

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 1 of 76

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [1- M-P VB Schedule Change](#)
- [2- Newsweek Bulletin](#)
- [3- Football Stat Sheet](#)
- [4- Photos from Football Game](#)
- [6- Kory is turning 40](#)
- [7- Photos from Hamlin Volleyball Match](#)
- [9- Drought Monitor](#)
- [10- South Dakota Average Gas Prices](#)
- [11- SD SearchLight: Kansas newspaper saga illustrates the balancing act of community news](#)
- [12- SD SearchLight: Decision looms by Sept. 6 on pipeline permit, overruling counties](#)
- [13- SD SearchLight: At the border, politicians play while migrants pay](#)
- [14- SD SearchLight: Updated COVID-19 vaccines expected to be available in September, federal officials say](#)
- [16- Weather Pages](#)
- [20- Daily Devotional](#)
- [21- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [22- Subscription Form](#)
- [23- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [24- News from the Associated Press](#)

M-P VB Schedule Change

The Mobridge/Pollock volleyball match has been moved to Monday, October 2nd. C game will be at 4pm, JV game at 5pm, Varsity to follow

JH will now play M/P at home on Monday, September 11th with both 7th and 8th grade at 5pm

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



Saturday, Aug. 26

Girls Soccer at Vermillion, 1 p.m.
Boys Soccer at Vermillion, 2:30 p.m.
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 27

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.
United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.
Monday, Aug. 28
Senior Menu: Chicken tetrazzini, mixed vegetables, honey fruit salad, lettuce salad with dressing, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.
School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, green beans.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 2 of 76

The Bulletin by Newsweek

World in Brief

Another interest rate hike could be on the way in September as the U.S. continues its battle with inflation, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell warned during an economic symposium in Wyoming.

Michigan authorities reported at least five deaths in connection with storms that blew through the state on Thursday. The National Weather Service is reviewing suspected tornado activity in the area, with at least four confirmed to have touched down.

A precautionary evacuation has been lifted for Louisiana residents living within a two-mile radius of a fire that broke out at a petroleum refinery in Garyville.

Officials in Maui County have shared a list naming the 388 people who are still missing following this month's deadly wildfires.

The 2028 Republican National Convention will be held in Houston, Texas. Party officials approved the location Friday in an unusually early announcement.

Early results in Zimbabwe's general election show the opposition CCC party neck and neck with ZANU-PF, the party once led by Robert Mugabe and which has held power for more than 40 years.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Yan Igorevich Petrovskiy, the co-leader of Russian neo-Nazi paramilitary group Task Force Rusich which has been fighting for Moscow in Ukraine, has been arrested in Finland. Ukraine has reportedly requested his extradition..

TALKING POINTS

"We are attentive to signs that the economy may not be cooling as expected. We are prepared to raise rates further if appropriate and intend to hold policy at a restrictive level until we are confident that inflation is moving sustainably down toward our objective." Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell explained why the Fed may consider yet another interest rate hike at its upcoming September meeting during the Jackson Hole Annual Symposium in Wyoming on Friday.

"I warned the Pentagon that I would hold their most senior nominees if they broke the law. They did it anyway, and forced my hand. Since then, Chuck Schumer and the Biden Administration have refused any serious negotiations, and so this situation has dragged on. This has given me more time to look more closely into the background of some of these nominees, and I have deep concerns about some of them. I will continue this process of oversight and I will announce my opposition to specific nominees in the weeks ahead," Alabama Sen. Tommy Tuberville said in a statement to Breitbart News.

"I do not want to deal in unproven facts, but my firm personal conviction is that, yes, this was the case. They were being bribed. The fact that Joe Biden gave away \$1 billion in U.S. money in exchange for my dismissal, my firing, isn't that alone a case of corruption?" former Prosecutor General of Ukraine Viktor Shokin told Fox News..

WHAT TO WATCH IN THE DAYS AHEAD

The 2023 World Athletics Championships wind to an end on Sunday with the finals for eight running and field events.

National Cinema Day returns to select theaters across the U.S. on Sunday. Moviegoers can purchase tickets for just \$4 at participating theaters.

A post-game Vanilla Ice concert at the home of the White Sox in Chicago was canceled after two women were shot at the Guaranteed Rate Field stadium. A message on the big screen attributed the cancellation of the show to "technical issues."

Former President Donald Trump and the 18 others indicted alongside him in Georgia all met a Friday deadline to surrender to Fulton County authorities. Meanwhile, Zillow told Newsweek a listing appearing to show that Trump sold his signature Mar-a-Lago luxury residence in Florida weeks before turning himself in is "incorrect."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 3 of 76

Football: Groton Area 56, Redfield 6

Groton Area Tigers

Rushing: 28 carries for 244
Korbin Kucker 15-133, 2 TD
Keegen Tracy 7-18, 2TD
Taylor Diegel 3-8
Lane Tietz 3-(-15)

Passing: Completed 8 of 9 for 145 Yards, 3 TD
Lane Tietz completed 7 of 7 for 143 yards, 3 TD
Korbin Kucker completed 1 of 2 for 2 yards

Receivers:

Colby Dunker 3-87, 2 TD
Taylor Diegel 2-24, 1 TD
Keegen Tracy 3-34

Fumbles: Had 1, lost 0

Penalties: 3 for 20 yards

Defensive Leaders

Christian Ehresmann, 6 tackles, 1 sack
Brevin Fliehs, 6 tackles
Holden Sippel, 1 sack
Taylor Diegel, 1 sack, 2 interceptions
Carter Moody, 2 sacks
Logan Ringgenberg, 1 sack
Keegen Tracy, 1 interception

Record: 1-1 (NEC: 1-1)

Next Game: Friday at Dakota Hills at Waubay

Scoring:

First Quarter

10:19: Groton: Taylor Diegel, 40 yard interception return. PAT kick no good.6-0
5:55: Groton: Korbin Kucker, 5 yard run. PAT: Kucker pass to Tracy. 14-0
4:27: Groton: Korbin Kucker 16 yard pass from Lane Tietz. PAT: Kucker kick..... 21-0
0:14: Groton: Korbin Kucker 6 yard run. (PAT kick no good) 27-0
0:00: Groton: Keegen Tracy 30 yard pass from Lane Tietz. PAT: Tracy run 35-0

Second Quarter

11:19: Redfield: Justin Ratigan, 33 yard pass from Chase McGillvary. PAT: Run no good..... 35-6
6:46: Groton: Keegen Tracy, 75 yard run. PAT: Run no good41-6

Third Quarter

0:38: Groton: Colby Dunker, 43 yard pass from Lane Tietz. PAT: Kucker kick 48-6

Fourth Quarter

6:21: Groton: Colby Dunker, 23 yard pass from Lane Tietz. PAT: Kucker run 56-6
Mercy Rule: End of Game

Redfield Pheasants

Rushing: 15 carries for -16 yards
Chase McGillvary 11-(-12)
Jacob Buranen 4-(-4)

Passing: 6 of 13 for 112 yards, 1 TD, 3 Int.
Chase McGillvary All Passes

Receivers:

Justin Ratigan 6-112, 1 TD

Fumbles: Had 1, lost 0

Penalties: 1 for 15 yards

Defensive Leaders

Justin Ratigan 8 tackles
Noah Johnson, 5 tackles
Chase McGillvary, 5 tackles

Record: 0-2 (NEC: 0-1)

Next Game: at Roncalli

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 4 of 76



Colby Dunker makes a catch and runs down for a touchdown. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Korbin Kucker gives big bear hug and brings down this Redfield player. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Taylor Diegel gains a few yards before being tripped up by Redfield's Ayden Understock-Jessen.

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 5 of 76



Lane Tietz throws a pass as he was a perfect seven for seven on the night. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Korbin Kucker looks for an open teammate. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Gridiron team runs past Redfield

Groton Area Football Coach Shaun Wanner had just one word to describe Groton's 56-6 win over Redfield. "Execution." He said that was the main key to the game as the Tigers executed the plays well and dominated the game.

Groton Area scored five touchdowns in the first quarter while the defense had five sacks and three interceptions. Korbin Kucker had 133 yards rushing, Colby Dunker had 76 yards receiving, and Lane Tietz completed seven of seven passes for 142 yards and three touchdowns.

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM with Mike Nehls, Paul Kosel and Jeslyn Kosel, sponsored by John Sieh Agency, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber, Bierman Farm Services, Locke Electric, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, BK Custom T's & More, Krueger Brothers, Groton Ford, Blocker Construction, Full Circle Ag, S & S Lumber.



Keegen Tracy makes the catch just inside the field. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 6 of 76

Kory is turning 40

Come join in on the fun

Saturday, August 26, 2023

At 4:00 at the Other Place Bar in Andover, SD



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 7 of 76

Volleyball Photos from the Hamlin Match



Anna Fjeldheim
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Chesney Weber
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Jerrica Locke
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Elizabeth Fliehs
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 8 of 76



Faith Traphagen
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Rylee Dunker
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Laila Roberts
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Carly Guthmiller
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Emma Kutter
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 9 of 76

Drought Classification

None

D0 (Abnormally Dry)

D1 (Moderate Drought)

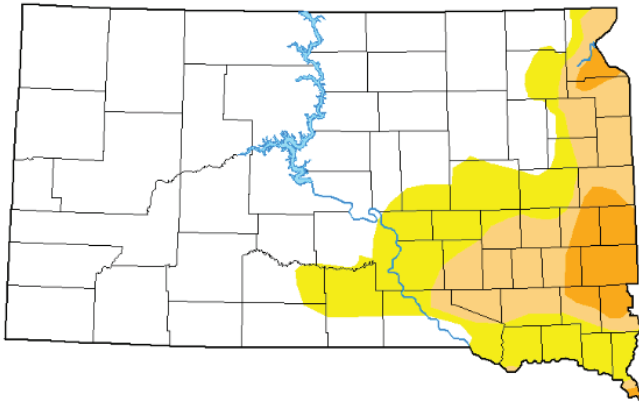
D2 (Severe Drought)

D3 (Extreme Drought)

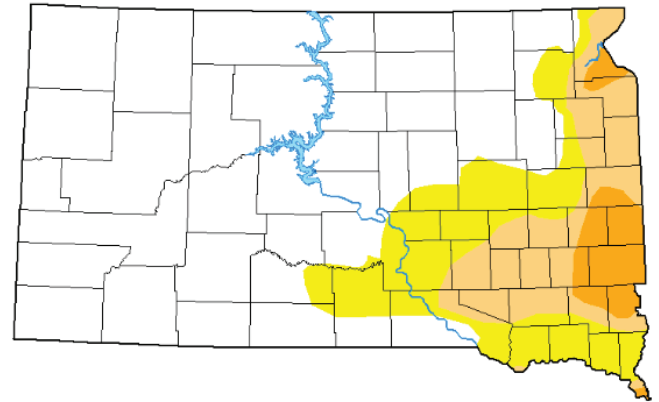
D4 (Exceptional Drought)

No Data

Drought Monitor



August 22



August 15

On this week's map, no changes were made across the Plains states while some minor improvements were made in northwestern Wyoming and some degradations in south-central Colorado. Across the Plains, hot and dry conditions prevailed across much of the region this week with well-above normal temperatures (2 to 8 degrees F) observed, except for areas of the Dakotas where temperatures were a few degrees below normal. In terms of the overall drought situation, the past 60-day period has been marked with some improvements in response to above-normal precipitation across areas of Kansas and Nebraska. However, the longer-term dry signal has remained intact across areas of the region and continues to be reflected in various drought indicators including soil moisture and streamflow levels.

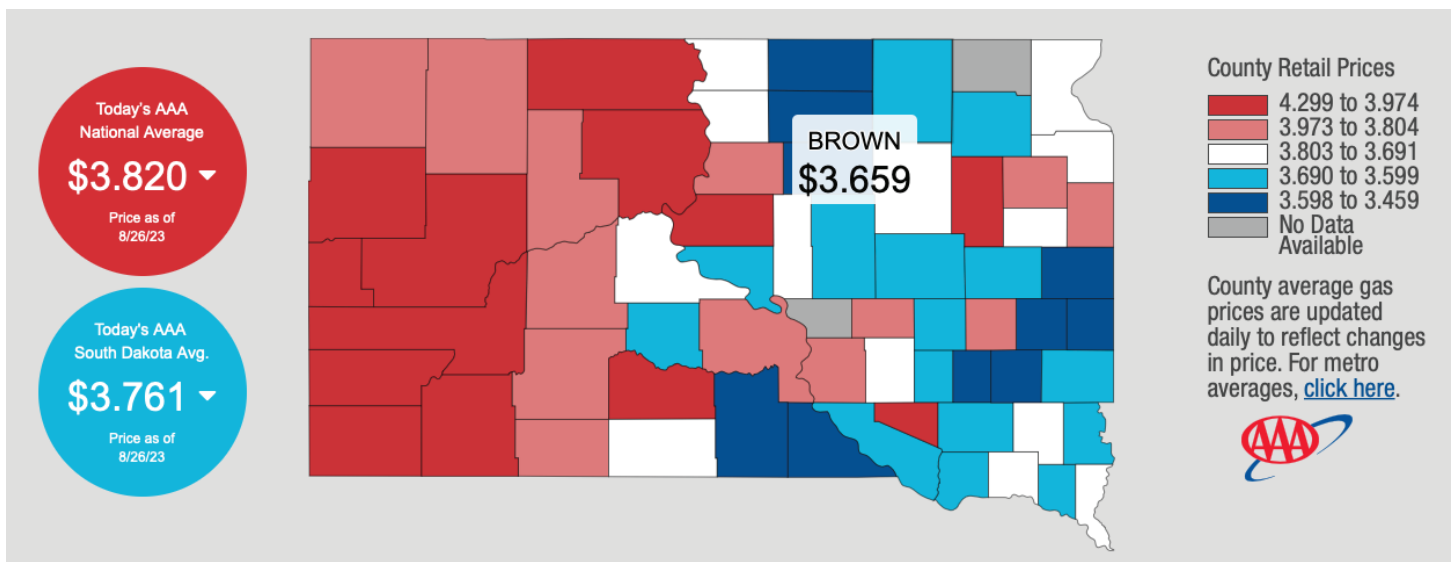
Broton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 10 of 76

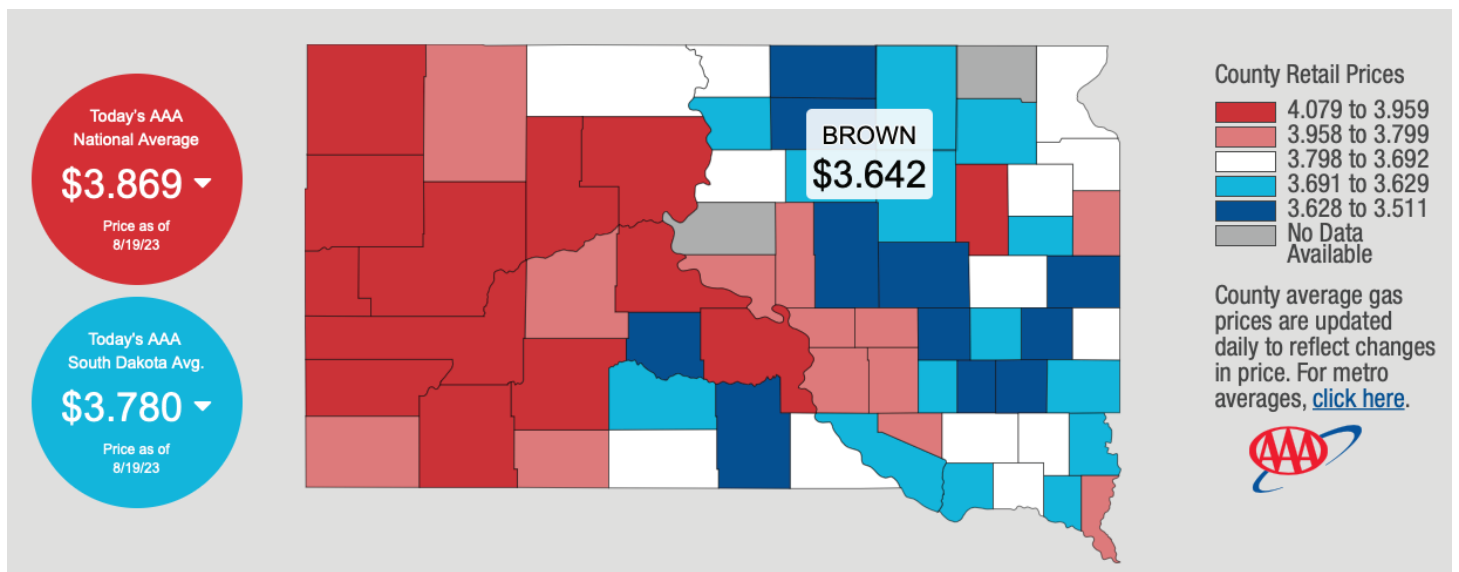
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$3.761	\$3.911	\$4.369	\$4.165
Yesterday Avg.	\$3.763	\$3.928	\$4.382	\$4.156
Week Ago Avg.	\$3.780	\$3.965	\$4.415	\$4.132
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.562	\$3.695	\$4.163	\$3.743
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.828	\$4.021	\$4.486	\$4.811

This Week



Two Weeks Ago



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 11 of 76



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

COMMENTARY

Kansas newspaper saga illustrates the balancing act of community news

DAVID BORDEWYK

One of my favorite newspaper mottos is “the only newspaper in the world that cares about (insert community name).” Over the years, I have seen various newspapers print it on their front-page nameplate. In many respects, the motto captures what a good newspaper is all about — publishing news and information about the community that informs and engages its citizens.

Sometimes that job is far from easy. Especially for newspapers intent on taking their journalistic responsibilities seriously.

Recently, you may have seen the news that spread like a prairie fire about the weekly newspaper in Marion, Kansas, that was the subject of a search warrant by local police. The police seized the newspaper’s computers, cell phones and documents. They also took computers from the editor’s home. All stemming from a convoluted small-town drama involving a businesswoman who doesn’t like the newspaper. Plus, police accusations that a newspaper reporter broke the law.

By week’s end, police had rescinded the search warrant and returned seized equipment to the newspaper. It appeared the story was winding down, but not before nationwide outrage came from those who advocate for the First Amendment and a free press — including myself — about how this incident represented an attack on journalism and a threat to democracy itself.

We’ve since learned more about the story.

The Washington Post reported that the local police chief sought the search warrant because he believed a Marion County Record reporter may have broken the law by impersonating someone else to obtain information from an online state government database. The newspaper’s editor and lawyer said no law was violated and that the reporter accessed the government record only for research purposes allowed under the law. In short, journalism is not a crime.

The New York Times published a broader story about tension between the Marion County Record and some Marion residents because of what those residents perceive to be unnecessary and overly aggressive news coverage by the hometown newspaper. A quote from the Times story:

“The role should of course be positive about everything that is going on in Marion, and not stir things up and look at the negative side of things,” said Mitch Carlson, who co-owns the local grocery store.

Marion County Record Editor Eric Meyer responded that he believes the newspaper’s watchdog reporting ultimately makes the community better. As the Times reported, not everyone in Marion agrees with Meyer.

Besides First Amendment and free press debates, the Kansas story raises another important question. How does a community newspaper strike a proper balance in the way it covers the community and what it publishes on the printed pages and online? What is the happy medium?

There is a distinction between civic boosterism and watchdog reporting, and there is a place for both in a good community newspaper. Reporting aggressively about local government and asking tough questions of those in authority do not disqualify a newspaper from also amplifying hometown civic pride and running stories and photos that end up on refrigerator doors and in family scrapbooks.

Journalism school teaches you how to gather and report news accurately and fairly. Knowing how to cover the difficult stories that may irritate your subscribers and fellow residents is no easy task. Especially when those mad at you are your neighbors and friends you see on the street every day.

The story out of Kansas may not be over. Regardless, it is a good lesson about the role newspapers play in their communities and why it should never be taken for granted by those who run them and by

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 12 of 76

those who read them.

There is no exact science or playbook to follow when putting together a good, solid newspaper that keeps a community informed. It's more of an artform than anything. It comes with having a good ear to the ground and a keen sense of the community's pulse. Again, no easy task.

An adage says you are not doing your job as an editor if something you wrote doesn't make someone mad. The same can be said about writing a story that makes someone smile.

There is room for both in the newspaper.

David Bordewyk is executive director of the South Dakota Newspaper Association, which represents the state's 105 newspapers.

Decision looms by Sept. 6 on pipeline permit, overruling counties

BY: JOHN HULT - AUGUST 25, 2023 5:52 PM

The Public Utilities Commission will decide at a later date whether it will overrule county zoning officials on behalf of a carbon pipeline company.

Friday marked the second day of a two-day hearing in Pierre on the question of county authority, brought by Navigator CO2 Ventures, the company behind one of two proposed carbon pipelines that might pass through South Dakota.

Navigator wants commissioners to shoot down county-level restrictions on pipeline construction its representatives say are untenable. On the first day, a Navigator official named Monica Howard said the rules in Minnehaha and Moody counties represent uniquely targeted attempts to scuttle pipeline projects that backers see as critical to the future of the Midwest's ethanol industry. Howard testified that the county ordinances amount to 11th-hour rule changes to the permitting process.

Navigator's Heartland Greenway project and a similar pipeline pitch from Summit Carbon Solutions would move pressurized carbon gas from ethanol plants for underground sequestration. That would allow for ethanol sales in states with low carbon requirements and open up billions in federal tax credits for the pipeline companies.

On Friday, Commissioner Gary Hanson pushed Howard on the right of counties to manage their land use, and questioned her on how Navigator could characterize county zoning rules passed in 2023 as unexpected.

The pipelines have been controversial in South Dakota. Several bills aiming to regulate carbon pipelines appeared in the Legislature in 2023, and counties along the route have heard citizen complaints about safety and land rights for more than a year.

"It's extremely difficult to understand how a business the size of Navigator, with all the personnel that you say are involved, could possibly have not seen this (coming) when hundreds of people were turning out and demanding that some government entity pass some rules," Hanson said.

Howard said counties dismissed her company's suggestions based on "an established, vetted route" that complies with federal regulations and instead passed "arbitrary setbacks" for homes, schools, churches and cities.

"I'm not saying counties can't or shouldn't enact regulation, but not at this point," Howard said.

Most of the day was taken up by testimony from county zoning officials from Minnehaha and Moody counties. Each testified that pipeline companies were offered ample opportunities to give feedback. In Moody County, Planning Director Kendra Eng said, the company had the same amount of time as anyone else at its pipeline ordinance meetings.

The PUC did not make a decision on the question of preempting county ordinances on Friday.

The commission directed lawyers for both sides to prepare legal briefs on the issue, and to file them by Tuesday. The PUC has pledged to make its decision on Navigator's pipeline permit application, and on the preemption question, by Sept. 6.

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

COMMENTARY

At the border, politicians play while migrants pay

BRAD JOHNSON

Sister Teresa Ann Wolf from the Mother of God Monastery in Watertown recently comforted a young, pregnant Guatemalan woman who collapsed in pain after crossing the Rio Grande River, her baby breached and both lives in peril.

Gov. Kristi Noem recently flew to the Texas border, where she joined Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and a few other Republican governors to grandstand on the issue of border security. She boasted about deploying "my" South Dakota National Guard to the Texas border.

She called the border crisis "a war. It's a war for our country, and for our federal laws that have been passed in our Constitution. They are threatening our sovereignty right now, and the cartels are out for blood, and they are facilitating the trafficking of our children each and every day."

Actually, it is not a war – that's occurring in Ukraine where real bombs and bullets are killing people and destroying communities.

This is a humanitarian crisis caused by comfortable, privileged politicians like Noem, who will address the Freedom Conference and Festival on Saturday at a ritzy Beaver Creek, Colorado, ski resort. While they seek personal glory and political gain, others offer hope and compassion.

That is what Sister Teresa, Watertown Multicultural Center Director Jim Shroll, WMC board members Randy Howey and former Watertown Mayor Sarah Caron did recently.

They traveled to Mission Border Hope in Eagle Pass, Texas, where nearby in the river, Gov. Abbott ordered buoys and razor wire installed to deter immigrant crossings. Instead, they've caused injury and death.

Mission Border Hope, operated by a religious order, takes in immigrants brought by the U.S. Border Patrol. Some stay a few hours, some a few days before leaving to join family or friends elsewhere. Sister Teresa called the situation "inhumane" largely because "the whole situation has been politicized. It seems there is little concern about the basic humanity of these children, or anybody. It's a continuation of a very cruel and heartless system."

She said when politicians mischaracterize the immigration issue, real people are hurt.

"People come for a reason," she said. "Usually, it is because they have no other choice, whether they are fleeing corruption, politics, gang violence or crop failures. Some come when they are threatened or have had a family member killed and are forced to flee."

The vast majority are not criminals.

"They are hardworking, and they would do any type of work," Sister Teresa said. "Contrary to what politicians say, they are not looking for handouts. They want to work. They need a hand up to get on their feet. They need a job, a place to live and to send their children to school. They are glad to take any work, at any pay to make a life, to work hard to support themselves."

South Dakota, which Noem says has more than 25,000 open jobs, could use legal immigrants. Many already staff construction crews, dairies, cheese factories, meat processing plants and other factories. Some likely will serve Noem in Beaver Creek.

Instead of spending her time cutting commercials posing as a plumber or a dental assistant to attract new people to our state, Noem could pressure Congress to create a humane immigration system.

Sister Teresa pointed her finger at Congress.

If she could speak directly to South Dakota's U.S. Senators John Thune and Mike Rounds and Congressman Dusty Johnson, as well as Noem, this is what she'd say:

"In the name of God, in the name of justice, in the name of the Gospel, do your job," she said with a tear in her eye and a fierceness to her voice. "Approach immigration reform with compassion, justice and timeliness. This is your responsibility, and you can't push it off on other people or onto other political people. If you are not responsible, you are answerable to God."

"I always think of the Gospel of Matthew and the Last Judgment. I was hungry. I was thirsty. I was sick, I was in prison, and you ministered to me, or you did not. There is no in-between."

Brad Johnson is a Watertown real estate appraiser, former newspaper reporter and editor, and longtime opinion columnist.

Updated COVID-19 vaccines expected to be available in September, federal officials say

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - AUGUST 25, 2023 10:40 AM

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is gearing up for a fall vaccination campaign that not only includes updated COVID-19 boosters, but the annual flu shot and the newly approved RSV vaccine.

"We're going to be encouraging Americans to get their COVID-19 vaccine in addition to their annual flu shot, as well as the immunizations for RSV for people who are over the age of 60 as well as for infants," one official said. Respiratory syncytial virus, known as RSV, usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms but can also be serious, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says.

During a roughly 24-minute call on Thursday, four officials from the CDC and the Food and Drug Administration spoke to reporters on background to discuss the plans for the fall's vaccine campaign.

The officials declined to say how many Americans the Biden administration is targeting for updated COVID-19 shots heading into cold and flu season.

"We can't speculate or predict where it will ultimately land. But our goal is for that number of uptake to be as high as possible," the same official said.

The Biden administration, the official said, hopes to provide access for uninsured and underinsured people to get the booster once the updated COVID-19 vaccine is approved.

A second official said an updated COVID-19 vaccine from one pharmaceutical company shows some promise against the EG.5 variant that makes up an increasing number of new cases, though the official said there needs to be more data about the updated vaccines' impact on the BA.2.86 variant.

"One of the manufacturers has already made it clear that when testing their vaccine against the EG.5 variant that it looks like the neutralization is robust," the second official said. "So I think that's a good harbinger."

On the BA.2.86 variant, the second official said that "it's too early to know for sure about BA.2.86 in terms of the exact data."

"But I think we feel comfortable in saying that it's likely that the vaccine will help protect against the severe outcomes that would occur," the second official said. "So we'll obviously have more data that will come in in the next few weeks. But for right now, I think we believe that the booster will be helpful against the severe outcomes that might occur."

Once the FDA approves one or several updated COVID-19 vaccines this fall, the first official said the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices plans to meet quickly to make its recommendations for clinicians.

"Our intention, certainly as we look into mid-September, is to have the ACIP meeting and as close as possible succession to FDA action," the first official said, adding that CDC and FDA are "joined at the hip on this."

The first official noted that ACIP recommendations help to "guide clinicians as to ... who would best benefit from COVID-19 vaccines."

Getting the updated COVID-19 vaccine into nursing homes and long-term-care facilities will be a priority for the Biden administration, according to the first official.

"We are focused on getting older individuals their vaccines, partly because they have been a higher proportion of hospitalizations throughout the pandemic," the first official said.

"CDC has been working very closely with the associations and the provider groups that provide vaccinations in facilities like long-term care and assisted living," the first official said. "We're also focusing a lot of our outreach on both the individuals who live there, the owners and operators, and the providers who work in those facilities to make sure they know when the vaccines are coming out, how to access them, how to administer them, etc."

Once approved, the updated mRNA COVID-19 vaccines for people aged 12 and older will be fully licensed this fall, though the vaccines for people 11 and younger will still be under the emergency use authoriza-

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 15 of 76

tion, according to the second official.

The protein-based COVID-19 vaccine from Novavax will also remain under the emergency use authorization framework, according to the second official.

So some of the updated vaccines may come with a cost, unlike during the pandemic when all the COVID-19 vaccines were free.

Moderna, for example, announced earlier this year that it would increase the price of its COVID-19 vaccine from \$30 to \$130, leading to a bipartisan condemnation of the decision at a U.S. Senate hearing.

Testing and treatments will also remain available during the upcoming cold and flu season, the first official said.

"What we know about treatments is that they can reduce the risk of severe illness, hospitalization and death," the first official said. "CDC's goal is to protect against respiratory diseases this fall and winter."

COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths have begun to increase, according to CDC data.

Between Aug. 6 and Aug. 12 the number of hospital admissions increased by nearly 22% bringing the total weekly admissions to 12,600. That's the highest it's been since mid-April, according to CDC data.

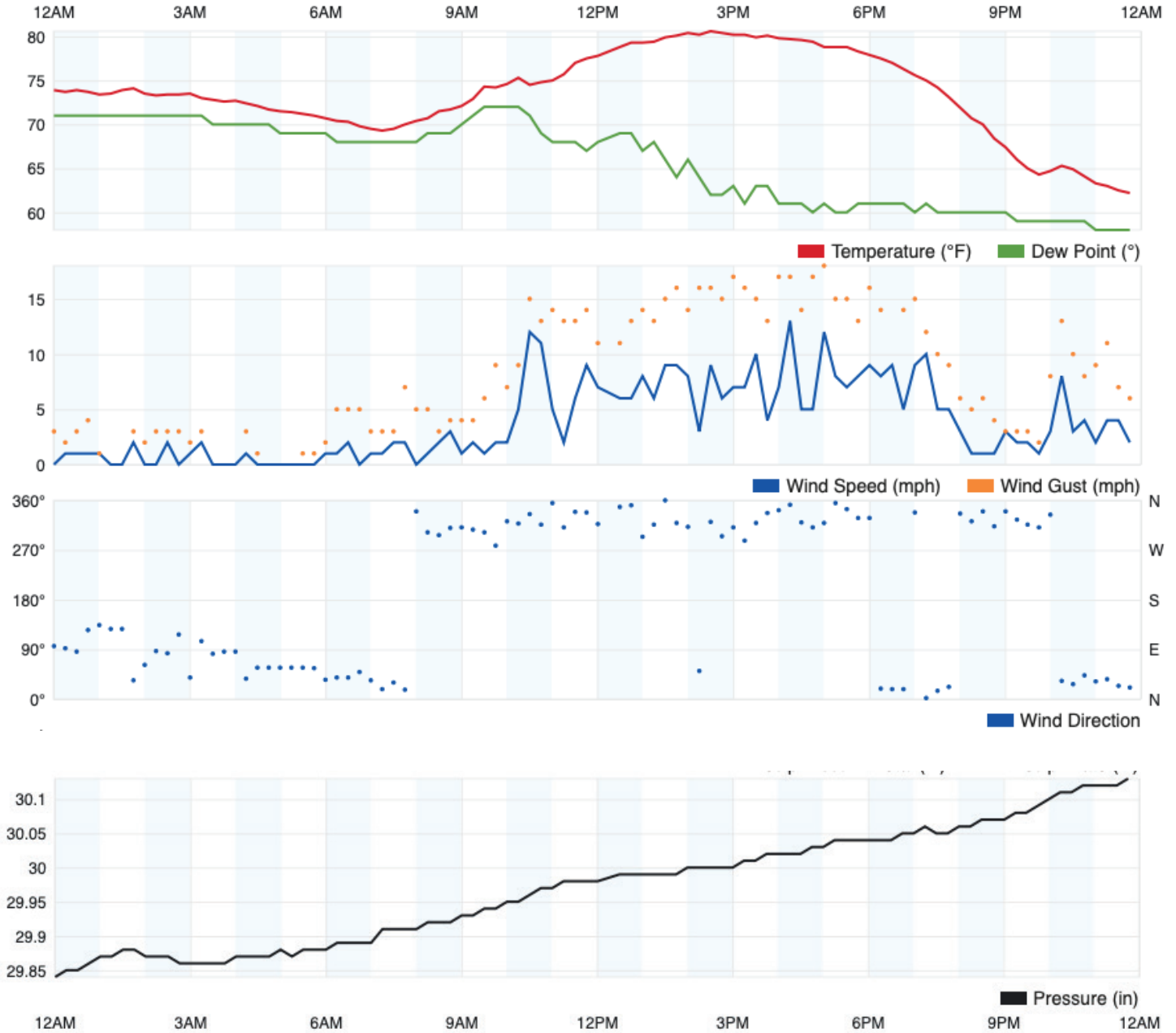
The number of deaths increased by slightly more than 8% during the same time frame to about 251 a week, though that still remains much lower than during the pandemic, according to CDC data.

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

Groton Daily Independent

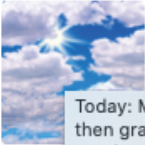
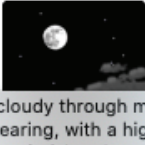





Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 16 of 76

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 17 of 76

Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
 Becoming Sunny	 Mostly Clear	 Sunny	 Mostly Clear	 Sunny	 Mostly Clear	 Sunny
High: 74 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 82 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 80 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 82 °F

Today: Mostly cloudy through mid morning, then gradual clearing, with a high near 74. North northeast wind 6 to 8 mph.

Today



72-79°

TONIGHT SUNDAY



52-59° 80-91°

weather.gov/abr



Anticipate mostly dry conditions through the weekend with seasonal temperatures and low humidity.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 18 of 76

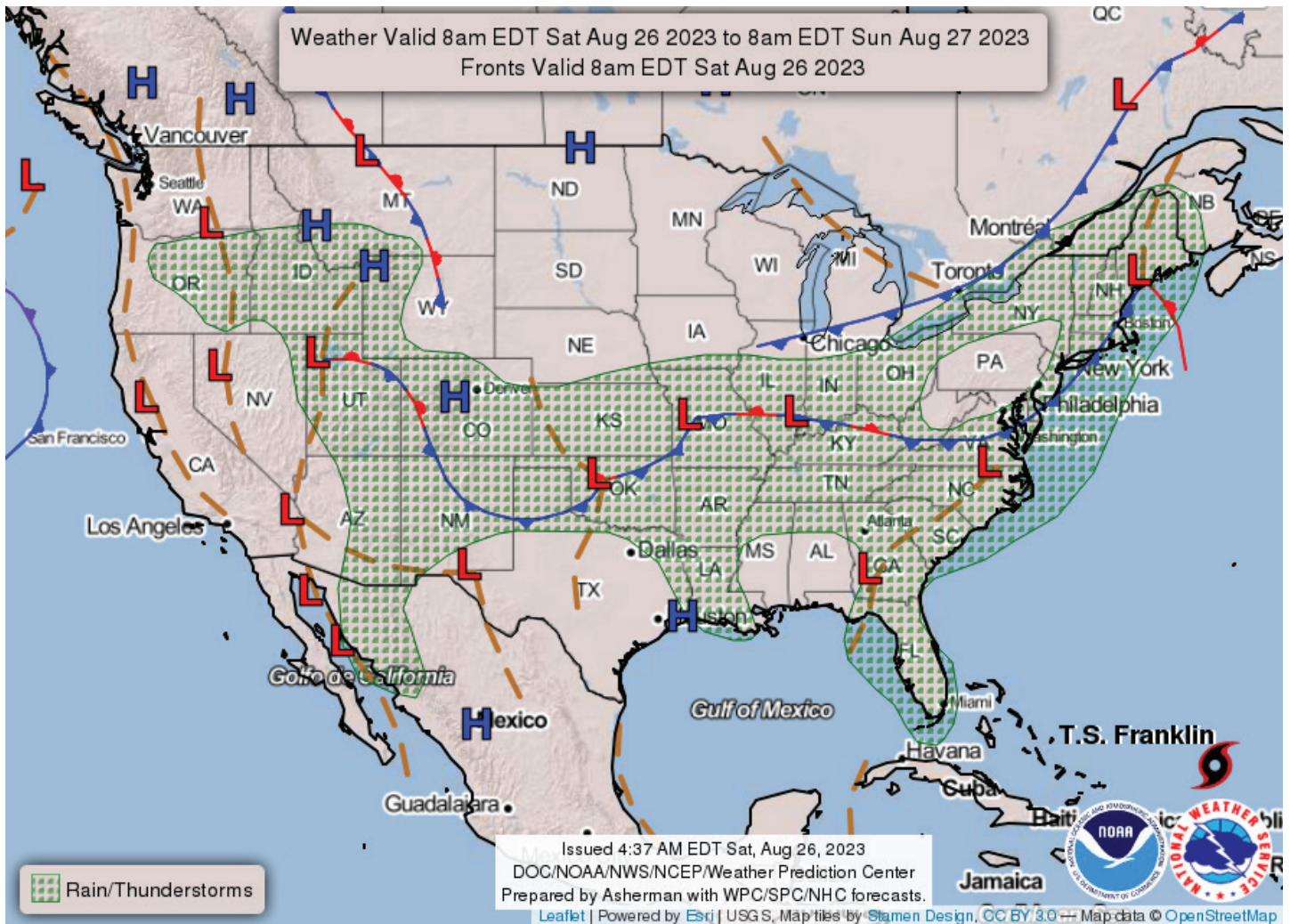
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 81 °F at 2:35 PM
Low Temp: 63 °F at 11:26 PM
Wind: 18 mph at 3:01 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 13 hours, 38 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 101 in 1926
Record Low: 38 in 1896
Average High: 82
Average Low: 54
Average Precip in Aug.: 1.81
Precip to date in Aug.: 5.92
Average Precip to date: 15.91
Precip Year to Date: 18.59
Sunset Tonight: 8:23:15 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:46:23 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 19 of 76

Today in Weather History

August 26, 1983: Heavy rainfall up to four and a half inches fell in the town of Mahto, Corson County, flooding basements. Hail, up to three inches in diameter, caused significant damage to roofs and broke numerous windows.

August 26, 1998: Massive rainfall of 3 to over 6 inches fell across far eastern Corson, most of Campbell and Walworth counties during the evening hours of the 26th. The heavy rain caused flooding on many roads along with some highways through the night and into the morning hours on the 27th. Near Selby, high winds, heavy rain, and some hail caused damage to sunflowers and moved a barn three feet off the foundation. In Selby, wind-driven rain pushed water through some ceilings and into basements. An old barn near Glenham was also blown down by the strong winds. Some rainfall amounts include 3.50 inches at Herreid, 3.80 inches at Java, 4.20 inches at Selby, 4.50 inches 3N of Selby and just southeast of Mclaughlin, 5 inches at Glenham, 5.75 inches 8N of Mobridge, and 6.35 inches 1.5 miles southeast of Glenham.

1864: A train running from Cincinnati to Chicago was derailed by a tornado in Dearborn County, Indiana, or 75 miles southeast of Indianapolis. Two passenger cars were lifted from the tracks and dropped in a ravine which injured 30 people.

1883 - Krakatoa Volcano exploded in the East Indies. The explosion was heard more than 2500 miles away, and every barograph around the world recorded the passage of the air wave, up to seven times. Giant waves, 125 feet high and traveling 300 mph, devastated everything in their path, hurling ashore coral blocks weighing up to 900 tons, and killing more than 36,000 persons. Volcanic ash was carried around the globe in thirteen days producing blue and green suns in the tropics, and then vivid red sunsets in higher latitudes. The temperature of the earth was lowered one degree for the next two years, finally recovering to normal by 1888. (David Ludlum)

1976: A weak tornado touched down briefly in the Hockley Hills near Kiana, AK, about 29 miles north of the Arctic Circle. This tornado is the most northerly report of a tornado on record. Kiana is 545 miles northwest of Anchorage, Alaska.

1949 - A hurricane made landfall at Delray Beach. Winds reached 153 mph at the Jupiter Lighthouse before the anemometer failed. The hurricane caused 45 million dollars damage to crops, and also caught the Georgia and South Carolina coast resulting in another two million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1965 - Late night severe thunderstorms associated with an unusually strong late summer cold front produced 100 mph winds straight line winds in the Chicago area and northwest Indiana. In Lake County IND, high winds derailed a train near Crown Point, and left a canoe suspended among telephone lines. Two nights later the temperature at Midway Airport in Chicago dipped to 43 degrees, establishing a record for the month of August. (Storm Data) (Hugh Crowther)

1976 - A weak tornado touched down briefly in the Hockley Hills near Kiana, AK, about 29 miles north of the Arctic Circle. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms drenched northern Illinois during the morning and afternoon hours pushing August rainfall totals for Chicago, Moline and Peoria to new all-time highs for any month of the year. By the end of August, Chicago had received 17.10 inches of rain, which easily surpassed the previous record of 14.17 inches established in September 1961. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A dozen cities in Texas, Colorado and California reported record high temperatures for the date, including readings of 100 degrees at Pueblo CO, 106 degrees at Wichita Falls TX, and 109 degrees at Redding CA. Afternoon thunderstorms in Utah deluged the town of Beaver with more than an inch of rain in twenty minutes. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Anchorage, AK, was soaked with a steady rain, and the 24 hour total of 4.12 inches smashed their previous 24 hour precipitation total of 2.10 inches. It also pushed their rainfall total for the month past their previous record for August. (The National Weather Summary)

1992: Hurricane Andrew made a second landfall near Burns Point, LA as a Category 3 hurricane. Morgan City, LA recorded sustained winds of 92 mph with a peak gust of 108 mph. Hammond, LA was deluged with 11.92 inches of rain. As Andrew moved inland and weakened, it spawned 47 tornadoes from this date through the 28th from the South to the Mid-Atlantic States.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 20 of 76

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

THE RESURRECTION

Lo, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it; his appearance was as lightening, and his clothes were as white as snow. For fear of him, the guards trembled and became as dead men.

And the angel said to the women, "Be not afraid I know that you seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here. Why seek the living among the dead? Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful man and be crucified and on the third day rise again.' Come now and see that place where He lay. (Then they remembered His words.)"

"Go quickly and tell His disciples and Peter that He is risen from the dead, and lo, He goes before you into Galilee. There, you will see Him as He told you."

Some went away with fear and trembling and said nothing because they were afraid. Others went away quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell the disciples.

Prayer: Father, how grateful we are for Your victory over death and the assurance of eternal life with You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: And the angel said to the women, "Be not afraid I know that you seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here. Why seek the living among the dead? Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24



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

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 21 of 76

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
- 09/08/2023 Family Fun Fest 3:30-5:30pm
- 09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 09/09-10/2023 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
- 09/10/2023 Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
- 09/10/2023 Emmanuel Lutheran Church Sunday School Rally 9:00am
- 09/10/2023 7th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 4-6pm
- 09/15/2023 Homecoming Parade
- 10/13/2023 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
- 10/14/2023 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
- 10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
- 10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
- 11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
- 12/02/2023 Tour of Homes, Live & Silent Auctions at Olive Grove Golf Course 4pm-close
- 12/09/2023 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9-11am

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 22 of 76

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Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 23 of 76



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.25.23

12 23 26 31 38 2

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$67,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.23.23

9 11 29 38 39 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$8,870,000

NEXT 12 Hrs 31 Mins 23
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.25.23

4 6 26 41 44 6

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 12 Hrs 46 Mins
DRAW: 24 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.23.23

9 11 17 21 23

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$23,000

NEXT 12 Hrs 46 Mins
DRAW: 24 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.23.23

18 25 38 56 61 19

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 13 Hrs 15 Mins 24
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.23.23

25 30 32 33 55 20

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$345,000,000

NEXT 13 Hrs 15 Mins 24
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Beloved wild horses that roam Theodore Roosevelt National Park may be removed. Many oppose the plan

By JACK DURA Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The beloved wild horses that roam freely in North Dakota's Theodore Roosevelt National Park could be removed under a National Park Service proposal that worries advocates who say the horses are a cultural link to the past.

Visitors who drive the scenic park road can often see bands of horses, a symbol of the West and sight that delights tourists. Advocates want to see the horses continue to roam the Badlands, and disagree with park officials who have branded the horses as "livestock."

The Park Service is revising its livestock plans and writing an environmental assessment to examine the impacts of taking no new action — or to remove the horses altogether.

Removal would entail capturing horses and giving some of them first to tribes, and later auctioning the animals or giving them to other entities. Another approach would include techniques to prevent future reproduction and would allow those horses to live out the rest of their lives in the park.

The horses have allies in government leaders and advocacy groups. One advocate says the horses' popularity won't stop park officials from removing them from the landscape of North Dakota's top tourist attraction.

"At the end of the day, that's our national park paid for by our tax dollars, and those are our horses. We have a right to say what happens in our park and to the animals that live there," Chasing Horses Wild Horse Advocates President Chris Kman told The Associated Press.

Last year, Park Superintendent Angie Richman told The Bismarck Tribune that the park has no law or requirement for the horses to be in the park. Regardless of what decision is ultimately made, the park will have to reduce its roughly 200 horses to 35-60 animals under a 1978 environmental assessment's population objective, she previously said.

Kman said she would like the park "to use science" to "properly manage the horses," including a minimum of 150-200 reproductive horses for genetic viability. Impacts of the park's use of a contraceptive on mares are unclear, she added.

Ousting the horse population "would have a detrimental impact on the park as an ecosystem," Kman said. The horses are a historical fixture, while the park reintroduced bison and elk, she said.

A couple bands of wild horses were accidentally fenced into the park after it was established in 1947, said Castle McLaughlin, who in the 1980s researched the history and origins of the horses while working as a graduate student for the Park Service in North Dakota.

Park officials in the early years sought to eradicate the horses, shooting them on sight and hiring local cowboys to round them up and remove them, she said. The park even sold horses to a local zoo at one point to be food for large cats.

Around 1970, a new superintendent discovered Roosevelt had written about the presence of wild horses in the Badlands during his time there. Park officials decided to retain the horses as a historic demonstration herd to interpret the open-range ranching era. "However, the Park Service still wasn't thrilled about them," McLaughlin told the AP.

"Basically they're like cultural artifacts almost because they reflect several generations of western North Dakota ranchers and Native people. They were part of those communities," and might have ties to Hunkpapa Lakota leader Sitting Bull, she said.

In the 1880s, Theodore Roosevelt hunted and ranched as a young man in the Badlands of what is now western North Dakota. The Western tourist town of Medora is at the gates of the national park that bears his name.

Roosevelt looms large in North Dakota, where a presidential library in his honor is under construction

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 25 of 76

near the park — a legislative push in 2019 that was championed by Republican Gov. Doug Burgum.

Burgum has offered for the state to collaborate with the Park Service to manage the horses. Earlier this year, North Dakota's Republican-controlled Legislature passed a resolution in support of preserving the horses.

Republican U.S. Sen. John Hoeven of North Dakota has included legislation in the U.S. Interior Department's appropriations bill that he told the AP "would direct them to keep horses in the park in line with what was there at the time that Teddy Roosevelt was out in Medora."

"Most all of the input we've got is that people want to retain horses. We've been clear we think (the park) should retain horses," Hoeven said. He's pressing the park to keep more than 35-60 horses for genetics reasons.

The senator said he expects the environmental review to be completed soon, which will provide an opportunity for public comment. Richman told the AP the park plans to release the assessment this summer. A timeline for a final decision is unclear.

The environmental review will look at the impact of each of the three proposals in a variety of areas, Maureen McGee-Ballinger, the park's deputy superintendent, told the AP.

There were thousands of responses during the previous public comment period on the park's proposals — the vast majority of which opposed "complete livestock removal."

Kman's group has been active in gathering support for the horses, including drafting government resolutions and contacting congressional offices, tribal leaders, similar advocacy groups and "pretty much anyone that would listen to me," she said.

McLaughlin said the park's effort carries "a stronger possibility that they'll succeed this time than has ever been the case in the past. I mean, they have never been this determined and publicly open about their intentions, but I've also never seen the state fight for the horses like they are now."

The park's North Unit, about 70 miles (112.65 kilometers) from Medora, has about nine longhorn cattle. The proposals would affect the longhorns, too, though the horses are the greater concern. Hoeven said his legislation doesn't address the longhorns. The cattle are managed under a 1970 plan.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park "is one of very few national parks that does have horses, and that sets it apart," North Dakota Commerce Tourism and Marketing Director Sara Otte Coleman said in January at a press conference with Burgum and lawmakers.

Wild horses also roam in Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland and Virginia.

The horses' economic impact on tourism is impossible to delineate, but their popularity is high among media, photographers, travel writers and social media influencers who tout them, Otte Coleman said.

"Removal of the horses really eliminates a feature that our park guests are accustomed to seeing," she said.

Friday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL=

Alcester-Hudson 38, Corsica/Stickney 8

Avon 62, Burke 21

Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan 36, Flandreau 2

Britton-Hecla 44, Florence/Henry 16

Canistota 30, Howard 18

Canton 30, Sioux Falls Christian 16

Chester 63, Centerville 34

Clark/Willow Lake 6, Webster 0

Dakota Valley 21, Vermillion 0

Dell Rapids 44, Madison 13

Deubrook 44, Colman-Egan 14

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 26 of 76

Deuel 26, Aberdeen Roncalli 0
Elk Point-Jefferson 41, Baltic 6
Elkton-Lake Benton 49, Estelline/Hendricks 0
Faulkton 40, Hitchcock-Tulare 0
Freeman Academy/Marion 50, Iroquois/ Lake Preston Co-op 0
Gayville-Volin High School 42, Colome 22
Great Plains Lutheran 45, Waverly-South Shore 0
Groton Area 56, Redfield 6
Hamlin 42, Dell Rapids St. Mary 6
Hanson 60, Irene-Wakonda 0
Harding County/Bison Co-op 28, Kadoka Area 26
Herreid/Selby Area 24, Timber Lake 13
Ipswich 48, Northwestern 10
Jones County 56, Sunshine Bible Academy 6
Lemmon/McIntosh 22, Dupree 6
Lennox 42, Chamberlain 29
Lyman 36, New Underwood 12
Milbank 9, Beresford 0
Mobridge-Pollock 42, Dakota Hills 8
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 52, Miller/Highmore-Harrold 19
Parkston 46, Platte-Geddes 0
Philip 22, Wall 12
Pierre T F Riggs High School 32, Aberdeen Central 0
Potter County 26, Sully Buttes 12
Sioux Falls Jefferson 28, Harrisburg 21, OT
Sioux Falls Lincoln 43, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 7
Sioux Falls Washington 21, Rapid City Stevens 7
Sioux Valley 42, Sisseton 7
Stanley County 38, DeSmet 30
Tea Area 27, Huron 26
Tri-Valley 45, Parker 13
Viborg-Hurley 50, Garretson 0
Warner 41, Leola/Frederick 0
Watertown 33, Brookings 0
White River 40, Bennett County 22
Winner 46, Wagner 6
Wolsey-Wessington 48, Gregory 32
Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 59, Scotland 13
Yankton 42, Mitchell 0

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Central def. Rapid City Central, 25-16, 25-18, 25-14
McLaughlin def. Wakpala, 25-15, 25-12, 25-20
Mitchell def. Sturgis Brown, 25-12, 25-18, 17-25, 25-23

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

US Forest Service rejects expansion plans of premier Midwest ski area Lutsen Mountains

By STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The U.S. Forest Service said Friday it has rejected the expansion plans of Lutsen Mountains, one of the premier skiing destinations in the Midwest.

Lutsen Mountains was hoping to expand onto 495 acres (193 hectares) of public land in the Superior National Forest in northeastern Minnesota so it could add more runs, lifts and other facilities and essentially double its skiable terrain in the Sawtooth Mountains along the north shore of Lake Superior. It's one of the largest ski areas in the Midwest, with a vertical rise of 1,088 feet (326 meters) and 95 runs.

In rejecting the permit application, the Forest Service cited impacts on tribal resources such as sugar maple stands, negative effects for users of the Superior Hiking Trail and backcountry skiers, and other impacts to the environment.

The company has until Oct. 10 to file objections. It asked the Forest Service last month to defer a decision indefinitely while it consulted with three Ojibwe tribes that hold treaty rights to hunt, fish and gather in the area. The resort signed a memorandum of understanding with them in May, and asked the Forest Service to give it time to modify its proposal and reach a solution that would benefit the tribes.

The company promoted the additional skiing opportunities and economic benefits that the project would bring to the area, including more tourism and jobs. But Thomas Hall, supervisor of the Superior National Forest, concluded that negative impacts would outweigh the benefits.

The three tribes — the Bois Forte, Fond du Lac and Grand Portage bands — said in a statement that they supported the Forest Service decision, saying the project would have destroyed natural resources that the tribes had relied on for centuries.

They said the expansion would "irreversibly impact this unique area that has been historically important to the Bands and will continue to be important culturally, spiritually and as a subsistence resource for future generations."

Two prisoners in South Dakota charged with attempted murder in attack on guards

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Two South Dakota prison inmates are charged with attempted murder after prosecutors say they assaulted a corrections officer then attacked another officer who rushed to help.

Both officers were treated for injuries at a hospital and released after they were attacked Thursday morning inside the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls. Prosecutors didn't provide details on the attack or the extent of the officers injuries.

The inmates — 48-year-old Lester Monroe and 30-year-old Kyle Jones — are charged with attempted murder and aggravated assault, Attorney General Marty Jackley said in a news release.

Monroe is serving a more than 13-year sentence for assault on an officer and auto theft. Jones is serving a more than 50-year sentence for manslaughter, eluding police and a drug charge.

Monroe and Jones remain in the custody of the penitentiary and cannot be reached for comment. Their charges did not appear Friday in the state's online court records, so it was not immediately clear if they have attorneys who could speak on their behalf.

North American grassland birds in peril, spurring all-out effort to save birds and their habitat

By TAMMY WEBBER Associated Press

POTTER, Neb. (AP) — When Reed Cammack hears the first meadowlark of spring, he knows his family has made it through another cold, snowy winter on the South Dakota prairie. Nothing's better, he says, than hearing the birds light up the area with song at sunrise.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 28 of 76

"It's part of the flora and fauna of our Great Plains and it's beautiful to hear," says Cammack, 42, a sixth-generation rancher who raises cattle on 10,000 acres (4,047 hectares) of native grasslands.

But the number of birds has dropped steeply over the years, despite seemingly ideal habitat "and I don't know for sure why," says Cammack's 92-year-old grandfather, Floyd.

North America's grassland birds are deeply in trouble 50 years after adoption of the Endangered Species Act, as habitat loss, land degradation and climate change threaten what remains of a once-vast ecosystem from Canada to Mexico.

Over half their overall population has been lost since 1970, and several species are heading toward possible extinction.

"Birds are the canary in the coal mine," says Amanda Rodewald, senior director of the Center for Avian Population Studies at Cornell University's ornithology lab. "They're an early warning of environmental changes that also can affect us."

The lesser prairie chicken, which has declined by more than 90%, is the only grassland bird federally listed as endangered, in part of its range. Congress voted to delist it in an effort led by Republicans who say the protections hinder oil and gas drilling, though environmentalists hope President Joe Biden will veto the measure.

But more than half a dozen other grassland birds have lost 50% or more of their breeding population and could lose another 50% in the next half-century, according to a 2022 report. They include: the Sprague's pipit, a northern grassland songbird, that's lost more than 75% of its population since 1970. The chestnut-collared longspur, which lives in the northern shortgrass prairie and sings as it flies. The Henslow's sparrow, which barely sings at all. And the bobolink, known for its robust songs and long-distance travels to South America.

The 38% — 293,000 square miles (760,000 square kilometers) — of historic North American grasslands that remain are threatened by intensive farming, urbanization and the rapid spread of trees once held at bay by periodic fires.

Still, much is unknown: Where do birds stop during migration and for how long? What's happening on their wintering grounds and how many birds return from their winter territory? If birds must travel great distances to find suitable breeding habitat, does that affect breeding success?

"Where along that full life cycle both in time and space are these birds suffering the most?" says Andy Boyce, a research ecologist at the Smithsonian's Migratory Bird Center who studies the Sprague's pipit. "We need to figure out a lot of this before we can even start to prioritize where conservation actually needs to take place."

Researchers aim to learn more with the help of radio telemetry receivers being installed across the Great Plains to help track birds from Canada to Mexico's Chihuahuan desert.

When a bird fitted with a tiny transmitter flies within 12 miles (20 kilometers) of a receiver — mounted on towers and other structures — information is collected electronically by researchers.

That's more efficient than traditional banding, which requires birds to be caught or seen again to track movements and longevity, researchers say. It's also ideal because many grassland birds are nomadic, roaming the Great Plains for the best nesting habitat — a trait that evolved when wildfires and bison created a shifting grassland mosaic.

Researchers are about halfway to building 150 or more receivers, says Matthew Webb, who leads installation efforts for the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies. He says it's "extremely important to get adequate coverage," to fill knowledge gaps about bird movements.

Meanwhile, biologists are sharing data and using sophisticated computer modeling to determine the biggest threats. And they're working with farmers and ranchers to implement practices that ensure survival of livelihoods and native birds.

Although some birds require contiguous grasslands, most adapted to living alongside agriculture when habitat was nestled within or around fields and farmers fallowed some fields, Cornell's Rodewald says.

But intensive farming — eliminating hedgerows and buffers, fewer crop types and more pesticides — has

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 29 of 76

taken a toll. And climate change is bringing hotter, drier conditions that hurt soil health, worsen erosion and dry up watering holes.

So nonprofits and government agencies are offering farmers incentives to improve soil, enroll grasslands in conservation programs and adopt bird-friendly practices, such as mowing after nesting season.

"Private landowners care and are very, very good stewards of (the land) because it's their livelihood," says Brandt Ryder, chief conservation scientist for the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies.

Ranchers also are critical to birds' survival, scientists say, because almost all of North America's remaining prairie is on privately owned rangelands. What's more, without cattle, they say, there would be no high-quality grasslands, which require grazing and hooves on the ground to stay healthy.

Cattle rancher Brian Sprenger never saw sharp-tailed grouse as a kid, when much of the rangeland near Sidney, Nebraska, was overgrazed or farmed.

But about 20 years ago, more ranchers began putting land into a federal conservation program, replanted native grasses and started moving cattle to prevent overgrazing. Now Sprenger, 44, sometimes sees two dozen or more grouse at a time during mating season.

"We've noticed that as we have started allowing these rangelands to flourish ... that we have seen a lot of different bird species," Sprenger says.

Many land owners now are battling fast-spreading eastern red cedar and juniper trees that are contributing to the grassland ecosystem collapse, says Dirac Twidwell, a rangeland ecologist at the University of Nebraska.

Tree and shrub encroachment and cultivation now account for roughly the same amount of Great Plains loss every year — a combined 6,250 square miles (more than 16,000 square kilometers), says Twidwell.

The trees leave less land for ranching and push out grassland birds, which can't adapt to woods, says Twidwell. So landowners and environment groups are cutting them down and conducting prescribed burns to restore the land.

"These are some of our last remaining grasslands on the planet that are largescale grasslands; that's why you're seeing an increased sense of urgency from bird conservation groups and the livestock industry," Twidwell says.

Rancher Reed Cammack says land owners are well aware of their outsized role: "If there's to be anything left for my kids' kids to see, it's imperative that we do something now."

Infant dies after being left in a car on a scorching day in South Dakota, police say

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — An infant died this week after being left in a car on a scorching day in South Dakota, police said.

The baby was found inside a vehicle outside a church late Wednesday afternoon, the Yankton Police Department said in a news release Thursday. The discovery came as temperatures reached 100 degrees and the heat index broke 110 degrees in the region.

Police said the infant had been in the vehicle "for an extended period of time." Authorities have not provided the infant's name and age, or said whether any arrests have been made.

An autopsy has been requested, police said.

"The Yankton Police Department will continue the investigation. As more details become available, we will issue another press release," the release said.

Yankton has a population of nearly 15,500 and is located in the southeastern corner of South Dakota, along the border with Nebraska.

Shelling kills civilians in Ukraine's northeast as fears grow of a second Russian takeover

By SUSIE BLANN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian forces struck a cafe in a key front-line area in northeastern Ukraine Saturday, killing two civilians and wounding a third, regional officials said.

The shelling near the city of Kupiansk came as U.K. officials said that Russia may try to retake the area, which was captured by Kyiv in a lightning counteroffensive last September after more than six months of Russian occupation. Fierce fighting there earlier this month prompted mandatory evacuations and fears of a second Russian takeover.

Russian shells on Saturday morning struck the cafe in Podoly, an eastern suburb of Kupiansk, regional governor Oleh Syniehubov said in a Telegram post. He added that rescue teams were working at the site.

U.K. military intelligence on Saturday assessed that Russia may "increase the intensity of its offensive efforts" around Kupiansk and nearby Lyman in an attempt to take pressure off its forces near Bakhmut and in the Zaporizhzhia region, where a Ukrainian counteroffensive has reportedly made gradual gains. Earlier this month, Ukrainian authorities ordered a mandatory evacuation of nearly 12,000 civilians from 37 towns and villages around Kupiansk, citing a concerted effort by Russian troops to punch through the front line.

After the Russian occupiers left Kupiansk last year, Ukrainian authorities said they found torture chambers and mass graves in the region.

Ukrainian officials have so far reported limited advances in Kyiv's large-scale counteroffensive launched in early June, including in the southern Zaporizhzhia region and on the outskirts of Bakhmut, the eastern city that became the site of the war's longest and bloodiest battle before falling to Moscow in May.

A Washington-based think tank said late Friday that Ukrainian forces were pushing forward in Zaporizhzhia after taking the village of Robotyne earlier this week. The Institute for the Study of War in its latest assessment cited pro-Kremlin military bloggers expressing concern over a lack of reinforcements and troop locations in the area, while the Ukrainian General Staff that same day claimed unspecified successes south and southeast of Robotyne.

On Saturday morning, the Ukrainian regional administration of Zaporizhzhia reported that Russian shelling the previous day of Mala Tokmachka, one of the villages near which Kyiv's troops were reportedly advancing, killed one resident and wounded another.

Also on Saturday, a new drone attack on Moscow forced an early-morning temporary shutdown of all three major airports serving the city, Russian state media reported. Officials blamed Ukraine for what appeared to be the latest of near-daily strikes on the Russian capital and the surrounding region.

Kyiv has since early this year sought to take the 18-month-war into the heart of Russia, also saying recently that it was behind strikes on Russian military assets far behind the front lines.

Russia's defense ministry and Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyenin said that a drone was shot down over the Istra district of the Moscow region, some 50 kilometers (30 miles) west of Red Square. Sobyenin said in a Telegram post that there were no immediate reports of any casualties or damage.

According to Russia's state Tass agency, the Sheremetevo, Domodedovo and Vnukovo airports all suspended flights for over an hour early on Saturday.

Russian Telegram channels on Saturday posted videos, some of them apparently from home security cameras, of what they claimed was Russian air defense downing the drone. One video shows a car parked outside what appears to be suburban home, its alarm beginning to blare seconds after two loud blasts sound in the distance.

Russia's defense ministry that same day blamed Ukraine for the attack. As of Saturday morning, Ukrainian authorities had not said whether Kyiv had any involvement.

Russia and Ukraine traded multiple drone attacks earlier this week, with Kyiv apparently targeting Moscow and the Kremlin's forces launching another bombardment of Ukrainian grain storage depots in what have recently become signature tactics.

Also this week, Kyiv claimed it had destroyed a key Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile defense system

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 31 of 76

in occupied Crimea. Ukrainian media also claimed that Ukrainian saboteurs coordinated by Kyiv's military intelligence services carried out a pair of recent drone attacks that destroyed and damaged bomber aircraft at air bases deep inside Russia.

Later on Saturday, Russia's defense ministry said in a separate statement that another drone was brought down as it approached the Russian city of Belgorod, some 45 kilometers (27 miles) from the Ukrainian border. It did not mention any casualties or damage.

Belgorod regional Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov accused Ukrainian forces of shelling a border village using cluster munitions, wounding six civilians. Gladkov did not provide visual evidence for the use of the controversial and widely banned weapons, which contain dozens of small bomblets that scatter shrapnel over a wide area.

Kyiv last month began receiving cluster bombs from the U.S., but has pledged to use them only to dislodge groups of enemy soldiers. Ukrainian officials have regularly accused Moscow of firing cluster munitions at residential areas, while Russian regional authorities have reported on Ukrainian cross-border attacks in which civilians were hurt.

Ukraine's air force, meanwhile, reported early on Saturday that two Iranian-made "Shahed" drones fired by Russian troops were shot down during the night over the country's northeast.

In Ukraine's front-line Kherson region in the south, local Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin reported that an 83-year-old woman died in the hospital after suffering burn wounds as Russian forces overnight shelled the riverside village of Olhivka. Also on Saturday, the Kherson regional administration reported that Russian shelling damaged a hospital in the province's namesake capital, blowing out doors and windows but causing no casualties.

New crew for the space station launches with 4 astronauts from 4 countries

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Four astronauts from four countries rocketed toward the International Space Station on Saturday.

They should reach the orbiting lab in their SpaceX capsule Sunday, replacing four astronauts living up there since March.

A NASA astronaut was joined on the predawn liftoff from Kennedy Space Center by fliers from Denmark, Japan and Russia. They clasped one another's gloved hands upon reaching orbit.

It was the first U.S. launch where every spacecraft seat was occupied by a different country — until now, NASA had always included two or three of its own on its SpaceX taxi flights. A fluke in timing led to the assignments, officials said.

"We're a united team with a common mission," NASA's Jasmin Moghbeli radioed from orbit. Added NASA's Ken Bowersox, space operations mission chief: "Boy, what a beautiful launch ... and with four international crew members, really an exciting thing to see."

Moghbeli, a Marine pilot serving as commander, is joined on the six-month mission by the European Space Agency's Andreas Mogensen, Japan's Satoshi Furukawa and Russia's Konstantin Borisov.

"To explore space, we need to do it together," the European Space Agency's director general, Josef Aschbacher, said minutes before liftoff. "Space is really global, and international cooperation is key."

The astronauts' paths to space couldn't be more different.

Moghbeli's parents fled Iran during the 1979 revolution. Born in Germany and raised on New York's Long Island, she joined the Marines and flew attack helicopters in Afghanistan. The first-time space traveler hopes to show Iranian girls that they, too, can aim high. "Belief in yourself is something really powerful," she said before the flight.

Mogensen worked on oil rigs off the West African coast after getting an engineering degree. He told people puzzled by his job choice that "in the future we would need drillers in space" like Bruce Willis' character in the killer asteroid film "Armageddon." He's convinced the rig experience led to his selection

as Denmark's first astronaut.

Furukawa spent a decade as a surgeon before making Japan's astronaut cut. Like Mogensen, he's visited the station before.

Borisov, a space rookie, turned to engineering after studying business. He runs a freediving school in Moscow and judges the sport, in which divers shun oxygen tanks and hold their breath underwater.

One of the perks of an international crew, they noted, is the food. Among the delicacies soaring: Persian herbed stew, Danish chocolate and Japanese mackerel.

SpaceX's first-stage booster returned to Cape Canaveral several minutes after liftoff, an extra treat for the thousands of spectators gathered in the early-morning darkness.

Liftoff was delayed a day for additional data reviews of valves in the capsule's life-support system. The countdown almost was halted again Saturday after a tiny fuel leak cropped up in the capsule's thruster system. SpaceX engineers managed to verify the leak would pose no threat with barely two minutes remaining on the clock, said Benji Reed, the company's senior director for human spaceflight.

Another NASA astronaut will launch to the station from Kazakhstan in mid-September under a barter agreement, along with two Russians.

SpaceX has now launched eight crews for NASA. Boeing was hired at the same time nearly a decade ago, but has yet to fly astronauts. Its crew capsule is grounded until 2024 by parachute and other issues.

FIFA suspends Spain soccer federation president Luis Rubiales for 90 days after World Cup final kiss

By GRAHAM DUNBAR and JOSEPH WILSON AP Sports Writer

GENEVA (AP) — FIFA suspended Spanish soccer federation president Luis Rubiales from office on Saturday while its disciplinary committee investigates his conduct at the Women's World Cup final, which included kissing a player without her consent.

FIFA said Rubiales is removed from soccer duties for 90 days "pending the disciplinary proceedings opened" against him Thursday.

Rubiales refused to resign from his soccer presidency Friday at an emergency meeting of the Spanish soccer federation's general assembly when he had been expected to leave under intense pressure from the Spanish government, women players plus soccer clubs and officials.

FIFA has given no timetable for a ruling by its disciplinary panel. The body's disciplinary judges can impose sanctions on individuals ranging from warnings and fines to suspensions from the sport.

FIFA's move came after the Spanish federation had even threatened action against star player Jenni Hermoso for refusing to accept Rubiales's version of the kiss that happened at the on-field medal and trophy presentation after Spain's 1-0 win against England last Sunday in Sydney, Australia.

FIFA's suspension should prevent Rubiales working in soccer or having contact with other officials.

FIFA disciplinary judge Jorge Palacio also intervened Saturday to protect the "fundamental rights" of Hermoso and the integrity of the disciplinary case.

Palacio ordered Rubiales "to refrain, through himself or third parties, from contacting or attempting to contact the professional player of the Spanish national football team Ms. Jennifer Hermoso or her close environment," FIFA said in a statement.

"Likewise, the RFEF (Spanish soccer federation) and its officials or employees, directly or through third parties, are ordered to refrain from contacting the professional player of the Spanish national team Ms. Jennifer Hermoso and her close environment," FIFA said.

Palacio is a Colombian lawyer and former member of its constitutional court who has worked in women's rights.

Rubiales is a vice president of UEFA, holding the No. 3-ranking elected position at the top of the European soccer body which pays him 250,000 euros (\$270,000) annually plus expenses

He was elected to the executive committee by UEFA member federations in 2019 and was within weeks

promoted to the vice presidency by UEFA president Aleksander Čeferin.

Neither UEFA nor Čeferin have commented on the Rubiales scandal this week. FIFA has now intervened in the case twice.

Russia's Wagner mercenaries face uncertainty after the presumed death of their leader in plane crash

By The Associated Press undefined

The Wagner Group's presence extends from the ancient battlegrounds of Syria to the deserts of sub-Saharan Africa, projecting the Kremlin's global influence with mercenaries accused of using brutal force and profiting from seized mineral riches.

But that was under Yevgeny Prigozhin, who in what may have been his final recruitment video, appeared in military fatigues and held an assault rifle from an unidentified dry and dusty plain as he boasted that Wagner was "making Russia even greater on all continents and Africa even more free."

A private jet carrying Prigozhin and his top lieutenants crashed northwest of Moscow on Wednesday, two months after he led an armed rebellion that challenged the authority of Russian President Vladimir Putin. There is wide speculation that the mercenary leader, who is presumed dead, was targeted for assassination because of his uprising, although the Kremlin has denied involvement.

The crash has raised questions about the future of Prigozhin's private army, which fought alongside Russian troops in Ukraine before his brief uprising against military leaders in Moscow.

Russian authorities have cited the need to await DNA test results to confirm Prigozhin's death, but Putin expressed condolences after the jet fell from the sky. The Russian leader also has ordered Wagner fighters to sign an oath of allegiance to the Russian state, according to a decree published on the Kremlin's website late Friday and effective immediately.

The order followed the Kremlin's denial Friday of suggestions from Western officials and news media that the Wagner leader may have been killed on Putin's orders.

In African countries where Wagner provided security against extremist organisations like al-Qaida and the Islamic State group, officials and commentators predicted Russia would likely maintain a presence, placing the mercenaries under new leadership.

Others, however, say Prigozhin built deep, personal connections that Moscow could find challenging to replace quickly.

Africa is vitally important to Russia — economically and politically.

This summer, Wagner helped secure a national referendum in the Central African Republic that cemented presidential power; it is a key partner for Mali's army in battling armed rebels; and it contacted the military junta in Niger that wants its services following a coup.

Expanding ties and undercutting Western influence in Africa is a top priority as the Kremlin seeks new allies amid its war in Ukraine, where Wagner forces also helped win a key battle. Africa's 54 nations are the largest voting bloc at the U.N., and Moscow has actively worked to rally their support for its invasion.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., said Friday that Wagner's forces "are destabilizing, and we've encouraged countries in Africa to condemn their presence as well as their actions."

The Republican Front in the Central African Republic, which is allied with the country's ruling party, on Thursday reiterated its support for Russia and Wagner, saying they were "determined to fight alongside the African people as they struggle for self-determination."

Wagner forces have served as personal bodyguards for President Faustin Archange Touadera, protecting the capital of Bangui from rebel threats and helping Touadera win the July 30 constitutional referendum that could extend his power indefinitely.

Central African activist and blogger Christian Aime Ndotah said the country's cooperation with Russia would be unaffected by new leadership at Wagner, which has been "well-established" in the country for years.

But some in the Central African Republic denounce the mercenaries, and the U.N. peacekeeping mission there criticized them in 2021 for human rights abuses.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 34 of 76

"A state's security is its sovereignty. You can't entrust the security of a state to a group of mercenaries," said Jean Serge Bokassa, former public security minister.

Nathalia Dukhan, a senior investigator at The Sentry, a policy organization based in Washington, predicted the Kremlin would try to bring Africa closer into its orbit.

"Wagner has been a successful tool for Russia to expand its influence efficiently and brutally," she said. "In the midst of all the turmoil between Putin and Prigozhin, the Wagner operation in Central Africa only deepened, with increased direct involvement by the Russian government."

High-ranking Wagner operatives have built relationships in Mali and the Central African Republic and understand the terrain, said Lou Osborn of All Eyes on Wagner, a project focusing on the group.

"They have a good reputation, which they can sell to another Russian contender. It wouldn't be surprising if a new organization took them over," Osborn said, noting that Russian military contractors in Ukraine, such as Redut and Convoy, have recently expressed a desire to do business in Africa.

Redut was created by the Russian Defense Ministry, which had sought to put Wagner under its control. Following the June mutiny, Putin said the mercenaries could sign contracts with the ministry and keep serving under one of the group's top commanders, Andrei Troshev. It wasn't clear how many troops accepted, but media reports put the number at a few thousand.

The Kremlin still could face challenges in keeping the strong presence in Africa that Prigozhin helped establish.

Former Putin speechwriter Abbas Gallyamov said Prigozhin may have been allowed to continue his post-activities because Russian authorities had to find people who would take over his work.

"Time was needed to create the new channels, new mechanisms of control over those projects," he said. "And it's not a fact that they have been successful in that. It's possible that they have failed and the Kremlin may lose some of those projects."

Britain's Defense Ministry said Prigozhin's demise "would almost certainly have a deeply destabilizing effect on the Wagner Group."

"His personal attributes of hyper-activity, exceptional audacity, a drive for results and extreme brutality permeated Wagner and are unlikely to be matched by any successor," it said.

On Friday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov refused to comment on Wagner's future.

For Prigozhin, who founded Wagner in 2014, its missions weren't simply about advancing Russia's global clout. His contractors in Syria, Libya, Sudan and elsewhere tapped the mineral and energy wealth of those countries to enrich himself.

Central African Republic lawmaker and opposition leader Martin Ziguélé said Wagner was active in gold mining, timber and other industries — without paying taxes.

"We can only conclude that it's plundering," he said.

Prigozhin reached a deal with Putin after the rebellion that saw Wagner mercenaries move to Belarus in exchange for amnesty and spoke repeatedly since then about expanding his activities in Africa. He was seen courting African officials at a recent summit in St. Petersburg.

He quickly welcomed last month's military coup that toppled Niger President Mohamed Bazoum. The junta reached out to Wagner, but the group's response was unclear. There's been no visible presence of Russian mercenaries in the West African nation so far, other than crowds waving Russian and Wagner flags at demonstrations in support of the coup.

While U.S. officials didn't confirm that Russia or Wagner had any role in Bazoum's ouster, there are fears the Kremlin could exploit it to weaken Western positions in West Africa, where Wagner mercenaries already are active in Mali and have a suspected presence in Burkina Faso.

Some people in Niger think Prigozhin's presumed death won't stop Russia from trying to expand its influence.

"Our belief is that Russia wants to get a base here and to be popular. It's obvious they want to be here," Baraou Souleimanin, a tailor in Niamey, Niger's capital, told The Associated Press. Since the coup, he said he's sewn more than 150 Russian flags in a month.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 35 of 76

The night after Brynn was born, her mother Lindsay noticed her skin was gray, her breathing labored. Blood had pooled beneath Brynn's scalp, causing two bulges on her head.

Doctors transferred her to the neonatal intensive care unit at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, where she got blood transfusions and tests for different bleeding problems. She improved and went home — only to wind up back in the hospital when she was about a month old for the massive brain bleed. A doctor warned she likely wouldn't make it. A pastor prayed with the family.

After her surgery, Brynn stayed in the NICU for two months. At various points, doctors thought she might have a vascular problem or a mass in her liver.

"Everybody was very unsettled because nobody knew what the heck was going on," Lindsay Schulte recalled. "I don't think we slept. I mean, watching your child nearly die in front of your eyes twice is a memory I'll never erase."

Then the Schultes learned about the clinical trial, which involved 400 hospitalized infants. Brynn and both parents got the whole genome testing. The diagnosis came in less than a week: She had the rare bleeding disorder, which affects an estimated 1 in 2 million to 1 in 3 million live births, and another condition causing a severe reaction to certain anesthesia drugs.

Doctors said that diagnosis would likely have been delayed — or even missed — with multiple narrower tests.

Many babies in the trial had genetic variants that narrower tests just couldn't detect, said Dr. Jill Maron, a study author and chief of pediatrics at Women & Infants Hospital in Rhode Island.

That's because targeted tests cover maybe 1,700 out of 20,000 genes, so whole genome testing simply "captures more things," said Dr. Paul Kurszka of GeneDx, a company that provides whole genome testing but wasn't involved in the study.

Another child in the clinical trial, 2-year-old Cash Denaro of Oceanside, California, was found to have a genetic condition called Noonan syndrome, which involves heart defects, developmental delays and other problems. His mom, Amanda Denaro, said that with the diagnosis, "we know what they think he may be delayed on, so we can work on these more — not just kind of push it under the rug."

Broader access to full genome tests is necessary if more kids are going to be helped, experts like Maron said. Full genome tests generally cost about three times more than narrower tests, she said, and aren't covered by Medicaid in most states.

Then there's the question of interpreting test results: More than 40% of the time in the study, labs found the same genetic variant, but one considered it the cause of disease while the other saw it as insignificant. Philip Brooks at the National Institutes of Health, which helped pay for the research, said it "remains a topic to be addressed."

One reason for the differing interpretations is that science is moving so quickly linking genes to disorders and there isn't a comprehensive international system where doctors can check for the latest information, said Mara Aspinall, who teaches biomedical diagnostics at Arizona State University. She was not involved in the study.

Despite such hurdles, some kids are already benefitting from whole genome testing. It made all the difference in ensuring Brynn got the right treatment so she could thrive, said Dr. Cristina Tarango, her hematologist at Cincinnati Children's.

Today, Brynn lives like any active preschooler except for regular infusions of factor XIII replacement.

On a recent morning, Lindsay Schulte put "Sleeping Beauty" on the television and laid Brynn on a blanket on the kitchen counter. A visiting nurse took blood from a port implanted in her chest and Schulte slowly administered the medication through a syringe.

Like usual, Brynn chose the bandage to put over her port — one featuring a cat from her favorite show. "All done!" her mom chirped, and soon Brynn was running barefoot across a couch, gleefully chasing her older brother. _____

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Fukushima residents are cautious after the wrecked nuclear plant began releasing treated wastewater

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

IWAKI, Japan (AP) — Fish auction prices at a port south of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant were mixed amid uncertainty over how seafood consumers will respond to the release of treated and diluted radioactive wastewater into the ocean.

The plant, which was damaged in the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, began sending the treated water into the Pacific on Thursday despite protests at home and in nearby countries that are adding political and diplomatic pressures to the economic worries.

Hideaki Igari, a middleman at the Numanouchi fishing port, said the price of larger flounder, Fukushima's signature fish known as Joban-mono, was more than 10% lower at the Friday morning auction, the first since the water release began. Prices of some average-size flounder rose, but presumably due to a limited catch, says Igari. Others fell.

It was a relatively calm market reaction to the water release. But, Igari said, "we still have to see how it goes next week."

The decadeslong release has been strongly opposed by fishing groups and criticized by neighboring countries. China immediately banned imports of seafood from Japan in response, adding to worries in the fisheries community and related businesses.

In Seoul on Saturday, thousands of South Koreans took to the streets to condemn the release of wastewater and to criticize the South Korean government for endorsing the plan. The protesters called on Japan to store radioactive water in tanks instead of releasing it into the Pacific Ocean.

A citizens' radiation testing center in Japan said it's getting inquiries and expects more people might bring in food, water and other samples as radiation data is now a key barometer for what to eat.

Japanese fishing groups fear the release will do more harm to the reputation of seafood from the Fukushima area. They are still striving to repair the damage to their businesses from the meltdown at the power plant after the earthquake and tsunami.

"We now have this water after all these years of struggle when the fish market price is finally becoming stable," Igari said after Friday's auction. "Fisheries people fear that prices of the fish they catch for their living may crash again, and worry about their future living."

The Japanese government and the plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, say the water must be released to make way for the facility's decommissioning and to prevent accidental leaks of insufficiently treated water. Much of tank-held water still contains radioactive materials exceeding releasable levels.

Some wastewater at the plant is recycled as coolant after treatment, and the rest is stored in around 1,000 tanks, which are filled to 98% of their 1.37 million-ton capacity. The tanks cover much of the complex and must be cleared out to make room for new facilities needed for the decommissioning process, officials say.

Authorities say the wastewater after treatment and dilution is safer than international standards require, and that its environmental impact will be negligible. On Friday, the first seawater samples collected after the release were significantly below the legally releasable levels, the power company said.

But, having suffered a series of accidental and intended releases of contaminated water from the plant early in the disaster, hard feelings and distrust of the government and TEPCO run deep in Fukushima — especially in the fishing community.

TEPCO says the release will take 30 years, or until the end of the plant decommissioning. People fear that could mean a tough future for youths in the fishing town, where many businesses are family-run.

Fukushima's current catch already is only about one-fifth its pre-disaster level due to a decline in the number of fishers and decreased catch sizes.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 37 of 76

The government has allocated 80 billion yen (\$550 million) to support fisheries and seafood processing, and to combat potential reputation damage by sponsoring campaigns to promote Fukushima's Joban-mono and processed seafood. TEPCO has promised to deal with reputational damage claims, and those hurt by China's export ban.

Tetsu Nozaki, head of the Fukushima prefectural fisheries cooperatives, said in a statement that worries of the fishing community will continue for as long as the water is released.

"Our only wish is to continue fishing for generations in our home town, like we used to before the accident," Nozaki said.

Fish prices largely depend on the sentiment of wholesalers and consumers in the Tokyo region, where large portions of the Fukushima catch goes.

At the Friday auction at the Numanouchi port, the price for flounder was down from its usual level of about 3,500 yen (\$24) per kilogram (2.2 pounds) to around 3,000 yen (\$20), said Igari, the middleman.

"I suspect the result is because of the start of the treated water release from the Fukushima Daiichi and fear about its impact," he said.

Igari said the discharge is discouraging but hopes careful testing can prove the safety of their fish. "From the consumers' point of view about food safety at home, I think the best barometer is data," he said.

At Mother's Radiation Lab Fukushima in Iwaki, a citizens' testing center known as Tarachine, tests were being conducted on water samples, including on tritium levels for seawater that the lab collected from just off the Fukushima Daiichi plant before the release.

Lab director Ai Kimura said anyone can bring in food, water or even soil, though the lab has big backlogs because testing take time.

She joined the lab after regretting she might not have fully protected her daughters because of the lack of information and knowledge earlier in the disaster. She says having independent test results is important not because of distrust of government data, but because "we learned over the past 12 years the importance of testing in order to get data" on what mothers want to know for serving safe and healthy food to their children and families.

Kimura said people have different views about safety — some are fine with government standards, others want them to be as close to zero as possible.

"It's very difficult to make everyone feel safe. ... That's why we conduct testing so we can visualize data on food from different places and help people have more options to make a decision," she said.

Kimura said the lab's testing has shown Fukushima fish to be safe over the past few years, and she happily eats local fish.

"It's totally fine to eat fish that does not contain radiation," she said.

But now the treated wastewater release will bring new questions, she said.

Aeon, a major supermarket chain that has been testing cesium and iodine levels in fish, announced plans to also test for tritium, a radionuclide inseparable from water.

Katsumasa Okawa, a fish store and restaurant operator who was at one of his four shops Thursday, said customers were sparse after the plant started its final steps of the treated water release at 1 p.m. and media reports covered the development.

But on Friday, he said, his Yamako seafood restaurant next to Iwaki's main train station seemed to be doing business as usual, with customers coming in and out during lunchtime.

Okawa said he's been looking forward to the wastewater draining as a big step toward decommissioning the nuclear plant. "I feel more at ease thinking those tanks will finally go away."

Okawa, who said he did voluntary testing of his products for a number of years after the disaster, is worried about returning to the days of radiation testing and data as a benchmark of what to eat.

"I think too much testing data only triggers concerns," he said. "I'm confident about what I sell and I will just keep up the work."

Some people say they want to eat good fish and not worry.

Bus driver Hideki Tanaka, on vacation and fishing at another Iwaki port of Onagawa, said he hoped to

catch horse mackerel.

"If you worry too much, you can't eat fish from anywhere," he said.

Hawaii's cherished notion of family, the 'ohana, endures in tragedy's aftermath

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN, JAE C. HONG and MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

LAHAINA, Hawaii (AP) — Families were torn asunder. A community is reeling with grief. More than 100 people have perished and hundreds more remain missing after flames and smoke barreled from the hills and annihilated the historic town of Lahaina.

But even in places overwhelmed by despair and devastation, the Hawaiian spirit known as 'ohana endures.

In the Hawaiian lexicon, 'ohana is a sensibility, a way of thinking that means family, belonging, community and so much more — solace in a time of calamity. It is a unifying principle in an increasingly fragmented world. And in recent weeks, amid misfortune, the word has taken on profound importance in a place appealing for help.

"In times like this, 'ohana gets stronger," says Dustin Kaleiupu, whose Maui roots date back to when monarchs ruled the islands.

The kanaka of Hawaii, the Native Hawaiians who inhabit the islands, value 'ohana, which extends beyond the familial ties of blood. It is a life nourished by kinship.

"In a small town like Lahaina, we all know each other. We've all grown up together," says Kaleiupu, whose 'ohana came to his aid after he and his grandfather escaped the flames that turned their home into a mound of ash and charred debris. "It's such a tight-knit community."

TESTING THE BONDS OF 'OHANA

Finding grace and solace can be almost unimaginable when the very world around you is burning. This is what Lahaina faces today as the smoke begins to clear.

Thousands of other homes are gone. At least 115 people are confirmed dead. And by some counts, nearly 400 of Lahaina's residents remain unaccounted for: fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, young and old, friends and neighbors — all part of someone's 'ohana.

"There's plenty of families who've been displaced by the fire. So we're going to take care of our community as much as possible. So in this sense, our community is the 'ohana," says Kapali Keahi, whose family has lived on Maui for generations.

In the days, and now weeks, after the deadliest wildfire in the United States in more than a century, families who lost homes and possessions continue to depend on the generosity of relatives, friends and even strangers. Shipments of food, clothes and everyday necessities keep arriving from the state's other islands, including Oahu, home to Honolulu.

Online fundraisers, many set up by displaced families, have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars, much of it from distant places. One relief fund has well surpassed \$1.2 million, its 6,400 donors hailing from every part of the globe.

So much of Lahaina has been lost. Left behind are people in deep despair, said Kekai Keahi, another Lahaina resident. One thing, though, remained strong: a connecting strand.

"Ohana was never lost. It never left," he said. "We will always come to each other's aid."

Keahi spoke as Hawaiian flags fluttered near the ocean and a Native Hawaiian group calling itself Na 'Ohana o Lele — the 'ohana of Lahaina — gathered at a beachside park to speak on behalf of their community.

The message from the group was clear: There will be talk of rebuilding, yes, but families need time to grieve and begin healing before any of that begins.

Archie Kalepa, a surfing legend and revered member of Maui's Native Hawaiian community, urged his 'ohana to honor core values. "Love your family, take care of the land," he said, "and you'll rebuild your community."

MANY PEOPLE FROM MANY PLACES, UNITED

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 39 of 76

The community of 13,000 people included immigrants from many parts of the world. Here, they find common ground.

No matter where they came from, no matter when they arrived, transplants are soon charmed by Hawaii's culture, a melange of imported customs and traditions melded together by ways in existence long before the British imperialist and explorer Capt. James Cook came across the Hawaiian archipelago nearly 250 years ago while crossing the Pacific.

As they assimilate, newcomers pick up the oft-spoken vocabulary intrinsic to island life. "Mahalo" conveys gratitude, admiration and respect. "Aloha" is for hello and goodbye, or for love and affection — a word with the warmth of a hug and the beauty of a lei.

Then there is 'ohana. As the movie "Lilo & Stitch" defined it, "'ohana means family, and family means nobody is left behind or forgotten."

With so many dead or missing, a sentiment like that is ripe to resonate across a community coping with loss.

"It's all about family out here," says Mike Tomas, whose immediate family lost their home in the fire. They are sheltering in the homes of friends and relatives. He had planned to move with his girlfriend to Texas sometime in the fall, but they will now depart much sooner.

"Nothing's left here," he says. Not even the clothes and belongings they had begun packing. But he knows he'll be back.

"This has always been home," he says. "This is where family is."

Amber Bobin moved from Chicago to Maui nearly four years ago. She says she was drawn, in part, by the culture and strong bonds of community.

Earlier this week, she joined a small group to hang 115 crosses on fences erected along the road that cuts through Lahaina. That's a single cross for each of the souls whose remains have been found. Bobin expected to hang more crosses in the coming days. The fence also was festooned with a collection of ribbons, one for every person still missing.

And if 'ohana is a way of life in good times, those crosses and ribbons help reveal what it is in tough ones: a mindset that ensures those who have been part of you remain so, even after they were torn away by forces no one imagined would be visited upon home.

"To be able to experience what 'ohana means, especially in tragedy," she says, "has been significantly impactful."

Beloved pets in Canada rescued from wildfires by volunteers who stayed behind

By SUSAN HAIGH Associated Press

Wildfires forced Amanda Dengler to flee her home in Canada's Northwest Territories three times in the past 18 months, and each time her cats have evaded her attempts to bring them along.

The latest time, Dengler had to stay away longer than expected, and joined the many residents who have turned to networks of volunteers who are rescuing animals from communities threatened by Canada's record year of wildfires.

Dengler said she tried to catch her three cats on Aug. 13, when she left her home in the town of Hay River because of a nearby wildfire.

"I think they picked up on my fear and it kind of drove their fear a little bit, and they were not cooperative," she said.

So, she took her two dogs, a suitcase of clothes and her electronics with her. She filled a bathtub with water and left an open bag of dry food on the floor for the cats, thinking she'd be gone for a few days. Once it became longer than that, she looked for help.

That's when she saw a message on Facebook from Dr. Michelle Tuma, a veterinarian in the Northwest Territories capital of Yellowknife and a member of Veterinarians Without Borders. Tuma has spent the past month trying to help families flee with their pets, reunite with them or keep tabs on animals left behind.

"We pray that Allah strengthens the relationship with (Wagner) to continue the deal. If the relationship is good and strong, it's possible they'll continue with the deal even after his death," he said Thursday.

In neighboring Mali, a military junta that seized power in 2020 expelled French troops, diplomats, and media, and ordered an end to a decade-long U.N. peacekeeping mission.

Though not officially recognized by Malian authorities, Wagner forces have been known to operate in the rural north, where rebel and extremist groups have eroded state power and tormented communities.

Human Rights Watch says Mali's army, together with suspected Wagner mercenaries, committed summary executions, looting, forced disappearances and other abuses.

"What we have experienced through Wagner is the massacre of our people," said Ali Nouhoum Diallo, former president of the national assembly.

Timbuktu resident Youba Khalifa said Wagner's presence in Mali wouldn't change without Prigozhin because "they're going to replace him with another leader."

Although Prigozhin had told his troops in Belarus their new mission would be in Africa, several thousand of them trained the Belarusian army near the Polish border, prompting Warsaw to bolster forces there. There were signs, however, the mercenaries were preparing to pull back to Russia.

Belarusian Hajun, a group monitoring Russian troops in Belarus, said Thursday that satellite images showed more than a third of the tents at a Wagner camp were dismantled, a sign of a possible exodus. Still, President Alexander Lukashenko insisted his country will host about 10,000 troops.

That draws strong objections from the Belarusian opposition, which demands their withdrawal.

"Prigozhin's death should put an end to Wagner's presence in Belarus, which will reduce the threat for our country and its neighbors," exiled opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya told the AP.

A broad genetic test saved one newborn's life. Research suggests it could help millions of others

By LAURA UNGAR AP Science Writer

CINCINNATI (AP) — Brynn Schulte nearly died twice when she was a baby, at one point needing emergency surgery for massive bleeding in her brain.

No one knew what was wrong until a test that looked at her full genetic blueprint found a rare bleeding disorder called factor XIII deficiency — an early diagnosis that saved her life.

"You have this hopeless feeling when you don't really know what's going on," said her father, Mike Schulte. "Casting a wide net really made a world of difference figuring this out quickly and getting her the right care that she needed almost immediately."

Brynn, now 4, got the genetic testing as part of a clinical trial, the results of which were published recently in the Journal of the American Medical Association. "Whole genome" tests are nearly twice as good as narrower tests at unearthing genetic abnormalities that can cause disease in infants — the study found 49% of abnormalities, compared to 27% with more commonly used tests targeting particular types of genetic diseases.

Whole genome tests could solve the problem of doing several narrowly targeted tests on babies, which still might not find the disorder. Experts caution there are some issues, because labs vary in how they interpret results, and whole genome tests are costlier and less likely to be covered by insurance.

But researchers envision that whole genome tests eventually will be used for millions of hospitalized babies with confounding, sometimes life-threatening conditions. According to the U.S. National Human Genome Research Institute, around 350 million people worldwide live with rare disorders, and about 80% of the more than 7,000 conditions are genetic.

"I've been doing clinical trials of babies for over 40 years," said study author Dr. Jon Davis, chief of neonatology at Tufts Children's Hospital in Boston. "It's not often that you can do something that you feel is going to really change the world and change clinical practice for everyone."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 41 of 76

"It's hard because we don't really know how long this is going to go on for," Tuma said.

Her first involvement was helping residents of the small town of Behchoko, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) northwest of Yellowknife, when they evacuated to the territorial capital on July 24 because of a wildfire.

Many who took buses or planes could not bring their pets with them and were forced to leave the animals behind, Tuma said.

"So we had an amazing group of people who went into the community, helped rescue a bunch of animals out of the community at the owners' consent and brought them to Yellowknife," she said.

Ultimately more than 100 animals were rescued and brought to the city where they were kept at boarding facilities, shelters or with the more than 80 foster families who came forward to help.

In the following weeks, there were evacuations in more communities and more pets to help. Then, on Aug. 16, an evacuation order was issued for Yellowknife. In several days, about 20,000 of the city's roughly 23,000 residents left.

Tuma, however, decided to remain, as an essential worker.

"I've been working these wildfires for every other community for the last month and it was just a no-brainer for me to stay back and help with my community, my hometown, and give back to this amazing city," she said.

Working with staff around Canada at Veterinarians Without Borders, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and local officials, Tuma and others have been busy helping to save, transport and care for pets as firefighters battle to keep the flames at bay.

They've brought food and water to homebound pets, fielded calls from worried pet owners, and helped arrange for the delivery of much-needed animal transport crates to remote areas.

"At first, the flights weren't allowing pets on unless they had carriers and the city immediately sold out of those," said Charly Jarrett, director of communications for Veterinarians Without Borders.

Eventually, military flights as well as commercial flights allowed evacuees to bring their pets aboard without a crate.

Tuma — sometimes with the help of a locksmith — has been busy rescuing animals in their homes, including a scared kitty who was hiding behind a washing machine before giving Tuma a couple of bites. She also helped staff at a local vet clinic pack up an angry snake for transport. It was spitting, hissing and lunging at its rescuers as they tried to remove it from a glass enclosure.

Tuma also has treated sick animals, prescribed sedatives for anxious ones who needed to be transported, and helped keep track of the approximately 70 to 80 animals still in Yellowknife.

Maggie McGuane — daughter of the late Canadian actor Margot Kidder, a native of Yellowknife who was known for playing Lois Lane in the Superman movies — contacted Veterinarians Without Borders to offer help. McGuane is involved with Wings of Rescue, a California-based charity that transports at-risk pets from disaster areas and overcrowded shelters.

On Aug. 20, a husband and wife team of volunteer pilots from Wings of Rescue flew out 17 animals, including two snakes. The cost of the flight was partly covered by a \$10,000 donation from the American-based Tito's Handmade Vodka and the company's Vodka for Dog People Charity.

Two of Dengler's cats, which had to be picked up in Hay River — a five-hour drive from Yellowknife — were on that flight. Her third cat, a 7-year-old indoor-outdoor cat named Stitch, was still at large but was recently spotted by a neighbor.

Dengler, who is staying with friends in Calgary, said it was a relief to know at least her other four pets were safe.

"I think right now people are looking for comfort, right? You leave your whole life behind and ... sometimes pets can be family members for some people," she said. "Even if I lost my house. Even if I lost all my belongings, I still have the life of my animals. Everything else is replaceable."

Schoolkids in 8 states can now eat free school meals, advocates urge Congress for nationwide policy

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 42 of 76

By STEVE KARNOWSKI and SUSAN MONTROYA BRYAN Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — When classes resume after Labor Day, Amber Lightfeather won't have to worry about where her children's next meals will be coming from. They'll be free.

Minnesota, New Mexico, Colorado, Vermont, Michigan, and Massachusetts will make school breakfasts and lunches permanently free to all students starting this academic year, regardless of family income, following in the footsteps of California and Maine. Several other states are considering similar changes and congressional supporters want to extend free meals to all kids nationwide.

Lightfeather, who has four kids who attend public schools in Duluth, Minnesota, said her family has sometimes qualified for free or reduced-price meals but would have had to pay in the upcoming school year if Minnesota had not made the change. Her earnings as a hospital worker and her husband's as a tribal employee would have put them over the limit. Last year, the family was paying over \$260 a month for school meals for all four kids, who are at the hungry ages of 10, 13, 16 and 17.

She felt so strongly that she testified for Minnesota's school lunch bill when it came before the Legislature last winter. Students hugged Gov. Tim Walz, a former teacher, when he signed it into law at their Minneapolis elementary school in March.

"I was crying when I found out that they finally passed it. I didn't just go and testify for my own kids. I testified for every kid who could benefit," Lightfeather said.

Schools nationwide offered free meals to all at the height of the pandemic, which sent participation soaring. But when federal aid ran out in spring 2022, most states reverted to free or discounted meals only for kids who qualified. That left out families that weren't poor enough, stigmatized those who were, and added to growing school meal debt.

"We know that students learn better when they are well nourished," said Emily Honer, director of nutrition programs for the Minnesota Department of Education. "And we know that students a lot of time don't know where their meal is going to come from. We're taking that (fear) away."

In New Mexico, where educators and policymakers have long talked about the nexus of poverty and educational outcomes, most students were eligible for free or reduced-price meals even before the new law was signed in March.

Nevertheless, Albuquerque Public Schools saw an immediate increase in participation. And in the first seven days of the school year that started this month, the numbers increased by 1,000 per day for breakfast and lunch.

At Lowell Elementary in Albuquerque, the cafeteria was buzzing Tuesday as dozens of students lined the lunch tables with bright blue trays filled with veggies, rice and teriyaki beef.

Lorraine Martinez, the school secretary, said some children used to suffer stomach cramps or would feel dizzy because they didn't have enough to eat.

"Now everybody has the food and water and milk — the nutrition — that they need," she said.

Many families will still struggle to afford school meals in other states. Annette Nielsen, executive director of the Hunter College NYC Food Policy Center in New York City, said breakfasts and lunches can cost parents \$1,500 per student per year.

"Don't we want kids to be able to perform well in school and get good, nutritious, healthful meals throughout their learning?" Nielsen asked. "I think it's the least we can do."

The Minnesota Legislature allocated over \$440 million for first two years of the program despite Republican complaints about subsidizing families that can afford to pay. Honer, of the Minnesota Department of Education, said she was heartened by how many private and charter schools plan to participate.

Stacy Koppen, director of nutrition services for St. Paul Public Schools, said her district can offer universal meals at 60 schools this year, up from the 40 that qualified last year for a federal program that makes meals free to all students at schools with high populations from lower-income families.

"You can just come to school and focus on learning," she said.

The new law is also a boon for Minnetonka in suburban Minneapolis, which is considered affluent. Superintendent David Law said about 8% to 10% of the district's students qualified for free or reduced-priced

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 43 of 76

lunches before the pandemic, and that plenty of families didn't qualify but weren't in a position to spend \$20 a week per kid either.

Law said its also a benefit that serving breakfast is now mandatory. His schools had previously struggled to fill food-service openings for part-time, lunch-only positions, but his cafeterias are now almost fully staffed because the additional hours makes those jobs more attractive. More staff and the additional state money should help improve the quality and variety of the meals, he said.

"I think it's going to be a win all around," Law said.

In New Mexico, education officials said the new law means more than 3,000 additional students now have access to no-cost meals, and because New Mexico also is requiring schools to upgrade their kitchens, more food can be made from scratch.

Alexis Bylander, senior policy analyst for the nonprofit Food Research & Action Center in Washington, D.C., said momentum is building. She noted that some states have at least taken incremental action to make meals more affordable. Connecticut is using federal stimulus money to extend free meals to more students this year. Pennsylvania is planning on free breakfasts. Illinois passed a free school meals for all policy this year, but didn't include funding to implement it. New York City and some other local communities offer universal free meals on their own.

U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar reintroduced a bill in May to extend universal free meals to every state. While it's unlikely to advance in this divided Congress, Bylander said it lays out a vision of what is possible.

"While the eight state policies are great, and we think that there's going to be more passed in the near future, we're really calling on Congress and highlighting the need for a nationwide policy so all kids get that benefit," Bylander said.

Tens of thousands expected for March on Washington's 60th anniversary demonstration

By AARON MORRISON AP National Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Martin Luther King III, along with his wife, Arndrea Waters King, and their 15-year-old daughter, Yolanda, have developed a set of traditions for this time of the year.

Each August, they rewatch the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s rapturous address to the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Even if the civil rights icon's legacy is closer to the Kings than it is for most other families, they see march anniversaries as a teaching moment.

"We are like any other family, in the sense that we want to teach our daughter about this moment in history," Arndrea said. "And then we also try to connect it with movements or people that are doing things in the present."

This year, the Kings will join an expected crowd of tens of thousands of people, who are gathering Saturday at the Lincoln Memorial in the nation's capital to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the late reverend's "I Have A Dream" speech.

The event is convened by the Kings' Drum Major Institute and the National Action Network. A host of Black civil rights leaders and a multiracial, interfaith coalition of allies will rally attendees on the same spot where as many as 250,000 gathered in 1963 for what is still considered one of the greatest and most consequential racial justice and equality demonstrations in U.S. history.

On Friday, Martin Luther King III, who is the late civil rights icon's eldest son, and his sister, Bernice King, each visited their father's monument in Washington.

"I see a man still standing in authority and saying, 'We've still got to get this this right,'" Bernice said as she looked up at the granite statue.

The original march, which featured their father as a centerpiece, helped till the ground for passage of federal civil rights and voting rights legislation in the 1960s.

Organizers of this year's commemoration hope to recapture the energy of the original March on Wash-

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 44 of 76

ington – especially in the face of eroded voting rights nationwide, after the recent striking down of affirmative action in college admissions and abortion rights by the Supreme Court, and amid growing threats of political violence and hatred against people of color, Jews and the LGBTQ community.

“What we know is when people stand up, the difference can be made,” Martin Luther King III told The Associated Press in an interview ahead of Saturday. “This is not a traditional commemoration. This really is a rededication.”

The event kicks off with pre-program speeches and performances at 8:00 a.m. ET. The main program begins at 11 a.m. ET., followed by a march procession that will begin through the streets of Washington toward the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial.

Featured speakers include Ambassador Andrew Young, the close King adviser who helped organize the original march and who went on to serve as a congressman, U.N. ambassador and mayor of Atlanta. Leaders from the NAACP and the National Urban League are also expected to give remarks.

Several leaders from groups organizing the march met Friday with Attorney General Merrick Garland and Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the civil rights division, to discuss a range of issues, including voting rights, policing and redlining.

The gathering Saturday is a precursor to the actual anniversary of the Aug. 28, 1963 March on Washington. President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris will observe the march anniversary on Monday by meeting with organizers of the 1963 gathering. All of King’s children have been invited to meet with Biden, White House officials said.

For the Rev. Al Sharpton, founder of the National Action Network, continuing to observe March on Washington anniversaries fulfills a promise he made to the late King family matriarch Coretta Scott King. Twenty three years ago, she introduced Sharpton and Martin Luther King III at a 37th anniversary march and urged them to carry on the legacy.

“I never thought that 23 years later, Martin and I, with Arndrea, would be doing a march and we’d have less (civil rights protections) than we had in 2000,” Sharpton said.

“We’re fulfilling the assignment Mrs. King gave us,” he said. “We are having to march, saying we can’t go backwards, and we’ve got to go forward.”

Coming out of the march on Saturday, Sharpton says he will lead a voting rights tour in the fall in states that are trying to erect barriers ahead of the 2024 presidential election. He also plans to meet with major Black entrepreneurs to create a fund to finance the fight against conservative attacks on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Bernice King, said she sympathized with those who have grown weary over the continued fight to preserve civil rights. But they need to remember her mother’s words, in addition to her father’s famous speech, she said.

“Mother said, struggle is a never ending process,” said Bernice, who is CEO of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center For Nonviolent Social Change, which was founded by her mom after the civil rights icon’s assassination in 1968.

“Freedom is never really won – you earn it and win it in every generation. Vigilance is the answer,” she said. “We have to always remember, it’s difficult and dark right now, but a dawn is coming.”

Her father’s March on Washington remarks have resounded through decades of push and pull toward progress in civil and human rights. But dark moments followed his speech, too.

Two weeks later in 1963, four Black girls were killed in the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama, followed by the kidnapping and murder of three civil rights workers in Neshoba County, Mississippi the following year. The tragedies spurred passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

And the voting rights marches from Montgomery to Selma, Alabama, in which marchers were brutally beaten while crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge in what became known as “Bloody Sunday,” forced Congress to adopt the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

“Unfortunately, we’re living in a time when there’s a younger generation who believes that my daddy’s generation, and those of us who came after, didn’t get enough done,” Bernice King said. “And I want them to understand, you are benefiting and this is the way you’re benefiting.”

She added: "We can't give up, because there's a moment in time when change comes. We have to celebrate the small victories. If you're not grateful, you will undermine your progress, too."

Ramaswamy faces curiosity and skepticism in Iowa after center-stage performance in GOP debate

By THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

PELLA, Iowa (AP) — Vivek Ramaswamy has charged back into Iowa, stoking curiosity and skepticism after his attention-grabbing performance in the first Republican presidential debate.

The charismatic 38-year-old businessman was met Friday by hundreds of GOP activists in small central cities near Des Moines, with more events planned in the coming days.

He is drawing new interest from Republicans who will participate in the nation's first caucuses next year, but also apprehension from attendees at his events and pointed criticism from a former GOP governor. Much of the negative feedback is about his foreign policy ideas, notably his argument that the U.S. should stop providing arms and funding to Ukraine as it fights Russia's invasion.

"I like that he's young and energetic, and wants to tear the whole thing down," said Thomas Bean, a 23-year-old who attended a morning event south of Des Moines. He was referring to Ramaswamy's goal of reducing the federal bureaucracy by 75 percent.

"I like what he's proposing. They're not status quo," said Bean, a public relations professional. "I just don't know how much of what he's proposing is realistic."

Like Bean, several people who came to see Ramaswamy cited his youth, energy and outsider profile — punctuated by his criticism of and by better-known rivals Wednesday in Milwaukee. He drew larger than expected audiences on Friday, first to the Indianola breakfast restaurant and later a lunchtime event at a Pella brew pub.

Ramaswamy introduced himself as the son of poor Indian immigrants. But he spent most of his time speaking for what he describes as a frustrated generation seeking meaning in a nation that he says has lost its patriotism. The Ohio businessman has a background in investing and biotechnology.

"So what does it mean to be American? It means we believe in the ideals that set this nation into motion 250 years ago," Ramaswamy said, drawing applause. "That you get ahead in this country, not on the color of your skin, but on the content of your character and your contributions."

He mostly took a more inspirational tone than on Wednesday, when he confronted veteran politicians such as former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and Vice President Mike Pence.

Ramaswamy's argument that the U.S. should suspend financial aid to Ukraine was met with sharp rebukes from Pence and former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley. Haley on Wednesday likened Ramaswamy's position to siding with Russian President Vladimir Putin and thus "choosing a murderer."

The crosstalk and jabs during the debate, Ramaswamy said, were like "some banter on the basketball court."

Still, Ramaswamy's campaign was seizing on his rising profile. His campaign said it raised \$450,000 in the first hours after the debate. And he is scheduled to appear Sunday on NBC's Meet the Press and CNN's State of the Union.

Former Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, who has not endorsed a candidate, said in an interview that Ramaswamy "brings some real enthusiasm and commitment to traditional values that Americans are really clamoring for," but described his foreign policy as "a real problem."

"I don't think he's really thought that through. And I thought that Nikki Haley really took him to task on that," said Branstad, who served as ambassador to China under former President Donald Trump. "Rightly so."

Janice Johnson, a 72-year-old from Indianola, Iowa, said she wanted someone from Ramaswamy's generation to take the nation's reins. But speaking before one of his events, Johnson described Ramaswamy as "sometimes a little too enthusiastic."

Jim Jones, a former county GOP official from nearby Carlisle, said he viewed Ramaswamy with equal

parts intrigue and apprehension.

"The intrigue is about, how does this guy come off appearing so strong and come from nowhere so quickly?" said Jones, 75. "The apprehension comes from his idea of abandoning Ukraine. That's a little bit scary."

Ramaswamy said Friday that he was trying to protect Ukraine by seeking an ending in which Russia would retain territory it took by force.

"I personally think that actually is the best, reasonable outcome for Ukraine. At least it comes out with its sovereignty intact — and saving a lot of Ukrainian lives in the process," he told reporters when asked about the criticism. "That's the best case, realistic scenario for Ukraine."

Others with more vested interests have also piled on Ramaswamy.

Hal Lambert, a donor to Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, questioned Ramaswamy's credentials and reason for running, noting Ramaswamy's frequent praise during the debate for Trump, who remains the heavy favorite for the nomination.

"Either he thinks Trump is going to go to prison or he thinks at 38 years old and with less experience than an average city councilman, he'd be better than 'the greatest president of the 21st century,'" Lambert said. "Which is it? Either way he shouldn't be running."

Ken Cuccinelli, chairman of the pro-DeSantis Never Back Down super PAC, predicted last week that Ramaswamy would get more scrutiny as interest in him rises. Never Back Down issued a strategy memo before the debate urging DeSantis to attack Ramaswamy — something the Florida governor did not do, opting instead to largely stay out of the infighting between others on stage.

"So, I'm not backing off 'Vivek the fake,'" Cuccinelli said, referencing a catchphrase that Never Back Down wanted DeSantis to use. "He's the most inconsistent candidate in the field, and he's getting no scrutiny."

The US and allies clash with North Korea, China and Russia over failed satellite launch and tensions

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States and its allies clashed Friday with North Korea, Russia and China over Pyongyang's failed attempts to launch a spy satellite and who is responsible for escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The open Security Council meeting called by the U.S., Albania, Ecuador, France, Japan and Malta to condemn the attempted launch, which used banned ballistic missile technology, was attended by North Korea's United Nations ambassador for just the second time since 2017.

Ambassador Kim Song, who also addressed the council in July, told members the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — the country's official name — has "an independent and legitimate right" as a sovereign country to launch a satellite for "self-defense to deter the ever-increasing hostile military acts of the United States and its followers."

The North's space agency said Thursday its reconnaissance satellite, Malligyong-1, failed for a second time to go into orbit, blaming an error in its third-stage flight. Pyongyang said it will make a third attempt in October to achieve a key military goal of its leader, Kim Jong Un.

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said the DPRK had again defied Security Council resolutions by pursuing its unlawful ballistic missile program. She said 13 of the 15 Security Council members oppose the DPRK's unlawful actions and have called for an end to the country's pursuit of nuclear weapons and its tests — and for unity of the council.

Song said the DPRK has never recognized Security Council resolutions, which he claimed infringe on "the rights of a sovereign state and will never be bound by them in the future."

He accused the United States and South Korea's "military gangsters" of "turning the Korean Peninsula into a potential area of an immense thermal nuclear war" while clamoring for regime change in the DPRK and waging large-scale joint military exercises that he said feature "nuclear preemptive strikes on our state as a fait accompli."

Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia called the council meeting "a cynical, hypocritical attempt by the U.S. and its allies to step up pressure on Pyongyang and to detract attention from the reckless escalatory actions of Washington and its allies in the region, who represent the real sources of threats to international peace and security."

He called the expansion of U.S.-led military exercises "blatantly provocative," saying they further complicate prospects for starting a dialogue, which is necessary to strengthen regional security.

China's deputy U.N. ambassador Geng Shuang accused the United States of "a long-standing hostile policy towards the DPRK," telling the council that Washington's continuous pressure, including sending a nuclear-armed submarine to the peninsula in July, makes the North feel "increasingly insecure."

He said the Security Council should not intensify tension but take practical actions to respond to the DPRK's legitimate concerns and create conditions to relaunch talks.

Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador, rejected "the disingenuous claims by Russia and China that the U.S. is acting in a hostile manner," calling the military exercises routine, lawful and defensive.

"And unlike the DPRK's ballistic missile launches, they are not prohibited by U.N. Security Council resolutions," she said.

Thomas-Greenfield also reiterated the U.S. commitment to diplomacy, saying that the Biden administration publicly and privately has repeatedly urged the DPRK to engage in dialogue without preconditions. "But the DPRK has still not responded to our offers," she said.

China's Geng retorted that the military exercises are "at a record level," pointing to U.S. bombers and Marines taking part, and noting more U.S. sanctions on the DPRK. "I would like to ask in this context, how can the dialogue be really resumed?" he said.

The council meeting also saw a heated exchange between Japan and the DPRK and China over Tokyo's release of treated radioactive water from the tsunami-wrecked Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean.

North Korea's Song first raised the issue, saying the Security Council should denounce "Japan's heinous crime against humanity," which he said is jeopardizing the safety and security of all people and the marine ecological environment.

Japan's U.N. Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane rejected the "baseless allegations," saying that scientific evidence has said the discharges are safe.

But China's Geng, whose country has banned seafood from Japan, reiterated Beijing's strong opposition, saying the discharge of "nuclear-contaminated water" into the ocean is "transferring the nuclear threat to the whole world."

After Maui officials named 388 people unaccounted for in fires, many called to say they're OK

By REBECCA BOONE, BEATRICE DUPUY, GENE JOHNSON and JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Within a day of Maui County releasing 388 names of people unaccounted for following the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century, more than 100 of them or their relatives came forward to say they're safe, the FBI said Friday.

The agency is reviewing the information they provided and working to remove the names from the list.

"We're very thankful for the people who have reached out by phone or email," Steven Merrill, the FBI's special agent in charge in Honolulu, said in a news conference. "As we get someone off of a list, this has enabled us to devote more resources to those who are still on the list."

Several people on the list told The Associated Press earlier in the day that they are alive and well, with a few also saying they were confused or frustrated to be on it. At least two others were among the victims of the fire — people who are known to have perished but have not yet been positively identified as deceased in the official tally, which currently stands at 115.

Arturo Gonzalez Hernandez wound up on the list even though he moved away from Lahaina, the historic

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 48 of 76

seaside community demolished in the blaze, three years ago, and he called the FBI on Friday to provide his name and birthdate. An inaccurate list could cause unnecessary stress, he said.

"Some people are still struggling with the impact of so many people dying," said Gonzalez, who now lives up the coast near Kapalua.

Terrí Thomas was killed when fire overtook her car as she fled from her apartment with her two dogs and two friends, said her cousin, Tammy Cruz, of Columbus, Georgia. The car became stuck in traffic and only one of the friends escaped. He later told Cruz that Thomas was crying hysterically when he last saw her, the car growing hotter by the second.

Thomas' niece provided a DNA swab to help identify her remains, Cruz said Friday, but the family hasn't received notification of her death.

"Her dogs were her world to her," Cruz said. "I knew she wouldn't have left her dogs."

The 388 names represented a portion of a broader list of up to 1,100 people reported missing that the FBI said earlier this week it was working to validate. Maui County said the newly published list included those for whom it had first and last names as well as verified contact information for someone who reported them missing.

Merrill said there were children on the list but he couldn't provide a number.

Officials asked anyone who knows someone on the list to contact authorities.

Something similar happened after a wildfire in 2018 that killed 85 people and destroyed the town of Paradise, California. Authorities published a list of the missing in the local newspaper, a decision that helped identify scores of people who had made it out alive but were listed as missing. Within a month, it dropped from 1,300 names to only a dozen.

Heidi Mazur, of Lahaina, told AP she was frustrated to be on the unaccounted-for list when she has been active on Facebook and started an online fundraiser after the fire.

"They will find me in a New York minute if I don't pay my car registration or taxes, but they can't seem to locate me in a disaster here in Lahaina!" she said via Facebook Messenger.

MalamaKai Watson, 40, was not in Lahaina during the fires but on the other side of the island. With cellphone and internet service disrupted, she understood when she first appeared on a grassroots Facebook list of the missing. But she was quickly listed as found after she was able to get in touch with her loved ones.

She was baffled to be on the new, more official list. She called the FBI to say she was safe, but didn't see any changes online Friday.

"Now it's annoying," she said. "There are people on there who are definitely missing. The focus needs to be on the people needing to be found still."

Seth Alberico, a soccer coach from California's Bay Area, said his name and his daughter Kalia's had previously circulated on the unofficial, crowdsourced list, but he didn't realize they were also on the new "verified" list until AP told him.

"I would love to be taken off the list," he said. "We are both safe."

He was staying in a condo on Kaanapali Beach not far from the burn area at the time of the Aug. 8 fire. A former player knew he had been on Maui and knew he had a daughter, and she reported them missing when she couldn't reach him on Facebook afterward, he said. His daughter hadn't even been with him, he said.

He said he sent messages on Facebook and Instagram trying to be taken off the list, to no avail.

An additional 1,732 people reported missing had been found safe as of Thursday afternoon, officials said.

Crews have been searching for remains among the ashes of destroyed businesses and multistory residential buildings. The search will take weeks to complete, with many of the last structures posing complicated challenges, Army Col. David Fielder, deputy commander of the joint task force responding to the wildfires, said in a news conference Friday.

Dozens of searchers have also been combing a 4-mile (6.4-kilometer) stretch of water for signs of anyone who might have perished after climbing over a seawall to try to escape the flames and black smoke enveloping downtown.

Also Friday, officials announced the interim administrator for the county's emergency management agency, a position that's been empty since Herman Andaya resigned last week after criticism for not activating disaster sirens during the fires.

Darryl Oliveira, former fire chief and civil defense director for the Big Island, is respected across the state for his management expertise in disasters including hurricanes and lava flows.

He said he wants to earn "trust and confidence" as he helps rebuild Maui's emergency management system.

Earlier in the week, officials pleaded for relatives of people who were still unaccounted for to come forward and give DNA samples to help identify remains, promising that the samples would not be entered into law enforcement databases or used in any other way. At the time, DNA had been collected from only 104 families, a figure officials described as concerningly low.

Maui Prosecuting Attorney Andrew Martin, who is leading the family assistance center, said there has been a slight increase in the donation of samples since then, but "we're still not where we want to be."

Among the many reasons people may be hesitant is a "historical and generational mistrust of the government," Martin said, referring to a sentiment rooted in the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

Alabama wants to be the 1st state to execute a prisoner by making him breathe only nitrogen

By KIM CHANDLER Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Alabama is seeking to become the first state to execute a prisoner by making him breathe pure nitrogen.

The Alabama attorney general's office on Friday asked the state Supreme Court to set an execution date for death row inmate Kenneth Eugene Smith, 58. The court filing indicated Alabama plans to put him to death by nitrogen hypoxia, an execution method that is authorized in three states but has never been used.

Nitrogen hypoxia is caused by forcing the inmate to breathe only nitrogen, depriving them of oxygen and causing them to die. Nitrogen makes up 78% of the air inhaled by humans and is harmless when inhaled with oxygen. While proponents of the new method have theorized it would be painless, opponents have likened it to human experimentation.

Alabama authorized nitrogen hypoxia in 2018 amid a shortage of drugs used to carry out lethal injections, but the state has not attempted to use it until now to carry out a death sentence. Oklahoma and Mississippi have also authorized nitrogen hypoxia, but have not used it.

The disclosure that Alabama is ready to use nitrogen hypoxia is expected to set off a new round of legal battles over the constitutionality of the method.

The Equal Justice Initiative, a legal advocacy group that has worked on death penalty issues, said Alabama has a history of "failed and flawed executions and execution attempts" and "experimenting with a never before used method is a terrible idea."

"No state in the country has executed a person using nitrogen hypoxia and Alabama is in no position to experiment with a completely unproven and unused method for executing someone," Angie Setzer, a senior attorney with the Equal Justice Initiative said.

Alabama attempted to execute Smith by lethal injection last year, but called off the execution because of problems inserting an IV into his veins. It was the state's second such instance within two months of being unable to put an inmate to death and its third since 2018. The day after Smith's aborted execution, Gov. Kay Ivey announced a pause on executions to conduct an internal review of lethal injection procedures. The state resumed lethal injections last month.

Smith was one of two men convicted in the 1988 murder-for-hire slaying of a preacher's wife. The Alabama attorney general argued it is time to carry out the death sentence.

"It is a travesty that Kenneth Smith has been able to avoid his death sentence for nearly 35 years after being convicted of the heinous murder-for-hire slaying of an innocent woman, Elizabeth Sennett," Attorney

General Steve Marshall said Friday in a statement.

Alabama has been working for several years to develop the nitrogen hypoxia execution method, but has disclosed little about its plans. The attorney general's court filing did not describe the details of the how the execution would be carried out. Corrections Commissioner John Hamm told reporters last month that a protocol was nearly complete.

A number of Alabama inmates seeking to block their executions by lethal injection, including Smith, have argued they should be allowed to die by nitrogen hypoxia.

Robert Grass, an attorney representing Smith, declined to comment Friday.

Sennett was found dead on March 18, 1988, in the home she shared with her husband on Coon Dog Cemetery Road in Alabama's Colbert County. Prosecutors said Smith was one of two men who were each paid \$1,000 to kill Sennett on behalf of her husband, who was deeply in debt and wanted to collect on insurance.

The slaying, and the revelations over who was behind it, rocked the small north Alabama community. The other man convicted in the killing was executed in 2010. Charles Sennett, the victim's husband and a Church of Christ pastor, killed himself when the investigation began to focus on him as a possible suspect, according to court documents.

7 tornadoes confirmed as Michigan storms down trees and power lines; 5 people killed

By COREY WILLIAMS and MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

CANTON TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP) — At least seven tornadoes touched down in Michigan as part of severe storms powered by strong winds that killed five people, while downing trees, tearing roofs off buildings and leaving hundreds of thousands of customers without power, officials said.

The National Weather Service on Friday said an EF-2 tornado with a maximum wind speed of 125 mph (201 kilometers per hour) struck Lansing, the state capital, killing one person Thursday night and injuring three others.

Lansing Police Department spokesperson Jordan Gulkis said an 84-year-old woman died after a tree fell on a home. Firefighters extricated the woman from the home, but she was pronounced dead at a hospital.

The weather service also confirmed that an EF-1 tornado with winds of 90 mph (145 kph) crossed from Ingham County into the western edge of adjacent Livingston County on Thursday night.

Four other EF-1 tornadoes were reported in Belleville and Gibraltar in Wayne County, and in South Rockwood and near Newport in Monroe County.

A weaker EF-0 tornado with peak winds of 80 mph (128 kph) was on the ground for less than two miles in Wayne County's Canton Township, west of Detroit, the weather service said. That tornado caused a tree to fall into a house, said meteorologist Sara Schultz.

The weather service office in Grand Rapids, in western Michigan, said officials would be in the field Friday conducting damage surveys on a suspected tornado in Kent County.

The storms featured lightning displays erupting across the night sky and dumped multiple inches of rain on communities across the lower portion of the state.

In western Michigan, the Kent County sheriff's office said a 21-year-old woman and two girls, ages 1 and 3, died Thursday night after two vehicles collided head-on as it was raining.

"There was two vehicles traveling toward each other. One hydroplaned on water and it was occupied by four people," Sgt. Eric Brunner told WZZM-TV.

The sheriff's office said a 22-year-old Gowen man who was driving the car carrying the woman and two girls was seriously injured in the crash, which occurred when his car struck an SUV. That vehicle's driver suffered minor injuries.

In Ingham County, where Lansing is located, the sheriff's office said Friday that one person was confirmed dead and several people severely injured as more than 25 vehicles were severely damaged along Interstate 96.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 51 of 76

It was not immediately clear early Friday afternoon if the storm or a crash was responsible for the wrecks on the freeway.

In the north Detroit suburb of Southfield, Muqitu Berry said he was in his ranch home about 9:30 p.m. Thursday when a large part of the trunk of a neighbor's tree came crashing down, sounding "like a train coming through."

The tree ended up across the front of Berry's driveway and yard and took down power lines, dropping them onto his driveway and at least one vehicle, leaving Berry and his neighbors without power.

"I can't get out of my driveway. I can't go anywhere," Berry said Friday morning. "We're out of power, and it's very frustrating."

Wayne County Executive Warren Evans declared a state of emergency Friday in Michigan's largest county, which includes Detroit, due to power outages, flooding, fallen trees and power lines and storm debris.

The county also warned residents to avoid any contact with several rivers after flooding caused municipalities to discharge partially or fully untreated wastewater into various waterways.

In Macomb County, northeast of Detroit, several thousand basements in Eastpointe and St. Clair Shores were spared flooding when stormwater and wastewater were discharged to Lake St. Clair through an emergency bypass system, Public Works Commissioner Candice Miller said. The bypass has been used only three times since 2017 but twice this week.

"Apparently, these storms have become our new normal," Miller said. "This has been like a tropical storm, and both government and residents will need to make appropriate preparations whenever possible."

Canton Township, a community of some 100,000 people, was hit earlier this week by flooding in its downtown business district.

"Some of our parks are destroyed," township supervisor Anne Marie Graham-Hudak said, adding that the township received calls from 200 residents regarding flooding in their basements.

More than 390,000 customers in Michigan and over 120,000 in Ohio were without power as of about 7:15 p.m. Friday, according to the Poweroutage.us website.

Thursday night's storms followed a round of heavy rain Wednesday that left areas in southeast Michigan with over 5 inches (12.7 centimeters) of rain by Thursday morning, resulting in street flooding in the Detroit area, including tunnels leading to Detroit Metropolitan Airport in the suburb of Romulus, officials said.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer on Friday declared a state of emergency for Wayne and Monroe counties, which makes available state resources to help with response and recovery efforts related to storm damage.

The storms pushed east across Lake Erie and into northeast Ohio, uprooting trees and leaving thousands of homes and businesses without power.

A tornado also tore through part of Cleveland late Thursday night. It's path was about 150 yards (137 meters) wide and nearly a mile long.

No injuries were reported, but several buildings were severely damaged, including the 143-year-old New Life at Calvary Church that lost its roof. Church leaders asked members to stay away from the building.

"2 Timothy 4:17 says, the Lord stood with me and gave me strength," Pastor Kellie Sullivan said in a press release. "Our church has faced major loss and we praise God that no one was hurt. Please pray for our church as we start to rebuild."

Parts of the western United States have been deluged in recent weeks with rain from Tropical Storm Hilary, and much of the central U.S. was beaten down by deadly sweltering heat. In Hawaii and Washington, emergency crews battled catastrophic wildfires.

Scientists say that without extensive study they cannot directly link a single weather event to climate change, but that climate change is responsible for more intense and more frequent extreme events such as storms, droughts, floods and wildfires. Climate change is largely caused by human activities that emit carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, according to the vast majority of peer-reviewed studies, science organizations and climate scientists.

Bronny James has a congenital heart defect that caused his cardiac arrest, a spokesperson says

By BETH HARRIS AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Bronny James went into cardiac arrest during a basketball workout at the University of Southern California last month because of a congenital heart defect, according to a family spokeswoman.

The 18-year-old son of Los Angeles Lakers superstar LeBron James was stricken on July 24. He was hospitalized at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and later was seen by doctors at the Mayo Clinic and Atlantic Health-Morristown Medical Center in New Jersey.

A statement issued Friday by Stephanie Rosa of the LeBron James Family Foundation said the probable cause of James' sudden cardiac arrest has been identified.

"It is an anatomically and functionally significant Congenital Heart Defect which can and will be treated," the statement said. "We are very confident in Bronny's full recovery and return to basketball in the very near future."

The younger James was released from Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles three days after the incident at USC's Galen Center. The following night he dined out in Santa Monica with his family.

Bronny, whose full name is LeBron James Jr., committed to USC in May after the 6-foot-3 guard became one of the nation's top prospects out of Sierra Canyon School in nearby Chatsworth.

James didn't join the Trojans on their European tour this month.

Bronny James was the second high-profile USC basketball recruit to go into cardiac arrest in the last year. Vincent Iwuchukwu also was stricken during a workout last July, but the 7-foot-1 center returned to the court six months later, eventually appearing in 14 games for the Trojans as a freshman.

Spain soccer head won't resign for kissing player at World Cup. Team won't play until he goes

By JOSEPH WILSON Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Less than a week after winning the Women's World Cup, Spain's national team players announced Friday that they will not play any more games unless the president of the country's soccer federation steps down for kissing player Jenni Hermoso on the lips after their victory.

Luis Rubiales, who was also chastised for grabbing his crotch after Spain's 1-0 victory over England on Sunday, remained defiant despite immense pressure to resign. The kiss marred the title celebrations in Sydney, Australia, on Sunday, and criticism has steadily mounted.

Hermoso issued a statement Friday strongly rebuking Rubiales' characterization of the kiss as consensual, while the 46-year-old federation president cast himself as the victim at an emergency general assembly of the federation in Madrid.

"I won't resign," he declared four times in quick succession, to applause from the overwhelmingly male audience.

Several Spanish news media outlets reported on Thursday that Rubiales would step down. Instead, he said on Friday that he is the victim of a witch hunt by "false feminists."

While Rubiales held his ground, federation vice president Rafael del Amo, who had been in charge of women's soccer, announced that he was resigning, followed by at least two other federation members. Del Amo had urged Rubiales to also resign.

Among those applauding Rubiales were women's national team coach Jorge Vilda and men's national team coach Luis de la Fuente. Until Friday's assembly, he had received no public support in Spain, with political parties from both the left and the right speaking out against him.

In his speech to the gathering, Rubiales said Hermoso "lifted me up" in a celebratory gesture and he asked her for "a little kiss?" and she "said yes."

"The kiss was the same I could give one of my daughters," Rubiales said.

The televised broadcast of the medals ceremony didn't show the first moments when Rubiales congratu-

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 53 of 76

lated Hermoso. But it does show that his feet were on the ground before he held her face and kissed her. Hermoso contradicted Rubiales' version in two statements, one issued through her FUTRPO players union and a second published on social media.

She said that she did not consent to the kiss or try to pick up the president, and that there was no conversation like the one described by Rubiales.

"I won't tolerate anyone doubting my word and even less someone putting words in my mouth," she said.

In a second statement, Hermoso said the kiss "left me in a state of shock."

"I believe that no person in any workplace should be the victim of this type of nonconsensual behavior," she added.

Hermoso also accused the federation of pressuring her and her family to speak out in Rubiales' defense. The federation previously denied a report that it forced her to make a statement downplaying the kiss shortly after it happened.

After a full day of accusations and counteraccusations between Hermoso and Rubiales, the federation issued a statement early Saturday saying that its president did not lie and that he and the organization would take legal action against Hermoso and her union. The statement included photos that it said show Hermoso lifting Rubiales off the ground during the medals ceremony.

The FUTPRO statement signed by Hermoso, her 22 teammates, and more than 50 other Spanish players said they would no longer play for Spain "if the present leadership remains in charge."

Rubiales said he would defend his honor in court against politicians, including two ministers, who called his kiss an act of sexual violence. One of them was acting Deputy Prime Minister Yolanda Díaz, who urged the government to take "urgent measures."

"Impunity for macho actions is over," Díaz said. "Rubiales cannot continue in office."

Alexia Putellas, Hermoso's teammate and a two-time Ballon d'Or winner as the best player in the world, posted a message of support on X, formerly known as Twitter.

"This is unacceptable," the Barcelona player wrote. "I'm with you, my teammate, Jenni Hermoso."

Other teammates quickly followed, along with players from abroad.

"I'm disgusted by the public actions of Luis Rubiales," U.S. soccer star Alex Morgan said on X. She added that winning a World Cup "should be one of the best moments in these players' lives but instead it's overshadowed by assault, misogyny, and failures by the Spanish federation."

The president of Spain's women's league, Beatriz Álvarez, told Spanish state broadcaster RTVE that she was not surprised because Rubiales' "ego is above his dignity."

"What surprises and scandalizes me are his words," Álvarez said. "Every time he speaks he shows what kind of person he really is."

Spain's government planned to file a lawsuit Friday alleging that Rubiales violated the country's sports laws, according to Víctor Francos, secretary of state for sports and head of Spain's Higher Council for Sports. If Spain's Administrative Court for Sports agrees to hear the suit, the council will suspend Rubiales pending the court's ruling, Francos said.

If found guilty by the court for committing sexist acts, Rubiales could be ruled unfit to hold office. Francos said he would ask the court to move its regular Thursday meeting up to Monday.

Iberia airlines, a major sponsor of the federation, said it supported the government's initiative to "protect the rights and dignity of our athletes."

About 100 people, mostly women, gathered Friday night in front of the Spanish soccer federation's headquarters in Madrid to call for Rubiales' resignation, many waving red cards used by soccer referees to expel players from games.

"What has to happen now is his resignation and the resignation of everyone who applauded him," said 39-year-old protester Alma Doña. "The federation needs to be reformed and women's soccer should have more support."

Spanish soccer club Barcelona, which provided nine players for Spain's team, said Rubiales' behavior "was completely inappropriate." Real Madrid said it supported the government's decision to try to suspend

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 54 of 76

Rubiales. Sevilla called for his resignation. Athletic Bilbao said it was renouncing its seat on the federation's board and backed the government's decisions. Osasuna slammed Rubiales, calling him "rude and sexist." Espanyol, Valencia, and Celta Vigo also issued statements against Rubiales, as did Spanish league president Javier Tebas.

FIFA, the governing body of soccer, opened a disciplinary case against Rubiales on Thursday. Disciplinary judges can impose sanctions on individuals ranging from warnings and fines to suspensions from the sport.

The Netherlands-based FIFPRO player's union, which had already demanded action against Rubiales, reiterated its position after his assembly speech.

The only relevant institution to remain silent has been European soccer body UEFA, for which Rubiales is a vice president. FIFPRO urged UEFA to open its own disciplinary case.

Rubiales, who led the Spanish players union for eight years before taking over as federation president in 2018, is currently heading the UEFA-backed bid to host the men's World Cup in 2030. Spain is bidding with neighboring Portugal and Morocco, and also possibly Ukraine.

Rubiales made 339,000 euros (\$365,000) in 2021 after taxes, for presiding over the federation with a budget of 382 million euros (\$412 million). The federation runs Spain's men's and women's national soccer teams and its semi-professional and amateur soccer leagues. It also organizes the referees for La Liga. The government maintains some oversight of the entity but it cannot name or remove its executives.

Shortly before the kiss, Rubiales grabbed his crotch in a victory gesture, with Queen Letizia of Spain and 16-year old Princess Sofía standing nearby.

He offered an apology for that, saying it was in a moment of "euphoria" and directed toward Vilda on the field.

The first members of the elite in Spanish men's soccer spoke out against Rubiales on Thursday, when it looked like he was bowing out. Their words of reproach continued to trickle in after Rubiales' diatribe on Friday.

"What an embarrassment," former Spain goalkeeper Iker Casillas said on X. "We should have spent the last five days talking about our women players, about the joy they gave us all! About how proud we are that they gave us a title that we didn't have in women's soccer, instead ..."

Real Betis forward Borja Iglesias, who has occasionally been called up for Spain's national team, said he would not play for his country again "until things change."

Biden and Harris will meet with King's family on the March on Washington's 60th anniversary

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris will observe Monday's 60th anniversary of the March on Washington by meeting with organizers of the 1963 gathering and relatives of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial.

The Oval Office meeting will be held six decades after President John F. Kennedy and King met at the White House on the morning of the march on Aug. 28, 1963. All of King's children have been invited to meet with Biden, White House officials said.

Biden also will speak later Monday at a White House reception commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a nonpartisan, nonprofit legal organization that was established at Kennedy's request to help advocate for racial justice.

Two White House officials provided details of the Democratic president and vice president's plans on the condition of anonymity because their schedules have not been officially announced.

The 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom is still considered one of the greatest and most consequential racial justice demonstrations in U.S. history.

The nonviolent protest attracted as many as 250,000 people to the Lincoln Memorial and provided momentum for passage by Congress of landmark civil rights and voting rights legislation in the years that followed. King was assassinated in April 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 55 of 76

Black civil rights leaders and a multiracial, interfaith coalition of allies will gather in Washington on Saturday to mark six decades since the first march. Biden will be flying back to Washington after a week of vacation with his family near Lake Tahoe.

This year's commemoration comes at a difficult time, following the erosion of voting rights nationwide and the recent striking down of affirmative action in college admissions and abortion rights by the Supreme Court. It also comes amid growing threats of political violence and hatred against people of color, Jews and LGBTQ individuals.

White House officials say Biden and Harris, who are seeking reelection in 2024, are working to advance King's dream of equal opportunity for all. Harris is the first Black person to be vice president.

Biden has signed executive orders to advance racial justice and equity throughout the federal government and to expand access to the right to vote. Voting rights legislation backed by Biden and Harris has stalled in a divided Congress.

He recently designated a national monument to honor Emmett Till and his mother, Mamie Till-Mobley. Till is the Black teenager from Chicago who was tortured and killed in 1955 after he was accused of whistling at a white woman in Mississippi. The killing helped galvanize the Civil Rights Movement.

Harris has been outspoken about what she says are attempts by "extremists" to rewrite Black history, including the Florida Board of Education's recent approval of a revised curriculum to satisfy legislation signed by Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican presidential candidate. The new standards include instruction that enslaved people benefited from skills they learned while in bondage.

The White House says Black Americans are also benefiting from Biden's economic and other policies, including low unemployment.

Officials note his numerous appointments of Black women to federal courts, including Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, the first Black woman to serve on the nation's highest court.

They also point to nearly \$7 billion in aid to the nation's network of historically Black colleges and universities and his efforts to forgive billions of dollars in student loan debt.

Kremlin denies role in plane crash believed to have killed Russian mercenary leader Prigozhin

By The Associated Press undefined

The Kremlin on Friday rejected allegations it was behind a plane crash that is presumed to have killed mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhin, who conducted a brief but shocking mutiny in Russia two months ago.

Prigozhin, whose brutal fighters were feared in Ukraine, Africa and Syria, was eulogized Thursday by President Vladimir Putin, even as suspicions grew that the Russian leader was behind the crash that many saw as an assassination.

A preliminary U.S. intelligence assessment concluded the plane was downed by an intentional explosion. One of the U.S. and Western officials who described the assessment said it determined that Prigozhin was "very likely" targeted and that the explosion falls in line with Putin's "long history of trying to silence his critics."

The officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment, did not offer any details on what caused the explosion, which was widely believed to be vengeance for the mutiny in June that posed the biggest challenge to Putin's 23-year rule.

But Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov flatly rejected the allegations.

"Right now, of course, there are lots of speculations around this plane crash and the tragic deaths of the passengers of the plane, including Yevgeny Prigozhin," Peskov told reporters during a conference call. "Of course, in the West those speculations are put out under a certain angle, and all of it is a complete lie."

Prigozhin was listed among those aboard the plane.

Asked by The Associated Press whether the Kremlin has received an official confirmation of Prigozhin's death, Peskov referenced Putin's remarks from a day earlier: "He said that right now all the necessary forensic analyses, including genetic testing, will be carried out. Once some kind of official conclusions are

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 56 of 76

ready to be released, they will be released.”

Britain’s Defense Ministry said the presumed death of Prigozhin could destabilize his Wagner Group of private military contractors.

His “exceptional audacity” and “extreme brutality” permeated the organization “and are unlikely to be matched by any successor,” the ministry said in a statement.

Wagner mercenaries were key elements of Russia’s forces in its war in Ukraine, particularly in the long fight to take the city of Bakhmut, the conflict’s most grueling battle. Wagner fighters also have played a central role projecting Russian influence in global trouble spots, first in Africa and then in Syria.

The jet crashed Wednesday soon after taking off from Moscow for St. Petersburg, carrying Prigozhin, six other Wagner members and a crew of three, according to Russia’s civil aviation authority. Rescuers found 10 bodies, and Russian media cited anonymous sources in Wagner who said Prigozhin was dead. But there has been no official confirmation.

President Joe Biden, speaking to reporters Wednesday, said he believed Putin was likely behind the crash. “I don’t know for a fact what happened, but I’m not surprised,” Biden said. “There’s not much that happens in Russia that Putin’s not behind.”

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov took offense at that. “It is not for the U.S. president, in my opinion, to talk about certain tragic events of this nature,” he said Friday.

The passenger manifest also included Prigozhin’s second-in-command, as well as Wagner’s logistics chief and at least one possible bodyguard.

It was not clear why several high-ranking members of Wagner, who were normally exceedingly careful about their security, would have been on the same flight. The purpose of their trip to St. Petersburg was unknown.

Russian authorities have opened an investigation into the crash. The country’s Investigative Committee said Friday that it had recovered the plane’s flight recorders and that genetic testing was being used to identify the bodies.

Numerous opponents and critics of Putin have been killed or fallen gravely ill in apparent assassination attempts, and U.S. and other Western officials long expected the Russian leader to go after Prigozhin, despite promising to drop charges in a deal that ended the June 23-24 mutiny.

Prigozhin was outspoken and critical of how Russian generals were waging the war in Ukraine, where his mercenaries were some of the fiercest fighters for the Kremlin. For a long time, Putin appeared content to allow such infighting, but Prigozhin’s brief revolt raised the ante.

On June 23, his mercenaries swept through the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don and captured the military headquarters there without firing a shot. They then drove to within about 200 kilometers (125 miles) of Moscow and downed several military aircraft, killing more than a dozen Russian pilots.

Putin initially denounced the rebellion as “treason” and a “stab in the back,” but soon made a deal that saw an end to the mutiny a day after it began in exchange for an amnesty for Prigozhin and his mercenaries and permission for them to move to Belarus.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, who facilitated that deal, said Friday that Prigozhin never asked him for security guarantees. “I don’t have to ensure Prigozhin’s safety ... the conversation was never in that vein,” he was quoted as saying by the state news agency Belta.

Lukashenko said he previously warned Putin of “an impending assassination attempt on Prigozhin,” according to Belta. Lukashenko told Belta he received “very serious information from the deepest sources” while on a recent trip to the United Arab Emirates and passed it on via the Russian ambassador in the UAE to Putin and the head of Russia’s FSB security agency.

Lukashenko later checked with Prigozhin, who confirmed Putin had warned him about the threat, according to Belta.

Since Prigozhin’s presumed death, unconfirmed reports said hundreds of Wagner’s fighters have fled Belarus. Relatives of Wagner fighters on one Telegram chat reported long lines for payments at a Wagner office in Russia’s southern Krasnodar region, the private force’s base.

Retired police sergeant who killed 3 at California bar shot his estranged wife first, officials say

By EUGENE GARCIA, AMY TAXIN and JOHN ANTCZAK Associated Press

TRABUCO CANYON, Calif. (AP) — The retired police sergeant who opened fire during a lively Wednesday evening at a popular Southern California biker bar had traveled from Ohio to confront his estranged wife, shooting her in the face before turning his gun on the crowd, authorities said.

John Snowling killed three people, including his wife's dining companion and a man who approached him as Snowling retrieved additional guns from his truck, and wounded six others, Orange County Sheriff Don Barnes said Thursday. He was fatally shot by deputies within minutes of the rampage.

The shooting unfolded as a cover band entertained guests during the bar's popular weekly spaghetti night. Snowling entered the bar, walked up to Marie Snowling and immediately shot her without saying a word, authorities said. Some patrons froze and others ran as bullets flew inside the bar before Snowling went out to the parking lot and continued to fire, witnesses and authorities said.

As the shooting began, M Street band keyboardist Mark Johnson hid behind a speaker with his wife, singer Debbie Johnson.

"Once he started shooting, it was very indiscriminate," Mark Johnson said.

Snowling, 59, was a retired police sergeant with the Ventura Police Department in Southern California. His wife, Marie Snowling, had filed for divorce in December 2022, citing irreconcilable differences. The proceedings were ongoing and the case was scheduled for a mandatory settlement conference in November.

Married for more than three decades, they have two adult children.

Officials said John Snowling traveled from Ohio, where he had been living on a 7-acre property with his dog, according to his divorce lawyer, Tristan teGroen. It was unclear when he arrived in Southern California, where he still owns property in Camarillo. There was "no murmur of domestic violence or threats or anything like that from the other attorney," teGroen said.

John Snowling used two guns at the beginning of the shooting and then retrieved two more from his truck. All four — three handguns and a shotgun — were purchased legally, Barnes said.

Authorities identified one of the dead as John Leehey, 67, of Irvine, California. The other two weren't named, including the woman dining with Marie Snowling. After being shot, the woman exited the bar and was able to make it to the roadway before dying, Barnes said.

All nine people shot were adults. Marie Snowling was conscious and speaking but remained hospitalized Thursday, Barnes said.

William Mosby, of Lake Forest, a father figure to Marie Snowling, told The Orange County Register, that John Snowling could not "deal with the divorce."

Kenneth H.J. Henjum, Marie Snowling's attorney, said in an email that her family was in shock and was requesting privacy.

John Snowling had worked for the police department in coastal Ventura, northwest of Los Angeles, from 1986 to 2014. Ventura Police Chief Darin Schindler issued a statement expressing condolences to the victims' families, the survivors and the responding deputies.

Cook's Corner has long been a place for motorcyclists to gather for bands, open-mic nights or just a cold beer after a long ride. It calls itself the oldest motorcycle bar in Southern California and sits at the intersection of two picturesque highways in an area of scrubby hills and bicycle trails. It attracts everyone from motorcycle riders on choppers to avid cyclists in Lycra and families with young children.

"It's a Disneyland for bikers," said Kamran Amiri, who has been a Cook's Corner regular for two decades.

Amiri, who was there Wednesday but left before the shooting, said the bar is "just full of the friendliest people" who go there to chat over a drink, listen to music or show off their motorcycles.

Hours before the shooting, rows of motorcycles and bikes framed the gravel entrance.

M Street had performed in Cook's Corner's outdoor area before, but this was the band's first time on the stage inside, Mark and Debbie Johnson said.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 58 of 76

Two people in the crowd were celebrating birthdays, and the band promised a special song later in the evening, Debbie Johnson said.

It never came.

"We launched into our next song and somewhere in the middle of it this man just walks in, doesn't say a word, and just starts shooting," she said.

Some bargoers ran up a nearby hill.

Mark Johnson said that once the gunman went outside, he and about 30 others shut the doors and hunkered down inside. Johnson called 911.

"We opened the back gate to see where he was and he immediately started shooting," he said.

He and his wife said two of their fellow bandmembers were wounded and were expected to survive. The fifth member wasn't injured.

"I have never been so happy to see dozens of police cars heading my way," Debbie Johnson said. "We were fish in a very small barrel."

One image, one face, one American moment: The Donald Trump mug shot

By JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press

A camera clicks. In a fraction of a second, the shutter opens and then closes, freezing forever the image in front of it.

When the camera shutter blinked inside an Atlanta jail on Thursday, it both created and documented a tiny inflection point in American life. Captured for posterity, there was a former president of the United States, for the first time in history, under arrest and captured in the sort of frame more commonly associated with drug dealers or drunken drivers. The trappings of power gone, for that split second.

Left behind: an enduring image that will appear in history books long after Donald Trump is gone.

"It will be forever part of the iconography of being alive in this time," said Marty Kaplan, a professor at the University of Southern California Annenberg School of Communications.

In the photo, Trump confronts the camera in front of a bland gray backdrop, his eyes meeting the lens in an intense glare. He's wearing a blue suit, white shirt and red tie, his shoulders squared, his head tilted slightly toward the camera. The sheriff's logo has been digitally added above his right shoulder.

Some of the 18 others charged with him in Georgia smiled in their booking photos like they were posing for a yearbook. Not Trump. His defiance is palpable, as if he's staring down a nemesis through the lens.

"It is not a comfortable feeling — especially when you've done nothing wrong," he later told Fox News Digital about the moment.

NOT LIKE ANY OTHER PHOTOGRAPH

Trump facing charges is by now a familiar sight of 2023 to Americans who watched him stand before a judge in a New York courtroom or saw watercolor sketches from the inside of federal courthouses in Miami and Washington, where cameras aren't allowed.

This is different.

As Anderson Cooper put it on CNN: "The former president of the United States has an inmate number." P01135809, to be exact. But until he surrendered to face charges of trying to steal the 2020 election in Georgia, his fourth indictment this year, he avoided having to pose for the iconic booking photo like millions accused of crimes before him.

Never mind that Trump, like all Americans, is innocent until proven guilty in court; the mug shot, and all it connotes, packs an extra emotional and cultural punch.

A mug shot is a visceral representation of the criminal justice system, a symbol of lost freedom. It permanently memorializes one of the worst days of a person's life, a moment not meant for a scrapbook. It must be particularly foreign to a man born into privilege, who famously loves to be in control, who is highly attentive to his image and who rose to be the most powerful figure in the world.

"'Indictment' is a sort of bloodless word. And words are pale compared to images," said Kaplan, a former

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 59 of 76

speechwriter for Vice President Walter Mondale and Hollywood screenwriter. "A mug shot is a genre. Its frame is, 'This is a deer caught in the headlights. This is the crook being nailed.' It's the walk of shame moment."

Not even President Joe Biden, who otherwise has declined to talk about his predecessor's legal problems, could resist remarking on the mugshot. "Handsome guy," he said sarcastically.

HE IS ALREADY LEVERAGING THE MOMENT

Trump is unlikely to treat the mug shot as a moment of shame as he seeks a second term in the White House while fighting criminal charges in four jurisdictions. His campaign has reported a spike in contributions each time he's been indicted.

And the imagery itself? Trump hasn't shied away from it. In fact, his campaign concocted one long before it became real.

Months before he was photographed in Georgia on Thursday evening, his campaign used the prospect of a mug shot as a fundraising opportunity. For \$36, anyone can buy a T-shirt with a fake booking photo of Trump and the words "not guilty." Dozens of similar designs are available to purchase online, including many that appeal to Trump's critics.

Now they have a real one to work with. Within minutes of the mug shot's release, Trump's campaign used it in a fundraising appeal on its website. "BREAKING NEWS: THE MUGSHOT IS HERE," reads the subject line of the campaign's latest fundraising email, which advertises a new T-shirt with the image. And this quote: "This mugshot will forever go down in history as a symbol of America's defiance of tyranny."

In a show of solidarity, U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene posted to X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, a photo of herself smiling broadly in front of a gray background, the sheriff's logo in the top left corner to mimic the jail's style — essentially her DIY mug. "I stand with President Trump against the commie DA Fani Willis," she said, a swipe at the Fulton County, Georgia, district attorney who persuaded a grand jury to indict Trump.

Recent history is full of politicians seeking political dividends from their booking photos. They've offered large smiles or defiant smirks and tried to make the best of their predicament.

Yet this is one of just 45 presidents in all of U.S. history — not only someone who held the keys to the most powerful government in the world, but who held a position that for many these days, both at home and overseas, personifies the United States. To see that face looking at a camera whose lens he is not seeking out — that's a potent moment.

"There's a power to the still image, which is inarguable," said Mitchell Stephens, a professor emeritus at New York University who has written a book about the place imagery holds in modern society and how it is supplanting the word.

"It kind of freezes a moment, and in this case it's freezing an unhappy moment for Donald Trump," Stephens said. "And it's not something he can click away. It's not something he can simply brush off. That moment is going to live on. And it's entirely possible that it will end up as the image that history preserves of this man."

Trump and all 18 others charged in Georgia election case meet the deadline to surrender at jail

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Former President Donald Trump and the 18 people indicted along with him in Georgia on charges that they participated in a wide-ranging illegal scheme to overturn the results of the 2020 election have all turned themselves in to a jail in Atlanta before the deadline at noon Friday.

After Trump was booked Thursday evening — scowling at the camera for the first-ever mug shot of a former president — seven co-defendants who had not yet surrendered did so Friday morning. All but one of those charged had agreed to a bond amount and conditions with Fulton County District Fani Willis ahead of time, and they were free to go after booking.

Harrison William Prescott Floyd, who is accused of harassing a Fulton County election worker, did not

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 60 of 76

negotiate a bond ahead of time and remained in the jail after turning himself in Thursday. Federal court records from Maryland show Floyd, identified as a former U.S. Marine who's active with the group Black Voices for Trump, was also arrested three months ago on a federal warrant that accuses him of aggressively confronting two FBI agents sent to serve him with a grand jury subpoena.

Next, Fulton County Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee is expected to set arraignments for each of the defendants in the coming weeks. That's when they would appear in court for the first time and enter a plea of guilty or not guilty, though it is not uncommon for defendants in Georgia to waive arraignment.

The case filed under Georgia's Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, or RICO, is sprawling, and the logistics of bringing it to trial are likely to be complicated. Legal maneuvering by several of those charged has already begun.

At least five of them are trying to move their cases to federal court. Two are former federal officials: former White House chief of staff Mark Meadows and former U.S. Department of Justice official Jeffrey Clark. The other three — former Georgia Republican Party chair David Shafer, Georgia state Sen. Shawn Still and Cathy Latham — are among the 16 Georgia Republicans who signed a certificate declaring falsely that Trump had won the 2020 presidential election and declaring themselves the state's "duly elected and qualified" electors.

A judge is to hear arguments on Meadows' request Monday and on Clark's on Sept. 18. There has been speculation that Trump will also try to move to federal court.

One defendant, lawyer Kenneth Chesebro, who prosecutors say worked on the coordination and execution of a plan to have 16 Georgia Republicans sign a certificate declaring falsely that Trump won and declaring themselves the state's "duly elected and qualified" electors, has filed a demand for a speedy trial. That requires his trial start by the end of the next court term, in this case by early November. The day after he filed that request, Willis — who has said she wants to try all 19 defendants together — proposed starting the trial for everyone on Oct. 23. The judge issued an order Thursday setting an Oct. 23 trial for Chesebro alone.

Lawyer Sidney Powell, accused of making false statements about the election in Georgia and helping to organize a breach of voting equipment in rural Coffee County, also filed a speedy trial demand Friday.

Trump attorney Steve Sadow on Thursday filed an objection to the proposed broad October trial date and a March date that Willis had previously suggested. He asked that Trump's case be separated from Chesebro and any other codefendant who files a speedy trial demand.

Visitors to Lincoln Memorial say America has its flaws but see gains made since March on Washington

By NATHAN ELLGREN and GARY FIELDS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Fencing and construction workers greet visitors to the Lincoln Memorial, signaling that — for the moment — the monument to the nation's 16th president is a work in progress.

And so is the nation Abraham Lincoln saved and the dream that Martin Luther King Jr. envisioned at its steps nearly 60 years ago at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

The spectrum of visitors to the Lincoln and MLK memorials and the African American Museum of History and Culture ranges from a 10-year-old elementary school student born in Colombia to a 70-something college advisor and retired military veteran. At least one visitor was at the original march as a child. They agree that portions of King's speech have become a reality while some remain unrealized. Several note as well that the gains took a multiracial coalition to achieve.

Washington Resident and 1963 March Participant

Diane Miller was 12 years old when her mother gathered up Miller and her siblings "and had us march from 3rd and R Street down to the reflecting pool, which I think is about five miles," the now 72-year-old said. "On that day it was just exciting to merge into groups coming out of different streets, marching all the way down here."

Miller, who intends to participate in the 60th anniversary, said she especially remembers the diversity of the crowd. "To be honest it was the first time I saw a group of Anglo-Saxons or white people," she said.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 61 of 76

"It was my first time realizing all white people were not against Black people. So it was a joyous occasion for me to participate."

Miller, who was on a vacation Bible school field trip with People's Congregational United Church of Christ, said she reflects on that day and believes much of what King spoke of has come to pass, but there are still battles. "We're still trying to integrate into a society that did not accept us in the beginning."

The future, she said, lies with the young people. "It's very important that we encourage our youth today to continue to build themselves stronger."

Veteran, Academic Adviser and Pastor

Tommie Babbs, 72, an academic advisor for the State University of New York at Buffalo served more than three decades in the military. The positives he has seen predate King's speech, especially the diversity of the people who struggled alongside King. "A lot of white people took blows like we did. A lot of white people sacrificed. So this was an American movement."

He thought a major step came when Barack Obama was elected president — twice. "You know, it wasn't a fluke. It was intentional," he said. "That made me trust America, believe in America, believe in the ideal of America."

Babbs said his hope is that people will judge one another by their character and that is achieved through communication. "Once we get to know each other, once we have a conversation with each other, once we talk to each other, then color seems to go away."

Visiting the city with other military veterans, the Buffalo resident Air Force veteran, said there have been dark times, including the race-related shooting in 2022 at the Tops supermarket in Buffalo that left 10 people dead and several others wounded. The incident was sparked by racial hatred but "it backfired because it brought so many white people together with Black people." People of all races and ethnicities helped, he said.

Civil Rights Attorney

Cynthia Robbins, who declined to give her age, was on the church field trip with Miller. She became a civil rights attorney because "I believed that Martin Luther King's dream can be a reality. I believe that the arc of history does bend toward justice."

That fight is critical now with the growth of white supremacists and hate movements and actions, such as the curtailing of part of the Voting Rights Act and the use of affirmative action in providing equal opportunities.

Her own dream is people will embrace King's message and see that there is still work to do and that the fight for justice is not about one race or another. "I think the most important thing of Martin Luther King's work to me is that it is a continuous effort that we must continue to press on, that we can't take justice for granted."

Incoming College Freshman

Zahir Harris, 18, visiting the District with the Village Initiative Project out of Bridgeport, Connecticut, said he remembers hearing King's March on Washington speech in middle school. The movement behind that march, he said, is unfinished but he can see its successes in his own life as he walks around freely, eats where he wants, and chooses a college freely. Minorities did not have that advantage during King's time, he said.

From Colombia to Greenville, South Carolina

For Tomas Galeano, 10, it was his first visit to Washington, D.C., here with his parents from their home in Greenville, South Carolina.

Born in Colombia, his family moved to the U.S. three years ago. When he looks at the memorial he thinks of freedom. "Here in the United States, everyone can have their freedom. It doesn't matter who they are or what they have gone through."

He knows of King through school and watching and listening to YouTube and he credits the late civil rights leader for how he is treated. "When I started school, I was really nervous about how people would react to me about being from different country," he said. "But, I was really impressed and happy from

what it turned out because everybody treated me with respect and equality.”

He said students need to be taught more about the late leader and to live as he did: “Try your best. Try your hardest. Never give up.”

The Dream Speech

About a mile from the steps where King spoke the type-written speech he read from that day is on loan to the African American Museum of History and Culture. Small groups walk up to the display in the “Defending Freedom, Defining Freedom” gallery almost reverently. One or two visitors stay there reading every word.

Jan Gunning, 74, professor emeritus in economics at the Vrije Universiteit in Holland, lived in D.C. decades ago and worked at the World Bank. “It’s one of the great speeches in history,” he said, adding that while the written words are impressive it is King’s oral delivery that makes the speech memorable. “The power is in the way he spoke, the way he brought the crowd with him.”

Asmatiek Fields, 34, was star-struck by the chance to see the speech that King created and read from that day. He talked about how he might share that with students at his school. “I got kids who won’t see it,” he said.

The women’s basketball team coach at Truett McConnell University in Cleveland, Georgia, said the words of the speech while inspiring, also brought “a lot of emotions. There’s a heavy feeling to it, just thinking of the timeline and what was going on.”

Ukraine aid faces a stress test as some GOP 2024 presidential candidates balk at continued support

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For President Joe Biden, strong backing for Ukraine’s effort to repel Russia’s invasion has been a rare issue where he’s mustered bipartisan support.

But this week’s first GOP presidential debate — and recent comments on Ukraine by the 2024 GOP polling leader and former president, Donald Trump — show that unusual unity will face a stress test as the 2024 presidential campaign intensifies and the leading Republican contenders show antipathy toward the American backing of Ukraine.

There long has been an isolationist strain in the United States, particularly in the Republican Party, but rarely has it been shared by so many candidates for president.

On the debate stage in Milwaukee, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said he would make additional U.S. aid “contingent” on European allies increasing contributions. Entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy called it “disastrous” that the U.S. government was “protecting against an invasion across somebody else’s border” and argued Ukraine funding would be better spent on the “invasion of our own southern border.”

Meanwhile, Trump, who did not participate in the first debate, has said he will end Russia’s invasion in one day if he wins back the White House. Even some of his Republican allies, like Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, said that assertion was folly.

Trump also has called on Congress to withhold additional Ukraine funding until the FBI, IRS and Justice Department “hand over every scrap of evidence” on the Biden family’s business dealings.

Daniel Fried, a former U.S. ambassador to Poland and distinguished fellow at the Atlantic Council, said that Republican congressional leadership and Biden remain on the same page on providing Ukraine the assistance it needs.

Still, he said the prominent voices in the Republican field calling for the U.S. to slow or wind down support for Kyiv send a troubling signal to allies about what the U.S. commitment could look like following the 2024 election and harken back to the years when isolationists pressured the U.S. to remain neutral during the first two years of World War II.

“The majority of elected Republicans in the committee chairs and the people with power in Congress are still solid,” Fried said. “When they attack the administration, it’s usually for not doing enough. But Trump

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 63 of 76

and the Trump wannabes represent this other tradition in our history. And the last time this isolationist tradition was powerful in America, it led to catastrophic results.”

Biden campaign spokesman Kevin Munoz in a statement criticized “MAGA Republicans” on the debate stage for siding with Russian President Vladimir Putin over the Ukrainian people and alluded to Ramaswamy mocking U.S. politicians who have made the trip to Kyiv to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to show solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

At one point during Wednesday’s debate, Ramaswamy took a dig at former Vice President Mike Pence and New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, both of whom visited Kyiv this summer, for making a “pilgrimage” to “their Pope Zelenskyy” without doing the same for Americans impacted by Hawaii’s wildfires and crime and violence in U.S. cities.

Former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley on the debate stage slammed Ramaswamy, saying he was effectively standing with Putin and was being short-sighted about U.S. interests. “This guy is a murderer. And you are choosing a murderer over a pro-American country,” said Haley, who also previously served as the South Carolina governor.

Publicly, the White House has stressed that key Republican lawmakers, notably the Senate Republican leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, are largely in agreement on the need to continue robust assistance to Ukraine.

The Biden administration earlier this month called on Congress to provide more than \$13 billion in emergency defense aid to Ukraine and an additional \$8 billion for humanitarian support through the end of the year. The aid money was included in a supplemental spending request that also includes money to replenish U.S. federal disaster funds and funds to bolster enforcement at the Southern border with Mexico. Biden in a brief exchange with reporters on Friday said he was not interested in splitting the request.

The United States has committed more than \$60 billion in aid to Ukraine since the beginning of Russia’s full-scale invasion. That includes more than \$43 billion in military aid.

“We believe that the support will be there and will be sustained even if there are some dissident voices on the other side of the aisle,” White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters earlier this week. “We believe that at the core there is still a strong bipartisan foundation of support for our Ukraine policy and for supporting and defending Ukraine.”

Support among the American public for providing Ukraine weaponry and direct economic assistance has softened with time. An AP-NORC poll conducted in January 2023 around the one-year mark of the conflict found that 48% favored the U.S. providing weapons to Ukraine, down from the 60% of U.S. adults who were in favor of sending Ukraine weapons in May 2022.

While Democrats have generally been more supportive than Republicans of offering weaponry, their support dropped slightly from 71% to 63% in the same period. Republican support dropped more, from 53% to 39%.

Dozens of Republicans in the House, and some GOP senators, have expressed reservations about — and even voted against — spending more federal dollars for the war effort. Many of those Republicans are aligning with Trump’s objections to the U.S. involvement overseas.

“It’s very easy to say ‘I’d rather spend money on a bridge in West Virginia than a bridge on Ukraine.’ That on a superficial level makes sense,” said Bradley Bowman, senior director of the Center on Military and Political Power at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a conservative Washington think tank. “We’re witnessing a struggle for the heart and soul of the Republican Party right now and the Ukraine debate is a proxy of that.”

Christopher Borick, director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion in Pennsylvania, said the handling of the Ukraine war isn’t as salient to the electorate as the economy, health care, immigration, abortion and some other issues. But polling suggests that concerns about the costs of the war resonate with working-class Republican primary voters.

On the flip side, Borick said Biden is not likely to win votes solely on his handling of Ukraine. But how the war plays out in the months ahead could help or diminish the president’s broader argument about his administration’s competency and success at restoring U.S. leadership on the international stage after four

years of Trump's "American first" foreign policy approach.

"Right now, Ukraine isn't as prominent an issue for voters, but we're seeing Trump, Ramaswamy and DeSantis setting the table to raise the question later in the campaign of how much U.S. treasure we're spending over there that we could be spending at home," he said.

Protest this way, not that way: In statehouses, varied rules restrict public voices

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI, JEFF AMY and ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Shaking violently between sobs, parent Sarah Shoop Neumann could only manage a whisper as state troopers escorted her out of a Tennessee legislative hearing where she was waiting to testify against a bill that would let teachers carry guns.

"I was supposed to speak. I was supposed to testify," said Neumann, whose son still attends an elementary school where six people — including three 9-year-old children — were fatally shot this year.

Moments earlier, a Republican subcommittee chairman ordered law enforcement to clear the public out of the room after the crowd erupted into applause and others defied a new ban on holding signs during committee proceedings. Only after troopers cleared the room was Neumann allowed to return to testify.

While acts of protest big and small are common in legislatures, states often have rules in place to limit disruptions to government proceedings, with authorities given wide latitude to remove people who jeer, chant or are otherwise seen to interrupt debates.

People who go to capitols to voice their opinions often face a varied set of regulations that limit the display of signs, political messaging on clothing and even where people can gather, with penalties ranging from expulsion to criminal charges.

In some cases, lawmakers have pursued policies that effectively limit acts of protest, such as requiring people to get permission before protesting, leading to legal resistance and criticism that lawmakers are trying to tamp down on dissent and free speech rights.

"These kinds of rules limit our ability to communicate directly with our elected representatives who are supposed to be reacting to these views," said Vera Eidelman, staff attorney with the ACLU Speech, Privacy & Technology project. "They make it more difficult for the public to have an impact on the legislation that will very much impact them."

Tennessee provides the latest example, where a judge took swift action to block the new GOP-approved rule to penalize disruptive lawmakers and ban the public from holding signs during government proceedings. State officials are fighting to uphold the ban.

Neumann was among the grieving families that had come to the Tennessee Capitol this week for a special session that many of them hoped would address gun laws after the shooting at The Covenant School. She has spent the past five months attempting to win over hesitant lawmakers.

The hundreds of families, community organizers and advocates who have shown up to the Republican-dominated Legislature have been met with an enhanced law enforcement presence and found large sections of the building roped off — forcing many to be turned away from watching their government at work.

"I think this is a dangerous step that we are taking," said Democratic Rep. Jason Powell, who represents Nashville. "I thought it was a dangerous step when I saw the halls of the chamber and saw more people with batons than people who are here to fight for justice."

Similar policies elsewhere have faced legal pushback. A law in Georgia that blocks disruptive protests at government buildings is being legally challenged. A federal judge in Mississippi has recently blocked a law that requires permission from state police for protests or other gatherings near state government buildings in the capital city.

Earlier this year, Tennessee Republicans attracted national attention for expelling two young Black Democratic lawmakers for breaking House rules during a demonstration in support of gun control.

During this week's special session in Tennessee, the existing political tensions were only enhanced when

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 65 of 76

the Republican-dominated House established the new policy on signs and disruptive lawmakers. Protesters were quick to test the boundaries of the new parameters.

"Rules exist for two reasons: One is to provide order and second, to promote civility," said Republican Rep. Gino Bulso. "These rules do that exceptionally well."

Joe Cohn, legislative and policy director at the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, said it is understandable for the government to impose rules that allow officials to carry out their duties but added that the policies must be carefully calibrated with the public's free speech rights.

"The most important thing to remember is that when the government imposes rules on members of the public who wish to observe official proceedings, those rules have to be reasonable and they have to be content and viewpoint neutral," said Cohn.

At the Georgia Statehouse, protestors risk criminal charges under a state law that prohibits disruptive protests in the state's Capitol and adjoining buildings, although the law's constitutionality is being challenged following recent arrests of protestors. Charges were later dropped by county prosecutors.

A Democratic state lawmaker and other protestors sued over the law in federal court in 2020, arguing that it is overly broad and violates the First Amendment. The Georgia Supreme Court ruled in 2006 that a similar law meant to bar disruption of public meetings was unconstitutionally vague.

Despite questions about the law's constitutionality, frequent protestors at Georgia's Capitol are mindful of the law. For example, Democrats staging a sit-in over a recent voting law left an aisle open on the stairway that they sat on, because fully blocking it could have triggered their arrest.

This year, the majority-white and Republican-led Mississippi Legislature passed a bill to require state-issued permits for protests in parts of Jackson, the capital city, which is majority-Black and governed by Democrats.

In effect, the law would require people to obtain permission from state law enforcement officials for any protest near the statehouse, Governor's Mansion or other state government buildings in the capital city. A federal judge blocked the law in a ruling that said it would have a chilling effect on First Amendment rights.

There was already a scheduling process for people who wanted to have events in and around the Capitol, but the law would have given broader authority to the state over issuing permits for protests or other large gatherings in other parts of downtown Jackson.

Many statehouses also have rules around the display of political signs, with policies not allowing banners or signs to be displayed in legislative chambers but granting permission for people to have them in common areas like rotundas.

Kansas allows handheld signs inside the building during protests, but not sticks with those signs -- even though state law permits people to carry concealed guns in the building.

Those policies were set separately, but state Rep. Kyle Hoffman, a western Kansas Republican, said, "Concealed carry is a passive defensive weapon."

"A stick, I think, would be more considered offensive," he added.

Descendants of a British owner of slaves in Guyana apologize as Caribbean nation seeks reparations

By BERT WILKINSON Associated Press

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP) — The descendants of a 19th-century Scottish sugar and coffee planter who owned thousands of slaves in Guyana apologized Friday for the sins of their ancestor, calling slavery a crime against humanity with lasting negative impacts.

Charles Gladstone, a descendant of former plantation owner John Gladstone, traveled to Guyana from Britain with five relatives to offer the formal apology.

"It is with deep shame and regret that we acknowledge our ancestors' involvement in this crime and with heartfelt sincerity, we apologize to the descendants of the enslaved in Guyana," he told an audience at the University of Guyana. "In doing so, we acknowledge slavery's continuing impact on the daily lives of many."

Neither Guyana President Irfaan Ali, who on Thursday demanded reparations and lashed out at the

descendants of European slave traders, nor other senior government officials were in the audience of a couple hundred students, university staff members and representatives of grassroots organizations.

During his speech, Gladstone announced that his family would create a fund for various unnamed projects in the country as part of a "meaningful and long-term relationship between our family and the people of Guyana."

"In writing this heartfelt apology, we also acknowledge Sir John Gladstone's role in bringing indentured laborers to Guyana, and apologize for the clear and manifold injustices of this," he said.

John Gladstone was the father of 19th century British Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone and received more than 100,000 pounds in compensation for hundreds of slaves.

A renowned 1823 slave revolt took place on his estate at Success Village on Guyana's east coast. The Demerara rebellion was crushed in two days with hundreds of slaves killed. Some enslaved people were beheaded and had their heads planted on poles on the way to Georgetown, Guyana's colonial and current capital, as a lesson to others with similar ideas.

Outside the auditorium where Gladstone made the apology, a handful of protesters shouted "Murderers!" and held signs reading, "The Gladstones are murderers" and "Stolen people, stolen dreams."

The leader of the protest, Cedric Castellow, dismissed the apology as "perfunctory" and said Britain and other European countries owe Guyana and the Caribbean billions of dollars in reparation payments.

"The British government and others benefited from the slave trade, their descendants and heirs," Castellow said. "They owe us, and the legacy will affect future generations as well."

Some protesters slipped into the auditorium. One began to shout at the end of the apology and was shushed by the university's vice chancellor, Paloma Mohamed, who asked them not to embarrass Guyana.

Gladstone also demanded that the British government start "meaningful discussions" with a 15-nation Caribbean trade block known as Caricom that is seeking reparations and hired a law firm to examine its case for financial compensation from Britain and other European nations.

"We also urge other descendants of those who benefited from slavery to open conversations about their ancestors' crimes and what they might be able to do to build a better future," Gladstone said.

Among those who traveled to Guyana for Friday's apology was former BBC journalist Laura Trevelyan. Earlier this year, her family apologized to slave descendants in Grenada because her ancestors owned hundreds of slaves in that eastern Caribbean island.

"It seems that the momentum for the global reparations movement is being led by the Caribbean and its intellectuals," Trevelyan told The Associated Press after Gladstone's speech. "People like us support the Caricom ... plan, and I really hope that the British government will begin negotiations with the Caribbean in the near future."

A handful of nations have apologized for their role in slavery, including the Netherlands.

In Iowa and elsewhere, bans on LGBTQ+ 'conversion therapy' become a conservative target

By HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — One of Iowa's largest cities repealed its ban on "conversion therapy" — the discredited practice of trying to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity through counseling — after a Christian organization threatened legal action, part of a deepening national movement to challenge protections for LGBTQ+ kids.

The city council in Waterloo voted this week to remove its restrictions after Liberty Counsel warned in a letter June 30 that it would "take further action" if the city did not repeal the ordinance by August 1. It was enacted in May.

The organization, which is based in Orlando, Florida, argued the ordinance infringes on the constitutional right to free speech and acted on behalf of a therapist in Waterloo "who was concerned about the implications of this on the practice of counseling," Mat Staver, Liberty Counsel founder and chair, said in an interview in which he promised further litigation targeting states.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 67 of 76

In Iowa and across the country, efforts are spreading to curb the rights of LGBTQ+ kids and adopt restrictions on gender and sexuality in classrooms, youth sports and medicine. In recent years, local bans on conversion therapy in Florida also fell with the help of Liberty Counsel, which describes itself as a Christian ministry that is "restoring the culture by advancing religious freedom, the sanctity of human life and the family."

Such therapy has been discredited and is opposed by, among others, the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association, citing research that shows it leads to increased risk of suicide and depression.

"The mental health mainstream believes that one, that these practices don't really work, and two, that they may cause harm," said Dr. Jack Drescher, a Columbia University psychiatry professor and editor of the chapter on gender dysphoria in the psychiatric association's diagnostic manual. "There's no science on the side of people who believe in conversion therapy. There's just faith and belief."

Laws prohibiting mental health professionals from attempting to change a minor's sexual orientation or gender identity are on the books in 22 states and Washington, D.C., according to the Movement Advancement Project, an LGBTQ+ rights think tank. In 13 states, including Iowa, some municipalities have adopted their own provisions.

The issue has the potential to come to a head in the next year if the U.S. Supreme Court decides early this fall to hear the appeal of a Washington state therapist, Brian Tingley, whose lawsuit was dismissed.

While early lawsuits similar to Tingley's failed, a Supreme Court ruling in 2018 prompted a new round of cases, said Christy Mallory, legal director at the UCLA School of Law's Williams Institute, which researches sexual orientation and gender identity. That ruling invoked free speech protections to block a California law that required anti-abortion centers to provide information about abortion.

In 2020, a panel of three federal judges in Florida relied in part on that 2018 ruling and became the first federal appeals court to block ordinances in Boca Raton and Palm Beach County that banned conversion therapy. Liberty Counsel represents the two therapists who won that case.

The diverging federal rulings in the Washington and Florida cases may be a reason for the U.S. Supreme Court to weigh in this term, bringing another high-profile LGBTQ+ issue to the docket.

Staver is confident the Supreme Court will strike down bans in the near future. And Liberty Counsel has imminent plans to sue over statewide bans, he said.

"I think it is a losing proposition for any state or local government to have one of these laws, and they would be wise to repeal them before they also are sued," Staver said.

In Iowa, Senate Democrats and a Republican in the House introduced bills for conversion therapy bans that didn't make it out of subcommittees in 2020. That was the last time there was a concerted effort for a ban in the state, said Damian Thompson, public policy director at Iowa Safe Schools, an organization that advocates for LGBTQ+ children.

Meanwhile, in Iowa and elsewhere, laws have since been passed to prohibit teachers from raising gender identity and sexual orientation issues with students through grade six, to restrict the restrooms transgender students can use, and to ban treatments like puberty blockers and hormone therapy for trans minors. Many are facing challenges in court.

Republican lawmakers say the laws are designed to affirm parents' rights and protect children. The issues have become flashpoints in the race for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination.

But many parents and advocates worry about the deterioration of the rights and safety of LGBTQ+ kids.

In Waterloo, a city of over 65,000, Councilor Jonathan Grieder said he had heard concerns about conversion therapy happening in the area. He worked with Thompson at Iowa Safe Schools to draft an ordinance after watching statewide efforts stall but a ban pass in another Iowa city, Davenport, and in Linn County.

The Waterloo council approved it 6-1 in May, but overturned it 4-3 on Monday amid the prospect of costly litigation.

Archer Trip, of neighboring Cedar Falls, addressed the council before the repeal vote as a "survivor of conversion therapy" who had been placed there in high school.

"It does not work. Now, I am a proud queer man, but I am also here to protect everyone else," Trip

said. "We should protect our children."

Archer's twin sister, Nic Trip, who was also put in conversion therapy, testified: "Unfortunately, not all parents always make the safest decision for their children. What is the line of what is OK to do to our children?"

Mayor Quentin Hart said, not mentioning the Liberty Counsel, that there was "threat of impending litigation moving forward," which put the members in a "tough situation."

"I don't believe that the Waterloo City Council are cowards," Hart said. "I believe that they do have a decision to make tonight."

The decision disappointed Thompson, who said Iowa Safe Schools will continue to advocate for local bans despite far-right groups' success in turning a "common sense" issue into a "wedge culture war" one.

"Which is a shame," Thompson said, "because in the meantime it only results in more kids being victimized and more kids, ultimately, receiving lifelong trauma."

Economy's solid growth could require more Fed hikes to fight inflation, Powell says at Jackson Hole

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming (AP) — The continued strength of the U.S. economy could require further interest rate increases, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said Friday in a closely watched speech that also highlighted the uncertain nature of the economic outlook.

Powell noted that the economy has been growing faster than expected and that consumers have kept spending briskly — trends that could keep inflation pressures high. He reiterated the Fed's determination to keep its benchmark rate elevated until inflation is reduced to its 2% target.

"We are attentive to signs that the economy may not be cooling as expected," Powell said. "We are prepared to raise rates further if appropriate and intend to hold policy at a restrictive level until we are confident that inflation is moving sustainably down toward our objective."

"Although inflation has moved down from its peak — a welcome development — it remains too high."

Powell's speech, at an annual conference of central bankers in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, highlighted the uncertainties surrounding the economy and the complexity of the Fed's response to it. It marked a contrast to his remarks here a year ago, when he bluntly warned that the Fed would continue its campaign of sharp rate hikes to rein in spiking prices.

"When it comes to another rate hike, the chair still very much has his finger on the trigger, even if it's a bit less itchy than it was last year," said Omair Sharif, chief economist at Inflation Insights.

Substantially higher loan rates, a direct result of the Fed's rate hikes, have made it harder for Americans to afford a home or a car or for businesses to finance expansions. At the same time, items like rent, restaurant meals and other services are still getting costlier. "Core" inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy prices, has remained elevated despite the Fed's streak of 11 rate hikes beginning in March 2022.

The overall economy has nevertheless powered ahead. Hiring has remained healthy, confounding economists who had forecast that the spike in rates would cause widespread layoffs and a recession. Consumer spending keeps growing at a healthy rate. And the U.S. unemployment rate stands exactly where it did when Powell spoke last year: 3.5%, barely above a half-century low.

"He is still very concerned how rapid the economy is growing because that does actually mean, all else equal, we need higher interest rates just to be restrictive," said Diane Swonk, chief economist at KPMG.

In his speech, Powell did not mention the possibility that the Fed will eventually cut interest rates. Earlier this year, many on Wall Street had expected rate cuts by early next year. Now, most traders envision no interest rate cuts before mid-2024 at the earliest.

Powell said the central bank's policymakers believe their key rate is high enough to restrain the economy and cool growth, hiring and inflation. But he acknowledged that it's hard to know how high borrowing costs must be to slow the economy, "and thus there is always uncertainty" about how effectively the Fed's policies are in reducing inflation.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 69 of 76

The Fed's officials "will proceed carefully as we decide whether to tighten further or, instead, to hold the policy rate constant and await further data," he said.

Since Powell spoke at last summer's Jackson Hole conference, the Fed has raised its benchmark rate to a 22-year high of 5.4%. From a peak of 9.1% in June 2022, inflation has slowed to 3.2%, though still above the Fed's 2% target.

Powell acknowledged the decline in inflation, which he called "very good news." Consumer prices, excluding the volatile food and energy categories, have begun to ease.

"But two months of good data," he added, "are only the beginning of what it will take to build confidence that inflation is moving down sustainably toward our goal."

In June, when the Fed's 18 policymakers last issued their quarterly projections, they predicted that they would raise rates once more this year. That expectation might have changed, though, in light of milder inflation readings the government has issued in recent weeks. The officials will update their interest rate projections when they next meet Sept. 19-20.

Some Fed officials, including John Williams, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, a top official on the interest-rate setting committee, have suggested that the central bank may be nearing the end of its rate hikes.

Many economists have postponed or reversed their earlier forecasts for a U.S. recession. Optimism that the Fed will pull off a difficult "soft landing" — in which it would manage to reduce inflation to its target level without causing a steep recession — has risen.

Many traders in the financial markets envision not only a soft landing but an acceleration of growth. Those expectations have helped fuel a surge in bond yields, notably for the 10-year Treasury note, which heavily influences long-term mortgage rates. Accordingly, the average fixed rate on a 30-year mortgage has reached 7.23%, the highest level in 22 years. Auto loans and credit card rates have also shot higher and could weaken borrowing and consumer spending, the lifeblood of the economy.

Emily Roland, co-chief investment strategist at John Hancock Investment Management, is among the analysts who still doubt that the Fed will achieve a soft landing.

"The lag impact of all the tightening that the Fed has done — the most amount that we've seen in decades — is likely to bite and tip the economy into a recession," she said. "It's just taking a while to get there."

Likewise, Sonia Meskin, head of U.S. macro at BNY Mellon Investment Management, said she worries that the financial markets are "underestimating the chances of a harder, delayed landing."

"Much of the tightening might still be in the pipeline," Meskin said, and the full impact of higher rates might not hit until next year.

Some economists say they think that much higher long-term rates in the bond market might lessen the need for further Fed hikes because by slowing growth, those long-term rates should help cool inflation pressures. Indeed, many economists say they think the Fed's July rate increase will prove to be its last.

Even if the Fed imposes no further hikes, it may still feel compelled to keep its benchmark rate elevated well into future to try to contain inflation. This would introduce a new threat: Keeping interest rates at high levels indefinitely would risk weakening the economy so much as to trigger a downturn. It could also endanger many banks by reducing the value of bonds they own — a dynamic that helped cause the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and two other large lenders last spring.

Republicans pick Houston to host their 2028 national convention

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans on Friday chose Houston to host their 2028 national convention, hoping to cement support in Texas even as Democrats are betting that a booming Hispanic population and other key demographic shifts could eventually turn the country's largest reliably red state blue.

"I am excited to announce Houston as the host city for the 2028 Republican National Convention," Republican National Committee Chair Ronna McDaniel said in a statement. She applauded the committee's "smart business decision" last spring to allow for selecting the site "earlier than ever."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 70 of 76

Houston is the United States' fourth largest city and is among its fastest growing, with a population exceeding 2.3 million. It was for decades a Republican stronghold, the home turf of President George H.W. Bush and the site of the Republican convention that nominated him for reelection in 1992.

But the city has since become solidly Democratic, with the party sweeping every countywide seat in Harris County, which includes Houston, in 2016. In a reflection of the change, McDaniel's statement listed among the officials Republicans are "eager to work with" Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, a former state lawmaker who was once a leading Democratic voice in the Texas House.

"As the nation's most diverse and inclusive city, we believe Houston represents the future of the United States and our aspirations as a country," Turner said in a statement released by the RNC.

Houston's blue shift is a departure from the rest of Texas, which hasn't supported a Democrat for president since Jimmy Carter in 1976 and where Republicans have won every statewide office since 1994 — the longest political winning streak in the nation. Still, Texas is now more than 40% Hispanic, and its strong economy has brought in many new residents from more liberal states.

Both factors have Democrats dreaming about flipping Texas, which would drastically alter the nation's political landscape.

Former U.S. Rep. Beto O'Rourke came within 3 percentage points of upsetting Republican Sen. Ted Cruz in 2018, though then-President Donald Trump carried Texas by a larger margin of about 5.5 percentage points in 2020. Democrats are hoping to knock off Cruz in next year's Senate race with a primary field that includes Rep. Colin Allred, a former NFL linebacker who was elected to a once strongly red Dallas district.

Texas nonetheless remains "the heart of the conservative movement," Republican Gov. Greg Abbott said in a social media post on Friday. His party's retrenching there reflects a different strategy than next year, when the GOP will hold its convention in Milwaukee, in the critical swing state of Wisconsin.

Democrats haven't yet selected their 2028 national convention site. But the Democratic National Committee considered Houston along with New York and Atlanta before settling on Chicago for its 2024 convention, underscoring the importance of the battleground Midwest.

NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week

By The Associated Press undefined

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these are legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the facts:

Conspiracy theorist spreads false information about the return of COVID-19 mandates

CLAIM: Transportation Security Administration managers were told on Aug. 15 that by mid-September they, along with airport employees, will again be required to wear face masks and by mid-October the policy will apply to travelers as well. Further, the managers were told that COVID-19 lockdowns will return by December.

THE FACTS: No such announcement was made to TSA managers, an agency spokesperson told the AP. A spokesperson for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which issued a now-expired travel mask mandate in 2021, also refuted the rumors. The claim originated on the Aug. 18 episode of "The Alex Jones Show," where its namesake host said an anonymous "high-level manager in the TSA" and an unnamed "Border Patrol-connected" source told him about the alleged announcement. Jones is known for spreading conspiracy theories. A tweet with the video, which had more than 38,000 likes and 20,000 shares as of Friday, claimed the supposed announcement was "due to a new 'dangerous variant' out of Canada." But TSA Press Secretary Robert Langston told the AP that managers at the agency did not receive any such instructions last week. Benjamin Haynes, a spokesperson for the CDC, confirmed that reports of upcoming lockdowns are "utterly false." Neither Jones, nor a representative of his show, responded to a request for comment before publication. Two new COVID-19 variants — EG.5 and BA.2.86 — have recently emerged. As of Aug. 23, the latter had only been reported in Denmark, South Africa, Israel, the U.S. and the U.K, according to the CDC. Health Canada confirmed to the AP that as of Aug. 18, no cases had been detected

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 71 of 76

in the country. Canada has seen a steady increase of EG.5 cases, but the World Health Organization reported in early August that its risk to global public health is low. In early 2021, the CDC issued an order requiring people to wear masks on public transportation, including airplanes, and in transportation hubs, that was implemented and enforced by the TSA. A federal judge in Florida struck down the mandate in April 2022, finding that the CDC failed to justify the order and that it did not follow proper rulemaking procedures. Lawrence Gostin, a professor of global health law at Georgetown University who also specializes in constitutional law, told the AP that the CDC could reissue the order, but he said it would likely be immediately challenged and struck down in a lower court, a decision which would probably then be upheld by the Supreme Court. The CDC has authorization from Congress to issue certain orders if they are necessary to prevent infectious diseases from spreading between states, he said. It can also make recommendations. But the agency has no enforcement power, leaving implementation and enforcement to the states, which is why pandemic-related restrictions varied across the U.S. "They don't even have the power to do the kinds of things that are being suggested," Gostin explained. Similar limits apply to the president and to Congress. Gostin said that if the president or Congress tried to institute a nationwide lockdown, "they'd be slapped down by the courts in a minute" because of restrictions on federal police power. While COVID-19 hospital admissions are rising — there were 12,613 for the week ending Aug. 12 — they are far lower than than past peaks, like the 44,000 weekly hospital admissions in early January, the nearly 45,000 in late July 2022, or the 150,000 admissions during the omicron surge of January 2022. Still, some schools and businesses are reinstating mask mandates and other restrictions. Leana Wen, a professor of public health at George Washington University, told the AP that the fact that COVID-19 has become an endemic virus is another reason future lockdowns or restrictions at any level of government are highly unlikely. An endemic virus is one that has a constant presence in a geographic area. "Eliminating it is not possible," she said. "And so having measures that are aimed at a societal level, containment is not practical and won't achieve the aim that we initially thought was possible in early 2020."

— Associated Press writer Melissa Goldin in New York contributed this report.

Counties don't decide presidential elections, contrary to misleading posts about 2020

CLAIM: Former President Donald Trump won 2,497 counties in 2020, far more than President Joe Biden's 477 counties, suggesting Trump actually won the election.

THE FACTS: It is true that Trump won significantly more counties than Biden, but those numbers come from an analysis immediately following the election that was later slightly updated. Regardless, it doesn't say anything about the outcome of the election. County victories don't play a role in deciding the president and county populations vary widely. Biden won the popular vote and the Electoral College. Still, some are resurfacing a claim that Trump's win in many counties indicates he must have won. "Biden won 477 counties Trump won 2,497 counties," reads a popular post on the platform X, formerly known as Twitter, which had received more than 28,000 likes as of Friday. "Who do you think won the election? Something isn't adding up." The numbers cited were shared in the days immediately following the election in November 2020 and attributed in media reports to the Brookings Institution. The figures were later updated after the vote count was finalized to put Biden at 551 counties and Trump at 2,588 counties, Mark Muro, a senior fellow at Brookings, said in an email. But it's worth noting that not every state has county governments and how those numbers are reported can vary. AP Election Research team data shows Trump won 3,198 counties and New England townships, Biden won 1,380 and there were four ties. Moreover, "counties are an arbitrary geographic unit that has nothing to do with the number of votes that any person receives," said Rachael Cobb, an associate professor of political science and legal studies at Suffolk University in Boston. "Counties don't vote, people vote." In U.S. presidential elections, each state holds a certain number of electoral votes and a candidate must obtain at least 270 votes in the Electoral College to win. In most states, the winner of the statewide popular vote gets all of the state's electoral votes. Cobb noted that one county may have 100 voters and another could have 1,000 voters, so it's the votes that matter — "not the geographic boundaries." Indeed, counties range widely in terms of population size: Loving County, Texas, for example, has an estimated population of 52, according to the Census Bureau. Meanwhile, Los

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 72 of 76

Angeles County, California, has an estimated population of about 9.7 million. "Biden won the nation's most important big, dense, populous counties while Trump won hundreds of sparsely populated small-town and rural counties that contained few voters," Muro said. Biden won the election with more than 81 million votes and 306 electoral votes.

— Associated Press writer Angelo Fichera in New Jersey contributed this report.

Carbon dioxide helps plants grow. That doesn't mean more of it is good for the planet

CLAIM: Carbon dioxide is good for crop growth, so efforts to remove it from the atmosphere will destroy the planet.

THE FACTS: Excess carbon dioxide does increase growth in some crops, but it also decreases their nutritional value and has other negative impacts on the planet, such as increasing droughts and fires through climate change. Overall, the negatives of more CO₂ far outweigh any benefits, experts say. But a video circulating online is misrepresenting research around the issue in an attempt to discredit efforts to tackle rising carbon emissions. In the video, a narrator points to a 2022 story from NPR titled "Stopping climate change could mean sucking carbon from the air." He then shows a clip from a natural gas company that supplies supplementary carbon dioxide to greenhouses to help grow tomatoes and highlights a line from a study published by The Lancet in 2019, reading: "Higher CO₂ concentrations increase photosynthesis in C₃ plants (eg, wheat, rice, potatoes, barley), which can increase crop yields." "So if we suck all the carbon out of the air, we're almost going to destroy the planet. Because these plants need carbon dioxide in order to grow," the narrator concludes. But experts — including the authors of the study cited — say this is a fallacy. For starters, scientists are not seeking to remove "all" CO₂ from the air, just to bring it down to earlier levels and keep it from increasing so rapidly. "That will stabilize temperatures to historical norms which will be much more advantageous for crop growth than any CO₂ fertilization effects," said Phil Robertson, an ecosystem science professor at Michigan State University. Additionally, the video misrepresents the benefits of increased carbon dioxide to some plants by ignoring the downsides. The key point of the Lancet study was that while a higher concentration of carbon dioxide did increase growth in 85% of plants, it ultimately lowered their nutritional value — which is not a worthwhile trade-off for the planet — said Kristie Ebi, a co-author of the study and a professor of global health at the University of Washington's Center for Health and the Global Environment. "There's about 830 million people in the world who are food insecure. There's about 2 billion that are micronutrient deficient," Ebi said. The clip of tomatoes being grown in a greenhouse in the video on social media is a controlled environment where temperature, water and nutrients are optimized for plant growth, but it's more complicated in outside crop fields, experts explained. More importantly, the increasing amount of heat-trapping carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases being released by humans into the atmosphere has led to climate change, which has all sorts of other negative impacts on the planet that vastly outweigh any benefits from higher crop yields. "Heatwaves, droughts, forest fires as we see raging now, and all these other impacts associated with climate change would impact society much more than you would see benefits from slightly higher carbon now," said Jonas Jagermeyr, an associate research scientist at Columbia University's Center for Climate Systems Research who also studies food security at the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

— Associated Press writer Karena Phan in Los Angeles contributed this report.

No, a top FEMA official was not arrested for treason following the Maui fires. The claim is satire

CLAIM: Erik Hooks, the deputy director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, has been arrested in connection with the agency's response to the Maui wildfires.

THE FACTS: A FEMA spokesperson told the AP that Hooks has not been arrested. The claim originated on a website that says it publishes "humor, parody, and satire" and has previously published similar false stories about supposed arrests of public officials. Many on social media are nevertheless quoting directly from an item posted on the website, Real Raw News, that falsely purports Hooks, who effectively serves as the agency's chief operating officer, was arrested by the U.S. Marines at his home in Arlington, Virginia, on Saturday. The item goes on to say that an indictment alleges Hooks and Deanne Criswell, who serves

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 73 of 76

as FEMA administrator, ordered agents in Maui to “deny fire victims food and water, to inhibit civilian relief efforts, to stop ‘by any means necessary’ displaced persons from exiting fire-ravaged Lahaina, and to dispose of bodies as ‘discriminately as possible.’” Jeremy Edwards, FEMA’s press secretary, said in an email Thursday that “Deputy Administrator Hooks is literally at FEMA Headquarters as we speak, and has been here all week, working with FEMA personnel and our interagency partners as we help the people of Maui recover, as well as respond to other events happening nationwide.” Edwards included a link to a recent FEMA tweet in which Hook is pictured at a meeting with other federal officials ahead of Tropical Storm Hilary earlier this week. Real Raw News frequently publishes fabricated stories about made-up arrests without any supporting evidence. The website’s “About Us” page even includes a disclaimer stating it’s content is for “informational and educational and entertainment” purposes and “contains humor, parody, and satire.” The website’s post about Hook’s supposed arrest also does not provide any credible evidence, citing only an anonymous “source in General Eric M. Smith’s office.” The site has similarly cited unnamed sources in the acting commandant’s office in prior false stories. Real Raw News, the Marines and the Department of Defense didn’t immediately respond to emails seeking comment.

Nerve agents, poison and window falls. Over the years, Kremlin foes have been attacked or killed

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — The attacks range from the exotic — poisoned by drinking polonium-laced tea or touching a deadly nerve agent — to the more mundane of getting shot at close range. Some take a fatal plunge from an open window.

Over the years, Kremlin political critics, turncoat spies and investigative journalists have been killed or assaulted in a variety of ways.

None, however, has been known to perish in an air accident. But on Wednesday, a private plane carrying a mercenary chief who staged a brief rebellion in Russia plummeted into a field from tens of thousands of feet after breaking apart.

Assassination attempts against foes of President Vladimir Putin have been common during his nearly quarter century in power. Those close to the victims and the few survivors have blamed Russian authorities, but the Kremlin has routinely denied involvement — as it did on Friday by saying it was “a complete lie” it had anything to do with the jet crash.

There also have been reports of prominent Russian executives dying under mysterious circumstances, including falling from windows, although whether they were deliberate killings or suicides is sometimes difficult to determine.

Some prominent cases of documented killings or attempted killings:

POLITICAL OPPONENTS

In August 2020, opposition leader Alexei Navalny fell ill on a flight from Siberia to Moscow. The plane landed in the city of Omsk, where Navalny was hospitalized in a coma. Two days later, he was airlifted to Berlin, where he recovered.

His allies almost immediately said he was poisoned, but Russian officials denied it. Labs in Germany, France and Sweden confirmed Navalny was poisoned by a Soviet-era nerve agent known as Novichok, which he reported had been applied to his underwear. Navalny returned to Russia and was convicted this month of extremism and sentenced to 19 years in prison, his third conviction with a prison sentence in two years on charges he says are politically motivated.

In 2018, Pyotr Verzilov, a founder of the protest group Pussy Riot, fell severely ill and also was flown to Berlin, where doctors said poisoning was “highly plausible.” He eventually recovered. Earlier that year, Verzilov embarrassed the Kremlin by running onto the field during soccer’s World Cup final in Moscow with three other activists to protest police brutality. His allies said he could have been targeted because of his activism.

Prominent opposition figure Vladimir Kara-Murza survived what he believes were attempts to poison him

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 74 of 76

in 2015 and 2017. He nearly died from kidney failure in the first instance and suspects poisoning but no cause was determined. He was hospitalized with a similar illness in 2017 and put into a medically induced coma. His wife said doctors confirmed he was poisoned. Kara-Murza survived, and his lawyer says police have refused to investigate. This year, he was convicted of treason and sentenced to 25 years in prison.

The highest profile killing of a political opponent in recent years was that of Boris Nemtsov. Once deputy prime minister under Boris Yeltsin, Nemtsov was a popular politician and harsh critic of Putin. On a cold February night in 2015, he was gunned down by assailants on a bridge adjacent to the Kremlin as he walked with his girlfriend in a death that shocked the country. Five men from the Russian region of Chechnya were convicted, with the gunman receiving up to 20 years, but Nemtsov's allies said their involvement was an attempt to shift blame from the government.

FORMER INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVES

In 2006, Russian defector Alexander Litvinenko, a former agent for the KGB and its post-Soviet successor agency, the FSB, felt violently ill in London after drinking tea laced with radioactive polonium-210, dying three weeks later. He had been investigating the shooting death of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya as well as the Russian intelligence service's alleged links to organized crime. Before dying, Litvinenko told journalists the FSB was still operating a poisons laboratory dating from the Soviet era.

A British inquiry found that Russian agents had killed Litvinenko, probably with Putin's approval, but the Kremlin denied any involvement.

Another former Russian intelligence officer, Sergei Skripal, was poisoned in Britain in 2018. He and his adult daughter Yulia fell ill in the city of Salisbury and spent weeks in critical condition. They survived, but the attack later claimed the life of a British woman and left a man and a police officer seriously ill.

Authorities said they both were poisoned with the military grade nerve agent Novichok. Britain blamed Russian intelligence, but Moscow denied any role. Putin called Skripal, a double agent for Britain during his espionage career, a "scumbag" of no interest to the Kremlin because he was tried in Russia and exchanged in a spy swap in 2010.

JOURNALISTS

Numerous journalists critical of authorities in Russia have been killed or suffered mysterious deaths, which their colleagues in some cases blamed on someone in the political hierarchy. In other cases, the reported reluctance by authorities to investigate raised suspicions.

Anna Politkovskaya, the journalist for the newspaper Novaya Gazeta whose death Litvinenko was investigating, was shot and killed in the elevator of her Moscow apartment building on Oct. 7, 2006 — Putin's birthday. She had won international acclaim for her reporting on human rights abuses in Chechnya. The gunman, from Chechnya, was convicted of the killing and sentenced to 20 years in prison. Four other Chechens were given shorter prison terms for their involvement in the murder.

Yuri Shchekochikhin, another Novaya Gazeta reporter, died of a sudden and violent illness in 2003. Shchekochikhin was investigating corrupt business deals and the possible role of Russian security services in the 1999 apartment house bombings blamed on Chechen insurgents. His colleagues insisted that he was poisoned and accused the authorities of deliberately hindering the investigation.

YEVGENY PRIGOZHIN AND HIS LIEUTENANTS

Wednesday's plane crash that is presumed to have killed Yevgeny Prigozhin and top lieutenants of his Wagner private military company came two months to the day after he launched an armed rebellion that Putin labeled "a stab in the back" and "treason." While not critical of Putin, Prigozhin slammed the Russian military leadership and questioned the motives for going to war in Ukraine.

On Thursday, a preliminary U.S. intelligence assessment found that the crash that killed all 10 people aboard was intentionally caused by an explosion, according to U.S. and Western officials. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment. One said the explosion fell in line with Putin's "long history of trying to silence his critics."

Putin's spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, rejected allegations the Kremlin was behind the crash. "Of course, in the West those speculations are put out under a certain angle, and all of it is a complete lie," he told

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 75 of 76

reporters Friday.

In his first public comments on the crash, Putin appeared to hint there was no bad blood between him and Prigozhin. But former Kremlin speechwriter turned political analyst Abbas Gallyamov said: "Putin has demonstrated that if you fail to obey him without question, he will dispose of you without mercy, like an enemy, even if you are formally a patriot."

Today in History: August 26, De Gaulle leads victory march through Paris

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Aug. 26, the 238th day of 2023. There are 127 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 26, 1968, the Democratic National Convention opened in Chicago; the four-day event that resulted in the nomination of Hubert H. Humphrey for president was marked by a bloody police crackdown on antiwar protesters in the streets.

On this date:

In 55 B.C., Roman forces under Julius Caesar invaded Britain, with only limited success.

In 1910, Thomas Edison demonstrated for reporters an improved version of his Kinetophone, a device for showing a movie with synchronized sound.

In 1920, the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing American women's right to vote, was certified in effect by Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby.

In 1939, the first televised major league baseball games were shown on experimental station W2XBS: a double-header between the Cincinnati Reds and the Brooklyn Dodgers at Ebbets Field. The Reds won the first game, 5-2, the Dodgers the second, 6-1.

In 1944, French Gen. Charles de Gaulle braved the threat of German snipers as he led a victory march in Paris, which had just been liberated by the Allies from Nazi occupation.

In 1957, the Soviet Union announced it had successfully tested an intercontinental ballistic missile.

In 1958, Alaskans went to the polls to overwhelmingly vote in favor of statehood.

In 1972, the summer Olympics opened in Munich, West Germany.

In 1978, Cardinal Albino Luciani (al-BEE'-noh loo-CHYAH'-nee) of Venice was elected pope following the death of Paul VI; the new pontiff took the name Pope John Paul I. (However, he died just over a month later.)

In 1985, 13-year-old AIDS patient Ryan White began "attending" classes at Western Middle School in Kokomo, Indiana, via a telephone hook-up at his home -- school officials had barred Ryan from attending classes in person.

In 2020, All three scheduled NBA playoff games were postponed, with players choosing to boycott in their strongest statement yet against racial injustice. (The games resumed three days later, after players and owners agreed to expand initiatives, many tied to increased voting awareness and opportunities.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama bestowed the Medal of Honor on Army Staff Sgt. Ty Carter, who'd risked his life to save an injured soldier, resupply ammunition to his comrades and render first aid during intense fighting in a remote mountain outpost in Afghanistan.

Five years ago: A gunman opened fire on fellow gamers at a video game tournament in Jacksonville, Fla., killing two men and wounding 10 others before taking his own life. More than 1,000 mourners gathered for the funeral of Mollie Tibbetts, the 20-year-old Iowa college student whose body had been found in a cornfield; a dairy worker suspected of being in the country illegally was charged in her death. Playwright Neil Simon, whose comedies included "The Odd Couple" and "Barefoot in the Park," died at age 91.

One year ago: An affidavit released by the FBI showed that 14 of the 15 boxes recovered from former President Donald Trump's Florida estate contained classified documents, many of them top secret, mixed

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 063 ~ 76 of 76

in with miscellaneous newspapers, magazines and personal correspondence. Authorities began distributing iodine tablets to residents near Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in case of a radiation leak, amid mounting fears that the fighting around the complex could trigger a catastrophe.

Today's Birthdays: Pop singer Vic Dana is 83. Former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge is 78. R&B singer Valerie Simpson is 78. Pop singer Bob Cowsill is 74. Broadcast journalist Bill Whitaker is 72. Actor Brett Cullen is 67. Former NBA coach Stan Van Gundy is 64. Jazz musician Branford Marsalis is 63. Country musician Jimmy Olander (Diamond Rio) is 62. Actor Chris Burke is 58. Actor-singer Shirley Manson (Garbage) is 57. Rock musician Dan Vickrey (Counting Crows) is 57. TV writer-actor Riley Weston is 57. Rock musician Adrian Young (No Doubt) is 54. Actor Melissa McCarthy is 53. Latin pop singer Thalia is 52. Actor Meredith Eaton is 49. Rock singer-musician Tyler Connolly (Theory of a Deadman) is 48. Actor Mike Colter is 47. Actor Macaulay Culkin is 43. Actor Chris Pine is 43. Comedian/actor/writer John Mulaney is 41. Actor Johnny Ray Gill is 39. Country singer Brian Kelley (Florida Georgia Line) is 38. R&B singer Cassie (AKA Cassie Ventura) is 37. Actor Evan Ross is 35. Actor Danielle Savre is 35. Actor Dylan O'Brien is 32. Actor Keke Palmer is 30.