

Groton Daily Independent

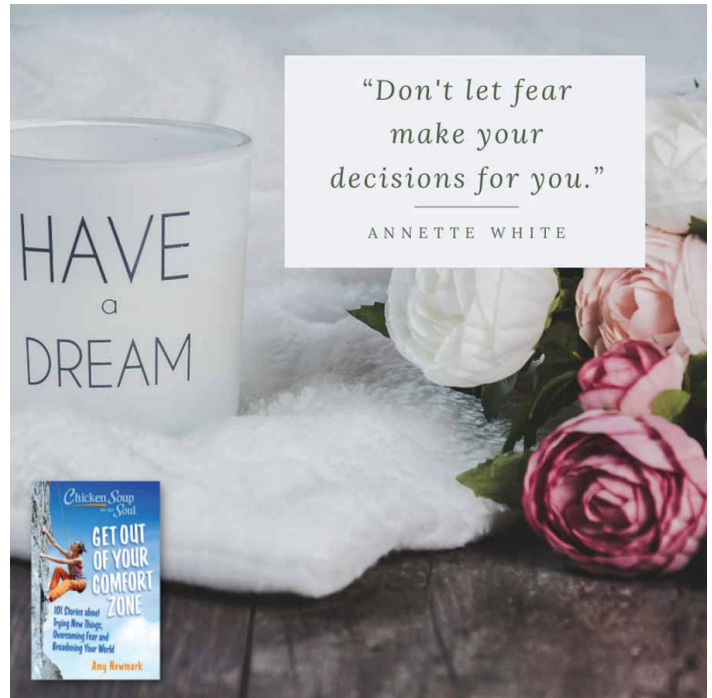
Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 1 of 81

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Farmers & Ranchers Feed 1,000 Fairgoers a 42-Cent Lunch](#)
- [3- Livestreaming from back of pickup](#)
- [4- Julianna Kosel completes Cosmetology Course](#)
- [5- City of Groton conducts adult mosquito control](#)
- [6- Lake County Fatal Crash](#)
- [7- Names Released in Charles Mix County Fatal Crash](#)
- [8- Northern State Grabs Wins over Truman State and Christian Brothers](#)
- [9- Gov Noem's "Freedom Works Here" is Bringing People to South Dakota](#)
- [10- Groton Transit Letter](#)
- [11- Sunday Extras](#)
- [29- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [30- Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [31- Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [32- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
- [34- EarthTalk - Old Cars](#)
- [35- SD SearchLight: Former prison employee's conviction is a rare occurrence in South Dakota](#)
- [39- Weather Pages](#)
- [43- Daily Devotional](#)
- [44- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [45- Subscription Form](#)
- [46- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [47- News from the Associated Press](#)

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.

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



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 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.
Groton unit 39 will have their its meeting at the post home. Meal at 6 and meeting begins at 6:30. At this meeting you can pay your membership dues and help make a plan for our new Auxiliary year.

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

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 2 of 81

Farmers & Ranchers Feed 1,000 Fairgoers a 42-Cent Lunch

Even during a year when crop and cattle markets are up, South Dakota's family farmers and ranchers still earn much less than what consumers pay at the grocery checkout.

To reinforce this fact, South Dakota Farmers Union (SDFU) is providing lunch September 2 South Dakota State Fair attendees for only 42-cents – the price family farmers and ranchers receive for the ingredients.

"This nearly free lunch brings to light how much the middleman makes," said Parade rancher Oren Lesmeister. "The price people pay for a steak at the meat counter is far from the price I receive.

Thankfully beef prices are up this year, but my family only receives \$2.64 for the \$9.99 steak sold at the grocery store. And this goes for all commodities we raise here in South Dakota."

Feeding more than 1,000 fairgoers, the Farmers Share Lunch is a longstanding tradition for the state's largest agriculture organization and premiere sponsor of the South Dakota State Fair, explained Karla Hofhenke, SDFU Executive Director.

"Agriculture is South Dakota's number one industry and economic driver," Hofhenke said. "This Farmers Share Lunch is one way to help educate all South Dakotans on the economics of raising crops and livestock. We see it as a way to boost support for the South Dakota families doing the work."

Tracy Solseng would agree.

"Forty-two cents seems very cheap and is a bit surprising because when we go to the grocery store we pay much more," said the fairgoer from Huron who attends the fair each year with her parents, Elton and Colleen Solseng who are visiting from North Dakota.

Educating consumers as well as farm and ranch families is a large focus of South Dakota Farmers Union year-round. And during Farmers Union Day at the State Fair the organization also hosts Farm Safety Quiz Bowl championships for high school-age youth. It is an opportunity for teens to sharpen and showcase their farm safety knowledge.

"I have seen many farm and ranch families go through loss or injury due to accidents. It's devastating. This quiz bowl is one of several ways our organization works to promote safety through education," said Doug Sombke, SDFU President. "And because fairgoers of all ages watch the competition, the Quiz Bowl educates more than youth."

Teams competing are Gettysburg, Selby Area, Platte-Geddes and Wolsey-Wessington.

SDFU also hosts a Landowner Rights Forum

"Landowner rights have been part of our organization's policy since the beginning because for farmers and ranchers, our land is much more than our livelihood – it is our legacy," Sombke explained.

SDFU policy is established by its members. "We are not told what our policy is by the national organization. Our policy is developed at the local level based on what is important to our members. This is the definition of 'grassroots,'" Sombke said.

Landowner rights have received quite a bit of attention in recent months after the private corporation, Summit Carbon Solutions, began threatening to use eminent domain in order to install its pipeline on private land in South Dakota.

"Threatening to use eminent domain instead of working with landowners is not respecting landowner rights," said Lesmeister, who also serves as District 28-A Legislator.

Lesmeister and Sombke are among the South Dakotans discussing the issue during the public forum. Other forum participants include Aberdeen farmer Craig Schaunaman; Jeff Kippley, Aberdeen farmer and Vice President of National Farmers Union and Brian Jorde, Managing Lawyer, Domina Law Group.

An article covering the forum will be posted to www.sdfu.org during the week of September 4. South Dakota Farmers Union website is also where readers can go to learn more about how South Dakota Farmers Union works to support family farmers and ranchers and view the Farm Safety Quiz Bowl Results.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 3 of 81



Whatever it takes!!!

Doug Sippel was gracious enough to allow the GDILIVE crew to use the back of his pickup to set up shop for livestreaming the football game Friday in Waubay. They were up on a hill and had a great vantage point. Mike Nehls, on the tailgate, did the play-by-play, Jeslyn Kosel ran the camera and Paul Kosel tried to keep everything going. Believe it or not, this is the ninth season of GDILIVE.COM. (Photo courtesy Doug Sippel)



Tina, Jeslyn and Paul Kosel attended the graduation ceremony of Julianna Kosel at the Paul Mitchell the School in Rapid City, on August 30th.

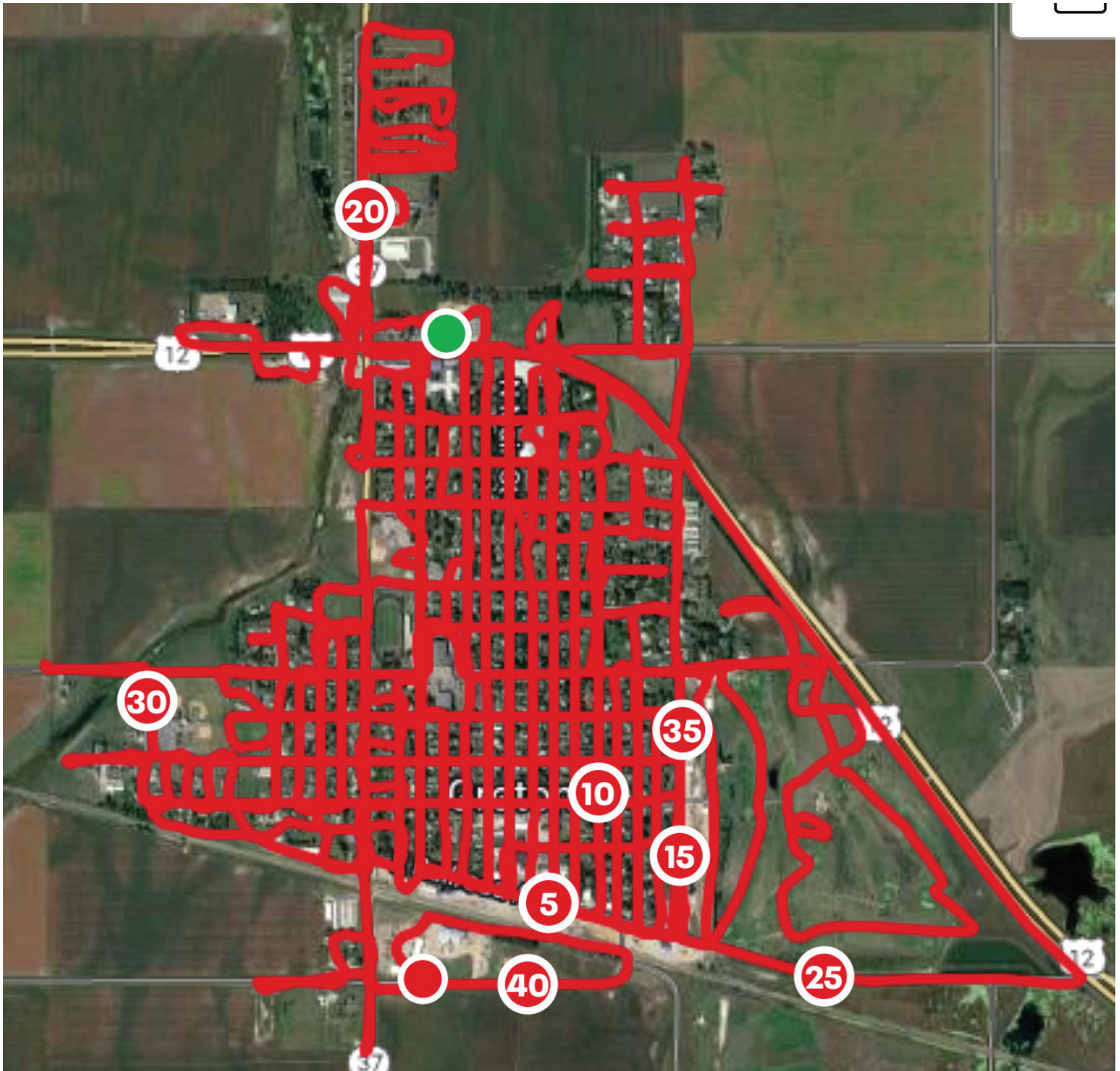


Julianna Kosel completes Cosmetology Course



Julianna Kosel completed her 1,500 hours of Cosmetology Course at Paul Mitchell the School in Rapid City. A graduation ceremony was held Wednesday, Aug. 30, at the school. In addition to the course, she was involved in two clubs at the school. The Be Nice Club is a club they can join that promotes the Paul Mitchell Be Nice Culture by FUNraising for local charities, doing inclusive activities inside the school to promote a welcoming/supportive environment for all students/staff, or doing community projects outside of school to bring our community together or to help raise awareness by offering needed items to those in need in our community.

Julianna was also a member of the John Paul Mitchell Club. It is a club that helps raise funds or gather item donations for the animals in need in local community!



City of Groton conducts adult mosquito control

The City of Groton conducted an adult mosquito control Saturday evening. 10.3 gallons of Perm-X UL 4-4 was used. Wind was SSW and was very light. Temperature was around 80 degrees. 37.3 miles were driven.

Lake County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: U.S. Highway 81, mile marker 83, 12 miles west of Madison, S.D.

When: 1:25 a.m., Saturday, September 2, 2023

Driver 1: Male, 83, Fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 2017 Chevrolet Cruz

Driver 2: Female, 22, No injuries

Vehicle 2: 2007 Ford F-250

Passenger in vehicle 2: Male, 21, Minor injuries

Passenger in vehicle 2: Male, 21, Serious non-life-threatening injuries

Passenger in vehicle 2: Male, 21, Minor injuries

Lake County, S.D.- One person died early this morning in a two vehicle crash 12 miles west of Madison, S.D.

The names of the persons involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates a 2017 Chevrolet Cruz was traveling east on S.D. Highway 81. A 2007 Ford F-250 was traveling west on S.D. Highway 81. The Cruz entered the oncoming lane of travel and collided with the F-250.

The 83-year-old male driver of the Chevrolet Cruz sustained fatal injuries and was declared deceased at the scene.

He was wearing a seatbelt.

The 22-year-old female driver of the Ford F-250 was not injured.

She was wearing a seatbelt.

There were three passengers in the F-250.

A male passenger, age 21, sustained minor injuries

He was wearing a seatbelt.

A male passenger, age 21, sustained Serious non-life-threatening injuries

He was not wearing a seatbelt.

A male, age 21, sustained minor injuries.

He was not wearing a seatbelt.

South Dakota's Highway Patrol is investigating the crash. All information released so far is only preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

Names Released in Charles Mix County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: S.D. Highway 46 and S.D. Highway 50 (Intersection), 2 miles west of Wagner, S.D.

When: 9:34 p.m., Tuesday, Aug 29, 2023

Driver No. 1: Robert Kozik, 68, Twin Lake, MI., Fatal injuries

Vehicle No. 1: 2015 Dodge Grand Caravan

Driver No. 2: Wayne Fiebelkorn, 47, Dallas, S.D, Not injured

Vehicle No. 2: 2019 Peterbilt Semi tractor trailer

CHARLES MIX COUNTY, S.D.- A Twin Lake, MI. man has been identified as the person who died Tuesday night in a car versus semi collision two miles west of Wagner, S.D.

Preliminary crash information indicates a 2015 Dodge Grand Caravan was traveling south on S.D. Highway 50. At the intersection with S.D. Highway 46, the Grand Caravan stopped at the stop sign. A 2019 Peterbilt Semi tractor trailer was traveling westbound on SD 46 and did not have a stop sign at the intersection with SD 50.

As the Semi was traveling through the intersection the Grand Caravan pulled out in front of the Semi. The Semi struck the Grand Caravan sending it into the north ditch. The driver of the Caravan was ejected from the vehicle.

The driver of the Grand Caravan, Robert Kozik, age 68 was taken by ambulance to the Wagner Hospital where he died as a result of his injuries.
He was not wearing a seatbelt.

The driver of the Semi, Wayne Fiebelkorn, age 47, was not injured.
He was wearing a seatbelt.

South Dakota's Highway Patrol is investigating the crash. All information released so far is only preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 8 of 81

Northern State Grabs Wins over Truman State and Christian Brothers

Monticello, Ark. – Back-to-back sweeps came together for the Northern State University volleyball team on Saturday with wins over Truman State and Christian Brothers. The Wolves tallied 86 kills between the two matches, averaging 14.33 kills per set.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 3, TSU 0

Final Score: NSU 3, CBU 0

Record: NSU 3-1

HOW IT HAPPENED vs. TRUMAN STATE

The Wolves made quick work of the bulldogs, hitting .368 with 40 kills

Northern tallied set victories of 25-13, 25-13, and 25-14

NSU added match highs in assists (36), digs (45), blocks (15), kills (40), and aces (4)

The Northern State defense forced 23 attack errors, as Truman State hit just -0.033 in the match

Hanna Thompson and Morissen Samuels led the offense with ten kills apiece, with five hitters notching an attack percentage above .300

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Morissen Samuels: 10 kills, .400 attack%, 10 digs, 3 blocks

Hanna Thompson: 10 kills, .333 attack%

Keri Walker: 32 assists, 5 digs, 2 kills, 2 blocks

Abby Meister: 12 digs

HOW IT HAPPENED vs. CHRISTIAN BROTHERS

The Wolves slid to victory with set scores of 25-21, 25-14, and 25-16

Northern hit .195 in the win, accumulating 46 digs, 42 assists, 77 digs, five blocks, and five aces

The Buccaneers recorded just 22 kills in the match and hit .069

Hanna Thompson led the Wolves offense as the only player in double figures, notching 12 kills

Keri Walker dished out 34 assists and added 14 digs, while Abby Meister led the team with 25 digs

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Hanna Thompson: 12 kills, 5 digs

A'Lailah Perry: 9 kills, 1 block

Abby Brooks: 8 kills, .375 attack%, 1 block

Morissen Samuels: 8 kills, 8 digs, 1 block, and 1 ace

Abby Meister: 25 digs

Reece Johnson: 13 digs, 2 aces

UP NEXT

The Wolves travel to Spearfish next Thursday through Saturday with matches scheduled against Black Hills State, Montana State Billings, Texas A&M Kingsville, and South Dakota Mines. Game times and match information are listed on the schedule page at nsuwolves.com.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 9 of 81

Gov Noem's "Freedom Works Here" is Bringing People to South Dakota

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem's "Freedom Works Here" nationwide workforce recruitment campaign has 1,289 applicants in the final stages of moving to South Dakota. The week of August 20th-26th saw the largest jump in this number since the start of the campaign. During that week, the "Bright Side" ad aired during the first Republican presidential primary debate on Fox News.

"South Dakota businesses are starting to reap the benefits of this workforce recruitment campaign," said Governor Noem. "We'd like to share some of the incredible success stories of businesses that have actually been able to fill some of their workforce needs by welcoming our newest citizens to the best state in the nation."

Glacial Lakes Rubber & Plastics, a business located in Watertown, had 40 job openings early this spring. Now, they only have 10 job openings. Recently, they have hired 14 workers from Texas, California, Colorado, and Minnesota.

Demkota Beef in Aberdeen has also hired 82 workers from out of state in the last six weeks. They have been recruiting from Texas, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Indiana, Illinois, Arkansas, Florida, Colorado, and Missouri.

6,039 people have applied to move to South Dakota through "Freedom Works Here." The most applications have come from California (959), Texas (448), Florida (445), Minnesota (353), and New York (276). 168 South Dakotans have also used the campaign as a tool to get plugged into career opportunities. A map showing where applicants are from can be found here.

These numbers represent those working directly through the "Freedom Works Here" program. Even more people are finding jobs and moving to South Dakota of their own accord after seeing the ads.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 10 of 81



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,

Dam Hansen & Eugenia Strom

Groton Transit

Steve Smith, Sherry Koehler, Topper Tostad, Dick Kolker

Groton Daily Independent

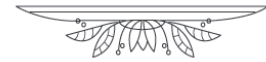
Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 11 of 81



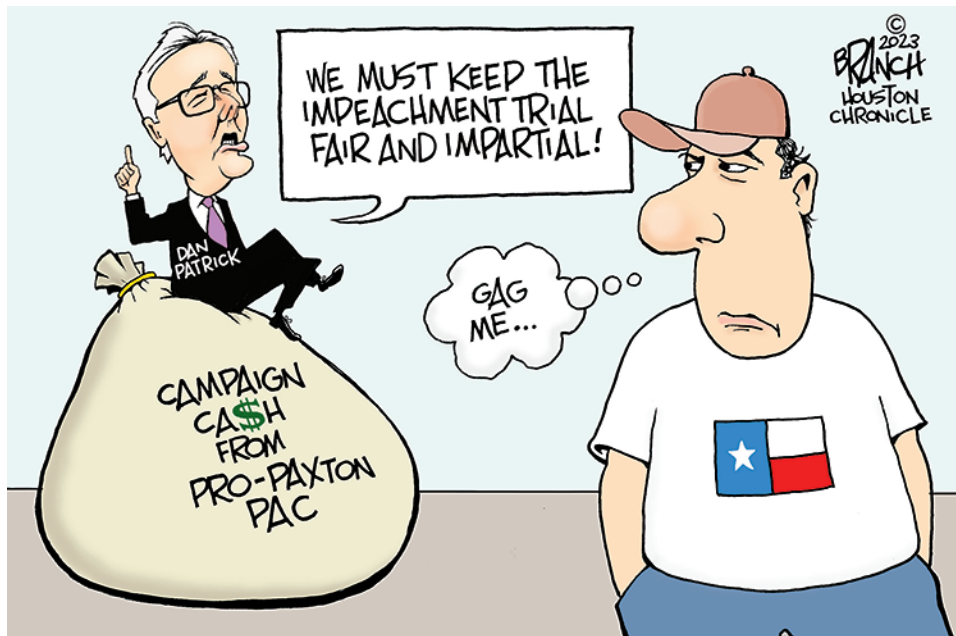
THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

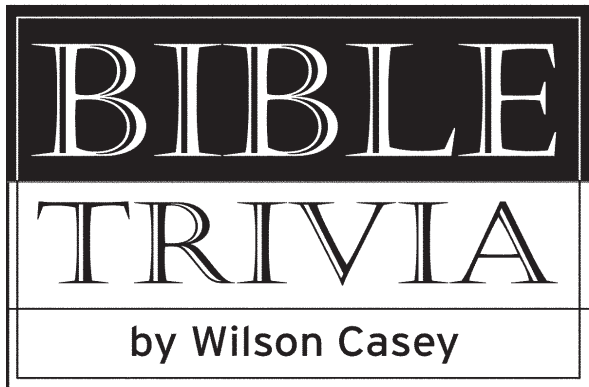
*If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
when men rose up against us, then they would have
swallowed us alive, when their wrath was kindled
against us; then the waters would have overwhelmed
us, the stream would have gone over our soul...*

PSALM 124: 2-4



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1. Is the book of Labour (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From Acts 20:35, “That so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words, it is more _____ to give than to receive.” *Righteous, Understanding, Blessed, Beautiful*

3. Ecclesiastes 3:13 states, “And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the _____ of God.” *Will, Gift, Guidance, Law*

4. From Proverbs 14:23, “In all labour there is profit, but the _____ of the lips tendeth only to penury.” *Whispering, Closing, Talk, Howling*

5. In Ephesians 4:28, “Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his _____.” *Brothers, Soul, Might, Hands*

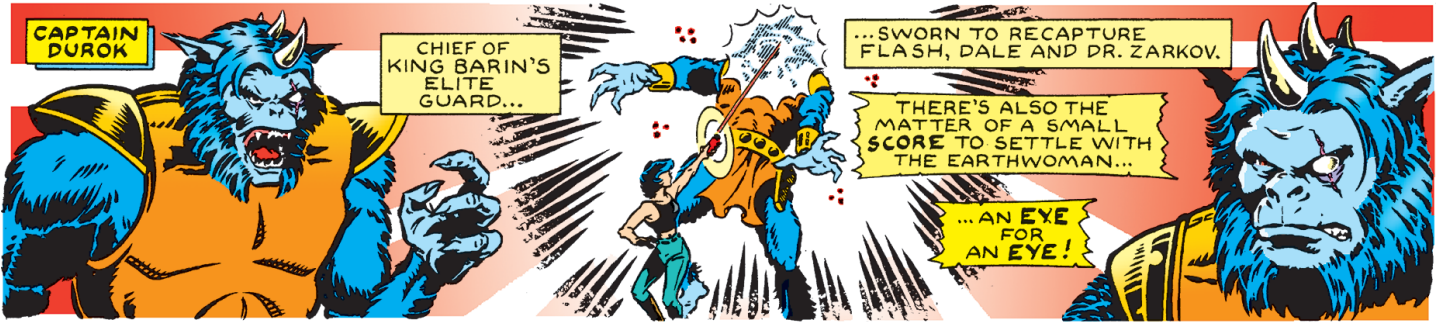
6. From Exodus 20:9, how many days shalt thou labour and do all thy work? *Two, Four, Six, Seven*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Blessed, 3) Gift, 4) Talk, 5) Hands, 6) Six

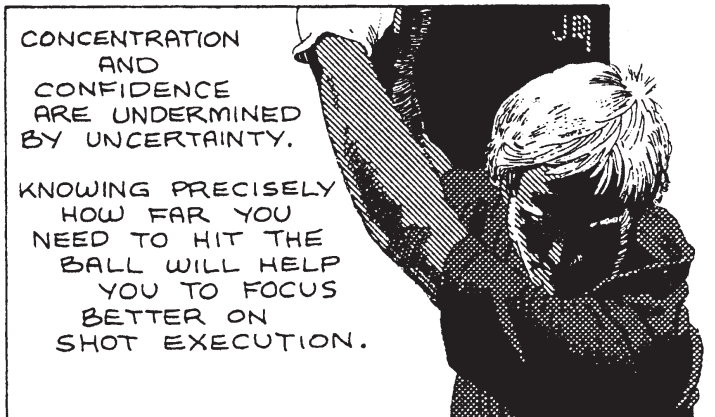
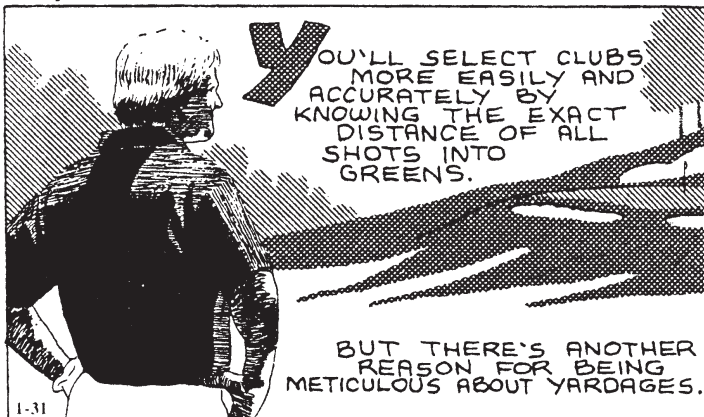
Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey’s subscriber site at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 13 of 81



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





Spinal Cord Injury Misdiagnosed as Blood Pressure Stroke

DEAR DR. ROACH: Have you ever heard of a “low blood pressure stroke”? That was my husband’s (incorrect) diagnosis several years back when he suddenly could not move his arms and legs. He was told that not enough oxygen was getting to his spine. (His blood pressure is historically low, usually around 90/60.)

That lasted about seven months, and he was bedridden the entire time. He then went to a neurosurgeon and was (correctly) diagnosed with a spinal cord injury. He had C1-C2 surgery and had use of his limbs the next day. After months of physical therapy, he regained a lot of function.

We’ve never heard of that diagnosis before or after his experience. Does it really exist? — E.S.K.

ANSWER: The brain has tremendous ability to regulate its own blood flow under a very wide range of blood pressures, but there are some limits. When a person is used to very high blood pressure levels, such as 200/110 for months or years, a sudden drop to 90/60 (or even 120/80 sometimes) can cause a stroke. That’s the main reason we don’t lower blood pressure too quickly in people who have had very high blood pressure levels for a long time. It takes weeks or months for the brain to recover its ability to regulate blood flow.

In a person who has a heart attack, prolonged low blood pressure (or no blood pressure) will also cause brain damage. That’s why starting CPR as quickly as possible is so critical in order to preserve brain function.

In both of these cases, not enough

system (the brain, the spinal cord and the retinas), which can lead to cell death — the hallmark of a stroke. But these are extreme cases.

A healthy person whose normal blood pressure is around 90/60 is at risk for fainting when suddenly standing; however, they are at a lower-than-average risk for heart disease and stroke. The diagnosis of “a low blood pressure stroke” for your husband doesn’t make any sense at all to me, and advanced imaging of the brain should have made it abundantly clear that it was not the right diagnosis.

I’m shocked that he wasn’t treated correctly for that long. But I’m very happy to hear that his neurosurgeon did not assume the diagnosis of a stroke, instead making the correct diagnosis and performing the procedure to help him recover. Your husband is fortunate that he still had neurological function to recover after such a long time, since spinal cord injuries generally heal better when treated promptly.

DEAR DR. ROACH: My primary care physician and blood specialist claim there is nothing that will increase white blood cell count. Are there any supplements that I can take or foods I can eat to improve the low count? — R.J.L.

ANSWER: The question is, why is your white blood cell count low? Some people have low white blood cell counts for no reason; it runs in families, so there aren’t any health concerns there. However, there are a large variety of blood diseases that cause low white cell counts. Some affect the lymphocytes, while others affect the granulocytes (the two main types of white cells).

Nutritional deficiencies are extremely rare in North America (vitamin B12, folic acid and copper are the exceptions that should be looked for), so neither diet nor supplements are usually helpful. If there’s an absence of blood disease or symptoms, low white blood cell counts usually do not need treatment.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 15 of 81



Yara Shahidi, left, and Odessa A'zion star in "Sitting in Bars with Cake." Courtesy of Amazon Prime Video

"The Little Mermaid" (PG) -- The live-action adaptation of Disney's 1989 animated classic hits streaming on Sept. 6 after racking up \$568 million in the box office. In her first lead role in film after having a promising start in music, Halle Bailey ("Grown-ish") puts a refreshing spin on the daydreaming red-haired mermaid, with vocals that simply couldn't be paired better for a live-action version of Ariel. Melissa McCarthy ("Bridesmaids") takes on the treacherous (and fabulous) villain, Ursula, while Prince Eric is played by Cambridge

alumni Jonah Hauer-King. While some of the visual effects of the film did leave something to be desired, the final moments between Ariel and Ursula make for a beautiful bone-chilling climax. (Disney+)

"Love Again" (PG-13) -- If you're looking for a conventional rom-com to pour your heart into, look no further than Priyanka Chopra Jonas' new film, out now. Chopra Jonas, who you might've seen in any of her numerous Bollywood films or thriller series like "Citadel" and "Quantico," plays Mira, a children's book author still mourning the loss of her fiancé. One of the only things that gives her solace is texting his old phone number, but she doesn't realize that a stranger, named Rob, now has her ex's old number. Rob lets these messages pile up, until he's overcome with such curiosity about the messages that he has to put a face to the name. When Mira and Rob finally do meet, sparks fly between them both, leaving Rob to figure out how to tell Mira that he's always been on the other line of those messages. (Netflix)

"Sitting in Bars with Cake" (PG-13) -- From Trish Sie, the director of "Pitch Perfect 3," this film follows two 20-somethings: a shy baker named Jane and her longtime best friend, Corinne. When Jane brings one of her cakes to the bar where Corinne's celebrating her birthday, Jane suddenly becomes the center of attention, and the girls realize that cake is just the icebreaker Jane always needed to find her romantic match. So, they plan to proceed with their "cake barring" once a week for a year, until Corinne receives a diagnosis that throws a wrench in their plans and their friendship. Yara Shahidi ("Black-ish") and Odessa A'zion ("Fam") lead this touching film about friendship and love, out on Sept. 8. (Amazon Prime Video)

"The Changeling" (TV-MA) -- LaKeith Stanfield ("Judas and the Black Messiah") and Clark Backo ("Letterkenny") star in the lead roles for this new horror fantasy series based on the novel by Victor LaValle. Apollo (Stanfield) is settling into his new life as a father to his first child and as a husband to his wife, Emma (Backo). Emma, however, suffers from symptoms of post-partum depression, and with her symptoms going untreated, she commits a horrific act, then disappears into thin air. Now at a loss on what to do next, Apollo has no choice but to search for her in a New York City he didn't know existed. The first three episodes of the series AppleTV+ described as "a fairytale for grown-ups" premiere Sept. 8. (AppleTV+)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 16 of 81



1. Name the group that released the 1966 version of "Cherish."
2. Who wrote and released "Just When I Needed You Most"?
3. What prompted Neil Diamond to write "Sweet Caroline"?
4. Who released "Heaven Must Be Missing an Angel"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Our guardian star lost all its glow the day that I lost you. It lost all its glitter the day you said no."

Answers

1. The Association. The song went to No. 1 and ended the year as the No. 7 song per Billboard -- until the rankings were revised and the song ended up as No. 2.
2. Randy VanWarmer, in 1979. VanWarmer's recording company didn't especially like the song, but it topped the adult contemporary chart.
3. Diamond wrote the song after seeing a photo of President Kennedy's daughter Caroline.
4. Tavares. The song was too long and had to be split between a- and b-sides of the records.
5. "Mr. Blue," by the Fleetwoods, in 1959. The song isn't to be confused with the Catherine Feeny "Mr. Blue" that ended the season six finale of "BoJack Horseman," the animated adult comedy TV series. Although the Fleetwoods' song might have been the better choice.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



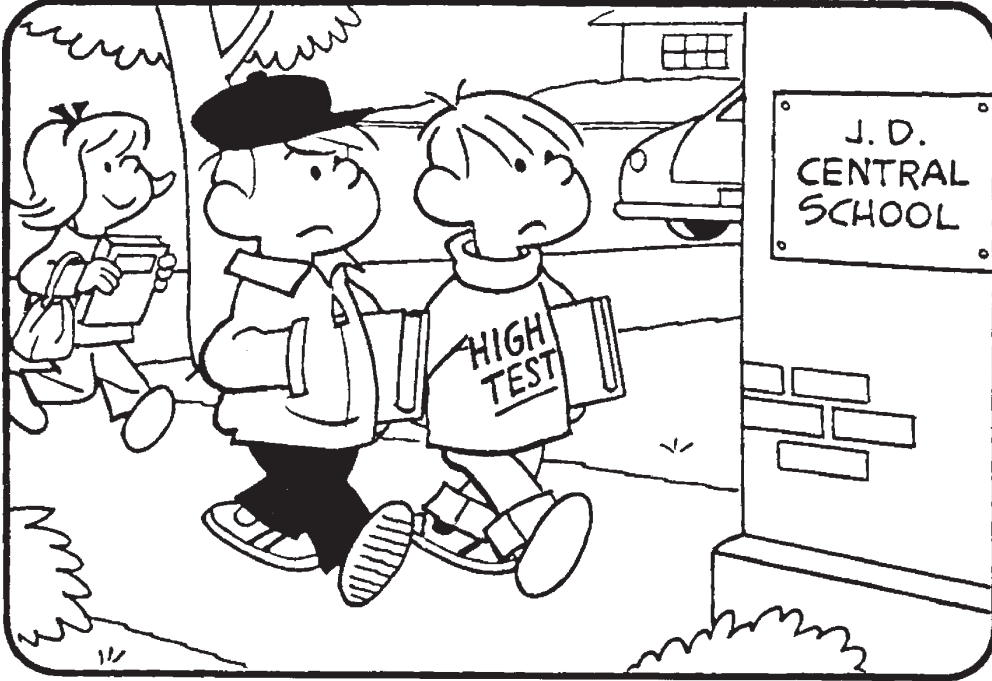
"Have you ever seen a credit card melt?"

Groton Daily Independent

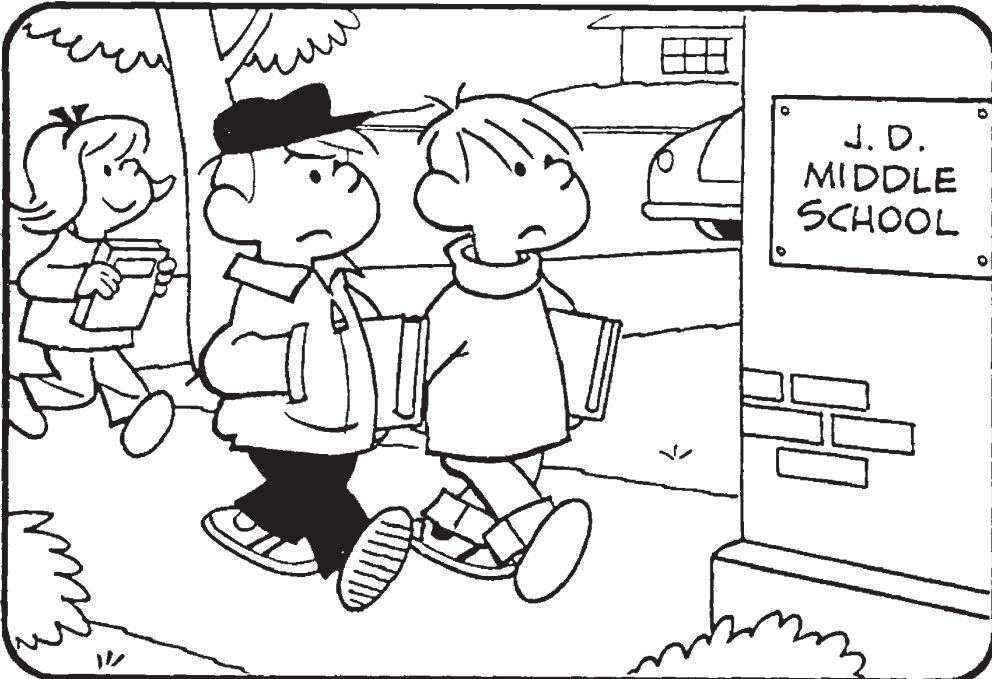
Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 17 of 81

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Purse is missing. 2. Cap is missing. 3. Sweater words are missing. 4. Book is moved. 5. Car is moved. 6. School name is different.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 18 of 81



* When I need to dust the ceiling, I don't have a fancy contraption; I just use my broom. If you have popcorn ceilings, you can rubber band a feather duster to the end of your broom. Look around your house, and maybe you'll find a sneaky cleaning purpose for everyday items.

* Dirty candles can be cleaned up quickly with a leg of panty hose. Slip the candle in the hose, rub the outside of the candle and release.

* "Rub banana on CDs with scratches. Wipe the excess off with a soft towel and make sure all of the banana is gone before you put it in your player. It usually does the trick for me." -- E. in Maine

* You can use a coffee filter to clean the screen of your television. It's not scratchy and non-static. Be sure not to

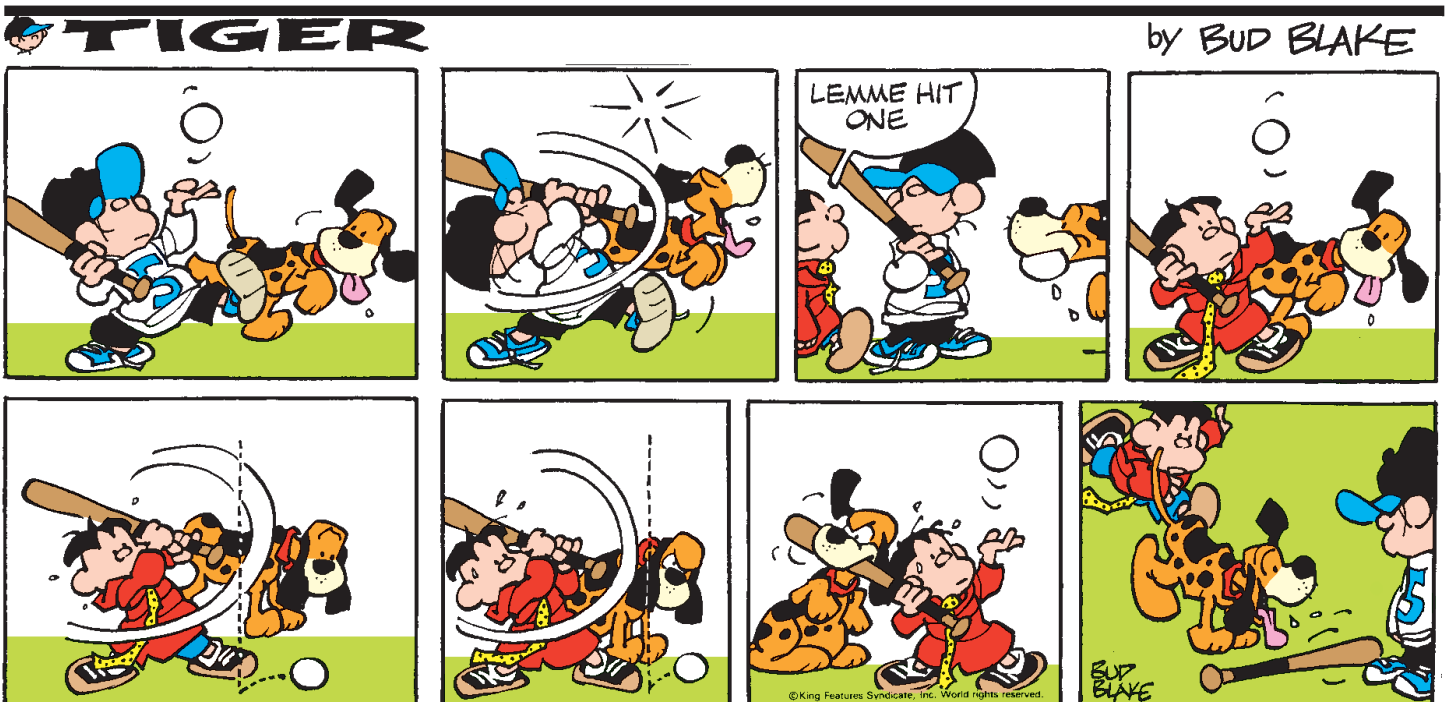
press down hard into today's screens. And use only approved cleaners for your flat-screen and plasma television sets.

* "I purchased a medium-size colander with a handle at the dollar store. I have it hanging on a hook in the kids' bathtub. It's much easier for them to scoop toys out of the water, and more fun too, I think." -- A.C. in Nebraska

* Need to clean your iron? Scrub the face with salt. Then heat it and run the iron over the salt. I pour the salt on foil for even more heat effect.

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 19 of 81

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Martial art
- 5 Smack a baseball
- 9 Romance
- 12 Abbr. on a phone
- 13 Sunscreen additive
- 14 "Big Blue"
- 15 Royal with a golden touch
- 17 Actress Vardalos
- 18 Naval rank
- 19 Avid
- 21 Hosp. triage area
- 22 Parsley and sage
- 24 Stately trees
- 27 Candle dripping sounds
- 28 Incite
- 31 Luau souvenir
- 32 Glamorous Gardner
- 33 Santa — winds
- 34 Ward (off)
- 36 Tiara sparkler
- 37 Winter blanket
- 38 Accepted fact
- 40 "I see"
- 41 Flood protection
- 43 Clothe
- 47 Coach Parseghian
- 48 Cell phone

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| 51 | | | | | 52 | | | | | 53 | | |
| 54 | | | | | 55 | | | | | 56 | | |

- 9 Airplane meal
- 10 Theater award
- 11 Sharif of "Funny Girl"
- 16 Ball club VIP
- 20 Six-pack muscles
- 22 Refuge
- 23 Pre-diploma hurdle
- 24 Sprite
- 25 Grant's foe
- 26 Prized Chinese vessel
- 27 Carry on
- 29 Popular card game
- 30 Cold and damp
- 35 Conk out
- 37 Hide from view
- 39 Action words
- 40 Busy insect
- 41 Young fellows
- 42 New York canal
- 43 Early birds?
- 44 Formerly
- 45 Phone inventor
- 46 Actor Morales
- 49 401(k) alternative
- 50 Aye canceler

DOWN

- 1 Gag
- 2 — arms
- 3 Lairs
- 4 Wild parties
- 5 Whirl
- 6 Bankroll
- 7 Lawyers' org.
- 8 Shocking weapon

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 20 of 81

— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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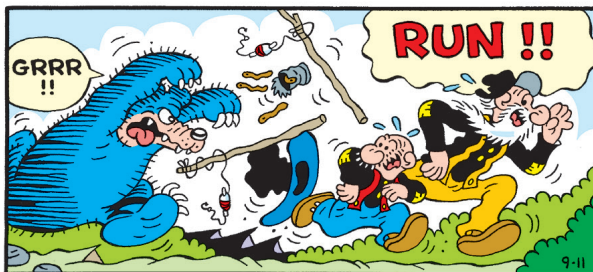
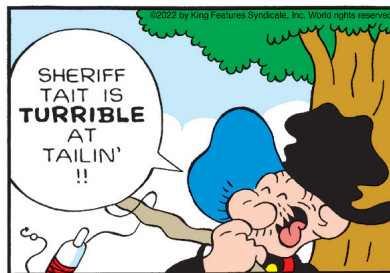
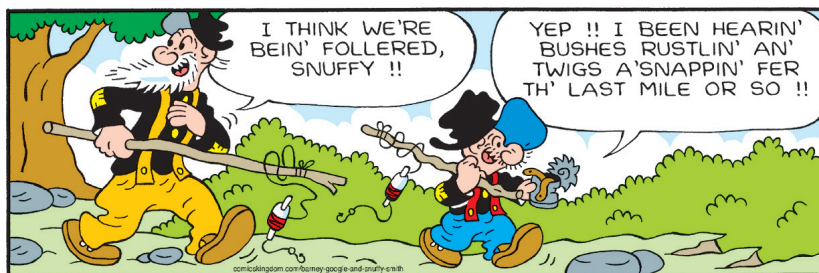
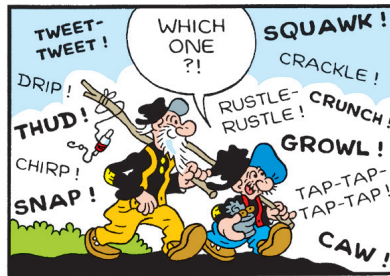
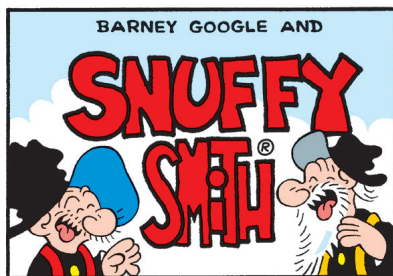
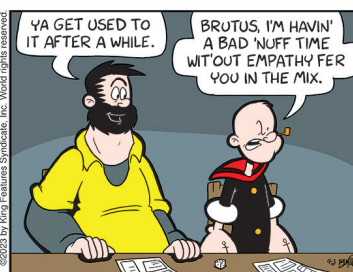
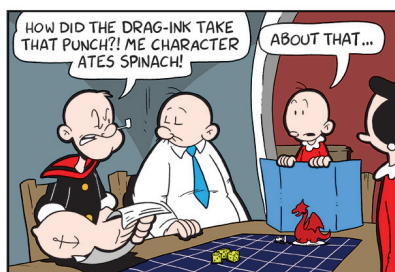
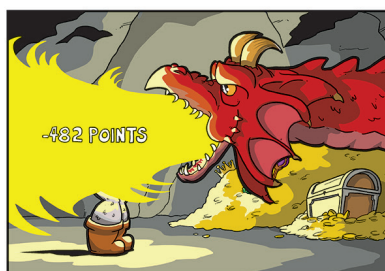
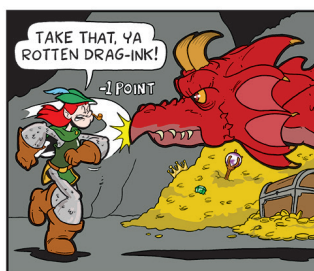
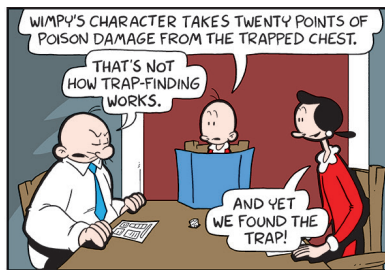
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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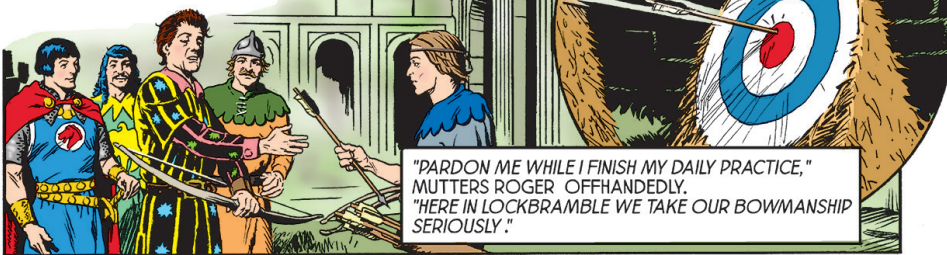
Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 21 of 81



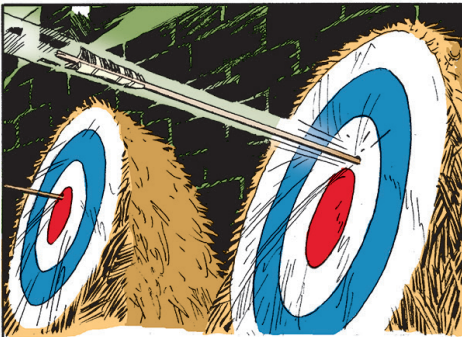
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 22 of 81

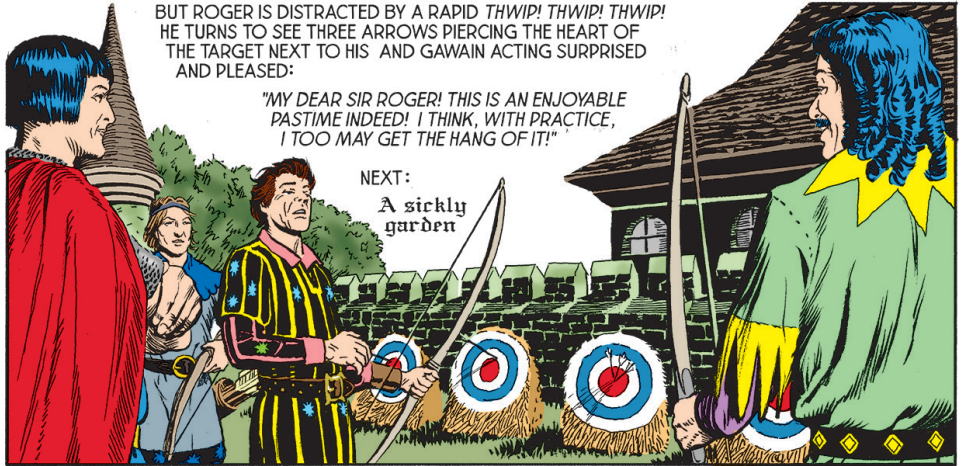
Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES



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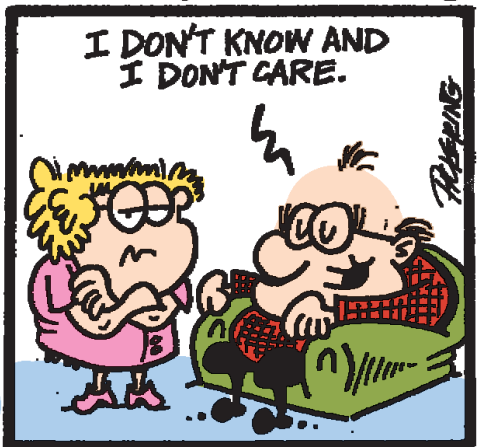
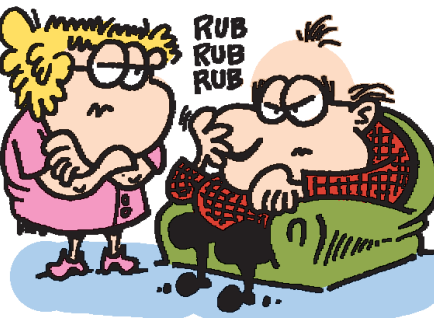
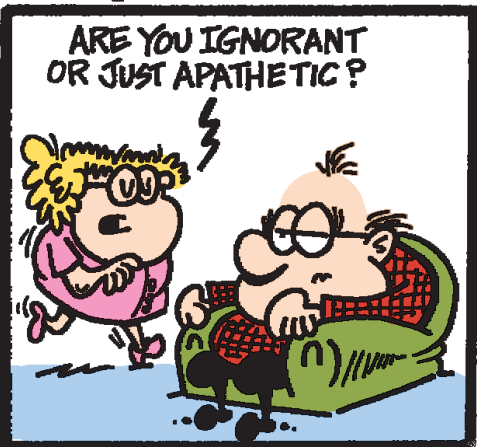


... AND CALMLY REPLIES, "MY GOOD FRIEND LORD GRUNYARD HAS CONCERNS ABOUT THE MORALE OF HIS TENANTS AND THEIR AFFAIRS." ROGER RANKLES: "WHAT WOULD OUR ABSENT LORD KNOW ABOUT..."



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Skip the Yard Sale

If all the decluttering you did over the summer has now left you with piles of belongings, you might be ready to just have it all gone.

And you might say, "I think I'll hold a yard sale!" If you've been to several yard sales, it looks so easy.

Holding a yard sale is a lot of work! There's all that sorting, and pricing, and carrying, and recruiting of help, not to mention going around to post flyers (and taking them down after the event), as well as worrying whether the weather will cooperate with a mild, non-rainy day. And then you carry back into the house all the things you didn't sell and stack them up again.

When you really just want it all gone, you have a few other choices. What you need to remember is the "twice" rule: Only pick up and carry an item twice. You pick up an item and put it in your vehicle, and you pick up that item to take it to its final spot. That's it.

A consignment shop near you can help you earn a few dollars for items in good condition. Some will concentrate on clothing and others might prefer bric-a-brac and knick-knacks. Be sure to clarify the details before you take your items to drop off: How is the pricing decided and what cut does the shop take? Is there a time limit on how long your items can stay there? Is your agreement in writing?

Donations to charity organizations such as Goodwill or The Salvation Army won't get you any cash, but you might end up with a small tax deduction if you get a receipt. Check their websites for information on how to calculate the value of your donations.

Remember: Only pick up an item twice!

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 24 of 81

1. Punter Reggie Roby, who played 16 NFL seasons from 1983-98, played for what college team?

2. The Guldpucken is an award presented annually to the top ice hockey player from what country?

3. What 7-foot-1-inch-tall center from Marquette University was selected by the Washington Bullets in the second round of the 1994 NBA Draft?

4. What Pulitzer Prize-winning sports columnist for The New York Times (1942-74) also wrote the books "Kings of the Home Run" (1962) and "Pro Football's Hall of Fame" (1965)?

5. Two NASCAR drivers were killed in separate incidents during practice for the 1994 Daytona 500. Who were they?

6. Name the golfer from Northern Ireland who won the 2010 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach Golf Links.

7. The Bravos de Margarita, Navegantes del Magallanes and Tigres de Aragua are pro baseball teams in what South American country?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. The Iowa Hawkeyes.

2. Sweden.

3. Jim McIlvaine.

4. Arthur Daley.

5. Neil Bonnett and Rodney Orr.

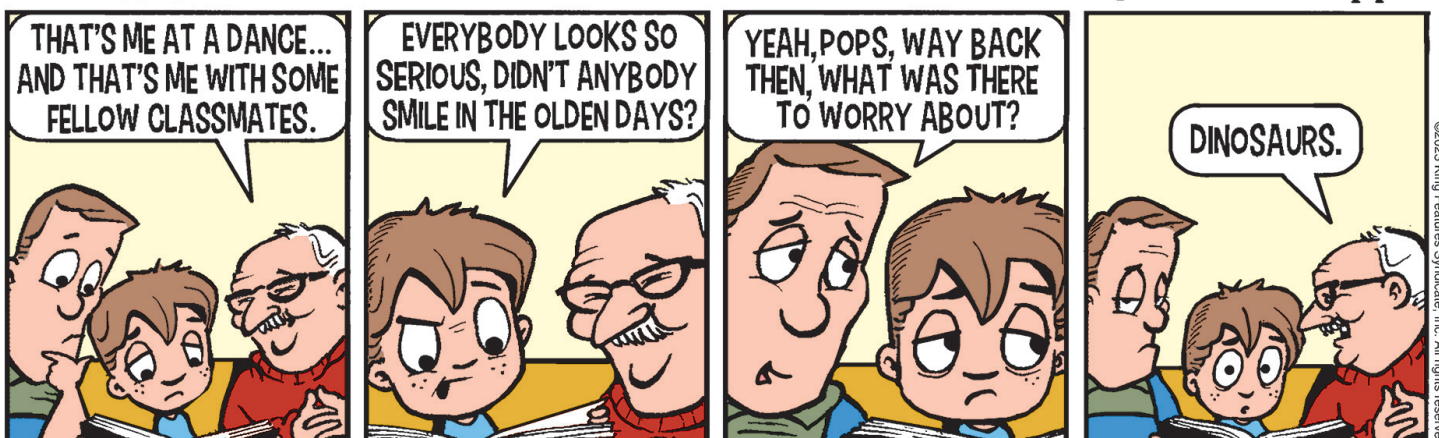
6. Graeme McDowell.

7. Venezuela.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Keep Dogs Leashed on the Trail

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Can we talk about people on hiking paths who let their dogs run off-leash? I'm getting increasingly frustrated at the number of loose dogs that run up to my dog, Chester, when we're out for a day hike. Since the pandemic, it seems to happen much more often. I keep my dog on a leash because he's big, boisterous and could knock an adult down if he took off running. Why can't other people do the same? -- Bev in Stoneham, Massachusetts

DEAR BEV: I hear you! As a hiker myself, I get the appeal of going out to wild spaces. And I love bringing my dog along. But she stays on her leash. It's not just the right thing for dog owners to do, it's the law in

most state parks. Some federal parks don't even allow dogs or other pets, often because of fragile ecology.

Hikers, check the rules of the park or wildlife area you're planning to walk through before leaving home. Even if there are no rules about dogs, keep your dog on a leash. Not only will it protect your dog from encounters with unappreciative wildlife (like skunks, rattlesnakes and porcupines), it will also protect other hikers and their dogs from injury and undue stress. Not all dogs on the trail are friendly or well-socialized.

And finally, pick up your dog's poop and carry it out with you. Yes, it's gross. But it preserves the beauty and ecology of the park. And it's the right thing to do.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* In 2014, there was a school in Turin, Italy, that had just one teacher and one student. Though the latter admitted to being lonely, officials decided to keep the school open as long as at least one pupil was enrolled.

* Altocalciphilia is the medical term for a shoe addiction.

* Embryonic bats go through a stage called "peek-a-boo," when their wings grow to cover their eyes.

* Muhammad Ali's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame is the only star that is not on the sidewalk, but on the wall of the Kodak Theatre, to honor the boxing champ's request that he "did not want to be walked on."

* Pennies are used to adjust the time in London's famous Big Ben clock tower. A single cent can change the pendulum's center of mass and alter the time by 0.4 seconds per day.

* Michael Bay filmed Megan Fox washing his Ferrari as her audition for "Transformers."

* Halley's Comet has two correct pronunciations. It can rhyme with "daily" or "valley" since its discoverer, Edmond Halley, spelled his name six different ways during his lifetime.

* The 2003 invasion of Iraq was originally dubbed "Operation Iraqi Liberation" but quickly changed due to the fact its acronym spelled out "oil."

* After learning that her husband had been killed in World War II, Mariya Oktyabrskaya sold everything she owned to donate a tank to the Soviet Red Army, with the condition that she be allowed to drive it. When the tank was hit by gunfire, she would not only risk her own life to jump out and repair it, but ended up becoming the first female tanker to receive the Hero of the Soviet Union award.

Thought for the Day: "Too many people overvalue what they are not and undervalue what they are." -- Malcolm Forbes

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- If frost is forecast, cover tender plants, such as tomatoes, cucumbers and squash. It doesn't take much to damage or kill them.
- Finish harvesting, and dry, freeze and/or can your fruits and vegetables.
- Start saving your seeds of vegetables, flowers, and herbs.
- Divide perennials, replant and/or share with friends.
- Bring houseplants in from outdoors; check for bugs and diseases, and apply controls.
- Stop fertilizing roses, and remove dead blooms and foliage. – Brenda Weaver

Source: naturespath.com



by Freddy Groves

The VA OIG Strikes Again

Anyone who calls in advance with threats to kill staff, and then tries to enter a federal building with a loaded firearm, can't be too bright. The man who did this, demanding prescription drugs in his voicemail message, couldn't have been surprised when he was met by Veteran Affairs Police and relieved of the gun in his pocket.

And what was he going to do with those zip ties he had? His mother, who had driven him to the Department of Veterans Affairs clinic and claimed not

to know her son planned violence (and then bailed him out the same day on a \$500 surety bond), told investigators her son's motive would have been to take his doctor hostage.

It wasn't until a day later, when he told an acquaintance he planned to return to the VA that the police took it seriously and grabbed him. When the VA OIG talked to him, the bail amount suddenly went up to \$500,000.

And then there's the guy who tried to get an increase in his VA disability benefits for service-connected degenerative disc disease with degenerative arthritis. He claimed he had trouble walking, getting out of bed, lifting anything, bending and so on. Sounds quite painful, truthfully, and his exam videos showed that he did indeed have trouble with those activities.

Except it wasn't the truth. He neglected to mention his fitness club membership when he went for his physical exams. VA OIG investigators filmed him at the club lifting, bending, squatting ... and completing leg presses with 800 pounds of weights. They even discovered his personal stash of online videos showing him doing all those activities. He went to the fitness club the same day as (and the day after) one of his medical exams for Social Security disability, which he'd also applied for.

When he's sentenced he could get 10 years, not to mention a \$250,000 fine, plus an order to pay back the money he stole from the VA.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 28 of 81

Wishing Well®

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HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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1. FOOD & DRINK: What does the acronym "IPA" stand for in a beer?
2. LITERATURE: Who is the author of "The Hunger Games" series?
3. U.S. STATES: Which state has the most lighthouses?
4. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of New Zealand?
5. GAMES: What is a perfect score in bowling?
6. SCIENCE: What does an auxanometer measure?
7. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a female donkey called?
8. MOVIES: Which holiday is celebrated at the end of "When Harry Met Sally"?
9. TELEVISION: Which entertainer has hosted "Saturday Night Live" the most?
10. ANATOMY: What is the anatomical name for the kneecap?

Answers

1. India Pale Ale.
2. Suzanne Collins.
3. Michigan.
4. Wellington.
5. 300 points.
6. Plant growth.
7. A jenny.
8. New Year's Eve.
9. Actor Alec Baldwin, 17 times.
10. Patella.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

The Fight for Our Country

I was recently at the edge of “the Land of the Free” – the Southern border.

I’ve been to the border before, but this was my first time seeing it from the air. After taking an aerial tour, it became clearer to me than ever before that what we are witnessing at the border is a warzone. President Biden has failed to keep the United States of America secure.

This Southern border is a warzone – so I’m sending soldiers.

This is a war for our country. It’s a war for our federal laws and for our Constitution. Our sovereignty is being threatened by what’s happening at the Southern border every single day. Over 22,000 pounds of fentanyl has been captured by border patrol officers this year alone – enough to kill nearly 5 billion people. 32 pounds of fentanyl has been seized by South Dakota law enforcement officers in the last year – and while that might not seem like a lot, it is enough to kill 7.2 million people.

As a result of Biden’s refusal to take action, every state has become a border state. This crisis is impacting us here in South Dakota. This deteriorating situation has required Republican governors to do all we can to secure the border.

Two years ago, when Texas Governor Greg Abbott called for help securing the Southern border, I was the first governor to send National Guard troops. Our Lakota helicopters have also been at the border on a surveillance mission. And now, I’m sending more National Guard soldiers down to the border to keep the United States of America secure.

Our South Dakota National Guard is the best this nation has to offer. They have won multiple awards for their readiness, and they have shown me time and time again that I can trust them with any mission.

The Biden Administration should be sending help to Texas, but they continue to ignore federal law. Often, Mexican drug cartels use tribal reservations, like those in South Dakota, as a launchpad to facilitate the spread of their evil throughout the country. I have no jurisdiction on their reservations, and the Biden Administration is not enforcing federal law or supporting tribal law enforcement. The cartels know that the federal government won’t stop them.

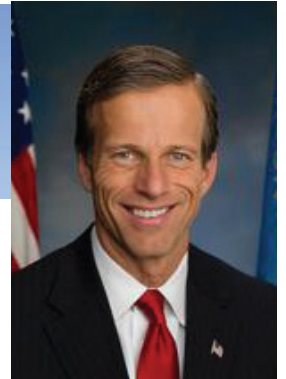
The Biden Administration is destroying our tribal reservations, facilitating trafficking of kids, and tearing our communities apart with drugs. President Biden’s policies are inhumane – so Republican governors are stepping up.

While I was at the Southern border, I met with Customs and Border Patrol and attended an Operation Lone Star Briefing. The main things that these border patrol officers need are flexibility and resources. They need to be able to do their job, and they need the proper resources to do it well.

We don’t need new laws; we just need President Biden to respect the laws that we already have. The Remain in Mexico policy must be reinstated. The border wall must be completed. We can’t allow Americans’ security to remain at risk while Biden does nothing.

The South Dakota National Guard is going to the Southern border to fight for our country. There is no one that I trust more to help end this warzone and secure our nation than these brave men and women. I thank them for answering the call to serve and for fighting for Freedom.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Good Luck This School Year

It's that time of year again. School is back in session, classrooms are full of students, and sports teams are taking the field. The beginning of a new school year is an important moment, not just for kids on their first day of kindergarten or seniors setting out for their final year. It's a chance for all students to start fresh, work hard, and set and attain new goals. So, whether you're trying to excel in class or going out for varsity – or both – I want to wish South Dakota's students all the best for this school year.

The value of a quality education cannot be overestimated. Education helps us build up our talents, discover new interests, and ultimately work toward a bright future. I'm grateful for the South Dakota teachers who work hard to support students and challenge young South Dakotans to do better. Both of my parents were educators, and I grew up seeing firsthand teachers' dedication to their students' success. Of course, like every parent, my parents took a keen interest in ensuring their five kids got a good education and became well-rounded adults. Kimberley and I did the same for our two daughters.

In addition to academics, extracurriculars like music, clubs, and sports help students learn and put important life skills into action. It's always a pleasure to meet student leaders from Future Farmers of America, the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, and other student groups. As I travel across South Dakota, I also try to attend as many local sporting events around the state as I can. Playing football and basketball and running track for the Jones County Coyotes taught me valuable life lessons. And it's great to see student athletes continuing the South Dakota spirit of competition with their towns supporting them and their teams. Sometimes I even get to meet some fellow tuba players in the band.

As the school year and sports seasons ramp up, though, inflation continues to strain family budgets. The price of groceries alone has increased 20 percent during the Biden administration. School supplies cost almost 24 percent more than they did two years ago. And sports registration fees and equipment can run in the hundreds of dollars. To help make youth sports more affordable for families, I introduced the PHIT Act, which would allow families to use pre-tax health savings accounts or flexible spending accounts to pay for youth sports registration and some of the gear their kids need to play. My bill is a small step to ensure more kids are able to play sports and enjoy the social and physical benefits of being active.

The beginning of the school year also has many students and their parents thinking about the future. Whether you're thinking about entering the workforce, learning a trade, or pursuing a college degree, South Dakota's schools do an excellent job preparing students for their next step. For South Dakotans who may be considering serving our country in the Armed Forces after high school, I have the opportunity as a U.S. senator to nominate South Dakotans to one of the multiple service academies. Information about the academy application process is available at thune.senate.gov or by calling any of my offices.

The beginning of a new school year is an exciting time. I encourage students to work hard, try new things, and set goals for the new year. And I'm certain that your parents, teachers, coaches, and communities will support you along the way.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 31 of 81



CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



On the Road Again

August has been a busy month! Every year, Congress has an extended “district work period.” It’s a time where members of Congress stop traveling back and forth to Washington and spend August in their home state to attend events or much-needed meetings, visit with constituents at fairs, sit down with business owners and community leaders, and host town halls. This time in the state helps us hear firsthand what is happening in communities big and small. Some may see August as a break from Congress doing their work, but it is filled with important meetings across the state to connect with South Dakotans.

I’ve been all across the state, from Hot Springs to Webster, North Sioux City to Newell—it’s easy to say I’ve spent a lot of time in the car. A day in each town is jam packed with events. One of my favorites is celebrating South Dakota agriculture at Dakotafest. I shared an update on the Farm Bill during South Dakota Farm Bureau’s Congressional forum, served lunch, and met producers from across the state who work hard day in and day out to provide quality products for Americans.

This August, I’ve hosted several Vietnam veteran pinning ceremonies, giving Vietnam veterans a proper thank you and welcome home. More than 100 Vietnam veterans have gathered at these ceremonies, bringing the total number of Vietnam veterans I have honored to almost 900 since I started the program in 2019.

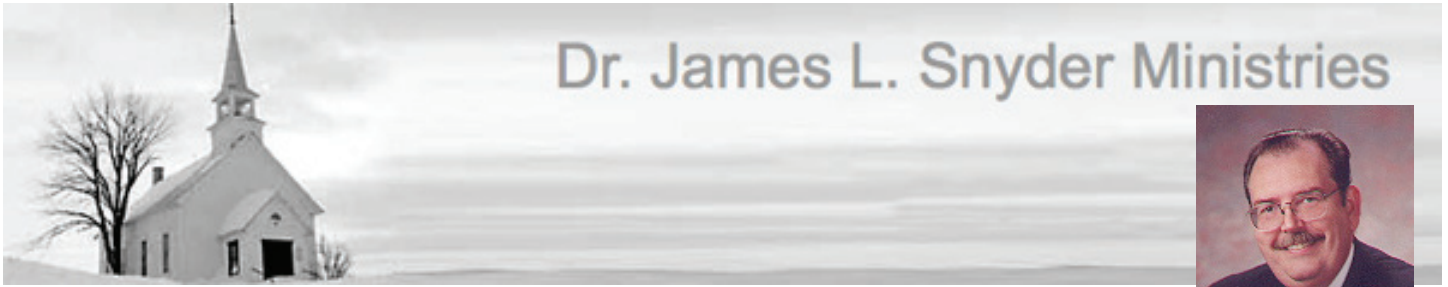
At the beginning of the month, I spoke at the Naturalization Ceremony in Sioux Falls. It was a privilege to congratulate new citizens on completing the citizenship process. These individuals bring unique talents to our state and I’m grateful for their decision to call South Dakota, and America, home.

I’ve met with dozens of business leaders, community leaders, students, and health care workers. They keep me updated on what is going on in each community, any needs they have, and progress on community and business improvements.

The time I spend going from town to town allows me to best represent you in Washington D.C. – I’m looking forward to a productive fall when Congress is back in session.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 32 of 81



What a Wacky World We Live in

I like the old saying, "Just when you think it can't get any worse, it does." This is the kind of world we live in today, and I'm still not adjusted to this sort of thing. I'm not sure I will ever adjust to the world around me.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I will be watching the news, and a story of some devastation somewhere in the world will come on. When this happens, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage will say, "What a wacky world we live in." And if anybody knows about wacky, it is she. After all, she married me.

A story happened in our city when a truck driver was driving under an overpass, and the truck was too big and smashed the overpass. That shut down traffic for at least one day. "What's wrong with that driver?" The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asked. "Doesn't he know about overpasses?" Then she sighed deeply and said, "What a wacky world we live in."

When I was young, we had the Three Stooges. Today we have the news media, and I'm unsure which one is wackier. Watching the news the other night, a similar story was being reported, and I looked at my wife and said, "What a wacky world we live in." I paused for a moment and then said, "It's not the world I grew up in." Then I laughed. I wasn't expecting her response, but after all this time, I should've expected something.

"Whatever made you think that you have grown up?" I didn't catch it at first, but I got what she said after a while. That gave me pause for thinking, have I really grown up?

When I was a teenager at home, my mother would get aggravated at me and say very dramatically, "Why don't you just grow up?"

Now, after over 50 years, my wife is questioning that I have grown up. After she said it to me, I pondered for quite a few days on what does it actually mean to grow up? And, most importantly of all, does anybody ever grow up? We may live in a wacky world because few people have actually grown up yet. So if we had more adults around, maybe things wouldn't get as wacky as it has become.

I wanted to ask The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, who I assume has grown up, what I need to do to grow up?" As we watched the news one night, she said, "What a wacky world we live in." At that point, I replied, "Maybe it's so wacky because people haven't grown up yet." She went on a tirade explaining why most people have not grown up yet. I tried to listen carefully and take a few notes, but none made sense. It's like a first-grader listening to a 12th-grader explaining the law of gravity. That makes no sense to them at all. I thought maybe I could get a few clues as to what I can do to grow up.

I couldn't keep it any longer, so I asked her, "What do you think I need to do to grow up?" I should never ask questions like this to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. "Well," she started, "you should stop acting like a silly person." I chuckled and said, "But what if I'm not acting?" Staring at me, she said, "That is exactly what I mean." "So, if you are not acting, you are the silliest person I have ever known." According to her, you can't be silly and grown-up at the same time.

I asked her for more ideas about growing up. "The next thing you need to do is stop thinking every situation is a joke." Pondering this, I'm not sure I will ever grow up if that is true. I see a joke where The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage sees something serious. She's much more grown-up than I ever will be. "There is a positive side to this wacky world of ours."

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me smiling. Then she continued, "If the world weren't

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 33 of 81

as wacky as it is, people would see that you're wacky." I did not know what she meant by that and would not press that point. The fact that she mentioned that is a plus for me, and I won't undermine that.

After all of this, I wonder if it's worth growing up. What good does it do to grow up when those people around you aren't? Maybe wacky is not that bad.

On the bright side, I'm going to try. I couldn't help but think of one of the strangest stories about David in 1 Samuel 21, "And he [David] changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?" David used "wacky" to his advantage. That worked for him and after giving some thought, maybe that could work for my advantage.

Of course, David was acting and I probably am not.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: The engine is fried on my old Honda Civic. What's the most environmentally friendly thing to do with this car?

-- Tom C., Venice, CA

Studies show that the typical combustion engine has a lifetime expectation of about 200,000 miles. For the average American, reaching this mileage takes about 14 years. Surprisingly, a survey by Zebra found that the average American only keeps their longest-owned car for eight years. The manufacturing of new cars, even electric ones, generates heavy emissions, contributing to pollution. Large automotive conglomerates like Stellantis (parent company of well-known brands like RAM, Maserati, Jeep, Chrysler and Dodge) are now focusing on extending car lifetimes and reusing parts to reduce carbon emissions.

One obvious option is engine repair or replacement. Repairing or replacing your car's engine, though it may seem like a weak investment, is more environmentally friendly than buying a brand-new car. However, older cars often have poor fuel efficiency, so it is good to check online databases to compare your old car's fuel efficiency with newer models you're considering.

Another possibility is to convert your gasoline-powered engine to electric. But it is no easy task, as you'll have to not only remove and replace the engine itself but also the transmission, gas tank and exhaust system. This option is certainly more eco-friendly than buying a new car, and you'll save on fuel costs. However, the immediate costs for the conversion kits, accessories and installation service can range from \$7,000 to \$20,000, making it reasonable only if you plan to keep your car for a while.

If your car is truly beyond repair, buying a hybrid or electric vehicle is likely the best option. Then if you're truly eco-motivated, you can choose to recycle your old car's parts yourself. In doing so, make sure to do so responsibly. Drain and recycle used motor oil. Some recycling centers accept it for re-refining and repurposing, and certain locations of Auto Zone and O'Reilly Auto Parts will recycle engine oil and filters for no cost. The same firms may also be willing to buy your car's battery for a small amount. The car's tires, if in good condition, can be held onto for spares or sold for repurposing.

Beyond those simple tasks, you'll need an auto-salvage yard or junkyard to handle the rest. They will crush the car frame and chassis. The metal is then melted and repurposed. Car glass is laminated, so it cannot be mainstream recycled. However, your local junkyard may have contacts with large auto glass manufacturers, many of whom, according to only1autoglass, "are innovating and coming up with new ways to recycle auto glass, for multiple reuses." This practice isn't the norm throughout the industry, says only1, but it is gaining in popularity.



Fixing it and keeping it up and running might be the greenest thing you can do if you ride has seen better days. Credit: Pexels.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Former prison employee's conviction is a rare occurrence in South Dakota **Correctional officers operate outside oversight of law enforcement commission**

BY: JOHN HULT - SEPTEMBER 2, 2023 2:35 PM

A 42-year old former correctional officer who pressed his thumb into the neck of a strapped-down, mentally ill prison inmate was convicted by a jury of simple assault against an inmate last month.

Cases like those against Joshua S. Westenkirchner, of Harrisburg, are rare in South Dakota. Few correctional officers are charged criminally for assaulting inmates, though officials with the state Department of Corrections and Division of Criminal Investigation both said they do not track charges filed against DOC staff.

The former officer also faces excessive force allegations in a federal lawsuit filed by the inmate victim, Shawn Albrecht. That lawsuit names DOC Secretary Kellie Wasko and Penitentiary Warden Teresa Bittinger as additional defendants, among others.

Documents in that federal case and transcripts of testimony from Westenkirchner's trial have revealed more details about the assault charges, all of which stemmed from two days of interactions between Albrecht and Westenkirchner.

Prosecutors argued that Westenkirchner treated Albrecht "like an animal" by choking him and wiping vomit on him during days the inmate spent tied to a metal bed for belligerence. Jurors acquitted Westenkirchner of felony aggravated assault, a charge specific to choking, but convicted him on two counts of misdemeanor simple assault.

The former officer has not responded to requests for comment.

In a written statement, defense attorney Ron Volesky alleges that his client's case amounts to scapegoating one former DOC employee for the agency's failure to protect staff and properly manage the inmate population.

"Mr. Westenkirchner was the victim of multiple felonious assaults by a dangerous inmate who was an active threat to the safety of staff," Volesky's press release said. "The jury also heard evidence of systemic issues with South Dakota's prison system including the Warden's authorization of strapping an individual inmate to a metal bed frame with four-point restraints for up to ninety days, a cruel and unusual tactic."

Sparse details

For simple assault, Westenkirchner was sentenced to probation with a suspended imposition of sentence, a tool by which a conviction is scrubbed from a defendant's record if he adheres to certain conditions. Often, such sentences carry a threat of jail or prison time if the defendant doesn't follow the rules, but Westenkirchner was not given any suspended jail time.

That the public knows about the case at all is an anomaly. The trial took place in a public courtroom in Sioux Falls, but no state or local agency mentioned the case to the media before, during or after the trial, and no media outlet covered the trial.

Had it not been for a press release from Attorney General Marty Jackley, it's unlikely news of Westenkirchner's conviction would have appeared in print or broadcast.

Jackley oversees the DCI, which often investigates alleged crimes behind the prison walls. He also leads deputy attorneys general in his office, who prosecute such cases, typically against inmates accused of holding contraband, assaulting staff or other inmates, or otherwise behaving outside the bounds of the law.

Just last week, Jackley's office filed charges against two inmates in a brutal assault on a correctional officer that court records characterize as a planned and targeted attack in which the officer was bloodied by at least 70 punches and kicks, including dozens of blows that slammed the back of his head into the

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 36 of 81

concrete floor.

Inmate complaints of excessive force by correctional officers are common and frequently form the basis of civil rights complaints filed in federal court, nearly always naming the DOC Secretary as a defendant. Wasko, who's been DOC secretary for less than two years, is a named defendant in 21 federal lawsuits alleging various misdeeds by prison employees. Such complaints are typically unaccompanied by state charges against officers, however.

The results of internal investigations into excessive force complaints rarely find their way into public view. Unlike police officers, sheriff's deputies and state troopers, correctional officers in South Dakota are not certified. As such, alleged misconduct by a correctional officer falls outside the oversight of the state's Law Enforcement Standards and Practices Commission, whose meeting agendas and minutes list the names of officers who contest misconduct allegations. Contested misconduct cases, in which an officer disputes the allegations against them, occur during public meetings.

That's one reason why a Charles Mix County sheriff's deputy recently faced the commission to respond to questions about his conduct after an inmate died in the Lake Andes Jail, while none of the correctional officers he worked with that day faced public scrutiny.

In a statement released after Westenkirchner's conviction, Jackley said his behavior was unbecoming of a correctional officer.

"The conduct in this case should not and has not been tolerated. It is an isolated incident of one individual that should not reflect on those correctional officers that serve their positions with respect," Jackley said.

Trial, federal court offer insight

Transcripts of testimony from Westenkirchner's assault trial offer details on the incident that led to both the assault charges and the federal lawsuit.

Both stem from interactions between the officer and inmate March 14-15, 2022, at the state penitentiary in Sioux Falls. Albrecht is being held for forgery and drug possession, often in the mental health unit at the South Dakota State Penitentiary.

A former contract counselor for the DOC testified that Albrecht has a "complex" series of mental health issues, including addiction, a personality disorder and a history of antisocial behavior.

On March 14, Albrecht complained about his diet, Westenkirchner told the jury, and had "swallowed an object" of some type. Westenkirchner and another officer were unable to stop him.

As the officers attempted to strap Albrecht to a table by his hands and feet for an X-ray, Albrecht spit water at Westenkirchner, which temporarily delayed him from restraining the inmate's right foot.

Albrecht remained in the "four-point restraint" on the table through the night.

The following morning at 5:30 a.m., Westenkirchner went into Albrecht's cell to take away a blanket, which he said he was directed to do by DOC mental health staff. Shortly thereafter, staff began to hand out medications to inmates. Albrecht was hurling verbal abuse through the entire exercise, Westenkirchner said. When staff poured water in Albrecht's mouth to force him to swallow his medication, the inmate spit the water at Westenkirchner.

At that point, the officer told jurors, he applied "compliance holds" on the restrained inmate. Westenkirchner said he'd learned them in the military, and that they did not involve choking. He pushed down Albrecht's chest and pressed into a nerve near his jaw, he said.

"I didn't know what he would do after that, if he would just start spitting or start grabbing at people," he said. "So then that's why I went around and went hands-on with the inmate."

Assistant Attorney General Lindsey Quasney challenged Westenkirchner's version of events in her cross-examination. She pointed out that his coworker saw him raise his fist to Albrecht on March 14, which Westenkirchner denied. He also disagreed with prosecution experts who said his "hands-on" control tactic was applied so sloppily that it constituted a choke, and with a DOC employee who testified that Westenkirchner was given the option of having his sweatshirt tested for disease after the sliming incidents and that he had refused.

"So everyone is lying but you?" Quasney asked.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 37 of 81

"I'm not saying everyone is lying," Westenkirchner replied.

Quasney also noted that inmates are allowed to refuse their medications, and asked him why he'd stayed and applied pressure to Albrecht even after the spitting incident.

"I was already in the cell and I did not want him to attack or assault another person because I had already been assaulted multiple times that day," Westenkirchner said.

Quasney also asked why he felt it necessary to use what she described as a chokehold for at least 20 seconds to an inmate strapped to a metal table by his hands and feet.

"I was applying pain because he was not complying," he said.

Inmate: Officer spit, wiped vomit on him

Quasney also questioned the officer about wiping vomit off of his shoe and onto Albrecht's foot on March 14, asking if he'd treated Albrecht "like an animal." The officer said he'd wiped his shoe off on the inmate's blanket after stepping in vomit without realizing he'd touched Albrecht.

"Is there anybody else that you would wipe vomit (on), even on a blanket on their bed?" she asked.

"No," he said.

She also asked him why he didn't leave the cell and get a spit shield if he was worried about being "slimed" again, and challenged his concern about being spat upon, given that his "hands-on" hold put him face-to-face with Albrecht.

During his testimony, Albrecht said he'd just returned from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, when the incident took place. He'd needed surgery after swallowing metal objects. He told Assistant Attorney General Katie Mallery that he'd been "four-pointed" on March 14 to stop him from swallowing anything else.

"Your arms are secured at your sides so you can't grab or touch yourself, and then your legs are restrained so you can't move them either," Albrecht said. "So you are kind of — your legs are in a V and your arms are out to your sides."

He said the mattress on the restraint table had been removed because "when my restraints were loose I ripped up the mattress."

He told jurors the officers made remarks about being sick of his behavior and said "they wished I would just die already." Westenkirchner specifically had used those words, he said.

On March 14, Albrecht said, Westenkirchner had "pulled back" to hit him, but was told to leave "and they just walked him out of my cell."

On March 15, the day that began with Westenkirchner snatching Albrecht's blanket, the inmate said Westenkirchner spit on him. During the "med pass" that took place shortly afterward, Albrecht said he took his medication, then took an extra drink of water to spit at the officer.

That's when Westenkirchner choked him, he said. He also said the officer had slammed his head into the metal table, but that it didn't hurt as badly as the choke.

He only grabbed at the officer, he said, "hoping that he would let go."

Under questioning from Volesky, Albrecht said staff had been annoyed with him for his swallowing behavior and all the steps it forced them to take to stop it.

It wasn't uncommon for him to be strapped to a table for very long periods of time, he said.

"This time I don't remember," Albrecht said of the March 2022 incident. "Maybe a week. Well, I was four-pointed at the hospital too. And it's not my first time on four-point. Sometimes it's 90 days."

He also testified that "they just recently kind of addressed" the issue of four-point restraints in the penitentiary, "with the new change over of upper staff."

"I'm one of the very few inmates left that is allowed to be four-pointed," he said.

Further details of the DOC's restraint policies or how they've been applied to Albrecht are unclear from transcripts of the testimony from the officer and the inmate. The DOC policy on suicide prevention says restraints may be recommended to prevent an inmate from harming themselves or others. It also says inmates are to be monitored every 15 minutes while in restraints, and that periods of restraint longer than two hours must be approved by the warden or a designee.

The DOC has not responded to South Dakota Searchlight's request for a comment.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 38 of 81

Volesky did not explore the policy itself in his questioning of Westenkirchner or Albrecht. He did ask Albrecht about an immunity deal he'd taken to testify. Albrecht said the deal didn't make him immune from prosecution for sliming, which is a felony when committed against an officer, but only from his testimony in Westenkirchner's trial being used against him.

Agencies tight-lipped about convicted officer

Volesky's statement pointed out that the state had failed to charge Albrecht for assaulting his client by sliming, even though Albrecht spat at Westenkirchner multiple times.

He also pointed out that Jackley's office is defending DOC Secretary Wasko and other state employees in the federal lawsuit filed by Albrecht. In that case, the inmate has asked for \$20,000 in punitive damages and another \$10,000 in compensatory damages, as well as a transfer to a prison in a different state.

Jackley's office does not represent Westenkirchner in that lawsuit, though in a response to the inmate's complaint, an assistant attorney general denied that "excessive force" had been used against Albrecht.

The docket in the federal lawsuit notes that Westenkirchner's status as a defendant "in his official capacity" as a DOC employee was terminated on July 18. That is the date U.S. District Judge Karen Schreier signed the order dismissing him as a state defendant. It's unclear when Westenkirchner left his job at the DOC.

DOC spokesman Michael Winder referred questions on Westenkirchner's dates of employment to the Bureau of Human Resources, which declined to reveal his date of departure.

It also remains unclear how many other correctional officers may have been charged for their interactions with inmates.

Winder said via email that the DOC does not track the number of such cases forwarded to the DCI for prosecution.

Jackley spokesman Tony Mangan said the attorney general's office handles prosecutions for prison crimes investigated by either the DCI or the DOC's special investigations unit. He said the office does not track the number of cases filed, either against inmates or DOC employees. Regarding charges against prison employees, he wrote "the lawyers believe it is not that many."

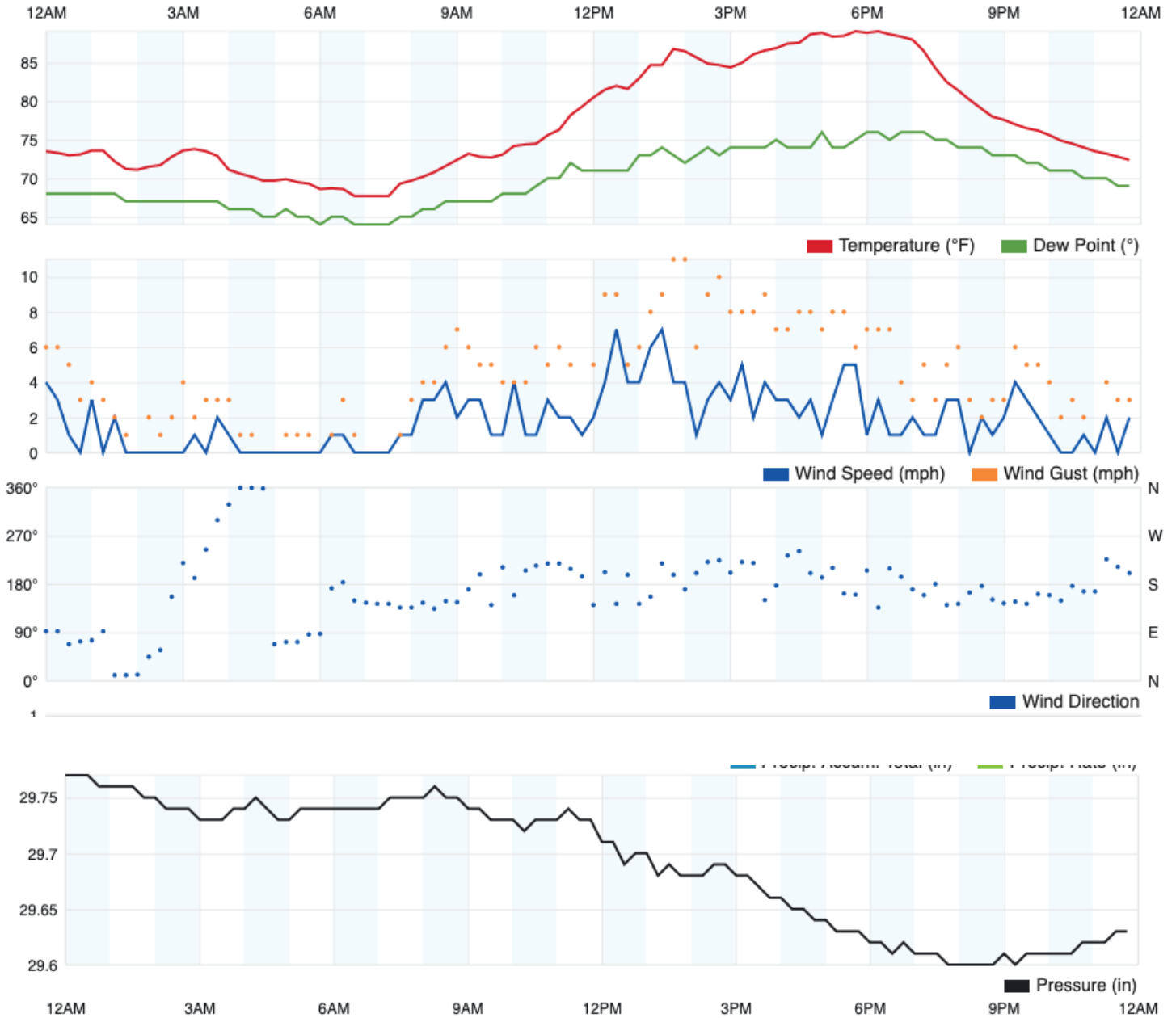
Volesky alleged that Jackley's involvement in the federal lawsuit is a conflict of interest, but Mangan said the attorney general's office cannot comment on ongoing litigation.

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

Groton Daily Independent

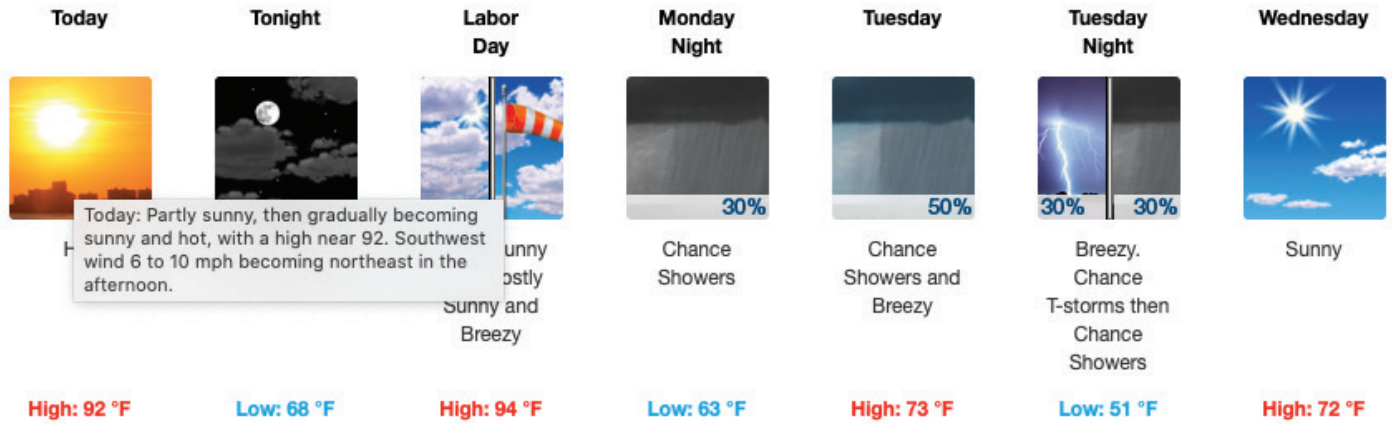
Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 39 of 81

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

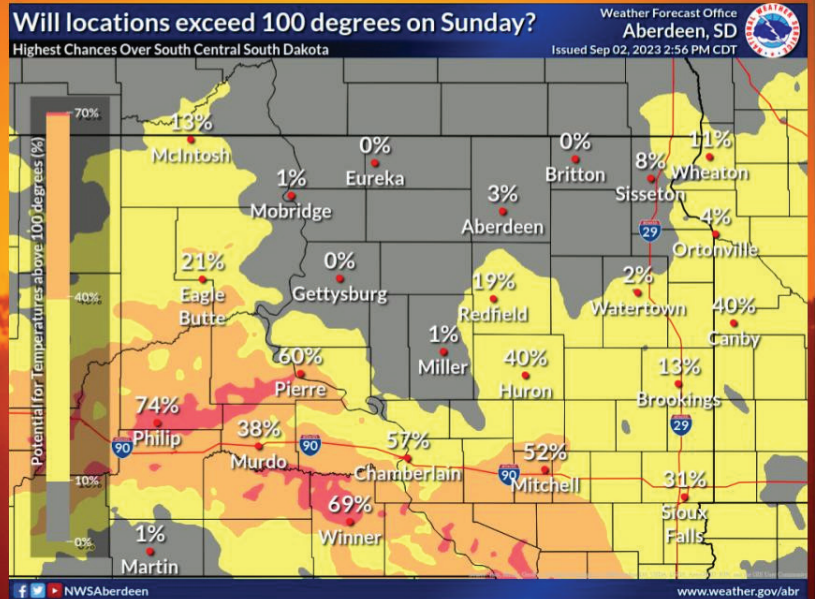
Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 40 of 81



Heat Continues...

Key Messages

- Hot and humid conditions will persist Sunday & Monday
- Wide spread 90°F temperatures will occur, with a few locations across western and south central South Dakota nearing or exceeding 100°F degrees
- Heat index (temp+humidity) will be high across the region. Caution should be used during prolonged outdoor activity.



Hot temperatures continue into Sunday. Highs well into 90s, and even lower 100s look likely by late Sunday afternoon. Heat indices will also push close to 100 degrees. Sunday night could bring some rain to the western Dakotas, but the east should remain dry.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 41 of 81

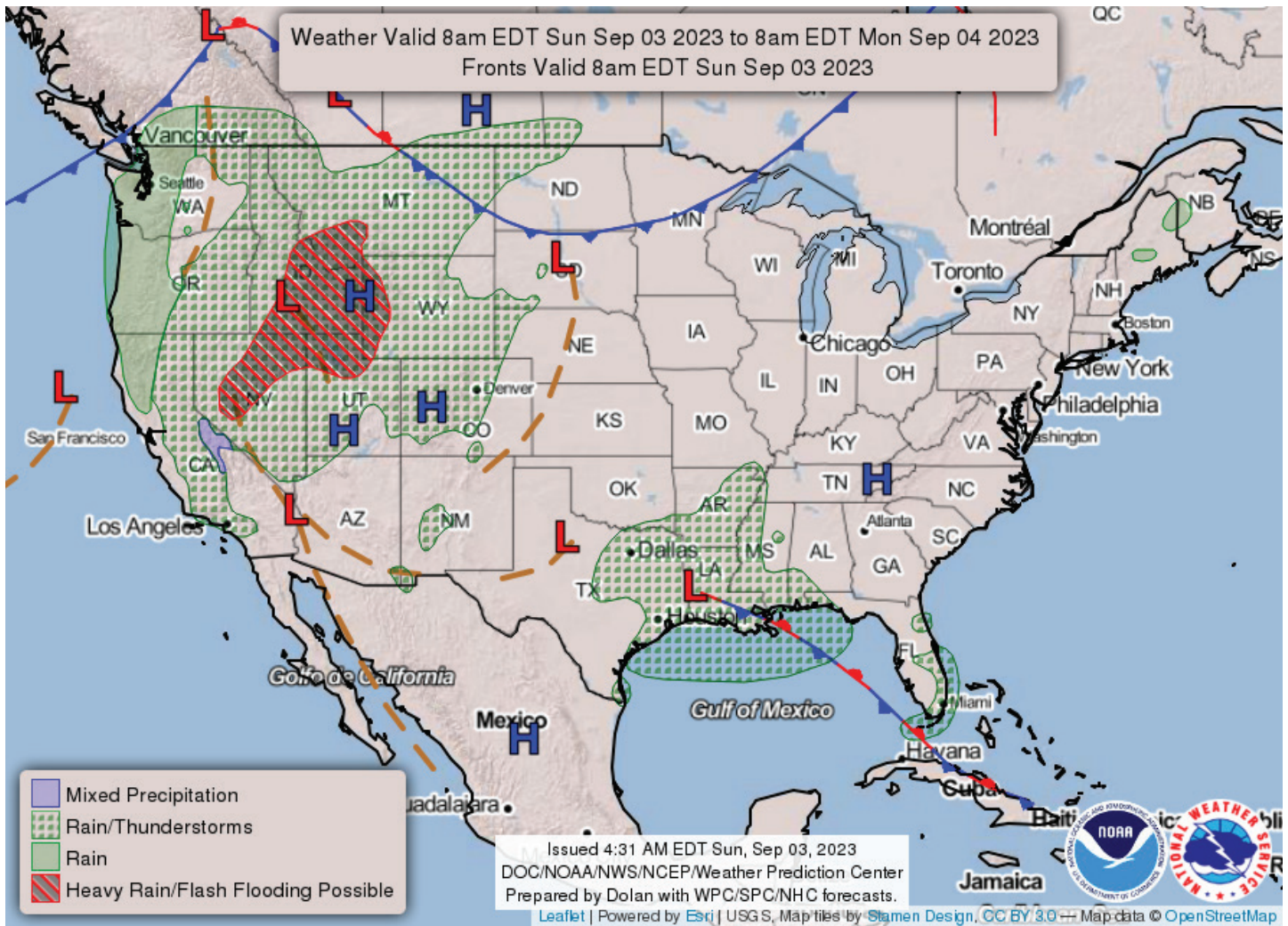
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 89.1°F at 5:45 PM
Low Temp: 67.0 °F at 6:45 AM
Wind: 11 mph at 2:00 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 13 hours, 13 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 102 in 1897
Record Low: 31 in 1974
Average High: 79
Average Low: 52
Average Precip in Sept.: .21
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 16.55
Precip Year to Date: 18.59
Sunset Tonight: 8:08:35 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:56:07 AM



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 42 of 81

Today in Weather History

September 3, 1974: An early freeze occurred across Minnesota and Wisconsin as temperatures fell into the upper 20s to the lower 30s. The cold was the earliest freeze on record in some parts of the state ending the growing season. The most significant damage was to the soybean and corn crop. Damage estimates were more than \$100 million.

September 3, 1999: Training thunderstorms resulted in extensive flash flooding in a 30 to 40-mile wide band from Fort Pierre in southeast Stanley County to Hecla in northeast Brown County. Rainfall amounts in this corridor ranged from 3 to 7 inches. As a result, the communities of Blunt in Hughes County and Onida in Sully County were severely flooded. Most of the homes and businesses were inundated throughout Blunt and Onida causing severe damage. Only a few houses in these communities were spared from receiving water in their basements. Most homes also experienced sewer backup. The sewer systems in both Onida and Blunt were flooded and shut down. Many people had to go to temporary shelters as a result of the flooding. Aberdeen and Fort Pierre had a lot of street flooding resulting in road closures and detours. Also, several basements in Aberdeen and Fort Pierre had the sewer backup. The torrential rains flooded many township and county roads along with several state and U.S. highways. Sections of Highways 14, 20, 83, and 1806 along with many other roads in central and northeast South Dakota had to be closed due to the flooding. Many of the township and county roads had massive amounts of gravel washed away. Some bridges received minor damage with some culverts also lost. A few pets and livestock were also lost as a result of the flooding. Many acres of crops were flooded throughout the area. Some rainfall amounts included 3 inches at Fort Pierre, 4 inches at Hecla and in the Aberdeen Area, 5 inches at the Sand Lake Wildlife Refuge and Blunt, 6 inches at Seneca, 7 inches 10 miles southeast of Gettysburg and at Onida.

1821: Known as the 1821 Norfolk Long Island Hurricane, this storm ripped up the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast coast September 3 and 4 – coinciding with Labor Day (before the holiday was established).

1834: A strong hurricane made landfall near Georgetown, South Carolina.

1930: A Category 4 hurricane devastates the Dominican Republic on this day. This storm killed more than 8,000 individuals, which is it the fifth deadliest Atlantic hurricane on record.

1953 - The temperature at Erie PA reached 99 degrees, and Stroudsburg PA established a state record for September with a reading of 106 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1961 - Denver, CO, received 4.2 inches of snow, their earliest snow of record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1970: During the early evening hours, amid a severe hailstorm at Coffeyville, Kansas, a stone 17.5 inches in circumference and nearly two pounds in weight was recovered. Average stone size from the storm was five inches in diameter, with another stone reportedly eight inches in diameter. This hailstone is currently the third-largest hailstone in the U.S.

1979: Hurricane David made landfall in south Florida as a Category 2 storm. It caused 15 deaths in the US. Hurricane David was a Category 5 over the Dominican Republic where over 2,000 people died.

1987 - Temperatures dipped into the 40s and 50s for morning lows across much of the eastern half of the country, with eleven cities reporting record lows for the date. Pellston MI tied Gunnison CO for honors as the cold spot in the nation with a low of 30 degrees. Smoke from forest fires darkened skies in southern Oregon and northern California. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Sixteen cities in the northwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Highs of 89 degrees at Stampede Pass WA and 116 degrees at Redding CA established records for the month of September. Readings of 98 degrees at Spokane WA and 100 degrees at Yakima WA equalled records for September. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather from Minnesota to Nebraska during the day and evening. Evening thunderstorms in Nebraska produced wind gusts to 100 mph at Valentine and Gretna, and produced baseball size hail at Lewellen. Thunderstorms in Arizona produced 2.20 inches of rain in forty minutes at Green Valley, and wind gusts to 60 mph. Eight cities in Texas and Florida reported record high temperatures for the date, including Victoria TX and San Antonio TX, each with a reading of 102 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 43 of 81

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

ROOM FULL OF LONELY

It seemed as though the night would never end. Little Luke tossed and turned trying to get comfortable and fall asleep. Finally, he gave up and came wandering out of his bedroom with his favorite blanket and teddy bear.

His father heard his footsteps and went upstairs. Picking him up he asked, "What's the matter? Why can't you sleep?"

"It's my room," he replied.

"Your room? What's wrong with your room?" asked his Dad.

"It's full of lonely," said Luke.

It is a well-known fact that loneliness is one of the biggest problems in society today. Though we are surrounded by family and friends, loneliness grips the hearts and minds of countless millions. Medications and endless activities do not seem to fill the vacuum.

God has promised in His Word that "He will never leave us nor forsake us." If that's true, then why do so many feel lonely?

Could it be that we have left God and He wants us to return to Him? Has He created those feelings of loneliness to get us to realize we have abandoned Him? Have we become so involved with so many "things" that we have crowded Him out of our days? Must He use the darkness of a lonely night to get our attention to return to Him? I promise He'll do what it takes!

Prayer: We ask You, Father, to do whatever it takes to draw us so close to You that we will feel Your presence and power wherever we are, night or day. Come close, now! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: So we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?" Hebrews 13:6



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

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 44 of 81

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

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 45 of 81

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 46 of 81



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.01.23

10 31 42 43 55 8

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$101,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.02.23

3 17 36 37 44 8

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$9,350,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.02.23

14 19 37 46 47 16

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 27 Mins 55 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.02.23

2 9 28 30 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$32,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.02.23

3 7 14 26 52 21

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.02.23

25 38 42 66 67 19

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$435,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 47 of 81

News from the  Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Central def. Pierre T F Riggs High School, 20-25, 25-21, 25-21, 25-17

Sturgis Brown def. Red Cloud, 25-16, 25-16, 25-19

Gillette Invitational=

Bronze Bracket=

Burns, Wyo. def. St. Thomas More, 25-13, 20-25, 15-11

St. Thomas More def. Moorcroft, Wyo., 22-25, 25-22, 15-12

Consolation Semifinal=

Newcastle, Wyo. def. St. Thomas More, 25-20, 24-26, 15-11

Gold Bracket=

Laramie, Wyo. def. Spearfish, 25-10, 25-14

Rapid City Christian def. Riverton, Wyo., 25-12, 25-18

Consolation Semifinal=

Riverton, Wyo. def. Spearfish, 25-20, 26-24

Third Place=

Thunder Basin, Wyo. def. Rapid City Christian, 25-22, 25-22

Silver Bracket=

Buffalo, Wyo. def. Rapid City Central, 25-15, 25-14

Rapid City Stevens def. Big Horn, Wyo., 25-21, 25-18

Wright, Wyo. def. Rapid City Central, 25-19, 25-23

Consolation Semifinal=

Cheyenne Central, Wyo. def. Rapid City Central, 25-16, 25-23

Semifinal=

Rapid City Stevens def. Douglas, Wyo., 25-23, 25-23

Gregory Invitational=

Burke def. Edgemont, 25-9, 25-13

Edgemont def. Colome, 25-20, 25-8

Edgemont def. St. Francis Indian, 25-7, 25-15

Stanley County Triangular=

Stanley County def. Little Wound, 25-18, 25-9, 25-18

Stanley County def. White River, 27-25, 18-25, 25-19, 25-20

White River def. Little Wound, 25-15, 25-20, 25-9

PREP FOOTBALL=

Harrisburg 33, Brandon Valley 28

Rapid City Stevens 57, Douglas 0

Sioux Falls Lincoln 59, Rapid City Central 0

St. Francis Indian 42, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 8

Standing Rock, N.D. 56, Red Cloud 6

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

Tribe getting piece of Minnesota back more than a century after ancestors died there

By TRISHA AHMED Associated Press/Report for America

GRANITE FALLS, Minn. (AP) — Golden prairies and winding rivers of a Minnesota state park also hold the secret burial sites of Dakota people who died as the United States failed to fulfill treaties with Native Americans more than a century ago. Now their descendants are getting the land back.

The state is taking the rare step of transferring the park with a fraught history back to a Dakota tribe, trying to make amends for events that led to a war and the largest mass hanging in U.S. history.

"It's a place of holocaust. Our people starved to death there," said Kevin Jensvold, chairman of the Upper Sioux Community, a small tribe with about 550 members just outside the park.

The Upper Sioux Agency State Park in southwestern Minnesota spans a little more than 2 square miles (about 5 square kilometers) and includes the ruins of a federal complex where officers withheld supplies from Dakota people, leading to starvation and deaths.

Decades of tension exploded into the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 between settler-colonists and a faction of Dakota people, according to the Minnesota Historical Society. After the U.S. won the war, the government hanged more people than in any other execution in the nation. A memorial honors the 38 Dakota men killed in Mankato, 110 miles (177 kilometers) from the park.

Jensvold said he has spent 18 years asking the state to return the park to his tribe. He began when a tribal elder told him it was unjust Dakota people at the time needed to pay a state fee for each visit to the graves of their ancestors there.

Lawmakers finally authorized the transfer this year when Democrats took control of the House, Senate and governor's office for the first time in nearly a decade, said state Sen. Mary Kunesh, a Democrat and descendant of the Standing Rock Nation.

Tribes speaking out about injustices have helped more people understand how lands were taken and treaties were often not upheld, Kunesh said, adding that people seem more interested now in "doing the right thing and getting lands back to tribes."

But the transfer also would mean fewer tourists and less money for the nearby town of Granite Falls, said Mayor Dave Smiglewski. He and other opponents say recreational land and historic sites should be publicly owned, not given to a few people, though lawmakers set aside funding for the state to buy land to replace losses in the transfer.

The park is dotted with hiking trails, campsites, picnic tables, fishing access, snowmobiling and horseback riding routes and tall grasses with wildflowers that dance in hot summer winds.

"People that want to make things right with history's injustices are compelled often to support action like this without thinking about other ramifications," Smiglewski said. "A number, if not a majority, of state parks have similar sacred meaning to Indigenous tribes. So where would it stop?"

In recent years, some tribes in the U.S., Canada and Australia have gotten their rights to ancestral lands restored with the growth of the Land Back movement, which seeks to return lands to Indigenous people.

A national park has never been transferred from the U.S. government to a tribal nation, but a handful are co-managed with tribes, including Grand Portage National Monument in northern Minnesota, Canyon de Chelly National Monument in Arizona and Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska, Jenny Anzelmo-Sarles of the National Park Service said.

This will be the first time Minnesota transfers a state park to a Native American community, said Ann Pierce, director of Minnesota State Parks and Trails at the Department of Natural Resources.

Minnesota's transfer, expected to take years to finish, is tucked into several large bills covering several issues. The bills allocate more than \$6 million to facilitate the transfer by 2033. The money can be used to buy land with recreational opportunities and pay for appraisals, road and bridge demolition and other engineering.

Rep. Chris Swedzinski and Sen. Gary Dahms, the Republican lawmakers representing the portion of the state encompassing the park, declined through their aides to comment about their stances on the transfer.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 49 of 81

They voted against a key bill allocating \$5 million to the transfer. The vote was largely on party lines and passed with broad support from Democrats.

Tribal wins are rare in these conflicts, but the land transfer is a victory, Jensvold said.

"We're just a small community," he said. "We've accomplished something that teetered on the edge of impossible."

St. Thomas-Minnesota builds big lead, holds off Division-II opponent in opener

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Shawn Shipman rushed for 140 yards and a touchdown, quarterback Amari Powell added two rushing touchdowns, and St. Thomas of Minnesota defeated Black Hills State 36-26 in a season opener on Saturday.

Powell completed 12 of 24 passes for a modest 105 yards and scored on runs of 1 and 11 yards. Shipman's 140 yards came on 21 carries. He had a 19-yard touchdown and a long run of 44 yards.

The Tommies led 22-0 early in the second quarter before their Division II opponent rallied behind the passing of Tanner Clarkson, who finished 17 of 25 for 280 yards with a touchdown and an interception. Clarkson's TD pass was a 52-yarder to running back Nolan Susel, who also ran for one touchdown and threw a 17-yard pass to TJ Chukwurah for another.

The Yellow Jackets led in total offense 366-334.

The Tommies are riding the longest home-field winning streaking in all levels of the NCAA, having won 27 consecutive home games.

St Thomas was 10-1 last season, its second in Division I, and won the Pioneer Football League championship. The Tommies unveiled their championship banner in a short ceremony on Saturday.

Death under investigation at Burning Man as flooding strands thousands at Nevada festival site

RENO, Nev. (AP) — Authorities in Nevada were investigating a death at the site of the Burning Man festival where thousands of attendees remained stranded Saturday night as flooding from storms swept through the Nevada desert.

Organizers closed vehicular access to the counterculture festival and attendees trudged through mud, many barefoot or wearing plastic bags on their feet. The revelers were urged to shelter in place and conserve food, water and other supplies.

The Pershing County Sheriff's Office said the death happened during the event but offered few details as the investigation continued, including the identity of the deceased person or the suspected cause of death, KNSD-TV reported.

Vehicle gates will not open for the remainder of the event, which began on Aug. 27 and was scheduled to end Monday, according to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which oversees the Black Rock Desert where the festival is being held.

More than one-half inch of rain is believed to have fallen on Friday at the festival site, located about 110 miles (177 kilometers) north of Reno, the National Weather Service in Reno said. At least another quarter of an inch of rain is expected Sunday.

The Reno Gazette Journal reported organizers started rationing ice sales and that all vehicle traffic at the sprawling festival grounds had been stopped, leaving portable toilets unable to be serviced.

Officials haven't yet said when the entrance is expected to be opened again, and it wasn't immediately known when celebrants could leave the grounds.

The announcements came just before the culminating moment for the annual event — when a large wooden effigy was to be burned Saturday night.

Messages left Saturday afternoon by The Associated Press for both the Bureau of Land Management and the Pershing County Sheriff's Office, the agencies that closed the entrance, weren't immediately returned.

Many people played beer pong, danced and splashed in standing water, the Gazette Journal said. Mike Jed, a festivalgoer, and fellow campers made a bucket toilet so people didn't have to trudge as often through the mud to reach the portable toilets.

"If it really turns into a disaster, well, no one is going to have sympathy for us," Jed said. "I mean, it's Burning Man."

Bavaria's governor leaves his deputy in office despite a furor over antisemitism allegations

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — The governor of the German state of Bavaria said Sunday that he will let his deputy stay in office despite a furor that started with allegations he was responsible for an antisemitic flyer when he was a high school student 35 years ago.

Governor Markus Soeder, a leading figure in Germany's center-right opposition, said he had concluded that it would be "disproportionate" to fire Hubert Aiwanger, his deputy and coalition partner, but that Aiwanger needs to work on rebuilding confidence with Jewish groups and others.

A state election is due in Bavaria in a matter of weeks.

In August, the daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung reported that, when Aiwanger was 17, he was suspected of producing a typewritten flyer calling for entries to a competition titled "Who is the biggest traitor to the fatherland?"

It listed, among other things, a "1st prize: A free flight through the chimney at Auschwitz."

Aiwanger, 52, said last weekend that one or more copies of the flyer were found in his school bag but he denied that he wrote it. His older brother came forward to claim that he had written it.

Aiwanger has acknowledged making unspecified mistakes in his youth and offered an apology but also portrayed himself repeatedly as the victim of a "smear campaign" or "witch hunt." His crisis management has drawn widespread criticism, including from Soeder.

On Tuesday, Soeder demanded that Aiwanger answer a detailed questionnaire, and his deputy delivered the answers on Friday evening. Soeder said he had a long conversation with Aiwanger on Saturday evening.

Over the past week, there has been a steady drip of further allegations about Aiwanger's behavior when he was at school — including claims that he gave the Hitler salute, imitated the Nazi dictator and had Hitler's "Mein Kampf" in his school bag. Aiwanger described the latter as "nonsense," said he didn't remember ever giving the Hitler salute and did not rehearse Hitler's speeches in front of the mirror.

On Thursday, Aiwanger said: "I deeply regret if I have hurt feelings by my behavior in relation to the pamphlet in question or further accusations against me from my youth. My sincere apologies go first and foremost to all the victims of the (Nazi) regime."

Soeder said in a statement to reporters in Munich that the apology was "overdue, but it was right and necessary." He said that Aiwanger's answers to his questions "weren't all satisfactory," but that he had distanced himself again from the flyer and gave repeated assurances he didn't write it.

"In the overall assessment — that there is no proof, that the matter is 35 years ago, and that nothing comparable has happened since — a dismissal would be disproportionate, from my point of view," Soeder said.

But leaders of Bavaria's governing coalition agreed "it is important that Hubert Aiwanger work on winning back lost trust," and should hold talks with Jewish community leaders, Soeder said. He added that that was discussed Sunday with the main Bavarian and German Jewish leaders.

The allegations put Soeder, who is widely thought to have ambitions to challenge center-left Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the 2025 national election, in an awkward position.

Aiwanger leads the Free Voters, a party that is a conservative force in Bavaria but has no seats in Germany's national parliament. He has served as the state's deputy governor and economy minister since 2018, when his party became the junior partner in a regional government under Bavaria's long-dominant center-right Christian Social Union.

Soeder, the CSU leader, has said he wants to continue the coalition with the Free Voters, a more or less like-minded party, after the Oct. 8 state election. In his statement Sunday, he again dismissed the idea of switching to a coalition with the environmentalist Greens.

Israel's Netanyahu demands Eritrean migrants involved in violent clash to be deported immediately

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday he wants Eritrean migrants involved in a violent clash in Tel Aviv to be deported immediately and has ordered a plan to remove all of the country's African migrants.

The remarks came a day after bloody protests by rival groups of Eritreans in south Tel Aviv left dozens of people injured. Eritreans, supporters and opponents of Eritrea's government, faced off with construction lumber, pieces of metal and rocks, smashing shop windows and police cars. Israeli police in riot gear shot tear gas, stun grenades and live rounds while officers on horseback tried to control the protesters.

The violence on Saturday returned to the fore the issue of migrants, which has long divided Israel. Its resurgence comes as Israel is torn over Netanyahu's judicial overhaul plan, and supporters cite the migrant issue as a reason why the courts should be reined in, saying they have stood in the way of pushing the migrants out.

"We want harsh measures against the rioters, including the immediate deportation of those who took part," Netanyahu said in a special ministerial meeting called to deal with the aftermath of the violence. He requested that the ministers present him with plans "for the removal of all the other illegal infiltrators," and noted in his remarks that the Supreme Court struck down some measures meant to coerce the migrants to leave.

About 25,000 African migrants live in Israel, mainly from Sudan and Eritrea, who say they fled conflict or repression. Israel recognizes very few as asylum seekers, seeing them overwhelmingly as economic migrants, and says it has no legal obligation to keep them.

The country has tried a variety of tactics to force them out, including sending some to a remote prison, holding part of their wages until after they agree to leave the country or offering cash payments to those who agree to move to another country, somewhere in Africa.

Critics accuse the government of trying to coerce the migrants into leaving. Under international law, Israel cannot forcibly send migrants back to a country where their life or liberty may be at risk.

Netanyahu said Sunday he didn't think deporting supporters of the Eritrean government would be a problem.

Migrants' supporters say Israel, a country founded upon the ashes of the Holocaust and built up by Jewish refugees, should welcome those seeking asylum. Opponents claim migrants have brought crime to the low-income southern Tel Aviv neighborhoods where they have settled.

The clashes came as Eritrean government supporters marked the 30th anniversary of the current ruler's rise to power, an event held near the Eritrean embassy in south Tel Aviv. Eritrea has one of the world's worst human rights records and migrants in Israel and elsewhere say they fear death if they were to return.

Critics see Netanyahu's judicial overhaul plan as a power grab meant to weaken the courts and limit judicial oversight on government decisions and legislation. Supporters say it is meant to restore power to elected legislators and rein in what they say is an interventionist and liberal-leaning justice system.

Pope joins shamans, monks and evangelicals to highlight Mongolia's faith diversity

By NICOLE WINFIELD and SARUUL ENKHBOLD Associated Press

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia (AP) — With China's crackdown on religious minorities as a backdrop, Pope Francis joined Mongolian shamans, Buddhist monks and a Russian Orthodox priest Sunday to highlight the role that religions can play in forging world peace, as he presided over an interfaith meeting highlighting Mongolia's tradition of religious tolerance.

Francis listened intently as a dozen faith leaders — Jewish, Muslim, Bahai, Hindu, Shinto and evangelical Christian among them — described their beliefs and their relationship with heaven. Several said the traditional Mongolian ger, or round-shaped yurt, was a potent symbol of harmony with the divine — a warm place of family unity, open to the heavens, where strangers are welcome.

"The fact that we are meeting together in one place already sends a message: It shows that the religious traditions, for all their distinctiveness and diversity, have impressive potential for the benefit of society as a whole," Francis said in remarks that cited Buddhist writings, Gandhi, his namesake St. Francis of Assisi and the existential philosopher Soren Kierkegaard.

"If the leaders of nations were to choose the path of encounter and dialogue with others, it would be a decisive contribution to ending the conflicts continuing to afflict so many of the world's peoples," he said.

The interfaith event, held at a theater in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, came midway through Francis' four-day visit to Mongolia, the first by a pope. He is in Mongolia to minister to one of the world's smallest and newest Catholic communities and highlight Mongolia's tradition of tolerance in a region where the Holy See's relations with neighboring China and Russia are often strained.

According to statistics by the Catholic nonprofit group Aid to the Church in Need, Mongolia is 53% Buddhist, 39% atheist, 3% Muslim, 3% Shaman and 2% Christian.

Later Sunday, Francis presided over a Mass in the capital's sports stadium attended by an estimated 2,000 people, including many Chinese pilgrims. There, he kissed babies held up to him and sought to encourage Mongolia's Catholic flock, telling them they know well the fatigue of the Biblical figure of Abraham, journeying through the desert.

"All of us are 'God's nomads,' pilgrims in search of happiness, wayfarers thirsting for love," he said.

The Vatican's difficult relations with China and Beijing's crackdown on religious minorities have been a constant backdrop to the trip, even though the Vatican hopes to focus attention instead on Mongolia and its 1,450 Catholics. No mainland Chinese bishops are believed to have been allowed to travel to Mongolia, whereas at least two dozen bishops from other countries across Asia have accompanied pilgrims for the events.

"We really hope that gradually our government and leaders will accept him and invite him to visit our country," said Yan Zhiyong, a Chinese Catholic businessman in Mongolia who attended an event on Saturday with Francis at the city's cathedral. "That would be the most joyful thing for us."

Hong Kong Cardinal-elect Stephen Chow, who made a historic visit to Beijing earlier this year, accompanied 40 pilgrims to Mongolia. He declined to discuss the absence of his mainland Chinese counterparts, focusing instead on Francis and the importance of his visit to Mongolia for the Asian church.

"I think the Asian church is also a growing church. Not as fast as Africa — Africa is growing fast — but the Asian church also has a very important role to play now in the universal church," he told reporters.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has demanded that Catholicism and all other religions adhere strictly to party directives and undergo "Sinicization." In the vast Xinjiang region, that has led to the demolition of an unknown number of mosques, but in most cases it has meant the removal of domes, minarets and exterior crosses from churches.

The Vatican and China did sign an accord in 2018 over the thorny issue of Catholic bishop nominations, but Beijing has violated it.

Most Mongolians follow the dominant Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism and revere its leader, the Dalai Lama. As a result, many Mongolians are concerned with the Chinese Communist Party's opposition

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 53 of 81

to the exiled Tibetan leader and its heavy-handed control over monastic life and what appears to be a concerted effort to gradually eliminate Tibetan culture.

Yet, given the need to maintain stable relations with Beijing — China is Mongolia's top export partner — the country's leaders have not spoken out on the matter, just as they have remained largely silent about repressive linguistic and cultural policies toward their ethnic brethren in China's Inner Mongolia region.

Francis also has largely avoided antagonizing Beijing, most significantly by avoiding any criticism of Beijing's religious crackdown or by meeting with the Dalai Lama.

While the Dalai Lama wasn't present Sunday, he was mentioned by the head of Mongolia's main Tibetan Buddhist monastery, Khamba Nomun Khan Gabju Choijamts Demberel.

The abbot noted that "His Holiness," as the Dalai Lama is known, had recently recognized the 10th reincarnation of the head lama of Mongolian Buddhists known as the Jebtsundamba Khutughtu.

"This is an extraordinary fortune for us," said the abbot.

The Dalai Lama's recognition has posed a problem, given that China has required all reincarnated lamas to be born within China and be officially certified by Beijing. The newly recognized Mongolian lama meets neither criteria.

In addition to China, Russia's war in Ukraine also loomed large in the background of Sunday's encounter.

The rector of the only Russian Orthodox Church in Ulaanbaatar, Father Antony Gusev, told the gathering the history of the church in Mongolia, recalling that the current head of the Russian church — Patriarch Kirill — laid the foundation stone for the building in 2001.

Kirill has strongly backed Russia's war in Ukraine, straining relations with the Holy See that had made a breakthrough only a few years ago when Francis and Kirill met in Havana in the first-ever meeting between a pope and Russian patriarch.

As Africa opens a climate summit, poor weather forecasting keeps the continent underprepared

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Much of the world takes daily weather forecasts for granted. But most of Africa's 1.3 billion people live with little advance knowledge of what's to come. That can be both deadly and expensive, with damage running in the billions of dollars.

The first Africa Climate Summit opens Monday in Kenya to highlight the continent that will suffer the most from climate change while contributing to it the least. Significant investment in Africa's adaptation to climate change, including better forecasting, will be an urgent goal. At the heart of every issue on the agenda, from energy to agriculture, is the lack of data collection that drives decisions as crucial as when to plant — and when to flee.

The African continent is larger than China, India and the United States combined. And yet Africa has just 37 radar facilities for tracking weather, an essential tool along with satellite data and surface monitoring, according to a World Meteorological Organization database.

Europe has 345 radar facilities. North America, 291.

"The continent, at large, is in a climate risk blind spot," said Asaf Tzachor, a researcher at the Center for the Study of Existential Risk at the University of Cambridge. In August, he and colleagues warned in a commentary for the journal *Nature* that climate change will cost Africa more than \$50 billion every year by 2050. By then, Africa's population is expected to double.

The widespread inability to track and forecast the weather affects key development choices, their commentary said: "There is no point investing in smallholder farms, for example, if floods are simply going to wash them away."

Kenya, the host of the climate summit, is one of the few countries in Africa seen as having a relatively well-developed weather service, along with South Africa and Morocco. Kenya has allocated about \$12 million this year for its meteorological service, according to the national treasury. In contrast, the U.S. National Weather Service budget request for fiscal year 2023 was \$1.3 billion.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 54 of 81

The vast expanse of the 54-nation African continent is relatively unserved and unwarned.

"Despite covering a fifth of the world's total land area, Africa has the least developed land-based observation network of all continents, and one that is in a deteriorating state," the WMO said in 2019.

And because of a lack of funding, the number of observations by atmospheric devices usually used with weather balloons decreased by as much as 50% over Africa between 2015 and 2020, a "particularly serious issue," the WMO said in a report last year.

Fewer than 20% of sub-Saharan African countries provide reliable weather services, the report said. "Weather stations are so far apart that their data cannot be extrapolated to the local level due to the varying terrain and altitude."

Now, 13 of the most data-sparse African countries, including Ethiopia, Madagascar and Congo, are getting money to improve weather data collection and sharing from a United Nations-created trust fund, the Systematic Observations Financing Facility. An older funding mechanism with many of the same partners, Climate Risk & Early Warning Systems, has supported modernizing meteorological systems in a half-dozen West and Central African countries.

And it's not just forecasting. As climate shocks such as Somalia's worst drought in decades become more common, better recording of weather data is a critical need for decision-making.

"For many people in the West, accurate weather forecasts often make lives more convenient: 'Shall I take an umbrella along?' In Africa, where many people depend on rain-fed agriculture, that is all a bit sharper," said Nick van de Giesen, a professor of water resources management at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands. "With a changing climate, traditional methods to determine, say, the onset of the rainy season are becoming less reliable. So farmers regularly sow after a few rains, after which rains may fail and seeds will not germinate."

That can be devastating during the current global food security crisis.

Van de Giesen is the co-director of the Trans-African Hydro-Meteorological Observatory, a project that has helped to set up about 650 low-cost local weather monitoring stations in collaboration with schools and other entities across 20 African countries. Not all of those surface monitoring stations are operational because of issues including threats by extremist groups that limit access for maintenance in areas such as Lake Chad.

"To be clear, TAHMO can never be a replacement of efficient and effective national weather services," van de Giesen said, adding that many African governments still don't have the needed resources or funding.

In countries like Somalia and Mozambique, with some of the continent's longest and most vulnerable coastlines, the lack of effective weather monitoring and early warning systems have contributed to thousands of deaths in disasters such as tropical storms and flooding.

After Cyclone Idai ripped into central Mozambique in 2019, residents told The Associated Press they had received little or no warning from authorities. More than 1,000 people were killed, some swept away by floodwaters as loved ones clung to trees.

Cyclone Idai was the costliest disaster in Africa, at \$1.9 billion, in the period from 1970 to 2019, according to a WMO report on weather extremes and their economic and personal tolls.

The lack of weather data in much of Africa also complicates efforts to link certain natural disasters to climate change.

Earlier this year, a collection of climate researchers known as World Weather Attribution said in a report that limited data made it impossible to "confidently evaluate" the role of climate change in flooding that killed hundreds of people in Congo and Rwanda around Lake Kivu in May.

"We urgently need robust climate data and research in this highly vulnerable region," their report said.

Last year, the researchers expressed similar frustration in a study of erratic rainfall and hunger in West Africa's Sahel region, citing "large uncertainties" in data.

They urged investments as simple as a network of rain gauges, saying that even small shifts in rainfall can affect millions of people.

What's at stake when Turkey's leader meets Putin in a bid to reestablish the Black Sea grain deal

By ANDREW WILKS and ELISE MORTON Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will meet with Vladimir Putin on Monday, hoping to persuade the Russian leader to rejoin the Black Sea grain deal that Moscow broke off from in July. Here are some key things to know and what's at stake:

WHERE WILL THE TALKS BE HELD?

The meeting in Sochi on Russia's southern coast comes after weeks of speculation about when and where the two leaders might meet.

Erdogan previously said that Putin would travel to Turkey in August.

WHY DID RUSSIA LEAVE THE GRAIN DEAL?

The Kremlin refused to renew the grain agreement six weeks ago. The deal — brokered by the United Nations and Turkey in July 2022 — had allowed nearly 33 million metric tons (36 million tons) of grain and other commodities to leave three Ukrainian ports safely despite Russia's war.

However, Russia pulled out after claiming that a parallel deal promising to remove obstacles to Russian exports of food and fertilizer hadn't been honored.

Moscow complained that restrictions on shipping and insurance hampered its agricultural trade, even though it has shipped record amounts of wheat since last year.

WHY IS TURKEY A BROKER?

Since Putin withdrew from the initiative, Erdogan has repeatedly pledged to renew arrangements that helped avoid a food crisis in parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Ukraine and Russia are major suppliers of wheat, barley, sunflower oil and other goods that developing nations rely on.

The Turkish president has maintained close ties to Putin during the 18-month war in Ukraine. Turkey hasn't joined Western sanctions against Russia following its invasion, emerging as a main trading partner and logistical hub for Russia's overseas trade.

NATO member Turkey, however, has also supported Ukraine, sending arms, meeting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and backing Kyiv's bid to join NATO.

RUSSIA-TURKEY TIES HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN ROSY

Erdogan angered Moscow in July when he allowed five Ukrainian commanders to return home. The soldiers had been captured by Russia and handed over to Turkey on condition they remain there for the duration of the war.

Putin and Erdogan — both authoritarian leaders who have been in power for more than two decades — are said to have a close rapport, fostered in the wake of a failed coup against Erdogan in 2016 when Putin was the first major leader to offer his support.

Traditional rivals Turkey and Russia grew closer over the following years as trade levels rose and they embarked on joint projects such as the Turkstream gas pipeline and Turkey's first nuclear power plant. Ankara's relations with Moscow have frequently alarmed its Western allies. The 2019 acquisition of Russian-made air defense missiles led to Washington kicking Turkey off the U.S.-led F-35 stealth fighter program.

Russia-Turkey relations in fields such as energy, defense, diplomacy, tourism and trade have flourished despite the countries being on opposing sides in conflicts in Syria, Libya and Nagorno-Karabakh. Since Erdogan's reelection in May, Putin has faced domestic challenges that may make him appear a less reliable partner, most notably the short-lived armed rebellion declared by late mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin in June.

WHAT ARE RUSSIA'S DEMANDS?

The Sochi summit follows talks between the Russian and Turkish foreign ministers on Thursday, during which Russia handed over a list of actions that the West would have to take in order for Ukraine's Black Sea exports to resume.

Erdogan has indicated sympathy with Putin's position. In July, he said Putin had "certain expectations

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 56 of 81

from Western countries" over the Black Sea deal and that it was "crucial for these countries to take action in this regard."

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres recently sent Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov "concrete proposals" aimed at getting Russian exports to global markets and allowing the resumption of the Black Sea initiative. But Lavrov said Moscow wasn't satisfied with the letter.

Describing Turkey's "intense" efforts to revive the agreement, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said it was a "process that tries to better understand Russia's position and requests, and to meet them."

He added: "There are many issues ranging from financial transactions to insurance."

Russians press Ukraine in the northeast to distract from more important battles in counteroffensive

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

LYMAN, Ukraine (AP) — Concealed under pine branches in the forests of northeast Ukraine, the muzzle of a Soviet-era howitzer rises, aiming for a group of approaching Russian infantrymen many kilometers away.

A Ukrainian soldier signals to fire, then swiftly runs for cover. The thunderous crash of the unleashed projectile sends a pall of black smoke billowing above jabs of yellow flames. A pile of spent shells in the nearby foliage grows by the day.

Here, along a small section of the 1,200-kilometer (745-mile) front line, Moscow's army is staging a ferocious push designed to pin down Ukrainian forces, distract them from their grinding counteroffensive and minimize the number of troops Kyiv is able to send to more important battles in the south.

The Kremlin tactic threatens to further slow the pace of the counteroffensive that was launched almost three months ago. Kyiv's effort to reclaim Russian-occupied territory has produced minimal gains and heavy losses, and time is running short for Ukrainian troops, who must try to make the most of the last few weeks of the summer fighting season.

The Ukrainian military now considers the battles in the northeast, specifically near the town of Kupiansk, in the northern Kharkiv region, and in the forests near Lyman, to be Russia's main offensive.

At the same time, Ukraine's main offensive operations are focused in the south, where they are inching toward the shores of the Sea of Azov in an apparent bid to cut the land corridor to the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia seized in 2014. Doing this would split in two the Russian-occupied land in southern Ukraine, undermining Moscow's supply lines.

Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Maliar urged observers to measure Ukrainian progress not in kilometers or meters but "by the very fact that we are successful in moving forward in such conditions."

While aiming to keep Ukrainian troops busy along the mostly static northeast front, Russia has also had time to reinforce its defenses in the south, including laying widespread mines, Ukrainian officials said. The deep fortifications have slowed Kyiv's advances in that direction.

Meanwhile, the Ukrainians must deal with limitations in manpower, air power and artillery. And the looming fall rainy season adds even greater urgency to an already difficult battle. The muddy ground will hinder Kyiv's infantry and heavy machinery.

In the south, Ukrainian forces have recently had more success breaking through Russian lines. Since the start of the counteroffensive, Ukraine has advanced 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) in the southern Zaporizhzhia region, overcoming dense Russian fortifications last week to retake the village of Robotyne — Ukraine's first tactically significant victory in that part of the country.

It is a far cry from the sweeping territorial gains Western allies hoped for. But winning control of the village brings Ukrainian forces one step closer to the town of Tokmak, about 30 kilometers (19 miles) away, an important Russian-occupied rail hub that would be a major strategic gain. And if Ukrainians advance even 15 kilometers (9 miles) from Robotyne, it could bring them within shooting range of Russia's east-west transport routes, potentially undermining Moscow's combat capabilities, military observers say.

"We passed the first line of Russian defense, and we are approaching the second," said a Ukrainian soldier with the call sign "Legion" who is positioned in Zaporizhzhia. He said the success was owed to

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 57 of 81

NATO-supplied weapons, in particular U.S.-made Bradley combat vehicles, as well as Ukrainian-made drones capable of striking 60 kilometers (37 miles) behind Russian lines.

In some places, including the Robotyne area, the second defensive line "is quite strong," military spokesman Oleksandr Shtupun said. "Without proper preparation, it is hard to breach it."

Kyiv has never explicitly stated its goals for the counteroffensive, apart from saying it seeks to restore Ukraine's 1991 territorial borders.

In the northeast, Russia intensified its operation in mid-July, amassing 100,000 troops. Dark patches of scorched trees mark where Russian artillery assailed Ukrainian positions in the lush woodlands near Lyman. Soldiers joke that the area locals dubbed the "silver forest" is a black forest now.

On the outskirts of Kupiansk, Ukrainian forces must move across mostly open fields near the Synkivka settlement, where Russian forces have focused their advance. Villages nearby have been destroyed, giving Ukrainian forces few options for cover.

"The enemy is constantly trying to advance," said brigade artillery commander Viktor Yurchuk. "Fighting has been nonstop."

Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, commander of Ukraine's ground forces, said Russian troops were regrouping in both the Kupiansk and Lyman areas and deploying newly formed brigades and divisions as well as weaponry. Maliar said professional airborne units have also been deployed from around Avdiivka, further south in the Donetsk region where the two armies are also locked in battles.

Apart from preventing Ukrainian forces from redeploying in the south, a Russian advance in the northeast would also create a protective buffer for the Kremlin's supply lines. Moscow hopes to halt Ukrainian advances in Bakhmut, where Kyiv's forces recently took control of commanding heights within closer range of Russia's supply routes.

For Yurchuk, that means the intensity of the battles will not let up anytime soon. After 18 months of war, he is tired.

"Everyone is fed up with the war, believe me," he said.

Privately, some of Ukraine's allies have expressed concern that the counteroffensive may come up short. Soldiers respond that every kilometer of advance is a herculean feat against a well-fortified enemy.

US. national security adviser Jake Sullivan pushed back against the notion that Ukraine is in a stalemate, saying last week that Ukrainians "are operating according to their tactics and their timetable."

The allies' concerns have reached Ukrainian soldiers on the front line.

"It's very hard for our soldiers to hear that our assault is going too slowly," said a drone operator known by the call sign "Salam" with the elite Adam Group in the Bakhmut area. "We are here witnessing the situation on the front line, and we never expected something rapid."

It's a view many Ukrainian service members share.

Reflecting the frustrations, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said this week that criticizing the slow pace equals "spitting into the face of the Ukrainian soldier who sacrifices his life every day."

"I would recommend (to) all critics to shut up, come to Ukraine and try to liberate one square centimeter by themselves," he said while on a trip to Spain.

George Barros, an analyst with the U.S.-based Institute for the Study of War think tank, challenged assessments that the counteroffensive is not going well.

"This campaign is going the best that it could have, given the way that it was supported," he said.

Because the Russians appear to have limited flexibility in their reserves, even a small Ukrainian breakthrough that severs a strategic point in Russian lines might result in the Kremlin's troops being "stretched very thin," Barros said.

For now, there is no indication that Russia's efforts in the northeast are having a significant impact on the Ukrainian offensive in the south.

"On time, let's say we have around one more month" before the rains set in, Shtupun said. "I think we still have time for offensive actions, just like our enemy does too."

consideration, the Biden administration agreed to keep the wall at 18 feet for a small section where some access will be allowed.

Dan Watman of Friends of Friendship Park, which advocates for cross-border park access, said the 60-foot (18.3-meter) section that will remain at the lower height is only a token gesture. "The park on the Mexican side has become sort of a one-sided party," he said.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection said that it anticipates replacing the "deteriorated" two-layer barrier by November and that the higher one under construction "will provide much needed improvements."

The Berlin Wall installation has gotten rave reviews from visitors.

Sandra Flores, 55, who vacationed from the Mexican port city of Mazatlan, drew parallels between the Berlin slab and the U.S.-built wall.

"It's a little less severe here than it was in Germany but it's a wall that divides nations, lives, social and economic lives and everything related to the United States," she said.

Lydia Vanasse, who works in the financial sector in San Diego and lives in Tijuana, said the relic took her back to her 20s when the Soviet empire fell and Germans were suddenly allowed to move freely.

"San Diego and Tijuana are sister cities," she said. "The wall separates us, but we are united in many ways. It would be better if there wasn't a wall."

Direct criticism of any U.S. president or policy has been rare.

Tijuana's mayor said she understands the need for the U.S. to enforce borders and she has warm relations with U.S. officials, including Ken Salazar, the ambassador to Mexico. She said Salazar asked her to evict migrants who camped with hopes of getting asylum in the U.S. and blocked access to a U.S. border crossing in 2022. She heeded his recommendation.

Any failures at the border are a collective responsibility of governing nations, the mayor said.

"We are against violence, we are against family separation, we are against division, and that's what the wall represents," she said.

Fatal police shooting of pregnant Ohio woman raises concerns over firing at moving vehicles

By CLAUDIA LAUER The Associated Press

Body camera video of the fatal police shooting of Ta'Kiya Young, a 21-year-old pregnant mother in a suburb of Columbus, Ohio, has raised questions about how an allegation of shoplifting led to a bullet being fired through her windshield.

It was unclear Saturday whether the Blendon Township Police Department has adopted a use-of-force continuum policy, which would outline measures that must be exhausted before lethal force can be used.

The video of the Aug. 24 shooting, released Friday, shows Young in her car in a parking space as a police officer orders her to exit the vehicle. A second officer is seen drawing his firearm and stepping in front of the car, despite a department policy advising officers to get out of the way of an approaching vehicle instead of firing their weapon.

"Are you going to shoot me?" Young asks, seconds before she turns the steering wheel to the right and the car moves toward the second officer. The officer fires through the windshield and Young's sedan drifts into the grocery store's brick wall.

Lawyers for Young's family say the video is devastating and have called for the officer who shot her to be fired and criminally charged. Blendon police officials have refused to name either of the officers involved.

Here is a look at law enforcement policies on moving vehicles:

WHAT ABOUT FIRING AT MOVING CARS?

The New York City Police Department was among the first to bar officers from firing at or from moving vehicles after a 1972 shooting that killed a 10-year-old passenger in a stolen car led to protests.

Researchers in the late 1970s and early 1980s found the policy, along with a handful of other use-of-force restrictions, led to a decline in bystanders being shot and suspects dying in police shootings.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 59 of 81

Other law enforcement agencies have over the decades followed NYPD's lead, and industry organizations such as the Police Executive Research Forum and the International Association of Chiefs of Police have recommended the restrictions, saying shooting in such circumstances creates an unacceptable risk to bystanders from stray gunfire or the driver losing control of the vehicle if shot.

The Blendon Township department's policy states: "An officer should only discharge a firearm at a moving vehicle or its occupants when the officer reasonably believes there are no other reasonable means available to avert the imminent threat of the vehicle, or if deadly force other than the vehicle is directed at the officer or others."

But as of June only 32 police departments in the 100 largest U.S. cities had some form of restriction on firing at moving vehicles, according to Campaign Zero, an advocacy group of academics, activists and others seeking to end police brutality.

HOW ARE SUCH POLICIES INTERPRETED AND ENFORCED?

John P. Gross of the University of Wisconsin Law School, who has written about the challenges of ending police shooting at moving vehicles, said individual department policies sometimes include exceptions if a suspect is firing a weapon or if the car is being used as a weapon against an officer, though many restrictions specifically say other weapons must be present.

Prosecutors and internal police investigators often focus on the moment of use of force, but a broader view is necessary, he said. For example if an officer already has a license plate number, that may be a reason not to use force to stop a vehicle, since "most of us are findable."

"If you are pursuing someone accused of a homicide and who has shot at officers in the past, that's a different situation than somebody who might have shoplifted \$50 worth of items," Gross said. "That context should be part of this."

Departments often don't enforce the policies with meaningful discipline in part because of the strength of police unions, Gross said. In Blendon Township, union officials have said Young's car became a weapon the moment it began moving.

SHOULD OFFICERS PURPOSELY MOVE IN FRONT OF VEHICLES?

Many department policies advise officers to move out of the way. But in the Ohio video, an officer is seen drawing his firearm and putting himself in the path of Young's parked car, which Gross called "bad tactics."

"And oftentimes bad tactics translates to needing to use more force than was necessary," Gross said. "The officer shouldn't put himself in front of the car. He can't stop the car with his body."

Edward Obayashi, a national use-of-force expert and attorney who specializes in vehicle-related police shootings, agreed and said the officer went against his training.

"The best practice in these matters nationwide is that you do not put yourself in a position of danger," Obayashi said. "There was no urgent need for him to position himself the way he did."

Gross also questioned why the officer drew his firearm when the issue at hand was a shoplifting allegation. He urged changes to police training.

"They are taught that if someone is resisting even verbally, that person is going to fight or flee," Gross said. "That just ties resistance to a threat. Training teaches officers that there is danger around every corner and threats are everywhere."

Taiwan suspends work, transport and classes as island braces for arrival of Typhoon Haikui

BEIJING (AP) — Taiwan suspended flights, rail transport and ferry services along with classes, outdoor events, and officials urged workers to stay home as the island prepared for the arrival of Typhoon Haikui later Sunday.

The storm's approach came as Typhoon Saola continued to weaken while moving along the Chinese coast, where 900,000 people and 80,000 fishing vessels had been moved to safety and most of Hong Kong and parts of the coastal mainland closed down businesses, transport and schools.

Damage appeared to be minimal, however, and restrictions had largely been lifted by Sunday.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 60 of 81

Parts of Taiwan were already feeling the effects of Haikui's heavy rain and high winds, and dozens of domestic flights were canceled, along with air services to Hong Kong and Macao. The storm had maximum sustained winds of 137 kph (85 mph), with gusts up to 173 kph (107 mph), according to the island's meteorological bureau.

Among events canceled was a hot air balloon festival in the central Taichung region, several outdoor concerts, art events and a baseball festival. National parks and treacherous roads in the island's mountainous center were also closed.

Haikui was expected to continue on toward China after crossing over Taiwan, and authorities in the Chinese city of Shantou in Guangdong province were advising residents to take precautions.

Because of Saolua, workers in a number of Chinese cities stayed at home and students saw the start of their school year postponed from Friday to Monday. Trading on Hong Kong's stock market was suspended Friday and hundreds of people were stranded at the airport after about 460 flights were canceled in the key regional business and travel hub.

The cross-border bridge connecting Hong Kong, the gambling hub of Macao and manufacturing center of Zhuhai was closed at one point, with Macao leader Ho Iat Seng ordering a halt to casino operations.

As the storm side-swiped the densely populated financial center, the Hong Kong Observatory issued a No. 10 hurricane alert, the highest warning under the city's weather system for the first time since 2018.

However, by Saturday night, the observatory had canceled all warnings and the hundreds who had taken shelter at prepared facilities were returning home.

In recent months, China has experienced some of its heaviest rains and deadliest flooding in years in various regions. Dozens of people have been killed, including in outlying mountainous parts of the capital, Beijing.

Hong Kong's government said various departments received reports of a total of 1,206 uprooted trees and flooding was reported in 18 areas. It said 75 people visited hospitals with storm-related injuries.

Despite the twin storms, China's military continued to conduct operations meant to intimidate Taiwan, a self-ruled democracy that Beijing seeks to bring under Chinese sovereignty by force if necessary.

Taiwan's Defense Ministry said it was monitoring the movements of Chinese military aircraft and navy ships near the island. However, it said there were no indications any had crossed the median line in the Taiwan Strait or entered Taiwan's air defense identification zone as they frequently do.

Pope starts Mongolia visit by praising the country's religious freedom dating back to Genghis Khan

By NICOLE WINFIELD and SARUUL ENKHBOLD Associated Press

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia (AP) — Pope Francis on Saturday praised Mongolia's tradition of religious freedom dating to the times of its founder, Genghis Khan, as he opened the first-ever papal visit to the Asian nation with a word of encouragement to its tiny Catholic flock.

Francis met with President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh inside a traditional Mongolian ger, or round yurt, set up inside the state palace and wrote a message in the guest book that he was visiting "a country young and ancient, modern and rich of tradition," as a pilgrim of peace.

Francis is in Mongolia to minister to one of the world's newest and smallest Catholic communities — around 1,450 Mongolians are Catholic — and make a diplomatic foray into a region where the Holy See has long had troubled relations, with Russia to the north and China to the south.

While Christianity has been present in the region for hundreds of years, the Catholic Church has only had a sanctioned presence in Mongolia since 1992, after the country abandoned its Soviet-allied communist government and enshrined religious freedom in its constitution.

While Catholicism is tolerated and legal, foreign missionaries working here lament that the government restricts their numbers and treats the church as a nongovernmental organization — limitations that the Holy See is hoping will be lifted with a comprehensive bilateral agreement.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 61 of 81

In his remarks, Francis praised Mongolia's tradition of religious liberty, noting that such tolerance existed even during the period of the Mongol Empire's vast expansion over much of the world. At its height, the empire stretched as far west as Hungary to become the largest contiguous land empire in world history.

Nowadays, the landlocked nation sandwiched between Russia and China is overwhelmingly Buddhist, with traditional links to Tibet's leading lamas, including the Dalai Lama.

"The fact that the empire could embrace such distant and varied lands over the centuries bears witness to the remarkable ability of your ancestors to acknowledge the outstanding qualities of the peoples present in its immense territory and to put those qualities at the service of a common development," Francis told the president, diplomats and cultural leaders in remarks at the state palace.

"This model should be valued and repropounded in our own day," he said.

Referring to the 13th-century period of relative political stability within the Mongol Empire that allowed trade and travel to flourish, Francis called for such a period of fraternity and peace to take root today and spread peace throughout the region.

"May heaven grant that today, on this earth devastated by countless conflicts, there be a renewal, respectful of international laws, of the condition of what was once the pax mongolica, that is the absence of conflicts," he said.

Khurelsukh also referred to the "pax mongolica" in his remarks, saying that same spirit still guides Mongolia's efforts to be a peaceful, multilateral player on the world stage.

"Achievements of pax mongolica have created the solid grounds for the development of mutual respect between different nations of the world, cherishing each other's values and identities, enabling peaceful coexistence of various civilizations," he said.

Later in the day, Francis met with bishops and the missionaries who have cultivated the Catholic faith here for the past three decades, presiding over a prayer in the ger-shaped St. Peter and Paul cathedral in the capital, Ulaanbaatar. On the altar sat a delicate wooden statue of the Madonna, which was found by a Mongolese woman in a landfill and now is a symbol of the church in the country.

As Francis entered and blessed the crowd with holy water, he was met with shouts of "Viva il Papa!" inside and out of the cathedral, where an estimated 2,000 people gathered.

Francis sought to encourage the missionaries, telling them not to be concerned by their "small numbers, limited successes or apparent irrelevance." Rather, he urged them to be close to their Mongolian flocks, learn their language and love their culture.

"May you find refreshment, knowing that being little is not a problem but a resource," he said. "God loves littleness, and through it he loves to accomplish great things."

In the pews was one of the two Mongolese priests who have been ordained, the Rev. Peter Sanjaajav, who got a rousing applause from the crowd when he addressed Francis in Mongolian.

"Many thanks for coming to Mongolia, and for visiting our Church. Your visit makes us particularly happy," he said.

Another Mongolian woman who converted, Rufina Chamingerel, told Francis she had spent 14 years learning her Catholic faith, to which she converted as a student. Addressing Francis in Italian, she acknowledged the Mongolian church is young and small.

"Our Church is in that phase typical of children who constantly ask their parents questions," she said.

In his remarks to government authorities, Francis also praised Mongolia's efforts to care for the environment. The vast, landlocked country, historically afflicted by weather extremes, is considered to be one of the countries most affected by climate change. The country has already experienced a 2.1-degree Celsius (3.8-degree Fahrenheit) increase in average temperatures over the past 70 years, and an estimated 77% of its land is degraded because of overgrazing and climate change, according to the U.N. Development Program.

Mongolia is set to host the 2026 U.N. conference on desertification and has launched a campaign to plant 1 billion trees across its vast steppes and mountains of grasslands.

The pope, however, noted the need to combat "the insidious threat of corruption," an apparent reference

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 62 of 81

to a scandal over Mongolia's trade with China over the alleged theft of 385,000 tons of coal. In December, hundreds of people braved freezing cold temperatures in the capital to protest the scandal.

"Corruption is the fruit of a utilitarian and unscrupulous mentality that has impoverished whole countries," he said.

The Mongolian government has declared 2023 to be an "anti-corruption year" and says it is carrying out a five-part plan based on Transparency International, the global anti-graft watchdog that ranked Mongolia 116th last year in its corruption perceptions index.

Mongolians Catholic and not welcomed Francis' visit, saying it was a sign of Mongolia's prominence on the world stage.

"The visit of Roman pope is the proof that Mongolians are peace loving, mindful and spiritual nation," said Chinbat Gantulga, a Mongolian engineer. "It also shows that Mongolia has a religious freedom, and respect of spiritual beliefs of anyone."

Bill Richardson, a former governor and UN ambassador who worked to free detained Americans, dies

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bill Richardson, a two-term Democratic governor of New Mexico and an American ambassador to the United Nations who dedicated his post-political career to working to secure the release of Americans detained by foreign adversaries, has died. He was 75.

The Richardson Center for Global Engagement, which he founded and led, said in a statement Saturday that he died in his sleep at his home in Chatham, Massachusetts.

"He lived his entire life in the service of others — including both his time in government and his subsequent career helping to free people held hostage or wrongfully detained abroad," said Mickey Bergman, the center's vice president. "There was no person that Gov. Richardson would not speak with if it held the promise of returning a person to freedom. The world has lost a champion for those held unjustly abroad and I have lost a mentor and a dear friend."

President Joe Biden said Richardson seized every chance he had to serve in government and lauded his efforts to free Americans being held elsewhere. "He'd meet with anyone, fly anywhere, do whatever it took. The multiple Nobel Peace Prize nominations he received are a testament to his ceaseless pursuit of freedom for Americans," the president said in a statement. "So is the profound gratitude that countless families feel today for the former governor who helped reunite them with their loved ones."

Before his election in 2002 as governor, Richardson was U.S. envoy to the United Nations and energy secretary under President Bill Clinton and served 14 years as a congressman representing northern New Mexico.

But he also forged an identity as an unofficial diplomatic troubleshooter. He traveled the globe negotiating the release of hostages and American servicemen from North Korea, Iraq, Cuba and Sudan and bargained with a who's who of America's adversaries, including Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. It was a role Richardson relished, once describing himself as "the informal undersecretary for thugs."

"I believe that we have to engage our adversaries no matter how different our philosophies are," Richardson once said. "The way you deal with issues that divide nations is through humanitarian efforts before political differences. I think that is fundamental."

He helped secure the 2021 release of American journalist Danny Fenster from a Myanmar prison and this year negotiated the freedom of Taylor Dudley, who crossed the border from Poland into Russia. He met with Russian government officials in the months before the release last year of Marine veteran Trevor Reed in a prisoner swap and also worked on the cases of Brittney Griner, the WNBA star freed by Moscow last year, and Michael White, a Navy veteran released by Iran in 2020.

Roger Carstens, the U.S. government's chief hostage negotiator, described Richardson as "a friend and partner in bringing wrongfully detained Americans and hostages home." and said in a statement Saturday that he would "miss his wise counsel and friendship."

Berlin Wall relic gets a 'second life' on US-Mexico border as Biden adds barriers

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP) — As the U.S. government built its latest stretch of border wall, Mexico made a statement of its own by laying remains of the Berlin Wall a few steps away.

The 3-ton pockmarked, gray concrete slab sits between a bullring, a lighthouse and the border wall, which extends into the Pacific Ocean.

"May this be a lesson to build a society that knocks down walls and builds bridges," reads the inscription below the towering Cold War relic, attributed to Tijuana Mayor Montserrat Caballero and titled, "A World Without Walls."

For Caballero, like many of Tijuana's 2 million residents, the U.S. wall is personal and political, a part of the city's fabric and a fact of life. She considers herself a migrant, having moved from the southern Mexico city of Oaxaca when she was 2 with her mother, who fled "the vicious cycle of poverty, physical abuse and illiteracy."

The installation opened Aug. 13 at a ceremony with Caballero and Marcelo Ebrard, Mexico's former foreign secretary who is now a leading presidential candidate.

Caballero, 41, is married to an Iranian man who became a U.S. citizen and lives in the United States. She and their 9-year-old son used to cross the border between Tijuana and San Diego.

Since June, Caballero has lived in a military barracks in Tijuana, saying she acted on credible threats against her brought to her attention by U.S. intelligence officials and a recommendation by Mexico's federal government. Weeks earlier, her bodyguard survived an assassination attempt.

Caballero said that she doesn't know who wants to kill her but suspects payback for having seized arms from violent criminals who plague her city. "Someone is probably upset with me," she said in her spacious City Hall office.

Shards of the Berlin Wall scattered worldwide after it crumbled in 1989, with collectors putting them in hotels, schools, transit stations and parks. Marcos Cline, who makes commercials and other digital productions in Los Angeles, needed a home for his artifact and found an ally in Tijuana's mayor.

"Why in Tijuana?" Caballero said. "How many families have shed blood, labor and their lives to get past the wall? The social and political conflict is different than the Berlin Wall, but it's a wall at the end of the day. And a wall is always a sphinx that divides and bloodies nations."

President Joe Biden issued an executive order his first day in office to halt wall construction, ending a signature effort by his predecessor, Donald Trump. But his administration has moved ahead with small, already-contracted projects, including replacing a two-layered wall in San Diego standing 18 feet (5.5 meters) high with one rising 30 feet (9.1 meters) and stretching 0.6 mile (1 kilometer) to the ocean.

The wall slices through Friendship Park, a cross-border site inaugurated by then-U.S. first lady Pat Nixon in 1971 to symbolize binational ties. For decades, families separated by immigration status met through barbed wire and, later, a chain-link fence. It is a cherished, festive destination for tourists and residents in Mexico.

At an arts festival in 2005, David "The Human Cannonball" Smith Jr. flashed his passport in Tijuana as he lowered himself into a barrel and was shot over the wall, landing on a net on the beach with U.S. border agents nearby. In 2019, artist Lizbeth De La Cruz Santana covered the Tijuana side of the wall with paintings of adults who moved to the U.S. illegally as young children and were deported. Visitors who held up their phones to bar codes were taken to a website that voiced their first-person narratives.

Cline said he was turned away at the White House when he tried delivering the Berlin Wall relic to Trump and then trucked it across the country to find a suitable home. He said the piece has found "its second life" at the Tijuana park alongside the colorful paintings on the border wall that express views on politics and immigration.

The U.S. government has gradually restricted park access from San Diego over the last 15 years in a state park that once allowed cross-border yoga classes, religious services and music festivals. After lengthy

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 64 of 81

Armed with a golden resume and wealth of experience in foreign and domestic affairs, Richardson sought the 2008 Democratic nomination for president in hopes of becoming the nation's first Hispanic president. He dropped out of the race after lackluster finishes in the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary.

Richardson was the nation's only Hispanic governor during his two terms, calling it "the best job I ever had."

"It's the most fun. You can get the most done. You set the agenda," Richardson said.

As governor, Richardson signed legislation in 2009 that repealed the death penalty. He called it the "most difficult decision in my political life" because he previously had supported capital punishment. Other accomplishments included \$50,000-a-year minimum salaries for the most qualified teachers in New Mexico and an increase in the state minimum wage.

Some of his most prominent global work began in December 1994, when he was visiting North Korean nuclear sites and word came that an American helicopter pilot had been downed and his co-pilot killed.

The Clinton White House enlisted Richardson's help and, after days of tough negotiations, the then-congressman accompanied the remains of Chief Warrant Officer David Hilemon while paving the way for Chief Warrant Officer Bobby Hall to return home.

The following year, and after a personal appeal from Richardson, Saddam Hussein freed two Americans who had been imprisoned for four months, charged with illegally crossing into Iraq from Kuwait.

Richardson continued his freelance diplomacy even while serving as governor. He had barely started his first term as governor when he met with two North Korean envoys in Santa Fe. He traveled to North Korea in 2007 to recover remains of American servicemen killed in the Korean War.

In 2006, he persuaded Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir to free Pulitzer Prize-winning American journalist Paul Salopek.

In an interview with The Associated Press in August, Richardson said he was proud of the work he had done to free dozens of people over the years and of his advocacy for the Navajo Nation.

Richardson and former Navajo Nation President Peterson Zah created a fund to offer supplies and equipment to the Navajo Nation to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, providing personal protective equipment, food, water and hundreds of pairs of shoes to Navajo students in the state.

Richardson transformed the political landscape in New Mexico. He raised and spent record amounts on his campaigns, bringing Washington-style politics to an easygoing western state with a part-time Legislature.

Lawmakers, both Republicans and Democrats, complained Richardson threatened retribution against opponents. Former Democratic state Sen. Tim Jennings of Roswell once said Richardson was "beating people over the head" in his dealings with lobbyists on a health care issue. Richardson dismissed criticisms of his administrative style.

"Admittedly, I am aggressive. I use the bully pulpit of the governorship," Richardson said. "But I don't threaten retribution. They say I am a vindictive person. I just don't believe that."

Longtime friends and supporters attributed Richardson's success partly to his relentlessness. Bob Gallagher, who headed the New Mexico Oil and Gas Association, said if Richardson wanted something done then "expect him to have a shotgun at the end of the hallway. Or a ramrod."

In a statement, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, a Democrat, described Richardson as a visionary who saw New Mexico's potential before others did. "New Mexico, our country, and, frankly, the entire world lost a champion today. Bill Richardson was a titan among us, fighting for the little guy, world peace, and everything in between."

After dropping out of the 2008 presidential race, Richardson endorsed Barack Obama over Hillary Clinton despite Richardson's longstanding friendship with the Clintons.

Obama later nominated Richardson as secretary of commerce. Richardson withdrew in early 2009 because of a federal investigation into an alleged pay-to-play scheme involving his administration in New Mexico. The investigation ended without charges against Richardson and his former top aides.

Richardson had a troubled tenure as energy secretary because of a scandal over missing computer equipment with nuclear weapons secrets at Los Alamos National Laboratory and the government's investigation and prosecution of former nuclear weapons scientist Wen Ho Lee.

Richardson approved Lee's firing at Los Alamos in 1999. Lee spent nine months in solitary confinement, charged with 59 counts of mishandling sensitive information. He later pleaded guilty to one count of mishandling computer files and was released with the apology of a federal judge.

William Blaine Richardson was born in Pasadena, California, but grew up in Mexico City with a Mexican mother and an American father who was a U.S. bank executive.

He attended prep school in Massachusetts and was a star baseball player. He went to Tufts University and its graduate school in international relations, earning a master's degree in international affairs.

Richardson moved to New Mexico in 1978 after working as a Capitol Hill staffer. He wanted to run for political office and said New Mexico, with its Hispanic roots, seemed like a good place. He campaigned for Congress just two years later — his only losing race.

In 1982, he won a new congressional seat from northern New Mexico that the state picked up in reapportionment. He resigned from Congress in 1997 to join the Clinton administration as U.N. ambassador and became secretary of energy in 1998, holding the post until the end of the Clinton presidency.

Prime shocker: Colorado upsets No. 17 TCU 45-42 in Deion Sanders' debut as Buffs coach

By STEPHEN HAWKINS AP Sports Writer

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — After nine months of hype, Deion Sanders had Colorado ready for prime time in his much-anticipated debut as Buffaloes coach.

Shedeur Sanders, the coach's son, threw for a school-record 510 yards with four touchdowns — the game-winner a 46-yard catch-and-run by true freshman Dylan Edwards with 4:25 left — and the Buffs pulled off an opening shocker with a 45-42 win Saturday over 17th-ranked TCU, last year's national runner-up.

"A lot of you didn't believe in us," Shedeur Sanders said. "It's crazy because you just got to understand our coach, Coach Prime, my dad, everywhere he went, he was a winner. Every game, every opportunity, he took advantage of."

Deion Sanders came to Boulder, Colorado, to revitalize a long-dormant program, with an unprecedented roster flip.

Two-way star Travis Hunter, Edwards and Shedeur Sanders are among 87 newcomers at Colorado, which won only one game last season and has only two winning records since 2005.

Coach Prime, a two-time Super Bowl champion that included the last for the Dallas Cowboys 28 years ago, said when he first got the job he was coming to Colorado with luggage and it was Louis Vuitton.

Sanders practically named his son the starting quarterback before Shedeur even had a chance to enter the transfer portal, and was almost uncomfortably open about telling last year's CU players they should probably jump in, too.

Sanders' rebuild and a packed spring game at Folsom Field dominated the college football offseason.

But what would the team look like when the games started? Sanders already has a signature win as a three-touchdown underdog in his first game as a major college football coach.

"I've been talking about it and talking about it and you didn't believe me," he said.

Edwards caught three touchdown passes, including a 75-yarder in the opening minute of the second half when he turned another short pass into a big play. He also ran for another score.

Hunter, the former top recruit who came with the quarterback and coach from FCS school Jackson State, had 11 catches for 119 yards. As a defensive back, he had one of the two interceptions that TCU's Chandler Morris threw in or near the end zone. He played over 120 snaps.

"They showed up. They were more ready to play than we were, think more excited to play, think they played harder," TCU coach Sonny Dykes said. "It seemed like they had more determination down the stretch than we did. So against that's a real credit to them. I think their coaching staff, they really did a good job getting them ready to play."

Shedeur Sanders completed 38 of 47 passes and the Buffaloes had four 100-yard receivers for the first

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 66 of 81

time ever: Hunter, Edwards (five catches, 135 yards), Jimmy Horn Jr. (11 catches, 117 yards with a TD) and Xavier Weaver (six catches, 118 yards). Colorado outgained TCU 565-541 total yards.

Morris was 24-of-42 passing for 279 yards and two touchdowns. Emani Baily ran for 165 yards. Trey Sanders had three TD runs, including a 1-yard run for a 42-38 lead two plays after Major Everhart's 86-yard kickoff return.

Edwards' game-winning score came on a fourth-down play. He took a pass in the flats, made a slight hesitation and then raced down the sideline past the TCU defense.

TCU's final drive came to an end with a fourth-down stop around midfield, and Colorado, playing its final season in the Pac-12 before returning to the Big 12 to share a conference with the Horned Frogs, was able to run out the final minute.

Colorado didn't trail until Morris threw a 23-yard touchdown to Dylan Wright to put TCU up 28-24 with 2 1/2 minutes left in the third quarter. But that was the first of six consecutive possessions when the two teams traded touchdowns until Edwards' final score.

The Horned Frogs had an undefeated regular season last year in Dykes' first season, and reached the College Football Playoff, beating Michigan in the semifinal game before a 65-7 loss to Georgia.

They have now lost three of their last four games, going back to the Big 12 championship against Kansas State.

"I told the guys afterwards, if we play like that this year, we're not going to win many football games. So we've got to get a lot better," Dykes said. "Thought our tackling was really, really bad defensively. We've got a lot of guys back, those guys have tackled. I don't know what happened today that they couldn't tackle."

RUNNING ONTO THE FIELD

Deion Sanders spent much of the summer getting around on a scooter with a protective boot covering his left foot after multiple surgeries to remove blood clots and address issues with his toes. He took off the boot this week, and led his team onto the field for the opener.

Asked how his foot felt after the game, the coach responded, "Not good, not good. But I'm thankful. And God gave me what I needed to finish. I'm thankful that I finished. That's all we want to do is start and finish."

Sanders occasionally sat on a folding chair on the sideline during the game.

Sanders got postgame treatment on his foot before addressing his team or the media. While in the training room, he got a visit from his sons: Shedeur and safety Shilo, who had 10 tackles.

"We had a dad moment. They were really happy, elated," the coach said "I'm proud of both of them, I really am."

UP NEXT

Colorado: Six months after 50,000 people were at the spring game on a snowy April day, the Buffs play their home opener with Deion Sanders on Saturday against Nebraska (0-1) and new coach Matt Rhule. It's only their third meeting since 2010, the last season both teams were in the Big 12 together.

TCU: The Frogs are home next Saturday night against FCS team Nicholls (0-1).

DeSantis' redistricting map in Florida is unconstitutional and must be redrawn, judge says

By MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

A Florida redistricting plan pushed by Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis violates the state constitution and is prohibited from being used for any future U.S. congressional elections since it diminishes the ability of Black voters in north Florida to pick a representative of their choice, a state judge ruled Saturday.

Circuit Judge J. Lee Marsh sent the plan back to the Florida Legislature with instructions that lawmakers should draw a new congressional map that complies with the Florida Constitution.

The voting rights groups that challenged the plan in court "have shown that the enacted plan results in the diminishment of Black voters' ability to elect their candidate of choice in violation of the Florida

Constitution," Marsh wrote.

The decision was the latest to strike down new congressional maps in Southern states over concerns that they diluted Black voting power.

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a Republican-drawn map in Alabama, with two conservative justices joining liberals in rejecting the effort to weaken a landmark voting rights law. Not long after that, the Supreme Court lifted its hold on a Louisiana political remap case, increasing the likelihood that the Republican-dominated state will have to redraw boundary lines to create a second mostly Black congressional district.

In each of the cases, Republicans have either appealed or vowed to appeal the decisions since they could benefit Democratic congressional candidates facing 2024 races under redrawn maps. The Florida case likely will end up before the Florida Supreme Court.

Every 10 years — following a once-a-decade census — lawmakers in all 50 states, including Florida, redraw political boundaries.

DeSantis, a candidate for the 2024 GOP presidential nomination, was criticized for essentially drawing Democratic U.S. Rep. Al Lawson, who is Black, out of office by carving up his district and dividing a large number of Black voters into conservative districts represented by white Republicans.

In an unprecedented move, DeSantis interjected himself into the redistricting process last year by vetoing the Republican-dominated Legislature's map that preserved Lawson's district. He called a special session, submitted his own map and demanded lawmakers accept it.

In their lawsuit, the voting rights groups claimed the redrawn congressional map violated state and federal voting rights protections for Black voters.

Florida's population of 22.2 million is 17% Black. Under the new maps, an area stretching about 360 miles (579 kilometers) from the Alabama border to the Atlantic Ocean and south from the Georgia border to Orlando in central Florida is only represented by white members of Congress.

The Florida judge rejected defense arguments from Republican lawmakers that the state's provision against weakening or eliminating minority-dominant districts violated the U.S. Constitution.

Marsh wrote: "The court finds that defendants have not satisfied their burden in this case."

For at least a day, all the world is 'Margaritaville' in homage to Jimmy Buffett

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN and ANDY NEWMAN Associated Press

KEY WEST, Florida (AP) — All the world was "Margaritaville" on Saturday, from Key West to New York City and beyond, as legions of fans mourned the passing of beach-bum balladeer Jimmy Buffett at the age of 76.

Buffett's eponymous hit song has long been the anthem of Florida's Key West, where Buffett once lived and built his enduring legacy.

"Everybody equates that song with our city," said Clayton Lopez, a Key West city commissioner. "I mean, when you say Margaritaville, you're talking about the city of Key West."

The community planned a remembrance Sunday along Duval Street, home to some of Key West's most well-known eateries and music venues, including the Chart Room, a dive bar where Buffett sang early in his career.

"He's doing another show now, but it's in the sky," said Jimmy Weekley, who owns Fausto, a restaurant that is one of Key West's landmarks.

Buffett's fandom was widespread, and tributes poured in Saturday.

President Joe Biden sent condolences to Buffett's family "and to the millions of fans who will continue to love him even as his ship now sails for new shores." Former President Bill Clinton wrote on X, formerly Twitter, that Buffett's "music brought happiness to millions of people." Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys wrote: "Love and Mercy, Jimmy Buffett," and Paul McCartney called him "one of the kindest and most generous people."

Matt Urben, a self-described Parrothead, as Buffett fans are known, and a Brooklyn resident, awoke to news of Buffett's death. He joined fellow fans in New York City to reminisce.

"I actually got emotional," said Urben, 32, who said he'd seen 48 Buffett concerts since his college days. "They were really special and really fun. ... Just so many stories and so many memories."

Afterward, he and a buddy headed to the Margaritaville restaurant in Times Square — part of the Buffett business empire — which describes itself as "an island-inspired oasis in the middle of New York City."

When "Margaritaville" played, Reid Johnson sang along. By no means a Parrothead, he said, "I'm very familiar with his music."

Jeanne Fetner had traveled from Northern Virginia with her daughter Avery to visit colleges in New York City when she heard the news. She went to Margaritaville to celebrate Buffett, whose ode to a beef patty and bun, "Cheeseburger in Paradise," is her favorite song.

Fetner recalled a visit to Key West years ago on spring break.

"My friends and I went to Buffett's house and rang the bell on his door," Fetner recounted. Buffett's daughter Savannah appeared and told the group, "My dad can't come out but he wanted to thank you for coming," she said.

Tracy Smith, from Tampa, Florida, arrived at the Times Square restaurant with her daughters in between Broadway shows.

"We made a trip here to pay a tribute to Jimmy Buffett, too," she said while sipping on a margarita.

"I bought all his music," she said, "I love him and I love his vibe. He makes people happy."

Nobel Foundation withdraws invitation to Russia, Belarus and Iran to attend ceremonies

STOCKHOLM (AP) — The Nobel Foundation on Saturday withdrew its invitation for representatives of Russia, Belarus and Iran to attend this year's Nobel Prize award ceremonies after the decision announced a day earlier "provoked strong reactions."

Several Swedish lawmakers said Friday they would boycott this year's Nobel Prize award ceremonies in the Swedish capital, Stockholm, after the private foundation that administers the prestigious awards changed its position from a year earlier and invited representatives of the three countries to attend, saying it "promotes opportunities to convey the important messages of the Nobel Prize to everyone."

Some of the lawmakers cited Russia's war on Ukraine and the crackdown on human rights in Iran as reasons for their boycott. Belarusian opposition figure Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya on Friday called on the Swedish Nobel Foundation and the Norwegian Nobel Committee not to invite representatives of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's "illegitimate regime to any events."

On Saturday, she welcomed the Nobel Foundation's decision. She told The Associated Press that it was "a clear sign of solidarity with the Belarusian and Ukrainian peoples."

"This is how you show your commitment to the principles and values of Nobel," Tsikhanouskaya said.

Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Oleh Nikolenko called the decision a "victory for humanism."

"Thank you to everyone who demanded that justice be restored," he wrote on Facebook, adding that "a similar decision" should be made regarding the attendance of Russian and Belarusian ambassadors at celebrations taking place in Norway following the ceremony in Sweden.

Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, who said Friday he wouldn't have allowed the three countries to participate in the award ceremonies, was also happy with the decision. He posted on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, that "the many and strong reactions show that the whole of Sweden unambiguously stand on Ukraine's side against Russia's appalling war of aggression."

The foundation said Saturday it recognized "the strong reactions in Sweden, which completely overshadowed this message" and therefore it had decided not to invite the ambassadors of Russia, Belarus and Iran to the ceremony in Stockholm where the prizes in Sciences and Literatures are awarded.

However, the Norwegian Nobel Committee that awards the Nobel Peace Prize said it would follow its usual practice and invite all ambassadors to the ceremony in the Norwegian capital of Oslo where the

Nobel Peace Prize is awarded.

"The Committee wishes the government authorities in every country officially represented in Norway to have the opportunity to take part in the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony and to familiarize themselves with the Nobel Peace Prize laureates' important message," the Committee said to the AP in a statement.

"This applies not least to countries with an authoritarian regime which wage war against other countries or against their own population, and which our Peace Prize laureates oppose."

Saturday's announcement was widely praised in Sweden by politicians. Even the Swedish Royal House reacted with spokeswoman Margareta Thorgren saying, as quoted by newspaper Aftonbladet, that "we see the change in the decision as positive." She added that King Carl XVI Gustaf was planning to hand out this year's Nobel awards at ceremonies in Stockholm "as before."

This year's Nobel prize winners will be announced in early October. The laureates are then invited to receive their awards at glittering prize ceremonies on Dec. 10, the anniversary of award founder Alfred Nobel's death in 1896.

India launches a spacecraft to study the sun after successful landing near the moon's south pole

By ASHOK SHARMA and AIJAZ HUSSAIN Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India launched its first space mission to study the sun on Saturday, less than two weeks after a successful uncrewed landing near the south polar region of the moon.

The Aditya-L1 spacecraft took off on board a satellite launch vehicle from the Sriharikota space center in southern India on a quest to study the sun from a point about 1.5 million kilometers (930,000 miles) from Earth. The point, known as L1, affords an uninterrupted view of the sun.

The spacecraft is equipped with seven payloads to study the sun's corona, chromosphere, photosphere and solar wind, the Indian Space Research Organization said.

After over an hour, the ISRO said the launch was "accomplished successfully."

"The vehicle has placed the satellite precisely into its intended orbit. India's first solar observatory has begun its journey to the destination of Sun-Earth L1 point," ISRO posted on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter.

The satellite is scheduled to take 125 days to reach the L1 point.

India became the first country to land a spacecraft near the moon's south pole on Aug. 23 — a historic voyage to uncharted territory that scientists believe could hold vital reserves of frozen water. After a failed attempt to land on the moon in 2019, India joined the United States, Russia and China as only the fourth country to achieve the milestone.

Jitendra Singh, India's junior minister for science and technology, praised the ISRO officials for their work on the latest launch.

"Congratulations India. Congratulations ISRO," he said while being present at the ISRO control room. "It's a sunshine moment for India."

The sun study, combined with India's successful moon landing, would completely change the image of the ISRO in the world community, said Manish Purohit, a former scientist at the research organization.

Hundreds of people who had gathered to watch the launch cheered as India's sun mission took off.

Among the spectators, Prakash, who gave only one name, said the launch was "one more milestone" like the country's recent moon mission. "This is going to set the bar high for ISRO," he said.

"We are privileged to be Indian and witness this kind of developmental activities on the space center for India," said Sridevi, who also gave only one name.

Once in place, the satellite would provide reliable forewarning of an onslaught of particles and radiation from heightened solar activity that has the potential to knock out power grids on Earth, said B.R. Guruprasad, a space scientist, in an article in The Times of India newspaper. The advanced warning can protect the satellites that are the backbone of the global economic structure as well as the people living in space stations.

"Those seven payloads are going to study the sun as a star in all the possible spectrum positions that we have visible, ultraviolet, and X-ray. ... It's like we're going to get a black and white image, the color image and the high-definition image, 4K image of the sun, so that we don't miss out on anything that is happening on the sun," Purohit said.

'Margaritaville' singer Jimmy Buffett, who turned beach-bum life into an empire, dies at 76

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffett, who popularized beach bum soft rock with the escapist Caribbean-flavored song "Margaritaville" and turned that celebration of loafing into a billion-dollar empire of restaurants, resorts and frozen concoctions, has died. He was 76.

"Jimmy passed away peacefully on the night of September 1st surrounded by his family, friends, music and dogs," a statement posted to Buffett's official website and social media pages said late Friday. "He lived his life like a song till the very last breath and will be missed beyond measure by so many."

The statement did not say where Buffett died or give a cause of death. Illness had forced him to re-schedule concerts in May and Buffett acknowledged in social media posts that he had been hospitalized, but provided no specifics.

"Margaritaville," released on Feb. 14, 1977, quickly took on a life of its own, becoming a state of mind for those "wastin' away," an excuse for a life of low-key fun and escapism for those "growing older, but not up."

The song is the unhurried portrait of a loafer on his front porch, watching tourists sunbathe while a pot of shrimp is beginning to boil. The singer has a new tattoo, a likely hangover and regrets over a lost love. Somewhere, irritatingly, there is a misplaced salt shaker.

"What seems like a simple ditty about getting blotto and mending a broken heart turns out to be a profound meditation on the often painful inertia of beach dwelling," Spin magazine wrote in 2021. "The tourists come and go, one group indistinguishable from the other. Waves crest and break whether somebody is there to witness it or not. Everything that means anything has already happened and you're not even sure when."

The song — from the album "Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes" — spent 22 weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 chart and peaked at No. 8. The song was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2016 for its cultural and historic significance, became a karaoke standard and helped brand Key West, Florida, as a distinct sound of music and a destination known the world over.

"There was no such place as Margaritaville," Buffett told the Arizona Republic in 2021. "It was a made-up place in my mind, basically made up about my experiences in Key West and having to leave Key West and go on the road to work and then come back and spend time by the beach."

The song soon inspired restaurants and resorts, turning Buffett's alleged desire for the simplicity of island life into a multimillion brand. He landed at No. 18 in Forbes' list of the Richest Celebrities of All Time with a net worth of \$1 billion.

President Joe Biden sent condolences to Buffett's family.

"Jill and I send our love to his wife of 46 years, Jane; to their children, Savannah, Sarah, and Cameron; to their grandchildren; and to the millions of fans who will continue to love him even as his ship now sails for new shores," Biden said in a statement. "We had the honor to meet and get to know Jimmy over the years, and he was in life as he was performing on stage — full of goodwill and joy, using his gift to bring people together."

Former President Bill Clinton wrote on X, formerly Twitter, that Buffett's "music brought happiness to millions of people. I'll always be grateful for his kindness, generosity, and great performances through the years."

Music critics were never very kind to Buffett or his catalogue, including the sandy beach-side snack bar songs like "Fins," "Come Monday" and "Cheeseburger in Paradise." But his legions of fans, called "Parrotheads," regularly turned up for his concerts wearing toy parrots, cheeseburgers, sharks and flamingos

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 71 of 81

on their heads, leis around their necks and loud Hawaiian shirts.

"It's pure escapism is all it is," he told the Republic. "I'm not the first one to do it, nor shall I probably be the last. But I think it's really a part of the human condition that you've got to have some fun. You've got to get away from whatever you do to make a living or other parts of life that stress you out. I try to make it at least 50/50 fun to work and so far it's worked out."

His special Gulf Coast mix of country, pop, folk and rock added instruments and tonalities more commonly found in the Caribbean, like steel drums. It was a stew of steelpans, trombones and pedal steel guitar. Buffett's incredible ear for hooks and light grooves were often overshadowed by his lyrics about fish tacos and sunsets.

Rolling Stone, in a review of Buffett's 2020 album "Life on the Flip Side," gave grudging props. "He continues mapping out his surfy, sandy corner of pop music utopia with the chill, friendly warmth of a multi-millionaire you wouldn't mind sharing a tropically-themed 3 p.m. IPA with, especially if his gold card was on the bar when the last round came."

But others never warmed. "While his songs are full of steel drums, lyrically they are mostly about being a white American man dreaming of a Bahamas without Bahamians," Eater sniffed in 2021.

Tributes on Saturday came from all walks of life, from Hollywood star Miles Teller posting photos of himself with Buffett to former U.S. Sen. Doug Jones of Alabama, who wrote on X, formerly Twitter, that Buffett "lived life to the fullest and the world will miss him." Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys wrote: "Love and Mercy, Jimmy Buffett" and Paul McCartney called him "one of the kindest and most generous people."

Buffett's evolving brand began in 1985 with the opening of a string of Margaritaville-themed stores and restaurants in Key West, followed in 1987 with the first Margaritaville Café nearby. Over the course of the next two decades, several more of each opened throughout Florida, New Orleans and California.

The brand has since expanded to dozens of categories, including resorts, apparel and footwear for men and women, a radio station, a beer brand, ice tea, tequila and rum, home décor, food items like salad dressing, Margaritaville Crunchy Pimento Cheese & Shrimp Bites and Margaritaville Cantina Style Medium Chunky Salsa, the Margaritaville at Sea cruise line and restaurants, including Margaritaville Restaurant, JWB Prime Steak and Seafood, 5 o'Clock Somewhere Bar & Grill and LandShark Bar & Grill.

There also was a Broadway-bound jukebox musical, "Escape to Margaritaville," a romantic comedy in which a singer-bartender called Tully falls for the far more career-minded Rachel, who is vacationing with friends and hanging out at Margaritaville, the hotel bar where Tully works.

James William Buffett was born on Christmas day 1946 in Pascagoula, Mississippi, and raised in the port town of Mobile, Alabama. He graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and went from busking the streets of New Orleans to playing six nights a week at Bourbon Street clubs.

He released his first record, "Down To Earth," in 1970 and issued seven more on a regular yearly clip, with his 1974 song "Come Monday" from his fourth studio album "Living and Dying in ¾ Time," peaking at No. 30. Then came "Margaritaville."

He performed on more than 50 studio and live albums, often accompanied by his Coral Reefer Band, and was constantly on tour. He earned two Grammy Award nominations, two Academy of Country Music Awards and a Country Music Association Award.

Buffett was actually in Austin, Texas, when the inspiration struck for "Margaritaville." He and a friend had stopped for lunch at a Mexican restaurant before she dropped him at the airport for a flight home to Key West, so they got to drinking margaritas.

"And I kind of came up with that idea of this is just like Margarita-ville," Buffett told the Republic. "She kind of laughed at that and put me on the plane. And I started working on it."

He wrote some on the plane and finished it while driving down the Keys. "There was a wreck on the bridge," he said. "And we got stopped for about an hour so I finished the song on the Seven Mile Bridge, which I thought was apropos."

Buffett also was the author of numerous books including "Where Is Joe Merchant?" and "A Pirate Looks At Fifty" and added movies to his resume as co-producer and co-star of an adaptation of Carl Hiaasen's

novel "Hoot."

Buffett is survived by his wife, Jane; daughters, Savannah and Sarah; and son, Cameron.

Rival Eritrean groups clash in Israel, leaving dozens hurt in worst confrontation in recent memory

By OHAD ZWIGENBERG and SAM McNEIL Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Hundreds of Eritrean government supporters and opponents clashed with each other and with Israeli police Saturday, leaving dozens injured in one of the most violent street confrontations among African asylum seekers and migrants in Tel Aviv in recent memory.

Among those hurt were 30 police officers and three protesters hit by police fire.

Eritreans from both sides faced off with construction lumber, pieces of metal, rocks and at least one axe, tearing through a neighborhood of south Tel Aviv where many asylum seekers live. Protesters smashed shop windows and police cars, and blood spatter was seen on sidewalks. One government supporter was lying in a puddle of blood in a children's playground.

Israeli police in riot gear shot tear gas, stun grenades and live rounds while officers on horseback tried to control the protesters, who broke through barricades and hurled chunks rocks at the police. Police said officers resorted to live fire when they felt their lives were in danger.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he would convene a meeting Sunday to discuss steps against those who participated in the clashes, including deportations. A statement by his office referred to them as "illegal infiltrators."

The clashes came as Eritrean government supporters marked the 30th anniversary of the current ruler's rise to power. The event was held near the Eritrean embassy in south Tel Aviv. Eritrea has one of the world's worst human rights records. Asylum seekers in Israel and elsewhere say they fear death if they were to return.

Police said Eritrean government supporters and opponents had received permission for separate events Saturday, and had promised to stay away from each other.

At some point, the promises were broken, said Chaim Bublil, a Tel Aviv police commander.

"A decision was made by the government opponents to break through the barriers, to clash with the police, to throw stones, to hit police officers," Bublil told reporters at the scene.

He said the police had arrested 39 people and confiscated tasers, knives and clubs.

The Magen David Adom rescue service said at least 114 people were hurt, including eight who were in serious condition. The others had moderate or mild injuries. Of those hurt, 30 were police officers, said Bublil.

A spokesperson for Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital said it was treating 11 patients for gunshot wounds. Police said three protesters were wounded by police fire.

By late Saturday afternoon, the clashes had stopped. Police were still rounding up protesters, putting them on buses.

Many of the anti-government protesters wore sky blue shirts designed after Eritrea's 1952 flag, a symbol of opposition to the government of the east African country, while government supporters wore purple shirts with a map of Eritrea.

Eritreans make up the majority of the more than 30,000 African asylum seekers in Israel. They say they fled danger and persecution from a country known as the "North Korea of Africa" with forced lifetime military conscription in slavery-like conditions. Eritrea's government has denounced anti-government protesters as "asylum scum" who have marched against similar events in Europe and North America.

President Isaias Afwerki, 77, has led Eritrea since 1993, taking power after the country won independence from Ethiopia after a long guerrilla war. There have been no elections and there's no free media. Exit visas are required for Eritreans to leave the country. Many young people are forced into military service with no end date, human rights groups and United Nations experts say.

In Israel, they face an uncertain future as the state has attempted to deport them. But despite the struggle to stay, in often squalid conditions, many say they enjoy some freedoms they never would have at home — like the right to protest.

Eritrean asylum seekers are often “hunted and harassed” by the Eritrean government and its supporters inside Israel, said Sigal Rozen, from the Tel Aviv-based human rights organization Hotline for Refugees and Migrants.

Events like the one held in Tel Aviv on Saturday are controversial because they raise money for the heavily sanctioned government and are used to pressure Eritreans far from home, said Elizabeth Chyrum, director of the London-based Human Rights Concern — Eritrea.

Russia says it thwarted attacks on Crimea bridge. Shelling and strikes leave at least 3 dead

By SUSIE BLANN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia said Saturday its forces destroyed three Ukrainian naval drones being used in an attempt to attack a key bridge linking Russia to the Moscow-annexed Crimean Peninsula, forcing its temporary closure for a third time in less than a year.

One naval drone was destroyed late Friday and two others early Saturday morning, according to Russia’s Defense Ministry. There was no immediate comment from Ukrainian officials.

The Kerch bridge, which is a key supply route for Kremlin forces in Russia’s war with Ukraine, has come under repeated attack since Russia launched its full-scale invasion.

An explosion in October, which Russian authorities said was caused by a truck bomb, left three people dead. A further attack on the bridge in July, killing a couple and seriously wounding their daughter, left a span of the roadway hanging perilously.

The bridge connecting Crimea and Russia carries heavy significance for Moscow, both logistically and psychologically, as a key artery for military and civilian supplies and as an assertion of Kremlin control of the peninsula it annexed in 2014.

On Saturday afternoon, one civilian was killed and two wounded during shelling of Russia’s Belgorod region bordering Ukraine, Belgorod Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov said. Two Ukrainian drones attacked the region’s Valuysky district, causing minor damage to a private home and car, while another drone was intercepted by Russian air defense in the Grayvoronsky district.

A woman was also wounded Saturday during shelling of a village in the neighboring Kursk region, also bordering Ukraine, regional Gov. Roman Starovoit said. He blamed Ukraine for the shelling.

Ukrainian authorities, which generally avoid commenting on attacks on Russian soil, didn’t say whether they launched the attacks. Drone strikes and shelling on the Russian border regions are a regular occurrence.

Meanwhile, four people were wounded in the Ukrainian shelling of the eastern Ukrainian city of Donetsk, Moscow-installed mayor Aleksei Kulemzin said Saturday. Donetsk is the regional capital of the eastern Ukrainian province of the same name, which was among the four Ukrainian provinces illegally annexed by Russia in September. The city came under the control of Russia-backed separatists in 2014.

The Ukrainian military said in a regular update Saturday that over the previous 24 hours, Russia had launched four missile strikes and 39 airstrikes, in addition to 42 attacks from multiple rocket launchers.

One person was killed and two were wounded during shelling of Ukraine’s southern Kherson region on Saturday, according to Gov. Oleh Prokudin. Farther north, a 32-year-old police investigator was killed and two other people were wounded when shells hit the town of Seredyna-Buda in the northeastern Sumy region.

Four people were wounded during artillery shelling and drone attacks in the Nikopol district of the Dnipropetrovsk region, according to regional Gov. Serhii Lysak. Elsewhere in the province, Kryvyi Rih Mayor Oleksandr Vilkul said the anti-aircraft defense in the central Ukrainian city, which is President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s hometown, had successfully thwarted a strike, without specifying the nature of the attack.

A missile hit an apartment on the first floor of a multistory building in the eastern city of Kramatorsk but

there were no casualties, Donetsk regional Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said.

U.K. military officials said Saturday that Russia risks splitting its forces in an attempt to prevent a Ukrainian breakthrough in Ukraine's south. According to British intelligence, Ukrainian forces continued to take offensive action on the Orikhiv axis in southern Ukraine, with units reaching the first Russian main defensive line.

Zelenskyy said Saturday that Ukrainian forces were "on the move," after Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Maliar announced Friday that Kyiv's troops were advancing in the Zaporizhzhia region.

Russian President Vladimir Putin will host Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan for talks next week, the Kremlin announced Friday, just over six weeks after Moscow broke off a deal brokered by Ankara and the U.N. that allowed Ukrainian grain to reach world markets safely despite the 18-month war.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Putin and Erdogan would meet Monday in Russia's Black Sea resort of Sochi.

Texas AG Ken Paxton's impeachment trial is in the hands of Republicans who have been by his side

By PAUL J. WEBER and JAKE BLEIBERG Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Billionaires, burner phones, alleged bribes: The impeachment trial of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton is going to test the will of Republican senators to oust not only one of their own, but a firebrand who has helped drive the state's hard turn to the right for years.

The historic proceedings set to start in the state Senate Tuesday are the most serious threat yet to one of Texas' most powerful figures after nine years engulfed by criminal charges, scandal and accusations of corruption. If convicted, Paxton — just the third official in Texas' nearly 200-year history to be impeached — could be removed from office.

Witnesses called to testify could include Paxton and a woman with whom he has acknowledged having an extramarital affair. Members of the public hoping to watch from the gallery will have to line up for passes. And conservative activists have already bought up TV airtime and billboards, pressuring senators to acquit one of former President Donald Trump's biggest defenders.

"It's a very serious event but it's a big-time show," said Bill Miller, a longtime Austin lobbyist and a friend of Paxton. "Any way you cut it, it's going to have the attention of anyone and everyone."

The build-up to the trial has widened divisions among Texas Republicans that reflect the wider fissures roiling the party nationally heading into the 2024 election.

At the fore of recent Texas policies are hardline measures to stop migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border, battles over what is taught in public schools, and restrictions on LGBTQ+ rights — many of which are championed loudest in the Senate, where Republicans hold a dominant 19-12 majority and have Paxton's fate in their hands.

The Senate has long been a welcoming place for Paxton. His wife, Angela, is a state senator, although she is barred from voting in the trial. Paxton also was a state senator before becoming attorney general in 2015 and still has entanglements in the chamber, including with Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who will preside over the trial and loaned \$125,000 to Paxton's reelection campaign.

If all 12 Democrats vote to convict Paxton, they would still need at least nine Republicans on their side. Or the Senate could vote by a simple majority to dismiss the charges altogether. It was a GOP-dominated House that decided by an overwhelming majority that Paxton should be impeached.

"You're seeing a fracture within the party right now," said Matt Langston, a Republican political consultant in Texas. "This is going to impact the leadership and the party for a long time."

The trial also appears to have heightened Paxton's legal risks. The case against him largely centers on his relationship with Nate Paul, an Austin real estate developer who was indicted this summer after being accused of making false statements to banks to secure \$170 million in loans.

Last month, federal prosecutors in Washington kicked a long-running investigation of Paxton into a higher gear when they began using a grand jury in San Antonio to examine his dealings with Paul, according to

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 75 of 81

two people with knowledge of the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity because of secrecy rules around grand jury proceedings. The grand jury's role was first reported by the Austin American-Statesman.

Chris Toth, the former executive director of the National Association of Attorneys General, said Paxton has for years weathered scandals unique among top state lawyers. He said the outcome of the trial will send a message about what is acceptable to elected officials across the country.

Impeachment managers in the GOP-controlled Texas House filed nearly 4,000 pages of exhibits ahead of the trial, including accusations that Paxton hid the use of multiple cellphones and revealed in other perks of office.

"There's very much a vile and insidious level of influence that Ken Paxton exerts through continuing to get away with his conduct," Toth said.

Part of Paxton's political durability is his alignment with Trump, and this was never more apparent than when Paxton joined efforts to overturn the 2020 election. Like Trump, Paxton says he is a victim of politically motivated investigations.

But James Dickey, a former chairman of the Republican Party of Texas, said the base of the GOP sees Paxton's impeachment as different from legal troubles facing Trump.

"Exclusively, the actions against President Trump are from Democrat elected officials and so it can't avoid having more of a partisan tone," he said. "Therefore, Republican voters have more concern and frustration with it."

Patrick, in a rare television interview last month, was explicit in what the trial is and is not.

"It's not a criminal trial. It's not a civil trial," he told Houston television station KRIV. "It's a political trial."

Italian ex-premier says French missile downed an airliner in 1980 by accident in bid to kill Gadhafi

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — A former Italian premier, in an interview published on Saturday, contended that a French air force missile accidentally brought down a passenger jet over the Mediterranean Sea in 1980 in a failed bid to assassinate Libya's then leader Moammar Gadhafi.

Former two-time Premier Giuliano Amato appealed to French President Emmanuel Macron to either refute or confirm his assertion about the cause of the crash on June 27, 1980, which killed all 81 persons aboard the Italian domestic flight.

In an interview with Rome daily La Repubblica, Amato said he is convinced that France hit the plane while targeting a Libyan military jet.

While acknowledging he has no hard proof, Amato also contended that Italy tipped off Gadhafi, and so the Libyan, who was heading back to Tripoli from a meeting in Yugoslavia, didn't board the Libyan military jet.

What caused the crash is one of modern Italy's most enduring mysteries. Some say a bomb exploded aboard the Itavia jetliner on a flight from Bologna to Sicily, while others say examination of the wreckage, pulled up from the seafloor years later, indicate it was hit by a missile.

Radar traces indicated a flurry of aircraft activity in that part of the skies when the plane went down.

"The most credible version is that of responsibility of the French air force, in complicity with the Americans and who participated in a war in the skies that evening of June 27," Amato was quoted as saying.

NATO planned to "simulate an exercise, with many planes in action, during which a missile was supposed to be fired" with Gadhafi as the target, Amato said.

In the aftermath of the crash, French, U.S. and NATO officials denied any military activity in the skies that night.

According to Amato, a missile was allegedly fired by a French fighter jet that had taken off from an aircraft carrier, possibly off Corsica's southern coast.

Macron, 45, was a toddler when the Italian passenger jet went down in the sea near the tiny Italian island of Ustica.

"I ask myself why a young president like Macron, while age-wise extraneous to the Ustica tragedy,

wouldn't want to remove the shame that weighs on France," Amato told La Repubblica. "And he can remove it in only two ways — either demonstrating that the this thesis is unfounded or, once the (thesis') foundation is verified, by offering the deepest apologies to Italy and to the families of the victims in the name of his government."

Amato, who is 85, said that in 2000, when he was premier, he wrote to the then presidents of the United States and France, Bill Clinton and Jacques Chirac, respectively, to press them to shed light on what happened. But ultimately, those entreaties yielded "total silence," Amato said.

When queried by The Associated Press, Macron's office said Saturday it wouldn't immediately comment on Amato's remarks.

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni called on Amato to say if he has concrete elements to back his assertions so that her government could pursue any further investigation.

Amato's words "merit attention," Meloni said in a statement issued by her office, while noting that the former premier had specified that his assertions are "fruit of personal deductions."

Assertions of French involvement aren't new. In a 2008 television interview, former Italian President Francesco Cossiga, who was serving as premier when the crash occurred, blamed it on a French missile whose target had been a Libyan military jet and said he learned that Italy's secret services military branch had tipped off Gadhafi.

Gadhafi was killed in Libya's civil war in 2011.

A few weeks after the crash, the wreckage of a Libyan MiG, with the badly decomposed body of its pilot, was discovered in the remote mountains of southern Calabria.

This red dye was so valuable it built cities. One family in Mexico is still making it the old way

By FERNANDA PESCE Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO TEPEYACAC, Mexico (AP) — One family in central Mexico is struggling to preserve the production of cochineal dye, an intense, natural red pigment so prized that, after gold and silver, it was probably the most valuable thing the Spaniards found in Mexico after the 1521 conquest.

For centuries, red clothing — along with purple — had been a sign of power and wealth because it was rare and expensive. An indigenous Mexican process deriving the pigment from insects gave the Spanish empire a new source of red dye.

Some of Mexico's most picturesque and imposing colonial cities, like Oaxaca, were essentially built on the wealth derived from cochineal dye, also called carmine, and known as "grana cochinilla" in Spanish. It was much prized by the Spanish nobility, and it would go on to dye, among other garments, the British empire's 'Redcoat' military uniforms, before it began to be replaced by synthetic dyes in the 1800s.

Obtaining the dye the old fashioned way is slow, tedious and painstaking. It comes from the crushed bodies of tiny female insects that contain carminic acid and feed on the pads of nopal cactus plants.

Each insect, known as *Dactylopius coccus*, must be bred to a larvae stage and "planted" on a previously wounded cactus pad, and then left for months to feed and mature.

Then each must be harvested by hand, usually with a tiny brush, sifted, cleaned and left to dry in the sun.

The Mixtecs of Oaxaca first developed the method to obtain the precious pigment centuries before the Spaniards arrived. A symbol of status, carmine red was already employed by the nobility of Mexico's Indigenous peoples to dye garments, and widely used in the arts, to write codices, decorate ceramics and paint murals.

Mayeli Garcia and her family run a greenhouse in the village of San Francisco Tepeyacac, east of Mexico City, which specializes in the slow, old production process.

At their greenhouse, rows of hundreds of cactus pads are held on racks suspended in the air and covered by a white powder. That is the sign of the insects working beneath, drawing nourishment from the juices of the nopal and protecting themselves with the waxy powder.

"You have to wait three or four months for them to complete their life cycle, and then we harvest," Garcia

said. "You have to keep monitoring and watching every cactus pad."

That's essentially the way the best red was produced for three centuries.

By the 1800s, synthetic chemical dyes, cheaper to produce and more plentiful, began to replace cochineal dyes.

But the story doesn't end there. Artisans in Oaxaca maintained some production, because weavers of traditional clothing and rugs preferred it in handicrafts.

Some studies began suggesting that chemical dyes, and particularly some of the red ones, could have adverse health effects if consumed as food colorings or in cosmetics like lipstick. By 1990, U.S. authorities banned red dye No. 3 for use in cosmetics, though it is still allowed in food products.

Those concerns have begun to spur the demand for natural colorings — and there was Mexico's cochineal dye all along.

Companies that might want it on an industrial scale are out of luck. It simply isn't available in such quantities.

"We have tried to automate a little bit to make it less manual work, with machinery we ourselves invented, to try some brushes" for brushing the insects off the cactus pads, Garcia said. The motor of their prototype burned out, she noted ruefully.

Garcia struggles to make a living off the 100 kilograms (220 pounds) of cochineal dye she produces each year, though she is trying to diversify into soaps, creams, cosmetics and other products derived from the nopal, such as jam.

Her family still grows fresh vegetables to make ends meet. Selling the dye for less isn't an option.

"It is a lot of work, very labor intensive. It costs too much to produce in terms of labor, so the cost is difficult," she said.

But she still has plenty of reasons for keeping on with the cochineal farm, a whole ecosystem designed to keep the tiny bugs happy, well fed and safe from predators.

"We are having problems with synthetics and chemicals," she said. "So I think that there is a revolution going on, of returning to what once was, what was once produced, because it kept us much healthier."

A 2nd Tommy John rehab could be tougher for Angels' Shohei Ohtani. But it's not a given

By RONALD BLUM and MADDIE BURAKOFF Associated Press Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — If Shohei Ohtani has a second Tommy John surgery, it's possible his recovery might be more difficult than the first — but not a given.

"My first one, my rehab was pretty tough and I never felt 100%," Chicago Cubs pitcher Jameson Taillon said. "People would come up to me and ask me, 'Hey, dude, what should I expect after getting Tommy John?' I'd be like: To never feel good ever again.

"My second one was just like a new arm."

Ohtani tore the ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow while pitching against Cincinnati on Aug. 26. The unprecedented two-way star is continuing to bat as a designated hitter but won't pitch again this year while considering his medical options.

Now 29, Ohtani had Tommy John surgery on Oct. 1, 2018, performed by Los Angeles Dodgers head team physician Neal ElAttrache. He returned to the Angels as a batter the following May 7 and to the mound on July 26, 2020, in a season delayed by the pandemic. He didn't retire a batter in his return, got just five outs on Aug. 2 and left with a strained forearm that kept him from pitching until 2021.

Since then, he's gone 34-16 with a 2.84 ERA in 74 starts.

Combine that with his offense the last three seasons — a .278 average, 124 homers, 290 RBIs and 56 stolen bases entering Friday mostly as a designated hitter — and expectations before the injury were that the 2021 AL MVP could command a record \$500 million-plus contract as a free agent this offseason.

If Ohtani has the surgery, he wouldn't pitch again until 2025 at the earliest. Recovery time for most pitchers ranges from 12 to 18 months, though positions players have returned quicker. Philadelphia's Bryce

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 78 of 81

Harper was back as a designated hitter in May, just 160 days after the operation.

The UCL connects the humerus bone to ulna bone at the elbow. Doctors prefer to replace the torn ligament with an almaris longus tendon from the forearm. If that isn't available, a gracilus tendon removed from the knee is the No. 2 choice.

A second surgery often is more complicated than a first, with recovery time impacted by scar tissues and bone spurs. Pitchers often can resume throwing in week 17 following their first Tommy John. New York Mets medical director Dr. David Altchek said after a second TJ surgery, throwing might be delayed until week 21 or even 41.

"What I've seen is a big re-tear rate," said Altchek, who twice operated on Taillon and estimates he has performed 1,800 Tommy John surgeries since 1993.

"We think that some of the training methods may have something to do with it: The weighted balls. I'm not against weighted balls. Weighted balls do definitely increase velocity, but they put a lot more pressure on the ligament. If I get to decide what my patients do, I don't want them to even go near throwing a weighted ball with any velocity for like a year and a half to two years after the surgery."

Angels general manager Perry Minasian hasn't detailed the extent of the tear and said Ohtani and his agents were consulting medical experts.

"There's a lot of information that we don't know yet that we will need to know before determining what kind of recovery process he's going to have to go through or whether or not a surgery will be needed," said Dr. Matthew Best, an orthopedic surgeon who is director of research at Johns Hopkins' sports Medicine Division.

A spreadsheet of Tommy John surgery patients compiled by baseball analyst Jon Roegele lists 2,345 procedures, starting with Tommy John himself on Sept. 25, 1974, through Dodgers pitcher Tony Gonsolin on Friday. Roegele records 148 players who have had the procedure twice, including three times each for Jason Isringhausen, Jonny Venters, Ben Leeper and Corey Black.

"It's more complicated," said Yankees head team physician Christopher S. Ahmad of Columbia University. "There's issues with scar tissue. If there has been prior surgery to the ulnar nerve, that makes it more technically demanding on the surgeon because the nerve has to be dissected free again of scar tissue, moved out of the way, and then the reconstruction performed.

"The exact placement of doing the surgery with tunnel creation, passing the graft becomes more challenging because the anatomy may be altered based on the prior surgery and the way that the healing has taken place."

"Having said all that," he added, "revision Tommy John surgery is having more success than has been reported historically in the past. We used to say that Tommy John surgery done a second time may have a 50% success rate. Now the success rate is improving, 60, 70."

Most prominent among those who have come back from a second TJ are Nathan Eovaldi and Taillon. Hyun Jin Ryu returned last month, Walker Buehler is nearing a comeback with the Dodgers, and Jacob deGrom had his second TJ operation in June.

"The assumption is that the new tissue, whatever you put in there, is going to heal slower because the environment has already been kind of mucked around with," Altchek said.

More than a meal: Restaurant-based programs feed seniors' social lives

By KATHY McCORMACK Associated Press

GOFFSTOWN, N.H. (AP) — A group of friends and neighbors meets for a weekly meal, choosing from a special menu of nutritious foods paid for by social programs meant to keep older adults eating healthy.

They're all over 60, and between enjoying butternut squash soup, sandwiches, oats and eggs, they chat and poke fun about families, politics, and the news of the day.

But if you're imagining people gathering for lunch in a senior center, think again.

Long before COVID put a pause on social gatherings, some senior centers were losing their lunch appeal.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 79 of 81

Others didn't reopen after the pandemic.

Enter this elegant solution that's gained popularity: give some of the federal and state money set aside to feed seniors to struggling restaurants and have them provide balanced meals with more choices, flexible timing and a judgment-free setting that can help seniors get together to chat and stem loneliness.

"Isolation is the new pandemic," said Jon Eriquezzo, president of Meals on Wheels of New Hampshire's Hillsborough County, which runs one such program, in addition to delivering meals to homebound seniors and senior centers. "Knocking on doors and seeing somebody who's homebound is helpful. But getting people out to do this – the mutual support – you can't beat that."

Seniors are changing. They may still be working, taking care of grandchildren, and fitting in medical appointments, unable to show up at a set time for lunch or dinner. And after years of cooking for others, it's nice to be able to sit at the restaurant and order a meal.

Some restaurant programs target seniors in rural communities. Others benefit people with limited access to transportation. Some are geared toward minority communities.

"Everybody does something a little bit different when they're having a gap in services," said Lisa LaBonte, a nutrition consultant based in Connecticut.

According to information compiled by Meals on Wheels America, one in four Americans is at least 60 years old, with 12,000 more turning 60 every day. Those on fixed incomes also are living longer with less money; one in two seniors living alone lacks the income to pay for basic needs.

Debbie LaBarre looks forward to the weekly gathering with her pals at a bright, bustling restaurant a short drive from her New Hampshire apartment. The special menu at the White Birch Eatery in Goffstown lists the calories, carbohydrates and sodium content for the meals, which have to meet a dietician-approved one-third of the USDA recommended daily requirements for adults under the federal Older Americans Act Nutrition Program. LaBarre and others sign up for the program and swipe credit- and keychain-style cards with QR codes for their allotted meals. There's no charge for the meals, but donations are encouraged.

Even though she's eating out more, LaBarre, 67, lost weight as she prepared for a recent surgery. But what's most important for LaBarre is that she's interacting with others. Retired after years working as a plumbing and heating business office manager, she's concerned about Alzheimer's disease.

"My mother had it, and she was always in the house. She never left," she said. "I'm deathly afraid of it, so I said I guess I'm going to be as social as I can be."

LaBarre takes a friend — a recent widower who is blind — to a different restaurant in Merrimack, New Hampshire, that participates in the program.

"He says, 'I never go out unless you take me,'" LaBarre said.

From a nutrition standpoint, "we eat better in groups," nutrition consultant Jean Lloyd said. "Studies are out there that we eat healthier surrounded with people who eat healthy. And older adults are a vulnerable population."

She cited one from 2020 about the health impact of loneliness on seniors. Recently, the U.S. surgeon general noted that widespread loneliness in the U.S. poses health risks as deadly as smoking up to 15 cigarettes daily.

The program focuses on goals of the wide-ranging Older Americans Act — to reduce hunger and food insecurity and promote the socialization, health and well-being of seniors.

Back in the 1980s, the restaurant was considered a little-explored, unpopular option to the traditional meal gatherings at senior centers and church basements. As of early this year, there were at least 26 states where some restaurants and other food providers partnered locally with an area agency on aging or a nonprofit such as Meals on Wheels.

"We get to see people and check in on them and they bring new friends, and we get to meet all new faces, sometimes," said Cyndee Williams, owner of the White Birch Eatery, which opened in March 2020, right before the pandemic shut down everything. It restarted limited operations that summer. "And then, while we have a small profit margin, that helps us, too. It keeps my staff here and working."

Restaurant partnerships in New Hampshire and in states like South Carolina, Iowa, and New Jersey, for

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 80 of 81

example, started as COVID-19 restrictions were being lifted, along with the urgency of curbside pickups. Meanwhile, communities in Massachusetts, upstate New York, and northern California, which have established, pre-pandemic programs targeting rural areas and ethnic communities, are seeing additional restaurants coming on board.

"The pandemic had created an opportunity for us because it just made everyone aware of the need to think in a different way, to not provide services the way they always had in the past," said Edwin Walker, deputy assistant secretary for aging under the Department of Health and Human Services.

Some programs offer grab-and-go options for seniors, grocery dining services, food trucks, hospital facilities, and catering at senior centers and other community locations in addition to or in place of in-house restaurant dining.

The partnerships originate at the local level. The federal Administration for Community Living, which oversees the nutrition services program and provides grants for innovative projects, does not keep data on how many restaurants and people take part and overall costs. It is working on a research project to learn more about them.

Federal funds are distributed to states based on a formula. States coordinate with local area agencies on aging and related nonprofits to distribute funds, and states provide matching funds for some programs. Nonprofits also seek out grants and donations.

Programs target services to people with the greatest economic or social need, such as low-income and minority populations, rural residents, and those with limited English proficiency.

The programs have to adjust to costs of food and labor, which can be challenging. The restaurants are reimbursed, but the funding sources are limited, especially as COVID-related emergency money has come to an end.

"For every meal we serve, we get \$8.11," Eriquezzo said. "The meal costs us \$13. We suggest a \$4 donation. Even if we get donations, we're still short 80 cents."

Restaurants might need to adjust menus, perhaps by offering smaller portion sizes, lowering the maximum monthly meals to save money and more specifically target who is using the meal programs the most.

Still, partnering with the restaurants costs less than contracting with a town hall or a church for the community dining option, said Janet Buls, nutrition director, Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging.

Bents Smokehouse & Pub in Westgate, Iowa, population 200, was the first restaurant in Bul's territory to sign on after cooking meals for Meals on Wheels recipients during the worst of the pandemic.

Before any of that happened, though, times were tough.

"We would sit here all day and not even have 100 bucks in the till," restaurant owner Sheila Bents said. "They saved us."

And it's saving seniors, too.

Robert Mays, 65, started going with his wife and mother-in-law to the The Lizard's Thicket in Columbia, South Carolina, for weekly "Senior Lunch Bunch" gatherings.

"It allowed people living in the same neighborhood that normally don't see one another and even different races to come together to find out that we're way more alike than we are different," he said.

Today in History:

September 3, Treaty of Paris is signed ending Revolutionary War

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Sept. 3, the 246th day of 2023. There are 119 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 3, 1783, representatives of the United States and Britain signed the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the Revolutionary War.

On this date:

In 1861, during the Civil War, Confederate forces invaded the border state of Kentucky, which had de-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Sept. 03, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 071 ~ 81 of 81

clared its neutrality in the conflict.

In 1939, Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand declared war on Germany, two days after the Nazi invasion of Poland; in a radio address, Britain's King George VI said, "With God's help, we shall prevail."

In 1943, Allied forces invaded Italy during World War II, the same day Italian officials signed a secret armistice with the Allies.

In 1970, legendary football coach Vince Lombardi, 57, died in Washington, D.C.

In 1976, America's Viking 2 lander touched down on Mars to take the first close-up, color photographs of the red planet's surface.

In 1999, a French judge closed a two-year inquiry into the car crash that killed Princess Diana, dismissing all charges against nine photographers and a press motorcyclist, and concluding the accident was caused by an inebriated driver.

In 2003, Paul Hill, a former minister who said he murdered an abortion doctor and his escort to save the lives of unborn babies, was executed in Florida by injection, becoming the first person put to death in the United States for anti-abortion violence.

In 2005, President George W. Bush ordered more than 7,000 active duty forces to the Gulf Coast as his administration intensified efforts to rescue Katrina survivors and send aid to the hurricane-ravaged region in the face of criticism it did not act quickly enough.

In 2009, a private funeral was held in Glendale, California, for pop superstar Michael Jackson, whose body was entombed in a mausoleum more than two months after his death.

In 2010, Defense Secretary Robert Gates toured U.S. bases and war zones in Afghanistan, saying he saw and heard evidence that the American counterinsurgency strategy was taking hold in critical Kandahar province.

In 2012, Sun Myung Moon, a self-proclaimed messiah who founded the Unification Church, died in Gapyeong, South Korea at age 92.

In 2013, Ariel Castro, who'd held three women captive in his Cleveland home for nearly a decade before one escaped and alerted authorities, was found hanged in his prison cell, a suicide.

In 2019, Walmart said it would stop selling ammunition for handguns and short-barrel rifles, and the store chain requested that customers not openly carry firearms in its stores; the announcement followed a shooting at a Walmart store in Texas that left 22 people dead.

In 2022, thousands of mourners lined up to pay tribute to former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who launched drastic reforms that brought on the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Pauline Collins is 83. Rock singer-musician Al Jardine is 81. Actor Valerie Perrine is 80. Rock musician Donald Brewer (Grand Funk Railroad) is 75. Rock guitarist Steve Jones (The Sex Pistols) is 68. Actor Steve Schirripa is 66. Actor Holt McCallany is 59. Actor Costas Mandylor is 58. Actor Charlie Sheen is 58. Singer Jennifer Paige is 50. Dance-rock musician Redfoo is 48. Actor Ashley Jones is 47. Actor Nichole Hiltz is 45. Actor Joel Johnstone is 45. Actor Nick Wechsler is 45. Rock musician Tomo Milicevic (30 Seconds to Mars) is 44. Bluegrass musician Darren Nicholson (Balsam Range) is 40. Actor Christine Woods is 40. Actor Garrett Hedlund is 39. Olympic gold medal snowboarder Shaun White is 37. Hip-hop singer August Alsina is 31.