

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 1 of 61

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Newsweek Bulletin](#)
- [3- Bahr is kindergarten paraprofessional](#)
- [3- Sukhmon is HS special ed para](#)
- [4- Schuring takes over as athletic director](#)
- [4- Soccer teams lose to Mitchell](#)
- [5- Dagle is new ag teacher](#)
- [5- Duerre is MS/HS special ed teacher](#)
- [6- Groton Community Transit Announcement](#)
- [7- Groton September Calendar of Events](#)
- [11- SD SearchLight: Pennington County in dispute with state over opioid settlement amounts](#)
- [12- SD SearchLight: Without a motorcycle helmet law for adults, we all pay](#)
- [13- SD SearchLight: Judge sets March trial date in Trump federal election interference case](#)
- [15- Weather Pages](#)
- [19- Daily Devotional](#)
- [20- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [21- Subscription Form](#)
- [22- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [23- News from the Associated Press](#)

No GDI Thursday Morning

We are heading to Rapid City or a quick trip for Julianna's graduation. I will not be taking a computer with (imagine that!) so there will be no paper Thursday morning.

Tuesday, Aug. 29

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, green beans, sunset salad, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Waffles.

School Lunch: Hot dogs at elementary, bratwurst at MS/HS, baked beans.

Boys Golf at Lee Park Golf Course, Aberdeen, 10 a.m.

Volleyball at Ipswich, 6 p.m.

The Pantry at Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

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

"Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day."

-Sandy Koch



Wednesday, Aug. 30

School Breakfast: Egg bake.

School Lunch: Cheese nachos.

Senior Menu: Meatloaf, baked sweet potatoes, creamed peas, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

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

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

Thursday, Aug. 31

School Breakfast: Pop tarts.

School Lunch: Sloppy Joes (new recipe), tater tots.

Senior Menu: Breaded chicken breast on bun, sliced tomato, fruit, cucumber salad, Mandarin oranges.

Cross Country at Redfield, 10 a.m.

Volleyball hosts Sisseton, 6 p.m.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 2 of 61

The Bulletin by Newsweek

World in Brief

Donald Trump's trial related to the 2020 election case. Trump's 2024 campaign saw its lowest support since June 2022, according to an Emerson College poll.

State Sen. Mike McGuire will become the next leader of the California Senate. He will replace Toni Atkins — the first woman and openly gay lawmaker to lead the upper chamber — who will step down at a yet-to-be-determined date next year.

A Pakistani appeals court has suspended the conviction and three-year prison term of former prime minister Imran Khan, who was jailed in early August on corruption charges following a highly controversial trial.

Toyota Motors said it has shut down all operations in its 14 assembly plants in Japan due to a computer system malfunction, bringing domestic output at the biggest-selling automaker to a standstill. The cause is being investigated.

Progressive candidate Bernardo Arévalo was declared the winner of Guatemala's presidential elections, but his presidency plunged into uncertainty after his Seed Movement party was suspended by another government body.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Ukraine's forces have taken out a new Russian PREDEL-E coastal radar system in the country's contested Kherson region, where Kyiv's forces have been pushing back at Moscow's troops for nearly three months.

TALKING POINTS

"I give him credit. He walked into a crowd that he knew was going to be in opposition to many of his policies. And so I'm glad he was there to listen. And I personally think that that's a step in the right direction. But I think he does need to hear those folks; I mean, it is a community that has been injured over and over and over again," Jacksonville Mayor Donna Deegan told CNN This Morning while discussing the booing crowd that greeted Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis at a weekend prayer vigil.

"The American people get to decide who wins the White House — not Deep State actors who have shamelessly attacked Donald Trump since he announced his first bid in 2015. We must DEFUND the Left's sham prosecutions against President Trump," Republican Rep. Andrew Clyde of Georgia tweeted after proposing a legislative effort to block federal money from being used in prosecutions of former President Donald Trump.

"When we look at the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington, it must be to commemorate an historic day in an historic movement, but it has to also compel us to understand: The movement is not over," Vice President Kamala Harris said on the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington.

"When we see Simone compete, we're witnessing unmatched power and grace. Not only is she the first in history to hold all eight U.S. gymnastics titles, but she's a trailblazer who spoke up for those who couldn't speak for themselves. You represent the best of America," President Joe Biden said of Simone Biles following the gymnast's record-breaking eighth all-around title win.

What to Watch in the Days Ahead

President Joe Biden will host Costa Rica President Rodrigo Chaves at the White House on Tuesday, following an agreement between the two nations on possible legal pathways for migrants.

Biden is also scheduled to address the public about his administration's efforts to lower healthcare costs. Vice President Kamala Harris is expected to attend.

S&P Case-Shiller home price index, job opening, and consumer confidence data are on the economic calendar from 9 a.m. ET

House Republicans temporarily silenced Rep. Justice Jones, one of the three Democrats expelled over gun control protests, for violating newly enacted decorum rules. Meanwhile, a state judge struck down a decorum rule that restricts the public from bringing signs into proceedings during its special legislative session.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill issued an "all clear" after going into lockdown for several hours after a faculty member was shot on campus. The suspect was arrested.

Judge Tanya Chutkan set a date of March 4, 2024, for

Bahr is kindergarten paraprofessional



There are two new paraprofessionals this coming year for the Groton Area School District. Elizabeth Bahr will be the kindergarten para, and Chattarida Sukhmon will be the special education para at the high school.

Elizabeth Bahr, who prefers to be called Liz, has owned and operated a day care out of her home for the past twenty years. "My youngest child Raven is now going into kindergarten, so I decided it was time for a change for me too," Bahr smiled.

"I'll enjoy the regular hours at school, unlike those when running a home daycare," she explained. "It is always difficult when trying to juggle many conflicting schedules."

"I'm also happy to be working with Ann Gibbs since we already know each other well," Bahr stated.

"I'll help Ann with classroom duties and also work with the students in small groups," Bahr stated. "There will be twenty-six students in Mrs. Gibbs' kindergarten class this year."

"I had twelve children in my daycare last year, including my youngest daughter," she said. "The advantage of working at the school is that my schedule will be the same as my own children."

- Dorene Nelson

Sukhmon is HS special ed para



Chattarida Sukhmon, originally from Thailand, is the new paraprofessional for the high school special education department. She is married to a Groton graduate, Toby Carda, and continues to use her maiden name due to the Visa process which she'd started before they had married.

"I was nervous my first day on the job but enjoyed the experience anyway," Sukhmon admitted. "I work mainly with Todd Peterson, Sydney Kurtz, and Reilly Fuhrman and was able to be in the classroom to see how everything was done."

"I will be working mainly with four students to help them when they need it and to guide them in their school work," she explained. "I take them out of the regular classroom for individualized instruction."

"I also help them with various socializing behaviors such as blending in with the rest of the students, being friendly, and helping them with normal tasks and activities," Sukhmon listed. "They call me Mrs. S since my last name is hard to pronounce."

"I met Toby when he was teaching an online English class," she smiled. "We met in the local café / coffee shop where we talked about food and our personal life and education. We've been married for two years."

"Thail is my native language so I found English to be difficult at first," Sukhmon admitted. "Watching American movies and television helped me a lot with the pronunciation and accent. Working at Disney World in Florida also helped me understand and speak English."

"Back home in Thailand are my parents, my younger sister, and my dog," Sukhmon smiled. "My sister has that responsibility now! While I'm working here as a paraprofessional, my husband is student teaching in Webster. I think my job is much easier than his!"

- Dorene Nelson

Schuring takes over as athletic director



Alexa Schuring is currently the Math Interventionist at Groton Area Elementary School. In this position she provides individual and/or small group instruction to students who are struggling academically in math.

"I have always wanted to be a teacher, like my father," Schuring admitted, "but during my senior year in high school, my dad encouraged me to change my life path and pursue something other than the teaching profession."

"He just wanted me to spread my wings a little wider so I tried it for one year before transferring back home to NSU for teaching!" she smiled.

"When the athletic director job opened, I decided to apply but was surprised and pleased to have my dad's support," Schuring explained. "Following in my father's footsteps is a dream come true for me. Sports have always been important to me as I grew up. Even our family vacations were spent attending State events!"

"I've been working as the AD now for about a month and really like the job," she admitted. "I'm very excited for our sports teams this year. We have excellent kids here at Groton and to be able to build relationships with the athletes, coaches, and parents is a huge and treasured blessing in my life!"

"As the athletic director I schedule events with other schools for all junior high and high school athletics," Schuring said. "This includes assigning officials and referees."

"I collect and make sure all student athletes have physical and concussion forms turned in," she explained. "I'm also the liaison between

SDHSAA and our coaches, making sure our coaches have taken care of their required tests/classes before each season."

"Another job that is included is making sure that our medicine cabinet is stocked with the proper tools for coaches and trainers," Schuring stated. "I also have to approve all equipment and make sure everything is ready and set up prior to games."

"A big part of my job is communicating with the coaches, refs, community members, and other schools as to when games are and what time they will begin," she smiled. "Everyone wants to know when their favorite team and/or athlete is competing!"

- Dorene Nelson

Mitchell hands girls soccer team first loss, boys lose in close game

The Groton Area soccer teams went to Mitchell on Monday where the home team won both game. Mitchell won the girls game, 3-0, and the boys game, 4-2. It was the first loss for the girls team this year. Three teams in the girls division now all have one loss: Tea Area, Groton Area, Dakota Valley and Sioux Falls Christian.

Dagel is new ag teacher



Anna Dagel, the new ag teacher for the Groton Area School, is from Watertown, SD. "I received both my Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Animal Science from South Dakota State University," Dagel listed.

"I do not have my teaching certification yet, but I should be able to finish that in two years. It requires twelve hours of college credit," she explained "Finishing the required hours to get certified as well as tackling my first teaching job will certainly keep me busy!"

"Although I lived in town while growing up, I had the privilege of going to my grandparents' farm," Dagel explained. "On that farm I worked with cattle to prepare for the 4-H livestock shows. I loved working with cattle which eventually led to my college degrees."

"I decided to apply for this job because I love to learn and am very passionate about teaching and helping kids learn new things," Dagel smiled.

"The first job I have to do is organize my classroom and put up bulletin boards," she said. "I also have to get curriculum plans in place and start the lesson plans for the first semester."

"I'll use some of the lessons I learned from my animal science classes in college," Dagel added. "I'm very excited to be here and am looking forward to meeting my students."

- Dorene Nelson

Duerre is MS/HS special ed teacher



Chantel Duerre, the new middle school / high school special education teacher, is originally from Wallace, SD, a small town twenty miles south of Webster. "I graduated from Florence High School, which is close to Watertown," Duerre explained.

"My husband, our 18-month-old daughter, and I now live south of Bristol on my husband's 7th generation farm," she smiled. "For the last two years, I taught in Britton, but this is much closer to where we live."

"Since I'm also a farmer's wife, I do frequently help him on the farm with the crops and with various animals," Duerre listed.

"After I graduated from high school, I attended college at Black Hills State University in Spearfish where I received my Bachelor's Degree," Duerre stated.

"When I was in high school, I was able to work in a program called 'Classroom Experience,'" she explained. "I worked with younger students who struggle with their school work."

"I actually decided to major in Special Education because of this experience," Duerre smiled. "Besides that my high school principal told me that he thought I'd be good at it!"

"I'm anxious to start teaching here and getting to know my new students,"

She admitted. "I'm always pleased that I can be of help to students with their individual work."

- Dorene Nelson

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 6 of 61



Groton Community Transit

P.O. Box 693
205 E. 2nd Ave.
Groton, SD 57445

Dear Groton family,

Thank you, Thank you, for your loyalty and support through all of these years! We appreciate everyone of you!!

Although we have tried our best to keep the expenses low, our operating costs have increased significantly due to global factors in recent times. After carefully reviewing the finances, we have made a tough decision of increasing our transportation prices.

The change will take effect on Oct. 1, 2023 our rides within the town of Groton will be \$2 per ride, \$4 roundtrip. And, medical rides to Aberdeen from Groton will be \$20 roundtrip. Until then, you can take benefit of the old prices. We will honor old prices till Sept. 30, 2023!

We also offer a discounted pass for \$30 which includes 22 one way rides within Groton area!

We are a non-profit transportation service for the needs of all age groups of people!

As always, thank you for your loyalty and we thank you for your understanding and continued support!

Sincerely,

Dan Hansen & Eugenia Strom

Groton Transit

Steve Smith, Sherry Koehler, Topper Tostad, Dick Kolker

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 7 of 61



Groton September Calendar of Events

Friday, Sept. 1

Senior Menu: Bratwurst on bun, mashed potatoes, sauerkraut, fruit, 3 bean salad.

No School

Soccer at Dakota Valley: Boys at 4 p.m., girls at 5 p.m.

Football vs Dakota Hills Coop at Waubay, 7 p.m.

Main, open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Cross country at Britton, 4 p.m.

Boys soccer at James Valley Christian, 4 p.m.

Volleyball at Webster (7th/C at 5 p.m., 8th/JV at 6 p.m. with varsity to follow)

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Saturday, Sept. 2

CLOSED: Common Cents Community Thrift Store

Sunday, Sept. 3

St. John's Lutheran/Zion worship with communion. St. John's at 9 a.m., Zion at 11 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 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.

United Methodist: Worship with communion. Conde at 8:30 a.m., Coffee Hour at 9:30 a.m., Groton at 10:30a .m.

Monday, Sept. 4

No Senior Menu

No School

CLOSED: The Pantry at Groton Community Center

Tuesday, Sept. 5

Senior Menu: Ranch chicken breast, rice pilaf, cauliflower and pea salad, cookie, fruit, whole wheat bread.

St. John's Lutheran LWML Ladies Aid, 1 p.m.

The Pantry at Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N

Wednesday, Sept. 6

Senior Menu: Baked cod, parsley buttered potatoes, coleslaw, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

St. John's Lutheran Bible Study, 2:45 pm.; Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.; Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m., Youth Gathering meeting, 7 p.m.

Groton Chamber meeting, noon, at City Hall
Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm

Groton Chamber meeting, noon, at City Hall
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, Sept. 7

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meatsauce, tossed salad with dressing, pears, garlic bread.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.

Boys golf invitational at Olive Grove Golf Course.

Volleyball at Aberdeen Roncalli: (7th/C at 5 p.m., 8th/JV at 6 p.m. with varsity to follow)

Friday, Sept. 8

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

Youth Football, hosts Clark, 5 p.m.

Football hosts Clark/Willow Lake, 7 p.m.

Family Fun Fest, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., downtown Groton

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 8 of 61



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Saturday, Sept. 9

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.

Football junior high jamboree at Aberdeen Roncalli.

Girls soccer at Sioux Falls Christian, 1 p.m. (No JV)

Airport Fly-In/Drive-In

City wide rummage sale, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 10

St. John's Lutheran/Zion worship: St. John's at 9 a.m., Sunday school at 9:45 a.m., Zion at 11 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Rally Sunday. Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; choir, 7 p.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.

United Methodist: Welcome Pastor Rob, Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.; Pot-luck dinner, 11:30 a.m.

Youth Football at Warner, 6 p.m.

Airport Fly-In/Drive-In

Couples Sunflower Golf Tournament at Olive Grove
Doggie Day at the pool, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 11

Senior Menu: Breaded pork cutlet, scalloped potatoes, Harvard beets, blushing pears, whole wheat bread.

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

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

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

Cross Country at Webster, 2 p.m.

Junior High Volleyball hosts Mobridge-Pollock with 7th and 8th at 5 p.m.

School Board Meeting, 6 p.m.

Homecoming Coronation, 7:30 p.m.
United Methodist: PEO Meeting (outside group), 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 12

Senior Menu: Goulash, 7 layer salad, garlic toast, mixed fruit.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Church Council, 6 p.m.

The Pantry at Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Boys Golf at Redfield, 10 a.m.

Junior High Football at Redfield, 4:30 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 13

Senior Menu: Beef stroganoff with noodles, green beans, Jell-O with fruit, whole wheat bread, ambrosia.

St. John's Lutheran Bible Study, 2:45 pm.; Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.

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

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

Thursday, Sept. 14

Senior Menu: Tator tot hot dish, corn, Mandarin orange salad, whole wheat bread.

Boys Golf at Dakota Magic Golf Course, 10 a.m.

Cross Country at Lee Park Golf Course, Aberdeen, 4 p.m.

Volleyball at Clark/Willow Lake (Clark): (7th/C at 5 p.m., 8th/JV at 6 p.m. with varsity to follow)

Friday, Sept. 15

Senior Menu: Chicken pasta salad, grape juice, muffin, watermelon, carrots.

Homecoming Parade: 1 p.m.

Football hosts Deuel, 7 p.m.

TigerPalloza

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 9 of 61

Saturday, Sept. 16

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.

Junior High Volleyball Tournament at Matchbox in Aberdeen.

Volleyball Tournament at Hamlin, 9 a.m.

Junior High Football Jamboree at Webster, 10 a.m.

Youth Football jamboree in Groton.

Sunday, Sept. 17

St. John's Lutheran/Zion worship with communion. St. John's at 9 a.m., Sunday school at 9:34 a.m., Zion at 11 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.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.

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

Monday, Sept. 18

Senior Menu: Turkey sub with lettuce, tomato and cheese, peas, Macaroni salad, peaches.

St. John's Lutheran Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m.

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

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

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

Cross Country at Clear Lake, 4 p.m.

Junior High Football hosts Webster, 4 p.m.

Junior Varsity Football hosts Webster, 5 p.m.

Youth Football hosts Doland, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 19

Senior Menu: New England ham dinner, dinner roll, fruit cocktail.

St. John's Lutheran Quilting, 9 a.m.

The Pantry at Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Junior High Football hosts Sisseton, 4 p.m.

Volleyball at Warner: 7th at 5:15, 8th at 6:30, JV at 6:30 with varsity to follow.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.; Conde Ad Council

Wednesday, Sept. 20

Senior Menu: Sloppy Joe on bun, oven roasted potatoes, mixed vegetables, acini depepi fruit salad.

St. John's Lutheran Bible Study, 2:45 pm.; Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

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

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 21

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

Boys Golf at Sisseton, 10 a.m.

Boys Soccer hosts James Valley Christian, 4 p.m.

Volleyball at Tiospa Zina with C match at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity.

Friday, Sept. 22

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

Football at Sisseton, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 23

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.

Junior High Volleyball Tournament at Hamlin, 9 a.m.

Girls Soccer at Tea Area, 11 a.m. (No JV)

Youth Football at Clark Jamboree

Sunday, Sept. 24

St. John's Lutheran/Zion worship: St. John's at 9 a.m., Sunday school at 9:45 a.m., Zion at 11 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 10 of 61

school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.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.

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

Monday, Sept. 25

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

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

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

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center with potluck dinner starting at noon.

Region 1A Golf at Valley View Country Club, Sisseton, 10 a.m.

Cross Country at Olive Grove Golf Course, 4 p.m.

Junior High Football hosts Aberdeen Roncalli, 4 p.m.

Junior Varsity Football hosts Aberdeen Roncalli after JH game.

Volleyball vs. Florence/Henry at Florence (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m., C at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity)

Tuesday, Sept. 26

Senior: Baked pork chop, cream noodles, California blend, apple sauce, Whole wheat bread.

The Pantry at Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Volleyball hosts Great Plains Lutheran. C match at 5 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity.

Youth Football vs. Ellendale at NSU (3rd/4th at 5:30 p.m., 5th/6th at 6:30)

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 27

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

St. John's Lutheran Bible Study, 2:45 pm.; Confir-

mation, 3:45 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.

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

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

Thursday, Sept. 28

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

Parent-Teacher Conference, 1:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Cross Country at Sisseton, 4 p.m.

Junior High Volleyball hosts Britton-Hecla, 7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.

Junior High Football at vs. Clark/Willow Lake at Clark, 4:30 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 29

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

Faculty In-Service, no school.

Football at Webster Area, 7 p.m.

Youth Football at Webster, 5 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 30

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.

Girls Soccer at Garretson, 1 p.m.

Boys Soccer hosts Dakota Valley, 1 p.m.

Youth Football at Waubay Jamboree



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Pennington County in dispute with state over opioid settlement amounts

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - AUGUST 28, 2023 4:40 PM

Pennington County is arguing in court that the state should recalculate its national opioid settlement amounts to pay the county's litigation costs.

The national opioid settlement was the product of two channels of litigation: a multidistrict lawsuit against manufacturers and distributors of opioids for their role in fueling the opioid epidemic, and state attorneys general suing those same manufacturers and distributors.

South Dakota's attorney general filed a complaint against manufacturers and distributors in 2018. Three years later, Pennington County was the only South Dakota local government to participate in the national opioid multidistrict lawsuit, filing its complaint in April 2021. Those two channels of litigation merged when a judge ruled the multidistrict lawsuit would expand to a class action lawsuit to cover all subdivisions in all states.

Three months after Pennington County joined the multidistrict lawsuit, then-South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg announced the state would sign on to the national settlement.

That meant South Dakota counties and cities like Sioux Falls and Rapid City received settlement money without participating in the lawsuit.

"Pennington County did this. They participated and helped put this all together," said Verne Goodsell of Goodsell Oviatt, the Rapid City law firm that represented Pennington County. "Everybody else shouldn't get a free ride."

Goodsell, representing Pennington County, has filed two disputes aiming to recalculate the first three years of South Dakota's local government settlement allotments from one of the companies that settled in court, Janssen Pharmaceuticals.

Goodsell said the state should have added a "backstop" to have all state subdivisions share a cost of Pennington County's litigation expenses. That isn't required though — the settlement established that backstops are at the discretion of the states.

Pennington County received nearly \$50,000 in the first two years of the Janssen settlement allocations. It'll receive another \$43,713 in the third year of allocations, according to court documents, and hundreds of thousands more in the coming years.

It owes 15% of its entire Janssen settlement in legal fees, which as of the third round of settlements adds up to roughly \$14,000, not including future allocations. The county wants its allocations increased by that amount to cover the fees and to create the backstop taking into account its legal fees. That increase would come out of the settlements paid to all the other cities and counties in South Dakota.

The state argues that the South Dakota opioid settlement memorandum agreement didn't provide for a backstop when Pennington County signed on and that the state isn't required to adopt a backstop. South Dakota Chief Deputy Attorney General Charles McGuigan argues in a response letter to the dispute that state law doesn't allow opioid settlement funds to pay for attorney fees.

"Pennington County filed on the eve of settlement and was the only subdivision to file a complaint in the MDL court," McGuigan wrote, referring to the multidistrict lawsuit. "The only thing Pennington County has done is file a complaint."

McGuigan also notes that the Janssen settlement provided a way for litigating parties to seek reimbursement for attorney fees. But Pennington County can't be reimbursed for attorney fees from the settlement because the county filed three months past the cutoff, Goodsell said.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 12 of 61

A backstop is Pennington County's last option, he explained.

Goodsell said the county requested a backstop when it agreed to a memorandum of understanding with the state, but nothing was done. The county passed a resolution requesting the backstop earlier this year, but the dispute in Hughes County Court is the county's latest effort.

A hearing date has not been set for the matter.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.

COMMENTARY

Without a motorcycle helmet law for adults, we all pay

DANA HESS

There's a legend in journalism circles about a metropolitan daily newspaper that published a weak editorial page that was squeamish about taking a stand on anything. The paper was so consistently wishy-washy that the editorial writers had their keyboards fixed so that if they hit control-T, their computers automatically typed: "This bears watching."

This time of year, South Dakota reporters, and the public information officer for the Highway Patrol, could use their own control-T when writing about motorcycle accidents: "The victim was not wearing a helmet and was pronounced dead at the scene."

Control-T would get a workout this time of year as there are plenty of fatal motorcycle accidents to report on during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. A South Dakota Searchlight story noted at least six motorcycle deaths officially associated with the rally as well as five other deaths in the days leading up to or after the rally that weren't in the official total. It stands to reason, though, that when motorcyclists from Virginia, Michigan and Kansas die in South Dakota just before the rally, they were probably heading for Sturgis.

Some of these stories wouldn't need to be written if South Dakota had a helmet law. In this state, motorcyclists under 18 have to wear a helmet, but the rest of the riders can go without helmets — enjoying the wind in their hair and the bugs in their teeth. In South Dakota, wearing a helmet is left up to the rider's good sense, which is often in short supply, especially during the rally.

Currently 17 states and the District of Columbia require all riders to wear helmets. Contrast that with Iowa, Illinois and New Hampshire which have no helmet laws at all. The rest of the states, like South Dakota, require young riders to wear helmets.

Getting a helmet law through the South Dakota Legislature would be a heavy lift. And getting Gov. Kristi (Freedom lives here) Noem to sign it would be another matter.

It was tough enough getting legislators to endorse a seat belt law. When that law went into effect on Jan. 1, 1995, it made South Dakota the last of 49 states to require seat belt use in automobiles. (There's no seat belt law for adults in New Hampshire where they seem to take their state motto, "Live Free Or Die," quite seriously.)

South Dakotans resisted a seat belt law for a long time, hesitant to let the government into their cars and strap a belt across their waists. It's likely they won't be keen about the government sitting on their heads, either. That's too bad, because helmets work. Research shows that helmet use reduces the risk of death in an accident by 37% to 41%. Motorcyclists that don't wear a helmet and get in accidents are three times more likely to suffer brain injury.

Motorcycle helmet use isn't just a matter of safety, it's a matter of money. Any motorcycle accidents, but particularly fatal accidents, cause insurance rates to go up. So even if you wear a helmet, your insurance rates are likely to increase thanks to those who don't.

It's not just motorcyclists that pay. We all do. We all pay for the law enforcement that investigates the accidents and the first responders that have to deal with the mess. Accident-prone motorcyclists who don't have health insurance cause rates to go up for the rest of us while putting a burden on local taxpayers who may have to foot the bill for their care.

Maybe the solution can be found in something like the laws they have in Michigan and Florida. Those

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 13 of 61

states allow adult motorcycle riders to forgo helmets if they have insurance with medical benefits of at least \$20,000 and \$10,000, respectively.

The people who were inspired to take to the open road by "Easy Rider" are older now. That means an accident could be that much more serious for them. In 1980, the average age of someone who rode a motorcycle was 27. In 2018, the average age was 50. This year, many of the motorcyclists that died up to and during the rally were eligible for senior citizen discounts.

Like seat belts, motorcycle helmets save lives. Still, it's easy to imagine the rough road a motorcycle helmet law would face in the current Legislature. Those who stand against it would say that wearing a helmet curtails their freedom of the open road. Going without a helmet also keeps them free from safety and free from common sense.

Dana Hess spent more than 25 years in South Dakota journalism, editing newspapers in Redfield, Milbank and Pierre. He's retired and lives in Brookings, working occasionally as a freelance writer.

Judge sets March trial date in Trump federal election interference case

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY - AUGUST 28, 2023 12:59 PM

WASHINGTON — The federal trial in the case accusing former President Donald Trump of knowingly lying about the 2020 presidential election results and trying to overturn them will begin in March, a federal judge said Monday.

U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan, who waived Trump's appearance for the first hearing, scheduled jury selection to begin March 4, despite protests from the former president's attorney John Lauro that the date is "inconsistent with Trump's right to due process."

The trial would come amid an important date in the 2024 GOP presidential primary, where Trump remains the front-runner despite facing numerous criminal charges in multiple cases. March 5 is "Super Tuesday," when 14 states hold nominating contests and the leader in the race typically establishes a near-insurmountable advantage.

The former president's latest indictment was handed up Aug. 14 in Fulton County, Georgia, where state prosecutors allege 2020 election interference.

Lauro and co-counsel Todd Blanche requested the federal trial against Trump not begin until January 2026 so that they could review the 12.8 million pages of discovery provided by U.S. prosecutors.

"It's a sacred obligation to represent a defendant, and it's not easy when you have the entire government amassed against you," Lauro said, his voice growing louder.

"Let's take the temperature down," Chutkan said. "Mr. Trump has considerable resources that not every defendant usually has."

"Discovery in 2023 is not sitting in a warehouse looking at documents," Chutkan continued. "It's reviewed by electronic searches."

Federal prosecutors maintain the evidence was given in a searchable database, and that much of the information has already been available to the defense — including publicly available court documents, material housed by the National Archives and Records Administration, and Trump's own social media posts.

Molly Gaston, an assistant U.S. attorney, told Chutkan that a list of approximately 47,000 duplicative key documents has already been presented to the defense.

"Here's what we view as the most important: It's all in a very organized fashion," she said, referring to the list.

Chutkan called the government's digital production of the documents a "considerable" effort.

"This case is not going to trial in 2026," she said.

"You've known this was coming," she told Lauro. "No experienced counsel would have been sitting on their hands waiting for an indictment."

Defense: A 'complex' case needs time

Among the arguments that Trump's legal team will not receive adequate time to review the volume of

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 14 of 61

discovery, Lauro told Chutkan that the defense is facing "one of the most unique cases ever brought in the United States."

"We're going to be busy with very, very complex issues," Lauro said in response to Chutkan's questioning about why Trump's legal team requested more time.

Aspects of the case may be of "historic note," Chutkan argued, "but they are not legal ones." The scope of events unfolded over a few months, she added.

Lauro said the court can expect a "very, very unique and extensive motion that deals with executive immunity," or that a U.S. president cannot be subject to federal criminal charges.

Other forthcoming motions from the defense will question whether the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia has jurisdiction over the case, possible violations of the First Amendment, and whether Trump is being selectively prosecuted for alleged political reasons, Lauro said.

Federal prosecutors said they expected the motions to be rejected.

"Selective prosecution (arguments are) not new in this district," Gaston said in response. "First Amendment issues in the context of fraud (are) not a new legal issue, and that won't be complex either."

The public interest deserves a "prompt jury consideration," Gaston argued.

"We need to proceed to trial ... because on a near daily basis the defendant posts on social media about this case," she said.

When Chutkan asked for a timeline of the defense's planned motions, Lauro said they "anticipate filing as quickly as possible."

Lauro said his team will file against each criminal charge as well as a motion to dismiss the case because of "political persecution," which he suggested may require an additional hearing.

Charges against Trump

A federal grand jury handed up an indictment against the former president in early August on four counts: conspiracy to defraud the United States; conspiracy to obstruct an official proceeding; obstruction of, and attempt to obstruct, an official proceeding; and conspiracy against rights.

The 45-page indictment says that despite knowing his statements were false, then-President Trump worked with co-conspirators to produce fake electors and repeatedly claimed that he won the presidency, eventually leading to the violent attack on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

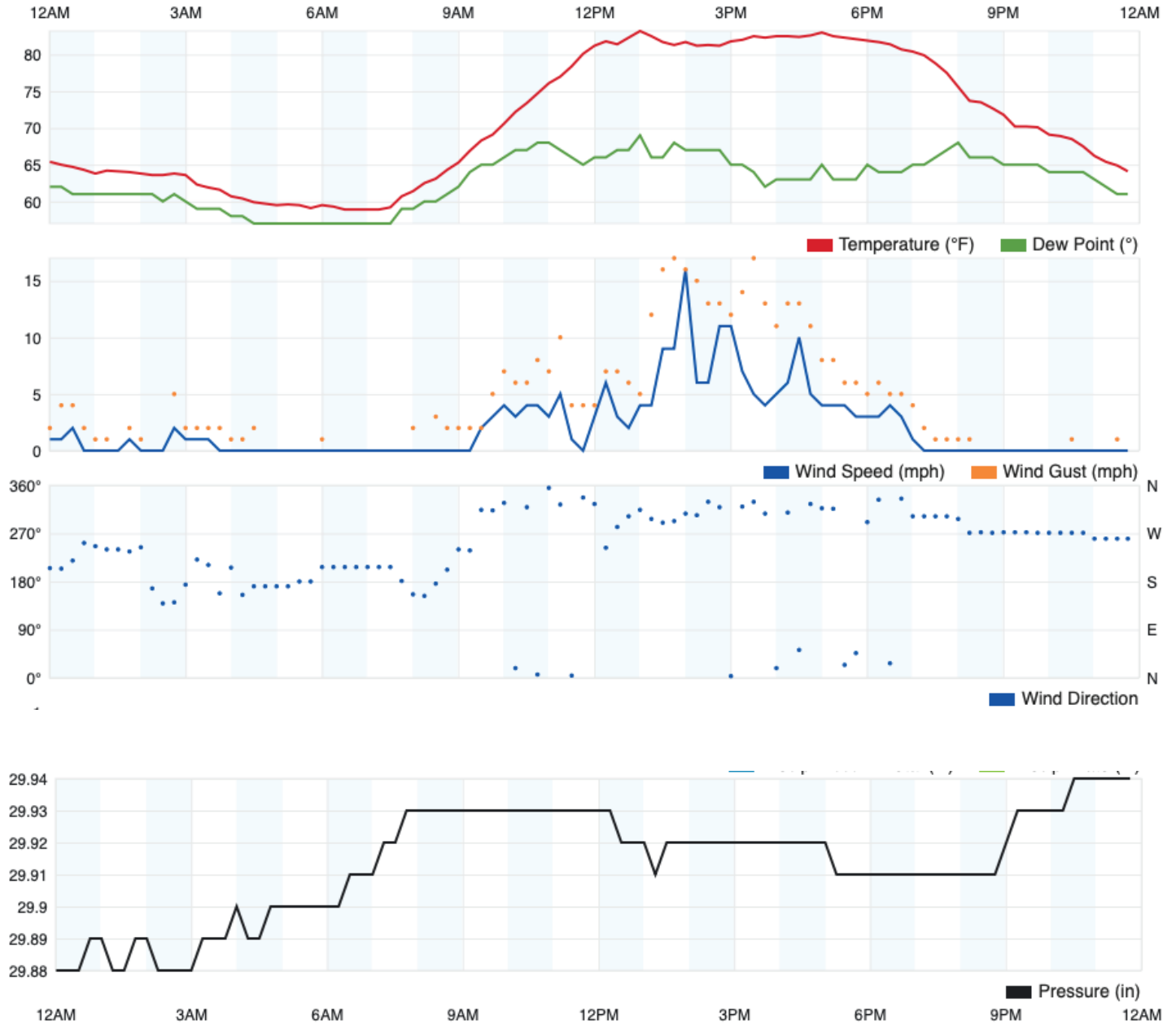
Trump, 77, appeared at the E. Barrett Prettyman Federal Courthouse in Washington for his arraignment Aug. 3 before U.S. Magistrate Judge Moxila A. Upadhyaya.

Ashley Murray covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.

Groton Daily Independent


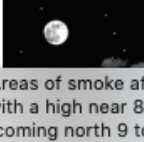
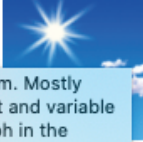




Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 15 of 61

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

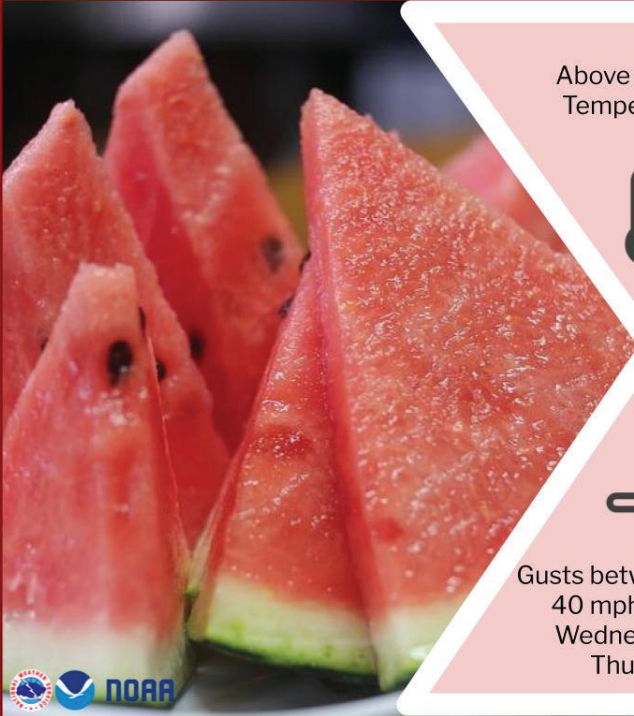


Groton Daily Independent


Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 16 of 61

Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
						
Areas Smoke	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear then Mostly Clear and Breezy	Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny
High: 84 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 85 °F	Low: 67 °F	High: 87 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 87 °F


Today: Areas of smoke after 11am. Mostly sunny, with a high near 84. Light and variable wind becoming north 9 to 14 mph in the morning.



Above Average Temperatures



Gusts between 30 and 40 mph possible Wednesday and Thursday!



Tuesday
Smoky
Highs: 82-88°F

Wednesday
Smoky and windy
Highs: 82-94°F

Thursday
Mostly sunny
Highs: 87-93°F

August 28, 2023 2:35 PM

Warmer than normal temperatures will return for the rest of the week along with some smoke for at least Tuesday and Wednesday. This smoke is expected to reach the surface and will impact visibilities. Smoke levels could affect sensitive groups. Gusts are also expected to be pretty strong starting west river on Wednesday morning and transitioning through the area through Thursday before diminishing Thursday night.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 17 of 61

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 83 °F at 12:59 PM

Low Temp: 59 °F at 6:31 AM

Wind: 17 mph at 1:38 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 13 hours, 29 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 100 in 1961

Record Low: 30 in 1893

Average High: 81

Average Low: 53

Average Precip in Aug.: 2.10

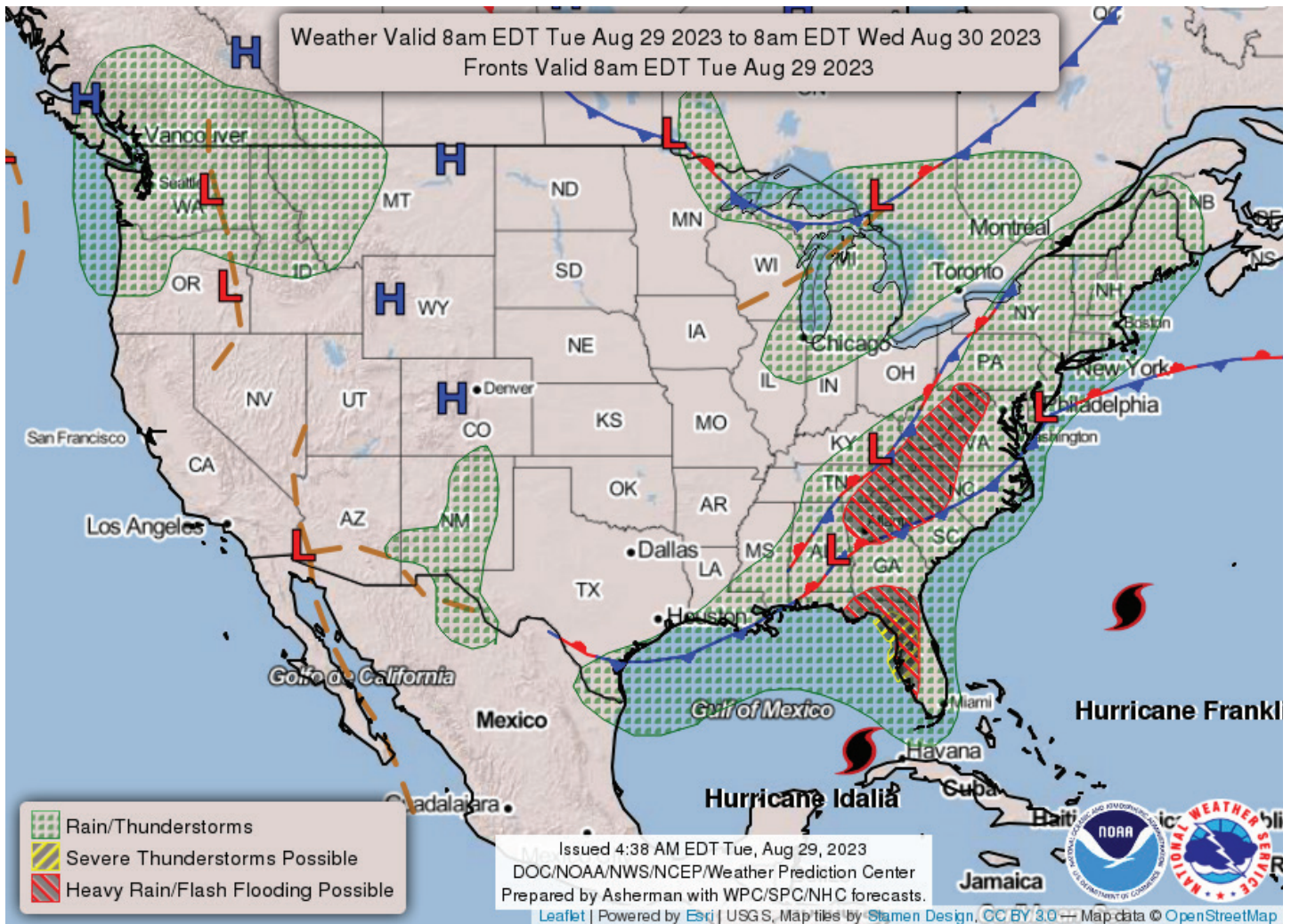
Precip to date in Aug.: 5.92

Average Precip to date: 16.20

Precip Year to Date: 18.59

Sunset Tonight: 8:17:50 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:50:02 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 18 of 61

Today in Weather History

August 29, 1983: A devastating hail storm struck portions of central South Dakota. In a small part of Faulk County, hail pounded the area for two straight hours. At times, the hail was the size of baseballs. Of course, this incredible hailstorm devastated crops in the area and took out windows in area buildings. In one home, the windows were shattered, the curtains shredded, and glass shards and water ruined much of the upper floor. On some houses, the paint was peeled off by the continual pounding of the hail. Also, funnel clouds were reported just east of Lake City, and near Langford and Veblen in Marshall County. In Veblen, a pole barn was blown over, and shingles were torn off.

August 29, 1993: A severe thunderstorm hit Groton with hail, damaging lightning, and 3.43 inches of rain which flooded some basements. At the high school, lightning spits a 30-foot chimney which fell through a large skylight and sections of the roof.

1960: The storm that would become Hurricane Donna forms near Cape Verde off the African coast. It would go on to cause 150 deaths from Puerto Rico to New England over the next two weeks.

1962 - Hackberry, LA, was deluged with twenty-two inches of rain in 24 hours, establishing a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1965 - A national record for the month of August was established when 2.5 inches of snow fell atop Mount Washington NH. Temperatures in New England dipped to 39 degrees at Nantucket MA, and to 25 degrees in Vermont. For many location it was the earliest freeze of record. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Some of the most powerful thunderstorms in several years developed over the piedmont of North Carolina, and marched across central sections of the state during the late afternoon and evening hours. Baseball size hail was reported around Albemarle, while thunderstorm winds downed giant trees around High Falls. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Cool air invaded the north central U.S. Ten cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Bismarck ND with a reading of 33 degrees. Deerfield, a small town in the Black Hills of South Dakota, reported a low of 23 degrees. The remnants of Tropical Storm Chris drenched eastern Pennsylvania with up to five and a half inches of rain, and produced high winds which gusted to 90 mph, severely damaging a hundred boats in Anne Arundel County MD. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Evening thunderstorms produced destructive lightning in West Virginia. The lightning caused widespread damage, particularly in Doddridge County. Numerous trees were downed closing many roads. Fire companies had a difficult time tending to the many homes and trailers on fire. Anchorage AK reported a record 9.60 inches of rain for the month of August. The average annual precipitation for Anchorage is just slightly more than fifteen inches. Three day rainfall totals in northwest Missouri ranged up to 8.20 inches at Maryville. (The National Weather Summary)

2005 - Hurricane Katrina made landfall in Plaquemines Parish in southeastern Louisiana early on the 29th with maximum sustained winds near 125 mph, a strong category-three, and the third most-intense landfalling hurricane in U.S. history. The center of the hurricane passed just east of New Orleans, where winds gusted over 100 mph. Widespread devastation and unprecedented flooding occurred, submerging at least 80 percent of the city as levees failed. Farther east, powerful winds and a devastating storm surge of 20-30 feet raked the Mississippi coastline, including Gulfport and Biloxi, where Gulf of Mexico floodwaters spread several miles inland. Rainfall amounts of 8-10 inches were common along and to the east of the storm's path. Katrina weakened to a tropical storm as it tracked northward through Mississippi and gradually lost its identity as it moved into the Tennessee Valley on the 30th.

2005: Hurricane Katrina makes landfall near New Orleans, Louisiana, as a Category 3 hurricane. Despite being only the third most powerful storm of the 2005 hurricane season, Katrina was one of the worst natural disasters in the history of the United States.

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

HE SATISFIES

God did not create any need He could not satisfy! He did not create food that would simply taste good. He created food that would taste good and satisfy our hunger - food that would nourish and sustain us, comforts us, and brings us enjoyment. Every hunger or need that we have - whether spiritual, emotional, physical, or social - can be fulfilled out of the abundance of His creation. That includes this life and the life to come. He is a needs-meeting God.

Listen to the Psalmist: "For He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things." If we are thirsty, we must drink the water that He provides to quench our thirst through His Son. If we are hungry, we must eat the Bread of Life which is His Son. Unless we ask the Lord to become our Savior, we will live lives that are empty, unsatisfied, and unfulfilled. Only when we are willing to allow Him to fill the needs He has placed deep within us with His Son will we become complete.

There is a story of a little boy returning home from the store with a jar of honey. After struggling for quite some time to open it, he finally succeeded. He stuck his finger into the jar to taste its contents. An older man watching him from a distance approached him.

"Is it sweet?" he asked. "Yes, Sir," came the reply. "How sweet?" asked the man.

"Well, Sir, I can't describe it. It's so sweet it more than satisfies my need for candy. But I'll tell you what. You stick your finger in the jar and taste it for yourself, and then you'll know."

"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!" He alone can satisfy our every need.

Prayer: Lord, fill the emptiness in our lives with Your presence as You become our Redeemer, Savior and Lord. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: For He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things. Psalm 107:9



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

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 20 of 61

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

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 21 of 61

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Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 22 of 61



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: 17 Hrs 18 Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.28.23

16 33 34 39 46 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$9,110,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 33 Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.28.23

5 19 26 40 48 13

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 48 Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.26.23

1 9 14 17 20

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$26,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 48 Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.28.23

23 24 48 61 64 4

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 17 Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

08.28.23

4 6 25 55 68 26

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$386,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 17 Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Monday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Chester def. Flandreau, 25-14, 25-14, 25-13

Dell Rapids def. Baltic, 28-26, 25-21, 25-10

Freeman def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-15, 25-11, 25-19

Harding County def. Newell, 12-25, 25-20, 25-13, 26-24

Wakpala def. Solen, N.D., 25-9, 23-25, 25-22, 20-25, 15-9

Warner def. Wolsey-Wessington, 27-25, 28-26, 25-11

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

Idalia strengthens to a hurricane, dangerous storm surges are forecast for Florida's Gulf Coast

By LAURA BARGFELD Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Idalia became a hurricane on Tuesday as it intensified on a path toward Florida's Gulf coast, with the National Hurricane Center warning of an increasing risk of life-threatening storm surge and dangerous hurricane-force winds in Florida in the next two days.

Florida residents loaded up on sandbags and evacuated from homes in low-lying areas along the Gulf Coast as Idalia intensified Monday and forecasters predicted it would hit in days as a major hurricane with potentially life-threatening storm surges.

"You should be wrapping up your preparation for #TropicalStormIdalia tonight and Tues morning at the latest," the National Weather Service in Tampa Bay said Monday on X, formerly known as Twitter.

As the state prepared, Idalia thrashed Cuba with heavy rain, especially in the westernmost part of the island, where the tobacco-producing province of Pinar del Rio is still recovering from the devastation caused by Hurricane Ian almost a year ago.

Authorities in the province issued a state of alert, and residents were evacuated to friends' and relatives' homes as authorities monitored the Cuyaguaje river for possible flooding. As much as 10 centimeters (4 inches) of rain fell in Cuba on Sunday, meteorological stations reported.

Idalia is expected to start affecting Florida with hurricane-force winds as soon as late Tuesday and arrive on the coast by Wednesday. It is the first storm to hit Florida this hurricane season and a potentially big blow to the state, which is also dealing with lingering damage from last year's Hurricane Ian.

Idalia is also the latest in a summer of natural disasters, including wildfires in Hawaii, Canada and Greece; the first tropical storm to hit California in 84 years, and devastating flooding in Vermont.

"Just got to prepare for these things, hope for the best, and prepare for the worst and, you know, hunker down, as they say," said Derek Hughes as he waited to load up his car with sandbags at a city park in Tampa.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis declared a state of emergency in 46 counties, a broad swath that stretches across the northern half of the state from the Gulf Coast to the Atlantic Coast. The state has mobilized 1,100 National Guard members, who have 2,400 high-water vehicles and 12 aircraft at their disposal for rescue and recovery efforts.

Tampa International Airport and St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport said they would close on Tuesday, and the Sunrail commuter rail service in Orlando was being suspended.

DeSantis warned of a "major impact" to the state, noting the potential for Idalia to become a Category 3 hurricane.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 24 of 61

"The property — we can rebuild someone's home," DeSantis said during a news conference Monday. "You can't unring the bell, though, if somebody stays in harm's way and does battle with Mother Nature."

DeSantis said the Florida Department of Transportation would waive tolls on highways in the Tampa area and the Big Bend starting at 4 a.m. Tuesday to help ease any burden on people in the path of the storm.

Large parts of the western coast of Florida are at risk for storm surges and floods. Evacuation notices have been issued in 21 counties with mandatory orders for some people in eight of those counties. Many of the notices were for people in low-lying and coastal areas, for those living in structures such as mobile and manufactured homes, recreational vehicles and boats, and for people who would be vulnerable in a power outage.

Pasco and Levy counties, located north of Tampa, both ordered mandatory evacuations for some residents. In Levy County, officials said residents of Cedar Key must be off the island by Tuesday evening because storm surges would make bridges impassable.

"Once the storm surge comes in, help may not be available to reach you," the county said in a public advisory.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami issued a hurricane warning Monday from Longboat Key in the Sarasota area to the Holocene River, up past Tampa Bay.

Many school districts along the Gulf Coast said they would be closed Tuesday and Wednesday. Several colleges and universities said they would close their campuses on Tuesday, including the University of Florida in Gainesville.

"They told us that our dorm building, especially, is prone to flooding," said Erin Amiss, a student at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg.

MacDill Air Force Base, located on Tampa Bay, is preparing to evacuate several aircraft and began a mandatory evacuation Monday morning for personnel who live in local counties, the Air Force said in a statement.

Tampa resident Grace Cruz, who has lived in the state for more than 40 years, put away patio furniture, filled her car up with gas and loaded up on sandbags. She worried about the tens of thousands of new residents to Florida who had never before experienced a hurricane, and she had some advice for them.

"If you're planning to get away, you start ahead of time because of the traffic," Cruz said. "No kidding. It's horrible."

As Gulf Coast residents packed up their cars or hauled out generators in case of power outages, state officials warned about potential fuel contamination at dozens of gas stations.

President Joe Biden spoke to DeSantis on Monday morning, telling the Florida governor that he had approved an emergency declaration for the state, the White House said in a news release. DeSantis is running for the Republican presidential nomination in 2024.

Southwest Florida is still recovering from Hurricane Ian, which was responsible last year for almost 150 deaths. The Category 5 hurricane damaged 52,000 structures, nearly 20,000 of which were destroyed or severely damaged.

At 5 a.m. EDT Tuesday, Hurricane Idalia was about 370 miles (600 kilometers) south southwest of Tampa, with maximum sustained winds of 75 metres per second (270 kph) as of 5 a.m., the hurricane center said. Idalia was moving north at 14 mph (22 kph). On Tuesday, it was expected to turn northeast at a faster pace, reaching Florida's western coast as a dangerous major hurricane on Wednesday.

After moving across Florida, Idalia is forecast to blow through Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina.

So far this year, the U.S. East Coast has been spared from cyclones. But in the West earlier this month, Tropical Storm Hilary caused widespread flooding, mudslides and road closures in Mexico, California, Nevada and points north.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration recently said the 2023 hurricane season would be far busier than initially forecast, partly because of extremely warm ocean temperatures. The season runs through Nov. 30, with August and September typically the peak.

Suspect's motive unclear in campus shooting that killed 1 at UNC Chapel Hill, police say

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM, GARY D. ROBERTSON and SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — Police were searching for both the weapon and the motive in a shooting at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill that left one faculty member dead and prompted an hours-long lockdown amid a search for the suspect.

The assailant in Monday afternoon's shooting at a science building in the heart of the flagship university's campus was taken into custody about an hour and a half after the gunfire was first reported, officials said at a news conference. Neither the suspect nor the victim were immediately identified and it wasn't clear whether they knew each other. Formal charges were pending.

"To actually have the suspect in custody gives us an opportunity to figure out the why and even the how, and also helps us to uncover a motive and really just why this happened today. Why today, why at all?" UNC Police Chief Brian James said. "And we want to learn from this incident and we will certainly work to do our best to ensure that this never happens again on the UNC campus."

UNC Police received a 911 call reporting shots fired at Caudill Labs just after 1 p.m. Monday, James said at a news conference. An emergency alert was issued and sirens sounded just two minutes later, issuing a lockdown warning that left worried students and staff barricading themselves inside dorms, bathrooms, classrooms and gyms.

Officers arriving at the lab building found a faculty member who had been fatally shot, James said. Based on "witness information," police took the suspect into custody just after 2:30 p.m., according to the chief.

Jones declined to elaborate on the apprehension, but TV station WRAL reported it took place in a residential neighborhood near the campus.

The lockdown was lifted around 4:15 p.m.

No other injuries were reported.

"This loss is devastating, and the shooting damages the trust and safety that we so often take for granted in our campus community," Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz said.

Clayton Ulm, 23, a graduate student, said he was in a class of about 50 to 70 people when they were told to go into lockdown. The alarm system had gone off, but screens in the classroom had also glared with the lockdown order.

"Then there was quite a bit of panic as students were trying to figure out what to do," Ulm said in a LinkedIn message while still in the classroom, heading into his third hour of lockdown. "Then we all started hiding beneath our chairs and under desks. Some students went and locked the doors."

Students started listening to police scanners to try to get information about where the shooter was, Ulm said. The panic eventually subsided. And people were allowed to use the nearby restrooms. Still, he called it "surreal seeing the mass panic."

About two hours after the first alert went out, officers were still arriving in droves, with about 50 police vehicles at the scene and helicopters circling over the school.

It took about an hour and a half to lift the lockdown after the arrest because authorities were making sure they had the right suspect in custody, James said.

Police also had received calls around campus about other potential victims and gunshots that needed to be checked out, he said.

"We had to ensure that the entire campus was safe," James said.

James said it was unclear if the suspect knew the victim. He also said the weapon has not been found.

"We are looking for a firearm. It is too early to determine if the firearm was legally obtained," he said.

Classes started at UNC, the nation's first public university, a week ago. The university, with about 20,000 undergraduate students and 12,000 graduate students, canceled Tuesday classes.

Rushil Umaretiya, a freshman from northern Virginia, held a candle outside Caudill Laboratories Monday evening with two friends at his side. The computer science student had moved to Chapel Hill just two weeks ago and said he did not know the person who died. Umaretiya said he wanted to end a day of fear

and uncertainty with a quiet moment of reflection in honor of the deceased faculty member.

"In my family, whenever someone passes, we light a candle, so I thought I'd come out and pay some respect to the community I'm trying to join," he said. "It's a scary time for a lot of people, like I have a lot of history with loss, so I think it's just fear and a lot of mixed emotions."

Ulm, the graduate student, said he had moved from Oklahoma to North Carolina for grad school just a couple months ago.

His mother called during the lockdown and was "crying profusely."

She told him: "I knew I should've texted you yesterday, I was so worried... this was my greatest fear."

Syria protests spurred by economic misery stir memories of the 2011 anti-government uprising

By KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Anti-government protests in southern Syria have stretched into a second week, with demonstrators waving the colorful flag of the minority Druze community, burning banners of President Bashar Assad's government and at one point raiding several offices of his ruling party.

The protests were initially driven by surging inflation and the war-torn country's spiraling economy but quickly shifted focus, with marchers calling for the fall of the Assad government.

The demonstrations have been centered in the government-controlled province of Sweida, the heartland of Syria's Druze, who had largely stayed on the sidelines during the long-running conflict between Assad and those trying to topple him.

In a scene that once would have been unthinkable in the Druze stronghold, protesters kicked members of Assad's Baath party out of some of their offices, welded the doors shut and spray-painted anti-government slogans on the walls.

The protests have rattled the Assad government, but don't seem to pose an existential threat. They come at a time when government forces have consolidated control over most of the country. Meanwhile, Damascus has returned to the Arab fold and restored ties with most governments in the region.

Still, anger is building, even among Syrians who did not join the initial anti-Assad protests in 2011. Those demonstrations were met with a harsh crackdown and plunged the country into years of civil war.

For some, the final straw came two weeks ago when the Syrian president further scaled back the country's expensive fuel and gasoline subsidy program. Assad also doubled meager public sector wages and pensions, but those actions did little to cushion the blow, instead accelerating inflation and further weakening the already sinking Syrian pound. The results further piled on the economic pressure on millions living in poverty.

Soon after, protests kicked off in Sweida and the neighboring province of Daraa.

Over the past decade, Sweida had largely isolated itself from Syria's uprising-turned-conflict. The province witnessed sporadic protests decrying corruption and the country's economic backslide. This time, crowds quickly swelled into the hundreds, calling out political repression by Assad's government and stirring echoes of the protests that rocked the country in 2011.

"People have reached a point where they can no longer withstand the situation," Rayan Maarouf, editor-in-chief of the local activist media collective Suwayda24, told The Associated Press. "Everything is crumbling."

While Assad's political fortunes have been on the rise in recent months, life for much of the country's population has become increasingly miserable. At least 300,000 civilians have been killed in the conflict, half of Syria's prewar population of 23 million has been displaced and large parts of the infrastructure have been crippled. Ninety percent of Syrians live in poverty. Rampant corruption and Western-led sanctions have also worsened poverty and inflation.

In Daraa — often referred to as the birthplace of the 2011 uprising but now under government control — at least 57 people were arrested in the current protests, according to the Britain-based Syrian Network for Human Rights. Unlike in 2011, government forces did not use lethal force.

In Sweida, the response has been more restrained, with Assad apparently wary of exerting too much

force against the Druze. During the years of civil war, his government presented itself as a defender of religious minorities against Islamist extremism.

Over the years, the province's young men also have armed themselves to defend their villages from Islamic State militants and Damascus-associated militias that produce and trade in illegal amphetamine pills, known as Captagon.

Joseph Daher, a Swiss-Syrian researcher and professor at the European University Institute in Florence, believes that this provides a layer of protection for protesters.

"Unlike other government-held areas, Sweida has some form of limited autonomy," Daher said.

Meanwhile, in Damascus, Lattakia, Tartous and other urban government strongholds, some are voicing their discontent more quietly. They write messages of support for the protests on paper, take pictures of those notes on the streets of their towns, and share them on social media.

Others suffer in silence and focus on daily survival. In Damascus, some have taken to carrying backpacks instead of wallets to carry the wads of cash they need to make everyday purchases amid the rampant inflation, while families struggle to buy basic necessities.

"If I buy (my son) two containers of milk, I'd have spent my entire month's salary," Damascus resident Ghaswan al-Wadi told the AP while preparing her family dinner at home after a long day at work.

The ongoing protests highlight Assad's vulnerability as a result of the failing economy, even in areas that tried to withstand the situation and not hold large-scale protests against his rule.

Could the protests eventually threaten his rule?

Daher said this could only happen if the protesters banded together.

"You have forms of solidarity from other cities (with Sweida)," Daher said. "But you can't say it would have a real effect on the regime, unless there would be collaboration between (protesters in) different cities."

Native nations on front lines of climate change share knowledge and find support at intensive camps

By HALLIE GOLDEN Associated Press

PORT ANGELES, Wash. (AP) — Jeanette Kiokun, the tribal clerk for the Qutekcak Native Tribe in Alaska, doesn't immediately recognize the shriveled, brown plant she finds on the shore of the Salish Sea or others that were sunburned during the long, hot summer. But a fellow student at a weeklong tribal climate camp does.

They are rosehips, traditionally used in teas and baths by the Skokomish Indian Tribe in Washington state and other tribes.

"It's getting too hot, too quick," Alisa Smith Woodruff, a member of the Skokomish tribe, said of the sun-damaged plant.

Tribes suffer some of the most severe impacts of climate change in the U.S. but often have the fewest resources to respond, which makes the intensive camps on combatting the impact of climate change a vital training ground and community-building space.

People from at least 28 tribes and intertribal organizations attended this year's camp in Port Angeles, Washington, and more than 70 tribes have taken part in similar camps organized by the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians at other sites across the U.S. since 2016.

They heard from tribal leaders and scientists and learned about a clam garden that is combatting ocean acidification. They visited the Elwha River where salmon runs were recently restored after the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe fought to have two dams torn down. They also learned how to make the most of newly available federal funds to add climate staff, restore habitats and reduce carbon emissions. And they set aside time to focus on cultural practices, such as cedar weaving, to unwind from the harsh realities of climate change.

"(What) this camp has done for us is to help us know that there is the network, there is a supporting web out there, that we can help one another," said Jonny Bearcub Stiffarm, a member of the climate advisory

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 28 of 61

board for the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes in Montana. "So we make new songs. We make new stories. We make new visions that we embrace for the positive outcome of our people. We make new warrior societies, new climate warrior societies."

Knowledge-sharing between tribes is not new. There were trade routes across North America before colonization. During first contact, tribes on the East Coast would send runners as far west as possible to share the news, said Amelia Marchand, citizen of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.

"This is kind of like a revitalization and an extension of that," she said.

Kiokun is one of only three fulltime employees for the Qutekcak Native Tribe. In 2022, a landslide cut off a major road and hurled debris into a bay, damaging a popular fishing spot for tribal elders, said Jami Fenn, the tribe's financial grant manager.

Out of last year's camp came a group made up of tribes and Native villages across the Chugach region in Alaska, including the Qutekcak Native Tribe, focused on responding to climate change. The group is now working to get a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant so they can rebuild fish habitats ruined by the landslides and add liaisons with federal entities on climate change issues.

Camp participants include those first starting to consider actions to counter the effects of climate change to those who have long had plans in place.

The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe in Washington attended for the first time last year. Soon after, they added a staff member focused on climate change, installed their first solar panels, and kicked off a friendly competition with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to see which could become carbon neutral by 2032. This year, the tribe co-hosted the camp.

Loni Greninger, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe vice chair, said a comment from a participant last year had stuck with her, about how the Western red cedar — which is central to the tribe's cultural identity — could die off in the Pacific Northwest because of excessive heat due to climate change.

"To think about a world where there wouldn't be cedar anymore, where I can't smell it, where I can't touch it, where I can't work with it, where I can't weave with it, where I can't use it anymore. That caught my attention," she said. "I don't want to be in a world like that."

This year's camp had added urgency. The federal government has granted more than \$720 million through the Inflation Reduction Act to help tribes plan and adapt to climate change. But Marchand, from the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, said navigating these opportunities can be "overwhelming" for tribal staff juggling many responsibilities.

The training helps tribes see "what the low-hanging fruit is ... where they can leverage their energy," she said.

Near the end of the camp, each tribal team presented projects they were working on and discussed the impact of climate change.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in Montana was among the first tribes in the U.S. to develop a climate response plan, and the tribe's climate change advisory committee chairman willingly shared that with other camp attendees.

"You don't have to steal it, it's yours," Michael Durglo Jr. told the group. "Everything I have is yours."

The Qutekcak Native Tribe is planning a tribal youth climate camp in Alaska, and Durglo has already agreed to teach part of the six-week program.

Kiokun, the tribe's tribal clerk, also plans to help with this work.

"I think I've found a new passion," she said.

Guatemala progressive's presidential victory certified, but his party is suspended

By SONIA PÉREZ D. and MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

GUATEMALA CITY (AP) — Progressive candidate Bernardo Arévalo was confirmed the winner of Guatemala's presidential election by the country's Supreme Electoral Tribunal on Monday, but the same day another government body ordered his political party suspended.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 29 of 61

Arévalo has faced a slew of legal challenges and allegations of irregularities since his unexpected victory over a candidate favored by the country's conservative elite.

Arévalo appears certain to take office as president on Jan. 14, but it was not clear whether his Seed Movement lawmakers would be able to take their seats in the country's Congress.

Arévalo called the suspension ruling legally void and said his party would appeal it.

"As of this moment, no one can stop me from taking office on Jan. 14," he told a news conference.

The electoral registry's ruling arose from an investigation into the Seed Movement by Guatemala's attorney general's office for alleged irregularities in the gathering of signatures for its formation as a party.

If the Seed Party appeals the ruling, as promised, the case will be taken to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal.

The Tribunal outranks the electoral registry, so the victory by Arévalo and the seats won in parliament by Seed Movement lawmakers in the first round elections appear confirmed. But the impact of the suspension of their party would have is unclear.

The announcements come after one of the most tumultuous elections in the Central American nation's recent history, which has put to test Guatemala's democracy.

At a time when Guatemalans, hungry for change, have grown disillusioned with endemic corruption, Arévalo and other opponents of the country's elite faced waves of judicial attacks in an attempt to knock them out of the race.

Arévalo, the little-known son of a former president, shocked much of the country by emerging as a frontrunner in the first round of presidential voting. He failed to get enough support to win outright and headed to a runoff vote against former first lady Sandra Torres. His rise came after a handful of other candidates were disqualified.

Arévalo rapidly gained support, campaigning on social progress and railing against corruption.

"This message generated, aroused hope, mobilized people who were fed up with corruption," he told the AP in a June interview.

Arévalo easily beat Torres in the Aug. 20 presidential runoff. According to the official count, the progressive candidate obtained 60.9% of the valid votes cast, against 37.2% for the right-wing Torres. The party also won 23 seats in the 160-seat Congress.

His win has been the source of a legal back-and-forth between various governmental entities and courts, some staffed with officials who have been sanctioned by the United States on charges of corruption. He has faced allegations of voter fraud by Torres, legal challenges and more.

Eight days after the runoff, Torres still hasn't conceded defeat and outgoing President Alejandro Giammattei hasn't said anything about the latest developments.

"It's obviously another attempt to subvert Semilla's (the Seed Movement's) path to power," said Alex Papadovassilakis, a Guatemala-based investigator for InSight Crime focused on crime and corruption. "I think we're entering uncharted waters."

Arrest warrants for electoral officials and raids to the party's headquarters have also caused concern in the international community and among Guatemalans.

Earlier this week, the Organization of American States' human rights commission asked that Guatemala provide protection for Arévalo after reports emerged of a possible plot to kill him.

Arévalo's victory has left much of the country's political establishment reeling, while his supporters have held protests against attempts to thwart his taking office.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres expressed concern about the attempts to undermine the results of Guatemala's presidential election, a U.N. spokeswoman said earlier.

The 64-year-old son of former President Juan José Arévalo was born in Uruguay, where his father was in exile following the ouster in a 1954 CIA-backed coup of his successor President Jacobo Árbenz, whom the U.S. saw as a threat during the Cold War.

The math problem: Kids are still behind. How can schools catch them up?

By ARIEL GILREATH of The Hechinger Report and JACKIE VALLEY of The Christian Science Monitor

On a breezy July morning in South Seattle, a dozen elementary-aged students ran math relays behind an elementary school.

One by one, they raced to a table, where they scribbled answers to multiplication questions before sprinting back to high-five their teammate. These students are part of a summer program run by the nonprofit School Connect WA, designed to help them catch up on math and literacy skills lost during the pandemic. There are 25 students in the program, and all of them are one to three grades behind.

One 11-year-old boy couldn't do two-digit subtraction. Thanks to the program and his mother, who has helped him each night, he's caught up. Now, he says math is challenging, but he likes it.

Other kids haven't fared so well.

Across the country, schools are scrambling to catch up students in math as post-pandemic test scores reveal the depth of missing skills. On average, students' math knowledge is about half a school year behind where it should be, according to education analysts.

Children lost ground on reading tests, too, but the math declines were particularly striking. Experts say virtual learning complicated math instruction, making it tricky for teachers to guide students over a screen or spot weaknesses in problem-solving skills. Plus, parents were more likely to read with their children at home than practice math.

The result: Students' math skills plummeted across the board, exacerbating racial and socioeconomic inequities in math performance. And students aren't bouncing back as quickly as educators hoped, supercharging worries about how they will fare in high school and beyond.

The Education Reporting Collaborative, a coalition of eight newsrooms, is documenting the math crisis facing schools and highlighting progress. Members of the Collaborative are AL.com, The Associated Press, The Christian Science Monitor, The Dallas Morning News, The Hechinger Report, Idaho Education News, The Post and Courier in South Carolina, and The Seattle Times.

Students had been making incremental progress on national math tests since 1990. But over the past year, fourth and eighth grade math scores slipped to the lowest levels in about 20 years, according to data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, known as the "Nation's Report Card."

"It's a generation's worth of progress lost," said Andrew Ho, a professor at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

At Moultrie Middle School in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, Jennifer Matthews has seen the pandemic fallout in her eighth grade classes. Her students have shown indifference to understanding her pre-algebra and Algebra I lessons.

"They don't allow themselves to process the material. They don't allow themselves to think, 'This might take a day to understand or learn,'" she said.

And recently students have been coming to her classes with gaps in their understanding of math concepts. Basic fractions, for instance, continue to stump many of them, she said.

Using federal pandemic relief money, some schools have added tutors or piloted new curriculum approaches in the name of academic recovery. But that money has a looming expiration date: The September 2024 deadline for allocating funds will arrive before many children have caught up.

Like other districts across the country, Jefferson County Schools in Birmingham, Alabama, saw students' math skills take a nosedive from 2019 to 2021. Leveraging pandemic aid, the district placed math coaches in all of their middle schools.

The coaches help teachers learn new and better ways to teach students. About 1 in 5 public schools in the United States have a math coach, according to federal data. The efforts appear to be paying off: State

testing shows math scores have started to inch back up for most of the Jefferson County middle schools.

In Pittsburgh's school system, which serves a student population that is 53% African American, special education teacher Ebonie Lamb said it's "emotionally exhausting" to see the inequities between student groups. But she believes those academic gaps can be closed through culturally relevant lessons, and targeting teaching to each student's skill level.

Lamb said she typically asks students to do a "walk a mile in my shoes" project in which they design shoes and describe their lives. It's a way she can learn more about them as individuals. Ultimately, those connections help on the academic front. Last year, she and a co-teacher taught math in a small group format that allowed students to master skills at their own pace.

"All students in the class cannot follow the same, scripted curriculum and be on the same problem all the time," she said.

Adding to the challenge of catching kids up is debate over how math should be taught. Over the years, experts say, the pendulum has swung between procedural learning, such as teaching kids to memorize how to solve problems step-by-step, and conceptual understanding, in which students grasp underlying math relationships.

"Stereotypically, math is that class that people don't like. ... For so many adults, math was taught just as memorization," said Kevin Dykema, president of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. "When people start to understand what's going on, in whatever you're learning but especially in math, you develop a new appreciation for it."

Teaching math should not be an either-or situation, said Sarah Powell, a professor at the University of Texas at Austin who researches math instruction. A shift too far in the conceptual direction, she said, risks alienating students who haven't mastered the foundational skills.

"We actually do have to teach, and it is less sexy and it's not as interesting," she said.

In Spring, Texas, parent Aggie Gambino has often found herself searching YouTube for math videos. Giada, one of her twin 10-year-old daughters, has dyslexia and also struggles with math, especially word problems. Gambino says helping her daughter has proved challenging, given instructional approaches that differ from the way she was taught.

She wishes her daughter's school would send home information on how students are being taught.

"The more parents understand how they're being taught," she said, "the better participant they can be in their child's learning."

Even at a nationally recognized magnet school, the lingering impact of the pandemic on students' math skills is apparent. At the Townview School of Science and Engineering in Dallas, the incoming ninth graders in Lance Barasch's summer camp course needed to relearn the meaning of words like "term" and "coefficient."

"Then you can go back to what you're really trying to teach," he said.

Barasch wasn't surprised that the teens were missing some skills after their chaotic middle school years. The hope is that by taking a step back, students can begin to move forward.

Recruiting is underway for Trump-like 'wrecking ball' to shrink government and fire federal workers

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — With more than a year to go before the 2024 election, a constellation of conservative organizations is preparing for a possible second White House term for Donald Trump, recruiting thousands of Americans to come to Washington on a mission to dismantle the federal government and replace it with a vision closer to his own.

Led by the long-established Heritage Foundation think tank and fueled by former Trump administration officials, the far-reaching effort is essentially a government-in-waiting for the former president's second term — or any candidate who aligns with their ideals and can defeat President Joe Biden in 2024.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 32 of 61

With a nearly 1,000-page "Project 2025" handbook and an "army" of Americans, the idea is to have the civic infrastructure in place on Day One to commandeer, reshape and do away with what Republicans deride as the "deep state" bureaucracy, in part by firing as many as 50,000 federal workers.

"We need to flood the zone with conservatives," said Paul Dans, director of the 2025 Presidential Transition Project and a former Trump administration official who speaks with historical flourish about the undertaking.

"This is a clarion call to come to Washington," he said. "People need to lay down their tools, and step aside from their professional life and say, 'This is my lifetime moment to serve.'"

The unprecedented effort is being orchestrated with dozens of right-flank organizations, many new to Washington, and represents a changed approach from conservatives, who traditionally have sought to limit the federal government by cutting federal taxes and slashing federal spending.

Instead, Trump-era conservatives want to gut the "administrative state" from within, by ousting federal employees they believe are standing in the way of the president's agenda and replacing them with like-minded officials more eager to fulfill a new executive's approach to governing.

The goal is to avoid the pitfalls of Trump's first years in office, when the Republican president's team was ill-prepared, his Cabinet nominees had trouble winning Senate confirmation and policies were met with resistance — by lawmakers, government workers and even Trump's own appointees who refused to bend or break protocol, or in some cases violate laws, to achieve his goals.

While many of the Project 2025 proposals are inspired by Trump, they are being echoed by GOP rivals Ron DeSantis and Vivek Ramaswamy, and gaining prominence among other Republicans.

And if Trump wins a second term, the work from the Heritage coalition ensures the president will have the personnel to carry forward his unfinished White House business.

"The president day one will be a wrecking ball for the administrative state," said Russ Vought, a former Trump administration official involved in the effort who is now president at the conservative Center for Renewing America.

Much of the new president's agenda would be accomplished by reinstating what's called Schedule F — a Trump-era executive order that would reclassify tens of thousands of the 2 million federal employees as essentially at-will workers who could more easily be fired.

Biden had rescinded the executive order upon taking office in 2021, but Trump — and other presidential hopefuls — now vow to reinstate it.

"It frightens me," said Mary Guy, a professor of public administration at the University of Colorado, who warns the idea would bring a return to a political spoils system.

Experts argue Schedule F would create chaos in the civil service, which was overhauled during President Jimmy Carter's administration in an attempt to ensure a professional workforce and end political bias dating from 19th century patronage.

As it now stands, just 4,000 members of the federal workforce are considered political appointees who typically change with each administration. But Schedule F could put tens of thousands of career professional jobs at risk.

"We have a democracy that is at risk of suicide. Schedule F is just one more bullet in the gun," Guy said.

The ideas contained in Heritage's coffee table-ready book are both ambitious and parochial, a mix of longstanding conservative policies and stark, head-turning proposals that gained prominence in the Trump era.

There's a "top to bottom overhaul" of the Department of Justice, particularly curbing its independence and ending FBI efforts to combat the spread of misinformation. It calls for stepped-up prosecution of anyone providing or distributing abortion pills by mail.

There are proposals to have the Pentagon "abolish" its recent diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, what the project calls the "woke" agenda, and reinstate service members discharged for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine.

Chapter by chapter, the pages offer a how-to manual for the next president, similar to one Heritage produced 50 years ago, ahead of the Ronald Reagan administration. Authored by some of today's most prominent thinkers in the conservative movement, it's often sprinkled with apocalyptic language.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 33 of 61

A chapter written by Trump's former acting deputy secretary of Homeland Security calls for bolstering the number of political appointees, and redeploying office personnel with law enforcement ability into the field "to maximize law enforcement capacity."

At the White House, the book suggests the new administration should "reexamine" the tradition of providing work space for the press corps and ensure the White House counsel is "deeply committed" to the president's agenda.

Conservatives have long held a grim view of federal government offices, complaining they are stacked with liberals intent on halting Republican agendas.

But Doreen Greenwald, national president of the National Treasury Employees Union, said most federal workers live in the states and are your neighbors, family and friends. "Federal employees are not the enemy," she said.

While presidents typically rely on Congress to put policies into place, the Heritage project leans into what legal scholars refer to as a unitary view of executive power that suggests the president has broad authority to act alone.

To push past senators who try to block presidential Cabinet nominees, Project 2025 proposes installing top allies in acting administrative roles, as was done during the Trump administration to bypass the Senate confirmation process.

John McEntee, another former Trump official advising the effort, said the next administration can "play hardball a little more than we did with Congress."

In fact, Congress would see its role diminished — for example, with a proposal to eliminate congressional notification on certain foreign arms sales.

Philip Wallach, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute who studies the separation of powers and was not part of the Heritage project, said there's a certain amount of "fantasizing" about the president's capabilities.

"Some of these visions, they do start to just bleed into some kind of authoritarian fantasies where the president won the election, so he's in charge, so everyone has to do what he says — and that's just not the system the government we live under," he said.

At the Heritage office, Dans has a faded photo on his wall of an earlier era in Washington, with the White House situated almost alone in the city, dirt streets in all directions.

It's an image of what conservatives have long desired, a smaller federal government.

The Heritage coalition is taking its recruitment efforts on the road, crisscrossing America to fill the federal jobs. They staffed the Iowa State Fair this month and signed up hundreds of people, and they're building out a database of potential employees, inviting them to be trained in government operations.

"It's counterintuitive," Dans acknowledged — the idea of joining government to shrink it — but he said that's the lesson learned from the Trump days about what's needed to "regain control."

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis faces Black leaders' anger after racist killings in Jacksonville

By STEVE PEOPLES and BRENDAN FARRINGTON Associated Press
TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Ron DeSantis scoffed when the NAACP issued a travel advisory this spring warning Black people to use "extreme care" if traveling to Florida.

The leading civil rights group argued that the state's loose gun laws and the Republican governor's "anti-woke" campaign to deny the existence of systemic racism created a culture of "open hostility towards African Americans and people of color."

Just three months later, DeSantis is leading his state through the aftermath of a racist attack that left three African Americans dead. Black leaders in Florida — and across the nation — say they're outraged by his actions and rhetoric ahead of the shooting.

"Gov. DeSantis has created and pushed a narrative of division and hate that is anti-Black," said Rev. Jeffrey

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 34 of 61

June poll from the Pew Research Center. Just 14% of Republicans see racism as a very significant issue compared with 55% of Democrats.

Meanwhile, one quarter of Republicans believe that being white hurts a person's ability to get ahead, according to an April study from the Pew Research Center. Republicans are about as likely to say that being Black helps (33%) a person's ability to get ahead in the U.S. as to say it hurts (34%) their ability to advance.

African American leaders have decried what they call a pattern of "policy violence" against people of color imposed by the DeSantis administration that reached a low point after the recent release of its public school curriculum on Black history.

Florida State House Democratic Leader Fentrice Driskell argued DeSantis' policies on race combine to embolden racists and extremists.

She pointed to the Republican governor's Stop-WOKE Act, which limits discussions of race in schools and businesses; his banning of diversity and equity inclusion at Florida colleges; and the newly approved Black history curriculum that suggests there were benefits to slavery. She also noted DeSantis' loosening of gun laws, including a new law that allows people to carry guns without a permit or training.

"We've given warnings — don't pass this legislation because it will only inflame tensions, don't pass this bad bill because it will promote vigilantism, don't do this because it will divide our communities," Driskell said. "He has courted support from the far right. He plays footsies with it. This rhetoric was always going to lead to violence."

Democratic Rep. Angie Nixon, who represents the district where the weekend murders took place, oscillated between angry shouts, tears and profanity as she condemned DeSantis in an interview.

"He refuses to use the word Black. He refuses to call that man a racist. He calls him a scumbag. No!" Nixon said. "He's tiptoeing around the true issue because he's worried that his poll numbers will drop with the base of voters that he has religiously went after."

DeSantis derided the NAACP's travel advisory as a "political stunt" back in May when he launched his presidential campaign.

"Claiming that Florida is unsafe is a total farce," DeSantis said in a conversation with Elon Musk. "I mean, are you kidding me? You look at cities around this country, they are awash in crime. In Florida, our crime rate is at a 50-year low."

On Monday, NAACP President Derrick Johnson said DeSantis deserves real blame for the weekend shooting.

"What Gov. DeSantis has done is created an atmosphere for such tragedies to take place," Johnson said. "This is exactly why we issued the travel advisory."

All assembly lines at Toyota's auto plants in Japan have been shut down by computer problems

By YURI KAGEYAMA AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — All 28 vehicle assembly lines at Toyota's 14 auto plants in Japan shut down Tuesday over a problem in its computer system that deals with incoming auto parts.

The automaker doesn't believe the problem was caused by a cyberattack but the cause is still under investigation, said spokeswoman Sawako Takeda.

It's unclear when the lines will be back up.

Toyota declined to say what models being produced might be affected.

The shutdown comes after a shortage of computer chips and other auto parts stalled production in Asian nations affected by social restrictions over the coronavirus pandemic.

The chips shortage woes had only recently started to ease for Japan's top automaker, which makes the Camry sedan, Prius hybrid, Lexus luxury brand.

Trump chief of staff Meadows says actions laid out in Georgia indictment were part of his job

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Mark Meadows testified in court Monday that actions detailed in a sweeping indictment that accuses him of participating in an illegal conspiracy to overturn then-President Donald Trump's 2020 election loss were all part of his job as White House chief of staff.

The extraordinary testimony — from a former top presidential aide who now faces charges alongside his old boss — came in the first courtroom skirmish in a case that's likely to have many. Meadows' claims were part of his argument that the case should be moved from a state court to federal court. U.S. District Judge Steve Jones did not immediately rule.

As Trump was consumed by claims of widespread election fraud in the weeks after his 2020 loss, Meadows said, it was difficult to focus on the things they needed to be doing to wind down the presidency. As a result, Meadows said, he took actions to determine whether the allegations were true, including actions prosecutors allege were improper.

Meadows said he didn't believe he did anything that was "outside my scope as chief of staff."

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, who used Georgia's racketeering law to bring the case, alleges that Trump, Meadows and 17 others participated in a wide-ranging conspiracy to try to keep the Republican president in power illegally even after his election loss to Democrat Joe Biden. Willis' team argued that Meadows' actions were political in nature and not performed as part of his official duties.

It's just one of four criminal cases Trump is currently facing. In Washington on Monday, a judge overseeing a federal case over charges that Trump sought to illegally subvert the results of the 2020 election set a trial date for March 4, 2024, right in the heart of the presidential primary calendar.

During the Georgia hearing, Meadows attorney George J. Terwilliger III called his client to the stand and asked him about his duties as Trump's chief of staff. The lawyer then walked him through the acts alleged in the indictment to ask if he had done those as part of his job. For most of the acts listed, Meadows said he had performed them as part of his official duties.

In the cross-examination, prosecutor Anna Cross ticked through the same acts to ask Meadows what federal policy was being advanced in each of them. He said repeatedly that the federal interest was in ensuring accurate and fair elections, but she accused him several times of not answering her question.

Meadows spent nearly four hours on the stand, sometimes struggling to remember details of the events that unfolded over about two months following the election. But he remained upbeat, indulging in self-deprecation with a quip about how he sometimes forgets to take out the trash, smiling frequently and laughing at the judge's jokes.

Prosecutor Donald Wakeford told the judge during his closing argument that the law that allows a case to be moved from a state court to federal court is meant to protect federal authority. But he argued that there is no federal authority to protect in this case because Meadows' actions were explicitly political and meant to keep Trump in power, making them illegal under the Hatch Act, which restricts partisan political activity by federal employees.

Terwilliger contended that the state cannot use an indictment to affect what a chief of staff does in his job. Even a mistake on Meadows' part wouldn't be grounds to keep from moving the case to federal court "unless it was malicious and done willfully," he said.

The allegations against Meadows include participating, along with Trump and others, in meetings or communications with state lawmakers that were meant to advance the alleged illegal scheme to keep Trump in power; traveling to Atlanta's suburbs, where a ballot envelope signature audit was happening; arranging a phone call between Trump and a Georgia secretary of state investigator; and participating in a January 2021 phone call between Trump and Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger during which Trump suggested Raffensperger could help "find 11,780 votes" needed for him to win Georgia.

Called as a witness by prosecutors, Raffensperger said in response to the efforts by Trump and his allies in the weeks following the election that "outreach to this extent was extraordinary." But under question-

ing by Meadows' attorney Michael Francisco, he said Meadows himself did not ask him to do anything he thought was inappropriate.

The judge said that he would try to rule as quickly as possible but that there isn't a lot of relative case law and he needs to give the matter "thorough consideration." In the meantime, the case continues to progress in Fulton County Superior Court, and the judge said Meadows will have to honor a Sept. 6 arraignment if he hasn't ruled by then.

If Meadows succeeds in moving his case to federal court, it would mean a jury pool that includes a broader area than just overwhelmingly Democratic Fulton County. It would also mean a trial that would not be photographed or televised, as cameras are not allowed inside. But it does not open the door for Trump, if he's reelected in 2024, or another president to pardon anyone because any convictions would still happen under state law.

At least four others charged in the indictment are also seeking to move their cases to federal court, and there is speculation that Trump will try to do the same. Trump attorneys Steve Sadow and Jennifer Little listened attentively in the courtroom to the Meadows hearing Monday, along with lawyers for some of the other defendants.

During his testimony, Meadows denied two of the allegations made against him in the indictment. He testified that he never asked White House personnel officer John McEntee to draft a memo to Vice President Mike Pence on how to delay certification of the election.

"When this came out in the indictment, it was the biggest surprise for me," Meadows said. He later said, "Me asking Johnny McEntee for this kind of a memo just didn't happen."

He also said he did not text the Georgia secretary of state's office chief investigator, Frances Watson, as the indictment alleged. Rather, he said, he believes that text was sent to Jordan Fuchs, the deputy secretary of state.

HBCU president lauds students, officer for stopping Jacksonville killer before racist store attack

By RUSS BYNUM and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — A campus security officer tipped off by observant students likely stopped the killer who fatally shot three people at a nearby Dollar General Store from carrying out his racist attack at Edward Waters University, the president of the historically Black institution said Monday.

Students reported seeing a young, white man, pull into a campus library parking lot in Jacksonville, Florida, and begin putting on tactical gear Saturday, Edward Waters University President Zachary Faison Jr. said. They immediately flagged down a security officer who was on patrol to tell them what they saw.

The officer approached the car on foot when the driver — who would later be identified as the shooter at the store — sped off, hitting a curb and narrowly avoiding a brick column, Faison said. The campus officer, who the campus president called a hero, then called the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and shared the description of the vehicle.

Minutes later, the gunman made his way to a Dollar General Store down the road and killed Angela Michelle Carr, 52, an Uber driver who was shot in her car; store employee A.J. Laguerre, 19, who was shot as he tried to flee; and customer Jerrald Gallion, 29, who was shot as he entered the store in the predominantly Black New Town neighborhood. The gunman killed himself after the murders.

"It's not just on a whim that he chose to come to Florida's first historically Black college or university," said Faison, who expressed condolences to the families of the victims and confirmed none were part of the university.

The campus officer, Lt. Antonio Bailey, said he relied on his training when he responded to the students' call saw the man in his vehicle wearing a tactical vest, gloves and a hat covering his head. He said he he did not see a weapon at that time.

"I'm no hero," Bailey said. "If anything, it's the students who alerted me so I could do my job."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 37 of 61

President Joe Biden called Monday — the 60th anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington — for action to end the type of “hate-fueled violence” that authorities said motivated the Jacksonville shooting.

“We can't let hate prevail, and it's on the rise,” Biden said at the White House as he met with civil rights advocates and King's children.

Faison requested help from the president to secure his campus as students expressed concerns for their safety. Faison said the director for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and members of the school will be conducting a risk assessment before they identify any modifications they may want to make on the campus.

Jacksonville Sheriff T.K. Waters said Monday that investigators believe the shooter specifically targeted the store and that he does not believe Edward Waters University was the intended location for the rampage. The sheriff declined to specify what reason the shooter may have had for targeting the store.

Waters said the man did not speak as he entered the store, but directed some shoppers — both Black and white people — to leave the building. He then began shooting.

“I don't understand his rhyme or reason for why he did what he did and the way that he did it,” Waters said. “I know that for a fact he was targeting Black people.”

Some say Jacksonville — home to nearly 1 million people, one third of whom are Black — has made strides in dealing with its racist past. The city elected its first Black mayor in 2011. But the weekend shooting happened as the city was preparing to commemorate what it calls Ax Handle Saturday, when a white mob used baseball bats and ax handles to beat peaceful Black demonstrators protesting segregation at a downtown lunch counter on Aug. 27, 1960.

Civil rights attorney Ben Crump stood with the family of Gallion — holding the man's 4-year-old daughter, Je Asia, on his hip — at a press conference Monday and said he was also representing the Carr family.

“How do you explain to her where her father is? This is what this is about,” Crump said as Je Asia watched the audience.

Crump called for additional gun reform in the wake of the shooting, saying those who defend and champion gun rights have blood on their hands.

“How many more before the leaders will step up and help solve these issues, versus looking the other way?” Crump said.

Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis was loudly booed Sunday as he spoke at a vigil in Jacksonville for the victims. Desantis, who is running for against Donald Trump and others for the GOP nomination for president, has loosened gun laws in his state and has antagonized civil rights leaders by deriding “wokeness.”

Authorities identified the shooter as Ryan Palmeto, 21, who they said was armed and ready to carry out an attack on Black people. During the attack, authorities said, Palmeto texted his father and told him to break into his room and check his computer.

Waters said a journal Palmeto's father found in his room was “the diary of a madman,” that made it clear he hated Black people. The family notified authorities, but by then the shooting had already begun.

Palmeto used two guns — a Glock handgun and an AR-15 style semi-automatic rifle. Authorities said the weapons were purchased legally earlier this year despite once being involuntarily committed for a mental health exam.

GOP silences 'Tennessee Three' Democrat on House floor for day on 'out of order' rule; crowd erupts

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI and JONATHAN MATTISE Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Republican lawmakers voted Monday to temporarily silence a Democratic member of the so-called Tennessee Three during an already tense House floor session after determining the young Black member violated newly enacted rules designed to punish disruptive members.

The move directed at Rep. Justin Jones prohibited him from speaking on and debating bills for the

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 38 of 61

remainder of the day, which came a week into a special session that Republican Gov. Bill Lee called in reaction to a deadly shooting at a Christian elementary school in Nashville in March.

The House and Senate are locked in an icy standoff over what to pass as families close to the shooting have increasingly voiced their frustrations with the legislative process. Various mental health, juvenile justice, school safety and other proposals are among what's being considered.

Republican legislative leaders aren't taking up any significant gun control changes, including the governor's push to keep guns away from people judged to pose a threat to themselves or others.

The vote to silence Jones prompted loud cries and chants that drowned out proceedings for several minutes even after the House speaker ordered the gallery to be cleared out.

Moments prior, Jones had been criticizing legislation that would have allowed more law enforcement officers in schools and began listing other resources that the state should be providing.

House Speaker Cameron Sexton had warned Jones not to stray off topic. Under new rules adopted by the GOP-dominant chamber last week, members can be silenced anywhere from a day to the rest of the year for not sticking to the bill being debated.

"What our schools need are mental health professionals," Jones said. "We need funding for mental health, for counselors. We need to pay our teachers better. We don't need more police in our schools."

Sexton then ruled Jones out of order, setting up a vote on whether to quiet him for the rest of Monday's session.

What happened next was a chaotic flurry of legislative proceedings, where Democrats outraged at the decision to move ahead to try to silence Jones for the day began pleading with their GOP colleagues to change their minds. Republican lawmakers remained unconvinced, however, with 70 GOP members voting to silence Jones. Democratic members then angrily left the chamber with Jones.

The crowd, which included gun control advocates urging change in a special session after a deadly Nashville school shooting in March, shouted "fascists" and "racists," and Sexton ordered troopers to clear out the gallery of the public.

"Look, House rules are House rules," Sexton told reporters afterward. "We voted on it. Might not like the rules, but the rules are what they are."

Many in the crowd remained in the stands, and their cries of "vote them out" and "Whose house, our house" drowned out the legislative proceedings for several minutes, enough at one point that a Republican lawmaker said he couldn't hear what he was supposed to be voting on.

Earlier that session, Sexton warned Jones he was nearly "impugning the reputation" of Republican Rep. Gino Bulso by calling Bulso's bills "reprehensible," "asinine," and "insulting," including one being discussed at the time that would allow private schools with pre-kindergarten classes to have policies allowing guns on campus.

Democrats noted that Bulso himself had been told to stay on topic, including when he said Jones "continually misrepresents facts to the public," then later said Jones "makes outrageous statements," without being put up for a vote on whether he should be silenced.

Not long after, Jones said lawmakers should "stop trying to put more guns to start a gun fight in our schools that would not protect our children. What is one little Glock against an AR-15?"

Sexton then declared Jones out of order.

Jones was among the two Tennessee lawmakers expelled earlier this year for his role in a pro-gun control protest inside the Tennessee Capitol, propelling him into the national spotlight as the new face of Democratic politics.

The April demonstration came just days after a shooter opened fire at The Covenant School, killing three children and three adults. Jones joined Democratic Reps. Justin Pearson and Gloria Johnson in approaching the front of the House floor without permission with a bullhorn, joining the chants and cries for action by protesters in the public gallery and outside of the chamber.

Pearson and Jones, who are both Black, were expelled, while Johnson, who is white, was spared by one vote. The two have since been reelected to their positions.

"The House is out of order under Cameron Sexton's leadership," Jones told reporters shortly after leav-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 39 of 61

Rumlin, pastor of The Dayspring Church in Jacksonville, where three Black people were gunned down at a Dollar General store over the weekend by a white man with a swastika emblazoned on his assault rifle.

Rumlin criticized DeSantis for not explicitly describing the killer as a racist at a Sunday vigil in Jacksonville. DeSantis was booed at the vigil, where he called the shooter "a major-league scumbag" and said, "We are not going to let people be targeted based on their race."

The Florida governor, also responding this week to a tropical storm bearing down on much of his state, has confronted multiple challenges on race since launching his presidential campaign. He has been criticized by Republican rivals on Florida's new education standards on slavery while losing ground against former President Donald Trump, the front-runner in the GOP primary.

Ever defiant, DeSantis' team rejected suggestions that he did not adequately condemn the weekend shooting and has more broadly ignored the concerns of the state's African American community. The Republican governor scored an overwhelming reelection last fall that included flipping the traditional Democratic stronghold of Miami-Dade County, which has a majority Latino population. He made modest gains among Black voters.

"This shooting was a terrible tragedy, and it is reprehensible that The Associated Press has decided to collect and amplify false talking points as 'reporting' on this horrific event," said DeSantis campaign spokesman Bryan Griffin. "Ron DeSantis has condemned these racially motivated murders repeatedly in the strongest language possible. ... He will not tolerate racial hatred or violence in Florida, and we reject your politicization of this horrible event."

The tragedy cast a shadow across the Republican presidential campaign this week as candidates faced uncomfortable questions about the party's increasing appeal among white supremacists and the GOP's fight against so-called "woke" policies on race and gender. While DeSantis has not mentioned his "war on woke" in recent days, cultural issues have been the centerpiece of his campaign.

Virtually all of the candidates have embraced a similar message aimed at appealing to the GOP's white conservative base by downplaying the existence of racism in America and restricting LGBTQ rights. To win the general election next fall, the Republican nominee will likely need to appeal to a much more diverse group of voters. But the primary fight won't be decided for several months.

Sen. Tim Scott, one of three Black Republicans running for president, called on his party to speak out against the latest tragedy as he campaigned in his home state of South Carolina.

"I think we should all be standing up and saying that any act of violence against someone very purely because of the color of your skin is terrible," he told reporters. "We saw three African Americans die because of the color of their skin over the weekend. That's devastating."

He avoided answering directly when asked if the Republican Party has done enough to denounce white supremacist violence.

"The question is, have humans done enough to talk about racism and discrimination and the use of violence? And I think that's the responsibility of every single American — the Republican Party, Democrat Party, no party affiliation," Scott said.

In a radio interview with conservative commentator Hugh Hewitt, former United Nations ambassador Nikki Haley said there was no clear explanation for such violence.

"There's a lot of hate online with social media. We've got a lot of mental health issues. And you combine that with the rhetoric that is happening in America of division and just being able to hide behind something on social media and getting angry, it causes for a bad cocktail," said Haley, who was serving as South Carolina's governor when a racist gunman attacked a Black church and killed nine people. "And when you get that, people die."

Haley, whose parents immigrated to South Carolina from India, declared in her presidential announcement speech that America is not a racist nation.

Republicans have little political incentive to appeal to voters of color — in the primary phase of the presidential campaign, at least.

One-third of Americans (35%) say racism is "a very big problem" in the United States, according to a

ing the House floor. "It's very disheartening, it's very troubling. This is a step from authoritarianism, and we should all be troubled by this."

Among the new slate of strict rules that House Republicans signed off on last week was a ban on the public holding signs during floor and committee proceedings. A Tennessee judge has since blocked the sign ban from being enforced after agreeing with civil rights activists that the prohibition likely violated free speech rights.

While the state is fighting to uphold the ban, Chancellor Anne Martin stood by her decision Monday, noting that "the state has no interest in enforcing an unconstitutional restriction."

The silencing of Jones is just one of several tense interactions that have exploded during the special session.

Hawaii power utility takes responsibility for first fire on Maui, but faults county firefighters

By JENNIFER McDERMOTT and JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Hawaii's electric utility acknowledged its power lines started a wildfire on Maui but faulted county firefighters for declaring the blaze contained and leaving the scene, only to have a second wildfire break out nearby and become the deadliest in the U.S. in more than a century.

Hawaiian Electric Company released a statement Sunday night in response to Maui County's lawsuit blaming the utility for failing to shut off power despite exceptionally high winds and dry conditions. Hawaiian Electric called that complaint "factually and legally irresponsible," and said its power lines in West Maui had been de-energized for more than six hours when the second blaze started.

In its statement, the utility addressed the cause for the first time. It said the fire on the morning of Aug. 8 "appears to have been caused by power lines that fell in high winds." The Associated Press reported Saturday that bare electrical wire that could spark on contact and leaning poles on Maui were the possible cause.

But Hawaiian Electric appeared to blame Maui County for most of the devastation — the fact that the fire appeared to reignite that afternoon and tore through downtown Lahaina, killing at least 115 people and destroying 2,000 structures.

Richard Fried, a Honolulu attorney working as co-counsel on Maui County's lawsuit, countered that if the power company's lines hadn't caused the initial fire, "this all would be moot."

"That's the biggest problem," Fried said Monday. "They can dance around this all they want. But there's no explanation for that."

The wrestling over the cause could be crucial in determining who is liable for billions of dollars in damage beyond the loss of life.

On Monday, Hawaii Attorney General Anne Lopez urged property owners in the burned areas to report any unsolicited offers to buy that property — an action that can be punished by up to a year in jail and a \$5,000 fine under an emergency proclamation issued by Gov. Josh Green earlier this month. Green said he was concerned that real estate investors would swoop in and dispossess local residents.

"Preying on people who suffered the most from the tragedy on Maui is despicable," said Lopez.

John Fiske, an attorney at a California firm that's also representing the county of Maui in the lawsuit, said the ultimate responsibility rests with Hawaiian Electric to properly keep up its equipment, and make sure lines are not live when they're downed or could be downed. Fiske said that if the utility has information about a second ignition source, it should offer that evidence now.

Mike Morgan, an Orlando attorney who's currently on Maui to work on wildfire litigation for his firm, Morgan & Morgan, said he thinks Hawaiian Electric's statement was an attempt to shift liability and total responsibility.

"By taking responsibility for causing the first fire, then pointing the finger on a fire that started 75 yards away and saying, 'That's not our fault, we started it but they should've put it out,' I'm not sure how that will hold up," Morgan, who manages complex litigation, said Monday. "It's also so premature because there

are ongoing investigations.”

Officials with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives who are investigating the cause and origin of the fire, and lawyers involved in the litigation, were at a warehouse Monday to inspect electrical equipment taken from the neighborhood where the fire is thought to have originated. The utility took down the burnt poles and removed fallen wires from the site.

Videos and images analyzed by AP confirmed that the wires that started the morning fire were among miles of line that the utility left naked to the weather and often-thick foliage, despite a recent push by utilities in other wildfire- and hurricane-prone areas to cover up their lines or bury them.

Compounding the problem is that many of the utility’s 60,000, mostly wooden power poles, which its own documents described as built to “an obsolete 1960s standard,” were leaning and near the end of their projected lifespan. They were nowhere close to meeting a 2002 national standard that key components of Hawaii’s electrical grid be able to withstand 105 mile per hour winds.

As Hurricane Dora passed roughly 500 miles (800 kilometers) south of Hawaii Aug. 8, Lahaina resident Shane Treu heard a utility pole snap next to Lahainaluna Road. He saw a downed power line ignite the grass and called 911 at 6:37 a.m. to report the fire. Small brush fires aren’t unusual for Lahaina, and a drought in the region had left plants, including invasive grasses, dangerously dry. The Maui County Fire Department declared that fire 100% contained by 9:55 a.m. Firefighters then left to attend to other calls.

Hawaiian Electric said its own crews then went to the scene that afternoon to make repairs and did not see fire, smoke or embers. The power to the area was off. Shortly before 3 p.m., those crews saw a small fire in a nearby field and called 911, the utility said.

Residents said the embers from the morning fire had reignited and the fire raced toward downtown Lahaina. Treu’s neighbor Robert Arconado recorded video of it spreading at 3:06 p.m., as large plumes of smoke rise near Lahainaluna Road and are carried downtown by the wind.

Hawaiian Electric is a for-profit, investor-owned, publicly traded utility that serves 95% of Hawaii’s electric customers. CEO Shelee Kimura said there are important lessons to be learned from this tragedy, and resolved to “figure out what we need to do to keep our communities safe as climate issues rapidly intensify here and around the globe.”

The utility faces a spate of new lawsuits that seek to hold it responsible. Wailuku attorney Paul Starita, lead counsel on three lawsuits by Singleton Schreiber, called it a “preventable tragedy of epic proportions,” and said the fire department’s response does not absolve Hawaiian Electric of liability.

Faculty member fatally shot in University of North Carolina building

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM, GARY D. ROBERTSON and SARAH RANKIN Associated Press
CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — A shooter killed a faculty member in a science building at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on Monday, police said after a lockdown that paralyzed the campus community as authorities searched for the suspect.

Police arrested the suspect over three hours after the initial reports of shots fired came in from Caudill Labs, officials said at a news conference. Charges were pending, and the suspect was not immediately identified.

University officials also did not immediately identify the staffer who was killed and said it was too soon to offer a possible motive.

“This loss is devastating, and the shooting damages the trust and safety that we so often take for granted in our campus community,” Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz said.

Emergency sirens sounded about two minutes after a 911 caller reported gunfire around 1 p.m. at the laboratory in the heart of the flagship campus, UNC Police Chief Brian James said.

Students and faculty barricaded themselves in dorm rooms, offices and classrooms until the lockdown was lifted around 4:15 p.m.

No other injuries were reported.

Adrian Lanier, a sophomore computer science major, told The Associated Press that he and others sat against a wall in a gym, trying to stay as far away as possible from doors and windows as rumors spread.

"No one really felt safe enough to leave. I didn't," Lanier said.

Oliver Katz, an exchange student from Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, said some students crowded into gym locker rooms to get away from windows while others crouched in corners and sat on the floor, he said.

"This never happens where I'm from," Katz said. "It was intense. But I was a little surprised that other people weren't panicking that much."

Katz, who has only been on campus for two weeks, said he's worried his home university will bring the exchange students back early. "I don't want to leave. I like it here, and I do still feel safe."

During the news conference, Guskiewicz apologized to students who are "feeling uncertain about your safety right now."

James, the campus police chief, said it was unclear if the suspect knew the victim. He also said the weapon has not been found.

"We are looking for a firearm. It is too early to determine if the firearm was legally obtained," he said.

During the lockdown, the university repeatedly sent alerts urging campus community members to remain sheltered in place.

About two hours after the first alert went out, officers were still arriving in droves, with about 50 police vehicles at the scene and helicopters circling over the school.

It took about an hour and a half to lift the lockdown after the arrest because authorities were making sure they had the right suspect in custody, James said.

Police also had received calls around campus about other potential victims and gunshots that needed to be checked out, he said.

"We had to ensure that the entire campus was safe," James said.

The building where gunfire broke out is a stone's throw from the school's iconic Bell Tower and just doors down from the store that sells students books and other merchandise.

Classes started at UNC, the nation's first public university, a week ago. The university, with about 20,000 undergraduate students and 12,000 graduate students, canceled Tuesday classes.

During the lockdown, a student told TV station WTVD that she had barricaded her dormitory door with her furniture. Another student, speaking softly, described hiding in fear with others in a dark bathroom.

Noel T. Brewer, a professor of health behavior and a 57-year-old married father of two, told the AP by phone — as he hid with colleagues in his locked office during the lockdown — that he was once held at gunpoint in his mother's jewelry store, but that Monday's events were "far more stressful."

The Jacksonville shooter killed a devoted dad, a beloved mom and a teen helping support his family

By RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — A.J. Laguerre worked at a Dollar General store after finishing high school to help support the grandmother who raised him. Angela Michelle Carr was an Uber driver beloved by her children. Jerrald Gallion relished weekends with his 4-year-old daughter.

All three were slain Saturday when a gunman with swastikas painted on his rifle opened fire at the Dollar General where Laguerre worked in Jacksonville. The sheriff said writings left by the killer, a 21-year-old white man, made clear that he was motivated by racism. Each victim was Black.

"I never thought I'd have to bury my baby brother," Quan Laguerre said Monday outside the family's house not far from the store.

"They say don't question God," he said. "But I just want to know why."

A.J. Laguerre, 19, was the youngest of five siblings, all raised by their grandmother after their mother

died in 2009, his brother said. The family celebrated in 2022 when A.J., like his older siblings before him, graduated from high school. As he looked into going to college to study cybersecurity, he got a job at the Dollar General store several months ago to help their grandmother pay the bills.

When he was off the clock, A.J. played Fortnite and other videogames on the live-streaming platform Twitch, his brother said, using the gamer tag galaxysoul. His goal was to build a large online following.

"He had dreams and aspirations of being a professional streamer," Quan Laguerre said. "So after he would get off work, he'd just stay up until 3 or 4 in the morning just grinding, you know, trying to get that stance and have followers."

A.J. Laguerre was shot inside the store trying to flee the gunman, Jacksonville Sheriff T.K. Waters told reporters.

Carr, 52, was killed in the parking lot when the shooter fired multiple bullets into her car.

"My mother, she was a good woman," son Chayvaughn Payne told The Associated Press in a brief phone call Monday.

Civil rights attorney Ben Crump, who is representing the Carr family, said at news conference later Monday that Carr had just dropped off a customer and was waiting for the person to get back in the car.

Carr joined St. Stephen African Methodist Episcopal Church in Jacksonville when she was 3 years old and still attended services there. The pastor said the church community has rallied behind her family.

"She was just a loving, caring mother," the Rev. David Green said.

Gallion, 29, was shot while entering the store's front door with his girlfriend, who escaped.

"My brother shouldn't have lost his life," his sister, Latiffany Gallion, said. "A simple day of going to the store, and he's taken away from us forever."

Family members recalled Gallion's sense of humor and work ethic. He worked two to three jobs — including as a restaurant manager — to provide for his daughter, Je Asia Gallion.

Je Asia's fifth birthday is approaching, and the family had planned a big party, said Sabrina Rozier, the child's maternal grandmother. Gallion was looking forward to a father-daughter dance in February.

"He was so excited about it, talking about the colors they would wear," Rozier said, as Je Asia played with the microphones during Monday's news conference. "Now she's asking, 'Who shot my daddy?'"

Although Gallion's relationship with the child's mother didn't last, they worked together to raise Je Asia. That earned him lasting affection from Rozier.

"He never missed a beat," Rozier said. "He got her every weekend. As a matter of fact, he was supposed to have her (Saturday)."

Gallion never made it to pick up his daughter. Now the pastor of the church he attended is preparing to bury him.

"In two weeks I have to preach a funeral of a man who should still be alive," the Rev. John Guns of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church said during the vigil. "He was not a gangster, he was not a thug — he was a father who gave his life to Jesus and was trying to get it together."

Spanish soccer federation leaders ask president Rubiales to resign over his kiss of player

By GRAHAM DUNBAR AP Sports Writer

GENEVA (AP) — Leading officials within the Spanish Football Federation asked suspended president Luis Rubiales to resign on Monday because of his behavior at the Women's World Cup, including kissing a player on the lips after Spain won the championship match.

The heads of the regional bodies that make up the federation (RFEF) made the request in a collective statement.

"After the latest developments and the unacceptable behavior that has caused great damage to the image of Spanish soccer, the presidents request that Luis Rubiales resign immediately as president of the RFEF," the statement said.

Earlier Monday, the federation asked UEFA to suspend it from international competitions because of

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 44 of 61

government interference related to Rubiales. However, in their statement, the heads of the regional bodies urged interim federation president Pedro Rocha to withdraw that request immediately.

The federation's request for a suspension was widely seen as an attempt to silence some of Rubiales' critics, including government ministers who have asked for his removal. Such a suspension would ban Spanish teams from competitions like the Champions League and could sway public opinion in favor of letting him keep his job.

Soccer's governing bodies have longstanding rules barring national governments from interfering with the running of domestic soccer federations. However, UEFA will not comply with the Spanish federation's request for a sanction, a person familiar with the issue told The Associated Press on Monday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the decision-making process was confidential.

Rubiales has faced a torrent of criticism from around the globe over his behavior at the Women's World Cup final, including his kiss of Spain player Jenni Hermoso without her consent during the on-field trophy ceremony. He was also widely criticized for grabbing his crotch in a victory gesture while in the presidential box near Spain's Queen Letizia and her teenage daughter, Princess Sofia.

Rubiales was suspended from office Saturday by soccer's governing body FIFA, which is investigating his conduct.

His mother on Monday started a hunger strike in a church in southern Spain in defense of her son, demanding an end to "the bloody and inhumane hounding" of him.

The unprecedented request by the Spanish federation asking for a suspension seemed like a leverage play against its critics by trying to provoke fans and powerful clubs like Barcelona and Real Madrid, plus the men's national team, into backing its efforts to save Rubiales' job. Rubiales is also a UEFA vice president.

Spain's top clubs are due to take part in Thursday's Champions League group-stage draw being made by UEFA, and the men's national team has games on Sept. 8 and 12 in qualifying for the 2024 European Championship.

FIFA opened a disciplinary case against Rubiales on Thursday after taking control of the process because it organized the Women's World Cup. Rubiales' behavior during and after Spain's 1-0 win over England in the final on Aug. 20 in Sydney, Australia, has focused intense scrutiny on him and his five-year management of the federation.

FIFA, however, did not invoke its version of the rules against government interference to protect Rubiales.

The Spanish federation then urged UEFA to act, reportedly in a letter sent Friday, the same day its embattled president defiantly refused to resign at an emergency meeting.

The FIFA suspension prevents Rubiales taking part in official business and having contact with other officials, including in Spain's bid to co-host the 2030 World Cup with Portugal, Morocco and possibly Ukraine.

FIFA disciplinary judge Jorge Palacio also ordered Rubiales and the federation not to contact Hermoso. She has said the federation pressured her to publicly back Rubiales.

Newly crowned as world champions, though drawn into a national scandal they did not seek and has distracted from their triumph, the Spain players have said they will not play any more games for as long as Rubiales is in charge.

Joe the Plumber, who questioned Obama's tax proposals during the 2008 campaign, has died at 49

By JOHN SEEWER Associated Press

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — Samuel "Joe" Wurzelbacher, who was thrust into the political spotlight as "Joe the Plumber" after questioning Barack Obama about his economic proposals during the 2008 presidential campaign, and who later forayed into politics himself, has died, his son said Monday. He was 49.

His oldest son, Joey Wurzelbacher, said his father died Sunday in Wisconsin after a long illness. His family announced this year on an online fundraising site that he had pancreatic cancer.

"The only thing I have to say is that he was a true patriot," Joey Wurzelbacher — whose father had the middle name Joseph and went by Joe — said in a telephone interview. "His big thing is that everyone

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 45 of 61

comes to God. That's what he taught me, and that's a message I hope is heard by a lot of people."

He went from toiling as a plumber in suburban Toledo, Ohio, to life as a media sensation when he asked Obama about his tax plan during a campaign stop.

Their exchange and Obama's response that he wanted to "spread the wealth around" aired often on cable news. Days later, Obama's Republican opponent, U.S. Sen. John McCain, repeatedly cited "Joe the Plumber" in a presidential debate.

Wurzelbacher soon faced intense media scrutiny and acknowledged that he didn't have a plumber's license, saying at the time he didn't need one because he worked for small plumbing company owned by someone else.

Wurzelbacher went on to campaign with McCain and his running mate, Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin. But he later criticized McCain in his book and said he did not want him as the GOP presidential nominee.

His sudden fame turned him into a sought-after voice for many anti-establishment conservatives, and he traveled the country speaking at tea party rallies and conservative gatherings.

He also wrote a book and worked with a veterans organization that provided outdoor programs for wounded soldiers.

In 2012, he made a bid for a U.S. House seat in Ohio. But he lost in a landslide to Democrat Marcy Kaptur in a district heavily tilted toward Democrats.

Republicans had recruited him to run and thought his fame would help bring in enough money to mount a serious challenge. But he drew criticism during the campaign for suggesting that the United States should build a fence at the Mexico border and "start shooting" at immigrants suspected of entering the country illegally.

Wurzelbacher returned to working as a plumber after he gave up on politics, his family said.

Funeral arrangements were pending. Survivors include his wife, Katie, and four children.

Florida prays Idalia won't join long list of destructive storms with names starting with 'I'

By JEFF MARTIN Associated Press

Floridians pray that when Idalia hits the Gulf Coast it won't join the long list of destructive Atlantic Ocean storms whose names started with "I."

Since 1955, 13 Atlantic storm names beginning with "I" have been retired, according to the National Weather Service. That happens when a storm's death toll or destruction is so severe that using its name again would be insensitive, according to the World Meteorological Organization, which oversees storm naming.

Some letter has to be No. 1, and hurricane season often reaches its peak around the time that the pre-determined alphabetical storm-name list gets to the "I."

After "I" storms, 10 names that begin with "F" have been retired, as have nine storms beginning with "C," University of Miami hurricane expert Brian McNoldy said.

In addition to the 13 retired "I" names from Atlantic Ocean hurricanes, a handful of Pacific Ocean storms beginning with "I" have been retired since 1982.

The U.S. began using female names for storms in 1953 partly to avoid confusion and make warnings more efficient by using easy-to-remember names, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Before then, radio stations used to broadcast warnings with numbers and names that confused people. By the late 1970s, male names were also being used for storms in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, according to NOAA.

Notorious I-storms in recent memory have included:

HURRICANE ISABEL

The 2003 storm reached Category 5 strength over the Atlantic. Though it weakened before making land-fall on North Carolina's Outer Banks, its winds caused extensive damage. More than 8 feet (2.4 meters) of seawater flooded rivers across the Chesapeake Bay region, according to accounts from the National

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 46 of 61

Weather Service. The hurricane was blamed for 17 deaths.

HURRICANE IVAN

Ivan tore through Grand Cayman island in 2004, damaging or destroying an estimated 95 percent of the buildings there, the National Weather Service said. Then, it slammed into the United States near Gulf Shores, Alabama, spawning more than 100 tornadoes as it moved inland. More than 92 people were killed.

HURRICANE IKE

Ike "left a long trail of death and destruction" in Haiti, Cuba and the United States in 2008, the weather service said. An estimated 74 people in Haiti were killed by flooding and mudslides, the agency said. Later, it struck the U.S. as a Category 2 hurricane at Galveston Island in Texas.

HURRICANE IRMA

Irma was the most powerful hurricane ever recorded in the open Atlantic Ocean when it took aim at several Caribbean islands in 2017, according to the National Weather Service. The Category 5 storm had sustained winds of up to 185 mph (295 kph). As it approached Antigua, officials announced the closing of the airport with an ominous message: "May God protect us all." Irma destroyed an estimated 90 percent of the structures on Barbuda, one of the hardest-hit islands. But several other islands, including Anguilla; the U.S. and British Virgin Islands; the French territory of St. Martin and the neighboring Dutch territory of St. Maarten all reported deaths and widespread damage.

HURRICANE IDA

Ida slammed into the Louisiana coast with winds of up to 150 mph in 2021, knocking out power to hundreds of thousands of people across New Orleans and nearby parishes. The deaths included at least five nursing home residents who were among about 800 elderly residents sent to a warehouse to try and survive the storm.

HURRICANE IAN

Ian struck Cuba as a major hurricane in 2022, bringing down the nation's electric grid and causing black-outs across large parts of the island nation. Later, as a Category 4 hurricane, it slammed into Florida's Gulf Coast, flooding houses on both coasts of the state, destroying reefs and bringing "red tide" algae to Gulf waters. Ian was blamed for more than 100 deaths, most of them in Florida.

Mother of beleaguered Spanish soccer chief starts hunger strike as calls mount for his resignation

BY CIARÁN GILES Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — The mother of the Spanish soccer federation president under fire for kissing a Women's World Cup champion on the lips started a hunger strike Monday in defense of her son as calls grew for his resignation and prosecutors opened a preliminary investigation.

The leaders of the regional soccer bodies that make up the Spanish federation added their call for soccer chief Luis Rubiales' resignation on Monday. FIFA, the world soccer body, had already provisionally suspended him for 90 days after he gave a defiant speech refusing to step down.

The scandal surrounding the kiss — and Rubiales' refusal to accept Jenni Hermoso's insistence that it was not consensual — has overshadowed the Spanish team's 1-0 victory against England in the Women's World Cup final. Spain's national team players said last week they would not play any more games unless Rubiales resigns.

Rubiales also came under a storm of criticism for grabbing his crotch in a victory gesture while in the presidential box near Spain's Queen Letizia and her teenage daughter, Princess Sofia.

Rubiales' mother, Angeles Béjar told the state news agency EFE she would remain on hunger strike "night and day" at a church in southern Spain until what she called the "inhumane hounding" of her son ends. Speaking outside the church in the southern town of Motril, Rubiales' cousin, Vanessa Ruiz, joined his mother in calling on Hermoso to "tell the truth."

Hermoso has denied Rubiales' claim that she consented to what he called the "mutual" kiss during the Aug. 20 medal ceremony in Sydney, Australia.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 47 of 61

In a statement last week, Hermoso said she considered herself the victim of abuse of power and accused the Spanish soccer federation of trying to pressure her into supporting Rubiales. The federation hit back by saying she was lying and that it would take legal action against her.

On Monday, leaders of the regional bodies within the Spanish federation called on Rubiales to resign "after the latest developments and the unacceptable behavior that has caused great damage to the image of Spanish soccer."

Earlier in the day, the National Court's Prosecutors Office said it was opening a preliminary investigation into whether the kiss was a sexual aggression offense and said it would give Hermoso 15 days to file a formal complaint as an alleged victim of sexual aggression.

Spain is hoping the country's sports tribunal, which resolves legal issues in sports, will remove Rubiales definitively. Victor Francos, head of the government's sports body, said the tribunal has yet to inform it what it intends to do about Rubiales.

Francos also expressed concern over how the issue may affect Spain's bid to hold the 2030 World Cup with Portugal, Morocco and possibly Ukraine.

The scandal has caused a commotion in Spain and abroad.

On Monday, U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric criticized what he called a "critical issue of sexism" in sports, adding: "We hope the Spanish authorities and the Spanish government deal with this in a manner that respects the rights of all female athletes."

Acting deputy Prime Minister Yolanda Díaz met Monday with soccer union representatives with a view to removing Rubiales and changing the way equality issues are managed in Spanish soccer. "There has to be a profound renewal of the sporting structure in our country," she said at a news conference.

Meanwhile, several hundred people waving purple women's rights placards gathered in the center of Madrid for an anti-Rubiales protest and in support of Hermoso.

Jacksonville shootings refocus attention on the city's racist past and the struggle to move on

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN Associated Press

By some measures, Jacksonville was making strides to emerge from its racist past. But the killing of three Black people by a young, white shooter was a painful and startling reminder that the remnants of racism still fester in the Florida city.

What happened Saturday in Jacksonville, said 79-year-old longtime resident Rodney Hurst, "could have happened anywhere, except it did happen in Jacksonville."

The shooting occurred as the community prepared to commemorate what is known as Ax Handle Saturday, when a white mob used baseball bats and ax handles to club peaceful Black demonstrators protesting segregation at a downtown lunch counter on Aug. 27, 1960. Police initially stood by but joined the white mob when the Black group began fighting back. Newspaper reports at the time said at least 62 people — 48 of them Black — were arrested for fighting and inciting a riot.

Hurst, who was 16 when the violence erupted, has been encouraged by progress following the Civil Rights Movement, but he worries that racism has again become normalized. Hurst blames dog whistles from Republicans, especially former President Donald Trump, who is again riding the politics of white grievance in his bid to return to the White House.

Even so, he said, "Jacksonville did not need anybody to help its racism along."

Jacksonville Sheriff T.K. Waters said notes left by the 21-year-old shooter made it clear he was targeting Black residents of a predominantly African American neighborhood.

He fatally shot Angela Michelle Carr, 52, as she sat in her car and chased A.J. Laguerre, 19, through a Dollar General store before shooting him. The third victim, Jerrald Gallion, 29, was killed as he entered the store.

Then the gunman killed himself.

Ryan Palmeter used an AR-15 style semi-automatic rifle and a Glock handgun, Waters said. He bought

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 48 of 61

both weapons legally earlier this year despite his involuntary commitment for a 72-hour mental health examination in 2017.

Palmer sent statements to federal law enforcement and the media suggesting his attack marked the fifth anniversary of a shooting at a video game tournament in Jacksonville that killed two people. That assailant also killed himself.

Somewhat puzzling is the apparent lack of a racial motive in the shooting five years ago, leaving questions about why Palmer cited the attack in his writings.

Jacksonville is home to nearly 1 million people, about a third of them Black, just south of Florida's border with Georgia. The city is still coming to terms with its Southern heritage while trying to become more cosmopolitan in the shadows of the state's other major cities: Miami, celebrated for glitzy nightlife and inviting beaches, and Orlando, home to the world-renowned Disney World and Universal theme parks.

In recent years, there were signs Jacksonville was changing, and it might still be.

Jacksonville elected its first Black mayor in 2011. A couple years later, another watershed moment unfolded when a coalition of activists succeeded in persuading the school board, after years of failed attempts, to rename a high school honoring Nathan Bedford Forrest, a Confederate general and the first grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

Since then, the city has continued to sever ties to the racist past by removing a Confederate soldier statue atop a memorial in a park bordering City Hall. The move was finalized by Jacksonville's former mayor, a Republican who once served as his party's statewide chair.

Donald Trump took Duval County in the 2016 presidential election. Two years later, a Black Democratic candidate running for governor, Andrew Gillum, won the county but narrowly lost statewide to now-Gov. Ron DeSantis.

In 2020, Joe Biden carried Duval County thanks to a heavy turnout from Black voters — the first time a Democratic presidential candidate has won the county since Jimmy Carter in 1976.

Earlier this year, Democrat Donna Deegan, who is white, was elected mayor of Jacksonville. Waters, who is Black and a Republican, took the helm of the sheriff's office in January.

"It feels some days like we're going backward," Deegan said through tears Sunday while addressing a congregation at St. Paul AME Church, 3 miles (4.8 kilometers) from the site of the shooting.

Just last week, a city council committee pulled funding for the mayor's chief of diversity and inclusion — the first time the city would have had such a position.

Former state Sen. Audrey Gibson, who represented a mostly Black district in Jacksonville, said a single event should not define the community.

"I don't think you can use one person to say there's a racism issue in Jacksonville," she said, even if a historical pattern of racial divides persists today, particularly in wealth and the economy.

There are still many unknowns about the shooter's motives and why he chose that particular neighborhood, Gibson said, even though "it was obvious that he was trying to attack Black people regardless of who they were."

Social justice activists such as Michael Sampson, who founded the Jacksonville Community Action Committee, have long hoped for permanent change but continue waiting.

Saturday's shooting is "a reminder that we're still at the same place," he said.

Sampson recalled the killing of 10 Black people at a Buffalo supermarket in May 2022 by a white supremacist, who was sentenced to life in prison in February.

"This happened in Buffalo," Sampson said. "You had a racist killer indiscriminately trying to kill Black people, and now this happened in Jacksonville — it happened in Jacksonville — so there's a culture that needs to be addressed out there."

Ax Handle Saturday serves as a reminder of Jacksonville's racist past, Sampson said, and the brutality against Black residents that repeated with the shooting and deaths of three people.

"That violence," he said, "is still something that we face every day."

Biden will observe 9/11 in Alaska instead of the traditional NYC, Virginia or Pennsylvania events

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden will observe next month's 22nd anniversary of the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil at an Alaska military base with service members and their families, the White House announced.

Biden will not participate in any of the observances at 9/11 memorial sites in New York City, Virginia or Pennsylvania. Instead, the president will stop in Alaska for a Sept. 11 observance at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage on his way back to Washington after a trip to Asia.

Biden is scheduled to travel to India from Sept. 7-10 to attend a summit with other world leaders, followed by a stop in Vietnam.

Vice President Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, will participate in the annual observance at the National September 11 Memorial and Museum in lower Manhattan.

First lady Jill Biden will lay a wreath at the 9/11 memorial at the Pentagon.

Terrorists hijacked commercial airplanes on Sept. 11, 2001, and flew them into the Twin Towers in New York's financial district and the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. A fourth plane crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after passengers fought back.

Nearly 3,000 people were killed in the attacks. Biden was a U.S. senator at the time.

It will not be the first time that a president has not attended annual observances at any of the three sites.

In 2015, President Barack Obama participated in a moment of silence on the White House lawn before going to Fort Meade in Maryland to recognize the military's work protecting the country.

In 2005, President George W. Bush marked the anniversary on the White House lawn.

The White House did not announce which official will participate in the Pennsylvania observance.

Son stolen at birth hugs Chilean mother for first time in 42 years

By NATHAN ELLGREN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — "Hola, mamá."

What seems like an unremarkable greeting between mother and son was in this case anything but.

Forty-two years ago, hospital workers took María Angélica González's son from her arms right after birth and later told her he had died. Now, she was meeting him face-to-face at her home in Valdivia, Chile.

"I love you very much," Jimmy Lippert Thyden told his mother in Spanish as they embraced amid tears.

"It knocked the wind out of me. ... I was suffocated by the gravity of this moment," Thyden told The Associated Press in a video call after the reunion. "How do you hug someone in a way that makes up for 42 years of hugs?"

His journey to find the birth family he never knew began in April after he read news stories about Chilean-born adoptees who had been reunited with their birth relatives with the help of a Chilean nonprofit Nos Buscamos.

The organization found that Thyden had been born prematurely at a hospital in Santiago, Chile's capital, and placed in an incubator. González was told to leave the hospital, but when she returned to get her baby, she was told he had died and his body had been disposed of, according to the case file, which Thyden summarized to the AP.

"The paperwork I have for my adoption tells me I have no living relatives. And I learned in the last few months that I have a mama and I have four brothers and a sister," Thyden said in the interview from Ashburn, Virginia, where he works as a criminal defense attorney representing "people who look like me" who cannot afford a lawyer.

He said his was a case of "counterfeit adoption."

Nos Buscamos estimates tens of thousands of babies were taken from Chilean families in the 1970s and 1980s, based on a report from the Investigations Police of Chile which reviewed the paper passports of

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 50 of 61

Chilean children who left the country and never came back.

"The real story was these kids were stolen from poor families, poor women that didn't know. They didn't know how to defend themselves," said Constanza del Río, founder and director and Nos Buscamos.

The child-trafficking coincided with many other human rights violations that took place during the 17-year reign of Gen. Augusto Pinochet, who on Sept. 11, 1973, led a Chilean coup to overthrow Marxist President Salvador Allende. During the dictatorship, at least 3,095 people were killed, according to government figures, and tens of thousands more were tortured or jailed for political reasons.

Over the past nine years, Nos Buscamos has orchestrated more than 450 reunions between adoptees and their birth families, del Río said.

Other nonprofit organizations are doing similar work, including Hijos y Madres del Silencio in Chile and Connecting Roots in the United States.

Nos Buscamos has been partnering for two years with genealogy platform MyHeritage, which provides free at-home DNA testing kits for distribution to Chilean adoptees and suspected victims of child trafficking in Chile.

Thyden's DNA test confirmed that he was 100% Chilean and matched him to a first cousin who also uses the MyHeritage platform.

Thyden sent the cousin his adoption papers, which included an address for his birth mother and a very common name in Chile: María Angélica González.

It turns out his cousin had a María Angélica González on their mother's side and helped him make the connection.

But González wouldn't take his phone calls until he texted her a photo of his wife and daughters.

"Then just the dam broke," said Thyden, who sent more photos of the American family who adopted him, his time in the U.S. Marines, his wedding, and many other memorable life moments.

"I was trying to bookend 42 years of a life taken from her. Taken from us both," he said.

He traveled to Chile with his wife, Johannah, and their two daughters, Ebba Joy, 8, and Betty Grace, 5, to meet his newly discovered family.

Stepping into his mother's home, Thyden was greeted with 42 colorful balloons, each one signifying a year of lost time with his Chilean family.

"There is an empowerment in popping those balloons, empowerment in being there with your family to take inventory of all that was lost," he said.

Thyden recalls his birth mother's response to hearing from him: "Mijo (son) you have no idea the oceans I've cried for you. How many nights I've laid awake praying that God let me live long enough to learn what happened to you."

González declined to be interviewed for this story.

Thyden, along with his wife and daughters visited the Santiago zoo where his American family first took him after the adoption. This time their tour guide was his biological sister.

Back at González's home, Thyden realized that he and his mother share a love of cooking.

"My hands are in the same dough as my mama," he said as they made fried empanadas together. He pledged to keep using the family recipe to stay connected with his family and his culture.

Thyden said his adoptive parents are supportive of his journey to reunite with his lost relatives, but were "unwitting victims" of a far-reaching illegal adoption network and are wrestling with the realities of the situation.

"My parents wanted a family but they never wanted it like this," he said. "Not at the extortion of another, the robbing of another."

Through a spokesperson, his parents declined comment.

While Thyden was successfully reunited with his birth family, he recognizes that reunification might not go as well for other adoptees.

"It could have been a much worse story," he said. "There are people who find out some really unfortunate details about their origin."

While in Chile, Thyden and del Río met with one of seven investigators working to address thousands of counterfeit adoption cases like his own.

"We don't want money, we just want the human recognition that this horrible thing happened in Chile and the compromise that this is not going to continue happening in the future," del Río said. "We are trying to make a difference. Not only with Jimmy and his family but we want to do it, the change, in the country."

Thyden also met with Juan Gabriel Valdés, the Chilean ambassador to the United States, to seek government recognition of the pervasiveness of the adoption scheme.

He said there was no mechanism, financial or otherwise, to assist Chilean adoptees in their efforts to visit their home country. He said he sold a truck to pay for his family's plane tickets and other expenses.

"People need to be able to decide ... what their name is going to be, where their citizenship is going to be. They should have access to both," he said. "They should have all the rights and privileges of a Chilean citizen because this is a thing that happened to them, not that they chose."

The Chilean Embassy in Washington did not return a request for comment.

Illinois judge refuses to dismiss case against father of parade shooting suspect

By MICHAEL TARM AP Legal Affairs Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — A judge on Monday refused to dismiss the case against a father who helped his son obtain a gun license three years before authorities say the younger man fatally shot seven people at a 2022 Fourth of July parade in suburban Chicago.

Illinois prosecutors charged Robert Crimo Jr. under a unconstitutionally vague law, his lawyer argued at a hearing earlier this month in Waukegan, north of Highland Park where the shooting took place.

Lake County Judge George Strickland rejected that argument, as well as a defense contention that prosecutors charged Crimo Jr. too late — after a three-year statute of limitations had passed. The court's rulings mean Crimo Jr.'s Nov. 6 trial will go head as previously scheduled.

The judge said at the hearing earlier in August that he would take three weeks to mull a decision, and he announced his ruling at a Monday hearing, which was also in Waukegan. He heard additional arguments on the statute of limitations issue Monday before ruling on it.

Crimo Jr. listened intently from a defense table chair, his hands folded in front of him, as the judge went through the arguments. He didn't appear to show any outward reaction as the judge dashed any hopes the case would be thrown out.

Crimo Jr. pleaded not guilty earlier this year to seven counts of reckless conduct — one count for each person killed. Each count carries a maximum three-year prison term.

Prosecutors had alleged that he helped his son, Robert Crimo III, obtain a gun license even though the then-19-year-old had threatened violence.

The four-sentence section of the state law invoked to charge Crimo Jr. says "a person commits reckless conduct when he or she, by any means lawful or unlawful, recklessly performs an act or acts that ... cause great bodily harm or permanent disability or disfigurement to another person."

A defense filing argued that the law's lack of specificity makes it impossible to know what actions qualify as criminal reckless conduct. They also say it offers no definition of "cause," opening the way for prosecutors to wrongly link the signing of a gun license application to a shooting years later.

"Here, the reckless conduct charge ... specifically seeks to criminalize the Defendant's lawful act of signing a truthful affidavit," according to the filing. It adds that, until Crimo Jr.'s case, "Illinois has never prosecuted an individual for signing a truthful affidavit under oath."

Crimo Jr.'s lawyer, George Gomez, argued earlier this month that prosecutors interpreted the law in an overly broad way that could create a "chilling effect" for residents who would worry that signing any affidavit, in this case a firearm owners ID application, could eventually be deemed reckless conduct.

Explaining his rulings Monday, Judge Strickland said the law was specific enough and was structured similarly to many, clearly constitutional laws. It was not overly broad, he said, including because it is limits

to reckless conduct that causes great bodily harm.

A grand jury indicted the son last year on 21 first-degree murder counts, 48 counts of attempted murder and 48 counts of aggravated battery, representing the seven people killed and dozens wounded in the attack. Potential evidence is voluminous in the son's case, for which no trial date has been set. He has pleaded not guilty.

Prosecutors said after the father's arrest that the accusations were based on his sponsorship of his son's application for a gun license in December 2019. Authorities say Crimo III tried to kill himself in April 2019 and was accused by a relative in September 2019 of making threats to "kill everyone."

Gomez argued Monday that prosecutors missed the deadline to charge Crimo Jr. because three years had passed. The judge agreed the statute of limitations was three years. But he said the years should be counted from the day of the Highland Park shooting, not from Crimo Jr.'s signature on the application.

Legal experts have said it's rare for a parent or guardian of a suspect in a shooting to face charges, in part because it's so difficult to prove such charges.

The father is a familiar face around Highland Park, where he was once a mayoral candidate and operated convenience stores. He was released on a \$50,000 bond after his December arrest.

Also Monday, the judge indicated he was open to a TV camera being in court during Crimo Jr.'s trial and to live streaming of the proceedings. Strickland has previously allowed a photographer to take photographs during the pretrial hearings and said that would continue.

Lake County State's Attorney Eric Rinehart told the judge he wouldn't want media coverage of any evidence in the father's case to disrupt prosecutors' case against the son but that, ultimately, his office did not object to permitting live and filmed footage.

Gomez also didn't object to expanded media coverage. He did say two potential defense witnesses may object to TV coverage of their testimony — Crimo III and his mother, Denise Crimo. Crimo III's defense attorneys, he added, have said they will object to calling him to testify in his father's case.

Strickland said he'd ask lawyers for the son to attend a hearing on Oct. 30 to discuss any last-minute issues or conflicts related to the father's trial.

Alaska report details 280 missing Indigenous people, including whether disappearances are suspicious

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Law enforcement has prepared a first-of-its-kind report detailing missing Alaska Natives and American Indian people in Alaska, a newspaper reported.

The Alaska Department of Public Safety last week released the Missing Indigenous Persons Report, which includes the names of 280 people, dates of their last contact and whether police believe the disappearance was suspicious in nature, the Anchorage Daily News reported.

In the report, the circumstances of each missing person in classified into one of four categories: environmental, nonsuspicious, suspicious or unknown. This is considered a point-in-time snapshot because it includes people who were missing as of July 14. Austin McDaniel, a Department of Public Safety spokesperson, said it's possible some have since been found.

About 75% of the cases fit in the environmental category: The person is believed to have died or disappeared in the wilderness after a plane crash, boat sinking or other outdoor accident, and their remains have never been found. Some cases here date back to the 1960s. Even though some people have been declared legally dead, McDaniel said they are considered missing until law enforcement "lays eyes on them."

Of the remaining cases, 18 were ruled suspicious, 30 as not suspicious and 17 unknown.

The list is not complete. It only represents missing persons cases investigated by the Anchorage Police Department or the Alaska State Troopers and not those of other police departments in Alaska, like Fairbanks or Juneau.

The statewide agency hopes smaller departments will contribute data for quarterly updates, McDaniel said.

Each name on the list represents a loved and missed person, said Charlene Aqpiq Apok, executive director of Data for Indigenous Justice.

This organization created its own database of missing and murdered Indigenous people in 2021 and has advocated for Alaska law enforcement to better track the issue.

"This report was definitely a step in the right direction," Apok said.

Detailing the circumstances of disappearances could present a clearer picture to law enforcement of the overall situation.

"Going missing while going on a hike or hunting is very different than someone being abducted," Apok said. "We really wanted to clarify those circumstances."

She said it's also validating for families to see what they long suspected about the disappearances.

"For a very long time we've been hearing from families, this is what happened, and it hasn't been recognized," she said.

Much of the data in the new state report is already in two existing databases of missing people, the state's Missing Persons Clearinghouse and NamUs, a nationwide database overseen by the U.S. Department of Justice. The state says it has committed to regularly updating the data in NamUs, something it hasn't always done before and isn't mandated.

To stop wildfires, residents in some Greek suburbs put their own money toward early warning drones

By ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — The nightmare repeats itself every year: A towering wall of flames devours forests, farmland and homes, forcing animals and people to flee for their lives.

With their hot, dry summers, Greece and its southern European neighbors experience hundreds of devastating wildfires each year. Last week alone, wildfires killed 21 people in Greece. The country's deadliest, in 2018, cost more than 100 lives. And experts warn climate change is likely to exacerbate extreme weather, fueling more wildfires.

This summer, a group of residents in a leafy suburb of the Greek capital united in determination to prevent the nightmare from reaching their homes.

In less than a week in early August, an initial group of three people with a shared concern grew to an online community of about 320 offering donations to hire a company using long-range drones equipped with thermal imaging cameras as a sophisticated early warning system to catch wildfires before they can spread.

It's a tried and tested system. Designed and set up with the help of Grigoris Konstantellos, a commercial airline pilot and mayor of the southern Athens seaside suburbs of Vari, Voula and Vouliagmeni, the drones began operating there last year.

"We didn't discover it, we created it," Konstantellos said of the program. "We said, 'Why shouldn't this capability exist?'"

The system seemed the perfect solution for the concerned residents in the northern suburbs of Kifissia, Ekali and Nea Erithrea.

"We're all worried, we're all anxious," said Melina Throuvala, a psychologist and one of the initial group of three. "We don't want to mourn victims, or to see our environment and our forests burning or our homes threatened. That was the main incentive."

And with wildfires, prevention is key.

Operated by drone pilots with advanced training to fly beyond the visual line of sight and with permission from civil aviation authorities, the drones provide live images and detect changes in temperature, alerting their handlers in the critical early stages before a fire spreads. The drones run 24/7, with pilots working in six-hour shifts.

"The first few minutes are the most crucial for a fire," said Giorgos Dertilis, who heads the local volunteer firefighting unit. "At the start it's easier to put out the fire. The more the minutes go by, the harder our job becomes."

Volunteer units are integrated into Greece's Civil Protection system, working closely with professional fire

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 54 of 61

departments. With no fire station in the wider Kifissia area, volunteers often can get to local blazes faster. The drone company operates from the volunteer firefighters' headquarters, so they can react immediately at any signs of a fire.

The drone program's value was quickly apparent. In the first couple of days, it picked up the start of a fire near a shuttered hotel, "so when we were on our way ... we knew, we were prepared to see a fire," Dertilis said. They quickly extinguished the blaze. "It's very important to know what to expect."

The system's innovation, said Emmanouil Angelakis, managing director of the company operating the drones, is that it includes specialized personnel, software, servers and satellite antenna so "drones, day and night, can scan all the forest areas with thermal cameras and sensors and give live images and coordinates of where a fire starts."

The idea for the system came in June 2022, after a wind-whipped wildfire descended on Konstantellos' municipality from a mountain ridge. As they coordinated the response, authorities realized they had a problem.

"We were chasing the fire," the mayor said. With the flames moving rapidly, keeping track of where water trucks were needed was a challenge. "We couldn't see basic things on the ground. We'd see them with a delay, because we weren't right in front of them."

An extensive review of the emergency response followed. "We saw that what was missing is for us to not chase the fire, but to be able to have a live image of the fire, of where our assets are and where the threat is," Konstantellos said. They thought of drones.

The fire department already uses drones during an active blaze, covering a small area. What was needed was to see a fire when it starts, and stop it in its tracks.

Getting in touch with the drone company, the fire prevention program was born. In the year and a half it's been operational, it's given early warnings for fires 12 times, Konstantellos said.

"We've caught fires at 3:30 in the morning," the mayor said. "When we sent the Civil Protection, they couldn't even find the fire. We could see it on the drone."

Then on Saturday, 270 lightning strikes sparked six blazes, starting at 5:30 a.m.. The drones saw them immediately, Konstantellos said Monday. With live drone images relayed to his cellphone, "we had amazing coordination, and in less than 40 minutes we had put out six fires in hard-to-reach places."

The drones have a range of 15 kilometers (nearly 10 miles) and are equipped with loudspeakers and searchlights to warn off people doing banned outdoor work on high fire-risk days — or to frighten off potential arsonists. The municipality is even running a pilot program to prevent drownings, whereby drones can drop lifejackets to swimmers in distress.

The municipality pays 13,000-14,000 euros (\$14,000-15,000) per month for 24/7 coverage. "For a municipality, it's a viable number to have peace of mind from the fires," Konstantellos said.

The drone company's Angelakis said the Kifissia residents' privately funded initiative "was the first time this happened on a volunteer basis and not by a state body."

Kifissia's nearby municipality of Dionysos followed, with its privately funded operation working out of the town hall.

Residents of less affluent areas would be less able to afford private funding. But other municipal and regional authorities are interested, said Konstantellos, who noted the system can be used to coordinate responses to other events such as floods, earthquakes or traffic accidents.

"As we say in aviation, 'A well-trained pilot is the best safety device,'" he said. "We convert this to the civil protection and we say: 'A well-prepared city is the best defense of a city against crisis.'"

Biden is 'old,' Trump is 'corrupt': AP-NORC poll has ominous signs for both in possible 2024 rematch

By WILL WEISSERT, EMILY SWANSON and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is "old" and "confused," and former President Donald Trump is "corrupt" and "dishonest." Those are among the top terms Americans use when they're asked to describe

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 55 of 61

the Democrat in the White House and the Republican best positioned to face him in next year's election.

Unflattering portraits of Biden and Trump emerge clearly in a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, which asked an open-ended question about what comes to mind when people think of them.

For Biden, the largest share of U.S. adults — including both Democrats and Republicans — mentioned his age. At 80, Biden is just three years older than Trump, but many Americans expressed real concerns about his ability to continue as president.

Trump, meanwhile, has been indicted in four cases featuring 91 total criminal counts and elicits words such as "corrupt" and "crooked" (named by 15%), along with "bad" and other generally negative comments (11%). Not far behind are words like "liar" and "dishonest" (8%). Another 8% offered generally positive comments like "good," though.

A deeper look doesn't improve things much for Biden or Trump. And while many of the criticisms reflect a familiar partisan divide, the poll shows neither man is immune to criticism from within his own party.

"He looks like he needs to be someone's kindly grandpa on the arm, not someone at the wheel of power," Justin Campbell, a 27-year-old Democrat and security guard in the Brookhaven area of Mississippi, said of Biden. He was even more negative about Trump, though, saying that the former president "acts like a kindergartner when people tell him 'no.'"

Campbell suggested that Trump reads so little about policy and national security that he might be "functionally illiterate." He said he plans to vote for Biden next year and, "I eagerly await Donald Trump being in jail."

Such sentiments were common. Fully 26% of respondents use words like "old" or "outdated" to describe Biden, and another 15% mention things like "slow" and "confused."

Another 10% give generally negative comments about the president, and 6% use words like "corrupt" and "crooked." Just 6% offer words like "president" and "leader," and 5% use those like "strong" and "capable" — the top positive comments made about Biden.

Biden's age was referenced frequently even among Democrats, 28% of whom mention it — a significantly higher percentage than those who point to the presidency or leadership (11%) or strength and capability (11%).

Trump's negative comments center not on age but on his moral standing and conduct, along with things like "loudmouth" and "angry" (6%), "crazy" and "dangerous" (6%) and "narcissist" (6%). Some 5% use words like "strong" and "capable."

Rami Marsha, a 58-year-old CEO of a manufacturing company in Agoura Hills, California, is a registered Democrat who voted for Trump in 2016 and for Biden in 2020 — but says he'd likely leave the presidential race portion of his ballot blank if those two square off again in 2024.

"I think he might be having some dementia, and I don't think he has the power to run the country," Marsha said of Biden. But he was equally blunt about Trump: "I've had enough of him."

That's a fairly common sentiment. The poll shows that only 24% of Americans overall want to see Biden run again, while 30% say the same about Trump — and majorities say they are reluctant to support them if they are nominated again.

Also, 62% of Americans say they have an unfavorable opinion of Trump; 52% say the same about Biden.

Biden's reelection campaign said the president's age is not a top motivator for voters, especially compared to the administration's policy accomplishments or key issues like abortion. It also noted that perceptions of the president and Democrats were not strong before last year's midterms — only to have the party defy expectations.

A Trump campaign spokesman did not answer messages seeking comment, but the former president has previously used his indictments to go on the political offensive, telling supporters at rallies, "I'm being indicted for you."

Larry Haith, a 73-year-old Idahoan and retired president and general manager of an auto parts firm, is a Republican who described Biden for the poll as an "idiot" and called Trump "arrogant." He said he doesn't

plan on voting for either next year.

Haith blamed Biden's economic policies for his cash net worth declining at least about \$150,000 and said the president "just needs to retire and get on with it."

Though he had some kind words for Trump, Haith was also critical of the former president.

"I really like what he did, and I like the decisions that he made," said Haith, who added that, at first, "I really liked that gruffness about him." But those feelings have cooled, he said, in part because Trump has what Haith described as "a typical New York, arrogant attitude."

"I'm not going to support him anymore," he said. "I'm done with him."

Annie Doerr, a 60-year-old retiree from suburban Atlanta who described herself as a moderate Republican, said of Trump, "I thought some of his policies were good for Americans, but he's just too much of a distraction."

Doerr had problems with the president, too, comparing him to what she had seen while caring for her 95-year-old father.

"He reminded me a lot of Biden, just things that come out of (Biden's) mouth," Doerr said.

"I just don't think he's fit to be president for four more years," she added. "He may have been when he first ran, but not now."

The poll also illustrated familiar ideological divides. It found that Republicans are more likely than Democrats to use words like "slow" and "confused" to describe Biden, 25% to 7%, as well as words like "corrupt" and "crooked" (14% to 0%) and "weak" or "unqualified" (9% to 2%).

For Trump, meanwhile, the top comments among Republicans include the generally positive (15%) along with things like "strong" (11%) and mentions of America or patriotism (8%), along with mentions of the presidency or leadership (6%).

Even some Republicans use negative words to describe Trump, though, including labels such as "loud-mouth" or "angry" (7%). Others mentioned arrogance or pompousness (6%), narcissism (5%) or other generally negative comments (6%).

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to cite corruption (25% to 4%) and dishonesty (12% to 4%) to describe Trump. Seven percent of Democrats mention racism, bigotry, homophobia or misogyny among their top words to describe the former president. Those words were hardly invoked by any Republicans in the poll.

Susan Grant, a 66-year-old retired office manager for a nonprofit physician membership association from Westfield, Indiana, said Trump "does not need to run again for any office. He's not fit."

But she added that, "While I respect Biden, I think he's too old."

"I do feel like he's at the age where he probably needs to not run," said Grant, a Republican. "I'm not saying he's not able. But, overall, I would like to see younger people running for president."

Climate activists target jets, yachts and golf in a string of global protests against luxury

By DAVID BRUNAT Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Climate activists have spraypainted a superyacht, blocked private jets from taking off and plugged holes in golf courses this summer as part of an intensifying campaign against the emissions-spewing lifestyles of the ultrawealthy.

Climate activism has intensified in the past few years as the planet warms to dangerous levels, igniting more extreme heat, floods, storms and wildfires around the world. Tactics have been getting more radical, with some protesters gluing themselves to roads, disrupting high-profile sporting events like golf and tennis and even splashing famous pieces of artwork with paint or soup.

They're now turning their attention to the wealthy, after long targeting some of the world's most profitable companies — oil and gas conglomerates, banks and insurance firms that continue to invest in fossil fuels.

"We do not point the finger at the people but at their lifestyle, the injustice it represents," said Karen Killeen, an Extinction Rebellion activist who was involved in protests in Ibiza, Spain, a favorite summer

US, China agree to discuss export controls as commerce secretary visits to warm up chilly ties

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said she and her Chinese counterpart agreed Monday to exchange information on U.S. export controls that frustrate Beijing and set up a group to discuss other commercial issues, but neither side appeared ready to make concessions on disputes that have plunged relations to their lowest level in decades.

Raimondo joined American officials including Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in July who have visited China in hopes of reviving chilly relations. They expressed optimism about improving communication but no progress on conflicts over technology, security, human rights and a lingering tariff war.

For its part, Chinese leader Xi Jinping's government wants to revive foreign investor interest in China as it tries to reverse a deepening economic slump.

Raimondo said she and Commerce Minister Wang Wentao agreed during a four-hour meeting to launch an "information exchange" on export controls. She said they also will set up a "working group" of officials and private sector representatives to "seek solutions on trade and investment issues."

A key Chinese complaint is limits on access to processor chips and other U.S. technology on security grounds that threaten to hamper the ruling Communist Party's ambition to develop artificial intelligence and other industries. The curbs crippled the smartphone business of Huawei Technologies Ltd., China's first global tech brand.

Raimondo said the information exchange will hold its first meeting Tuesday.

"The United States is committed to being transparent about our export control enforcement strategy," Raimondo told reporters at Ambassador Nicholas Burns's official residence.

"We are not compromising or negotiating in matters of national security," she said. "But this is meant to be a dialogue where we increase transparency."

Earlier, Wang told Raimondo that Beijing is ready to work together to "foster a more favorable policy environment for stronger cooperation" and "bolster bilateral trade and investment." Wang gave no details of possible initiatives.

Beijing broke off dialogues with Washington on military, climate and other issues in August 2022 in retaliation for a visit to Taiwan by then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi of the House of Representatives. The Communist Party claims the self-ruled island democracy as part of its territory and objects to foreign governments having contact with it.

The visits take place under an agreement made by Xi and President Joe Biden during a meeting last November in Indonesia. The Chinese state press has given them positive coverage, but Beijing has given no indication it might change trade, strategic, market access and other policies that irk Washington and its Asian neighbors.

In June, Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Xi for 30 minutes during a visit that was postponed from February after a Chinese surveillance balloon entered U.S. airspace. The Chinese leader called on Washington to change policies on Taiwan and other issues and rebuffed a request to resume military-to-military cooperation.

Last week, on the day Raimondo's visit to Beijing was announced, Washington removed 27 Chinese companies from a blacklist that limits access to U.S. technology.

The decision "may have helped grease the wheels for Raimondo's trip," said Anna Ashton and Kylie Milliken of Eurasia Group in a report.

It suggests Washington "is making modest but measurable progress with Beijing in re-establishing limited government-to-government communication," Ashton and Milliken wrote. "Raimondo's visit could produce additional progress."

Meting with Wang, Raimondo defended the Biden administration's "de-risking" strategy of trying to increase domestic U.S. production of semiconductors and other high-tech goods and to create additional sources of supply to reduce chances of disruption. Beijing has criticized that as an attempt to isolate China

and hamper its development.

"It is not intended to hinder China's economic progress. We believe a strong Chinese economy is a good thing," Raimondo told the Chinese minister. "We seek healthy competition with China. A growing Chinese economy that plays by the rules is in both of our interests."

Wang visited Washington in May. The U.S. government invited Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Washington, but plans for that have not been announced.

Raimondo also was due to meet China's No. 2 leader, Premier Li Qiang, and other officials.

The Biden administration also has taken steps that are likely to rankle Beijing.

In June, Biden added 59 Chinese companies including military contractors and semiconductor manufacturers to a list of entities Americans are prohibited from investing in.

Last week, Washington approved a \$500 million arms sale to Taiwan including infrared tracking systems for advanced F-16 fighter jets.

An evacuation order finds few followers in northeastern Ukraine despite Russia's push in the region

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KUPIANSK, Ukraine (AP) — The thunder of mortar fire echoes in the distance as 5-year old David approaches his mother with an innocent request: Can he play with the baseball bat a relative gave him as a gift?

Valeria Pototska rolls her eyes and tells her son no for the umpteenth time. It's a toy for big kids, she scolds. The boy, who doesn't so much as flinch when the weapons not far from their town in northeast Ukraine shoot off more rounds, pouts and pedals away on his bicycle.

Other neighborhood children frolic in a playground in Kupiansk-Vuzlovyyi, seemingly immune to the war unfolding 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) away. Ukrainian authorities this month ordered a mandatory evacuation of the village and three dozen other populated areas as war returned to Kharkiv province. So far, most residents have refused to go as the battle inches closer to their backyards.

"It's normal," Pototska said of the soundtrack of weapons that punctuates the monotony of their daily lives. Olena Kanivets, a friend sitting beside her, nods and takes a drag on a cigarette. "It's the strong who took the decision to leave," Kanivets said.

The Aug. 10 evacuation directive applies to 37 settlements that Russian soldiers occupied early in the 18-month-old war. A Ukrainian counteroffensive liberated them in September, lifting the invaded country's spirits. Citing a Russian attempt to push back into the area, the Kupiansk district military administration told roughly 12,000 residents to seek safety elsewhere.

Only a few hundred have heeded the warning. Among the thousands who haven't, some are paralyzed by the daunting task of relocating. Others said they had considered the hardships of displacement and decided to brave the renewed hostilities instead. Many signed documents stating they were staying at their own risk.

Their reasons range from the existential to the routine: fear of encountering poverty and loneliness in expensive faraway cities. Reluctance to give up homes in which they invested their life savings for a crowded shelter. Needing more time to tidy the garden or to tend to livestock.

The city of Kupiansk, which also was occupied by the Russians for more than six months last year, is under a partial evacuation order now. Katarina Chesta, a school administrator there, said she plans to stay put even if the order is extended citywide because she is tired of running away from war.

When Russia invaded eastern Ukraine in 2014, Chesta fled the port city of Mariupol under fire and ended up in Kupiansk, where her parents lived. The 39-year-old refuses to pack up and move again.

Russian airstrikes frequently target Kupiansk and hit the city's main school building in October and December, so Chesta is preparing an online curriculum for the new academic year.

"Maybe it's just the way I am," she said, sitting in her office wearing an immaculate white dress and her hair styled in an elegant updo. "Some people must stay here to be patriots for the city, to develop it, to survive."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 59 of 61

spot for the wealthy. She said the group is protesting unnecessary emissions such as superrich individuals going to pick up a pizza by boat. "In a climate emergency, it's an atrocity," she said.

Killeen and others from climate activist group Futuro Vegetal — or Vegetable Future — spraypainted a \$300 million superyacht belonging to Walmart heir Nancy Walton Laurie. Protesters held up a sign that read, "You consume, others suffer."

In Switzerland, some 100 activists disrupted Europe's biggest private jet sales fair in Geneva when they chained themselves to aircraft gangways and the exhibition entrance. In Germany, climate group Letzte Generation — which translates to Last Generation — spraypainted a private jet in the resort island of Sylt, in the North Sea. In Spain, activists plugged holes in golf courses to protest the sport's heavy water needs during hot dry spells.

In the U.S., Abigail Disney, the grand-niece of Walt Disney, was arrested at East Hampton Town Airport, New York, in July along with 13 other protesters for blocking cars from entering or exiting the parking lot. It was the first of up to eight actions carried out in the exclusive Hamptons area. Activists also crashed a golf course, disrupted a museum gala and demonstrated outside some private luxury homes.

"Luxury practices are disproportionately contributing to the climate crisis at this point," said American University social scientist Dana Fisher. According to a 2021 report by nonprofit Oxfam, if all planet-warming emissions were attributed to the people producing them, the richest 1% will be responsible for around 16% of emissions by 2030. "It makes a lot of sense for these activists to be calling out this toxic behavior."

Richard Wilk, an economic anthropologist at Indiana University, said luxury travel is "the real culprit" in the emissions of the ultrawealthy.

He published estimates of top billionaires' annual emissions in 2021 and found that a superyacht — with permanent crew, helicopter pad, submarines and pools — emits about 7,020 tons of carbon dioxide a year, over 1,500 times higher than a typical family car. And private aircraft in Europe alone last year caused more than 3 million tons of carbon pollution, equivalent to the average annual CO2 emissions of over half a million EU residents, according to the nonprofit Greenpeace.

But University of Pennsylvania climate scientist Michael Mann warned that attention away from the fossil fuel companies — which are responsible for at least 70% of all emissions — and toward the rich could be "playing right into the hands of the fossil fuel industry and the 'deflection campaign' they've used to divert attention from regulation by emphasizing individual carbon footprints over the much larger footprint of polluters."

"The solution is to get everyone to use less carbon-based energy," whether wealthy or lower-income people, he said.

David Gitman, president of Monarch Air Group, a Florida private air charter provider, encouraged activists to think twice about whether they're taking the right approach.

"If their activism goes toward some sort of actual assistance to real programs to make real change like sustainable aviation fuel, like carbon offsets, I think that this kind of activism can help achieve those results," said Gitman. "Now, if they go out and they spray-paint a private jet in an airport in Europe, is that going to get those results? In my opinion, no."

Fisher, of the University of Maryland, was also skeptical that the activism was effective in changing behavior by the wealthy.

In some cases, governments have stepped in with regulations. France is cracking down on the use of private jets for short journeys, and earlier this year, the Netherlands' Schiphol Airport also announced plans to ban private jets.

But as protests escalate, Fisher and Wilk say they could still move the needle toward behavior change.

"Public shaming is one of the most powerful ways of controlling people," Wilk said. "It acts in a lot of different ways to embarrass people, to make them more conscious of the consequences of their actions."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 60 of 61

Kharkiv province, which borders Russia, reemerged as a combat hot spot in mid-July. That's when the Russian military began assembling assault troops, tank units and other resources in the direction of Kupiansk, hoping to pressure Ukrainian troops fighting further south and to recapture the territory Ukraine won back, according to Ukrainian military officials.

Ukrainian military officials say their forces have kept the Russians from advancing but there is intense fighting on the outskirts of Synkivka, a village which is 14 kilometers (8.7 miles) from Kupiansk.

Illustrating the dangers for the local population, they said Russian units have shelled civilian infrastructure and homes while hunting for Ukrainian soldiers, who fight concealed in the wooded and agricultural landscape. The near-constant shelling kills several residents a week, according to the Kupiansk military administration.

Evacuees are taken to a shelter in Kharkiv, the provincial capital and Ukraine's second-largest city. Red Cross volunteers say the number requesting to relocate spiked in places that received more intense bombing, but many locals still linger.

"Until the moment shelling hits close, people refuse to leave," volunteer Volodymyr Fedulenko said.

For Oleksandr Ivanovich, 70, that moment came when a shell hit his house in the village of Hryshivka and left the roof in tatters. He was plucking weeds from the front porch at the time. "What to say, it is very painful to leave my home," Ivanovich said.

Tatiana Shapavalova, 59, who lives two doors away, boarded an evacuation van along with her neighbor. She thought their part of Ukraine would stay comparatively peaceful after the Russians withdrew from most of Kharkiv province last year, but the Aug. 13 artillery attack proved her wrong.

"We had hoped the Ukrainian army would push the Russians further away, but every day we hear them coming closer and closer," Shapavalova said.

Liudmyla Yermichuk, a resident of the village of Kivsharivka, asked to be evacuated with her 84-year old mother. Her sister decided to stay behind. "They are planning to clean their garden, and then they will maybe go to Kharkiv," she said from the Red Cross base in Kupiansk.

In the villages closest to the front line, residents have told volunteer Fedulenko they don't want to abandon their farm animals. They spend most of their time in basement shelters below razed houses, he said.

"I have to tell them, 'Your life is more important than your chickens,'" he said.

In Kupiansk-Vuzlovyi, the long war has created an atmosphere that blends the placid and the deadly. The roar of artillery fire sporadically disturbs the soft rustle of leaves in the late summer breeze. Municipal workers diligently mow the lawn next to bombed-out school buildings.

Residents who lived under occupation for half a year said the experience was terrifying. "Russians acted like kings," Pototska said. Many said they would evacuate if the return of Moscow's troops appeared imminent but until then hold on to hope of Ukrainian forces defeating them.

Kanivets, Pototska's friend, sent her 12-year-old son, Yaroslav, to a 10-day summer camp in western Ukraine "to give him a break" from the shelling. The war forced him to grow up very quickly but "he has friends here, it's his home, so I think it's better to stay," she said. "He's not scared."

"Old man," Kanivets said affectionately of her child.

Four months ago, Nataliia Rosolova's son Dmytro, 14, begged her to leave after a night of heavy shelling. "We need to stay for a while longer," she told him.

Rosolova, 38, recalled the conversation as an air raid alarm rang out in their neighborhood. She explained that she works as a medic and "there are very few of us left here." As she spoke, her younger son's toys are strewn in a backyard sandbox. The sound of projectile landing somewhere booms.

If a time comes when the family must flee, their bags are packed and ready to grab from Dmytro's bedroom.

"Maybe I'm not strong enough to make such difficult decisions," the mother said, tears welling. "But I'm not an enemy for my children. If there will be a need to leave, we will leave."

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Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 066 ~ 61 of 61

Today in History: August 29, Hurricane Katrina hits Louisiana

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 29, the 241st day of 2023. There are 124 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast near Buras, Louisiana, bringing floods that devastated New Orleans. More than 1,800 people in the region died.

On this date:

In 1632, English philosopher John Locke was born in Somerset.

In 1814, during the War of 1812, Alexandria, Virginia, formally surrendered to British military forces, which occupied the city until September 3.

In 1862, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing began operations at the United States Treasury.

In 1944, 15,000 American troops of the 28th Infantry Division marched down the Champs Elysees in Paris as the French capital continued to celebrate its liberation from the Nazis.

In 1957, the Senate gave final congressional approval to a Civil Rights Act after South Carolina Sen. Strom Thurmond ended a filibuster that had lasted 24 hours.

In 1958, pop superstar Michael Jackson was born in Gary, Indiana.

In 1966, the Beatles concluded their fourth American tour with their last public concert, held at Candlestick Park in San Francisco.

In 2008, Republican presidential nominee John McCain picked Sarah Palin, a maverick conservative who had been governor of Alaska for less than two years, to be his running mate.

In 2009, funeral services were held in Boston for Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, who was eulogized by President Barack Obama. He was buried hours later at Arlington National Cemetery outside Washington.

In 2019, President Donald Trump said the United States planned to withdraw more than 5,000 troops from Afghanistan, and would then determine future drawdowns.

Ten years ago: In a sweeping new policy statement, the Justice Department said it would not stand in the way of states that wanted to legalize, tax and regulate marijuana as long as there were effective controls to keep marijuana away from kids, the black market and federal property. The NFL agreed to pay \$765 million to settle lawsuits from thousands of former players who developed dementia or other concussion-related health problems they say were caused by the on-field clashes.

Five years ago: Sen. John McCain was remembered as a "true American hero" at a crowded service at the North Phoenix Baptist Church after a motorcade carried McCain's body from the state Capitol. Kanye West apologized on a Chicago radio station for calling slavery a "choice." The government reported that the economy had grown at a strong 4.2 percent annual rate in the April-June quarter, the best showing in nearly four years. Paul Taylor, a towering figure in American modern dance, died at a New York hospital at the age of 88.

One year ago: A United Nations nuclear watchdog team set off on an urgent mission to safeguard the endangered Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia atomic power plant at the heart of fighting in Ukraine, with hopes of avoiding a nuclear catastrophe. At least 15 protesters were killed after an influential Shiite cleric announced that he would resign from Iraqi politics, prompting hundreds of his angry followers to storm the government palace and sparking clashes with security forces and between rival militias. NASA called off the debut launch of its powerful new moon rocket after a last-minute cascade of problems, including unexplained trouble related to an engine. (The rocket would not take flight until November.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor Elliott Gould is 85. Actor Deborah Van Valkenburgh is 71. Former Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew is 68. Dancer-choreographer Mark Morris is 67. Country musician Dan Truman (Diamond Rio) is 67. Actor Rebecca DeMornay is 64. Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch is 56. Singer Me'Shell NdegeOcello (n-DAY'-gay-OH'-chehl-oh) is 55. Actor Carla Gugino is 52. Rock musician Kyle Cook (Matchbox Twenty) is 48. Actor John Hensley is 46. Actor Kate Simses is 44. Actor Jennifer Landon is 40. Actor Jeffrey Licon is 38. Actor-singer Lea Michele is 37. Actor Charlotte Ritchie is 34. Actor Nicole Gale Anderson is 33. MLB pitcher Noah Syndergaard (SIHN'-dur-gahrd) is 31. Rock singer Liam Payne (One Direction) is 30.