula, where it was forecast to slam into major urban areas.

Dozens of flights and ferry services were grounded and tens of thousands of fishing vessels evacuated to ports as government officials raised concerns about potentially huge damages from flooding, landslides and tidal waves triggered by the typhoon-strength winds.

The storm, named Khanun, was gaining strength as it moved slowly towards the country, South Korea's weather agency said, with southern and eastern areas increasingly feeling its force.

Khanun is expected to reach the southern resort island of Jeju hours later and then make landfall near the mainland port of Tongyeong Thursday morning.

The agency says Khanun could have a punishing impact as it will likely slice through the center of the country over several hours, with the storm's eye brushing the capital city of Seoul, while packing winds blowing at 90 to 154 kph (56 to 97 mph).

The storm is expected to dump 10 to 40 centimeters (4 to 16 inches) of rain in southern and central regions and as much as 60 centimeters (24 inches) in the country's mountainous eastern regions through Friday. It will be weaker as it blows into North Korea early in the day.

The Korean Meteorological Administration measured Khanun's maximum winds at 133 kph (82 mph) as of 7:10 p.m. Wednesday (10:10 a.m. GMT), as it passed through waters 250 kilometers (155 miles) southeast of Jeju while moving northward at a speed of 14 kph (8.6mph).

Winds were growing stronger in the country's southern regions as of 7 p.m., blowing at a maximum 96 kph (60 mph) in waters off Tongyeong and 95 kph (59 mph) in the southwestern mainland port of Yeosu while pouring 14 centimeters (5.5 inches) of rain in some areas of Jeju.

Winds were also picking up in Busan, a major port city on the mainland's southwest, where pedestrians struggled to hold onto their umbrellas. At the city's beaches, workers were deflating and tying swimming tubes to trees and setting up sandbags and flood shields in front of buildings.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has called for officials to be aggressive with disaster prevention measures and evacuations while stressing the perils posed by the storm, which comes just weeks after central and southern regions were pounded by torrential rain that triggered flashfloods and landslides that killed at least 47 people.

In an emergency meeting on Wednesday, Yoon expressed concern that Khanun could inflict huge damage because it was expected to move slowly through the country while sustaining much of its strength for hours. He called for officials to "fully mobilize all available resources" to minimize injuries and deaths.

Japan measured Khanun as a severe tropical storm with sustained winds of 108 kph (67 mph) and higher gusts. Warnings for stormy conditions, potential flooding and other risks were issued for the southwestern part of Japan's southern island of Kyushu and nearby areas.

In Kyushu's Kagoshima prefecture, 12,000 homes were out of power on Wednesday while more than 1,800 people have taken shelters at nearby community centers, hotels, and other facilities. Seven people were hurt, two seriously, after falling or being hit by flying objects. Regional train operations were halted, as were flights and ferry services connecting the prefecture with other Japanese cities.

Up to 30 centimeters (12 inches) of rainfall is expected in Kyushu and the nearby island of Shikoku through Thursday evening, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency, which warned residents against mudslides, flooding and high winds.

As a stronger typhoon last week, Khanun lashed Okinawa and other Japanese islands, causing injuries and damage.

The Korea Airport Corporation said at least 144 flights going in and out of Jeju were canceled as of 11 a.m. as Khanun approached. Ferry services connecting the island with mainland ports were also cancelled while authorities shut down at least 39 roads, 26 riverside parking lots and 613 hiking trails nationwide as

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part of broader preventive measures.

Lee Hak-beom, an official from Korea Coast Guard, said all but 200 of the country's 64,000 registered fishing vessels have evacuated to ports as of Wednesday morning.

Khanun has forced South Korea to evacuate the World Scout Jamboree that had been taking place at a coastal campsite in the southwestern county of Buan. Some 37,000 scouts had to be relocated Tuesday.

While South Korean organizers say the Jamboree will continue in the form of cultural events and activities, all outdoor activities will be banned from Thursday until the storm passes.

A K-Pop concert is planned for Seoul on Friday to go with the closing ceremony, but Lee Sang-min, South Korea's Minister of the Interior and Safety, admitted that the storm could complicate preparations.

"If the typhoon still has an influence by then ... and the conditions aren't ideal to support the proceeding of a concert, then we will have to consider cancelling foremost," Lee said during a briefing.

North Korean state media said Wednesday that officials were employing measures to protect factories from possible storm damage, including preparing sandbags, examining pumping systems and setting up emergency plans to evacuate important machinery and workers in case of flooding.

— Kim reported from Seoul, South Korea. AP writer Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to the report.

High ocean temperatures are harming the Florida coral reef.

Rescue crews are racing to help

BY DANIEL KOZIN, WILFREDO LEE and FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

LAYTON, Fla. (AP) — Steps away from the warming waters of Florida Bay, marine biologist Emily Becker removed covers from the dozens of water-filled tanks under her watchful eye. Nestled in seawater carefully maintained at about 85 degrees Fahrenheit (29 degrees Celsius) lay hundreds of pieces of coral — some a sickly white from the bleaching that threatens to kill them, others recovered to a healthy bright iodine in color.

As Becker looked over the coral, crews of reef rescue groups arrived in trucks carrying more — brought up by divers in a massive effort aimed at saving the coral from an ocean that is cooking it alive.

"People jumped into action really quickly, as best as they could," Becker said, wiping sweat from her brow.

Up and down the chain of islands that form the Florida Keys, coral rescue groups and government and academic institutions have mobilized to save the coral from a historic bleaching event that experts say threatens the viability of the third-largest reef tract in the world. They've been working long days and weekends in blistering heat for weeks to get as many specimens as they can onto land amid reports of some reef tracts experiencing near total mortality.

In mid-July, water surface temperatures averaged about 91 degrees (33 Celsius) off the lower Florida Keys, well above the average of 85 degrees (29.5 Celsius), according to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports.

The hot water resulted in nearly 100% bleaching along portions of the reef, causing the corals to lose their zooxanthellae, the algae that gives them color and nourishment. If they don't recover their zooxanthellae, they will ultimately die.

"We're already seeing not just bleaching, but actual coral death out on the reef because the temperatures were so hot," said Cynthia Lewis, director of the Keys Marine Lab, a research institute on the island of Long Key, some 100 miles (160 kilometers) south of Miami, where rescue groups have already brought more than 1,500 pieces of coral. "And we can't afford to lose more of our reef."

Coral bleaching occurs naturally when waters warm significantly, including in 2016 in the Keys. But Lewis said the current situation is urgent for coral, which is vital to Florida's economy, coastal protection and marine life.

The corals "don't have a lot of time," she said. "They're literally sitting, stewing in the water out there in these hot, hot temperatures."

A string of recent overcast and rainy days helped drop water temperatures slightly. But it will likely be

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late October or November before the coral samples can be returned to the reef, Lewis said.

What's at stake?

The Florida Coral Reef is the world's third-largest, extending about 350 miles (563 kilometers) from the Dry Tortugas in the Gulf of Mexico to St. Lucie Inlet, some 115 miles (185 kilometers) north of Miami.

The reef is a first line of defense against erosion and flooding from hurricanes and tropical storms, Lewis said. It helps support commercial fishing and a thriving tourism industry, from snorkeling and scuba diving to recreational fishing. And they nurture "such an amazing amount of diversity and life" in the ocean around them, she said.

"In a normal situation, they're like the rainforests of the ocean," Lewis said. "They're incredibly important."

The world's oceans have been record-setting hot since April, with scientists citing climate change from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas along with a boost from El Nino, a natural warming of parts of the Pacific that changes weather worldwide and generally heats the planet.

The bleaching occurred rapidly as the water temperature rose in July.

"We got kicked in the teeth because it happened so fast in the Lower Keys. I mean, within a week," said Michael Echevarria, president of the nonprofit Reef Renewal USA.

Reef Renewal was among those who initially worked to move endangered coral into land-based facilities. More recently, they've worked to save coral in several of their own underwater nurseries in shallower water by moving them to deeper, cooler water, where they hang pieces of coral from tree-like structures.

Reef Renewal founder Ken Nedimyer called the coral bleaching "hard to watch and hard to experience" and said his group knew that coral stress would increase under climate change, but didn't think it would come so soon.

"There's a lot of people that think this isn't real, that climate change is not real, and that the world is not warming up. And I don't care what they say, it's real. I'm living it right now and I've lived down here and done this for a long time," he said. "And I've never seen this."

Back at the Keys Marine Lab in Layton, the collected pieces of coral are placed in cooling trays set up on tables that hold between 40 and 400 gallons of seawater. The 85-degree water (29 degrees Celsius) makes for "much happier coral," Becker said.

"We've seen some coral that have been really stressed offshore, come back into our tables and recover already," she said. "They're already getting color back. So that's really encouraging to see that."

The work goes beyond saving the coral. Becker and others are studying different types of coral to see which ones survive temperature stress and disease better, hoping to "build a better reef with more resilient corals," she said. Scientists from the University of Miami have established a restoration research site off of Key Biscayne to do such work.

Jamison Gove, co-author of a new article in Nature about how Hawaii coral reefs weathered a 2015 marine heat wave that pushed ocean temperatures to their highest levels in 120 years of record-keeping, said his research suggests some corals off Florida may survive better than others depending on the health of local fish populations and runoff from land.

The Honolulu-based research oceanographer with NOAA said reefs that rebounded best after Hawaii's heat wave were those that had both the most fish and the least exposure to sewage from cesspools and septic systems.

But he said local management measures won't save reefs if people don't cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The effort to save Florida's coral is appreciated by Jennifer Cullen, manager of Rain Barrel Village, a souvenir shop in nearby Islamorada.

"I'm worried about the coral. I'm worried about tourism, worried about stronger hurricanes, because we've already had Hurricane Irma, which was devastating for the Keys and tourism," Cullen said. "It was a very long recovery, and I don't know how much more of that we can take."

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Today in History: August 10, Ruth Bader Ginsburg sworn in as Supreme Court justice

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Aug. 10, the 222nd day of 2023. There are 143 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 10, 1945, a day after the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Imperial Japan conveyed its willingness to surrender provided the status of Emperor Hirohito remained unchanged. (The Allies responded the next day, saying they would determine the Emperor's future status.)

On this date:

In 1792, during the French Revolution, mobs in Paris attacked the Tuileries (TWEE'-luh-reez) Palace, where King Louis XVI resided. (The king was later arrested, put on trial for treason, and executed.)

In 1821, Missouri became the 24th state.

In 1885, Leo Daft opened America's first commercially operated electric streetcar, in Baltimore.

In 1944, during World War II, American forces overcame remaining Japanese resistance on Guam.

In 1962, Marvel Comics superhero Spider-Man made his debut in issue 15 of "Amazing Fantasy."

In 1969, Leno and Rosemary LaBianca were murdered in their Los Angeles home by members of Charles Manson's cult, one day after actor Sharon Tate and four other people were slain.

In 1977, postal employee David Berkowitz was arrested in Yonkers, New York, accused of being "Son of Sam," the gunman who killed six people and wounded seven others in the New York City area.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed a measure providing \$20,000 payments to still-living Japanese-Americans who were interned by their government during World War II.

In 1993, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was sworn in as the second female justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1995, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols were charged with 11 counts in the Oklahoma City bombing (McVeigh was convicted of murder and executed; Nichols was convicted of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to life in prison).

In 2006, British authorities announced they had thwarted a terrorist plot to simultaneously blow up 10 aircraft heading to the U.S. using explosives smuggled in hand luggage.

In 2019, Jeffrey Epstein, accused of orchestrating a sex-trafficking ring and sexually abusing dozens of underage girls, was found unresponsive in his cell at a New York City jail; he was later pronounced dead at a hospital. (The city's medical examiner ruled the death a suicide by hanging.)

Ten years ago: In an address at the Disabled American Veterans' convention in Orlando, Florida, President Barack Obama assured disabled veterans that his administration was making progress on reducing a backlog of disability claims. A harrowing weeklong search for a missing California teenager ended when FBI agents rescued 16-year-old Hannah Anderson and shot and killed 40-year-old James Lee DiMaggio at a campsite deep in the Idaho wilderness. (Authorities say in addition to kidnapping Hannah, DiMaggio killed her brother and mother at his home east of San Diego.) Singer Edyie Gorme, 84, died in Las Vegas.

Five years ago: Richard Russell, a 29-year-old airline ground agent, stole a commercial plane from Sea-Tac International Airport near Seattle; he flew for 75 minutes, performing dangerous stunts while being chased by military jets before crashing into a remote island in Puget Sound, killing himself. Two police officers and two others were killed in a shooting in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.

One year ago: Donald Trump invoked his Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination as he testified under oath in the New York attorney general's civil investigation into the former president's business dealings. A fear of attacks that had rippled through Muslim communities nationwide after the fatal shootings of four men in Albuquerque, New Mexico, gave way to surprise when it turned out the suspect in the killings was himself Muslim. Muhammad Syed, 51, denied any connection to the crimes. But investigators said they had ample evidence to prove his guilt.

Today's Birthdays: Actor James Reynolds is 77. Rock singer-musician Ian Anderson (Jethro Tull) is 76. Country musician Gene Johnson (Diamond Rio) is 74. Singer Patti Austin is 73. Actor Daniel Hugh Kelly is

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71. Folk singer-songwriter Sam Baker is 69. Actor Rosanna Arquette is 64. Actor Antonio Banderas is 63. Rock musician Jon Farriss (INXS) is 62. Singer Julia Fordham is 61. Journalist-blogger Andrew Sullivan is 60. Actor Chris Caldovino is 60. Singer Neneh Cherry is 59. Singer Aaron Hall is 59. Former boxer Riddick Bowe is 56. Actor Sean Blakemore is 56. R&B singer Lorraine Pearson (Five Star) is 56. Singer-producer Michael Bivins is 55. Actor-writer Justin Theroux is 52. Actor Angie Harmon is 51. Country singer Jennifer Hanson is 50. Actor-turned-lawyer Craig Kirkwood is 49. Actor JoAnna Garcia Swisher is 44. Singer Cary Ann Hearst (Shovels & Rope) is 44. Actor Aaron Staton is 43. Actor Ryan Eggold is 39. Actor Charley Koontz is 36. Actor Lucas Till is 33. Reality TV star Kylie Jenner is 26. Actor Jeremy Maguire is 12.