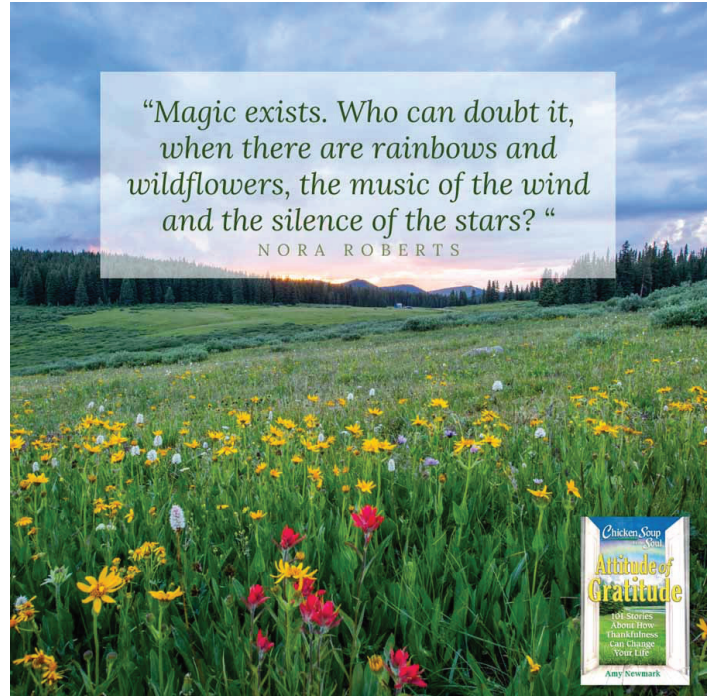


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"Magic exists. Who can doubt it, when there are rainbows and wildflowers, the music of the wind and the silence of the stars?"

NORA ROBERTS

Friday, Aug. 18

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

Girls Soccer hosts Belle Fourche, 4 p.m.

Boys Soccer hosts Belle Fourche, 6 p.m.

Football hosts Aberdeen Roncalli, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 19

Girls Soccer hosts St. Thomas More, 11 a.m.

Boys Soccer hosts St. Thomas More, 1 p.m.

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship at Rosewood Court, 10 a.m.

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

Sunday, Aug. 20

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

Monday, Aug. 21

Senior menu: Lasagna rotini, spinach salad with dressing, ambrosia fruit salad, cookie, whole wheat bread.

Faculty In-Service

The Pantry at Groton Community Center, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

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.
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The Bulletin by Newsweek

World in Brief

bankruptcy protection in the U.S. as the country's real estate crisis deepens.

Donald Trump is requesting an April 2026 start date for his trial on federal charges related to the 2020 election subversion case, more than two years after the January 2, 2024, date requested by Special Counsel Jack Smith.

Residents of the capital of Canada's Northwest Territories were fleeing by plane and car as wildfires approached, the latest in the country's worst-ever wildfire season. The deadline to evacuate Yellowknife is Friday noon. The government says it stands ready to airlift residents if needed.

Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy will end their conservatorship of former NFL offensive lineman Michael Oher, the subject of the 2009 film *The Blind Side*, after Oher claimed the family never legally adopted him and attempted to profit off him.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is monitoring a new, highly mutating lineage, named BA.2.86, of the virus that causes COVID-19. The variant has been detected in the U.S., Denmark, and Israel.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Russian forces are on the offensive in northeastern Luhansk and Kharkiv, hoping to draw attention and resources away from Kyiv's counteroffensive effort in the south and potentially even push through Ukrainian lines and recapture the city of Kupyansk..

TALKING POINTS

"As a Georgia State Senator, I am officially calling for an emergency session to review the actions of Fani Willis. America is under attack. I'm not going to sit back and watch as radical left prosecutors politically TARGET political opponents," Georgia state Sen. Colton Moore said in response to former President Donald Trump's fourth criminal indictment.

What to Watch in the Day Ahead

Another hearing for Bryan Kohberger, the man accused of killing four University of Idaho students last November, is scheduled for today. His attorneys are expected to file one motion to stay the trial and another to compel prosecutors to share some of the case's evidence.

Former Vice President Mike Pence, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley are among the 2024 GOP presidential candidates expected to deliver remarks today as part of conservative talk radio host Erick Erickson's *The Gathering* conference in Atlanta.

The final two matches of the FIFA Women's World Cup take place this weekend. Australia and Sweden will compete for third place in a match scheduled to begin at 4 a.m. ET on Saturday. Spain and England will compete in the final on Sunday starting at 6 a.m. ET.

Some of the top track and field athletes from around the world will convene Saturday in Budapest to celebrate the start of the 2023 World Athletic Championships. This year's competitions will run through August 27.

People in Ecuador will vote Sunday in their country's presidential election. The election comes less than two weeks after one candidate, journalist Fernando Villavicencio, was assassinated.

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Today on

GDILIVE.COM



Football

Friday,

Aug. 18, 2023

Doney Field

Groton

Join Mike Nehls and
Paper Paul with
broadcast of this
game!

Broadcast Sponsored by

Bahr Spray Foam
Bierman Farm Services
BK Custom Ts & More
Bary Keith at Harr Motors
Dacotah Bank
Dan Richardt at Groton Ford

Greg's Repair
Groton Chamber
Groton Ford
John Sieh Agency
Krueger Brothers
Locke Electric

Synthetic Cadaver part of new science course at Groton Area by Dorene Nelson

Groton Area High School was awarded a health/science grant of \$236,522 to add a SynDaver Synthetic Cadaver and a nursing simulator. These and other necessary items will be used in a new science course which supplements the current Biology II / Anatomy and Physiology course offerings and other health/PE classes.

Becky Hubsch, newly hired business manager and formerly the school's business teacher, originally applied for this amazing grant through Career and Technical Education (CTE) grants. Sixteen other South Dakota schools have also received varying amounts of money from this grant program.

New equipment had to be ordered and installed. This new lab is located in the old chemistry classroom, formerly used by Kristen Gonsoir before the east side addition to the high school.

School district funds covered all of the remodeling done in the classroom, including the removal of lab tables, re-painting, and installation of new tile flooring.

The grant money paid for all of the new equipment. Three training tables, two mannequins, a physical therapy station complete with a variety of Thera Bands, a fully functional hospital bed, and a Rhino Lift for lifting and/or moving heavy patients are all included in this list of necessary equipment.

SynDaver synthetic humans are anatomically accurate medical models fabricated by the company SynDaver Labs. All of the body's muscles, organs, and systems are meticulously represented, and, unlike traditional models with organs made of rubbery silicon or rigid plastic, SynDaver's are moist, pliable, and closely resemble living tissue.

To maintain the condition of the synthetic human body, it must be kept in water and can only be touched by gloved hands.

To meet the terms of the grant and in order to make the best use of this equipment, Groton alumni and community members will be asked to supply supplemental training on some course packets during the first few years.

The main focus of this grant is for Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes which will be taught by Brittany Hubbard, the newly hired freshman science, senior internship teacher, and health lab supervisor. Kristen Gonsoir will also get to use the SynDaver synthetic humans in her classes.

The school also intends to partner with 3M, Avera, Sanford, and local nursing homes for corporate sponsorship and material support.



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ThermaBand wall exercise station for strengthening

Ultrasound machine to treat musculo-skeletal issues



Photos by Dorene Nelson



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

With reorganization plans squashed for now, VA celebrates new Rapid City clinic

BY: SETH TUPPER - AUGUST 17, 2023 4:59 PM

RAPID CITY — The long-debated, evolving plans for veterans' health care in the Black Hills took a step forward Thursday with the grand opening of a new outpatient clinic.

The 49,000-square-foot Rapid City facility is triple the size of the Department of Veterans Affairs' previous clinic in the city.

That's a welcome development for Ricky L. Robertson, an Air Force veteran at Thursday's opening ceremony who said the VA outgrew the prior site.

"That building down there, it was in terrible shape," he said. "So, yeah, this is going to be great, I think."

The VA is leasing the new space, which is near the corner of U.S. Highway 16 and Catron Boulevard. It's owned by a company affiliated with Rapid City developer Hani Shafai, whose Dream Design International and other local partners built the facility over the past couple of years. Shafai, who told South Dakota Searchlight the project cost more than \$25 million, said he's proud to play a part in helping veterans.

"To be part of it is really a great honor," Shafai said. "You cannot describe the feeling. You really can't."

In recent years, the VA had even bigger plans for Rapid City. Congress passed a law in 2018 that required the agency to undertake a nationwide modernization and realignment. The VA's recommendations for the Black Hills in 2022 included relocating inpatient services from Hot Springs and Sturgis to Rapid City, and reducing services in the smaller two cities to outpatient care. In eastern South Dakota, the VA recommended closing a clinic in Wagner.

Last summer, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators — including South Dakota's John Thune and Mike Rounds, both Republicans — responded to public outrage in affected communities by refusing to confirm nominees for the committee tasked with reviewing and finalizing the recommendations. That intervention halted the reorganization plans.

Prior to the most recent reorganization effort, the VA campus in Hot Springs had long been under threat of a closure or reduction in services. Patrick Russell, co-chair of a Save the VA group in the city, said Thursday by phone that he doesn't see the VA's new investment in Rapid City outpatient care as a threat to Hot Springs.

"Save the VA has never been opposed to expanding the clinical services in Rapid City," Russell said.

Yet he criticized the VA for gradually reducing services in Hot Springs for more than a decade since talk of closing the campus surfaced.

"If you can't knock down a wall with a wrecking ball, all you do is start removing bricks one at a time until the wall is so weak it just tumbles," Russell said.

The Hot Springs VA Medical Center still offers inpatient services, including a domiciliary where veterans stay while receiving treatment for substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder and other conditions. The Fort Meade VA Medical Center in Sturgis also continues to offer forms of inpatient care.

U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-South Dakota, attended Thursday's grand opening. He said the future of the Hot Springs and Sturgis campuses is secure, and he doesn't think the blocked reorganization recommendations "will ever be taken up for action."

"Hot Springs and Fort Meade are going to continue to do a great job serving veterans," Johnson said, "not only for the rest of my career, but for the rest of my life."

Seth is editor-in-chief of South Dakota Searchlight. He was previously a supervising senior producer for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and a newspaper journalist in Rapid City and Mitchell.

Legislator resigns and agrees to repay nearly \$500,000, plus interest, in pandemic relief funds

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - AUGUST 17, 2023 1:12 PM

State Sen. Jessica Castleberry, R-Rapid City, will make \$2,400 monthly payments over a span of 20 to 30 years to repay state government, with interest, for pandemic relief money she accepted in alleged violation of state law.

Attorney General Marty Jackley announced details of the agreement Thursday at a press conference in Pierre. At about the same time, Castleberry announced her resignation from the Legislature in an email to the media.

"I was humbled to be appointed and honored to be elected. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the people of the state of South Dakota," Castleberry's release said.

Gov. Kristi Noem, who appointed Castleberry to the Legislature to fill a previous vacancy, publicly exposed the situation last month. Noem said Castleberry's business, Little Nest Preschool, received about \$603,000 in federal pandemic relief funds passed through the state.

Noem and Jackley have said Castleberry violated a state law that prohibits legislators from having a direct or indirect interest in any contract with the state during their terms in office and for one year after.

"Our state constitution prohibits a state legislator from receiving funds he or she is responsible for overseeing," Jackley said Thursday in a news release.

Jackley said \$104,100 of the \$603,229 the business received was shown to have directly benefited families – lowering the cost of day care for parents that qualified. The remaining \$499,129 was used for day care-related expenditures such as food, employee pay and mortgage payments, and it's that amount Castleberry will pay back at "the applicable federal interest rate," according to the terms of the agreement.

Jackley said the applicable rate was 4.03% as of Aug. 16.

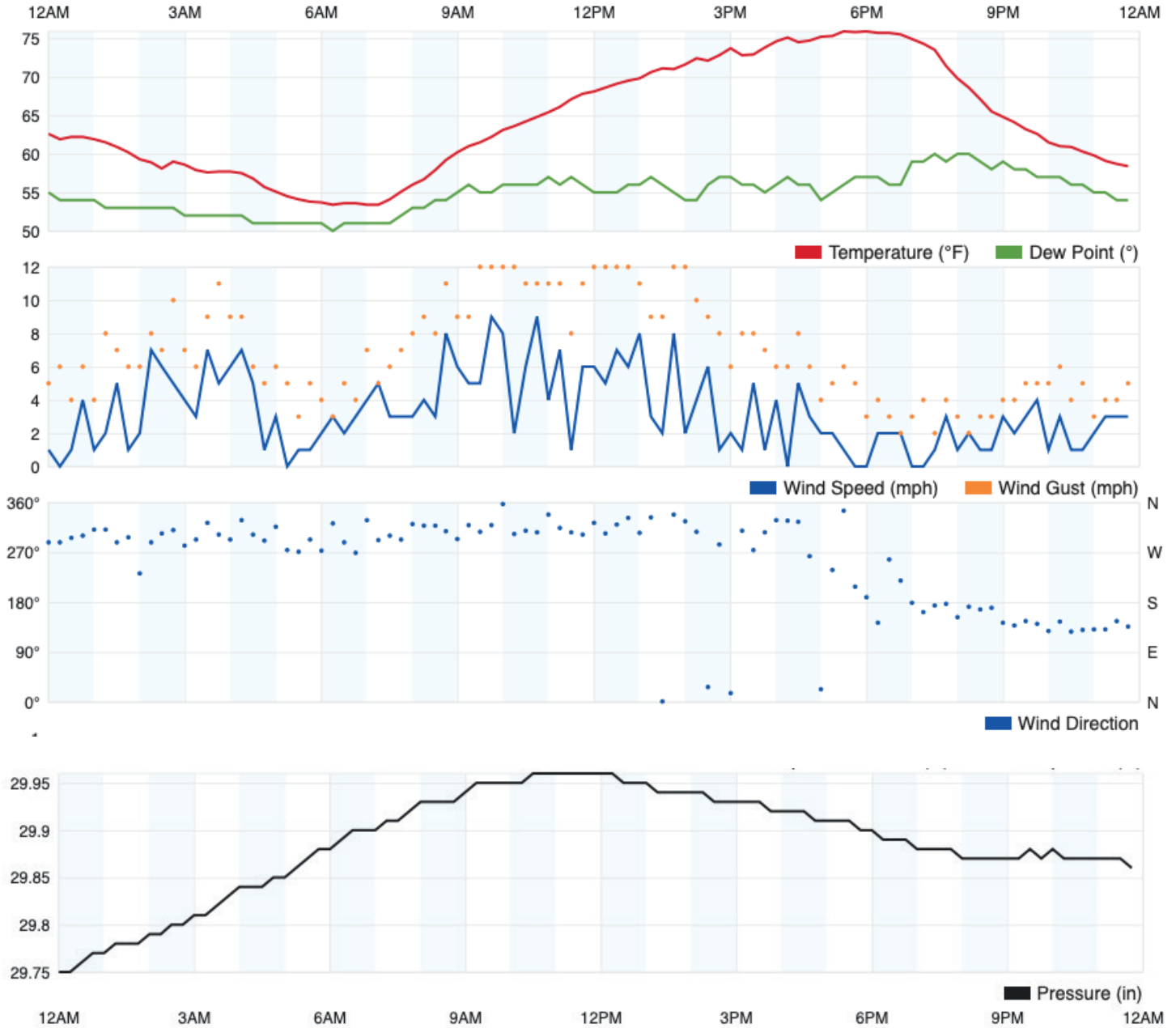
Noem has since issued an executive order related to the matter. It requires state offices under her control to include language in contracts requiring signers to acknowledge they're aware of the law Castleberry allegedly violated.

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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Yesterday's Groton Weather







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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Sunny and Windy	Partly Cloudy and Breezy then Mostly Clear	Hot	Mostly Clear then Partly Cloudy and Breezy	Slight Chance Showers and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny
High: 88 °F	Low: 68 °F	High: 95 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 73 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 87 °F

 **HEAT CONTINUES INTO THE WEEKEND** 

Today	Saturday	Sunday
		
86-105°F	89-98°F	73-82°F
Heat advisory west river		Much cooler



The mercury will rise quite a bit today as southerly winds bring in hot air. This will continue into Saturday. A heat advisory has been issued for counties around and west of the Missouri River. Please take precautions if you are spending time outside and always remember to look before you lock!

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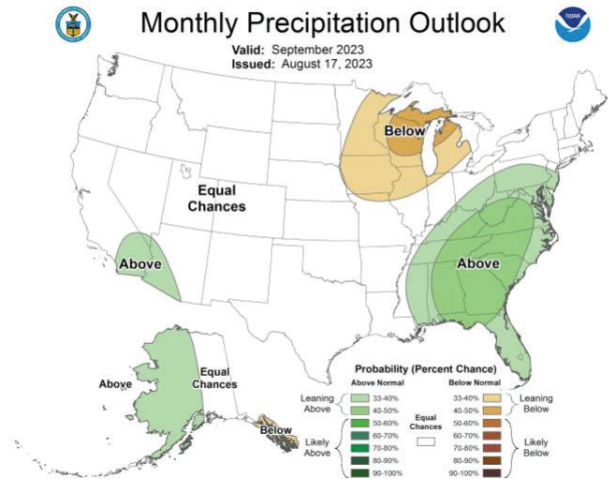
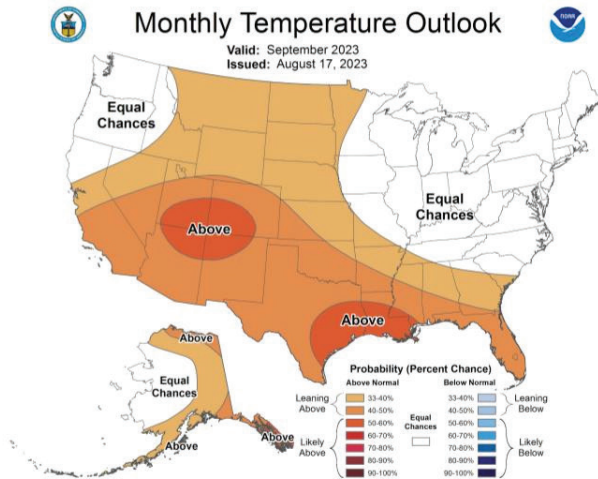
September Outlook

August 17, 2023
4:27 PM

issued August 17th

Main Points

- Forecast probabilities suggest temperatures will favor above normal for September
- For precipitation, probabilities were evenly split between below/normal/above



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 76 °F at 5:31 PM

Low Temp: 53 °F at 7:11 AM

Wind: 15 mph at 1:06 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 14 hours, 01 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 109 in 1959

Record Low: 38 in 2002

Average High: 83

Average Low: 56

Average Precip in Aug.: 1.30

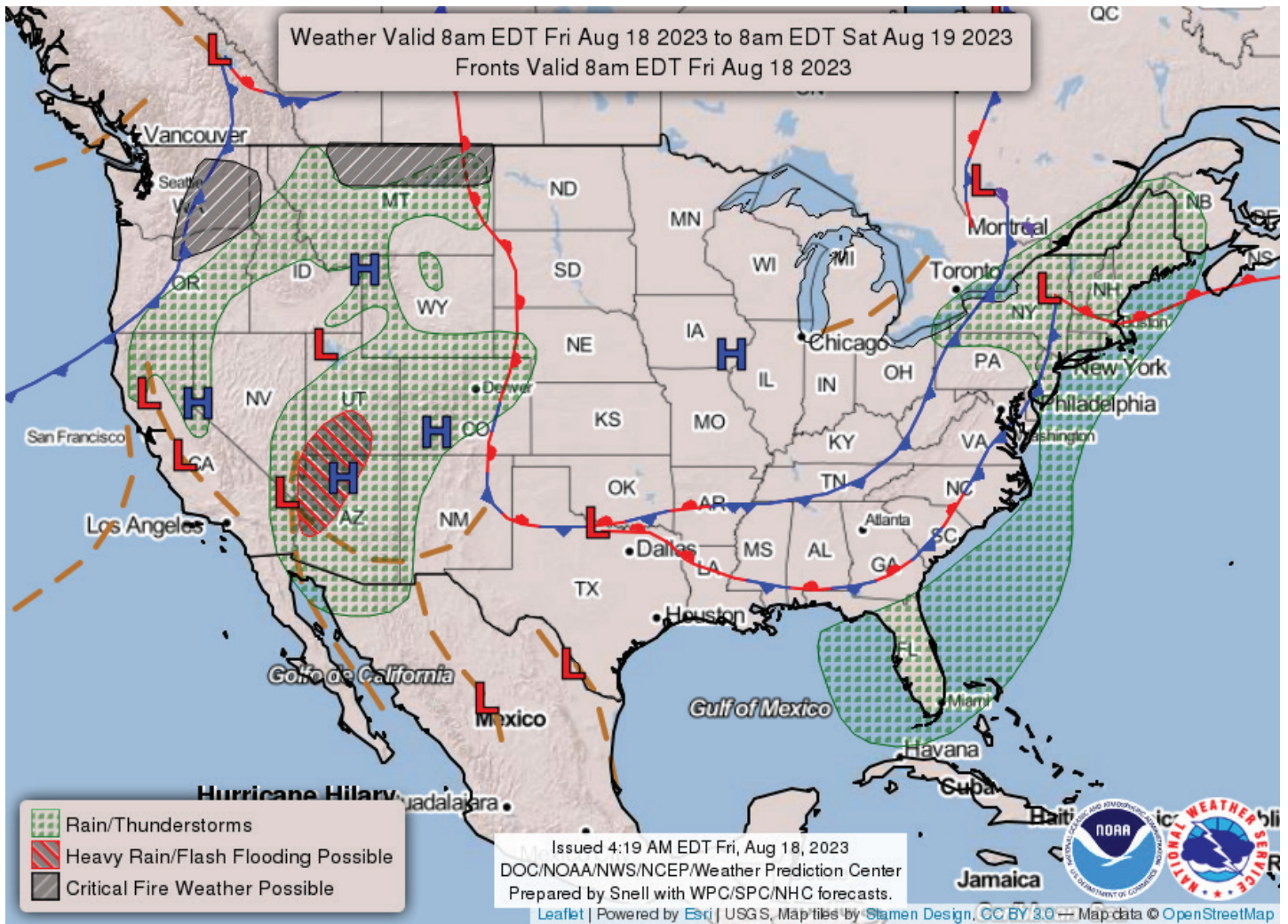
Precip to date in Aug.: 5.92

Average Precip to date: 15.40

Precip Year to Date: 18.59

Sunset Tonight: 8:37:06 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:36:37 AM



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Today in Weather History

August 18, 1936: A tornado moved east, ending southeast of Gettysburg. A farmhouse and four barns were destroyed near Gorman, in Potter County. Property damage was estimated at \$20,000.

August 18, 1938: A tornado destroyed a barn, unroofed a gym, and damaged other buildings near Stephen, in Hyde County. The funnel moved northeast then curved to the northwest. There were two other tornadoes on this day. One moved northeast from near Worlsey and Broadland in Beadle County producing estimated F3 damage. The other was an estimated F2 and also started off in Beadle County and moved northeast into Kingsbury County. This storm injured three people.

August 18, 1983: High winds up to 80 mph caused extensive damage to trees, structures, and cars, in Lyman, Hyde, Faulk, and Brown Counties. In Presho, several homes lost their roofs. Hay bales were scattered, metal siding was ripped from outbuildings, and a ballpark lost three large fence sections. Gusty winds up to 75 mph were recorded at Ordway, in Brown County, causing damage to a mobile home. Two hangers at the Aberdeen airport received extensive damage, with roofs and doors torn off.

August 18, 2009: Numerous thunderstorms developed along a stationary front and trained over the same locations producing very heavy rains along with large hail. Nickel size hail falling for several minutes piled up to 6 to 8 inches deep near Harrold in Hughes County. Massive rains of 2 to nearly 5 inches resulted in the flash flooding of numerous roads. Several of the streets were washed out. Some rainfall amounts included 3.05 inches at Warner, 3.15 inches southwest of Bristol, 4.40 inches in Webster, and 4.50 inches east of Warner.

1925: During the late morning hours a severe hailstorm struck southeastern Iowa destroying crops along a path six to ten miles wide and 75 miles long. The hail also injured and killed poultry and livestock, and caused a total of 2.5 million dollars damage. The hailstorm flattened fields of corn to such an extent that many had to leave their farms in search of other work.

1931: The Yangtze River in China peaks during a horrible flood that kills 3.7 million people directly and indirectly over the next several months. This flood was perhaps the worst natural disaster of the 20th century.

1983 - Hurricane Alicia ravaged southeastern Texas. The hurricane caused more than three billion dollars property damage, making it one of the costliest hurricanes in the history of the U.S. Just thirteen persons were killed, but 1800 others were injured. The hurricane packed winds to 130 mph as it crossed Galveston Island, and spawned twenty-two tornadoes in less than 24 hours as it made landfall. (The Weather Channel) (Storm Data)

1987 - Thirteen cities in the eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Orlando FL with a reading of 98 degrees, and Portland ME with a high of 94 degrees. Newark NJ reached 90 degrees for the thirty-sixth time of the year, their second highest total of record. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Twenty-two cities, from the Carolinas to the Upper Ohio Valley, reported record high temperatures for the date, pushing the total number of daily record highs since the first of June above the 1100 mark. Afternoon highs of 102 degrees at Greensboro NC and 105 degrees at Raleigh NC equalled all-time records. Evening thunderstorms in Montana produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Scobey. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms over the Middle Atlantic Coast Region and the Upper Ohio Valley produced torrential rains in eastern Virginia during the late morning and afternoon hours. Totals ranged up to twelve inches at Yorktown. Williamsburg VA was deluged with 10.78 inches of rain between 6 AM and 10 AM, with 6.72 inches reported in just two hours. Flash flooding caused nearly twelve million dollars damage in Accomack County VA. Early evening thunderstorms in the Central High Plains Region produced walnut size hail and wind gusts to 80 mph around Casper WY. Thunderstorms produced locally heavy rains in the Yellowstone Park area, causing fifteen mudslides. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?

A man was found dead next to a dumpster. As they looked in his pockets for his identification, they discovered several checks. When totaled, they were worth more than a thousand dollars. But, they did him no good. He never cashed them to receive their value.

As we read God's Word, we find promise after promise - all having value to the believer when "cashed in." But as with the checks of the dead man, they must be "turned into cash" to have any value. We must go to God and claim His promises to meet our needs.

James said that God "does not resent your asking. But when you ask Him, be sure you really expect Him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea."

There are times when it is easier to believe in God than it is to believe in the fact that he deeply cares for each of us and our every need. Surely, if He is bound by His Word - and He is - we can go to Him "in faith believing." We must always remember that nothing is so small that it escapes His concern, or that any problem is so large that He cannot solve it.

We limit God by the limitations we place on Him. The problems we have with our faith are our problems - not God's. "Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you," said Jesus.

Prayer: Give us a faith, Father, that is larger than our problems and a trust that matches Your power. Help us to grow in Your faith and not remain in our doubts. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. James 1:1-8



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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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

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

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

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Groton, SD 57445-0034

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- 1 Month \$15.98
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- 9 Months..... \$42.60
- 12 Months..... \$53.25

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.15.23

18 39 42 57 63 7

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000,000

NEXT 17 Hrs 6 Mins 10
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.16.23

14 18 31 37 43 2

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$8,200,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 21
DRAW: Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.17.23

5 14 17 24 34 7

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 36 Mins 11
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.16.23

3 5 19 24 26

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 36
DRAW: Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.16.23

15 22 44 49 63 26

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 5
DRAW: Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.16.23

9 11 17 19 55 1

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$264,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 5
DRAW: Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL=

Avon 42, Colome 12

Dupree 26, Faith 14

Elkton-Lake Benton 56, Colman-Egan 16

Harding County/Bison Co-op 58, New Underwood 6

Sioux Valley 42, Menno 0

Sisseton 40, Dakota Hills 0

Wall 56, Bennett County 6

White River 36, Kadoka Area 18

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Editorial Roundup: South Dakota

By The Associated Press undefined

Yankton Press & Dakotan. August 14, 2023.

Editorial: Inmate Labor Policy Change Has Impact

A familiar scene the past several years is the sight of state prison inmates from the Yankton Community Work Center working with nonprofit groups on local projects.

The image had practically become a staple of local public work. They could be seen performing cleanup duties — including offering assistance in river cleanup events — as well as clearing snow from public properties, helping out in the kitchen at The Center and doing custodial services at Ability Building Services (ABS). There are many other examples, and local nonprofits greatly valued the assistance provided by these inmates, who were paid a nominal wage for their services. And some of the inmates reportedly enjoyed the work, which likely had a positive psychological impact.

But all this is changing — apparently, with a degree of abruptness.

The South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) told the Press & Dakotan last week that the Inmate Work Program has been modified, permitting the inmates to work only on spot duties, such as cleanup after a storm, as opposed to longer-term duties.

However, local nonprofits that the Press & Dakotan contacted last week all said the program was modified on very short notice and with no solid announcement of the change.

This has left many of these groups in a difficult spot.

"We've had three or four (inmates), five days a week, 52 weeks a year," said Pat Kellar, ABS director of Day Services and Human Resources. "We found out in June that it would end July 1. It was quite an impact on us."

He said the decision apparently came from new DOC Secretary Kellie Wasko. "She had been involved in a lawsuit in another state and previous employment, where the state was sued for forcing inmate labor," he said. "It's really allowed for in (South Dakota) law, as long as it's not mandatory, and it's (limited to) community service organizations," Kellar noted.

The stories told to us by the local nonprofits were all the same: There was relatively little notice and now they have to make do for what were minor but indispensable services, which also helped the nonprofits stretch their limited budgets.

"We've just had to absorb that and make room for that cost like anyplace else," Kellar said. "It's money that we would have been spending on other direct-care staff or supplies or to provide services.

"We get our revenues from taxpayers. Now, we're going to be taking those monies and buying the ser-

VICES that we had inmates doing before.”

It’s a complicated change.

While some may argue that the inmates should be paid at the same rate as general public employees, it should be noted that inmates require special circumstances for their work. They must be trained and constantly monitored, and transporting them to and from work is also an issue. (The P&D story noted that local nonprofits were told that only men could transfer the prisoners to and from the Community Work Center, while a state spokesman told the P&D that was not the case. That is a point that needs clarity if this program is to continue.)

The program change represents a major adjustment for those entities that have depended on it.

And perhaps the change is warranted.

But the apparent abruptness in this program change and the differences between what the state is saying and what the local groups are saying is a major concern, and it needs to be addressed if the program is to still be utilized in the future. The nonprofits, who operate with tight budgets, need to know what’s happening in order to function and to make the inmate program work to its fullest level.

END

South Dakota state senator resigns and agrees to repay \$500,000 in pandemic aid

By SUMMER BALLENTINE Associated Press

A South Dakota state lawmaker stepped down Thursday after agreeing to repay \$500,000 in federal COVID-19 relief she received for her day care business in violation of the state constitution.

Republican Sen. Jessica Castleberry, of Rapid City, announced her resignation the same day she signed a settlement with the attorney general’s office in which she promised to return the money.

“Today I formally resign from my position in the South Dakota Senate,” Castleberry said in a Thursday statement. “I was humbled to be appointed and honored to be elected.”

A 2020 South Dakota Supreme Court advisory warned state lawmakers that it is unconstitutional for them to accept federal pandemic funding.

Attorney General Marty Jackley began investigating Castleberry upon the urging of fellow Republican Gov. Kristi Noem. A state Social Services Department staffer had recognized Castleberry’s name on a recent \$4,000 grant request, which was denied.

A review by the agency turned up more than a dozen other payments to a business belonging to Castleberry, Little Nest Preschool.

In total, Jackley’s office found Castleberry received about \$600,000 for her Rapid City day care centers. About \$100,000 was passed on to low-income families who used the day care centers, and the settlement does not require her to repay that money.

Castleberry has said she believed her company was eligible for funding after speaking with a lawyer.

She previously said she “communicated directly and transparently” with Social Services staff regarding her grant applications.

Jackley said Thursday that his investigation “did not reveal any abuse” in Castleberry’s spending of the funds, which he said were used for government-approved expenses.

“I am glad speculation from other state departments and the executive branch regarding my ethics and intentions can be laid to rest,” Castleberry said.

The settlement allows Castleberry to continue her work in child care. She can reapply for government funding after a yearslong cooling-off period.

US, Japan and South Korea agree on new security pledge ahead of Camp David summit

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States, Japan and South Korea are set to sign on to a new security pledge, committing the three countries to consult with each other in the event of a security crisis or threat in the Pacific, according to Biden administration officials.

Details about the new “duty to consult” commitment emerged as President Joe Biden prepared Friday to welcome South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida for a summit at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland.

The move is one of several joint efforts that the leaders are expected to announce at the daylong summit, as the three countries look to tighten security and economic ties amid increasing concerns about North Korea’s persistent nuclear threats and Chinese provocations in the Pacific.

Kishida, before departing Tokyo on Thursday, told reporters the summit would be a “historic occasion to bolster trilateral strategic cooperation” with Seoul and Washington.

“I believe it is extremely meaningful to hold a Japan-U.S.-South Korea summit where leaders of the three countries gather just as the security environment surrounding Japan is increasingly severe,” he said.

The “duty to consult” pledge is intended to acknowledge that the three countries share “fundamentally interlinked security environments” and that a threat to one of the nations is “a threat to all,” according to a senior Biden administration official. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to preview the coming announcement.

Under the pledge, the three countries agree to consult, share information and align their messaging with each other in the face of a threat or crisis, the official said. The commitment does not infringe on each country’s right to defend itself under international law, nor does it alter existing bilateral treaty commitments between the U.S. and Japan and the U.S. and South Korea, the official added. The United States has more than 80,000 troops based between the two countries.

The summit is the first Biden has held during his presidency at the storied Camp David.

The retreat 65 miles (104.6 kilometers) from the White House was where President Jimmy Carter brought together Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in September 1978 for talks that established a framework for a historic peace treaty between Israel and Egypt in March 1979. In the midst of World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met at the retreat — then known as Shangri-La — to plan the Italian campaign that would knock Benito Mussolini out of the war.

Biden’s focus for the gathering is to nudge the United States’ two closest Asian allies to further tighten security and economic cooperation with each other. The historic rivals have been divided by differing views of World War II history and Japan’s colonial rule over the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945.

But under Kishida and Yoon, the two countries have begun a rapprochement as the two conservative leaders grapple with shared security challenges posed by North Korea and China. Both leaders have been unnerved by the stepped-up cadence of North Korea’s ballistic missile tests and Chinese military exercises near Taiwan, the self-ruled island that is claimed by Beijing as part of its territory, and other aggressive action.

Yoon proposed an initiative in March to resolve disputes stemming from compensation for wartime Korean forced laborers. He announced that South Korea would use its own funds to compensate Koreans enslaved by Japanese companies before the end of World War II.

Yoon also traveled to Tokyo that month for talks with Kishida, the first such visit by a South Korean president in more than 12 years. Kishida reciprocated with a visit to Seoul in May and expressed sympathy for the suffering of Korean forced laborers during Japan’s colonial rule,

The leaders are also expected to detail in their summit communique plans to invest in technology for a three-way crisis hotline and offer an update on progress the countries have made on sharing early-warning data on missile launches by North Korea.

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Other announcements expected to come out of the summit include plans to expand military cooperation on ballistic defenses and make the summit an annual event.

The White House has billed the gathering of the three leaders at the rustic retreat in the Catoctin Mountains as a historic moment in the relationship and an opportunity for South Korea and Japan to move beyond decades of antagonism.

The leaders are also likely to discuss the long-running territorial conflicts in the disputed South China Sea involving China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei.

Earlier this month, the Philippine government summoned China's ambassador and presented a strongly worded diplomatic protest over the Chinese coast guard's use of water cannons in a confrontation with Philippine vessels in the South China Sea.

The tense hours-long standoff occurred near Second Thomas Shoal, which has been occupied for decades by Philippine forces stationed onboard a rusting, grounded navy ship. But it is also claimed by China.

Ambassador Rahm Emanuel, Biden's envoy to Japan, said the administration is in part looking to counter what he calls Beijing's bullying tactics and its confidence that Washington can't get its two most important Pacific allies — Japan and South Korea — to get along.

"Our message is we're a permanent Pacific power and presence and you can bet long on America," Emanuel said at a Brookings Institution event focused on the summit. "China's message: 'We're the rising power, they're declining. Either get in line or you're gonna get the Philippine treatment.'"

Associated Press writer Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed reporting.

Wildfire nears capital of Canada's Northwest Territories as fleeing residents fill roads and flights

YELLOWKNIFE, Northwest Territories (AP) — Residents in the capital of Canada's Northwest Territories rushed to beat a noon Friday deadline to evacuate their homes as one of hundreds of wildfires raging in the territories moved closer to the city of 20,000.

Thousands have fled, driving hundreds of kilometers (miles) to safety or waiting in long lines for emergency flights, as the worst fire season on record in Canada showed no signs of easing.

The fire was within 16 kilometers (10 miles) of Yellowknife's northern edge Thursday, and officials worried that strong northern winds could push the flames toward the only highway leading away from the fire, which was choked with long caravans of cars.

Still, there remained plenty of time to leave by road or air, Shane Thompson, a government minister for the Territories, told a news conference. He said that without rain the fire might reach the city's outskirts by the weekend.

"We're all tired of the word unprecedented, yet there is no other way to describe this situation in the Northwest Territories," Premier Caroline Cochrane posted on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Canada has seen a record number of wildfires this year — contributing to choking smoke in parts of the U.S. — with more than 5,700 fires burning more than 137,000 square kilometers (53,000 square miles) from one end of Canada to the other, according to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre.

As of Thursday evening, more than 1,000 wildfires were burning across the country, over half of them out of control. Hundreds of kilometers (miles) to the south of Yellowknife, hundreds of properties were ordered to evacuate because of the threat from a wildfire near West Kelowna, British Columbia.

The evacuation of Yellowknife was by far the largest this year, said Ken McMullen, president of the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs and fire chief in Red Deer, Alberta.

"It's one of those events where you need to get people out sooner rather than later" because fire could block the only escape route before ever reaching the community.

Ten planes left Yellowknife with 1,500 passengers on Thursday, said Jennifer Young, director of corporate affairs for the Northwest Territories' Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, adding that the agency hopes 22 flights will leave Friday with 1,800 more passengers.

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Yellowknife Mayor Rebecca Alty said that the fire wasn't the only concern.

"With the heavy smoke that will be approaching we encourage all residents to evacuate as soon as possible," she said.

Alty said some good news is the fire didn't advance as far as originally expected Thursday with crews working hard getting firebreaks in. But "it is still coming," she said.

As people fled, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau met with his incident response group. He asked ministers to work to ensure communication services remained available and said there would be no tolerance for price gouging on flights or essential goods.

At the Big River Service Station about 300 kilometers (185 miles) south of Yellowknife, the line of vehicles waiting for fuel was "phenomenal," employee Linda Croft said. "You can't see the end of it."

Resident Angela Canning packed up her camper with important documents, family keepsakes and basic necessities as she prepared to leave with her two dogs, while her husband stayed behind as an essential worker.

"I'm really anxious and I'm scared. I'm emotional. ... I'm in shock," she said. "I don't know what I'm coming home to or if I'm coming home. There's just so much unknowns here."

About 6,800 people in eight other communities in the territory have already been forced to evacuate their homes, including the small community of Enterprise, which was largely destroyed. Officials said everyone made it out alive.

A woman whose family evacuated the town of Hay River on Sunday told CBC that their vehicle began to melt as they drove through embers, the front window cracked and the vehicle filled with smoke that made it difficult to see the road ahead.

"I was obviously scared the tire was going to break, our car was going to catch on fire and then it went from just embers to full smoke," said Lisa Mundy, who was traveling with her husband and their 6-year-old and 18-month-old children. She said they called 911 after they drove into the ditch a couple of times.

She said her son kept saying: "I don't want to die, mommy."

Authorities said the intensive care unit at a Yellowknife hospital would close Friday and in-patient units from Stanton Territorial Hospital could be moved in the coming days. Most long-term care patients were transferred to institutions to the south, the Health and Social Services Authority said on its website.

The evacuation order issued Wednesday night applies to Yellowknife and the neighboring First Nations communities of Ndilo and Dettah.

Indigenous communities have been hit hard by the wildfires, which threaten important cultural activities such as hunting, fishing and gathering native plants.

Amy Cardinal Christianson, an Indigenous fire specialist with Parks Canada, has said the wildfires "are so dangerous and so fast moving" that evacuations increasingly are necessary, posing a challenge in remote communities where there might be one road in, or no roads at all.

Alice Liske left Yellowknife by road with her six kids earlier this week because the air quality was so bad. She worried about how so many people would flee the city in such a short time.

"Not only that," she said, "but when we go back, what will be there for us?"

After Israeli raids, Palestinian police struggle in militant hotbed, reflecting region on the brink

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

JENIN, West Bank (AP) — Last month, after the biggest Israeli military raid on a Palestinian refugee camp in the occupied West Bank in years, Palestinians turned their wrath on their own security forces.

They unleashed gunfire, firebombs and pipe bombs at Palestinian security buildings in an outpouring of rage against the Palestinian Authority's failure to protect them from the devastating July 3 raid and a long-running, deeply unpopular security alliance with Israel.

"The horrible events of that night reminded us of the lead-up to the Hamas coup in Gaza," the head of

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police in Jenin, Brig. Gen. Azzam Jebara, said at a ceremony this week for officers who defended a police station from rampaging protesters. "It was a warning."

Scarred by the Hamas militant group's violent takeover of Gaza from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' forces in 2007, the Palestinian Authority has cooperated with Israel to suppress Islamist militant groups and keep the secular nationalist Fatah party in power in the West Bank. Hamas is both a major threat to Israel and the biggest rival to Fatah.

The July unrest exposed Palestinians' seething resentment toward their semi-autonomous government and forced a reckoning for their beaten-down security forces, who in their blue camouflage uniforms have come to embody the tensions tearing at Palestinian society. Widely derided for working with Israel, the forces remain a symbol of Palestinian hopes for statehood.

Seeking to regain trust during a lull in Israeli military raids, Palestinian police have stepped up a campaign to restore order in the city of Jenin, long a bastion of crime adjacent to the militarized refugee camp.

But the force's efforts to seize cars, cash and drugs have also revealed their limits. Unable to protect their people from radical Jewish settler attacks and near-daily Israeli military raids across the West Bank, Palestinian security forces described a law enforcement system on the brink of collapse.

"If we think we're establishing control now, we're fooling ourselves," said Ibrahim Abahre, deputy head of Preventive Security, a domestic intelligence agency, in Jenin. "At any moment, the Israeli army could enter and everything could explode."

Since the spring of last year, militants from the Jenin refugee camp, where Palestinian forces have lost control, have carried out dozens of shooting attacks in the West Bank and Israel. Israeli soldiers have repeatedly raided the camp to kill and capture suspected militants.

On July 3, Israeli special forces entered the camp under the cover of drone strikes, killing 12 Palestinians, at least eight of them militants, wounding dozens and leaving a trail of destruction. An Israeli soldier was also killed in the operation, which recalled one of the biggest battles of the second Palestinian uprising over 20 years ago.

Nearly 180 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire across the West Bank in 2023, almost half of them affiliated with militant groups, according to a tally by The Associated Press. It's the territory's highest death toll in nearly two decades. Palestinian attacks on Israelis have killed 27 people this year.

Israel says its incursions are counterterrorism efforts prompted by the reluctance of Palestinian security forces to intervene against militants.

"There is a line to how many Israelis can be killed while the Palestinians work out their internal struggles," said an Israeli military official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters. "At some point, we just have to go in."

Palestinians accuse Israel of trying to undermine their security efforts.

"They want to embarrass us," said acting Jenin governor Kamal Abu al-Rub. The Israeli raids, Palestinian officials say, have inflamed tensions, stoked anger toward the Palestinian Authority and inspired more militancy.

"We understand the Palestinian Authority has lost power," said Maj. Gen. Akram Rajoub, a longtime security commander and former Jenin governor. "But we are trying to control the chaos that erupts when Israel invades. Chaos is what undermines respect for the authority."

In the camp, independent fighters drawn from a new generation of frustrated Palestinians have emerged from factions like Fatah, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Militants say they've seen the Palestinian Authority, which promised them statehood, morph into a subcontractor for the Israeli occupation that can barely pay salaries or provide municipal services.

"Abbas can have his politics. My specialty is resistance," said 32-year-old Abu Suleiman, who served as a major in the security forces before being suspended for his militant activity.

"Everything the Palestinian Authority does is in Israel's interest," he added from his living room, its shattered windows taped shut, walls pockmarked from July's raid. He gave only his nom de guerre because he is wanted by the Israeli military.

At the funeral last month for those killed in the raid, jostling crowds shouted insults at senior officials

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from the ruling Fatah party and chased them out of the camp. "Collaborators!" they chanted — a reference to Palestinian intelligence coordination with Israel.

"It was a natural, collective response to say, 'wake up. Your job is to defend and protect us here, and you have failed,'" said 51-year-old Nidal Nagnagheyeh, the head of a committee running social support programs in the camp.

A week after the raid, 87-year-old Abbas visited the camp for the first time in over a decade to display solidarity. Palestinian security forces began to rebuild their presence in Jenin — a bid to show they can impose order without Israeli interference. Israel's army scaled back its operations in the camp to allow for that, the Israeli military official said.

Palestinian authorities have deployed 1,000 new security officers from Abbas' presidential guard across the city of Jenin. They have set up checkpoints to catch criminals who long have taken refuge in the city. Militants are lying low, officials say, rather than shooting in the air and showing off their M-16s in the streets.

In the weeks since, police say they've seized scores of stolen cars from the streets, confiscated hundreds of narcotic pills and arrested 364 criminals, including over a dozen wanted in cold murder cases. Authorities are preparing to inaugurate a local prison.

Vendors without permits have been expelled from Jenin's outdoor market and sent outside the city center.

But the law-and-order campaign does not extend to the territory's greatest source of instability — the Jenin refugee camp. Police say they won't disarm gunmen wanted by Israel or make arrests in the camp, underscoring the complexity of the security situation.

But even the stepped-up police tactics have rankled gunmen, who drive stolen cars to commit shooting attacks, carry smuggled weapons and own unlicensed vegetable stands. Last month the mayor, who helped devise the Jenin market makeover, narrowly escaped when peddlers angry about losing their income opened fire on his car.

"At night we face the Israeli army and during the day the Palestinian Authority is now after us," Abu Suleiman said, adding that he had been stopped this week by plainclothes Palestinian police and almost opened fire, mistaking the men for undercover Israeli soldiers. "At some point, hell will break loose."

Jebara, the police chief, said authorities' failure to dismantle militant groups is tantamount to the failure of the Palestinian national project, which officers like him had hoped they were building.

"I joined the police force 21 years ago because I wanted to be accountable to my people, to impose sovereignty on our own land," he said. "Now Israeli settlements have killed our state. Where does that leave us?"

The Dutch defense minister says the US has approved the delivery of F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine

By MIKE CORDER and JIM HEINTZ Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The United States has given its approval for the Netherlands to deliver F-16s to Ukraine, the Dutch defense minister said Friday, in a major gain for Kyiv even though the fighter jets won't have an immediate impact on the almost 18-month war

"I welcome the US decision to clear the way for delivery of F-16 jets to Ukraine. It allows us to follow through on the training of Ukrainian pilots," Dutch Defense Minister Kajsa Ollongren said in a message on X, formerly known as Twitter. "We remain in close contact with European partners to decide on the next steps."

Ukraine has long pleaded for the sophisticated fighter to give it a combat edge. It recently launched a long-anticipated counteroffensive against the Kremlin's forces without air cover, placing its troops at the mercy of Russian aviation and artillery.

Apart from delivering the warplanes, Ukraine's allies also need to train its pilots. Washington says the F-16s, like the advanced U.S. Abrams tanks, will be crucial in the long term as Kyiv faces down Russia.

The Netherlands is part of a Western coalition that also includes Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden and the United Kingdom that in July pledged to train

Ukrainian pilots to fly F-16s.

Washington must give its blessing because the planes are made in the United States.

Dutch Foreign Minister Wopke Hoekstra said in a message on X that U.S. clearance to send F-16s to Ukraine "marks a major milestone" in Ukraine's defense.

It was not immediately clear when the first F-16s could be delivered to Ukraine.

As well as the Netherlands, Denmark said in June that training Ukrainian pilots had started and the country was considering delivering jets to Kyiv, but that pilots would need six to eight months of training before a possible donation of aircraft can become a reality.

In a statement to Danish media, Defense Minister Jakob Ellemann-Jensen said that the government has several times said that a donation was "a natural step after the training."

Meanwhile, Russian air defenses stopped drone attacks on central Moscow and on the country's ships in the Black Sea, officials said Friday, blaming the attempted strikes on Ukraine.

Defense systems shot down a Ukrainian drone over central Moscow early Friday and some fragments fell on an exhibition center, the Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement.

It said the drone was shot down about 4 a.m. (0100 GMT) and there were no injuries or fire caused by the fragments.

However, flights were briefly suspended at all four major Moscow airports.

Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said some of the fragments fell on the grounds of the Expocentre, an exhibition complex adjacent to the Moscow City commercial and office complex that was hit twice by drones in the past month.

The area is about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) west of the Kremlin. The defense ministry called the latest incident "another terrorist attack by the Kyiv regime."

Naval forces also destroyed a Ukrainian sea drone that attempted an attack on Russian ships late Thursday in the Black Sea, about 240 kilometers (150 miles) southwest of Sevastopol, the ministry said

The drone was taken out by fire from a patrol boat and a corvette, it said.

It was not possible to verify the claims.

Taekwondo athletes appear to be North Korea's first delegation to travel since border closed in 2020

BEIJING (AP) — North Korean taekwondo athletes and officials were traveling through Beijing on Friday morning, apparently the country's first delegation to travel abroad since the nation closed its borders in early 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The group of around 80 men and women wearing white track suits with "Taekwondo-Do" printed on the back and the North Korean flag on the front were in the departure hall of Beijing's international airport checking in and walking to customs. They reportedly arrived Wednesday or Thursday.

The group was expected to take an Air Astana flight to Kazakhstan to compete at the International Taekwon-do Federation World Championships, according to Japanese and South Korean media. The competition is being held in Astana through Aug. 30.

North Korea has extremely limited air connections at the best of times and travel all but ended when Pyongyang closed the national borders to prevent the spread of COVID-19. How badly North Koreans were affected by the illness is unknown, since most of the country's 26 million people have no access to vaccines, lack basic health care and are restricted from sharing information with the outside world.

In September 2022, North Korea resumed freight train service with China, its biggest trading partner and economic pipeline.

On Thursday, South Korea's spy agency told lawmakers that North Korea is preparing to further reopen its border gradually as part of its efforts to revitalize its struggling economy.

South Korea's National Intelligence Service told lawmakers in a closed-door briefing that North Korea's economy shrank each year in 2020-2022 and its gross domestic product last year was 12% less than in 2016, according to Yoo Sang-bum, one of the lawmakers who attended the briefing.

The apparent resumption of travel came as the U.N. rights chief, Volker Türk, told the first open meeting of the U.N. Security Council since 2017 on North Korean human rights that the country was increasing its repression and people were becoming more desperate, with some reported to be starving as the economic situation worsens.

Türk said North Korea's restrictions are even more extensive, with guards authorized to shoot any unauthorized person approaching the border and with almost all foreigners, including U.N. staff, still barred from the country.

Hilary rapidly grows to Category 4 hurricane off Mexico and could bring heavy rain to US Southwest

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Hurricane Hilary grew rapidly to Category 4 strength off Mexico's Pacific coast and could bring heavy rain to the southwestern U.S. by the weekend.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Hilary had sustained winds near 140 mph (220 kph) at midnight and was expected to continue its rapid intensification through Friday morning. It should start to weaken Saturday.

Tropical storm conditions could begin affecting the Baja California peninsula late Friday. Hilary's projected path threatened landfall in the middle of the peninsula by Sunday, or it may stay just offshore while heading for Southern California.

Hilary was centered about 425 miles (685 kilometers) south of Los Cabos on the southern tip of the Baja peninsula. It was moving west-northwest at 14 mph (22 kph), but was expected to turn gradually north through Saturday.

The hurricane center posted a hurricane watch and tropical storm warning for parts of Baja California Sur state, meaning tropical storm conditions were expected within 36 hours and hurricane conditions within 48 hours. A tropical storm watch was issued for parts of Baja California state.

The hurricane center said that as Hilary moves onto or brushes the Baja peninsula, it could possibly survive briefly as a tropical storm or tropical depression and cross the U.S. border.

No tropical storm has made landfall in Southern California since Sept. 25, 1939, according to the National Weather Service.

"Rainfall impacts from Hilary within the Southwestern United States are expected to peak this weekend into Monday," the hurricane center said. "Flash, urban, and arroyo flooding is possible with the potential for significant impacts."

The area potentially affected by heavy rainfall could stretch from Bakersfield, California, to Yuma, Arizona, as well as some parts of southern Nevada.

SpaceX delayed the launch of a satellite-carrying rocket from a base on California's central coast until at least Monday. The company said conditions in the Pacific could make it difficult for a ship to recover the rocket booster.

In Southern California, an outlook for excessive rainfall stretched from Sunday to Tuesday, according to the Los Angeles weather office.

While the odds are against Hilary making landfall in California as a tropical storm, there is a high chance of major rain and flooding, UCLA climate scientist Daniel Swain said in an online briefing Wednesday.

The Mexican government said a weakened Hilary might hit the coast Sunday night between the cities of Playas de Rosarito and Ensenada, in Baja California state.

Meanwhile, the city of Yuma was preparing Thursday by providing residents with a self-serve sandbag filling station.

The sandbag station will be stocked with sand and empty bags for self-filling while supplies last. Residents were allowed five sandbags per vehicle.

Hilary grows into major hurricane in Pacific off Mexico and could bring heavy rain to US Southwest

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Hurricane Hilary strengthened into a major storm Thursday evening off Mexico's Pacific coast, and it could bring heavy rain to the southwestern U.S. by the weekend.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Hilary's maximum sustained winds had risen to 120 mph (195 kph), making it a Category 3 hurricane.

The storm was expected to grow into a Category 4 hurricane Friday while on a projected path that threatened landfall on the central Baja California peninsula by Sunday or possibly keep just offshore while heading for Southern California.

Hilary was centered about 445 miles (715 kilometers) south of Los Cabos on the southern tip of the Baja peninsula. It was moving west-northwest at 14 mph (22 kph), but was expected to take a more northward heading in the coming days.

The hurricane center said that as Hilary moves onto or brushes the Baja peninsula, it could possibly survive briefly as a tropical storm or tropical depression and cross the U.S. border.

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China's Xi calls for measures to mitigate disastrous flooding amid economic slowdown

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese leader Xi Jinping has called for measures to mitigate the effects of this year's disastrous flooding which has left scores dead and inflicted massive damage on crops, homes and infrastructure, including in and around Beijing.

At least 90 rivers have risen above warning levels and 24 have already overflowed their banks, according to state media, threatening a vast area in northeastern China with flooding, including the Songliao Basin north of the capital, which encompasses more than 1.2 million square kilometers (482,200 square miles) with a population of almost 100 million.

"As China is still in the main flood season, rainstorms, floods, typhoons and other disasters still occur frequently in many places across the country," the Xinhua News Agency said, summarizing conclusions of Thursday's meeting of the party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee presided over by Xi.

Participants "urged relevant localities and departments to always prioritize the safety of people's lives

and property, and keep doing a good job in flood prevention and disaster relief," Xinhua said.

The reinforcement of dams and the efficient use of disaster relief funds to "repair damaged infrastructure such as transport, communications and electricity, and restore farmland and agricultural facilities" is crucial, it said.

Schools, hospitals and nursing homes must be swiftly restored, along with damaged housing "to ensure the affected residents can return home or move to new homes before the winter."

The flooding this year has also affected large parts of the central and eastern parts of the country, both in the semi-tropical south and the northern plains.

Much of China is having a particularly damp summer, with 142 people killed by flooding in July and dozens more this month.

Meteorologists warned that thunderstorms, gales and hail will affect parts of Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Jilin, Hebei, Beijing, and Tianjin in the north, along with Henan, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, and Fujian to the center and southeast.

Residents have been urged to reduce outdoor activities and seek shelter.

The severe weather comes as economic growth slid to 0.8% in the three months ending in June, down from 2.2% in January-March. That is equivalent to a 3.2% annual rate, which would be among China's weakest in decades.

A survey in June found unemployment among urban workers aged 16 to 24 spiked to a record 21.3%. The statistics bureau said this week it would withhold updates while it refined its measurement.

In a speech recently published by Qiushi, the party's top theoretical journal, Xi called for patience in a as the party tries to reverse the deepening economic slump.

That came hours after data Tuesday showed consumer and factory activity weakened further in July despite official promises to support struggling entrepreneurs. The government skipped giving an update on a politically sensitive spike in unemployment among young people.

Agreement central to a public dispute between Michael Oher and the Tuohys is being questioned

By ADRIAN SAINZ, JONATHAN MATTISE and BEN FINLEY Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — In 2004, when Michael Oher was a coveted college football recruit, the 18-year-old high schooler agreed in court to allow the Memphis couple he lived with to make decisions for him about signing contracts and any medical issues.

Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy had taken in Oher, who had been in the Tennessee foster care system and at one point lived on the streets. The judge-approved agreement, called a conservatorship, was made with the permission of Oher's biological mother and inked about two months before Oher signed to play offensive line for Ole Miss, where Sean Tuohy had been a standout basketball player.

Nineteen years later, Oher has asked for the agreement to end in a probate court filing accusing the Tuohys of enriching themselves at his expense and lying to him by having him sign papers making them his conservators rather than his adoptive parents. Oher, who played eight NFL seasons, claims the Tuohys never took legal action to assume custody before he turned 18, though he was told to call them "Mom" and "Dad."

The demand by Oher, whose life story was turned into the Oscar-nominated film "The Blind Side," has led to scrutiny of the Tuohys and of the agreement itself, with one expert questioning how a judge approved it.

"There are a lot of not just unusual, but shocking and maybe never before seen things, for even attorneys experienced in this area," said Victoria Haneman, a professor of trusts and estates at the Creighton University School of Law.

Now 37, Oher seeks a full accounting of assets, considering his life story produced millions of dollars, though he says he received nothing from the movie. He accuses the Tuohys of falsely representing themselves as his adoptive parents, saying he only discovered in February that the conservatorship provided

"Most often, it's the actors, director and screenwriters who determine the financial success of a project," Shapiro said. Studios do not need to acquire someone's "life rights" to tell a story. But they often do it to prevent lawsuits, she said.

The petition by Oher, who has never been a fan of the movie about his life, asks that the Tuohys be sanctioned and pay damages.

Some have questioned why the Tuohys didn't simply adopt Oher as an adult.

"There's no really clear answer as to what the legal obstacle was for them to complete the adoption," Haneman said. "They did say (Wednesday) that it was a timing issue, but that timing issue would not have prevented them from completing the adoption while he was at Ole Miss."

Emergency services chief on Maui resigns. He faced criticism for not activating sirens during fire

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN, JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER and CHRISTOPHER WEBER Associated Press LAHAINA, Hawaii (AP) — Outdoor alert sirens on Maui stayed silent as a ferocious fire devastated the seaside community of Lahaina last week. The head of the Maui Emergency Management Agency said he had no regrets about not deploying the system as a warning to people on the island.

A day after making that statement, Administrator Herman Andaya resigned Thursday. Andaya had said he feared blaring the sirens during the blaze could have caused people to go "mauka," using a navigational term that can mean toward the mountains or inland in Hawaiian.

"If that was the case, then they would have gone into the fire," Andaya explained.

But the decision not use the sirens, coupled with water shortages that hampered firefighters and an escape route that became clogged with vehicles that were overrun by flames, has brought intense criticism from many residents following the deadliest wildfire in the U.S. in more than a century. At least 111 people were killed.

Mayor Richard Bissen accepted Andaya's resignation effective immediately, the County of Maui announced on Facebook. Andaya cited unspecified health reasons for leaving his post, with no further details provided.

"Given the gravity of the crisis we are facing, my team and I will be placing someone in this key position as quickly as possible and I look forward to making that announcement soon," Bissen said in the statement.

The lack of sirens has emerged as a potential misstep, and The Associated Press reported that it was part of a series of communication issues that added to the chaos. Hawaii has what it touts as the largest system of outdoor alert sirens in the world.

The siren system was created after a 1946 tsunami that killed more than 150 on the Big Island, and its website says they may be used to alert for fires.

Andaya was to take part in a meeting of Maui's fire and public safety commission on Thursday morning, but it was canceled. On Wednesday he vigorously defended his qualifications for the job, which he had held since 2017. He said he was not appointed but had been vetted, took a civil service exam and was interviewed by seasoned emergency managers.

Andaya said he had previously been deputy director of the Maui County Department of Housing and Human Concerns and had been chief of staff for former Maui County Mayor Alan Arakawa for 11 years. During that time, he said, he often reported to "emergency operations centers" and participated in numerous trainings.

"So to say that I'm not qualified I think is incorrect," he said.

Arakawa said he was disappointed by the resignation "because now we're out one person who is really qualified." Arakawa said Andaya was scrutinized for the job by the county's personnel service.

"He was trying to be strong and trying to do the job," Arakawa said about the wildfire response. "He was very, very heartbroken about all the things that happened."

Hawaii Attorney General Anne Lopez said earlier Thursday that an outside organization will conduct "an impartial, independent" review of the government's response and officials intend "to facilitate any neces-

sary corrective action and to advance future emergency preparedness." The investigation will likely take months, she added.

Avery Dagupion, whose family's home was destroyed, is among many residents who say they weren't given earlier warning to get out.

He pointed to an announcement by Bissen on Aug. 8 saying the fire had been contained. That lulled people into a sense of safety and left him distrusting officials, Dagupion said.

At the Wednesday news conference, Gov. Josh Green and Bissen bristled when asked about such criticism. "The people who were trying to put out these fires lived in those homes — 25 of our firefighters lost their homes," Bissen said. "You think they were doing a halfway job?"

Displaced residents are steadily filling hotels that are prepared to house them and provide services until at least next spring.

Authorities hope to empty crowded, uncomfortable group shelters by early next week, said Brad Kierman, vice president for disaster operations with the American Red Cross. Hotels are also available for eligible evacuees who have spent the last eight days sleeping in cars or camping in parking lots, he said.

Contracts with the hotels will last for at least seven months but could easily be extended, he said. Service providers at the properties will offer meals, counseling, financial assistance and other disaster aid.

Green has said at least 1,000 hotel rooms will be set aside. In addition, AirBnB said its nonprofit wing will provide properties for 1,000 people.

The governor has also vowed to protect local landowners from being "victimized" by opportunistic buyers. Green said Wednesday that he instructed the state attorney general to work toward a moratorium on land transactions in Lahaina, even as he acknowledged that would likely face legal challenges.

Since the flames consumed much of Lahaina just over a week ago, locals have feared that a rebuilt town could become even more oriented toward wealthy visitors.

The cause of the wildfires is under investigation. But Hawaii is increasingly at risk from disasters, with wildfire rising fastest, according to an AP analysis of FEMA records.

The search for the missing moved beyond Lahaina to other communities that were destroyed. Searchers had covered about 45% of the burned territory as of Thursday, the governor said.

Corrine Hussey Nobriga, whose home was spared, said it was hard to lay blame for a tragedy that took everyone by surprise, even if some of her neighbors raised questions about the absence of sirens and inadequate evacuation routes. The fire moved quickly through her neighborhood, not far from where crews were sifting through ash and debris looking for human remains.

"One minute we saw the fire over there," she said, pointing toward faraway hills, "and the next minute it's consuming all these houses."

Rosalynn Carter marks 96th birthday at home with the former president, butterflies and ice cream

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Rosalynn Carter will celebrate her 96th birthday at home Friday with her husband, former President Jimmy Carter, and other family members, while the surrounding community of Plains, Georgia, honors the former first lady's years of public health advocacy.

The latest milestone comes as Rosalynn Carter navigates dementia and the former president, now 98, continues to receive hospice care. Yet they remain together in the same small town where they were born, married and that anchored Jimmy Carter's victorious 1976 presidential campaign.

Rosalynn will have a quiet birthday celebration, according to The Carter Center, the human rights organization the pair opened in Atlanta after losing his 1980 reelection bid. She plans to eat cupcakes and peanut butter ice cream, nodding to the couple's experience as Georgia peanut farmers, which became part of their political branding.

She also will release butterflies in the Carters' garden; her love of butterflies traces back to childhood. Extended family and friends also plan for several butterfly releases around Plains, including at the small

public garden next to the home where Eleanor Rosalynn Smith was born on Aug. 18, 1927.

The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers is sponsoring a screening of a new film, "Unconditional," which focuses on the challenges people face as caregivers for sick, aging and disabled loved ones. The event, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. at Plains High School, is open to the public.

Since her husband was Georgia governor in the early 1970s, Rosalynn Carter has called for a more comprehensive American health care system treating mental health as integral to overall health and recognizing the importance of caregivers to the nation's social and economic well-being.

"Her incredible ability is to both look at a problem from the need for policy changes, and to think about the individual who lives next door or down the street and is struggling," said Jennifer Olsen, who leads the Rosalynn Carter Institute.

Olsen noted the former first lady has pushed multiple U.S. administrations to establish an office within the Department of Health and Human Services dedicated exclusively to advocating for caregivers. The office develops specific programs to aid caregivers and analyzes all public policy — from tax provisions to labor rules and regulations — through the vantage point of people caring for loved ones.

Her emphasis on caregiving has gained new attention amid the Carters' declining health. In February, The Carter Center announced the 39th president would forgo further hospital treatment and instead receive only end-of-life care at home. In May, the family also disclosed the former first lady has dementia, though they have not offered details about her condition.

In recent months the couple's four children, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, have been a near-constant presence at the compound. Close friends and some extended family also have visited, as the couple seems to defy their age and conditions, even attending the Plains' Independence Day fireworks display in July.

The circumstances bring a sharper focus to one of Rosalynn's favorite observations, Olsen said.

"There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who will need caregivers," she has said over the years.

Rosalynn Carter is the second-oldest presidential spouse in U.S. history. Bess Truman died at 97 in 1982, the year after the Carters left the White House. Jimmy Carter is the longest-lived president. The longest-married first couple in history, the Carters' marked their 77th wedding anniversary in July.

Taliban official says women lose value if their faces are visible to men in public

By RIAZAT BUTT Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Women lose value if men can see their uncovered faces in public, a spokesman for a key ministry of Afghanistan's Taliban government said Thursday, adding that religious scholars in the country agree that a woman must keep her face covered when outside the home.

The Taliban, who took over the country in August of 2021, have cited the failure of women to observe the proper way to wear the hijab, or Islamic headscarf, as a reason for barring them from most public spaces, including parks, jobs and university.

Molvi Mohammad Sadiq Akif, the spokesman for the Taliban's Ministry of Vice and Virtue, said in an interview Thursday with The Associated Press that if women's faces are visible in public there is a possibility of fitna, or falling into sin.

"It is very bad to see women (without the hijab) in some areas (big cities), and our scholars also agree that women's faces should be hidden," Akif said. "It's not that her face will be harmed or damaged. A woman has her own value and that value decreases by men looking at her. Allah gives respect to females in hijab and there is value in this."

Tim Winter, who is the Shaykh Zayed Lecturer in Islamic Studies at the Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge University, said there was no scriptural mandate in Islam for face coverings and the Taliban would struggle to find anything in Islamic scripture that backed their interpretation of hijab rules.

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"Their name implies they are not senior religious experts," he told AP. "The word Taliban means students." He said the Taliban operate on the basis of textbooks used in village madrassas, religious schools, and that Muslim scholars who have been to Afghanistan during both periods of Taliban rule have been overwhelmed by their level of religious knowledge. "They have just been so isolated from the wider Muslim community."

The Taliban's restrictions on girls and women have caused global outrage, including from some Muslim-majority countries.

On Wednesday, U.N. special envoy Gordon Brown said the International Criminal Court should prosecute Taliban leaders for crimes against humanity for denying education and employment to Afghan girls and women.

Akif, who is the main spokesman for the Vice and Virtue Ministry, did not answer questions about the bans, including whether any of them could be lifted if there were to be universal adherence to hijab rules. He said there were other departments to deal with these issues.

Akif said the ministry faced no obstacles in its work and that people supported its measures.

"People wanted to implement Sharia (Islamic law) here. Now we're carrying out the implementation of Sharia." All the decrees are Islamic rulings and the Taliban have added nothing to them, he said. "The orders of Sharia were issued 1,400 years ago and they are still there."

He said that under the current administration men no longer harass or stare at women like they used to do in the time of the previous government.

The Taliban government also says it has destroyed the "evils" of drinking alcohol and bacha bazi, a practice in which wealthy or powerful men exploit boys for entertainment, especially dancing and sexual activities.

The ministry is in a fortified compound near Darul Aman Palace in the Afghan capital, Kabul. Women are forbidden from entering ministry premises, some of the guards who were on duty Thursday told AP, although there is a female-only security screening hut.

Slogans on concrete barricades praise the purpose of the ministry.

One reads: "The promotion of virtues and the prohibition of vices are an effective means of social order." Another says: "The promotion of virtues and the prohibition of vices save society from catastrophe."

Akif said the ministry relies on a network of officials and informants to check if people are following regulations.

"Our ombudsmen walk in markets, public places, universities, schools, madrassas and mosques," he said. "They visit all these places and watch people. They also speak with them and educate them. We monitor them and people also cooperate with and inform us."

When asked if women can go to parks, one of the spaces they are banned from, he said they would be able to if certain conditions could be met.

"You can go to the park, but only if there are no men there. If there are men, then Sharia does not allow it. We don't say that a woman can't do sports, she can't go to the park or she can't run. She can do all these things, but not in the same way as some women want, to be semi-naked and among men."

Millions of old analog photos are sitting in storage. Digitizing them can unlock countless memories

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Technology Writer

This may seem like a sad story because it begins with a boy with few memories of his father, who died when he was 7 years old. It's why Mitch Goldstone cherishes his only picture with his dad — a snapshot at Disneyland taken during the late 1960s, when the concept of people reflexively reaching for smartphone cameras in their pockets could only happen in Tomorrowland.

But this story, and the personal stories that follow, aren't sad at all. And a half-century later and more, Goldstone has done something with that memory.

He is pursuing a career focused on the joy of rediscovery. He and his longtime partner, Carl Berman,

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run ScanMyPhotos, part of a niche industry that specializes in turning the billions of analog slides, undeveloped negatives and printed pictures taken in the pre-smartphone era into digital treasure chests filled with memories that had been forgotten.

"There's nothing else like it, there are so few businesses doing something that makes people cry when they get the product back," Goldstone says. "Fortunately, they are usually happy tears."

Giving analog photos new digital life can resurface long-buried memories and make them feel fresh. It can bring back the roar of the water in old vacation snapshots, resurrect long-gone relatives in their prime and rekindle the warmth of a childhood pet's unconditional love. It can remind you of the intricacies of family relationships, summon forgotten moments and — perhaps best of all — make them easy to share.

It happened to me. I finally ended several years of procrastination and entrusted professionals to scan thousands of Kodachrome slides that I inherited from my 81-year-old dad when he died in 2019.

I hadn't been able to look at them — not from an emotional standpoint, but because I didn't have the proper equipment to peruse analog slides. Converting them into accessible digital media launched me on a journey back to my own childhood and the pasts of my parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. That, in turn, is giving me a better understanding of how I became me.

It's a phenomenon shared by other people who have taken the steps to preserve analog photos that were painstakingly shot in the decades before smartphones enabled people to routinely take pictures of everything.

It's not cheap. But if you have the \$200 to \$300 that it will likely cost to pay for the process — and if you can find the time to dig through musty boxes, drawers and garages — you may find a gateway to experiences like these.

AN ACTOR'S FINAL ENCORE

During his award-winning acting career, Ed Asner became famous for playing crusty yet lovable characters, with the most famous being Lou Grant — the newsroom boss in two popular TV series, "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" from 1970 to 1977 and an eponymous spinoff from 1977 to 1982. Asner also provided the voice for the curmudgeonly Carl Fredricksen in Pixar's 2009 animated film, "Up," that included a poignant scene about photography's power to rekindle memories.

After Asner died in 2021, a similar scene became real. His son, Matt, found hundreds of undeveloped negatives. He decided to get them digitized along with a storehouse of printed pictures.

"I honestly didn't know what I was going to get back," Matt Asner says. "It's kind of overwhelming. It's like you get this treasure back that opens your eyes to a past that you sort of remember. But a lot of it you don't remember."

Looking at his dad's photos rekindled memories that Matt didn't realize had been buried in his subconscious. One day, Matt was gazing at some photos taken of him when he was 3 or 4 years old at a Southern California beach house that his father would rent for the family during the summer. One picture in particular opened the floodgates.

"There's this picture of me holding a dead fish, and I had this wild memory of finding it on the beach and keeping it with me for four days," the son recalls. "My mom finally threw it away when I was sleeping because it was stinking so much. That was a very strong memory that I had forgot."

The digital conversions of Ed Asner's old pictures also produced troves of other visual baubles, including one of the actor as a young man gazing introspectively at himself in a mirror — perhaps as he prepared for a role. Matt now shares some of his favorite pictures of his father on his Twitter account, but what he likes best is sending them around to relatives — something the digital format makes easy.

"Some of these pictures haven't been seen for 40, 50 or even 60 years," Matt Asner marvels. "It's like opening up a strange world for everyone and it draws you closer as a family. My dad and mom were sort of the glue for the whole family. Now, these photos replace some of the glue that has gone away."

A DIPLOMAT'S JOURNEY

After retiring in 2021 from a long career as a U.S. diplomat who worked all over the world, Lyne Paquette returned to her home in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and retrieved from storage 12,000 images that she had taken from her film camera during her wide-ranging travels. After spending months sorting through

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him no familial relationship to them.

The Tuohys said they loved Oher like a son and supported him when he lived with them and when he was in college. They are devastated by accusations by Oher, who has been estranged from them for about a decade, their lawyers say.

In Tennessee, a conservatorship removes power from a person to make decisions for themselves, and it is often used in the case of a medical condition or disability. But Oher's conservatorship was approved "despite the fact that he was over 18 years old and had no diagnosed physical or psychological disabilities," his petition said.

The Tuohys said they set up the conservatorship to help Oher with health insurance, a driver's license and being admitted to college. Their lawyers said in a news conference Wednesday that the Tuohys never received money from Oher's NFL contracts or shoe deals and they split money from "The Blind Side," which earned the couple, their two children and Oher an estimated \$100,000 apiece.

The Tuohys didn't instead adopt Oher because the conservatorship was the fastest way to satisfy the NCAA's concerns that the Tuohys weren't simply steering a talented athlete to Ole Miss, lawyer Randall Fishman said.

"There was one thing to accomplish, and that was to make him part of the family, so that the NCAA would be satisfied because Sean would have been a booster of the university," Fishman said.

The Tuohys' lawyers said they intend to end the conservatorship and that the accounting Oher asked for would not be difficult.

Still, how the agreement was reached raised concerns for Haneman, the Creighton professor.

"I am frankly floored that any judge allowed them to use the conservatorship in this way, you know, with the purpose of circumventing NCAA rules," she said.

Haneman also questioned why the conservatorship didn't include a medical affidavit showing disability, or the appointment of a guardian ad litem who would protect Oher and provide an "independent set of eyes." Both are typically part of conservatorships, she said.

Haneman said there were other legal options available, such as power of attorney, that would not have stripped Oher of his "legal capacity."

"At the end of the day, you do not put an adult in a conservatorship because they need help with a driver's license or college applications," Haneman said.

Fishman said the medical affidavit wasn't needed because Oher didn't have mental or physical disabilities. Also, Oher had no assets to be accounted for, and the Tuohys were only made "conservator of the person."

"People have been saying, 'Well, you've got to have some kind of issue to be a ward in a conservatorship,'" Fishman said Thursday. "That's just not true. He just needed some guidance and that's why the court did it."

Fishman said the guardian issue was waived because Oher was 18 and his mother consented.

Another Tuohy attorney, Martin Singer, said in a statement that profit participation checks and studio accounting statements support the assertions that Oher received money from the film.

When Oher refused to cash the checks, the statement said, the Tuohys deposited Oher's share into a trust account for his son.

The couple said agents negotiated the advance for the Tuohys and Oher from the production company for "The Blind Side," based on a book written by Sean Tuohy's friend Michael Lewis.

Lewis told The Washington Post that no one involved in the book received millions of dollars. Regarding money made off the profits from the film, which raked in hundreds of millions of dollars, Lewis said that he and the Tuohy family each received around \$350,000 after taxes and agent fees.

"It's outrageous how Hollywood accounting works, but the money is not in the Tuohys' pockets," Lewis told the newspaper in an interview published Wednesday.

People depicted in biopics typically do not make a lot of money because they have little bearing on a movie's success, said Julie Shapiro, director of the Entertainment and Media Law Institute at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

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them all, Paquette sent about 3,500 to be digitized.

When Paquette got them back, she found herself transported back to so many of the places where she had been assigned or visited — various countries in Central and South America, Australia, Germany, Bangladesh, Syria and Vietnam. While she loves looking back at all the good times with all the friends she made, some of her favorite images are our her late parents.

"It brings back so much happiness, but sometimes sadness," Paquette, 67, says. "I can see now: I have had a very, very rich life."

A WAR CORRESPONDENT'S PORTFOLIO

Russell Gordon worked in 20 countries as a photographer covering assignments that thrust him into wars, including the one in Bosnia. So yes, he accumulated a lot of analog pictures, slides and negatives in his career. He had 200 of his favorites digitized, including one-of-a-kind shots such as a photo of a fellow journalist in Afghanistan who was eventually assassinated by the man he was interviewing in the picture.

"I was like a kid at Christmas, waiting with such anticipation," says Gordon, 58, as he recalled the wait for the digital conversion.

He wasn't disappointed. The memories embedded in the photos are even more precious to him because he is afflicted with post-traumatic stress disorder after years of covering horrific wars. "I have a little bit of quality of life now, but my life is largely formed around nostalgia now," Gordon says. "So this is such a gift."

The experience has made him more convinced that anyone with analog images should digitize them as soon as they get a chance.

"Life happens and people die," he says, sighing. "When you are gone, unless you are leaving behind some money, the only thing you are leaving behind are some photos."

A GEOLOGIST'S DISCOVERY

Clifford Cuffey inherited a passion for geology and photography from his father, who died last year.

Those shared traits coalesced into Cuffey finding himself with more than 100,000 photos, including about 70,000 Kodachrome slides that he had taken from 1985 through 2009 using cameras outfitted with manual Olympus and Nikon lenses. Many of the pictures were taken during his trips revolving around his interest in geology — his chosen profession.

And his dad, a geology professor at Penn State University, had left behind similar pictures taken during summer trips when Cuffey and his brother used to tag along as kids. But there were also other photos devoted to hobbies, such as trains and railroads that don't even exist any longer, old pets and, of course family pictures.

Cuffey, 55, has spent more than \$20,000 digitizing the best of his analog photo collection to help fulfill his goal to set up a website focusing on geology. But the investment is also producing some real sentimental dividends.

"These were the fun things I did growing up," Cuffey says. "Every time I look at my scanned photos, I have a big smile on my face and I am super glad I did it."

SOME OPTIONS FOR GETTING YOUR OLD PHOTOS DIGITIZED

With so many pictures, slides and other visual media still limited to an analog, digitizing has turned into a cottage industry. As with any service or product, it's smart to do some research to determine which service sounds best for your needs. But here are a few places to tip.

—Based on its research, Consumers Guide Review recommends these as the best places: iMemories, LegacyBox and ScanMyPhotos. Other photo-scanning sites that have drawn positive reviews include GoPhoto, ScanCafe, Memories Renewed, ScanDigital, DiJiFi and Digital Memories.

—If you don't feel comfortable turning over your old photos to strangers or think the scanning services are too expensive, there are ways to do it yourself. But that takes some technical expertise, patience and the proper equipment.

—If you are an Amazon aficionado, the e-commerce site rounds up what it believes are some of the best products in its inventory. PC Magazine recommends these products. If you do some Googling and research through another search engine, you will find plenty of other suggestions to scan all those photos on your own.

Trump's 2024 GOP rivals converge on Atlanta just days after his latest indictment

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Several Republican White House hopefuls are set to greet a conservative conference with hopes of making up ground against Donald Trump. But his shadow may be especially difficult to escape in the city where he was most recently indicted.

Trump won't speak at The Gathering, an Atlanta event by syndicated radio host Erick Erickson taking place Friday and Saturday about 10 miles from the jail where the former president has to surrender before next Friday on a racketeering indictment related to the 2020 election. Six of his 2024 rivals, meanwhile, are scheduled for onstage interviews with Erickson, an influential conservative who has been critical of the former president.

The timing sets up one more example of the struggle Trump's GOP opponents face: He dominates the primary polls and media attention — especially on cable news and talk radio — even as he faces multiple criminal indictments for alleged actions before, during and after his presidency. While they carry immense legal jeopardy, the four indictments seem to have hardened Trump's support among core GOP voters, even as a majority of Americans disapprove of him. And many party loyalists who say they are open to alternatives still don't want to hear criticisms of Trump.

"It's hard for anybody to get any oxygen in the room with President Trump," said Terry Lathan, a former Alabama Republican Party chairwoman who has previously backed Trump but now supports Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis for the 2024 nomination.

"Donald Trump can be exhausting," Lathan said. "But people will walk on broken glass to vote for the guy."

DeSantis, former Vice President Mike Pence, South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott and former United Nations ambassador Nikki Haley are set to appear Friday in the Atlanta neighborhood of Buckhead, a Republican-leaning enclave in an otherwise Democratic-dominated city. Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and businessman Vivek Ramaswamy will speak Saturday.

Each candidate will join Erickson for a Q&A, with the host promising a focus on their goals and issues, including artificial intelligence, Christian nationalism in America, and dealing with China as a global U.S. rival. Erickson said attendees come from 47 states. In his previews, Erickson has not mentioned Trump, though his chosen theme for the conference — "Forward: Which Way" — nods at how he wants to define the moment for Republicans.

Of the candidates appearing with Erickson, though, only Christie has consistently blasted Trump for alleged acts contained in the indictments. The rest typically echo in some fashion Trump's counterassaults against a "witch hunt," while avoiding details of the cases.

Addressing reporters in the early primary state of New Hampshire, DeSantis said he had not "had a chance to read" the Georgia indictment, a sweeping 98-page case in which District Attorney Fani Willis invoked state racketeering laws used to prosecute organized criminal networks. DeSantis instead attacked Atlanta itself and, implicitly, the Black prosecutor Trump has labeled as "racist."

"I will tell you," DeSantis said, "Atlanta has huge problems with crime right now, and there has been an approach to crime which has been less than exacting."

He offered no supporting evidence for that deflection, which was reminiscent of Trump lashing out at civil rights icon John Lewis in 2017. The late Atlanta congressman had declared Trump was "not a legitimate president" and refused to attend his inauguration. Trump answered that Lewis' district, which still includes downtown Atlanta and Buckhead, was "falling apart (and) crime infested."

Leading Republicans say GOP candidates have few practical options other than to campaign on Trump's terms — or at least sidestep him whenever possible.

Whit Ayres, a national pollster based in Virginia, handicapped the GOP electorate as 10-15% "Never Trumpers" — those who might gravitate to Christie for his attacks on Trump — and 35% or so "die-hard

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MAGA Trump supporters," referring to Trump's "Make America Great Again" slogan.

The rest, half or a slim majority of the party, "have doubts about his electability" in a general election but are still "reliable Republicans who voted for him twice," Ayres said. Trump's rivals cannot win over that remaining faction by "going after him frontally," the pollster argued.

As a Republican, "you can't call him unfit for office," Ayres said. "That's basically requiring half the party to admit they screwed up and put someone unfit for office into the Oval Office. That's just a psychological step too far for most people."

Erickson this week tacitly acknowledged the dynamics. He spent significant time on his radio show dissecting Trump's legal peril and pushed back at some Trump supporters' reactions, albeit gingerly. A former practicing attorney, Erickson rebutted online memes and conservative social media conversations that have dismissed the indictment because it includes defendants' actions that appear to be routine political activity.

"Trump supporters believe the 2020 election was stolen from him. The district attorney in Georgia says actually it was Donald Trump who was trying to steal the election," Erickson said. "Whether you believe it or not, whether you believe it's political or not, that's what the indictment is about."

Perhaps the best Trump's rivals can do — in Atlanta, the first primary debate next week and going forward — is maintain a foothold in the quiet hopes that one of the pending trials takes place and damages the former president before he secures another GOP nomination.

"This race may appear frozen," Ayres said. "The surface of the ocean looks calm, but there are all kinds of currents underneath that could disrupt the surface."

Yet a former Trump ally like Lathan demonstrates the challenge for his opponents.

She said she is alarmed by the Florida indictment on allegations that Trump wrongly kept classified material at his Mar-a-Lago residence. But the other cases, she added, are evidence of "Democrats and the Biden administration" targeting him.

And if Trump wins the nomination, she said: "I'm there. Game on."

Trump has "taken more arrows than anyone who has ever held that office," Lathan argued. "There are a lot of Republicans who will break back to him because of this. I mean, do all these 'get Trump' people not realize they're just making him stronger?"

Olympic champ Tori Bowie's mental health struggles were no secret inside track's tight-knit family

By EDDIE PELLIS and PAT GRAHAM AP Sports Writers

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Olympic gold medalist Tori Bowie's autopsy included an easy-to-overlook, one-line notation beneath the heading "Medical History:" Bipolar disorder.

In and around track circles, where the champion sprinter's absence is hitting particularly hard heading into Saturday's opening in Hungary of the first world championships since her death, Bowie's mental health struggles were more than an afterthought.

They were a stark reality that came to light during training over the years. They also revealed themselves in the Florida neighborhood where police found her body days after the 32-year-old, who was eight months pregnant, died at home due to what the coroner said were complications of childbirth.

"It's not that she slipped through the cracks," her one-time coach, Al Joyner, told The Associated Press last month. "I think people didn't take it seriously enough."

Bipolar disorder, a mental-health condition that causes extreme mood swings, can be treatable with medication and counseling. However, the National Institute of Mental Health cites studies that say that of the some 4.4% of U.S. adults who experience the disorder, 82.9% encounter "serious impairment."

Though Bowie had access to mental-health services through both the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee and USA Track and Field, officials at both organizations said she did not avail herself of those in the months and weeks before her April 23 death.

The officials said they believe Bowie's mental health played a role in how she handled what became an

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increasingly difficult pregnancy, one she dealt with without much assistance from friends, family or medical professionals. They spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the confidential information.

The AP spoke with Joyner as well as six other USA track and Olympic officials or team members who knew Bowie over her decade-plus as a prize-winning sprinter, then during her retirement. AP also reviewed autopsy and police records, including a 911 call from a family acquaintance who had been asked to check on Bowie at her house after no one heard from her in days.

"Last time I spoke to this girl, it was over three weeks ago. I saw her here at her home and she was living without power," said the acquaintance, whose name is redacted from the 911 recording. "I reported to her family that I was concerned about her mental health."

There were other red flags.

Neighbors saw Bowie sleeping on the floor at a local recreation center and another time, sleeping on a bench with groceries near her feet at a park near her house. The neighbors spoke on condition of anonymity to reveal the disturbing details of Bowie's case.

One of the neighbors called the U.S. Olympic committee with their concerns and the committee notified USA Track and Field. Track officials reached out to Bowie's agent, Kimberly Holland, but Holland said Bowie was not in need of help.

Holland told the AP this month that Bowie had access to health care. "I didn't have any red flags," she told The Washington Post in June, adding that Bowie was insistent on not delivering her baby in a hospital.

Police went to Bowie's house on May 2 after receiving several calls, including the 911 call from the acquaintance, who told the dispatcher she didn't feel safe entering because of the smell emanating from the residence.

Earlier this month, a lawsuit was filed seeking foreclosure on Bowie's Winter Garden, Florida, house, saying she had been delinquent on payments since Oct. 1, 2022, nearly seven months before her death.

When the autopsy came out, it indicated there were no signs of foul play or drug use. Bowie's bipolar disorder didn't make many headlines, nor did another detail — her weight: 96 pounds, even at eight months pregnant. In her heyday, the 5-foot-9 sprinter was a wall of muscle and weighed 130.

More was made of what the coroner listed as complications related to childbirth: among them, eclampsia, which results in seizures that can lead to coma and stems from high blood pressure during pregnancy.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, Black women are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related issues than white women. Bowie was the third woman on the 2016 U.S. Olympic gold-medal relay team who suffered complications in childbirth. All three were Black. But while Allyson Felix and Tianna Tashelle delivered in a hospital, Bowie died alone.

The news of her death hit hard around track-and-field circles.

"There's just a very heavy sadness that I think everybody feels, like, 'Wow, this could have been preventable.' Or, 'I didn't get to tell Tori how I felt,'" said retired decathlete Trey Hardee, who has struggled with mental health issues of his own.

Placed in a foster home as a baby, Bowie was taken in and raised by her grandmother — a formative episode that Joyner said shaped her life.

"It seemed like she was always out to prove something," Joyner said. "And then when she did prove something, it was never good enough. ... That's a dangerous thing. Everybody's been taught the same way: 'If I do this, it's going to be easy street.' But then when you do all those things and it's not happening, it makes you stop believing in fairy tales."

Yet, in many ways, Bowie's career was a fairy tale.

Fast on her feet and able to jump high, Bowie gravitated to basketball as a kid growing up in Sand Hill, Mississippi. Urged to give track a try, she and everyone around her quickly found out just how good she was. She went to Southern Miss, where she won the NCAA long jump title in 2011.

A few years later, she was among the top sprinters in the world. She won silver in the 100 and bronze in the 200 at the 2016 Rio Games, then capped off the Olympics by teaming with Felix and Co. for the relay gold.

A year later, at the world championships, Bowie reeled in the competition over the final 20 meters, leaned

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at the line then went tumbling over it to win the 100-meter title.

"I didn't want to come back saying, 'Oh, I should've done this. I should've done that,'" Bowie said, beaming as she discussed her victory, the scrapes from the fall still fresh on her legs.

After that win, Bowie became a frequent visitor to red carpets and was gaining a reputation as an icon in fashion and modeling.

But a 2018 Instagram post told a less glamorous, but unflinchingly honest story. Titled "The Cost of Success," it followed with a list: "1. Late Nights. 2. Early Mornings. 3. Very Few Friends. 4. Being Misunderstood. 5. Feeling Overwhelmed. 6. Questioning Your Sanity. 7. Being Your Own Cheerleader." It concluded: "But Guess What? It Will Be Worth It."

The post came six months after Bowie was involved in a physical altercation in February 2018 with training partner Shaunae Miller-Uibo at their training center in Florida. Bowie, in an interview with the track publication FloTrack, said the fight left her bleeding from the head. Both sprinters were asked to seek psychological counseling.

Bowie left Florida for the U.S. Olympic committee-run Elite Athlete Training Center in Chula Vista, California. But when she showed up to start the 2019 season, she was told she owed \$6,000 to the facility — a bill she said she did not expect and led to her leaving the center.

Bowie told FloTrack she lost trust in her coach Joyner, and agent, Holland, neither of whom, she said, had her back in the dispute over the money.

"I haven't really discussed this because I'm not sure how they even allowed me to get treated this way. So, I'm very disappointed," Bowie said in the 2019 interview.

Joyner conceded the rift between himself and the sprinter splintered their relationship.

"At that time, me and Tori, we had a great relationship and it cost us that," Joyner said. "She thought I was somewhere involved. ... It took her into a tailspin to the point where everybody was the enemy. I became the enemy. It was never the same. I was just heartbroken."

After finishing fourth in the long jump at world championships in 2019, Bowie posted on social media that she was looking forward to the Tokyo Olympics. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the games by a year and Bowie did not try to qualify for the U.S. team in 2021. World Athletics lists her as having run only one race in 2022 — on June 4 in Florida where she clocked a 23.60 in the 200 meters, nearly 2 seconds off her personal best.

Joyner's sister, heptathlon and long-jump great Jackie Joyner-Kersey, discussed the implications of people falling out of touch — and said that's why she always picks up the phone.

"I need to hear your voice. I can't hear it in a text," Joyner-Kersey said. "Because you may text you're doing good, but your voice may tell me something different."

Until the last few years, the stigma attached to mental illness was so great that virtually no athlete would dare bring it up in public.

Gymnast Simone Biles and sprinter Noah Lyles were among those in the Olympic space who helped change that dynamic. Their openness about their struggles at the Tokyo Games helped shift the conversation.

Despite the occasional post on social media discussing the sacrifices pro athletes have to make, Bowie was never much part of that conversation.

Had she sought medical or emotional counseling, there were places for her to turn. In the wake of sex-abuse scandals that rocked the Olympic world, along with the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Olympic committee doubled down on mental-health services for its athletes — adding doctors, hot lines, support groups, experts who travel with the teams and dozens of other resources for athletes who need help dealing with the strains of competition and daily life.

"I don't always need to talk to the athlete, I need to talk to the person who can get through to them," said Jess Bartley, the Olympic committee's director of mental health. "And I will spend hours and hours with that person about how to have a five-minute conversation to connect that athlete to the right resources."

At one point, Joyner might have been that person. He said there was a time when he thought Bowie had so much talent, she could have ended up on a pedestal with all-time greats, including his sister, Joyner-Kersey, and his late wife, 100-meter world-record holder Florence Griffith-Joyner.

"Because Tori just loved trying to be the best. She was like a sponge," Joyner said. "You can't think of Tori without thinking about her smile."

Justice Department seeks 33 years in prison for ex-Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrío in Jan. 6 case

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

The Justice Department is seeking 33 years in prison for Enrique Tarrío, the former Proud Boys leader convicted of seditious conspiracy in one of the most serious cases to emerge from the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol, according to court documents filed Thursday.

The sentence, if imposed, would be by far the longest punishment that has been handed down in the massive Jan. 6 prosecution. Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes, who was convicted of seditious conspiracy in a separate case, has received the longest sentence to date — 18 years.

Tarrío, who once served as national chairman of the far-right extremist group, and three lieutenants were convicted by a Washington jury in May of conspiring to block the transfer of presidential power in the hopes of keeping Republican Donald Trump in the White House after he lost the 2020 election.

Tarrío, who was not at the Capitol riot itself, was a top target of what has become the largest Justice Department investigation in American history. He led the neo-fascist group — known for street fights with left-wing activists — when Trump infamously told the Proud Boys to "stand back and stand by" during his first debate with Democrat Joe Biden.

During the monthslong trial, prosecutors argued that the Proud Boys viewed themselves as foot soldiers fighting for Trump as the Republican spread lies that Democrats stole the election from him, and were prepared to go to war to keep their preferred leader in power.

"They unleashed a force on the Capitol that was calculated to exert their political will on elected officials by force and to undo the results of a democratic election," prosecutors wrote in their filing. "The foot soldiers of the right aimed to keep their leader in power. They failed. They are not heroes; they are criminals."

Prosecutors are also asking for a 33-year-sentence for one of Tarrío's co-defendants, Joseph Biggs of Ormond Beach, Florida, a self-described Proud Boys organizer.

They are asking the judge to impose a 30-year prison term for Zachary Rehl, who was president of the Proud Boys chapter in Philadelphia; 27 years in prison for Ethan Nordean of Auburn, Washington, who was a Proud Boys chapter president; and 20 years for Dominic Pezzola, a Proud Boys member from Rochester, New York. Pezzola was acquitted of seditious conspiracy but convicted of other serious charges.

Tarrío wasn't in Washington on Jan. 6, because he had been arrested two days earlier in a separate case and ordered out of the capital city. But prosecutors alleged he organized and directed the attack by Proud Boys who stormed the Capitol that day.

Defense attorneys argued there was no conspiracy and no plan to attack the Capitol, and sought to portray the Proud Boys as an unorganized drinking club whose members' participation in the riot was a spontaneous act fueled by Trump's election rage. Tarrío's lawyers tried to argue that Trump was the one to blame for exhorting a crowd outside the White House to "fight like hell."

Attorneys for the Proud Boys say prosecutors' proposed sentences are extreme. Noting that the chaos on Jan. 6 was fueled by Trump's false election claims, a lawyer for Biggs and Rehl told the judge that "believing the commander in chief and heeding his call should yield some measure of mitigation."

"The defendants are not terrorists. Whatever excesses of zeal they demonstrated on January 6, 2021, and no matter how grave the potential interference with the orderly transfer of power due to the events of that day, a decade or more behind bars is an excessive punishment," attorney Norm Pattis wrote.

Like in the case of Rhodes and other Oath Keepers, prosecutors are urging the judge to apply a so-called "terrorism enhancement" — which can lead to a longer prison term — under the argument that the Proud Boys sought to influence the government through "intimidation or coercion."

U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta agreed with prosecutors that the Oath Keepers' crimes could be punished as "terrorism," but still sentenced Rhodes and the others to prison terms shorter than what prosecutors

were seeking. Prosecutors had asked Mehta to sentence Rhodes to 25 years behind bars.

Tarrio, of Miami, and his co-defendants will be sentenced before U.S. District Judge Timothy Kelly in a string of hearings starting later this month in Washington's federal court.

It's the same courthouse where Trump pleaded not guilty this month in the case brought by special counsel Jack Smith accusing the Republican of illegally scheming to subvert the will of voters and overturn his loss to Biden. Trump has denied any wrongdoing.

Tarrio and three of his lieutenants were also convicted of two of the same charges Trump faces: obstruction of Congress' certification of Biden's victory, and conspiracy to obstruct Congress.

Residents flee, airlifts begin as wildfire approaches capital of Canada's Northwest Territories

YELLOWKNIFE, Northwest Territories (AP) — Thousands of residents fled the capital of Canada's Northwest Territories ahead of an approaching wildfire Thursday, some driving hundreds of miles to safety and others waiting in long lines for emergency flights, the latest chapter in Canada's worst fire season on record.

The fire, boosted by strong winds, was within 16 kilometers (10 miles) of Yellowknife's northern edge, and people in the four areas at highest risk were told to leave as soon as possible, Fire Information Officer Mike Westwick said.

Officials worried that winds could push the flames toward the only highway leading away from the fire as long caravans of cars evacuated the city of 20,000, and although some rain was forecast, first responders were taking no chances. Westwick urged residents in other areas to leave by noon Friday.

"I want to be clear that the city is not in immediate danger and there's a safe window for residents to leave the city by road and by air," Shane Thompson, a government minister for the Territories, told a news conference. "Without rain, it is possible it will reach the city outskirts by the weekend."

Evacuating such a large number of people is "going to be tough," but people were cooperating and staying calm, Westwick said.

Westwick said later Thursday that water bombers were used to fight the fire. "They've been successful in completing drops and doing their part to limit the spread" of the fire.

Jennifer Young, director of corporate affairs for the Northwest Territories' Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, said 10 planes left Yellowknife on Thursday with 1,500 passengers.

The hope is to have 22 flights leave on Friday with 1,800 more passengers, and flights could potentially still be leaving on Saturday, she said.

Canada has seen a record number of wildfires this year — contributing to choking smoke in parts of the U.S. — with more than 5,700 fires burning more than 137,000 square kilometers (53,000 square miles) from one end of Canada to the other, according to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre. As of Thursday, 1,053 wildfires were burning across the country, more than half of them out of control.

In the Northwest Territories alone, 268 wildfires have already burned more than 21,000 square kilometers (8,100 square miles).

Thursday's evacuation of Yellowknife was by far the largest so far this year, said Ken McMullen, president of the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs and fire chief in Red Deer, Alberta.

"It's one of those events where you need to get people out sooner rather than later," because fire could block the only escape route before ever reaching the community.

Resident Angela Canning was packing up her camper with important documents, family keepsakes and basic necessities and leaving with her two dogs, while her husband stayed behind as an essential worker.

"I'm really anxious and I'm scared. I'm emotional ... I'm in shock," she told The Canadian Press. "I don't know what I'm coming home to or if I'm coming home. There's just so much unknowns here."

At the Big River Service Station about 300 kilometers (185 miles) south of Yellowknife, the line of vehicles waiting for fuel was "phenomenal," employee Linda Croft said. "You can't see the end of it."

About 6,800 people in eight other communities in the territory have already been forced to evacuate their homes, including the small community of Enterprise, which was largely destroyed. Officials said everyone

made it out alive.

A woman whose family evacuated the town of Hay River on Sunday told the CBC that their car began to melt as they drove through embers, the front window cracked and the vehicle began filling with smoke that made it difficult to see the road ahead.

"I was obviously scared the tire was going to break, our car was going to catch on fire and then it went from just embers to full smoke," said Lisa Mundy, who was traveling with her husband and their 6-year-old and 18-month-old children. She said they called 911 after they drove into the ditch a couple of times.

She said her son kept saying: "I don't want to die, mommy."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau convened an urgent meeting with ministers and senior officials Thursday to discuss the evacuation and pledged to provide any support needed.

Authorities said the intensive care unit at a Yellowknife hospital would close within 24 hours as the Northwest Territories health authority starts to reduce its services. In-patient units from Stanton Territorial Hospital would be moved in the coming days, if required, and most long-term care patients were transferred to institutions to the south, the Health and Social Services Authority said on its website.

Officials said evacuations have so far been safe and orderly, and that evacuees from Yellowknife who can't find their own accommodations can get support in three centers in the province of Alberta. The closest of those centers is more than 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) by road from Yellowknife.

Officials in Calgary said they're preparing to take in thousands of evacuees, and are opening a reception center at the Calgary airport, where five evacuation flights were expected to arrive Thursday. A second center has been set up at a hotel for those who drive to the city, said Iain Bushell, the city's director of emergency management.

Only those who cannot leave by road should register for the evacuation flights, officials added. People who are immunocompromised or have conditions that put them at higher risk also were encouraged to sign up.

"We're all tired of the word unprecedented, yet there is no other way to describe this situation in the Northwest Territories," Premier Caroline Cochrane posted on X, formerly known as Twitter. She urged residents to obey emergency management officials, traffic control devices and posted speed limits.

The evacuation order issued Wednesday night applies to the city of Yellowknife and the neighboring First Nations communities of Ndilo and Dettah.

Indigenous communities have been hit hard by the wildfires, which threaten important cultural activities such as hunting, fishing and gathering native plants.

Officials in British Columbia, where about 370 fires were burning, also braced for more evacuations, with the weather forecast for the next few days predicting dry lightning that could spark new blazes and brisk winds that could change direction quickly.

Cliff Chapman, director of provincial operations at the province's Wildfire Service, urged anyone at risk to pack a "grab-and-go" bag and to respect any evacuation orders.

The U.S. has also seen devastating wildfires, including fires last week on the Hawaiian island of Maui that killed more than 100 people and destroyed a historic town.

Rural areas near California's border with Oregon were placed under evacuation orders Wednesday after gusty winds from a thunderstorm sent a lightning-sparked wildfire racing through national forest lands, authorities said.

Mississippi judge declares mistrial for 2 white men charged in attack on Black FedEx driver

By EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS Associated Press

BROOKHAVEN, Miss. (AP) — Citing errors by police, a Mississippi judge declared a mistrial Thursday in the case of two white men accused of chasing and shooting at a Black FedEx driver who was making a delivery.

Brandon Case and his father, Gregory Case, are charged with attempted first-degree murder, conspiracy

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and shooting into the vehicle driven by D'Monterrio Gibson in January 2022. Gibson, now 25, was not injured. But the chase and gunfire led to complaints on social media of racism in Brookhaven, about an hour's drive south of the state capital, Jackson.

Judge David Strong said he made the mistrial decision because of errors by a Brookhaven Police Department detective. On Wednesday, the judge ended the session early after Detective Vincent Fernando acknowledged under oath while the jury was out of the courtroom that he had not previously given prosecutors or defense attorneys a videotaped statement police had taken from Gibson.

The judge said the officer also improperly testified about guns found in the home of one of the men on trial and shell casings found outside the home. Defense attorneys requested the mistrial, and Strong said he had no choice but to grant it.

"In 17 years, I don't think I've seen it," the judge said of the errors.

Sharon McClendon, Gibson's mother, burst out with a loud expletive in the courtroom after the judge's announcement, and she and her son declined to speak to reporters as they left the courthouse. Highway Patrol officers walked with them to a private vehicle, and some supporters hugged Gibson.

Rayshun Bridges, of Brookhaven, stood outside the courthouse with a handwritten poster reading: "We want justice for D'Monterrio." He said he does not know Gibson but has been following news coverage of the case.

"That young guy, he was at work trying to do his job," Bridges said.

The Cases, who remain out on bond, sat stoically as the judge announced his decision. Terrell Stubbs, the defense attorney for Gregory Case, declined to comment.

After court adjourned, District Attorney Dee Bates, who leaves office at the end of the year, told reporters that he disagrees with the judge's decision. The new trial is not expected before the end of the year because the judge's docket is full through December, a court official said.

Carlos Moore, Gibson's attorney in a civil lawsuit, said the mistrial "represents not just an administrative setback but also a delay in justice for Mr. Gibson and his family."

Moore said he has asked the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division to investigate the Brookhaven Police Department for misconduct.

"It is concerning that BPD withheld a potentially crucial evidence piece of evidence," Moore said of the videotaped statement. "We believe that this is not an isolated incident but a part of a larger pattern of obstruction by BPD."

Moore also called for the Justice Department to bring federal hate crime charges against the Cases, who defense attorneys have said tried to stop Gibson because he was driving a rental van with a Florida license plate and they wanted to know who was near a family home after dark.

The encounter between Gibson and the Cases happened as Gibson made FedEx deliveries on the evening of Jan. 24, 2022, while driving a van with the Hertz logo on three sides. After he dropped off a package at a home on a dead-end public road, Gregory Case used a pickup truck to try to block the van from leaving, and Brandon Case came outside with a gun, Bates told the majority-white jury.

As Gibson drove the van around the pickup truck, shots were fired, with three rounds hitting the delivery van and some of the packages inside, Bates said.

Stubbs told jurors that his client saw a van outside his mother-in-law's unoccupied home and went to check what was happening. The elder Case was just going to ask the van driver what was going on, but the driver did not stop, Stubbs said.

Detective Fernando testified that a truck stop's security camera video recorded a white van being followed by a pickup truck at 7:31 p.m., 14 minutes before Gregory Case called police.

A police dispatcher testified that the elder Case called first, reporting he had seen a suspicious vehicle near his home and the van almost ran over him. Audio of the call was played in court, with Case saying he thought the driver was up to "something that wasn't good."

Gibson called shortly later, reporting that someone shot at the van while he was delivering a package, the dispatcher said.

Fernando also said cellphone records showed calls between the father and son's phones that evening before Gregory Case called police.

Gibson is still employed by FedEx but is on workers' compensation leave, Moore said. A judge last week dismissed Gibson's federal lawsuit seeking \$5 million from FedEx, writing that the lawsuit failed to prove the company discriminated against him because of his race. That litigation also named the city of Brookhaven, the police chief and the Cases, and Moore said he plans to file a new civil suit in state court.

Biden's approval rating on the economy stagnates despite slowing inflation, AP-NORC poll shows

By JOSH BOAK and EMILY SWANSON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has devoted the past several weeks to promoting the positive impacts of his policies — but his efforts have yet to meaningfully register with the public.

Only 36% of U.S. adults approve of Biden's handling of the economy, slightly lower than the 42% who approve of his overall performance, according to the new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Both figures are close to where Biden's approval numbers have stood for about the past year and a half, including just two months ago. Signs of an improving economic outlook have done little to sway how people feel about the Democratic president as he gears up for a 2024 reelection campaign that could pit him against his predecessor and 2020 opponent, Republican Donald Trump.

Job growth has stayed solid with the unemployment rate at 3.5%, while the pace of inflation has slowed sharply over the past year to the annual rate of 3.2%.

Both Biden and Trump have weaknesses as older candidates seeking a rematch. Trump, 77, faces a series of criminal indictments that include his possession of classified material and allegations that he tried to overturn the 2020 election, which has rallied support among Republicans while leaving him with substantial vulnerabilities in a potential general election contest.

Biden, 80, has yet to fully bring Democrats to his side as the lingering aftershocks of inflation still weigh on people's minds. Along with members of his cabinet and Vice President Kamala Harris, Biden has been speaking about the \$500 billion worth of new investments by private companies that he said came from incentives he signed into law.

Erica Basile, a teacher who describes herself as a "staunch Democrat," said she feels the economy is "mediocre, but improving."

"I do think in many ways they're working very hard at getting the economy back on track post-COVID," said Basile, who lives in Lynnwood, Washington.

Just 65% of Democrats approve of Biden's economic leadership, while 76% approve of how he's handling the job overall.

In follow-up interviews, some survey respondents felt torn between the desire to return to a sense of normalcy after Trump's presidency and the desire for even more sweeping policies to address climate change, health care costs and taxes.

"When Joe Biden was selected to be the nominee and eventually won, my feeling at the time was that he could be the most milquetoast and undramatic president to help the country cool down," said Steven Peters, 41, who works in information technology in White House, Tennessee. "Unfortunately, that's what he's been. I'm dissatisfied because I had hoped there would be more change."

Peters added, "He's really middle of the road when a lot of people would like to see more dramatic action."

For GOP supporters, such as Merritt Rahn, 74, Biden has gone too far. Rahn said he is retired but also works at Home Depot and sees higher gasoline and food costs as making it harder for families to get by financially. The Jensen Beach, Florida, resident said Biden will further hurt the U.S. by moving energy sources away from oil and gas.

"It's a death to our society and economy," said Rahn, who added that he believes Biden "has no clue what's going on."

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The poll also found that 55% of Democrats say they don't think Biden should run again in 2024, though a large majority — 82% — say they would definitely or probably support him if he is the nominee. Overall, only 24% of Americans say they want Biden to run again.

Among Democrats who approve of how Biden is handling the economy, 58% would like him to seek another term. Just 20% of those who disapprove of his performance on the issue want the incumbent president to run again.

Biden continues to struggle to appeal to younger Democrats, especially on the economy. Only 52% of Democrats under age 45 say they approve of his handling of the economy, compared with 77% of those older.

The president has used the term "Bidenomics" to try to encompass his ideas to lower costs for people on Medicare, shift toward electric vehicles and renewable energy, and build factories for advanced computer chips and batteries. Yet some are still struggling to understand what the term means.

Asked about the definition of Bidenomics, Cory O'Brien, 39, said: "You know what, dude, I have no idea. Biden is a free market capitalist like most moderate Democrats are."

The age gap extends to Biden's reelection campaign: Just 34% of Democrats under 45 want him to run again, compared with 54% of those older than that. Still, about three-quarters of younger Democrats say they'll most likely support him if he's the nominee, though only 28% say they definitely will.

O'Brien, who works in education and lives in Massachusetts, said he expects the 2024 election to be "miserable" for voters because of the likely Biden and Trump rematch.

"I think it's going to be a miserable election cycle," he said. "We're going to see a lot of the same stuff that we saw in 2020."

Biden also faces renewed pressure related to investigations over his son Hunter's business dealings. The poll finds that a majority of Americans — 58% — have hardly any confidence in Biden to reduce corruption in government, though that's unchanged since January. Another 30% have some confidence and 10% have a great deal of confidence.

The poll shows that 23% of Americans say they have a great deal of confidence in Biden's ability to effectively manage the White House, 31% have some confidence and 45% have hardly any. Despite the fact that Biden has achieved several of his major policy goals, just 16% say they have high confidence in his ability to do that, while 38% say they have some confidence and 44% hardly any.

Few Americans say they think the national economy is doing well: 34% describe it as very or somewhat good. No more than about a third of Americans have called the economy good since 2021.

Average long-term US mortgage rate climbs to 7.09% this week to highest level in more than 20 years

By ALEX VEIGA and MATT OTT AP Business Writers

The average long-term U.S. mortgage rate climbed this week to its highest level in more than 20 years, grim news for would-be homebuyers already challenged by a housing market that remains competitive due to a dearth of homes for sale.

Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday that the average rate on the benchmark 30-year home loan rose to 7.09% from 6.96% last week. A year ago, the rate averaged 5.13%.

It's the fourth consecutive weekly increase for the average rate and the highest since early April 2002, when it averaged 7.13%. The last time the average rate was above 7% was last November, when it stood at 7.08%.

High rates can add hundreds of dollars a month in costs for borrowers, limiting how much they can afford in a market already unaffordable to many Americans.

"With prices even higher than they were a year ago in many markets, crossing the 7% mortgage rate threshold again could be what sets in motion a major contraction in the housing market this fall," said Lisa Sturtevant, chief economist for Bright MLS.

The latest increase in rates follows a sharp uptick in the 10-year Treasury yield, which has been above

4% this month and climbing. The yield, which lenders use to price rates on mortgages and other loans, touched its highest level since October on Thursday morning, and it's close to where it was in 2007.

The yield has been rising as bond traders react to more reports showing the U.S. economy remains remarkably resilient, which could keep upward pressure on inflation, giving the Federal Reserve reason to keep interest rates higher for longer.

"The economy continues to do better than expected and the 10-year Treasury yield has moved up, causing mortgage rates to climb," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's chief economist. "Demand has been impacted by affordability headwinds, but low inventory remains the root cause of stalling home sales."

High inflation drove the Federal Reserve to raise its benchmark interest rate 11 times since March 2022, lifting the fed funds rate to the highest level in 22 years.

Mortgage rates don't necessarily mirror the Fed's rate increases, but tend to track the yield on the 10-year Treasury note. Investors' expectations for future inflation, global demand for U.S. Treasuries and what the Fed does with interest rates can influence rates on home loans.

The average rate on a 30-year mortgage remains more than double what it was two years ago, when it was just 2.86%. Those ultra-low rates spurred a wave of home sales and refinancing. The sharply higher rates now are contributing to a dearth of available homes, as homeowners who locked in those lower borrowing costs two years ago are now reluctant to sell and jump into a higher rate on a new property.

The lack of housing supply is also a big reason home sales are down 23% through the first half of this year.

The average rate on 15-year fixed-rate mortgages, popular with those refinancing their homes, rose to 6.46% from 6.34% last week. A year ago, it averaged 4.55%, Freddie Mac said.

The fall of Rudy Giuliani: How 'America's mayor' tied his fate to Donald Trump and got indicted

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Rudy Giuliani glared across a Washington hearing room as a lawyer seeking his disbarment after the Jan. 6 insurrection asked: How did this man, celebrated as "America's mayor" after 9/11, become a leader of an attempt to overturn a national election?

"It's like there are two different people," Hamilton "Phil" Fox III, the lead prosecuting attorney for the agency that disciplines Washington lawyers, said last December. "I don't know if something happened to Mr. Giuliani or what."

Giuliani — feted, knighted and named Time magazine's person of the year for his leadership as New York City mayor after the 2001 terrorist attack — has seen his reputation eviscerated and now his liberty imperiled for his steadfast defense of former President Donald Trump's false claims about the 2020 election.

On Monday, Giuliani's downfall sank to its lowest level yet with his indictment in Georgia on charges he acted as Trump's chief co-conspirator in a plot to subvert President Joe Biden's victory.

Giuliani, Trump and 17 other people were charged under Georgia's version of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act. The law, known as RICO, was once one of Giuliani's favorite tools when he was cracking down on mobsters and Wall Street titans as Manhattan's top federal prosecutor in the 1980s. Now, as he nears 80, it could put him behind bars.

Giuliani called the indictment "an affront to American democracy" and said it "does permanent, irrevocable harm to our justice system." On his radio show Wednesday, he described the case as an "atrocity" and an "out and out assault on the First Amendment."

How did it come to this? People who've studied Giuliani's rise and fall see his failed 2008 presidential run as a turning point.

Giuliani started as the front runner for the Republican nomination, capitalizing on his post-9/11 popularity. But he struggled in the primaries amid GOP concerns about his past support for abortion rights, gay rights and gun control, and questions about his personal life and business ties to the Middle East.

For years following the race, Giuliani's political career appeared over. After falling into a deep depression,

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he and his then-wife Judith decamped to Florida, where Trump put them up for a month in a bungalow at his Mar-a-Lago estate, biographer Andrew Kirtzman said.

"Trump really took Giuliani under his wing at a very vulnerable moment," said Kirtzman, whose second Giuliani biography, "Giuliani: The Rise and Tragic Fall of America's Mayor," was published last year. "And then in 2016, Trump decided to run for president, and he needed Giuliani and Giuliani needed Trump."

Trump, a first-time candidate, leaned on Giuliani's political acumen and loyalty and put him to work as a surrogate leading attacks on former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, whom Giuliani had faced in a 2000 U.S. Senate race.

The 2016 campaign returned Giuliani to relevance, but he surprised many with the ferocity of his attacks and his frequent claims that Clinton had committed crimes. Giuliani was seen as squandering his image as an elder statesman of sorts on a candidate who, at the time, was written off as having little chance to win.

Giuliani angled for a post in Trump's cabinet but didn't get it. Instead, he continued as Trump's attack dog, a role that saw him traveling to Ukraine seeking damaging information about Biden's son, Hunter.

Giuliani's contacts with Ukrainian figures later played a role in Trump's first impeachment trial and prompted an FBI investigation. In April 2021, federal agents raided his home and office, seizing computers and cellphones, but the probe was later dropped without any charges.

Some people who were once close to him say the Giuliani of today has little in common with the man they knew.

"The man that I knew 20 years ago, the hero of Sept. 11 bears no resemblance to this man," said Judith Giuliani, who was by his side in the aftermath of 9/11 and his 2008 election loss. "I actually feel sorry for him. It's sad. He's not the person that he used to be to any of us."

When Trump lost the 2020 election, Giuliani played a starring role in his effort to remain in the White House, which prosecutors say included illegal maneuvering to flip the results in key states.

He was ridiculed for holding a news conference on Pennsylvania legal challenges outside Four Seasons Total Landscaping in Philadelphia, an out-of-the-way location next to a crematorium and a pornography shop, not the Four Seasons hotel in the heart of the city.

A few weeks later, Giuliani appeared to have hair dye streaking down his face at another news conference, making him the butt of late-night television jokes and internet memes.

Those blunders came in the wake of another embarrassment: clips from the "Borat" sequel showing Giuliani flirting with a young actress posing as a TV journalist and then lying on a bed, with his hand down his pants. Giuliani said he went to the hotel thinking he was going to be interviewed and was just tucking in his shirt.

After his efforts to keep Trump in office failed in the courts, Giuliani on Jan. 6, 2021, made incendiary remarks to Trump supporters who later stormed the U.S. Capitol, suggesting they engage in "trial by combat."

The New York State Bar Association said his words were intended to encourage Trump supporters "to take matters into their own hands." A panel of the D.C. Bar Association unanimously recommended that he be disbarred, saying his misconduct "sadly transcends all his past accomplishments."

Giuliani's critics argue that he's always been combative and abrasive, with a disdain for critics and a willingness to go after rivals.

"The real Rudy Giuliani was hiding in plain sight," said Donna Lieberman, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union. "Just because he was the face of a devastated and pained city after 9/11 doesn't mean that he wasn't still the authoritarian, anti-democratic bully" that he was "for 90% of his mayoralty," which ran from 1994 to 2001.

In the Georgia case, Giuliani is accused of making false statements, soliciting false testimony and seeking the illegal appointment of pro-Trump Electoral College voters. Giuliani was also described as a co-conspirator but not charged in special counsel Jack Smith's election interference case against Trump.

Giuliani maintains that he had every right to raise questions about what he believed to be election fraud.

Today, he remains popular among conservatives in his hometown. He hosts a daily radio show in New

York City and a nightly streaming show watched by a few hundred people on social media, which he calls "America's Mayor Live."

After 9/11, Giuliani started a consulting firm that had \$100 million in revenue in five years. Lately, though, he's shown signs of financial strain, exacerbated by a third divorce, costly lawsuits and investigations.

To generate cash, he's hawked autographed 9/11 shirts for \$911 dollars and pitched sandals sold by election denier Mike Lindell. He's also joined Cameo, a service where celebrities record short videos for profit. Giuliani's greetings cost \$325 a pop.

In July, he put his Manhattan apartment up for sale for \$6.5 million.

Last year, a judge threatened Giuliani with jail in a dispute over money owed to Judith, his third ex-wife. Giuliani said he was making progress paying the debt, which she said totaled more than \$260,000.

In May, a woman who says she worked for Giuliani sued him, alleging he owed her nearly \$2 million in unpaid wages and that he had coerced her into sex. Giuliani denied the allegations.

"His legacy is in tatters," said Kirtzman, who was with Giuliani on 9/11 as they fled debris from the falling World Trade Center. He's "gone through all of his money," is facing prison and "will never change his feeling that he was right and everyone else was wrong."

Maui residents fill philanthropic gaps while aid makes the long journey to the fire-stricken island

By JAMES POLLARD AND THALIA BEATY Associated Press

After learning that 100 pounds of insulin was stuck, grounded last week at Kona International Airport on the big island, volunteers at Maui Brewing Company, Hawaii's largest craft brewery, got to work. They spent several hours trying to link health officials with a general aviation pilot who could complete the medical delivery to their community.

Kami Irwin, who runs a military nonprofit, was frustrated that it fell to volunteers like her to secure such a vital resource.

"The fact that I'm just a normal civilian that is trying to help the community along with everyone else here and we were able to make that happen?" Irwin said. "It doesn't look good."

Irwin has been coordinating donation pickup out of the brewery's tasting room, taking advantage of what the tight community calls "coconut wireless," informal communication chains that spread information like a game of "telephone."

"We will be OK if us residents keep building together," she added.

Volunteers on Maui have cobbled together countless improvised, urgent solutions like the insulin shipment in response to the country's deadliest wildfire in over a century, which has killed more than 100 people and displaced thousands. Nonprofit groups struggle to deliver aid to the second-farthest state from the U.S. mainland, while mutual aid groups and local businesses help fill the cracks.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency opened its first disaster recovery center on Maui on Wednesday, the same day traffic resumed on a major road. In the initial days following the fire, officials scrambled to house thousands of displaced residents. Transportation and communications remained limited for days in impacted areas, which likely contributed to uncertainty for some residents about where to get assistance. Meanwhile, relief groups based on the U.S. mainland have contended with a major airport hamstrung by a deluge of departing tourists and arrivals toting assistance from afar.

But nonprofits and volunteers are ready to help.

The Salvation Army has been supplying meals and offering counseling to survivors and people impacted, serving food to 12,000 people on Tuesday, said Maj. Troy Timmer, divisional commander of The Salvation Army Hawaiian & Pacific Islands. The Salvation Army's Lahaina Corps location, was destroyed in the fire, but their staff all safely evacuated and continue to track the losses among the people they served. Trimmer acknowledged possible frustration as the community and officials scramble to meet urgent needs, saying that major tragedies take a significant toll.

"From my experience, what we've seen is that people are doing their best, including the officials. They're

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doing the best. Could there be something missed in the process? Absolutely," he said.

International relief groups like CityServe said that the primary airport in wildfire-ravaged Maui has been so full the group decided to truck a quarter-of-a-million meals from Florida to California and then load them onto ships to cross over 2,500 nautical miles. Officials from the faith-based nonprofit hope the packages of apple cinnamon oatmeal and vegetable rice arrive next Monday at the earliest.

"It's almost impossible to fly them in now," said Todd Lamphere, the vice president of government relations for CityServe. His prior experience with emergency response tells him the meals will arrive just as that first wave of external support begins to wane.

Edward Graham, chief operating officer of Samaritan's Purse, said the nondenominational evangelical Christian organization landed its cargo plane Tuesday with 17 tons of equipment. Most of their work will involve helping homeowners identify family heirlooms and other valuables.

Even finding a timeframe at the airport to drop off tools like sifting instruments, vital to helping people get closure by finding lost personal treasures, required coordination, Graham said. Even though there are several airfields on the island, Kahului Airport "has been overloaded just because of all the disaster relief flights coming in," he said.

Challenges don't end once assistance reaches the island. Many evacuees fled to a more remote area west of the nearly incinerated historic town of Lahaina. It wasn't until Tuesday at 6 p.m. local time that the two-lane Lahaina bypass road reopened to residents, first responders and employees of West Maui.

Laurence Balter, the owner of Maui Flight Academy, said his "small armada" of roughly a dozen pilots have used West Maui Airport to meet the survivors' immediate needs. The airfield is designed for smaller aircrafts and located near some of the hardest hit areas. He estimates they have flown over 100,000 pounds of supplies ranging from diapers and flashlights to Costco chicken and oil. He counted 57 flights on their second day in action and 36 on day three.

"Even if the run is 200 pounds they're still doing it because they know it's impacting someone's life," Balter said.

The group Maui Mutual Aid has raised \$1.6 million through its PayPal account, said Tina Ramirez, executive director of Grants Central Station. Her organization is acting as a fiscal sponsor for the mutual aid group, which is also coordinating the sourcing and delivering of supplies, transportation, housing and other needs, in part through an online form.

The group, which formed in response to COVID-19, has around 100 volunteers trying to handle logistics and gather information about people's needs, Ramirez said. Her group will eventually distribute the funds raised to pay directly for expenses, but have not yet released the money.

"In many cases, a lot of these people have lost their ID. They're unable to go to the bank. They're unable to get their bank cards," Ramirez said. "So we're still trying to work through all of that, as well as collecting all the information."

Water, supplies for babies and children, medication and personal toiletries were still needed, but that local groups were inundated with clothing donations, she said, adding that, in the past two days, more government support has reached the worst-hit areas.

"It takes a while. We are out in the middle of nowhere," Ramirez said. "It's a little different than on the mainland where you can drive things in, so everyone is doing the best they can."

Distribution centers flush with donations have not always been able to efficiently distribute the overwhelming amounts of aid that does arrive.

The Rev. Jay Haynes, a pastor at Kahului Baptist Church, said his congregation started bringing resources straight to homes after they noticed them piling up at major supply drops. He said the community's strong "word-of-mouth game" allows his team to gather needs lists directly from people seeking items like hygiene products, water and propane.

A Tuesday meeting of local pastors sought to build a more cohesive network. Haynes soon anticipates having to address long-term concerns of people torn from their communities. He expects the Central Maui public school system will be overpopulated with children lacking school supplies.

He preached patience for people compelled to help by visiting Maui. The need for volunteers will persist. "We're all tired. My people have been working nonstop since Wednesday," Haynes said. "But we're also overwhelmed by what this is going to be for the next months and years."

Canadian woman sentenced to nearly 22 years for 2020 ricin letter sent to Trump in White House

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Canadian woman was sentenced to nearly 22 years in prison in Washington Thursday in the mailing of a threatening letter containing the poison ricin to then-President Donald Trump at the White House.

Pascale Ferrier, 56, had pleaded guilty to violating biological weapons prohibitions in letters sent to Trump and to police officials in Texas, where she had been jailed for several weeks in 2019.

Her defense attorney Eugene Ohm said Ferrier has no criminal record prior to that and is an "inordinately intelligent" French immigrant who had earned a master's degree in engineering and raised two children as a single parent.

But in September 2020, prosecutors said Ferrier made the ricin at home in Quebec and mailed the potentially deadly poison derived from processing castor beans to Trump with a letter that referred to him as "The Ugly Tyrant Clown" and read in part: "If it doesn't work, I'll find better recipe for another poison, or I might use my gun when I'll be able to come. Enjoy! FREE REBEL SPIRIT."

The letter from Pascale Ferrier, which also told Trump "give up and remove your application for this election," was intercepted at a mail sorting facility in September 2020, before it could reach the White House.

She was arrested trying to enter a border crossing in Buffalo, New York, carrying a gun, a knife and hundreds of rounds of ammunition, authorities said. Investigators also found eight similar letters to law enforcement officials in charge of a Texas jail where she was held after she refused to leave a park area as it closed.

In a winding speech, Ferrier told the judge that she considers herself a "peaceful and genuinely kind person," but gets angry about problems like unfairness, abuses of power and "stupid rules." She spoke about feeling like she had done little to support her values while her children were young, and considered herself to be an "activist" rather than a "terrorist." She expressed little remorse but said, "I want to find peaceful means to achieve my goals," she said.

U.S. District Judge Dabney Friedrich handed down the 262-month sentence outlined in a plea agreement with prosecutors, which also would expel Ferrier from the country once she is released and require her to be under supervised release for life if she ever returns.

The judge noted a "real disconnect" between the Canadian grandmother who has worked toward another degree while behind bars and the crimes Ferrier pleaded guilty to. She pushed back on Ferrier's framing of her actions. "That isn't really activism," she said. "I hope you have no desire to continue on this path."

Prosecutor Michael Friedman said the sentence was an "appropriately harsh punishment" that sends a clear message.

"There is absolutely no place for politically motivated violence in the United States of America," he said. "There is no excuse for threatening public officials or targeting our public servants."

Sidelines are crowded because NFL teams are carrying 90-man rosters throughout preseason

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

More NFL hopefuls are getting an opportunity to stick around a little longer to showcase their skills this summer.

When the league eliminated the first two rounds of roster cuts in March, it allowed teams to carry 90 players throughout the preseason. Rosters have to be trimmed to 53 by Aug. 29. Last year, rosters were

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cut to 85 after the first preseason game, to 80 after the second and then 53.

"I think all coaches like that," Chiefs coach Andy Reid said about one cut. "You get an opportunity to coach the guys all the way through and that last game, they get a lot of reps. Even when we were doing four games, that last game they got a ton of reps. I just think that's a positive thing for the guys to have an opportunity to make a living at this thing, you know, shine."

Jets coach Robert Saleh especially likes the change because "there's so many guys who are making late surges where you're just not sure and you just say: 'God, if I could just have one more week with this guy,' and sometimes you have to let those guys go."

It also gives coaches more available players for practices and preseason games. More starters are playing less, if at all, in exhibition games.

"Just having the bodies so you're not wearing down these last two weeks of camp, where you can hold practices," Saleh said. "There's still a lot of guys battling for those back-end roster spots and special teams, and every year, it feels like it's the same case where you're just begging to have a few more days with certain young men and sometimes you can't."

Texans rookie wide receiver Xavier Hutchinson, a sixth-round pick out of Iowa State, is among the players fighting to earn a roster spot. He's learning to play special teams for the first time in his football career to give him an advantage because versatility helps.

"I'm learning something very new to myself," Hutchinson said. "I'm excited to see what I can do on (special teams), and excited to see if that can be a part of me helping the team out."

Packers running back Patrick Taylor, who signed as an undrafted free agent out of Memphis in 2020, has bounced between Green Bay's practice squad and the active roster after being among the final cuts in each of the past two seasons. He was released a few more times during the regular season but still appeared in 14 games in 2022.

"My main focus is on myself and controlling the things that I can control, such as my play and stuff like that," Taylor said.

Bills veteran linebacker A.J. Klein appreciates the expanded preseason rosters for a couple of reasons.

"I think it's good for the veterans who obviously need a little less workload off their legs throughout the preseason especially the second and third — used to be fourth — preseason game," Klein said. "But it also gives the younger guys an opportunity to get more tape out there, especially with the expanded practice squad rosters and the COVID rules and all the stuff that's that's been carried over. It's beneficial for everybody, for the established veterans, but also for the young guys who are looking for a major opportunity early on in preseason."

One cutdown deadline will make things more difficult for personnel staffs because 1,184 players will become available at the same time on Aug. 29. Teams are relying on their scouting evaluations to be prepared to scoop up talented players who get cut. Plus, they'll be busy assembling a 16-man practice squad so it will be hectic.

"I don't mean there is stress that way, but man there are players when that happens," Broncos coach Sean Payton said. "That's how we found (Saints tight end) Taysom Hill. He was one of those players."

Payton, who coached New Orleans from 2006-21, brought Hill to the Saints in 2017 after he was released by the Packers.

"I would say a lot of time and energy is spent on the right 53," Payton said. "That's what I think about, the right 53. We try to educate our players not to just look at the line in front of them. If you are a receiver, you're competing against the other 31 teams' depth at receiver as well. That's important. It's hard for them to understand that."

Payton makes an important point. There's no time to rest or celebrate for players on the back end of a roster because they can be cut the next day.

Pentagon review calls for reforms to reverse spike in sexual misconduct at military academies

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. military academies must improve their leadership, stop toxic practices such as hazing and shift behavior training into the classrooms, according to a Pentagon study aimed at addressing an alarming spike in sexual assaults and misconduct.

U.S. officials said the academies must train student leaders better to help their classmates, and upend what has been a disconnect between what the cadets and midshipmen are learning in school and the often negative and unpunished behavior they see by those mentors. The review calls for additional senior officers and enlisted leaders to work with students at the Army, Navy and Air Force academies and provide the expanded training.

The report, which was released Thursday, says that too often discussions about stress relief, misconduct, social media and other life issues take place after hours or on the weekends. The report recommends that those topics be addressed in classes and graded, to promote their importance.

The study comes on the heels of a report this year that showed a sharp spike in reported sexual assaults at the academies during the 2021-22 school year. It said that one in five female students said in an anonymous survey that they had experienced unwanted sexual contact. The survey results were the highest since the Defense Department began collecting that data many years ago.

Student-reported assaults at the academies jumped 18% overall compared with the previous year, fueled in part by the Navy, which had nearly double the number in 2022, compared with 2021. The anonymous survey accompanying the report found increases in all types of unwanted sexual contact — from touching to rape — at all the schools. And it cited alcohol as a key factor.

In response to the spike in assaults, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered on-site evaluations at the U.S. Naval Academy in Maryland, the Air Force Academy in Colorado and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in New York, to explore the issues and identify solutions. The new report, expected to be released Thursday, makes several immediate and longer-term recommendations to improve assault and harassment prevention and eliminate toxic climates that fuel the problems. Austin is ordering quick implementation of the changes.

In a memo, Austin acknowledges that the academies “have far more work to do to halt sexual assault and harassment.” He says the increase in assaults and harassment “is disturbing and unacceptable. It endangers our teammates and degrades our readiness.”

Elizabeth Foster, executive director of the Pentagon’s force resiliency office, told reporters Thursday that the study will set up ways to measure whether the changes are working. But she cautioned that “not only are they going to take time to implement, but cultural change does take time.”

Foster and Andra Tharp, the senior prevention adviser for the force resiliency office, said that while the academies offer a lot of strong programs, toxic and unhealthy command climates make them less effective. When cadets and midshipmen learn one thing about leadership or prevention in the classroom, but they don’t see it reinforced in other settings, it sends mixed messages about what to expect, about how to be treated and how to treat others.

Such mixed messages, they said, create cynicism and distrust.

The report points to the Air Force Academy’s longstanding system that treats freshmen differently and badly, promoting hazing and an unhealthy climate. Tharp said those students may leave the academy with a poor sense of what good leadership looks like.

“What was striking was that the message was, this is okay here and this is how we treat each other,” Tharp said. “Unfortunately, that didn’t stop once they left their freshman year.”

The officials added that a contributing factor to the behavior problems is that — like other college students around the country — many more cadets and midshipmen are arriving at the academies with previous bad experiences, ranging from assaults and harassment to thoughts of or attempts at suicide. On top of that, the report says incoming students then face a lot of stress as they grapple with their education and

the military training.

In many cases, the report says that student leaders aren't trained or equipped to handle those issues or provide proper support to the students.

Another problem, officials said, is the ever expanding influence of social media, where bullying and harassment can go on unchecked. The report pointed to Jodel, an anonymous social media app that focuses on a specific location and is in wide use by academy students.

The report said students can get inaccurate information about assault prevention, reporting, resources and military justice from the app, making them less likely to seek help.

It said training at the academies has not kept pace with change, including the ever-evolving social media platforms and how students differ today from in the past.

The report also noted that alcohol plays a significant role in misconduct. Asked about additional alcohol restrictions, Tharp said the academies can "implement all the alcohol prevention or responsible drinking as much as we want," but if those policies are implemented in a toxic command climate they won't have the intended impact.

Composer Bernstein's children defend Bradley Cooper's prosthetic nose after 'Maestro' is criticized

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — After Bradley Cooper's prosthetic nose in the trailer for the upcoming Leonard Bernstein biopic "Maestro" stoked criticism of antisemitism, the conductor's children have come to the defense of the actor.

The teaser trailer for "Maestro," which Cooper directs and stars in, debuted Tuesday and offered the first close-up look at Cooper's makeup and performance as the great American composer and longtime music director of the New York Philharmonic. Cooper, who is not Jewish, dons a prosthetic nose as part of his transformation into Bernstein, who was.

To some, Cooper's nose in the trailer seemed like the kind of outsized caricature that has been a regular feature of Jewish portrayals throughout film history. The nonprofit group Stop Antisemitism called it "sickening."

"Hollywood cast Bradley Cooper — a non-Jew — to play Jewish legend Leonard Bernstein and stuck a disgusting exaggerated 'Jew nose' on him," the group tweeted on X.

Bernstein's three children — Jamie, Alexander and Nina Bernstein — on Wednesday issued a statement supporting Cooper, saying they were "touched to the core to witness the depth of (Cooper's) commitment, his loving embrace of our father's music and the sheer open-hearted joy he brought to his exploration."

"It breaks our hearts to see any misrepresentations or misunderstandings of his efforts," the statement said. "It happens to be true that Leonard Bernstein had a nice, big nose. Bradley chose to use makeup to amplify his resemblance, and we're perfectly fine with that. We're also certain that our dad would have been fine with it as well."

The Bernstein children added that "strident complaints about this issue strike us above all as disingenuous attempts to bring a successful person down a notch — a practice we observed perpetrated all too often on our father."

A representative for Cooper declined to comment. Netflix, which is distributing the film, also wouldn't comment.

"Maestro" is set to premiere next month at the Venice Film Festival. Netflix will release it in select theaters Nov. 22 and on the streaming platform on Dec. 20.

The Cooper-Bernstein situation is multilayered; it touches not only the issue of stereotyping but the larger question of casting when it comes to certain groups. In recent years, there has been much debate throughout the acting world over who can and should portray certain characters, particularly in an environment where some groups have struggled over the decades to get regular and substantive work in Hollywood.

Emma Stone was criticized over and apologized for playing a half-Asian character in Cameron Crowe's

2015 film "Aloha." Tom Hanks has said if "Philadelphia" (1993) was made today, it would star a gay actor, "and rightly so." Some LGBTQ+ advocates have argued that trans roles like Jeffrey Tambor's in "Transparent" and Eddie Redmayne's in "The Danish Girl" ought to have been played by trans performers.

Those discussions have been largely focused on the authentic portrayals of ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+ characters, but some have argued the same perspective should also apply to Jewish characters. The stereotype of the large Jewish nose in particular has persisted in through centuries, from Shakespeare's Shylock to Nazi propaganda. "While the hooked nose is but one antisemitic caricature of many, it is particularly pernicious in that it is assumed to be true," writes the Media Diversity Institute.

"Jews Don't Count" author David Baddiel earlier this year criticized the casting of Irish actor Cillian Murphy as Jewish physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer in Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer," along with the casting of Helen Mirren as former Israel Prime Minister Golda Meir in the upcoming film "Golda."

"Casting directors are now frightened to cast except in line with the minority they are casting," Baddiel told the Times. "But they are not so worried about Jews."

Others have argued that transformation is an innate aspect of acting. Mark Harris, the Hollywood author and journalist, dismissed the controversy.

"We are not going to start fall movie season with a stupid 'backlash' controversy over an actor wearing makeup so that he can more closely resemble the historical figure he's playing," Harris wrote on X. "That is what actors have done for decades and will continue to do."

Israel clinches largest-ever defense deal with Germany for \$3.5 billion after securing US approval

By JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's Defense Ministry said Thursday it has secured its largest-ever defense deal selling a sophisticated missile defense system to Germany for \$3.5 billion after the United States approved the deal.

Although Israel has long had close economic and military links with western European countries, the deal with Germany could draw the attention of Russia. Israel has maintained working relations with Russia throughout the war in Ukraine and has repeatedly rebuffed requests to sell arms to Kyiv for fear of antagonizing Moscow.

Germany will buy the advanced defense system, coined Arrow 3, which is designed to intercept long-range ballistic missiles. Israel sought approval for the deal from the U.S. State Department because the system was jointly developed by the two countries. Israeli defense officials said the system would extend Germany's defense capability while strengthening the defense relationship between Israel and the United States.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the deal "historic."

"Seventy-five years ago the Jewish people were ground to dust on the soil of Nazi Germany," Netanyahu said. "Seventy-five years later, the Jewish state gives Germany — a different Germany — the tools to defend itself."

The sale still requires additional procedural steps by both Israel and Germany, including approval by both parliaments, according to the director of the Israeli Missile Defense Organization, Moshe Patel. Patel told reporters Thursday that the components of the missile system will be fully delivered to Germany by 2025, with the system reaching full capability by 2030.

Germany launched the European Sky Shield Initiative last year with 17 other nations, including the United Kingdom and Sweden, which is a joint European air defense system after the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius welcomed the U.S. approval allowing the deal to move forward.

"This procurement plan is essential for us in order to be able to protect Germany from ballistic missile attacks in the future," he said in a statement posted by his ministry on the social platform X, formerly known as Twitter. He added that "the project also constitutes a signal of our special German-Israeli relations."

Uzi Rubin, the former director of Israel's missile defense program, said Arrow 3 could be moved to act as a long-range ballistic missile shield for other European countries. He said it was the best defense avail-

able against the threat of ballistic missiles but does not protect against cruise missiles or others flying at lower altitudes.

While Israel has turned down requests to provide Ukraine with weapons, it has sent humanitarian aid.

Israel has a delicate relationship with Russia, with which it coordinates on security issues in neighboring Syria. Israel has carried out hundreds of airstrikes against Iranian military positions in recent years in Syria. Russia is also home to a large Jewish community.

By moving ahead on Arrow 3 with Germany, Israel appears to be counting on the fact that the deal, as well as a sale of a different missile defense system to NATO member Finland, involves only defensive weapons — and will not fundamentally disrupt cordial relations with Russia.

"Relations are a bit strained," said Rubin, who is also an expert at the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security, a think tank. "But still, we are not supplying Ukraine with any weapons. We do that because we want to keep relations with Russia at an acceptable level."

'Blue Beetle' director Ángel Manuel Soto says the DC film is a 'love letter to our ancestors'

By LESLIE AMBRIZ Associated Press

WEST HOLLYWOOD, Calif.. (AP) — Director Ángel Manuel Soto didn't think too much about the "Latino side of things" when visually crafting DC's "Blue Beetle" alongside Mexican screenwriter Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer.

The film — starring "Cobra Kai's" Xolo Maridueña as Jaime Reyes, aka Blue Beetle and DC's first Latino superhero — oozes with Mexican references and elements of other Latin American cultures through almost every scene. Still, the Puerto Rican director says that all of this came naturally due to his and Dunnet-Alcocer's backgrounds.

"We never were like, 'Okay, so how are we going to make this Latino?' We cannot hide who we are. If we have the opportunity to tell our collective experiences because we are Latino, they're going to come out Latino."

In "Blue Beetle," Reyes finds himself in possession of an ancient scarab named Khaji Da made of alien biotechnology that chooses Reyes as its symbiotic host. In a hilarious scene, the scarab attaches itself to Reyes, transforming the hesitant young adult into a superhero.

Soto is promoting the film by himself due to the ongoing Hollywood strikes, which prohibit actors and screenwriters from promoting work under television and theatrical contracts. Still, he made sure to bring his cast along for the ride via a culturally relevant white shirt with illustrations of his lead cast as Mexican Loteria characters during the Los Angeles leg of the press tour. The game is similar to bingo and is popular in Mexican and Mexican-American households.

"I know they're sad that they cannot be here, but they understand that what they're doing is important for the future generations, and they have my full support, so the least I could do was bring them with me," said Soto. "I know they're here in spirit."

Soto hopes that audiences will still show up to support the film when it opens Friday.

"Hopefully, people will watch the movie because it is a good movie, and our cast killed it and they're going to fall in love with them," said Soto.

The Associated Press sat down with Soto to chat more about the film's seamless Mexican and Latino cultural references and why he was initially hesitant to take on the project.

Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: What has it been like being on this press tour, having to promote it on your own?

SOTO: I love talking about what I love. I think as exhausting as it might be, because it's a lot for one person to do, connecting with fans and having experiences with people from other cultures, from other countries definitely fuels the energy cause I'm learning a lot. I learn a lot when I talk to people. I get reassurance, I get empowered. So any depletion of energy caused to forced nights of sleep and constant travel are immediately replenished when interacting with beautiful people.

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AP: I read that you originally wanted to pitch a Bane origin story, but instead, DC presented you with this film. What was it like for you mentally having to pivot from wanting to tell a supervillain origin story to this coming-of-age superhero one?

SOTO: I had no idea they were working on something like "Blue Beetle." Coming out of the success of a film like "The Joker" and understanding there's other characters that might have so many things to explore, I wanted to pitch that Bane idea. So they came in and was like, 'Yeah, that's a great idea. But we got this product here, and it's "Blue Beetle." I knew a little bit about Blue Beetle. I knew that Jaime Reyes was in it. My first reaction was that I didn't want to brownwash something, you know, that already existed. It's okay if there's familiarity with certain things, but I didn't want to be that person that my Latinidad had to conform to somebody else's expectations of Latinidad. I wanted to be able to be free, and I wanted the actors that I hired that are Latino to be authentically themselves.

So when I said that, they were like, 'Oh, no, no, don't worry. Our writer is Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer. He is a Mexican from Querétaro and just read the script. Let me know what you think.' And when I read the script, I could see that the person who wrote it not only is Latino, but he wrote characters that he knows and they were so relatable because we've realized that even though we're both from different countries, we're so similar. Our families are so similar. The music, the TV shows, we grew up exactly the same, just in different countries. And we're like, 'Oh my gosh, this is special because not only Mexicans are going to connect. I think all Latinos are going to connect. And consequently, all the people that are not Latino also are going to connect if they're open and curious.

AP: Can you talk more about how you and Dunnett-Alcocer settled on the story? I love how you found a way for the women to all be strong figures and also to blend all of these Latino cultures in the film.

SOTO: We know the tropes, right? We know the hero's journey, and we all know the superhero genre, how it works. We didn't want to miss the opportunity (to) tell the story through a different lens. For us, it's hard to keep a secret from your mother or family because they're always in your face, always up your nose. And we wanted to like, 'Okay, that's going to happen, then let's just keep them in from the beginning.' They were in the transformation. They're still going to be their family, and they're going to bully him because he is a reluctant hero. Not reluctant for a moment, the whole film, he just wants this (scarab) out and then he ends up understanding that that's his destiny and that could not have happened without his family.

And we wanted to create this love letter to the people that came before us, to our ancestors, especially to the women in our life. None of my family are damsels in distress. They're tougher than I can ever be. And we wanted to honor that. They paved the way and they are heroes in their own right. So we wanted to give them heroic arcs because it is important to see the women in our lives differently than society has pushed them to be.

AP: The soundtrack seemingly includes every Latino music legend. Why was it important for the soundtrack to be mostly Latinos?

SOTO: You know, the movies that you have seen, every time they go to a Latin country, if they go to Mexico, it's always the same music. If they go to the Caribbean, it's always the same music. And the truth is that, yeah, we listen to that, but we also listen to other stuff. Not only do we consume stuff from the U.S., but we also have great rock bands in our countries. Just because other people have not heard it doesn't mean that they're not great. So the same way that I've been introduced to other music from the U.S. without any complaints, I wanted to introduce to the world, to the music that I grew up with, hoping they don't complain about it either.

Bills' Damar Hamlin has little more to prove in completing comeback, coach Sean McDermott says

By JOHN WAWROW AP Sports Writer

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP) — Damar Hamlin has little more to prove to Bills coach Sean McDermott in the third-year safety's bid to resume his football career after a near-death experience during a game at Cincinnati in January.

"From my non-medical standpoint, I think he's checked all the boxes as far as that goes," McDermott said on Thursday. "There's just been enough of a sample where you're saying, he's executed well and come out of that healthy."

McDermott based his assessment on how Hamlin has showed no signs of hesitation in passing each milestone of his recovery, and especially since the Bills began practicing with pads three weeks ago. Adding to that, the coach was further reassured by Hamlin's performance in Buffalo's preseason-opening win over Indianapolis last weekend.

Hamlin was in on three tackles — including stopping Evan Hull for no gain on fourth-and-1 — in playing 22 defensive snaps in his first competitive setting since going into cardiac arrest and being resuscitated on the field after making what appeared to be a routine tackle against the Bengals on Jan. 2. Hamlin's heart stopped as a result of commotio cordis, which is when a direct blow at a specific point in a heartbeat causes cardiac arrest.

Following the Colts game, McDermott called Hamlin's performance "a remarkable display of courage and strength and faith," while adding: "What we just witnessed, to me, is remarkable."

McDermott's backing of Hamlin represents the latest signal the player is on track to make the Bills roster and re-secure his backup spot behind starters Micah Hyde and Jordan Poyer.

The Bills have two more preseason games left, starting with a notable one for Hamlin on Saturday, when Buffalo travels to the player's hometown of Pittsburgh. The 25-year-old Hamlin grew up in the city's exurb of McKees Rocks and then spent his college career at Pitt before being drafted by Buffalo in 2021.

Hamlin was already looking forward to the game against the Steelers by noting he will have many family members and friends in attendance.

The Bills close their preseason at Chicago on Aug. 26 before being required to make their final cuts three days later.

North Korea is preparing for a new round of weapons tests, South Korean spy agency says

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea is preparing for a new round of provocative weapons displays such as long-range missile tests and a spy satellite launch, as it ramps up illicit activities to support its fragile economy, South Korea's intelligence service told lawmakers Thursday.

North Korea's chronic economic hardships and food shortages have worsened as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and U.N. sanctions. But it still has conducted a record number of missile tests since last year amid suspicions that its weapons programs are funded by illegal cyber activities and covert exports of banned items.

The National Intelligence Service told lawmakers in a closed-door briefing that North Korea's economy shrank each year in 2020-2022 and its gross domestic product last year was 12% less than in 2016, according to Yoo Sang-bum, one of the lawmakers who attended the briefing.

Outside experts believe North Korea's current food shortages and economic troubles are the worst since leader Kim Jong Un took power in late 2011. But they say there are no signs of an imminent famine or major public unrest that could threaten Kim's grip on his 26 million people.

The food problem has been aggravated by attempts by the government to restrict market activities, dwindling personal incomes, and pandemic-related curbs that decimated foreign trade, according to North

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Korea monitoring groups.

The NIS told lawmakers that in the first half of this year, North Korea covertly exported an estimated 1.7 million tons of coal, up more than 300% from a year earlier, and 580 kilograms (1,280 pounds) of gold, up 50%, both in violation of U.N. sanctions, according to Yoo.

It estimated that North Korea has stolen more than \$1.5 billion in virtual assets since 2015, Yoo said.

The NIS has a spotty record in reporting developments in North Korea, one of the world's most secretive nations, but is generally more reliable than civilian monitoring groups. Calls to the NIS were unanswered Thursday.

The NIS also said that Kim is expected to resume weapons testing in response to major annual U.S.-South Korean military drills that begin next week and a trilateral U.S.-South Korea-Japan summit at Camp David in the United States this Friday.

The NIS said it has detected unusually heavy activities at a North Korean facility that produces solid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missiles and at another site related to liquid-fueled ICBMs, Yoo said in a televised briefing.

The NIS said North Korea also may try to launch a spy satellite in late August or early September to mark the country's 75th anniversary on Sept. 9. The NIS said North Korea has been testing an engine for the rocket to be used for the launch and has installed an additional land antenna to receive satellite data, Yoo said.

It would be North Korea's second attempt this year to put a spy satellite into orbit. In its first attempt in late May, the rocket crashed into the ocean soon after liftoff. North Korean state media said it lost thrust following the separation of its first and second stages.

Kim has vowed to develop a number of high-tech weapons systems including a military reconnaissance satellite in response to what North Korea calls U.S. military threats.

North Korea is extremely sensitive to U.S. efforts to bolster its alliances with South Korea and Japan. Since the start of 2022, the North has conducted more than 100 weapons tests, saying it needs to strengthen its own military capabilities in response to expanding U.S.-South Korean exercises, which have included a U.S. aircraft carrier, long-range bombers and a nuclear-armed submarine.

North Korea has demonstrated that its ICBMs have the potential range to reach the U.S. mainland, but many analysts believe it still needs to master some remaining technological challenges. Its shorter-range missiles are capable of targeting South Korea and Japan.

Three of North Korea's four known types of ICBMs use liquid fuels and the fourth employs solid fuel. Solid-fueled missiles are easier to move and fire quickly, making them more difficult to detect before launch.

Today in History: August 18, 19th Amendment is ratified, guaranteeing women right to vote

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, Aug. 18, the 230th day of 2023. There are 135 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 18, 1587, Virginia Dare became the first child of English parents to be born in present-day America, on what is now Roanoke Island in North Carolina.

On this date:

In 1894, Congress established the Bureau of Immigration.

In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson issued his Proclamation of Neutrality, aimed at keeping the United States out of World War I.

In 1920, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, guaranteeing American women's right to vote, was ratified as Tennessee became the 36th state to approve it.

In 1963, James Meredith became the first Black student to graduate from the University of Mississippi.

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In 1969, the Woodstock Music and Art Fair in Bethel, New York, wound to a close after three nights with a mid-morning set by Jimi Hendrix.

In 1983, Hurricane Alicia slammed into the Texas coast, leaving 21 dead and causing more than a billion dollars' worth of damage.

In 1993, a judge in Sarasota, Florida, ruled that Kimberly Mays, the 14-year-old girl who had been switched at birth with another baby, need never again see her biological parents, Ernest and Regina Twigg, in accordance with her stated wishes. (However, Kimberly later moved in with the Twiggs.)

In 2004, in Athens, Paul Hamm (hahm) won the men's gymnastics all-around Olympic gold medal by the closest margin ever in the event; controversy followed after it was discovered a scoring error cost Yang Tae-young of South Korea the title.

In 2005, a judge in Wichita, Kansas, sentenced BTK serial killer Dennis Rader to 10 consecutive life terms, the maximum the law would allow.

In 2011, Vice President Joe Biden met with Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

In 2014, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon ordered the National Guard to Ferguson, a suburb of St. Louis convulsed by protests over the fatal shooting of a Black 18-year-old, Michael Brown.

In 2020, Democrats formally made Joe Biden their 2020 presidential nominee at their all-virtual national convention.

Ten years ago: David Miranda, partner of Guardian reporter Glenn Greenwald, who'd received leaks from former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden, was detained for nearly nine hours at London's Heathrow airport, triggering claims authorities were trying to interfere with reporting on the issue. Usain Bolt won his third gold medal of the world championships held in Moscow, anchoring Jamaica to victory in the 4 x 100-meter relay.

Five years ago: Kofi Annan (KOH'-fee AN'-nan), the first Black African to become United Nations secretary-general, died at the age of 80. Pakistan's cricket-star-turned-politician Imran Khan was sworn in as the country's prime minister despite protests by opposition parties, which accused the security services of intervening on his behalf in the July elections.

One year ago: A federal judge ordered the Justice Department to put forward proposed redactions as he committed to making public at least part of the affidavit supporting the search warrant for former President Donald Trump's estate in Florida. Cleveland Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson was ordered to serve an 11-game unpaid suspension, pay a \$5 million fine and undergo required professional evaluation and counseling following accusations of sexual misconduct by two dozen women. Three men, including a Mafia hitman, were charged in the killing of notorious Boston crime boss James "Whitey" Bulger in a West Virginia prison.

Today's Birthdays: Former first lady Rosalynn Carter is 96. Actor-director Robert Redford is 87. Actor Henry G. Sanders is 81. Actor-comedian Martin Mull is 80. Rock musician Dennis Elliott is 73. Comedian Elayne Boosler is 71. Actor Denis Leary is 66. Actor Madeleine Stowe is 65. Former Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner (GYT'-nur) is 62. ABC News reporter Bob Woodruff is 62. The former president of Mexico, Felipe Calderon, is 61. Actor Adam Storke is 61. Actor Craig Bierko (BEER'-koh) is 59. Rock singer-musician Zac Maloy (The Nixons) is 55. Rock singer and hip-hop artist Everlast is 54. Rapper Masta Killa (Wu-Tang Clan) is 54. Actor Christian Slater is 54. Actor Edward Norton is 54. Actor Malcolm-Jamal Warner is 53. Actor Kaitlin Olson is 48. Rock musician Dirk Lance is 47. Actor-comedian Andy Samberg (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 45. Country musician Brad Tursi (Old Dominion) is 44. Actor Mika Boorem is 36. Actor Maia Mitchell is 30. Actor Madelaine Petsch is 29. Actor Parker McKenna Posey is 28.