

Groton Daily Independent

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Wednesday, Sept. 13

Dress up Day: Camo vs. Pink at MS/HS, Sports/ Jersey Day at elementary

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

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

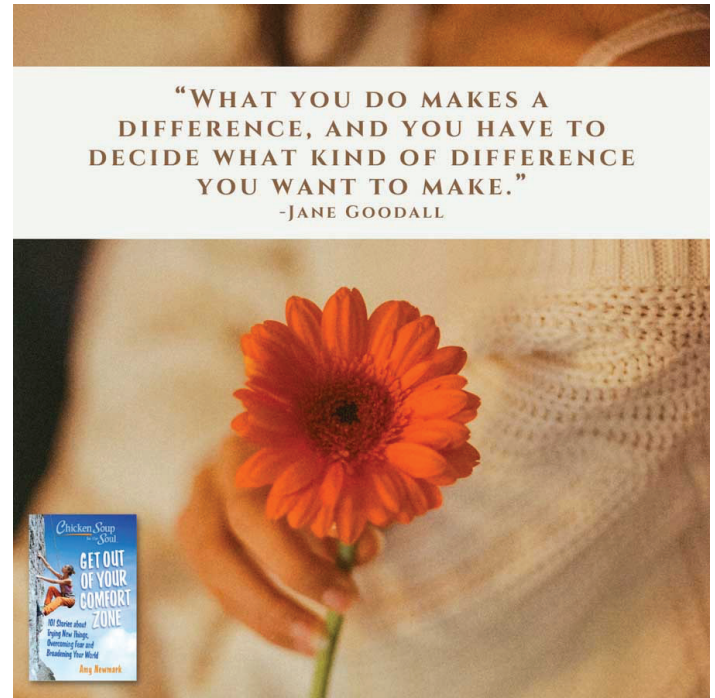
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.

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

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

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

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



Thursday, Sept. 14

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

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

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

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

Friday, Sept. 15

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

Homecoming Parade: 1 p.m.

Football hosts Deuel, 7 p.m.

TigerPalloza

Saturday, Sept. 16

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

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

Junior High Volleyball Tournament at Matchbox in Aberdeen.

Volleyball Tournament at Hamlin, 9 a.m.

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

Youth Football jamboree in Groton.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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The Bulletin by Newsweek

World in Brief

Taylor Swift dominated the MTV Video Music Awards, picking up nine trophies, including Video of the Year for her song Anti-Hero. Shakira was honored with a lifetime achievement award, and boy band NSYNC reunited for their first performance since 2013.

Donald Trump and President Joe Biden's ages are "absolutely a legitimate concern" for voters in the 2024 election, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis told CBS Evening News, and that Americans would like to see a new generation of leadership.

Five former Memphis police officers have been charged with federal civil rights violations related to the death of Tyre Nichols. The officers already face second-degree murder charges in a Tennessee state court.

More than a dozen people have died and over 50 people were injured in a fire at a multi-storey apartment building in Vietnam's capital Hanoi. Rescue operations are underway.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, an overnight Ukrainian missile and drone attack on the Crimean port of Sevastopol has reportedly damaged a landing ship and submarine belonging to the Russian Black Sea Fleet, in what appears to be the latest blow against Moscow's navy. 24 people were injured in Sevastopol. .

TALKING POINTS

"We will always support the decisions of President Putin and the Russian leadership... and we will be together in the fight against imperialism," Kim Jong Un said on his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"When I met with NATO leaders, I heard concerns that leaving so many senior positions unfilled is leading our allies to question our commitment to NATO. I'll be blunt: The actions of the senator from Alabama have become a national security nightmare," Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren said of Alabama Sen. Tommy Tuberville's ongoing block of military nominations.

"Congrats @nfl. How many more players have to get hurt on ARTIFICIAL TURF??! You care more about soccer players than us. You plan to remove all artificial turf for the World Cup coming up. So clearly, it's feasible. I'm sick of this.. do better!" Green Bay Packers offensive tackle David Bakhtiari tweeted after his former teammate, Aaron Rodgers, was injured while playing..

What to Watch in the Day Ahead

The Senate will host its first-ever Artificial Intelligence Insight Forums, a closed-door meeting convened by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer as lawmakers seek oversight on the rapidly developing sector. Some prominent tech executives have been invited, including Meta's Mark Zuckerberg, X CEO Elon Musk, and Google's Sundar Pichai.

Former Vice President and GOP presidential candidate Mike Pence will take questions during a town hall hosted by cable news network NewsNation at 9 p.m. ET. On Balance anchor, Leland Vittert will moderate.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics will release the consumer price index at 8:30 a.m. ET, days before the Federal Reserve meets to decide on its monetary policy. Economists expect inflation to rise further to 3.6% in August on a year-on-year basis from 3.2% in July.

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The following is a corrected version of the soccer game that was played on Saturday.

Groton girls soccer team tie with S.F. Christian

Groton Area and Sioux Falls Christian battled to a 1-1 tie in girls soccer action Saturday in Sioux Falls. Sioux Falls Christian scored first early in the second half. The Tigers scored later in the game on a free kick (foul) from Sioux Falls Christian. Jerrica Locke had an assist. Laila Roberts scored the goal. Jayden Penning had eight saves. The next soccer game is Sept. 23 at Tea Area. Tea Area and Groton Area are number one and two respectfully in the power points. That game will be broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM.

BECOME A MEMBER!

OVER 85 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCES



**Aberdeen
Community
Concert
Association**



**Vox Fortura:
International Pop-op Quartet**
Friday, September 15, 2023 at 7:00 pm



**Ireland's Greatest Showman feat.
David Shannon: Irish Tenor**
Monday, October 23, 2023 at 7:00 pm



The Starlets: Pop Female Trio
Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 7:00 pm



SD Jazz Festival Concert
Thursday, February 29, 2024 at 7:30 pm



**Shaun Johnson & The Big Band
Experience**
Thursday, April 25, 2024 - 7:00 pm

\$75 Adults | \$25 Students | \$155 Family/Grandparents

Concerts will be held in the Johnson Fine Arts Center Harvey & Cynthia Jewett Theater at Northern State University 1200 S. Jay Street.

ACCA Memberships can be purchased at Interior Design Concepts located at 21 N. Main Street or online at the ACCA website. All dates are subject to change. Check tickets for concert time.

WWW.ABERDEENCOMMUNITYCONCERTS.ORG

Volleyball Poll

Here is the South Dakota Media volleyball poll for the week of Sept. 11, 2023. Teams are listed with first place votes in parenthesis, record, points and previous ranking.

CLASS AA

1. Harrisburg (15) 8-0 75 1
2. S.F. Jefferson 4-0 60 3
3. S.F. Washington 3-1 43 2
4. Watertown 6-2 31 4
5. Huron 6-1 10 5

RECEIVING VOTES: S.F. Lincoln (5-4) 4; S.F. Roosevelt (3-4) 1; Aberdeen Central (6-1) 1

CLASS A

1. S.F. Christian (15) 12-1 75 1
2. Dakota Valley 4-0 54 2
3. Wagner 8-1 45 3
4. Dell Rapids 5-1 30 4
5. Madison 9-2 10 5

RECEIVING VOTES: Platte-Geddes (6-1) 6; Mobridge-Pollock (8-0) 5

CLASS B

1. Warner (14) 15-0 74 1
2. Chester Area (1) 11-0 61 2
3. Northwestern 7-3 44 3
4. Castlewood 6-1 22 RV
5. Colman-Egan 4-1 12 5

RECEIVING VOTES: Burke (9-3) 5; Faith (9-0) 5; Wolsey-Wessington (7-2) 2



**GHS 50th
Class
Reunion**

The GHS Class of 1973 will be celebrating 50 years. Anyone can come down to the Legion the evening of Saturday, Sept. 16 to visit the members of the class.



Full time shift supervisor opening at Ken's Food Fair, Groton SD.

Looking for a hard working self motivated individual with leadership skills and willing to take on responsibilities.

Pay will depend on experience. Benefits available will discuss at interview.

Apply at Ken's in Groton SD.

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Conde National League

Sept. 11 Team Standings: Cubs 3, Pirates 3, Giants 2½, Mets 1½, Tigers 1, Braves 1.

Men's High Games: Butch Farnen 218, Dalton Locke 210. Ryan Bethke 187

Men's High Series: Dalton Locke 584, Chad Furney 526, Ryan Bethke 512

Women's High Games: Nancy Radke 179, Suzi Easthouse 171, Michelle Johnson 161

Women's High Series: Suzi Easthouse 489, Nancy Radke 455, Michelle Johnson 413

Groton Area
Tigers



BECOME A SPONSOR



Is anyone interested in being a sponsor of any of these volleyball matches to be livestreamed on GDILIVE.COM? They are \$25 per match. Text Paul at 605-397-7460 or email paperpaul@grotonsd.net.

~~C at Clark~~

JV at Clark

~~C at Warner~~

~~C at Tiospa Zina~~

JV at Tiospa Zina

~~C at Florence~~

JV at Florence

C vs. Great Plains Lutheran

JV vs. Great Plains Lutheran

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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



Hispanic population gains in rural counties spark South Dakota growth

Stu Whitney

South Dakota News Watch

South Dakota's Hispanic population more than doubled over the past 12 years and now helps keep many small towns vibrant, a trend seen in other rural areas of the U.S., according to census data and experts.

There were an estimated 44,581 Latino individuals living in South Dakota as of 2022, or nearly 5% of the state population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

That base number is more than double the 2010 census count (22,119, or 2.7%) and more than four times the 2000 count (10,903, 1.4%). Hispanics are the third-largest racial/ethnic demographic group in South Dakota behind non-Hispanic whites (84.2%) and Native Americans (8.5%).

While Hispanic immigrants traditionally clustered in urban gateway cities, there has been a push to the rural Midwest as companies build food processing and manufacturing plants in smaller agricultural communities with lower operating costs.

This creates a need for workers and can help bolster population numbers in rural counties that have seen declines in recent decades, according to South Dakota State University professor and state demographer Weiwei Zhang.

"Much of this is driven by job opportunities," said Zhang. "A few family members find employment in the community, and then more relatives move there through chain migration."

Nationally, the Latino population increased 23% from 2010 to 2020 to reach a total of more than 62.1 million in the United States. The overall population growth during that time was 7%.

'This business is something beautiful'

About one-third of all Latinos living in the U.S. were born outside the country, according to the Pew Research Center, with Mexico the most common place of origin (61.5%).

Diana Vianey Pineda, a 30-year-old native of Guerrero, Mexico, came to South Dakota in 2015 to work at the Dakota Provisions meat processing plant in Huron. She was part of an influx that gives Beadle County the highest percentage of Hispanic residents in the state at 14.3%, or 2,741 residents, up from just 155 in 2000.

Other counties in the state's top five of Hispanic population percentage are Aurora (8.0%), Grant (6.4%), Minnehaha (6.1%) and Marshall (5.9%).

Along with her husband, who is also from Mexico, Pineda in 2021 started her own pinata business, Pinatas La Mexicana, in Huron. Family members have helped operate the business so far. The goal is to become immersed in the community and find financial stability after starting out at the packing plant, she told News Watch.

"We had a party and couldn't find anyone to make the pinata for us," said Pineda, referring to a decorated container, often made of papier-mâché, filled with candy and broken up by party goers with a stick.

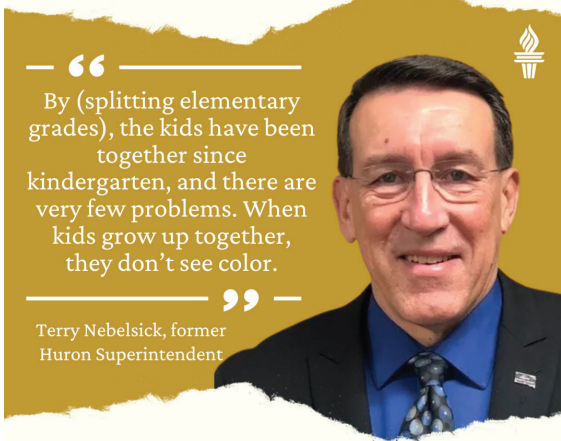


Esmerelda Rivas, Juana Sebastian and Rubia Lopez make pupusas, a traditional El Salvadorian food, at a Cinco De Mayo celebration on Saturday, May 7, 2022, at Falls Park in Sioux Falls.

(Photo: Argus Leader)

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“I decided to make one, and my family liked the results, so we decided to start selling them to the public.”

Pineda, whose interview with News Watch was done through translation software, said she is taking English classes so she can better communicate with her clients and expand the business, which has branched out with appearances in Sioux Falls and the South Dakota State Fair.

“This business is something beautiful and we are moving forward,” she said.

Immigrants help rejuvenate Huron community

For South Dakota communities shrinking from natural change (more deaths than births) and negative net migration, one of the solutions is to try to foster more international migration to offset those trends.

A prime example is the city of Huron, which lost 1,300 jobs when the Dakota Pork plant closed in 1997, around the same time NorthWestern Energy moved its corporate headquarters to Sioux Falls. Huron University was experiencing financial turmoil and officially closed in 2005.

Terry Nebelsick, a former principal and superintendent of the Huron School District who retired in 2021, told News Watch that the district had 2,400 students when he arrived in 1994.

“Seven years later we got down to 1,800 students, and the projection six years after that was 1,200 students. The community had to make a decision.”

Discussion among agricultural groups, city leaders and the Hutterite colonies led to the Dakota Provisions turkey plant opening in 2006. It created jobs that spurred incoming migration and refugee efforts, including an influx of Karen refugees from Myanmar (formerly Burma) in southeast Asia.

‘When kids grow up together, they don't see color’

Beef jerky maker Jack Link's also expanded operations at its plant in Alpena, about 20 miles southwest of Huron, contributing to the wave of incoming new residents.

Huron's school district enrollment is now just under 3,000, 58% of whom are minority or international students. Hispanic students make up 30% of the student body, and Karen students were named high school homecoming king and queen in 2022.

One of the challenges was to make sure that new residents found not just employment but opportunities to become part of the community. That meant lobbying Pierre successfully for more state aid to fund English-language learner (ELL) programs by tying them to economic development, according to Nebelsick.



Matthew Tschetter

When it became clear that there were elementary schools with mostly low-income or immigrant/refugee students, school officials proposed a \$22 million bond measure for three new elementary schools that would put all kindergarten and first graders in the same building, with a separate school for second-third graders and fourth-fifth graders.

The 2013 measure needed 60% approval to pass and ended up with 71% of the vote.

“By doing that, the kids have been together since kindergarten, and there are very few problems,” said Nebelsick. “When kids grow up together, they don't see color.”

Ministry helps immigrants with legal, language hurdles

South Dakota's largest county, Minnehaha, had more than 12,000 Hispanic residents in 2020, according to census data, or 6.1% of its population. That was up from 4.1% in 2010 and 2.1% in 2000.

Those numbers are probably lower than the actual count, said Matthew Tschetter, executive director of Caminando Juntos, a Sioux Falls-based ministry sponsored by the Aberdeen Presentation Sisters.

The organization aims to help Latino immigrants integrate into their communities

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with legal services, housing assistance and English language classes.

Tschetter, who was born in Colombia but grew up in Freeman, said that there could be "from 5,000 to 8,000 or more Hispanic folks who are undocumented, living and working in Sioux Falls and the surrounding area."

Undocumented residents are included in the census but are traditionally undercounted, according to U.S. Census Bureau studies.

The most prevalent countries of origin for Hispanic immigrants in Sioux Falls are Guatemala and Mexico, said Tschetter. Many of them need help with paperwork for county or state services or federal immigration proceedings such as family reunification.

Caminando Juntos, which translates to "walking together," started in 2002 in response to rapidly increasing Latino populations in South Dakota. In addition to legal guidance, staffers provide English interpretation for interactions with government agencies or potential employers.

"We live in a place where most everything in statewide government is English-only, but we try to serve as a buffer or go-between when we can," said Tschetter. "The welcoming part that we do really works at showing the migrant that they have dignity, that we will treat them with dignity and help them with whatever we are able to do."

Hispanics' median age much lower than whites in S.D.

As state demographer, Zhang is reluctant to make demographic population projections because of shifting variables such as economic factors and state and federal immigration policies.

But signs point to a continued trend of Hispanic growth in South Dakota.

The median age for Latino males in the state (23.4) is significantly lower than white males (40.4), with a similar disparity for Latino females (24) and white females (41.9). Nationally from 2018-20, Hispanic women had the highest fertility rate (64.8 births per 1,000 women ages 15-44) among demographic groups, with white women at 55.3.

Evidence of this growth can be seen in the Sioux Falls School District, the state's largest, which went from 3% Hispanic in 2000 to 7.1% in 2010 and 14.7% in 2022.

As more immigrants are drawn to manufacturing jobs, Zhang noted that communities can reach a "tipping point" where the level of education or job skills potentially becomes a drain on the community in terms of social services or other resources.

In South Dakota, only 15% of Hispanic males have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 31.6 for white males. For females, the percentages are 27.8 for Hispanics and 35.3 for whites.

The median household income in South Dakota is \$57,045 for Hispanics and \$69,702 for whites.

Immigrants can provide 'demographic lifeline' to towns

For rural communities struggling with sinking populations, however, Latinos can provide a "demographic lifeline" to slow the rate of decline, said Daniel Lichter.

He earned a sociology degree from SDSU in 1975 and now teaches public policy and sociology at Cornell University.

Lichter published a paper with colleague Kenneth Johnson in 2020 analyzing immigration and Hispanic population growth in mostly rural states. They found that though the influx of immigrants was "usually insufficient to reverse population declines in historically depopulating counties," stabilization of populations and institutions did occur.

"New Hispanic immigrants may not only revitalize rural economies, but keep schools, churches and hospitals open that otherwise may have closed," said the study.

Lichter called it a "demographic turning point" in America, with the politically fraught issue of border security sparking "antipathy toward Hispanics or other immigrant populations, especially among rural voters."



An Hispanic immigrant receives his Level One English certification at Caminando Juntos, a Sioux Falls-based ministry sponsored by the Aberdeen Presentation Sisters.

(Photo: Courtesy of Caminando Juntos)

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Kristi Hine

But there are signs of hope in South Dakota, as seen by Kristi Hine, publisher of the True Dakotan newspaper that serves Wessington Springs and Alpena in Jerauld County.

'It's not just us and them. They're part of this community.'

Hine, who is bilingual, provides interpretation for Hispanic families, many connected to the Jack Link's plant in Alpena, when they meet with local schools

or government agencies.

She moved to South Dakota and bought the newspaper in 2015 after living in Las Vegas and Phoenix.

"There were growing pains for sure," Hine said of the rising Hispanic population in Alpena and Wessington Springs. "But over the past decade of being that go-between the community and Spanish-speaking families, I've seen more acceptance."

She was struck by the story of Wessington Springs High School student Estrellita Cardona, who was diagnosed with leukemia in early 2023 while preparing for her quinceanera, a cultural celebration in the Hispanic tradition for girls turning 15.

Her classmates rallied around her by launching "Team Estrellita" and hosting fundraising events to help the family as Cardona received treatment at Sanford Children's Hospital.

When she died in April, the family called Hine and asked her to spread the word to their daughter's classmates and the rest of the community, who flocked to an all-night wake service at the Alpena Community Center to pay their respects.

"It was really beautiful to see everyone come together to support the family," said Hine. "I don't think that would have happened 10 years ago. It's not just us and them. They're a part of this community. It's a sign of how far we've come."

— This article was produced by South Dakota News Watch, a non-profit journalism organization located online at sdnewswatch.org.



Wessington Springs High School student Estrellita Cardona, who died earlier this year of leukemia, is pictured with her mother at Sanford Children's Hospital in Sioux Falls. Cardona's classmates rallied around her by launching "Team Estrellita" and hosting fundraising events to help the family. (Photo: Courtesy

of True Dakotan)

ABOUT STU WHITNEY



Stu Whitney is an investigative reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A resident of Sioux Falls, Whitney is an award-winning reporter, editor and novelist with more than 30 years of experience in journalism.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Seven housing projects get boost from long-delayed infrastructure program

Three Box Elder developments awarded in first round of grants

BY: JOHN HULT - SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 1:29 PM

A state board signed off Monday on the first grant dollars from a \$200 million housing infrastructure program that had been mired in controversy through two state legislative sessions.

Box Elder was the big winner at the September meeting of the South Dakota Housing Development Authority, at which seven applications for infrastructure grants were reviewed and approved. Three awards went to developments located in the West River city of 12,000 that's home to Ellsworth Air Force Base. The base is anticipating growth as one of the future homes for the new B-21 bomber.

HDA Director Chas Olson told board members the authority has seen 69 applications for funding since July, when rules for the program were finalized. If all applicants got all the money they've asked for, the projects would eat up about \$102 million of the \$200 million in available funding.

Projects leaning on infrastructure improvement program grants are expected to appear regularly on HDA meeting agendas moving forward. The program joins a list of other HDA-managed financing pools for affordable housing, though the infrastructure program is untethered to income-based development.

The newly available infrastructure program dollars became a political football in 2022, when lawmakers rejected Gov. Kristi Noem's plan to award the federal dollars through the Governor's Office of Economic Development. They instead moved the money to the Housing Development Authority, which later that year decided not to move forward with grants over concerns about the legality of offering them through the agency.

During the 2023 session, lawmakers passed what was billed as a fix to the program that explicitly authorized the authority to award the money near the start of the session, in January. They added an emergency clause meant to move the funds immediately from the authority to developers, the goal being to help fund projects to ease the state's housing crunch before the start of construction season.

But another wrinkle emerged just after the session. In order to award the money, the authority needed to go through the rulemaking process, which held up applications until late July and awards until this month.

The grant money is available to help developers cover the cost of installing water and sewer lines, streets and the like as they build new homes or apartments – a cost developers say has spiked higher than the state's climbing home prices.

As the authority worked through the details on the first seven awardees, Olson often included details on how the grants would impact prices for buyers.

Freedom Landing Phase 5 in Box Elder, for example, was awarded \$950,000 for the development of lots for single-family homes. The per lot price would be \$55,000.

"Without the grants, they would be \$85,000," Olson said.

The awards for Freedom Landing and six other projects presented Monday add up to about \$10.3 million.

Infrastructure program grant awardees

Freedom Landing Phase 5, Box Elder: This project promises to develop 38 single-family lots, each sized at 11,000 square feet. Total project cost is \$2.9 million. It was awarded \$950,000 in grants.

West Edge, Aberdeen: This development has 89 total lots, with a mix of single- and multi-family homes. The \$1.6 million in grants is expected to lower lot costs by \$8,000 or more, and drop rents to \$2,200 a month from \$2,500.

Northern Lights, Box Elder: This \$4.7 million project would develop 49 lots for single-family homes. The \$1.2 million in grants would push down lot costs from \$95,000 to \$55,000, Olson said.

South East Development, Lake Preston: This project was awarded about \$450,000 for an in-progress development with eight single-family homes and 27 multi-family units. The total cost of the development is \$1.3 million.

Branch Creek, Brookings: 100 lots for 135 single-family units are planned for this development of mixed townhomes and duplexes across 17 acres. The grant award will help cover \$1.7 million of the \$5 million cost.

Pierre Downtown Redevelopment, Pierre: This project for the state capital city was granted a \$600,000 award to help build 60 multi-family units. The affordable housing units would be open to those meeting income requirements, Olson said.

Alpha Omega Subdivision, Box Elder: Nearly 130 townhomes and 350 multi-family units are planned for this \$9.2 million development. The townhomes are expected to cost between \$310,000 and \$350,000. The project was awarded \$3 million.

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.

Farm profits reached new heights last year, but are expected to drop in 2023

South Dakota ranked ninth in 2022 with \$6.4 billion

BY: MADISON MCVAN - SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 2:48 PM

As food prices rose around the country, so did farmers' take-home pay.

Net farm profits rose by 30% from 2021 to 2022, according to recent data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. At the same time, food prices inflated by more than 10%.

The USDA predicts farm incomes will drop by about 20% in 2023 to levels still above pre-pandemic averages — and interest groups are already using the expected drop in profits to lobby for more money as Congress works on the next Farm Bill.

Farm incomes vary widely based on commodities and local weather patterns, so experts warn against making sweeping industry-wide generalizations. The record-high incomes last year were largely driven by high prices and good yields for the country's biggest cash crops — corn and soy — according to Pauline Van Nurden, extension economist at the Center for Farm Financial Management at the University of Minnesota.

South Dakota's farmers were ninth in the nation in farm income last year, bringing in \$6.4 billion, mostly through corn, cattle, soybeans, dairy products and hogs.

Most of the income growth is concentrated among the industry's biggest farms, according to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

In the warehouse of a St. Paul food nonprofit on Aug. 28, Vilsack announced the record-high income levels to a crowd of agriculture leaders and media before visiting the Minnesota State Fair.

He made a show of stepping away from the podium, removing his jacket and walking over to the whiteboard, where he started writing numbers.

Less than 8% of the country's farms brought in more than \$500,000 last year. Those farms made up 89% of the record-breaking farm profits last year, he explained.

Overall, farmers took home \$15 billion in direct government payments, most of which go to the biggest farms, according to the Environmental Working Group, which tracks subsidy data.

Vilsack pointed to the numbers representing large farms, and sent a strong signal the Biden administration has no interest in policies that would negatively affect the richest farmers.

"These folks are great people — good people, hard working people," he said. "They have a lot of risk. They are providing food for our families and for the world's families. I don't think it's a circumstance or a

situation where you necessarily have to do something to this world.”

He pointed to the numbers representing the smaller farms that shared the remaining profits.

“But you sure as heck need to do something about these people,” he said.

Vilsack touted investments that would help create new revenue streams for farms, like paying them to use “climate-smart” farming techniques, opening up carbon markets and finding ways to get fresh produce directly into grocery stores and schools.

Farm groups across the political spectrum largely support voluntary programs that pay farmers for implementing climate-friendly practices.

Ahead of the Farm Bill, however, commodity groups have also prioritized protecting and expanding crop insurance, and lowering premiums.

Jonathan Coppess, director of the Gardner Agriculture Policy Program at the University of Illinois, said the projected drop in farm income — from extreme highs in 2022 to above-average in 2023 — is to be expected given the ag sector’s volatility.

“There’s a temptation, if not a strategic mindset, to proclaim this as something drastic and bad,” Coppess said, referring to the farm lobby using the expected drop in income to influence the Farm Bill debate.

It’s already happening.

In a May 2 Senate hearing, American Farm Bureau Federation president Zippy Duvall presented a bleak picture of U.S. agriculture, leaning on the USDA data that showed a projected decrease in farm income.

“Much uncertainty remains related to the ability for farmers and ranchers to access supplies, to manage volatile markets and to deal with regulation and weather-related challenges,” Duvall said.

Republican U.S. Senate Agriculture committee staff recently published a blog headlined “USDA Forecasts Sharpest Decline in U.S. Farm Income in History,” urging lawmakers to fund strong crop insurance and risk management programs.

The current Farm Bill will expire at the end of the month.

— *The staff of South Dakota Searchlight contributed to this report.*

Like South Dakota Searchlight, Minnesota Reformer is part of States Newsroom, a network of news bureaus supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity. Minnesota Reformer maintains editorial independence. Contact Editor Patrick Coolican for questions: info@minnesotareformer.com. Follow Minnesota Reformer on Facebook and Twitter.

Madison McVan is a Report for America corps member who covers economic mobility for Minnesota Reformer. She previously covered agriculture for Investigate Midwest after graduating from the University of Missouri in 2020 with degrees in Journalism and Latin American studies.

State officials: Specialty parole unit helps trim fugitive parolee numbers in half

BY: JOHN HULT - SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 5:36 PM

An effort by state and local agencies to capture fugitives from parole has nearly halved the number of such “absconders” tracked by the South Dakota Department of Corrections.

The Absconder Apprehension Unit was formed last December and began its work in January, around six months after the launch of a collaborative group called Safe South Dakota. That group, formed in the summer of 2022 and comprised of the mayors and local law enforcement officials in Sioux Falls and Rapid City and state officials, has monthly phone calls to discuss public safety issues.

The specialty parole unit was formed in response to the high number of parole absconders, who are parolees who’ve lost touch with their parole officer.

Most parolees in South Dakota are not absconders. Parolees typically number 3,000 or more, with a few hundred absconding at any given time.

The unit’s parole agents serve as the primary points of contact for local law enforcement officers who find absconders during their day-to-day duties. The number of absconders fell by 100 from a high of 470

after the unit's first month of operations.

Officials in Sioux Falls and Rapid City repeatedly pointed to absconders as responsible for a jump in violent crime in each city in the runup to the 2023 legislative session. During that session, lawmakers passed and Gov. Kristi Noem signed a bill requiring those convicted of most violent felony crimes to serve all or nearly all of their prison terms without the option of early release on parole. That law, which took effect July 1, was dubbed "truth in sentencing" and passed with broad support in both chambers.

A joint press release from Rapid City and Sioux Falls, Minnehaha and Pennington counties and the state DOC sent Monday morning said the Safe South Dakota group "jumpstarted the creation and ultimate passing of Senate Bill 146."

The same release said that the number of absconders fell to 256 at the end of July – just over half of what the release called an "all-time high" of 486 from 2022.

As of Monday, the DOC website listed 258 absconders.

The release also notes that parole agents now use a "knock and talk" approach to communicating with non-absconding parolees, described as a "proactive" approach that involves getting out into the community and meeting parolees in person, sometimes on weekends or evenings.

"The parole division has worked very hard to ensure that there are multiple interventions to decrease criminal activity involving parolees, and we continue to work on initiatives to decrease crime in South Dakota," DOC Secretary Kellie Wasko said in the press release.

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.

New round of COVID-19 booster shots on the way after CDC recommendation

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 5:55 PM

WASHINGTON — Americans older than six months should get an updated COVID-19 booster this fall, according to a recommendation the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued Tuesday.

The vaccine should be available by later this week, the CDC said in a statement.

"We have more tools than ever to prevent the worst outcomes from COVID-19," said Director Mandy Cohen. "CDC is now recommending updated COVID-19 vaccination for everyone 6 months and older to better protect you and your loved ones."

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices voted to approve the updated booster shots, followed by a written statement from Cohen. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday approved an updated booster from Moderna and one from Pfizer.

The CDC noted in its announcement that protection from previous COVID-19 vaccines and boosters wanes, and that vaccines lower the likelihood of contracting long COVID.

The CDC's recommendation didn't come with any plans to get shots in arms from the Biden administration, which ended the public health emergency for COVID-19 earlier this year.

Uptake of COVID-19 shots has dropped since vaccinations were first approved in the final weeks of 2020 and initially rolled out by the Trump administration.

While more than 270 million people, about 81% of the country, got at least one dose of the original vaccine, that number dropped to just 56 million people, or about 17% of Americans getting the bivalent booster that was approved last year, according to CDC statistics.

The CDC noted in its announcement Tuesday that many Americans can still get the booster doses for free, even though the public health emergency is over.

"For people with health insurance, most plans will cover COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to you. People who don't have health insurance or with health plans that do not cover the cost can get a free vaccine from their local health centers; state, local, tribal, or territorial health department; and pharmacies participat-

ing in the CDC's Bridge Access Program. Children eligible for the Vaccines for Children program also may receive the vaccine from a provider enrolled in that program."

Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra said in a written statement that everyone eligible should "get an updated COVID-19 vaccine to protect themselves and their loved ones."

"Following the Biden-Harris Administration's launch of the largest adult vaccination program in our nation's history, COVID-19 vaccines saved millions of lives, kept countless people out of the hospital, and provided peace of mind for the country."

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

U.S. House Speaker McCarthy tells committees to launch Biden impeachment probe

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA - SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 1:52 PM

WASHINGTON — U.S. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy on Tuesday announced that he has directed several House committees to open a formal impeachment inquiry into unproven GOP allegations that President Joe Biden profited from his son's business dealings when he was vice president in the Obama administration.

"These allegations paint a picture, a picture of corruption," McCarthy, a California Republican, told reporters at a Capitol press conference. "This logical next step will give our committees the full power to gather all the facts and answers for the American public."

The inquiry for now will allow McCarthy to skirt a floor vote, as it's unclear if he has 218 votes for the House to launch a probe. But the announcement comes as a far-right group of Republicans have pushed for an impeachment investigation and have threatened McCarthy's position as speaker.

Congress is scrambling to broker a short-term spending deal with the White House to avoid a partial government shutdown before a Sept. 30 deadline, and the House GOP is pushing for spending cuts in its appropriations bills at odds with Senate legislation.

Ian Sams, the White House spokesperson for oversight and investigations, said in a statement that House Republicans have spent the entire year investigating Biden and have yet to find "evidence of wrongdoing." He added that McCarthy initially planned to hold an impeachment vote, but has "flip flopped because he doesn't have support."

"This is extreme politics at its worst," Sams said.

Democrats said the announcement by McCarthy showed him caving in to his right wing. "We have 11 legislative days to pass 11 appropriations bills and avoid a shutdown. Yet Mr. McCarthy — on his first day back — is calling for an impeachment inquiry," Rep. Madeleine Dean of Pennsylvania, a member of the House Judiciary Committee, said on X. "This is not leadership. This is a mockery. Mr. McCarthy needs to lead his caucus — not the other way around."

The chair of the House Progressive Caucus, Pramila Jayapal, Democrat of Washington, said on X that the impeachment inquiry is a distraction "from the fact that the GOP can't even pass bills to fund the government."

"So, here we go — headed to an extreme MAGA Republican shutdown while they play political games with a non-starter impeachment," she said on X.

McCarthy said the impeachment inquiry will be led by House Oversight Committee Chair James Comer of Kentucky, with assistance from House Judiciary Committee Chair Jim Jordan of Ohio and House Ways and Means Committee Chair Jason Smith of Missouri.

Jordan and Comer have spent the year holding various hearings, but those investigations haven't revealed any direct link that Biden profited from his son Hunter's business dealings.

"We'll follow the facts, the Constitution, and the law," Jordan wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

McCarthy said the allegations "warrant further investigation by the House of Representatives" and said on X that they are "serious and credible."

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Rep. Matt Gaetz, Republican of Florida, has openly threatened to strip McCarthy of his position as speaker if he did not launch an impeachment probe.

"When [McCarthy] makes his announcement in moments, remember that as I pushed him for weeks," Gaetz wrote earlier Tuesday on X.

Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, Republican of Georgia, criticized Gaetz for taking credit, arguing that on Biden's first day in office, she introduced articles of impeachment.

"You wouldn't cosponsor those and I had to drag you kicking and screaming to get you to cosponsor my articles on the border," she wrote on X. "Who's really been making the push?"

Shortly after McCarthy's announcement, Gaetz took to the House floor, arguing that McCarthy has not held up his end of the deals he made in January with the right wing of his conference – when he was elected on the 15th ballot for speaker.

"Mr. Speaker, you are out of compliance with the agreement that allowed you to assume this role," Gaetz said on the House floor.

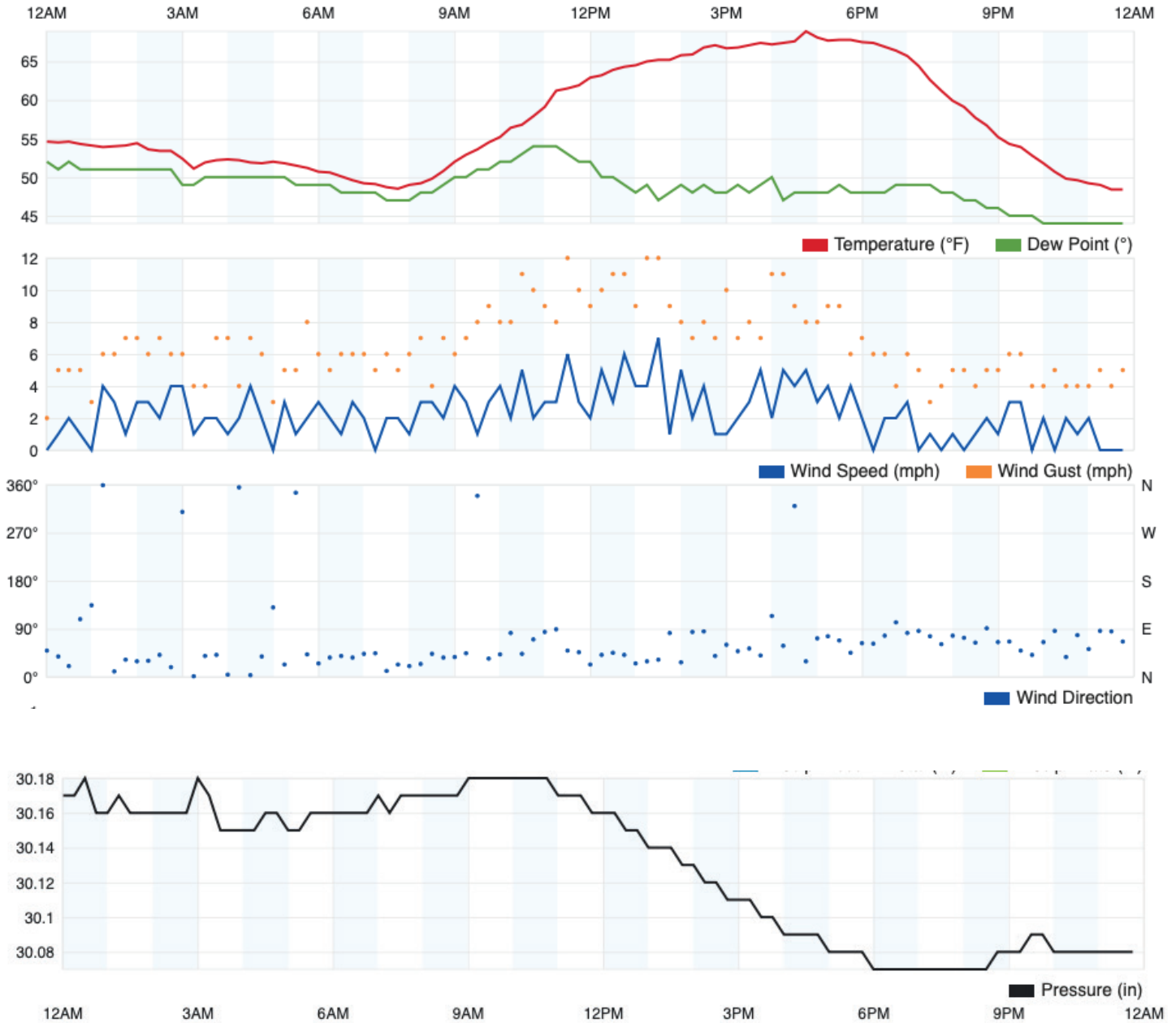
He said the path forward for the House is to "either bring you into immediate total compliance or remove you."

Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her areas of coverage include politics and policy, lobbying, elections and campaign finance.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 80 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 79 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 76 °F	Low: 46 °F	High: 71 °F



5 Day Forecast

September 13, 2023
3:55 AM



Dry today with precipitation chances end of the week

Today	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
				
70-85°	70-83°	70-80°	67-79°	70-85°



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Today will be dry with above average temperatures. Our attention then turns to Thursday through early Friday as a cold front will sweep across the area, bringing 20-65% chance of rain showers and possibly a thunderstorm or two towards Thursday afternoon and evening. No severe weather expected. Dry weather expected through the rest of Friday and into the weekend.

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Probability of Precipitation Forecast

	9/14								9/15				Maximum
	Thu								Fri				
	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am		
Aberdeen	5	10	10	35	35	35	25	25	5	5	0	35	
Britton	5	5	5	40	40	40	35	35	5	5	0	40	
Brookings	0	0	0	20	20	60	60	60	40	40	10	62	
Chamberlain	0	5	5	25	30	30	25	25	10	10	5	30	
Clark	0	0	0	45	45	45	45	45	10	10	5	46	
Eagle Butte	5	35	35	35	35	35	5	5	0	0	0	36	
Ellendale	5	15	15	35	35	35	15	15	5	5	5	36	
Eureka	5	20	20	40	40	40	5	5	0	0	0	42	
Gettysburg	5	15	15	35	35	35	5	5	0	0	0	33	
Huron	0	0	0	35	35	35	35	35	10	10	5	36	
Kennebec	0	5	5	20	20	20	15	15	5	5	5	19	
McIntosh	15	50	50	50	25	25	0	5	5	5	0	49	
Milbank	0	0	0	40	40	60	60	60	30	30	5	61	
Miller	0	5	5	30	30	30	25	25	5	5	5	29	
Mobridge	5	25	25	40	40	40	0	0	0	0	0	39	
Murdo	0	5	5	20	20	20	10	10	5	5	5	19	
Pierre	0	10	10	25	25	25	5	5	0	5	5	23	
Redfield	0	5	5	40	40	40	25	25	5	5	5	39	
Sisseton	5	5	5	45	45	50	50	50	15	15	0	48	
Watertown	0	0	0	40	40	55	55	55	20	20	5	56	
Webster	5	0	0	45	45	45	45	45	10	10	5	45	
Wheaton	0	5	0	45	45	60	60	60	15	15	5	58	

*Table values in %
 **Created: 3 am CDT Wed 9/13/2023
 ***Values are maximums over the period beginning at the time shown.

Precip chances return to the area Thursday through early Friday

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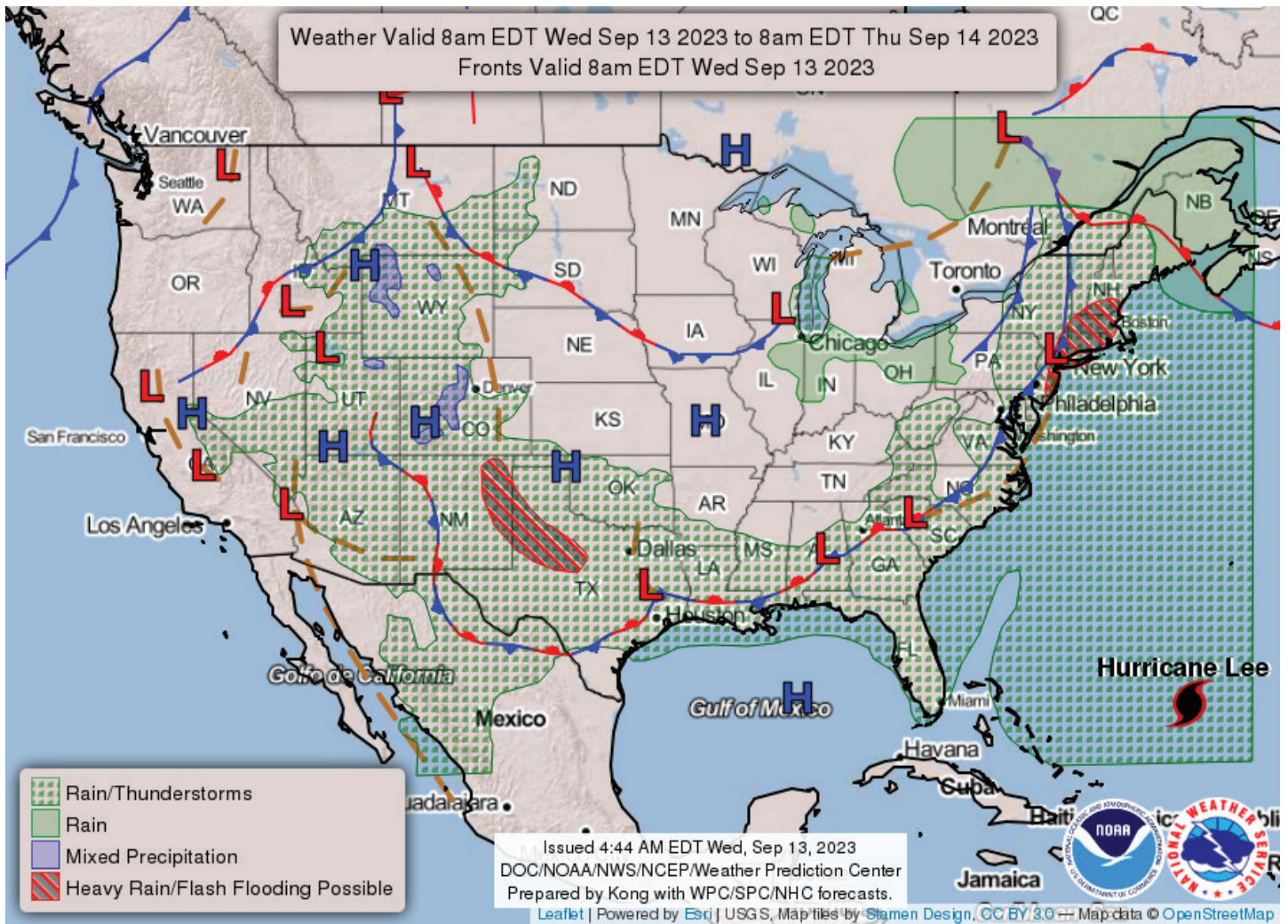
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 69 °F at 4:44 PM
Low Temp: 48 °F at 7:36 AM
Wind: 12 mph at 1:17 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 21 hours, 42 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 97 in 1927
Record Low: 26 in 1902
Average High: 76
Average Low: 48
Average Precip in Sept.: .88
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.57
Average Precip to date: 17.22
Precip Year to Date: 19.16
Sunset Tonight: 7:49:34 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:08:15 AM



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Today in Weather History

September 13, 1928: An estimated F4 tornado traveled across Yankton and Turner County. An entire farm was swept away just as the family was about to enter the storm cellar. A man and his daughter were killed. A woman was killed in the town of Davis, in Turner County. Nine homes were destroyed, 52 were damaged, and 13 people were injured in Davis.

1823: A strong category 1 or low category 2 hurricane struck near New Orleans, Louisiana and went toward Baton Rouge. Its strongest impacts occurred west of New Orleans. Click [HERE](#) for a tweet from Cary Mock, Professor at the University of South Carolina.

1922 - The temperature at El Azizia in Libya soared to 136 degrees to establish a world record. To make matters worse, a severe ghibi (dust storm) was in progress. (The Weather Channel)

1928 - Hurricane San Felipe crossed Puerto Rico resulting in the highest winds, the heaviest rains, and the greatest destruction in years. The hurricane produced much damage in the Virgin Islands, and later hit the Bahamas and Florida. (David Ludlum)

1944: The destroyer USS Warrington was sunk by the Great Atlantic Hurricane 300 miles east of Cape Canaveral, Florida. 247 men were lost in the tragedy.

1978: Little Rock, Arkansas saw 8.10 inches of rain which caused major flash flooding. Ten people were killed.

1984 - Hurricane Diana, after making a complete loop off the Carolina coast, made landfall and moved across eastern North Carolina. Diana deluged Cape Fear with more than eighteen inches of rain, and caused 78 million dollars damage in North Carolina. (Storm Data)

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the northeastern U.S. Flooding was reported in Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Greenwood NY received 6.37 inches of rain. A dike along a creek at Prattsburg NY gave way and a two million dollar onion crop left on the ground to dry was washed away. The prolonged rains in the eastern U.S. finally came to an end late in the day as a cold front began to push the warm and humid air mass out to sea. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Hurricane Gilbert smashed into the Cayman Islands, and as it headed for the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico strengthened into a monster hurricane, packing winds of 175 mph. The barometric pressure at the center of Gilbert reached 26.13 inches (888 mb), an all-time record for any hurricane in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, or the Atlantic Ocean. Gilbert covered much of the Gulf of Mexico, producing rain as far away as the Florida Keys. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably cool weather prevailed over the Central Plains Region, with a record low of 29 degrees at North Platte NE. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the Pacific Northwest, with a record high of 96 degrees at Eugene OR. Thunderstorms over south Texas produced wind gusts to 69 mph at Del Rio, and two inches of rain in two hours. (National Weather Summary)

2008: Hurricane Ike made landfall as a Category 2 storm near Galveston, Texas.

2017: The NWS Office in Reno, Nevada, issued their first tornado warning since July 21st, 2014.

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

GOD'S CURE FOR SLEEPLESSNESS

Charles Dickens is considered to be one of the world's greatest novelists and storytellers. One of His most interesting, compelling, and heart-touching stories is: "A Christmas Carol." It is considered to be a "classic."

However, there is an interesting story about him that that few people know. Whenever he left his home to travel and spend the night with his friends, he would take his faithful and dependable compass with him. After looking at his compass and before he retired for the night, he would always turn the head of his bed to the north. He believed that he would sleep deeply and more comfortably with his bed in that position.

David had his own "routine" for falling asleep. He said, "I will lie down in peace and sleep, for you, O Lord, will keep me safe!" The important word in this verse of Scripture is peace. David did not say that he would lie down and sleep in peace. Rather, he believed that the peace that he experienced in his heart is what enabled him to lie down and sleep.

But where does this peace come from? For David, it came from the Lord. David said that God gave him a greater joy than those who had experienced "abundant harvests." The joy and gladness that David experienced and brought peace to his heart came from his relationship with God.

We never find joy, gladness, or peace if we seek them for selfish reasons. But they fill the life of a Christian when we meet Him in prayer, seek Him in His Word, and worship Him faithfully.

Prayer: Father, give us confidence in the promises of Your Word so that we may rest in your love and enjoy Your enduring peace through Christ our Lord. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: I will lie down in peace and sleep, for you, O Lord, will keep me safe. Psalm 4:8



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

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2023 Community Events

- 01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center
- 01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 01/31/2023-02/03/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Drop Off 6-9pm, Community Center
- 02/04/2023-02/05/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Sale 1-5pm, Community Center
- 02/25/2023 Littles and Me, Art Making 10-11:30am, Wage Memorial Library
- 03/25/2023 Spring Vendor Fair, 10am-3pm, Community Center
- 04/01/2023 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
- 04/06/2023 Groton Career Development Event
- 04/08/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
- 04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
- 05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 06/16/2023 SDSU Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament
- 06/17/2023 Groton Triathlon
- 07/04/2023 Couples Firecracker Golf Tournament
- 07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
- 07/26/2023 GGA Burger Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 08/04/2023 Wine on Nine 6pm
- 08/10/2023 Family Fun Fest, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- 08/11/2023 GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
- 09/08/2023 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

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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.12.23

2 14 21 42 67 18

MegaPlier: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$162,000,000

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 52

DRAW: Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.11.23

13 34 35 36 49 1

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,050,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 7 Mins 50

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.12.23

3 11 13 26 45 13

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 22 Mins

DRAW: 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.09.23

4 14 31 34 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$39,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 22 Mins

DRAW: 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.11.23

18 22 25 30 35 22

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 51 Mins 50

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.11.23

9 25 27 53 66 5

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$550,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 51 Mins 50

DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the  Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Hamlin, 25-21, 25-20, 25-20
Alcester-Hudson def. Centerville, 25-12, 25-14, 25-21
Arlington def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-6, 25-10, 25-14
Baltic def. West Central, 25-15, 25-11, 25-10
Belle Fourche def. Bowman County, N.D., 25-23, 25-21, 25-18
Bridgewater-Emery def. Freeman, 25-21, 25-19, 25-23
Brookings def. Brandon Valley, 25-23, 25-21, 29-27
Burke def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-19, 25-18, 25-14
Canistota def. Hanson, 0-1, 1-0, 18-25, 25-22, 19-17
Castlewood def. Deuel, 25-19, 25-15, 25-12
Chester def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 25-19, 25-22, 18-25, 25-8
Dell Rapids def. Canton, 25-19, 31-29, 25-22
Douglas def. Rapid City Central, 25-23, 23-25, 25-14, 25-18
Dupree def. Wall, 19-25, 25-21, 19-25, 27-25, 16-14
Edgemont def. Hemingford, Neb., 25-23, 25-22, 23-25, 25-19
Estelline/Hendricks def. Great Plains Lutheran, 18-25, 25-6, 25-14, 25-20
Faulkton def. Leola-Frederick High School, 25-19, 25-20, 23-25, 25-21
Florence/Henry def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-16, 26-24, 25-22
Garretson def. Flandreau, 29-27, 25-20, 25-22
Gayville-Volin High School def. Viborg-Hurley
Harding County def. Hettinger/Scranton, N.D., 25-22, 25-18, 23-25, 25-19
Harrisburg def. Dakota Valley, 25-16, 22-25, 27-25, 25-13
Highmore-Harrold def. Potter County, 29-31, 25-14, 25-8, 25-15
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Menno def. Howard, 25-11, 25-22, 28-26
Milbank def. Waubay/Summit, 25-21, 25-15, 25-13
Miller def. Northwestern, 16-25, 25-19, 26-24, 20-25, 15-12
Mobridge-Pollock def. Timber Lake, 25-13, 25-11, 25-13
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Redfield, 22-25, 25-11, 20-25, 26-24, 15-7
Newell def. Bison, 25-20, 25-16, 25-16
North Central Co-Op def. Langford, 25-23, 25-23, 25-19
Parker def. Beresford, 21-25, 25-20, 25-23, 25-23
Parkston def. Gregory, 25-21, 25-21, 25-22
Rapid City Christian def. Philip, 25-21, 25-18, 25-18
Red Cloud def. St. Francis Indian, 25-23, 25-13, 25-8
Sioux Falls Christian def. Vermillion, 25-14, 25-17, 25-11
Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Tea Area, 25-11, 25-18, 25-13
Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Watertown, 22-25, 28-26, 16-25, 25-20, 15-9

Sioux Falls Washington def. Pierre T F Riggs High School, 25-10, 25-9, 25-22
Sioux Valley def. DeSmet, 25-12, 25-12, 25-12
Sisseton def. Webster, 24-26, 25-23, 25-23, 28-26
Spearfish def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-10, 25-16, 25-15
Sunshine Bible Academy def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-15, 25-15, 25-17
Wagner def. Avon, 25-16, 25-21, 25-16
Warner def. Ipswich, 25-5, 25-11, 25-3
Wessington Springs def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 25-21, 25-18, 20-25, 25-17
White River def. Jones County, 25-18, 25-23, 9-25, 24-23
Winner def. Lyman, 25-21, 25-18, 25-15
Yankton def. Huron, 25-22, 18-25, 25-19, 25-17

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

Supporters of Native activist Leonard Peltier hold White House rally, urging Biden to grant clemency

By TRISHA AHMED Associated Press/Report for America

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Hundreds of activists and Indigenous leaders rallied outside the White House on Tuesday to support Leonard Peltier on the imprisoned activist's 79th birthday, holding signs and chanting slogans urging President Joe Biden to grant clemency to the Native American leader.

Peltier is serving life in prison for the killing of two FBI agents during a 1975 standoff on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. He was convicted in 1977.

Key figures involved in Peltier's prosecution have stepped forward over the years to urge his release, rally organizers said, including the judge who presided over Peltier's 1986 appeal and the former U.S. attorney whose office handled the prosecution and appeal.

Tuesday's rally kicked off with chanting and drumbeats. Organizers delivered impassioned speeches about Peltier's life and his importance as a Indigenous leader, punctuated by shouts of "Free Peltier! Free Peltier!"

The rally's organizers said Peltier wrote a statement, which was read aloud in front of the White House, in which he thanked the people who have pushed for his release.

"I hope to breathe free air before I die. Hope is a hard thing to hold, but no one is strong enough to take it from me," Peltier wrote. "There is a lot of work left to do. I would like to get out and join you in doing it."

"Forty-eight years is long enough," said Nick Tilsen, president of NDN Collective, an Indigenous-led advocacy group that co-organized the rally with Amnesty International USA.

Amnesty considers Peltier a political prisoner, and organizers said a United Nations working group on arbitrary detention specifically noted the anti-Indigenous bias surrounding Peltier's detention.

"We are calling on the Biden administration, who has made it a choice — has made Indigenous civil rights a priority — for his administration, yet he allows and continues to allow the longest incarcerated political prisoner in the United States," Tilsen said.

Over 100 people journeyed by bus and caravan for three days from South Dakota to the District of Columbia to support Peltier's release, NDN Collective said in a Facebook post. Speakers at the rally included "Reservation Dogs" actor Dallas Goldtooth, President of the National Congress of American Indians Fawn Sharp and other Indigenous leaders.

While Peltier's supporters argue he was wrongly convicted of killing FBI agents Jack Coler and Ronald Williams, the agency has maintained that he is guilty and was properly sentenced to two consecutive life terms.

"Peltier intentionally and mercilessly murdered these two young men and has never expressed remorse for his ruthless actions," the FBI said in an email Monday, adding that the conviction "has withstood numerous appeals to multiple courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court."

Peltier has exhausted his opportunities for appeal and his parole requests have been denied. In 2017,

then-President Barack Obama denied a clemency request by Peltier.

An enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa tribe, Peltier was active in the American Indian Movement, which began in the 1960s a local organization in Minneapolis that sought to grapple with issues of police brutality and discrimination against Native Americans. It quickly became a national force.

AIM grabbed headlines in 1973 when it took over the village of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge reservation, leading to a 71-day standoff with federal agents. Tensions between AIM and the government remained high for years, providing the backdrop for the fatal confrontation in which both agents were shot in the head at close range.

The White House has been quiet on whether Biden would even consider clemency for Peltier, given the FBI's opposition. But members of Biden's own cabinet, including Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, have pushed for Peltier's release in the past.

"Congress hasn't weighed in on this issue in years," Haaland posted on social media in 2020, citing concerns about COVID-19. "At 75 with chronic health issues, it is urgent that we #FreeLeonardPeltier."

At the time, Haaland was a congresswoman. She is now the first Native American to lead a Cabinet department in the U.S.

PGA Tour resumes in California while the European flagship event is at Wentworth

By The Associated Press undefined

PGA TOUR

FORTINET CHAMPIONSHIP

Site: Napa, California.

Course: Silverado Resort and Spa (North). Yardage: 7,213. Par: 72.

Prize money: \$8.4 million. Winner's share: \$1.512 million.

Television: Thursday-Sunday, 6-9 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Max Homa.

FedEx Cup champion: Viktor Hovland.

Last tournament: Viktor Hovland won the Tour Championship.

Notes: This starts what the PGA Tour is labeling the "FedEx Cup Fall." Players outside the top 70 will compete over the next seven tournaments to finish in the top 125 to keep full tour cards for 2024. ... The leading 10 players outside the top 50 will earn spots in the first two \$20 million signature events in 2024, Pebble Beach and Riviera. ... The field features only five players who finished among the top 50 and are guaranteed all the \$20 million events next year. That includes defending champion Max Homa. ... Justin Thomas is playing for the first time since missing the FedEx Cup playoffs. He was a captain's pick for the Ryder Cup in two weeks in Italy. ... The FedEx Cup points earned after the first playoff event carry over into the fall portion. ... Winners of the fall events get into the Masters. ... The field includes five players who won during the 2022-23 season. ... Kevin Kisner is playing for the first time since the Travelers Championship in June.

Next tournament: Sanderson Farms Championship of Oct. 5-8.

Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/>

EUROPEAN TOUR

BMW PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

Site: Virginia Water, England.

Course: Wentworth GC (West). Yardage: 7,267. Par: 72.

Prize money: \$9 million. Winner's share: \$1.5 million.

Television: Thursday-Saturday, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Golf Channel); Sunday, 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Shane Lowry.

Race to Dubai leader: Rory McIlroy.

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Last week: Vincent Norrman won the Horizon Irish Open.

Notes: The flagship event of the European tour has one of its strongest fields, including all 12 members of the Ryder Cup team, captain Luke Donald and four of his five assistants. ... The European team arrives at Wentworth from a practice session at Marco Simone. ... Shane Lowry has not won since his victory at Wentworth a year ago. ... Billy Horschel and Tom Hoge are playing their second straight week on the European tour. Horschel won the BMW PGA Championship two years ago. ... Adam Scott and Tom Kim are in the field. Scott played in the Irish Open last week and missed the cut. ... Viktor Hovland and Jon Rahm are among those playing for the first time since the Tour Championship in Atlanta two weeks ago. ... The tournament dates to 1972. Arnold Palmer was the first American winner in 1975. Horschel is the only other American winner. ... McIlroy has a substantial lead over Rahm in the Race to Dubai. Adrian Meronk, left off the Ryder Cup, is third in the standings.

Next week: Cazoo French Open.

Online: <https://www.europeantour.com/dpworld-tour/>

PGA TOUR CHAMPIONS

SANFORD INTERNATIONAL

Site: Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Course: Minnehaha CC. Yardage: 6,729. Par: 70.

Prize money: \$2 million. Winner's share: \$300,000.

Television: Friday-Sunday, 4-6 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Steve Stricker.

Charles Schwab Cup leader: Steve Stricker.

Last week: Steve Flesch won the Ascension Charity Classic.

Notes: Steve Stricker is playing for only the second time in the last two months. He leads the PGA Tour Champions with five wins this year. ... Stricker has not finished worse than a tie for eighth in his 14 starts this year. ... Stephens Ames is not playing this week. He is second on tour with four victories. ... The tournament began in 2018. Sanford Health, the title sponsor, was instrumental in helping PGA Tour circuits get back to golf during the COVID-19 pandemic with its mobile testing. ... Stricker is a two-time winner of the Sanford International. ... Stricker, Ames, David Toms and Bernhard Langer all have multiple victories this year. ... Steve Flesch now has three wins in the last two years. ... Bernhard Langer tied for 10th in St. Louis, his 220th top 10 in his PGA Tour Champions career. He moved ahead of Ames to No. 2 in the Charles Schwab Cup. ... Kevin Sutherland was runner-up last week for his first top-five finish of the season.

Next week: Pure Insurance Championship.

Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/pgatour-champions>

KORN FERRY TOUR

SIMMONS BANK OPEN

Site: College Grove, Tennessee.

Course: The Grove. Yardage: 7,368. Par: 72.

Prize money: \$1.5 million. Winner's share: \$270,000.

Television: Thursday, 2-5 p.m. (Golf Channel); Friday-Sunday, 1:30-4 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Previous winner: Brent Grant.

Points leader: Ben Kohles.

Last tournament: Chan Kim won the Albertsons Boise Open.

Next week: Nationwide Children's Hospital Championship.

Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/korn-ferry-tour>

LPGA TOUR

Last week: Minjee Lee won the Kroger Queen City Championship.

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Next week: Solheim Cup.
Race to CME Globe leader: Celine Boutier.
Online: <https://www.lpga.com/>

LIV GOLF

Last tournament: Cameron Smith won LIV Golf-Greenbrier.
Next week: LIV Golf-Chicago.
Points leader: Cameron Smith.
Online: <https://www.livgolf.com/>

OTHER TOURS

Epson Tour: Guardian Championship, Capitol Hill GC, Prattville, Alabama. Defending champion: Maria Torres. Online: <https://www.epson.com/>

USGA: U.S. Mid-Amateur, Sleepy Hollow CC, Scarborough, New York. Defending champion: Matthew McClean. Online: <https://championships.usga.org/>

USGA: U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur, Stonewall GC (North), Elverson, Pennsylvania. Previous winner: Krissy Carman. Online: <https://championships.usga.org/>

Japan Golf Tour: ANA Open, Sapporo GC (Wattsu), Hokkaido, Japan. Defending champion: Tomoharu Otsuki. Online: <https://www.jgto.org/en/>

Challenge Tour: Portugal Open, Royal Obidos Spa & Golf Resort, Vau Obidos, Portugal. Defending champion: Pierre Pineau. Online: <https://www.europeantour.com/challenge-tour/>

Ladies European Tour: VP Bank Swiss Ladies Open, Golfpark Holzhausern, Ennetsee, Switzerland. Defending champion: Liz Young. Online: <https://ladieseuropeantour.com/>

Sunshine Tour: Vodacom Origins of Golf-Western Cape, Devonvale Golf & Wine Estate, Stellenbosch, South Africa. Defending champion: New event. Online: <https://sunshinetour.com/>

Japan LPGA: Sumitomo Life Vitality Ladies Tokai Classic, Shin Minami Aichi CC (Mihama), Aichi, Japan. Defending champion: Amiyo Ozeki. Online: <https://www.lpga.or.jp/en/>

Rescuers recover over 2,000 bodies after floods devastate eastern Libya and displace 30,000 people

By SAMY MAGDY and YOUSEF MURAD The Associated Press

DERNA, Libya (AP) — Rescuers have found more than 2,000 bodies as of Wednesday in the wreckage of a Libyan city where floodwaters broke dams and washed away neighborhoods. Officials fear the death toll could exceed 5,000 in the nation made vulnerable by years of turmoil and neglect.

The flooding caused significant infrastructure damage in the coastal city of Derna and displaced at least 30,000 people, the U.N. migration agency said. The damage is so extensive that the city is almost inaccessible for humanitarian aid workers, the International Organization for Migration said.

Mediterranean storm Daniel caused deadly flooding in many eastern towns, but the worst-hit was Derna. As the storm pounded the coast Sunday night, residents said they heard loud explosions when the dams outside the city collapsed. Floodwaters washed down Wadi Derna, a river running from the mountains through the city and into the sea.

More than 2,000 corpses were collected as of Wednesday morning and over half of them had been buried in mass graves in Derna, said eastern Libya's health minister, Othman Abduljaleel. Rescue teams were working day and night to recover many other bodies scattered in the streets and under the rubble. Some bodies were retrieved from the sea.

The startling devastation pointed to the storm's intensity, but also Libya's vulnerability. The country is divided by rival governments, one in the east, the other in the west, and the result has been neglect of infrastructure in many areas.

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The floods damaged or destroyed many access roads to Derna. Of seven roads leading to the city, only two are accessible from its southern edge. Bridges over the river Derna that link the city's eastern and western parts have also collapsed, according to the U.N. migration agency. The destruction has hampered the arrival of international rescue teams and the delivery of humanitarian assistance to tens of thousands of people whose homes were destroyed or damaged.

"The city of Derna was submerged by waves 7 meters (23 feet) high that destroyed everything in their path," Yann Fridez, head of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Libya, told broadcaster France24. "The human toll is enormous."

Local emergency responders, including troops, government workers, volunteers and residents, continued digging through rubble looking for the dead. They also used inflatable boats and helicopters to retrieve bodies from the water and inaccessible areas.

"This is a disaster of every sense of the word," a wailing survivor who lost 11 members of his family told a local television station as a group of rescuers tried to calm him. The television station did not identify the survivor.

Ahmed Abdalla, a survivor who joined the search and rescue effort, said they were putting bodies in the yard of a local hospital before taking them for burial in mass graves at the city's sole intact cemetery.

"The situation is indescribable. Entire families dead in this disaster. Some were washed away to the sea," Abdalla said by phone from Derna.

Bulldozers worked over the past two days to fix and clear roads to allow the delivery of humanitarian aid and heavy equipment urgently needed for the search and rescue operations. Derna is 250 kilometers (150 miles) east of Benghazi, where international aid started to arrive on Tuesday.

Libya's neighbors, Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia, as well as Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, have sent rescue teams and humanitarian aid. President Joe Biden also said the United States is sending emergency funds to relief organizations and coordinating with the Libyan authorities and the U.N. to provide additional support.

Mohammed Abu-Lamousha, a spokesman for the eastern Libyan interior ministry, on Tuesday put the death tally in Derna at more than 5,300, according to the state-run news agency. Dozens of others were reported dead in other towns in eastern Libya, he said.

Authorities have transferred hundreds of bodies to morgues in nearby towns. In the city of Tobruk, 169 kilometers (105 miles) east of Derna, the Medical Center of Tobruk's morgue received more than 300 bodies for people killed in the Derna flooding. Among them were 84 Egyptians, according to a list of dead obtained by The Associated Press.

Dozens of bodies of Egyptians killed in the floods were returned to their home country. Most of the dead are from one village, el-Sharif, in the southern province of Beni Suef. They were buried Wednesday morning following a mass funeral attended by hundreds of villagers. Four of the dead were buried at another funeral in the Nile Delta province of Beheira.

Among the dead was the family of Saleh Sariyeh, 60, a Palestinian from the refugee camp of Ein el-Hilweh in Lebanon, whose home was washed away in the floods, his nephew Mohammed Sariyeh told The Associated Press.

Mohammed Sariyeh said his uncle had been living for decades in Derna with his wife, Sanaa Jammal, and two daughters, Walaa, 27, and Hoda, 25, and were all killed on Monday. He added that friends called them from Libya telling the family that his uncle's apartment was in a building in the city center that was washed away during the storm.

The four were buried in Derna, Mohammed Sariyeh said adding that because of the ongoing fighting in Ein el-Hilweh, the family in Lebanon will not be receiving condolences in the camp.

At least 10,000 people were still missing in the city, according to Tamer Ramadan, Libya envoy for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He said 40,000 people have been displaced in Derna and other towns affected by the floods in eastern Libya.

Known for its white-painted houses and palm gardens, Derna is about 900 kilometers (560 miles) east of the capital, Tripoli. It is controlled by the forces of powerful military commander Khalifa Hifter, who is

allied with the eastern Libyan government. The rival government in western Libya, based in Tripoli, is allied with other armed groups.

Much of Derna was built by Italy when Libya was under Italian occupation in the first half of the 20th century. The city was once a hub for extremist groups in the years of chaos that followed the NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011.

North Korea's Kim vows full support for Russia's 'just fight' after viewing launchpads with Putin

By KIM TONG-HYUNG and DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed support for Russia's "just fight" during a summit with President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday that the U.S. warned could lead to a deal to supply ammunition for Moscow's war in Ukraine.

After touring launch pads with Putin at a remote space base in Russia's Far East, Kim expressed "full and unconditional support" and said Pyongyang will always stand with Moscow on the "anti-imperialist" front.

The leaders met at the Vostochny Cosmodrome for a summit that underscores how their interests are aligning in the face of their countries' separate, intensifying confrontations with the United States. The talks lasted four to five hours, after which Kim left, Russia's state news agency RIA Novosti reported.

North Korea may have tens of millions of aging artillery shells and rockets based on Soviet designs that could give a huge boost to the Russian army in Ukraine, analysts say.

The decision to meet at Cosmodrome, Russia's most important launch center on its own soil, suggests that Kim is seeking Russian help developing military reconnaissance satellites, which he has described as crucial to enhance the threat of his nuclear-capable missiles.

In recent months, North Korea has repeatedly failed in attempts to put its first military spy satellite into orbit.

But either buying arms from or providing rocket technology to North Korea would violate international sanctions that Russia has supported in the past.

Putin welcomed Kim's limousine, brought from Pyongyang in the North Korean leader's special armored train, at the entrance to the launch facility with a handshake that lasted around 40 seconds. In his opening remarks, Putin welcomed Kim to Russia and said he was glad to see him, saying the talks would cover economic cooperation, humanitarian issues and the "situation in the region."

Kim, in turn, expressed support for Moscow's efforts to defend its interests, in an apparent reference to the war in Ukraine. "Russia is currently engaged in a just fight against hegemonic forces to defend its sovereign rights, security and interests," the North Korean leader said. "I take this opportunity to affirm that we will always stand with Russia on the anti-imperialist front and the front of independence."

The two men began their meeting with a tour of a Soyuz-2 space rocket launch facility, at which Kim peppered a Russian space official with questions about the rockets.

Kim and Putin then met together with their delegations and later one-on-one, according to Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov. After the talks, the Russian president threw an official lunch for Kim, Russian state media reported.

The meeting came hours after North Korea fired two ballistic missiles toward the sea, extending a highly provocative run in North Korean weapons testing since the start of 2022, as Kim used the distraction caused by Putin's war on Ukraine to accelerate his weapons development.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't immediately say how far the North Korean missiles flew. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said the missiles landed in the waters outside of the country's exclusive economic zones and there were no reports of damages to vessels or aircraft.

Official photos showed that Kim was accompanied by Pak Thae Song, chairman of North Korea's space science and technology committee, and navy Adm. Kim Myong Sik, who are linked with North Korean efforts to acquire spy satellites and nuclear-capable ballistic missile submarines, according to South Korea's Unification Ministry.

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Asked whether Russia will help North Korea build satellites, Putin was quoted by Russian state media as saying "that's why we have come here. The DPRK leader shows keen interest in rocket technology. They're trying to develop space, too," using the abbreviation for North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Asked about military cooperation, Putin said "we will talk about all issues without a rush. There is time."

Kim also brought Jo Chun Ryong, a ruling party official in charge of munitions policies, who joined him on recent tours of factories producing artillery shells and missiles, according to South Korea.

During the lunch, which reportedly featured delicacies from Siberia and Russia's Far East, such as Kamchatka crab dumplings and taiga lingonberries with pine nuts and condensed milk, Kim said that he and Putin agreed to deepen their "strategic and tactical cooperation," and that he believes Russia will achieve victory, apparently referring to the war in Ukraine.

"We believe with certainty that the Russian army and people will achieve a great victory in the just fight to punish the evil forces pursuing hegemonic and expansionary ambitions and create a stable environment for national development," the North Korean leader said.

Despite the recent frequency of North Korean missile firings, Wednesday's launches on the eve of the summit came as a surprise. South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, said it was the first time the North launched a missile while Kim was traveling overseas.

Kim could have ordered the launches to make a point to Putin about North Korea's defense posture and show that he remains in close control of the country's military activities even while abroad, said Moon Seong Mook, an analyst with the Seoul-based Korea Research Institute for National Strategy.

Moon, a retired South Korean brigadier general who participated in past inter-Korean military talks, said the North with the launches could have also intended to express its anger toward the United States, after State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a press briefing that Putin was meeting "an international pariah to ask for assistance in a war."

The United States has accused North Korea of providing Russia with arms, including selling artillery shells to the Russian mercenary group Wagner. Both Russian and North Korean officials denied such claims.

Speculation about military cooperation grew after Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu visited North Korea in July. Kim subsequently toured his weapons factories, which experts said had the dual goal of encouraging the modernization of North Korean weaponry and examining artillery and other supplies that could be exported to Russia.

Tech titans will give senators advice on artificial intelligence in a closed-door forum

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and MATT O'BRIEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer has been talking for months about accomplishing a potentially impossible task: passing bipartisan legislation within the next year that encourages the rapid development of artificial intelligence and mitigates its biggest risks. On Wednesday, he's convening a meeting of some of the country's most prominent technology executives, among others, to ask them how Congress should do it.

The closed-door forum on Capitol Hill will include almost two dozen tech leaders and advocates, and some of the industry's biggest names: Meta's Mark Zuckerberg and X and Tesla's Elon Musk as well as former Microsoft CEO Bill Gates. All 100 senators are invited, but the public is not.

Schumer, D-N.Y., who's leading the forum with Republican Sen. Mike Rounds of South Dakota, won't necessarily take the tech executives' advice as he works with Republicans and fellow Democrats to try and ensure some oversight of the burgeoning sector. But he's hoping that they will give senators some realistic direction as he tries to do what Congress hasn't done for many years — pass meaningful regulation of the tech industry.

"It's going to be a fascinating group because they have different points of view," Schumer said in an interview with The Associated Press ahead of the forum. "Hopefully we can weave it into a little bit of

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some broad consensus.”

Rounds, who spoke to AP with Schumer on Tuesday, said Congress needs to get ahead of fast-moving AI by making sure it continues to develop “on the positive side” while also taking care of potential issues surrounding data transparency and privacy.

“AI is not going away, and it can do some really good things or it can be a real challenge,” Rounds said.

Schumer says regulation of artificial intelligence will be “one of the most difficult issues we can ever take on,” and ticks off the reasons why: It’s technically complicated, it keeps changing and it “has such a wide, broad effect across the whole world,” he said.

Congress has a lackluster track record when it comes to regulating technology. Lawmakers have lots of proposals — many of them bipartisan — but have mostly failed to agree on major legislation to regulate the industry as powerful tech companies have resisted.

Many lawmakers point to the failure to pass any legislation surrounding social media — bills have stalled in both chambers that would better protect children, regulate activity around elections and mandate stricter privacy standards, among other measures.

“We don’t want to do what we did with social media, which is let the techies figure it out, and we’ll fix it later,” says Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Mark Warner, D-Va., on the AI push.

Schumer’s bipartisan working group — comprised of Rounds, Democratic Sen. Martin Heinrich of New Mexico and Republican Sen. Todd Young of Indiana — is hoping that the rapid growth of artificial intelligence will create more urgency. Sparked by the release of ChatGPT less than a year ago, businesses across many sectors have been clamoring to apply new generative AI tools that can compose human-like passages of text, program computer code and create novel images, audio and video. The hype over such tools has accelerated worries over its potential societal harms and prompted calls for more transparency in how the data behind the new products is collected and used.

“You have to have some government involvement for guardrails,” Schumer said. “If there are no guardrails, who knows what could happen.”

Schumer says Wednesday’s forum will focus on big ideas like whether the government should be involved at all, and what questions Congress should be asking. Each participant will have three minutes to speak on a topic of their choosing, and Schumer and Rounds will moderate open discussions among the group in the morning and afternoon.

Some of Schumer’s most influential guests, including Musk and Sam Altman, CEO of ChatGPT-maker OpenAI, have signaled more dire concerns evoking popular science fiction about the possibility of humanity losing control to advanced AI systems if the right safeguards are not in place.

But for many lawmakers and the people they represent, AI’s effects on employment and navigating a flood of AI-generated misinformation are more immediate effects.

A recent report from the market research group Forrester projected that generative AI technology could replace 2.4 million jobs in the U.S. by 2030, many of them white-collar roles not affected by previous waves of automation. This year alone the number of lost jobs could total 90,000, the report said, though far more jobs will be reshaped than eliminated.

AI experts have also warned of the growing potential of AI-generated online disinformation to influence elections, including the upcoming 2024 presidential race.

On the more positive side, Rounds says he would like to see the empowerment of new medical technologies that could save lives and allow medical professionals to access more data. That topic is “very personal to me,” Rounds says, after his wife died of cancer two years ago.

Many members of Congress agree that legislation will probably be needed in response to the quick escalation of artificial intelligence tools in government, business and daily life. But there is little consensus on what that should be, or what might be needed. There is also some division — some members worry more about overregulation, and others worry more about the potential risks of an unchecked industry.

“I am involved in this process in large measure to ensure that we act, but we don’t act more boldly or over-broadly than the circumstances require,” says Sen. Young, one of the members of Schumer’s working

group. "We should be skeptical of government, which is why I think it's important that you got Republicans at the table."

Young says that Schumer has reassured him that he will be "hypersensitive to overshooting as we address some of the potential harms of AI."

Some Republicans have been wary of following the path of the European Union, which signed off in June on the world's first set of comprehensive rules for artificial intelligence. The EU's AI Act will govern any product or service that uses an AI system and classify them according to four levels of risk, from minimal to unacceptable.

A group of corporations has called on EU leaders to rethink the rules, arguing that it could make it harder for companies in the 27-nation bloc to compete with rivals overseas in the use of generative AI.

In the United States, most major tech companies have expressed support for AI regulations, though they don't necessarily agree on what that means.

"We've always said that we think that AI should get regulated," said Dana Rao, general counsel and chief trust officer for software company Adobe. "We've talked to Europe about this for the last four years, helping them think through the AI Act they're about to pass. There are high-risk use cases for AI that we think the government has a role to play in order to make sure they're safe for the public and the consumer."

Adobe, which makes Photoshop and the new AI image-generator Firefly, is proposing its own federal legislation: an "anti-impersonation" bill to protect artists as well as AI developers from the misuse of generative AI tools to produce derivative works without a creator's consent.

Senators say they will figure out a way to regulate the industry, despite the odds.

"Make no mistake. There will be regulation. The only question is how soon, and what," said Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., at a Tuesday hearing on legislation he wrote with Republican Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri.

Blumenthal's framework calls for a new "licensing regime" that would require tech companies to seek licenses for high-risk AI systems. It would also create an independent oversight body led by experts and hold companies liable when their products breach privacy or civil rights or endanger the public.

"Risk-based rules, managing the risks, is what we need to do here," Blumenthal said.

Special mosquitoes are being bred to fight dengue. How the old enemies are now becoming allies

By MARÍA VERZA and MADDIE BURAKOFF Associated Press

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — For decades, preventing dengue fever in Honduras has meant teaching people to fear mosquitoes and avoid their bites. Now, Hondurans are being educated about a potentially more effective way to control the disease — and it goes against everything they've learned.

Which explains why a dozen people cheered last month as Tegucigalpa resident Hector Enriquez held a glass jar filled with mosquitoes above his head, and then freed the buzzing insects into the air. Enriquez, a 52-year-old mason, had volunteered to help publicize a plan to suppress dengue by releasing millions of special mosquitoes in the Honduran capital.

The mosquitoes Enriquez unleashed in his El Manchen neighborhood — an area rife with dengue — were bred by scientists to carry bacteria called Wolbachia that interrupt transmission of the disease. When these mosquitoes reproduce, they pass the bacteria to their offspring, reducing future outbreaks.

This emerging strategy for battling dengue was pioneered over the last decade by the nonprofit World Mosquito Program, and it is being tested in more than a dozen countries. With more than half the world's population at risk of contracting dengue, the World Health Organization is paying close attention to the mosquito releases in Honduras, and elsewhere, and it is poised to promote the strategy globally.

In Honduras, where 10,000 people are known to be sickened by dengue each year, Doctors Without Borders is partnering with the mosquito program over the next six months to release close to 9 million mosquitoes carrying the Wolbachia bacteria.

"There is a desperate need for new approaches," said Scott O'Neill, founder of the mosquito program.

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DENGUE DEFIES TYPICAL PREVENTION

Scientists have made great strides in recent decades in reducing the threat of infectious diseases, including mosquito-borne viruses like malaria. But dengue is the exception: Its rate of infection keeps going up.

Models estimate that around 400 million people across some 130 countries are infected each year with dengue. Mortality rates from dengue are low – an estimated 40,000 people die each year from it – but outbreaks can overwhelm health systems and force many people to miss work or school.

“When you come down with a case of dengue fever, it’s often akin to getting the worst case of influenza you can imagine,” said Conor McMeniman, a mosquito researcher at Johns Hopkins University. It’s commonly known as “breakbone fever” for a reason, McMeniman said.

Traditional methods of preventing mosquito-borne illnesses haven’t been nearly as effective against dengue.

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes that most commonly spread dengue have been resistant to insecticides, which have fleeting results even in the best-case scenario. And because dengue virus comes in four different forms, it is harder to control through vaccines.

Aedes aegypti mosquitoes are also a challenging foe because they are most active during the day – meaning that’s when they bite – so bed nets aren’t much help against them. Because these mosquitoes thrive in warm and wet environments, and in dense cities, climate change and urbanization are expected to make the fight against dengue even harder.

“We need better tools,” said Raman Velayudhan, a researcher from the WHO’s Global Neglected Tropical Diseases Program. “Wolbachia is definitely a long-term, sustainable solution.”

Velayudhan and other experts from the WHO plan to publish a recommendation as early as this month to promote further testing of the Wolbachia strategy in other parts of the world.

SCIENTISTS SURPRISED BY BACTERIA

The Wolbachia strategy has been decades in the making.

The bacteria exist naturally in about 60% of insect species, just not in the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito.

“We worked for years on this,” said O’Neill, 61, who with help from his students in Australia eventually figured out how to transfer the bacteria from fruit flies into *Aedes aegypti* mosquito embryos by using microscopic glass needles.

Around 40 years ago, scientists aimed to use Wolbachia in a different way: to drive down mosquito populations. Because male mosquitoes carrying the bacteria only produce offspring with females that also have it, scientists would release infected male mosquitoes into the wild to breed with uninfected females, whose eggs would not hatch.

But along the way, O’Neill’s team made a surprising discovery: Mosquitoes carrying Wolbachia didn’t spread dengue – or other related diseases, including yellow fever, Zika and chikungunya.

And since infected females pass Wolbachia to their offspring, they will eventually “replace” a local mosquito population with one that carries the virus-blocking bacteria.

The replacement strategy has required a major shift in thinking about mosquito control, said Oliver Brady, an epidemiologist at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

“Everything in the past has been about killing mosquitoes, or at the very least, preventing mosquitoes from biting humans,” Brady said.

Since O’Neill’s lab first tested the replacement strategy in Australia in 2011, the World Mosquito Program has run trials affecting 11 million people across 14 countries, including Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Fiji and Vietnam.

The results are promising. In 2019, a large-scale field trial in Indonesia showed a 76% drop in reported dengue cases after Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes were released.

Still, questions remain about whether the replacement strategy will be effective – and cost effective – on a global scale, O’Neill said. The three-year Tegucigalpa trial will cost \$900,000, or roughly \$10 per person that Doctors Without Borders expects it to protect.

Scientists aren’t yet sure how Wolbachia actually blocks viral transmission. And it isn’t clear whether the

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bacteria will work equally well against all strains of the virus, or if some strains might become resistant over time, said Bobby Reiner, a mosquito researcher at the University of Washington.

"It's certainly not a one-and-done fix, forever guaranteed," Reiner said.

SPECIAL MOSQUITOES BRED IN COLOMBIA

Many of the world's mosquitoes infected with Wolbachia were hatched in a warehouse in Medellín, Colombia, where the World Mosquito Program runs a factory that breeds 30 million of them per week.

The factory imports dried mosquito eggs from different parts of the world to ensure the specially bred mosquitoes it eventually releases will have similar qualities to local populations, including resistance to insecticides, said Edgard Boquín, one of the Honduras project leaders working for Doctors Without Borders.

The dried eggs are placed in water with powdered food. Once they hatch, they are allowed to breed with the "mother colony" — a lineage that carries Wolbachia and is made up of more females than males.

A constant buzz fills the room where the insects mate in cube-shaped cages made of mosquito nets. Caretakers ensure they have the best diet: Males get sugared water, while females "bite" into pouches of human blood kept at 97 degrees Fahrenheit (37 degrees Celsius).

"We have the perfect conditions," the factory's coordinator, Marlene Salazar, said.

Once workers confirm that the new mosquitoes carry Wolbachia, their eggs are dried and filled into pill-like capsules to be sent off to release sites.

DOCTORS ENLIST HELP IN HONDURAS

The Doctors Without Borders team in Honduras recently went door-to-door in a hilly neighborhood of Tegucigalpa to enlist residents' help in incubating mosquito eggs bred in the Medellín factory.

At half a dozen houses, they received permission to hang from tree branches glass jars containing water and a mosquito egg-filled capsule. After about 10 days, the mosquitoes would hatch and fly off.

That same day, a dozen young workers from Doctors Without Borders fanned out across Northern Tegucigalpa on motorcycles carrying jars of the already hatched dengue-fighting mosquitoes and, at designated sites, released thousands of them into the breeze.

Because community engagement is key to the program's success, doctors and volunteers have spent the past six months educating neighborhood leaders, including influential gang members, to get their permission to work in areas under their control.

Some of the most common questions from the community were about whether Wolbachia would harm people or the environment. Workers explained that any bites from the special mosquitoes or their offspring were harmless.

María Fernanda Marín, a 19-year-old student, works for Doctors Without Borders in a facility where Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes are hatched for eventual release. She proudly shows neighbors a photo of her arm covered in bites to help earn their trust.

Lourdes Betancourt, 63, another volunteer with the Doctors Without Borders team, was at first suspicious of the new strategy. But Betancourt — who has been sickened by dengue several times -- now encourages her neighbors to let the "good mosquitoes" grow in their yards.

"I tell people not to be afraid, that this isn't anything bad, to have trust," Betancourt said. "They are going to bite you, but you won't get dengue."

A French agency says the iPhone 12 phone emits too much radiation and tells Apple to withdraw it

PARIS (AP) — A French government watchdog agency ordered Apple to withdraw the iPhone 12 from the market, saying it emits levels of electromagnetic radiation that are too high.

The National Frequency Agency, which oversees radio-electric frequencies as well as public exposure to electromagnetic radiation, called on Apple in a statement Tuesday to "implement all available means to rapidly fix this malfunction."

Corrective updates to the iPhone 12 will be monitored by the agency, according to the statement and if they don't work, "Apple will have to recall" phones that were already sold, it said.

The agency, which is known by the French acronym ANFR, said it recently checked 141 cellphones, including the Apple iPhone 12, for electromagnetic waves capable of being absorbed by the human body.

It said it found a level of electromagnetic energy absorption of 5.74 watts per kilogram during tests of a phone in a hand or a pocket, higher than the European Union standard of 4.0 watts per kilogram.

The agency said the iPhone 12 met the threshold when radiation levels were assessed for a phone kept in a jacket or in a bag.

Fire that burned in a 9-story apartment building in Vietnam's capital has killed at least 10 people

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — A fire in a nine-story apartment building in Vietnam's capital killed at least 10 people, including four children, and injured more than 50 others, state media reported Wednesday.

The fire has been extinguished and rescue operations were continuing, the official Vietnam News Agency reported. Authorities have not confirmed the exact number of deaths. Initial reports had suggested a higher death toll as the injured and dead were taken to different hospitals across the city.

State-owned national television channel VTV said four children were among those killed.

The fire was believed to have started late Tuesday and rescuers struggled to reach the building on a narrow lane in south Hanoi. It wasn't immediately clear how much of the building had burned.

It was home to 150 residents, and 54 of the 70 people rescued from the fire were hospitalized for their injuries, state media said. Residents were being treated for smoke inhalation and injuries sustained as they tried to escape the building.

Authorities were investigating the cause of the fire, which started around midnight in the parking area of the building that had no emergency exit.

A deadly fire at a karaoke parlor in southern Vietnam's Binh Duong province killed 32 people last year.

A Crimea shipyard is on fire after a Ukrainian attack that damaged 2 ships and injured 24 people

By The Associated Press undefined

A Ukrainian attack on a strategic shipyard in Russia-annexed Crimea wounded 24 people, damaged two ships undergoing repairs and caused a fire at the facility Wednesday, Russian authorities reported.

The attack in the port city of Sevastopol, which serves as the main base for Russia's Black Sea Fleet, took place as Moscow launched drones against southern Ukraine's Odesa region. The pre-dawn onslaught there damaged port and civilian infrastructure in the region's Izmail district - not far from the Crimean city — and wounded seven people, three seriously, Gov. Oleh Kiper said.

Ukraine's air force said it intercepted 32 of 44 Shahed-type drones launched over the country overnight, most of them directed toward the southern parts of the Odesa region.

The Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014 in an act that most of the world considered illegal, has been a frequent target since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than 18 months ago.

Wednesday's attack on the Sevastopol Shipyard attack appeared to one of the biggest in recent weeks. Russia's Defense Ministry said Ukraine launched 10 cruise missiles at the shipyard and three sea drones at Russian ships in the Black Sea.

The shipyard is of strategic importance to Russia because vessels in its Black Sea fleet are repaired there.

Seven missiles were shot down, and all the sea drones were destroyed, the Russian military said, but some of the missiles damaged two ships that were being repaired at the shipyard.

Mikhail Razvozhayev, the Moscow-appointed governor of Sevastopol, said on Telegram that the resulting fire injured 24 people. He posted a photo showing the shipyard in flames with smoke billowing over it.

Ukraine's RBC-Ukraine news outlet reported, citing unnamed sources in Ukrainian military intelligence, that an amphibious landing ship and a submarine were damaged in the attack. Some Russian messaging

app channels made the same claim.

There was no immediate comment from Ukrainian officials. Kyiv has acknowledged past attacks on Crimea, which Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has a goal of reclaiming, and avoided claiming responsibility for drone attacks on Moscow and other regions of Russia.

How Libya's chaos left its people vulnerable to deadly flooding

By JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A storm that has killed thousands of people and left thousands more missing in Libya is the latest blow to a country that has been gutted by years of chaos and division.

The floods are the most fatal environmental disaster in the country's modern history. Years of war and lack of a central government have left it with crumbling infrastructure that was vulnerable to the intense rains. Libya is currently the only country yet to develop a climate strategy, according to the United Nations.

The north African country has been divided between rival administrations and beset by militia conflict since NATO-backed Arab Spring uprising toppled autocratic ruler Moammar Gadhafi in 2011.

The city of Derna in the country's east saw the most destruction, as large swaths of riverside buildings vanished, washed away after two dams burst.

Videos of the aftermath show water gushing through the port city's remaining tower blocks and overturned cars, and later, bodies lined up on sidewalks covered with blankets, collected for burial. Residents say the only indication of danger was the loud sound of the dams cracking, with no warning system or evacuation plan.

Here's a look at why the storm was so destructive and what obstacles stand in the way of getting aid to those who need it most:

TWO GOVERNMENTS, TWO PRIME MINISTERS

Since 2014, Libya has been split between two rival governments, each backed by international patrons and numerous armed militias on the ground.

In Tripoli, Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah heads Libya's internationally recognized government. In Benghazi, the rival prime minister, Osama Hamad, heads the eastern administration, which is backed by powerful military commander Khalifa Hifter.

Both governments and the eastern commander have separately pledged to help the rescue efforts in the flood-affected areas, but they have no record of successful cooperation.

Rival parliaments have for years failed to unify despite international pressure, including planned elections in 2021 that were never held.

As recent as 2020, the two sides were in an all-out war. Hifter's forces besieged Tripoli in a year-long failed military campaign to try to capture the capital, killing thousands. Then in 2022, former eastern leader Fathi Basagah tried to seat his government in Tripoli before clashes between rival militias forced him to withdraw.

The support of regional and world powers has further entrenched the divisions. Hifter's forces are backed by Egypt, Russia, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, while the west Libya administration is backed by Turkey, Qatar and Italy.

The UAE, Egypt and Turkey are all helping rescue efforts on the ground. But as of Tuesday, rescue operations were struggling to reach Derna.

Claudia Gazzini, a senior Libya analyst at International Crisis Group, says the problem is partially logistical with many of the roads entering the port city having been severed by the storm. But political strife also plays a role.

"International efforts to send rescue teams have to go through the Tripoli-based government," said Gazzini. That means permissions to allow aid inside the most affected areas have to be approved by rival authorities.

She was skeptical the Benghazi government could manage the problem alone, she said.

GROWING UNREST AND DISCONTENT

The flooding follows a long line of problems born from the country's lawlessness.

Last month, protests broke out across Libya after news broke of a secret meeting between the Libyan and Israeli foreign ministers. The demonstrations turned into a movement calling for Debibah to resign.

Earlier in August, sporadic fighting broke out between two rival militia forces in the capital, killing at least 45 people, a reminder of the influence rogue armed groups wield across Libya.

Libya has become a major transit point for Middle Eastern and African migrants fleeing conflict and poverty to seek a better life in Europe. Militias and human traffickers have benefited from the instability in Libya, smuggling migrants across borders from six nations, including Egypt, Algeria and Sudan.

Meanwhile, Libya's rich oil reserves have done little to help its population. The production of crude oil, Libya's most valued export, has at times slowed to a trickle due to blockades and security threats to companies. Allocation of oil revenues has become a key point of disagreement.

TALE OF A NEGLECTED CITY

Much of Derna was constructed when Libya was under Italian occupation in the first half of the 20th century. It became famous for its scenic white beachfront houses and palm gardens.

But in the aftermath of Gaddafi's ouster in 2011, it disintegrated into a hub for Islamist extremist groups, was bombarded by Egyptian airstrikes and later besieged by forces loyal to Hiftar. The city was taken by Hiftar's forces in 2019.

Like other cities in the east of the country, it has not seen much rebuilding or investment since the revolution. Most of its modern infrastructure was constructed during the Gaddafi era, including the toppled Wadi Derna dam, built by a Yugoslav company in the mid 1970s.

According to Jalel Harchaoui, an associate fellow specializing in Libya at the London-based Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, Hiftar views the city and its population with suspicion, and has been reluctant to allow it too much independence. Last year, for instance, a massive reconstruction plan for the city was led by outsiders from Benghazi and elsewhere, not natives of Derna.

"Tragically, this mistrust might prove calamitous during the upcoming post-disaster period," Harchaoui said.

Former leaders of Israel's security services are speaking out against Netanyahu's policies

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

HERZLIYA, Israel (AP) — They contended with bloody uprisings, destabilizing wars and even the assassination of a prime minister during their service. But for dozens of former Israeli security commanders, the policies of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government are the biggest threat yet to the country's future.

In unprecedented opposition, more than 180 former senior officials from the Mossad, the Shin Bet domestic security agency, the military and the police have united against steps they say will shatter Israel's resilience in the face of mounting threats from the West Bank, Lebanon and Iran.

"We were used to dealing with external threats," said Tamir Pardo, a former head of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency and a leader of the new group. "We've been through wars, through military operations and all of a sudden you realize that the greatest threat to the state of Israel is internal."

Netanyahu's government, made up of ultranationalist and ultra-religious parties, was formed last year and immediately pressed ahead with a contentious plan to reshape the country's judiciary. Senior government ministers have proposed a litany of steps critics view as undemocratic, including increased gender segregation in public spaces and giving an outspoken homophobe control over some educational content.

Critics say the overhaul will change the very foundation of Israel and remove the checks that would prevent the government's more radical policies from becoming law. The government says the overhaul is meant to restore power to elected lawmakers and curb an overly interventionist and liberal-leaning judicial system.

The plan has sparked mass protests and opposition from a broad swath of Israeli society. Top legal officials, business leaders, the country's booming high-tech sector and military reservists have spoken out against it.

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Former security chiefs have too, as individuals. But now, dozens, some of whom were appointed by Netanyahu, have banded together against the government's intentions, hoping their chorus of widely respected voices will bolster their case.

"We are the people who were there, who fought all the wars," said Noam Tibon, a retired military major general. "We decided there needs to be a strong, ethical and clear voice that calls for and works to stop the process of destruction of the country."

In a country familiar with wars and armed conflict, Israel's Jewish majority holds its security establishment in high regard. Military service is compulsory for most Jewish males, which has fostered intimate ties between ordinary Israelis and the armed forces.

The group of former officers, dubbing itself the "Generals' Protest," reads like a who's who list of well-known figures. Former military chief of staff and defense minister Moshe Yaalon and former Shin Bet director Carmi Gillon, who served when Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated, are among the prominent names.

While former security officials have in the past largely remained above the political fray, these are extraordinary days, said Idit Shafran Gittleman, a senior researcher at Israel's Institute for National Security Studies.

"Just as they protected the country physically," she said, "now they are fighting over the character of the state."

The movement says it draws members from various political leanings but has no political aspirations itself. Its leaders say they will disband once they feel the looming threat to Israel's security is removed.

The former generals, like the broader protest movement, have not taken a clear stand on the Palestinian issue and Israel's ongoing occupation of the West Bank. While individual members have spoken out, including Pardo, who told The Associated Press that Israel's rule in the occupied West Bank amounts to apartheid, the group says it isn't its focus.

The Palestinians and other critics say this is a significant blind spot for a movement that says it is defending democracy. But Israeli anti-occupation activists joining the protests believe the pervasive talk about democratic values and the ultranationalist makeup of the government is prompting an awakening over Israel's treatment of the Palestinians.

The commanders say Israel's cohesion as a society is crumbling and that it won't be able to withstand the volley of challenges it's now facing: surging fighting with the Palestinians, tensions with the Lebanese Shiite militant Hezbollah or Iran.

"Israel didn't win wars because of its planes or its batteries or its tanks. It won mainly because of its human capital, its social cohesion, its brotherhood," said former Israeli police chief Moshe Karadi, a group member. "That is breaking down. That is collapsing."

The overhaul has exposed longstanding divisions in Israeli society, between those who support maintaining a liberal, Western-facing character and those who prefer to see Israel as more religious and conservative.

The disagreements have most immediately and perhaps destructively affected the military, the group of retired generals says. Not only have reservists, the backbone of the country's armed forces, pledged to refuse to serve if the overhaul moves forward. The divide has seeped into the regular ranks.

The ex-commanders also oppose a draft bill that could grant blanket exemptions from the military draft to all ultra-Orthodox Jews. If the bill is passed, it would expand a current system of more limited exemptions that critics already say is unfair. They say government ministers are unravelling the country's social fabric by publicly lambasting security services or soldiers who appear to oppose the government.

Karadi said the government's steps are affecting all aspects of Israeli security, including the police.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir has been promised a national guard force that critics have likened to a personal militia that would undermine the already overburdened police force.

Ben-Gvir, who oversees the police, has drawn accusations that he is politicizing the force. He has called on police to take a tougher stance against anti-government protesters, and a popular Tel Aviv police commander who regularly clashed with Ben-Gvir over the protests resigned in July under what he said was political pressure.

Pardo, who was appointed by Netanyahu in 2011, said the prime minister was once attentive to the counsel of his security chiefs. He says Netanyahu is now focused on political survival, especially since he was charged with corruption.

The generals group has its own critics.

Amir Avivi, president and founder of Israel Defense and Security Forum, a hawkish group of former military officers, said the generals are obsessed with Netanyahu's downfall and misusing their security credentials to further a political message that itself may harm Israel's security.

"We see a discourse that is very shallow, full of slogans and political. This is not the type of speech that is expected from officers," he said.

Generals' Protest group members have spoken at mass protests against the overhaul and are quietly lobbying coalition legislators.

They also insist that they don't oppose the government itself, which they say was legitimately elected, nor that they are some kind of military junta hoping to overthrow it.

"We are people who sacrificed their lives and careers for the security of the state," said Pardo. "Maybe it's worth listening to us."

North Korea's leader is in Russia to meet Putin, with both locked in standoffs with the West

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea's Kim Jong Un rolled through Russia on an armored train Tuesday toward a meeting with President Vladimir Putin, a rare encounter between isolated leaders driven together by their need for support in escalating standoffs with the West.

Kim is expected to seek economic aid and military technology for his impoverished country, and, in a twist, appears to have something Putin desperately needs: munitions for Russia's war in Ukraine.

It's a chance for the North Korean leader to get around crippling U.N. sanctions and years of diplomatic isolation. For Putin, it's an opportunity to refill ammunition stores that the war has drained.

Any arms deal with North Korea would violate the sanctions, which Russia supported in the past.

Kim's personal train stopped in Khasan, a station on the Russia-North Korea border, early Tuesday where it was met by a military honor guard and a brass band. He was met on a red carpet by regional Gov. Oleg Kozhemyako and Natural Resources Minister Alexander Kozlov, according to North Korean state media and video posted on social media.

Kim said his decision to visit Russia four years after his previous visit — his first foreign trip since the COVID-19 pandemic — showed how Pyongyang is "prioritizing the strategic importance" of its relations with Moscow, North Korea's official news agency said Wednesday.

The Korean Central News Agency said Kim then left for his destination, but it didn't specify where.

Many had assumed he and Putin would meet in Vladivostok, a Russian city close to the border where the two leaders had their last meeting in 2019, and which Putin is visiting this week for an economic forum.

But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov confirmed only that Kim has entered Russia, and state news agency RIA-Novosti later reported his train had headed north after crossing the Razdolnaya River, taking it away from Vladivostok. The South Korean news agency Yonhap later published a photo it said showed the train in Ussuriysk, a city about 60 kilometers (about 40 miles) north of Vladivostok that has a sizable ethnic Korean population.

Some Russian news media speculate he is headed for the Vostochny spaceport, which Putin is to visit soon. At the forum, Putin declined to say what he intended to do there. The launch facility is about 900 kilometers (550 miles) northwest of Ussuriysk, but the route there is circuitous and it is unclear how long Kim's slow-moving train would take to reach it. Workers on Wednesday were seen constructing a temporary wooden platform at a railway station in Komsomolsk-on-Amur, another city in the Russian Far East, for the arrival of Kim's train. Citing unidentified Russian officials, Japan's Kyodo news agency reported that Kim was expected to visit a plant in that city that produces Sukhoi fighter jets after his meeting with Putin.

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Peskov said Putin and Kim will meet after the Vladivostok forum, and that the meeting would include a lunch in Kim's honor.

Kim left Pyongyang on his train Sunday, accompanied by members of the ruling party, government and military, KCNA said.

Officials identified in North Korean state media photos could hint at what Kim might seek from Putin and what he would be willing to give.

Kim is accompanied by Jo Chun Ryong, a ruling party official in charge of munitions policies who joined him on recent tours of factories producing artillery shells and missiles, according to South Korea's Unification Ministry. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu will be part of the Russian delegation, Peskov said.

Kim's delegation also includes Foreign Minister Choe Sun Hui and his top military officials, including Korean People's Army Marshals Ri Pyong Chol and Pak Jong Chon and Defense Minister Kang Sun Nam.

North Korea may have tens of millions of aging artillery shells and rockets based on Soviet designs that could give a huge boost to the Russian army in Ukraine, analysts say.

Also identified in photos were Pak Thae Song, chairman of North Korea's space science and technology committee, and navy Adm. Kim Myong Sik, who are linked with North Korean efforts to acquire spy satellites and nuclear-capable ballistic missile submarines. Experts say North Korea would struggle to acquire such capabilities without external help, although it's not clear if Russia would share such sensitive technology.

Kim Jong Un may also seek badly needed energy and food supplies, analysts say. Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Rudenko said Russia may discuss humanitarian aid with the North Korean delegation, according to Russian news agencies.

Data from FlightRadar24.com, which tracks flights worldwide, showed an Air Koryo An-148 took off from Pyongyang on Tuesday and flew to Vladivostok. North Korea's national airline has only just resumed flying internationally after being grounded during the COVID-19 pandemic. There had been speculation that North Korea could use a plane to fly in support staff.

Kim is making his first foreign trip since the pandemic, during which North Korea imposed tight border controls for more than three years. After decades of hot-and-cold relations, Russia and North Korea have drawn closer since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Lim Soo-suk, South Korea's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, said Seoul was maintaining communication with Moscow while closely monitoring Kim's visit.

"No U.N. member state should violate Security Council sanctions against North Korea by engaging in an illegal trade of arms, and must certainly not engage in military cooperation with North Korea that undermines the peace and stability of the international community," Lim said at a briefing.

U.S. deputy ambassador Robert Wood said Tuesday that Moscow's potential deals with North Korea could include "the provision of raw materials that would assist Russia's defense industrial base." Wood's comments came during a U.N. Security Council meeting called by Russia to protest Western weapons supplies to Ukraine.

According to U.S. officials, Putin could focus on securing more supplies of North Korean artillery and other ammunition to refill arsenals as Moscow seeks to show it can grind out a war of attrition. That could potentially put more pressure on the U.S. and its partners to pursue negotiations as concerns over a protracted conflict grow despite their huge shipments of advanced weaponry to Ukraine in the past 18 months.

The United States has accused North Korea of providing Russia with arms, including selling artillery shells to the Russian mercenary group Wagner. Both Russian and North Korean officials denied such claims.

Speculation about their military cooperation grew after Shoigu, the Russian defense minister, visited North Korea in July. Kim subsequently toured his weapons factories, which experts said had the dual goal of encouraging the modernization of North Korean weaponry and examining artillery and other supplies that could be exported to Russia.

Speaker McCarthy directs the House to open an impeachment inquiry into President Biden

By LISA MASCARO and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Kevin McCarthy announced Tuesday he is directing the U.S. House to open an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden over his family's business dealings, launching historic proceedings ahead of the 2024 election.

McCarthy said that House investigations so far "paint a picture of a culture of corruption" around the Biden family as Republicans probe the business dealings of the president's son, Hunter Biden, from before the Democratic president took office.

"These are allegations of abuse of power, obstruction and corruption, and they warrant further investigation by the House of Representatives," McCarthy, R-Calif., said at the Capitol, announcing he was directing the House led by the Oversight Committee "to open a formal impeachment inquiry."

The White House shot back, calling the action in the midst of the presidential campaign "extreme politics at its worst."

"House Republicans have been investigating the president for nine months, and they've turned up no evidence of wrongdoing," said spokesman Ian Sams.

Acting on his own, the Republican speaker McCarthy faces mounting pressure from his right flank to take action against Biden or risk being ousted from his leadership job — while he also is struggling to pass legislation needed to avoid a federal government shutdown at the end of the month.

McCarthy is launching the inquiry without a House vote, and it's unclear if he would even have enough support from his slim GOP majority. Some lawmakers have panned the evidence so far as not reaching the Constitution's bar of "high crimes and misdemeanors."

The White House and others pointed to McCarthy's past statements when he insisted a speaker acting unilaterally to launch an impeachment inquiry would have no legitimacy. McCarthy "flipfopped because he doesn't have support," Sams said.

An inquiry is a step toward impeachment, which used to be rare, and McCarthy essentially outlined the potential charges ahead. With Donald Trump now the Republican front-runner to challenge Biden in next year's election, GOP allies are working to detract attention from the indicted former president's legal challenges and turn a negative spotlight on Biden.

The inquiry will be led by Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer, in coordination with Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan and Ways & Means Chairman Jason Smith. They are heading across the Capitol Wednesday to brief the Senate.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has warned House Republicans off the effort, but said Tuesday, "I don't think Speaker McCarthy needs advice from the Senate."

House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries called it an "illegitimate impeachment inquiry" and said Democrats will defend Biden "until the very end."

"There is not a shred of evidence that President Joe Biden has engaged in wrongdoing," Jeffries said. "President Joe Biden is a good man. He's an honest man. He's a patriotic man."

The Republican speaker is once again at a political crossroads — trying to keep his most conservative lawmakers satisfied and save his own job. It's a familiar political bind for McCarthy, who is juggling the impeachment inquiry and a government shutdown threat with no clear end game.

Government funding is to run out on Sept. 30, which is the end of the federal fiscal year, and Congress must pass new funding bills or risk a shutdown and the interruption of government services.

Minutes after McCarthy spoke a chief Republican critic stood on the House floor deriding the inquiry as merely "a baby step" and reviving the threat of ousting the speaker. "We must move faster," said Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla.

The White House has insisted Biden was not involved in his son's business dealings. And Democrats are stepping up to fight against what they view as unfounded claims against him ahead of the 2024 election as Republicans attempt to blur the lines with Trump.

Former President Trump was twice impeached by the House but acquitted by the Senate. He now faces more serious charges in court, indicted four times this year, including for trying to overturn the 2020 election Biden won.

House Republicans are probing the business dealings of Hunter Biden but so far have not produced hard evidence linking them and the president. They have shown a few instances, largely during the time the elder Biden was Barack Obama's vice president, when he spoke by phone with his son and stopped by dinners his son was hosting with business partners.

An impeachment inquiry would provide more heft to the House investigation, especially as the Oversight Committee battles in court for access to Biden family financial records.

Republicans contend the Justice Department has not fully probed the allegations against Hunter Biden, and say he received preferential treatment in what they call a sweetheart plea deal that recently collapsed. The Department of Justice has appointed a special prosecutor in that probe.

"We will go wherever the evidence takes us," McCarthy said.

Comer, the Oversight chairman from Kentucky, is digging into the Biden family finances and is expected to seek banking records for Hunter Biden as the panel tries to follow the flow of money.

On Tuesday, Comer demanded the State Department produce documents about the work Biden did as vice president during the Obama administration to clean up corruption in Ukraine. Comer wants to understand the State Department's views of former Ukrainian prosecutor Viktor Shokin, whom Biden and many Western allies wanted removed from office because of allegations of corruption.

As a government shutdown looms, conservatives who power McCarthy's majority want to slash spending, and the hard right is unwilling to approve spending levels the speaker negotiated with Biden earlier this year.

McCarthy is trying to float a 30-day stopgap measure to keep government running to Nov. 1, but conservatives are balking at what's called a continuing resolution, or CR, as they pursue cuts.

Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., said late Monday exiting McCarthy's office she has "red lines" against any new money being spent for COVID-19 vaccines or mandates or the war in Ukraine.

And Gaetz, a top Trump ally, said if McCarthy puts a continuing resolution up for a vote, he will face blowback from conservatives with a motion to vacate the chair and oust him from office.

At the start of the year, Gaetz and other Republicans secured agreements from McCarthy as he struggled to win their votes to become House speaker, including a House rule that allows opponents to call a vote to try to remove him from the speaker's position.

Iran identifies 5 prisoners it wants from US in swap for Iranian-Americans and billions in assets

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran on Tuesday identified the five prisoners it hopes to see freed in the United States in exchange for five Iranian-Americans now held in Tehran and billions in assets once held by South Korea.

The acknowledgment by the Iranian mission to the United Nations in New York comes as the Biden administration has issued a blanket waiver for international banks to transfer \$6 billion in frozen Iranian money from South Korea to Qatar without fear of U.S. sanctions.

The moves by both Tehran and Washington appear to signal the prisoner swap is progressing as the money once held in South Korean won is converted into euros and moved to Qatar, where Iran will be able to use it for humanitarian purposes.

In a statement to The Associated Press, Ali Karimi Magham, a spokesman for the Iranian mission, confirmed the list of prisoners that Tehran wants released.

The five sought by the Iranians are:

— Kaveh Lotfolah Afrasiabi, an Iranian charged in 2021 with allegedly failing to register as a foreign

agent on Iran's behalf while lobbying U.S. officials on issues like nuclear policy;

— Mehrdad Ansari, an Iranian sentenced to 63 months in prison in 2021 for obtaining equipment that could be used in missiles, electronic warfare, nuclear weapons and other military gear;

— Amin Hasanzadeh, an Iranian and permanent resident of the United States whom prosecutors charged in 2019 with allegedly stealing engineering plans from his employer to send to Iran;

— Reza Sarhangpour Kafrani, an Iranian charged in 2021 over allegedly unlawfully exporting laboratory equipment to Iran; and

— Kambiz Attar Kashani, an Iranian-American sentenced in February to 30 months in prison for purchasing "sophisticated, top-tier U.S. electronic equipment and software" through front companies in the United Arab Emirates.

The U.S. State Department declined to comment, citing "the sensitivity of this ongoing process."

The news website Al-Monitor, relying on a statement from the Iranian mission, first reported the Iranians' identities on Monday.

On the U.S. side, Washington seeks the release of Siamak Namazi, who was detained in Iran in 2015 and later sentenced to 10 years in prison on internationally criticized spying charges; Emad Sharghi, a venture capitalist sentenced to 10 years; and Morad Tahbaz, a British-American conservationist of Iranian descent who was arrested in 2018 and also received a 10-year sentence.

The fourth and fifth prisoners were not identified. All five are under house arrest at a hotel in Tehran.

U.S. Republicans have criticized the possibility of an exchange, which is under discussion amid heightened tensions between Iran and the West over its nuclear program, as well as a series of ship seizures and attacks attributed to Tehran.

The Pentagon is considering a plan to put U.S. troops on board commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of all oil shipments pass moving out of the Persian Gulf.

A major deployment of U.S. sailors and Marines, alongside F-35s, F-16s and other military aircraft, is also underway in the region. Meanwhile, Iran supplies Russia with the bomb-carrying drones Moscow uses to target sites during its war in Ukraine.

AP Sources: UAW may strike at small number of factories if it can't reach deals with automakers

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Leaders of the United Auto Workers union are considering targeted strikes at a small number of factories run by each of Detroit's three automakers if they can't reach contract agreements by a Thursday night deadline.

The union's leadership discussed smaller-scale strikes at a meeting on Friday, and local union leaders were told about the strategy on Tuesday afternoon, two people with knowledge of the moves said.

The people didn't want to be identified because they weren't authorized to disclose details until President Shawn Fain updates workers Wednesday afternoon in a Facebook Live appearance.

At the Tuesday meeting, Fain didn't say whether the union would target vehicle assembly plants or component factories, one of the people said. Strikes at parts plants could force production halts at multiple assembly factories. He also didn't say how many workers would walk off their jobs.

The UAW wouldn't comment Tuesday on its strategy.

Strikes at individual plants would be far less costly to the union, which would have to pay \$500 per week to each of its 146,000 members if it strikes against General Motors, Stellantis and Ford at the same time. In that case, the union's \$825 million strike fund would run dry in just under three months, not including payments by the union for health insurance.

The strategy comes as the pace of talks with all three automakers picked up with just two days left before contracts with the union expire at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday.

Both sides are exchanging offers and negotiating long hours. But they still appear to be far apart on wages and benefits.

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The union and companies have said they are willing to talk in an effort to work out deals before the deadline. Still, Fain last week said he threw counter-offers from the companies into the trash, and he accused the companies of being slow to make wage and benefit offers.

Yet there was optimism on both sides that they still could reach deals before the deadline.

Ford CEO Jim Farley said Tuesday night that the company submitted a new offer to the union "that's our most generous offer in 80 years of the UAW and Ford."

The offer gives pay increases, eliminates different tiers of wages, has protection against inflation and makes bigger contributions to retirement plans. "It's a significant, significant enhancement," he said. "I'm still optimistic that we'll get a deal, but there is a limit."

Farley ruled out a union demand for a 32-hour work week for 40 hours of pay, but said it's still possible to avoid a strike.

GM President Mark Reuss said Tuesday that a lot of progress had been made in the past few days. "The give-and-take is really happening, so we're on a path, that's part of the process," he said at a Detroit industry gathering hosted by the trade publication Automotive News.

Reuss said GM's goal is to reward employees while also investing in the future.

Fain, when asked on Labor Day about targeted strikes, said everything is on the table. "We've mapped out a lot of different strategies. But it's really just going to depend on where we are on Sept. 14. That will dictate how we react."

The union likely will strike at plants that make components for pickup trucks and big SUVs, which are the companies' main profit centers, said Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University in Detroit.

"They're trying to impose some hardship on the companies and apply an accelerating level of pressure to encourage them to make an offer which will be acceptable to the rank and file and goes further toward meeting the demands that they have on the table," he said.

It would make sense for the union to target the companies' most popular and lucrative products, he said. "You would go after the components that would shut down as many of those product facilities as possible."

The tactic would force the companies to lay off workers at assembly plants, and they would get unemployment benefits rather than money from the union strike fund, Masters said.

Last known offers from GM and Ford were 10% raises over four years with lump sum annual payments in the years that raises are not awarded. The last known offer from Stellantis, formerly Fiat Chrysler, was raises of 14.5% over four years with no lump sums for wages. All three companies offered lump sums in other areas to cover inflation and a bonus for ratifying a contract.

In addition to general wage increases, the union is seeking an end to varying tiers of wages for factory jobs; a 32-hour week with 40 hours of pay; the restoration of traditional defined-benefit pensions for new hires who now receive only 401(k)-style retirement plans; and a return of cost-of-living pay raises, among other benefits.

Perhaps most important to the union is that it be allowed to represent workers at 10 electric vehicle battery factories, most of which are being built by joint ventures between automakers and South Korean battery makers. The union wants those plants to receive top UAW wages. In part, that is because workers who now make components for internal combustion engines will need a place to work as the auto industry makes the transition to electric vehicles.

The auto companies say they face tremendous capital expenses as they develop electric vehicles and prepare factories to make them, all while still manufacturing cars, trucks and SUVs with internal combustion engines.

The union, however, says the companies are wildly profitable and can afford to give big raises because labor is only a small percentage of the price of a car. The companies collectively posted net income of \$164 billion over the past decade, \$20 billion of it this year.

Apple's new iPhones get faster chips, better cameras and new charging ports

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Technology Writer

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP) — Apple on Tuesday unveiled its next generation of iPhones — a lineup that will boast better cameras, faster processors, a new charging system and a price hike for the fanciest model.

The showcase at Apple's headquarters in Cupertino, California, comes as the company tries to reverse a mild slump that has seen its sales drop from last year in three consecutive quarters. The malaise is a key reason Apple's stock price has dipped by about 10% since mid-July, dropping the company's market value below the \$3 trillion threshold it reached for the first time earlier this summer.

Investors apparently weren't impressed with what Apple rolled out Tuesday. The company's shares fell nearly 2% Tuesday, a steeper decline than the major market indexes.

As has been case with Apple and other smartphone makers, the four types of iPhone 15 models aren't making any major leaps in technology. But Apple added enough new bells and whistles to the top-of-the line model — the iPhone 15 Pro Max — to boost its starting price by \$100, or 9%, from last year's version to \$1,200. As part of the higher base price, the cheapest iPhone 15 Pro Max will provide 256 megabytes of storage, up from 128 megabytes for the least expensive version of the iPhone 14 Pro Max.

Apple is holding the line on prices for rest of the lineup, with the basic iPhone 15 selling for \$800, the iPhone 15 Plus for \$900 and the iPhone 15 Pro for \$1,000.

Although maintaining those prices are bound to squeeze Apple's profit margins and put further pressure on the company's stock price, Investing.com analyst Thomas Monteiro believes it's a prudent move with still-high inflation and spiking interest rates pinching household budgets. "The reality was that Apple found itself in a challenging position leading up to this event," Monteiro said.

And the price hike for the iPhone 15 Pro Max could help Apple boost sales if consumers continue to gravitate toward the company's premium models. Wedbush Securities analyst Dan Ives expects the iPhone 15 Pro and Pro Max to account for about 75% of the device's total sales in the upcoming year.

All the new models will be available in stores Sept. 22, with preorders beginning this Friday.

One of the biggest changes that Apple announced is a new way to charge the iPhone 15 models and future generations. The company is switching to the USB-C standard that is already widely used on many devices, including its Mac computers and many of its iPads.

Apple is being forced to phase out the Lightning port cables it rolled out in 2012 because of a mandate that European regulators plan to impose in 2024.

Although consumers often don't like change, the transition to USB-C ports may not be that inconvenient. That's because the standard is already widely used on a range of computers, smartphones and other devices people already own. The shift to USB-C may even be a popular move since that standard typically charges devices more quickly and also offers faster data transfer speeds.

The basic iPhone 15 models have been redesigned to include a shape-shifting cutout on the display screen that Apple calls its "Dynamic Island" for app notifications — a look that was introduced with last year's Pro and Pro Max devices. The basic models are also getting a faster chip used in last year's Pro and Pro Max models, while the next generation of the premium iPhone 15s will run on an even more advanced processor that will enable the devices to accommodate the same kind of video games that typically require a console.

The iPhone 15 Pro and Pro Max also will be equipped with what Apple maintains is the equivalent of seven camera lenses. They will include periscope-style telephoto lens that will improve the quality of photos taken from far distances. The telephoto lens boasts a 5x optical zoom, which lags the 10x optical zoom on Samsung's premium Galaxy S22 Ultra, but represents an upgrade from the 3x optical zoom on the iPhone 14 Pro and Pro Max.

In anticipation of next year's release of Apple's mixed reality headset, the iPhone 15 Pro and Pro Max will also have a spatial video option designed for viewing on that headset.

Apple is encasing the premium models in titanium that the company says is the same alloy used on

some space ships.

Besides its new iPhones, Apple also announced its next generation of smartwatches — a product that made its debut nearly a decade ago. The Series 9 Apple Watch, available in stores Sept. 22, will include a new gesture control that will enable users to control alarms and answer phone calls by double snapping their thumbs with a finger.

Americans can now get an updated COVID-19 vaccine

By MIKE STOBBE and LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writers

Most Americans should get an updated COVID-19 vaccine, health officials said Tuesday.

Advisers to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention endorsed the new shots for everyone 6 months and older and the agency's director quickly signed off Tuesday on the panel's recommendation. That means doses should be available this week, some as early as Wednesday.

The severity of the COVID-19 pandemic has faded, but there are still thousands of hospitalizations and hundreds of deaths in the U.S. each week. Hospitalizations have been increasing since late summer, though the latest data indicate infections may be starting to level off, particularly in the South.

Still, experts worry that immunity from previous vaccinations and infections is fading in many people, and a new shot would save many lives.

According to a survey last month that CDC cited, about 42% said they would definitely or probably get the new vaccine. Yet only about 20% of adults got an updated booster when it was offered a year ago.

Doctors hope enough people get vaccinated to help avert another "triple-demic" like last year when hospitals were overwhelmed with an early flu season, an onslaught of RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, and yet another winter coronavirus surge.

Here is what you need to know about the new COVID-19 shots:

WHO SHOULD GET THE UPDA

TED VACCINE?

The Food and Drug Administration approved the updated shots from Pfizer and Moderna for adults and children as young as age 6 months. FDA said starting at age 5, most people can get a single dose even if they've never had a prior COVID-19 shot. Younger children might need additional doses depending on their history of COVID-19 infections and vaccinations.

The CDC decides how best to use vaccines and makes recommendations for U.S. doctors and the general public. The agency's panel of outside experts recommended the updated COVID-19 shots by a vote of 13-1. The no vote came from a panel member who had argued that the new shots should initially be recommended only for older people and others at greatest risk of severe illness. But other panel members said all ages could — and should — benefit.

"We need to make vaccination recommendations as clear as possible," said one panel member, Dr. Camille Kotton, an infectious diseases doctor at Massachusetts General Hospital.

WHERE CAN I GET A SHOT?

The new vaccine will be available at pharmacies, health centers and some doctor offices. Locations will be listed on the government's vaccines.gov website. The list price of a dose of each shot is \$120 to \$130, according to the manufacturers. But federal officials said the new COVID-19 shots still will be free to most Americans through private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid. For the uninsured or underinsured, the CDC is working with health departments, clinics and certain pharmacies to temporarily provide free shots.

On Tuesday, a Pfizer official said his company expected to have doses available at some U.S. locations as early as Wednesday.

WHY MORE COVID-19 SHOTS?

Similar to how flu shots are updated each year, the FDA gave COVID-19 vaccine makers a new recipe for this fall. The updated shots have a single target, an omicron descendant named XBB.1.5. It's a big change. The COVID-19 vaccines offered since last year are combination shots targeting the original coronavirus strain and a much earlier omicron version, making them very outdated.

Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax all have brewed new supplies, and the FDA on Monday approved shots from Pfizer and Moderna. Novavax's updated vaccine is still under review.

WILL THEY BE EFFECTIVE ENOUGH?

Health officials are optimistic, barring a new mutant. As expected, XBB.1.5 has faded away in the months it took to tweak the vaccine. Today, there is a soup of different coronavirus variants causing illness and the most common ones are fairly close relatives. Recent lab testing from vaccine makers and other research groups suggest the updated shots will offer crossover protection.

Earlier vaccinations or infections have continued to help prevent severe disease and death but protection wanes over time, especially against milder infections as the virus continually evolves. The FDA did allow seniors and others at high risk to get an extra booster dose last spring. But most Americans haven't had a vaccination in about a year.

CAN I GET A FLU SHOT AND COVID-19 SHOT AT THE SAME TIME?

Yes. The CDC says there is no difference in effectiveness or side effects if people get those vaccines simultaneously, although one in each arm might be more comfortable. The CDC urges a yearly flu shot for pretty much everyone ages 6 months and up. The best time is by the end of October.

Hillary Clinton joins Jill Biden at the White House to honor recipients of a prestigious arts prize

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Jill Biden and Hillary Clinton, the first lady and a former first lady, on Tuesday introduced the recipients of a prestigious Japanese award for lifetime achievement in the arts, an event that led Clinton to her first public appearance at the White House since the Obama administration.

"Secretary Clinton, Hillary, it's an honor to welcome you back to the White House," Biden said as an audience dotted with Clinton administration alums and some celebrities, including actor Debra Messing and choreographer Mikhail Baryshnikov, burst into loud applause.

"Wow, you are so loved," Biden exclaimed. "Your lifetime of work has left an indelible mark on this country. Thank you for always doing all the good you can by all the means you can in all the ways you can."

Clinton introduced the recipients of the Praemium Imperiale, which is awarded annually by the Japan Arts Association in the categories of music, theater/film, painting, sculpture and architecture.

Three laureates who attended are trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, painter Vija Celmins and theater director Robert Wilson. Sculptor Olafur Eliasson and architect Diébédo Francis Kéré were absent. All five will be honored at a ceremony in Tokyo next month.

Clinton is the U.S. adviser to the Praemium Imperiale, helping select its laureates. In 1994, then-President Bill Clinton and first lady Hillary Clinton hosted a ceremony like Tuesday's.

Jill Biden said the artists being honored "invite us to join a conversation with the world, to step beyond the limits of our imagination."

Clinton quoted President Joe Biden, who once said the arts "invigorate and strengthen democracy."

"At a time when so much is happening to change the ways that we work and live and how we connect with one another, how we relate to the rest of the world, it's so important for us to recognize the critical role that the arts play in helping us understand our past and present while inspiring us to create a better future," Clinton said.

Her appearance was a reminder of her long association with one of America's most famous buildings.

In her White House years, Clinton was a wife, a mother and the nation's hostess, but also a wronged spouse and the head of a national health care task force. In later years, she became a visiting senator and Cabinet member, but never attained the long-sought role of Madam President.

Early on as first lady, she held a rare news conference where she was grilled about the Clintons' past real estate dealings, declaring that she had been "rezoned" out of her sphere of privacy.

Former aides expected her return Tuesday to be sentimental.

"I have to imagine she's really looking forward to being back and being back with the Bidens, who she's

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been close to for a long time," said Lisa Caputo, who was Clinton's White House press secretary.

Clinton's ties to the White House bracket her time as first lady.

Early visits came when she accompanied Bill Clinton to the executive mansion, when he was Arkansas governor from the late 1970s to the early 1990s, for annual receptions for the nation's governors.

She was a regular at the White House in her post-first lady roles as a U.S. senator and as secretary of state, a position that came with a permanent seat next to the president at Cabinet meetings.

Twice she sought the ultimate White House perch, campaigning in 2008 and again in 2016 to become the first woman elected president. She fell short each time, and kept her distance from the White House during the Trump years.

Ellen Fitzpatrick, emeritus professor of history at the University of New Hampshire, said going back to the White House evokes memories for any former first lady.

She recalled Jacqueline Kennedy's trip back with her children years after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. The former first lady later told President Richard Nixon in a note that a day she had dreaded turned out to be one of the most precious she spent with her kids.

"I think for Hillary herself, I'm sure it will be quite a moment going back in," said Fitzpatrick, author of "The Highest Glass Ceiling," a book about women who run for president.

Clinton made some good and not-so-good White House memories.

"My eight years in the White House tested my faith and political beliefs, my marriage and our nation's Constitution," she wrote in "Living History," her memoir. "I became a lightning rod for political and ideological battles waged over America's future and a magnet for feelings, good or bad, about women's choices and roles."

In his first year in office, President Clinton made her head of a national task force charged with bringing health insurance to every American. No first lady had ever been responsible for shaping such major public policy. The work, largely done in secret, inevitably attracted criticism. The plan ultimately died without a vote in Congress.

In 1994, Clinton fielded questions for more than an hour in the East Room about her financial dealings as part of the Whitewater affair, an Arkansas real estate project the couple had lost money in and that federal authorities were investigating.

At one point, she said, "I've always believed in a zone of privacy, and I told a friend the other day that I feel after resisting for a long time that I've been rezoned."

Another notable White House image of the Clintons came in 1998 after the president's sexual relationship with intern Monica Lewinsky was exposed. As the family kept plans for a two-week vacation on the Massachusetts island of Martha's Vineyard, the Clintons walked across the South Lawn to the waiting helicopter with a teenaged Chelsea as a buffer between her parents.

Hillary Clinton also was among those in the Roosevelt Room at the White House when the president declared to the nation that "I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky." She went on national television and blamed their political problems on a "vast, right-wing conspiracy."

Her public approval ratings ticked upward as her marital woes played out in public.

After the president was acquitted during a Senate impeachment trial in January 1999, she was elected to a U.S. Senate seat from New York in 2000. For a short period, she went about her duties as a freshman lawmaker while closing out her chapter as first lady.

After Clinton lost the Democratic presidential nomination to then-fellow Sen. Barack Obama in 2008, he persuaded her to become his secretary of state. She again was a regular presence at the White House, with a seat next to Obama at the Cabinet table. She's prominent in the famous photo of officials crowded into the Situation Room when Osama bin Laden was killed in 2011.

Thousands are feared dead and thousands more are missing in flood-ravaged eastern Libya

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Emergency workers uncovered more than 1,500 bodies in the wreckage of Libya's eastern city of Derna on Tuesday, and it was feared the toll could surpass 5,000 after floodwaters smashed through dams and washed away entire neighborhoods of the city.

The startling death and devastation wreaked by Mediterranean storm Daniel pointed to the storm's intensity, but also the vulnerability of a nation torn apart by chaos for more than a decade. The country is divided by rival governments, one in the east, the other in the west, and the result has been neglect of infrastructure in many areas.

Outside help was only just starting to reach Derna on Tuesday, more than 36 hours after the disaster struck. The floods damaged or destroyed many access roads to the coastal city of some 89,000.

Footage showed dozens of bodies covered by blankets in the yard of one hospital. Another image showed a mass grave piled with bodies. More than 1,500 corpses were collected, and half of them had been buried as of Tuesday evening, the health minister for eastern Libya said.

At least one official put the death toll at more than 5,000. The state-run news agency quoted Mohammed Abu-Lamousha, a spokesman for the east Libya interior ministry, as saying that more than 5,300 people had died in Derna alone. Derna's ambulance authority said earlier Tuesday that 2,300 had died.

But the toll is likely to be higher, said Tamer Ramadan, Libya envoy for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He told a U.N. briefing in Geneva via videoconference from Tunisia that at least 10,000 people were still missing. He said later Tuesday that more than 40,000 people have been displaced.

The situation in Libya is "as devastating as the situation in Morocco," Ramadan said, referring to the deadly earthquake that hit near the city of Marrakesh on Friday night.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres conveyed his solidarity with the Libyan people and said the United Nations "is working with local, national and international partners to get urgently needed humanitarian assistance to those in affected areas," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

The destruction came to Derna and other parts of eastern Libya on Sunday night. As the storm pounded the coast, Derna residents said they heard loud explosions and realized that dams outside the city had collapsed. Flash floods were unleashed down Wadi Derna, a river running from the mountains through the city and into the sea.

The wall of water "erased everything in its way," said one resident, Ahmed Abdalla.

Videos posted online by residents showed large swaths of mud and wreckage where the raging waters had swept away neighborhoods on both banks of the river. Multi-story apartment buildings that once were well back from the river had facades ripped away and concrete floors collapsed. Cars lifted by the flood were left dumped on top of each other.

Libya's National Meteorological Center said Tuesday it issued early warnings for Storm Daniel, an "extreme weather event," 72 hours before its occurrence, and notified all governmental authorities by e-mails and through media ... "urging them to take preventive measures." It said that Bayda recorded a record 414.1 millimeters (16.3 inches) of rain from Sunday to Monday.

On Tuesday, local emergency responders, including troops, government workers, volunteers and residents dug through rubble looking for the dead. They also used inflatable boats to retrieve bodies from the water.

Many bodies were believed trapped under rubble or had been washed out into the Mediterranean Sea, said eastern Libya's health minister, Othman Abduljaleel.

"We were stunned by the amount of destruction ... the tragedy is very significant, and beyond the capacity of Derna and the government," Abduljaleel told The Associated Press on the phone from Derna.

Red Crescent teams from other parts of Libya also arrived in Derna on Tuesday morning but extra excavators and other equipment had yet to get there.

Flooding often happens in Libya during rainy season, but rarely with this much destruction. A key ques-

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tion was how the rains were able to burst through two dams outside Derna – whether because of poor maintenance or sheer volume of rain.

Karsten Haustein, a climate scientist and meteorologist at Leipzig University, said in a statement that Daniel dumped 440 millimeters (15.7 inches) of rain on eastern Libya in a short time.

“The infrastructure could probably not cope, leading to the collapse of the dam,” he said, adding that human-induced rises in water surface temperatures likely added to the storm’s intensity.

Local authorities have neglected Derna for years. “Even the maintenance aspect was simply absent. Everything kept being delayed,” said Jalel Harchaoui, an associate fellow specializing in Libya at the London-based Royal United Services Institute for Defense and Security Studies.

Factionalism also comes into play. Derna was for several years controlled by Islamic militant groups. Military commander Khalifa Hifter, the strongman of the east Libya government, captured the city in 2019 only after months of tough urban fighting.

The eastern government has been suspicious of the city ever since and has sought to sideline its residents from any decision-making, said Harchaoui. “This mistrust might prove calamitous during the upcoming post-disaster period,” he said.

Hifter’s eastern government based in the city of Benghazi is locked in a bitter rivalry with the western government in the capital of Tripoli. Each is backed by powerful militias and by foreign powers. Hifter is also backed by Egypt, Russia, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, while the west Libya administration is backed by Turkey, Qatar and Italy.

Still, the initial reaction to the disaster brought some crossing of the divide.

The Tripoli-based government of western Libya sent a plane with 14 tons of medical supplies and health workers to Benghazi. It also said it had allocated the equivalent of \$412 million for reconstruction in Derna and other eastern towns. Airplanes arrived Tuesday in Benghazi carrying humanitarian aid and rescue teams from Egypt, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. Egypt’s military chief of staff met with Hifter to coordinate aid. Germany, France and Italy said they also were sending rescue personnel and aid.

It was not clear how quickly the aid could be moved to Derna, 250 kilometers (150 miles) east of Benghazi, given conditions on the ground. Ahmed Amdourd, a Derna municipal official, called for a sea corridor to deliver aid and equipment.

President Joe Biden said in a statement Tuesday that the United States is sending emergency funds to relief organizations and coordinating with the Libyan authorities and the U.N. to provide additional support.

“Jill and I send our deepest condolences to all the families who have lost loved ones in the devastating floods in Libya,” he said.

The storm hit other areas in eastern Libya, including the town of Bayda, where about 50 people were reported dead. The Medical Center of Bayda, the main hospital, was flooded and patients had to be evacuated, according to footage shared by the center on Facebook.

Other towns that suffered included Susa, Marj and Shahatt, according to the government. Hundreds of families were displaced and took shelter in schools and other government buildings in Benghazi and elsewhere in eastern Libya.

Northeast Libya is one of the country’s most fertile and green regions. The Jabal al-Akhdar area — where Bayda, Marj and Shahatt are located — has one of the country’s highest average annual rainfalls, according to the World Bank.

Escaped Pennsylvania inmate still believed to be within specific perimeter, police say

By MARYCLAIRE DALE and MARC LEVY Associated Press

POTTSTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Escaped murderer Danelo Souza Cavalcante is still believed to be within a search perimeter in a rural stretch of southeastern Pennsylvania hours after he stole a rifle from a garage and fled a homeowner’s gunfire, authorities said Tuesday.

Heavily armed police descended on the South Coventry Township area closing roads and telling residents

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to lock their doors in the nearly 2-week-old manhunt. In the evening, Pennsylvania State Police said on X, formerly known as Twitter, that Cavalcante was believed to be in the area of Routes 23 and 100, Fairview and Nantmeal Roads and Iron Bridge and County Park Roads.

"Residents should secure buildings, property and vehicles," police said. "Report sightings or related activity immediately to 911."

Helicopters hovered overhead throughout the day as officers brought in horses, search dogs and armored personnel carriers and began searching an 8- to 10-square-mile (21- to 26-square-kilometer) area of rolling farm country, forests and parkland northwest of Philadelphia.

Pennsylvania State Police Lt. Col. George Bivens vowed to "hunt until we find" Cavalcante, but also cautioned that it will take a "long time" to methodically search the entire area.

Cavalcante entered an open garage late Monday, stole a .22-caliber rifle and ammunition and fled when the homeowner, who was in the garage, drew a pistol and shot at him several times, Bivens said at a news conference. He added that he has no reason to believe Cavalcante was injured by the gunfire.

Bivens said he believes Cavalcante was fleeing from pursuers and looking for a place to hide when he saw the open garage.

"The garage door was open. He didn't, I believe, recognize that the owner was in there. And I think he was probably looking for a place to hide, ran for that garage, saw the firearm, grabbed that, encountered the homeowner and fled with the firearm," Bivens said.

It was, he said, a "crime of opportunity."

About 500 law enforcement personnel were searching or guarding the new search area in northern Chester County, a few miles south of Pottstown, Bivens said. More were being called in as schools closed and officers shut down roads, manned checkpoints and stopped vehicles to question motorists and open trunks.

Two hours before the garage encounter, Bivens said, a motorist alerted police to a man matching Cavalcante's description crouching in the darkness along a line of trees near a road. Police found footprints there, followed their trail and found the prison shoes Cavalcante had been wearing. A pair of work boots was reported stolen from a porch nearby.

Cavalcante, 34, broke out of the Chester County jail Aug. 31 while awaiting transfer to a state prison to serve a life sentence for fatally stabbing an ex-girlfriend in 2021. Prosecutors say he killed her to stop her from telling police that he was wanted in a slaying in Brazil, his home country.

Prosecutors there, in Tocantins state, said Cavalcante is accused of "double qualified homicide" in the 2017 killing of Válder Júnior Moreira dos Reis in the municipality of Figueiropolis, over a debt the victim owed him for repairing a vehicle.

To escape the Chester County lockup, Cavalcante scaled a wall by crab-walking up from the recreation yard, climbing over razor wire, running across a roof and jumping to the ground. His escape went undetected for more than an hour until guards took a head count. The tower guard on duty was fired, officials said.

A \$25,000 reward was offered for information leading to his capture.

Residents in the area said they are frustrated and nervous.

Jason Mesiarik was outside his barn on his farm late Monday when he heard six or seven gunshots from what he believes was a neighbor's encounter with Cavalcante.

"I was just finishing up feeding at the barn, and I stepped outside, was checking my Twitter feed, and that's when I heard like, like the six or seven, the shots ring out and I knew it was like one of two or three houses just across the road," Mesiarik said.

He called police to report it and helicopters promptly began circling, he said. Around 2 a.m., heavily armed police knocked on his door and swept the barns. Police were still there on his road at dawn and swept the property several hours later, he said.

Todd McFarland said his dog barked for an hour because of the helicopters. Last week he was stopped by state police who searched his white Ford Transit van after Cavalcante stole a similar vehicle. At the time, McFarland had no idea an escaped murderer was on the loose.

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"I don't understand why they can't find him, truthfully," he said Tuesday. "I think everybody's a little frustrated."

Kathleen Brady, who lives within view of where Cavalcante was seen crouching near a road, endured an anxious and largely sleepless night. Sirens sounded, helicopters circled overhead and rifle-toting police walked through her yard. She and her child plan to stay with friends — outside of the search area — if he isn't caught.

"You don't know how desperate he is at this point. If he thinks this is the end, he has a lot to lose," Brady said. "Will he take someone hostage? Will he hold them at gunpoint to take their car? Will he come and just try to take their house to get some time? You don't know. It's terrifying."

Bivens has said state police are authorized to use deadly force if Cavalcante doesn't surrender but noted that other agencies involved in the search may have their own rules.

On Saturday, Cavalcante slipped out of an earlier 8-square-mile (13-square-kilometer) search area and stole a dairy delivery van that had been left unlocked with the keys in it.

He abandoned it more than 20 miles (32 kilometers) to the north after nearly running out of fuel and unsuccessfully seeking help at the homes of two former colleagues late that same day, police said, in what they called a desperate quest for help.

Bivens declined to say how he thinks Cavalcante escaped the first search perimeter, and officials have pushed back against questions about whether they blew a chance to catch him.

Bivens has declined to discuss whether Cavalcante has received assistance from others, but said no arrests have been made. Encircled by police, Bivens said Tuesday, Cavalcante can't get any such help.

"At this point, I believe he is beyond assistance and he is in that perimeter and we will actively hunt until we find him," Bivens said.

For HBCUs, the bands are about much more than the show to the Black community: 'This is family'

By KRISTIE RIEKEN AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — It's almost 10 p.m. and still a sweltering, sticky 95 degrees when Texas Southern's Ocean of Soul band marches onto the top of a parking garage a stone's throw from downtown Houston.

The glittering skyline is close enough to provide some illumination to the dimly lit structure. It reveals beads of sweat dripping off many faces as the students near the end of a 10-hour rehearsal day. One of the three drum majors, Dominique Conner, speeds through his bandmates, handing out kudos when earned and criticism when needed.

Band director Brian Simmons climbs to the top of a nearby ladder and lifts a bullhorn.

"Everything you do matters," he barks.

Just why more than 100 student musicians are honing their routines on a giant slab of concrete in the brutal August heat of a Houston summer is a microcosm, in many ways, of life at a historically Black college or university like Texas Southern. They are here because it's the best available option at a school where resources are rarely plentiful. They are here because they need the practice for a showcase against seven other HBCU marching bands that is coming up fast.

They are also here because playing in bands like the Ocean of Soul isn't about school participation and it's not about knocking out an extracurricular activity. By joining, just like their brethren in HBCU bands at Southern and Howard and Florida A&M and all the others, they become part of a treasured hallmark of the Black community, which is eager to love them like family and celebrate with them step by choreographed step. It has been this way for decades, but in the age of social media and online streaming, the bands are enjoying fresh attention.

"HBCU bands, it represents a lot of things," said Simmons, who at 31 is the youngest band director ever at Texas Southern and is decades younger than most everyone else in his position at an HBCU. Simmons performed in Southern's Human Jukebox band as a student and spent eight years as assistant director there before coming to Texas Southern in 2021.

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"It's competition. It's discipline. It's tradition. It's all those things," Simmons explained. "Marching band for HBCUs, it's almost a cornerstone."

Somewhat quiet by nature, the importance of his role has forced Conner to be more outspoken, even commanding. Being a part of something that means so much to the Black community fills the junior with pride.

"It just gives minorities the chance and opportunity to show their passion and their craft and their culture," he says. "People have the chance to just show their creativity."

THE RIGHT NOTES

Competition and showmanship are at the heart of all HBCU bands, which number approximately 40 across the country. They have been ever since William Foster at Florida A&M formed the Marching 100 band in 1946, launching a high-stepping style and thrilling blend of music and dance that can border on gymnastics. It is unique and it has been emulated at thousands of high schools and colleges ever since.

For Christy A. Walker, HBCU bands are "literally in my blood" and she has spent her life around them. Her parents met while both were in the North Carolina A&T band and she followed in their footsteps playing clarinet in the Blue and Gold Marching Machine.

Walker has written three books about HBCU bands, helped found a website about them and hosts a podcast called "The HBCU Band Experience." She called the bands a vital part of Black culture that deserve more reverence than they get.

"We do it different and honestly we are, I would say, tastemakers for the entire band culture, including non HBCUs," she said. "Because we are the ones that will play Top 40 songs that are out now. If a song comes out on Monday, by the time Saturday rolls around a band will perform it."

At HBCUs, Tennessee State band director Reginald McDonald says, the bands are often "the window to the school" that influences opinions about the institution.

"It basically puts a spotlight on each one of our programs and allows people to understand and know that in terms of music education at each one of these schools they're very viable programs," he says. "And we do some unique things with very little funding often and we make magic, in a sense, happen."

The Aristocrat of Bands he runs is one of the best in the country. Founded the same year as the Marching 100, it began performing at professional football games in 1956 and became the first HBCU band to perform in a presidential inaugural parade when it marched for John F. Kennedy's ceremony in 1961.

It also has a title no other HBCU band can claim: Grammy winner. The band beat Willie Nelson, among others, in February for the Best Roots Gospel album honor for "The Urban Hymnal."

THE SHOWCASE

More than 2,200 band members and dozens of directors and staff from around the country have arrived for the chance to show their skills in front of a crowd of more than 50,000 at NRG Stadium, home of the NFL's Houston Texans.

Derek Webber, a graduate of Hampton University, created the National Battle of the Bands to increase exposure of HBCUs and their bands and to help them educate aspiring musicians. He is proud that the event has raised more than \$1 million in scholarships for participating schools, which are often underfunded and lack resources.

"For an HBCU, the bands are part of the culture, they're part of the lifestyle," Webber said. "And in some cases, they're more important than the athletic team."

Webber proudly noted the size of the crowd the bands would draw on the final Saturday before college football began.

"Here we are on a Saturday and there's no football going on and we're going to get 50,000 folks," he said. "The fans really enjoy what they see. The bands put in a tremendous amount of work to put on a great show. And this is energetic. This is entertaining. This is family. This is lifestyle."

Nerves were high as Saturday night arrived with the promise of 3 1/2 hours of music, with all eight bands performing and rap artists such as Doug E. Fresh, Outkast's Big Boi and Slim Thug taking a stage in between.

Draped in a sparkling gold cape, with a feathered Corinthian helmet on his head, Yohance Goodrich II

high-stepped onto the field as Mr. Spartan with Norfolk State's Spartan Legion band trailing behind.

Tall and regal, Goodrich commanded the band with an easy confidence. Every move he made was precise and crisp, whether leading the band through traditional songs or dancing to a hip-hop medley highlighted by T.I. and Missy Elliott songs. Mr. Spartan is the band's head drum major and, as Goodrich noted as he cited his responsibility for the success of the band, "enthusiasm is the key and discipline is the legacy."

"It's the highest position on the student level ... it's an honor to earn that position," he beamed. "It's a lot of work that goes into it and most importantly it's one of the biggest positions on campus in terms of our culture and how important band is to our university."

THE PAYOFF

Virginia State's Myles Spann began twirling "behind the scenes" in ninth grade, dreaming that one day he would have a shot to perform in a marching band. After two seasons in Virginia State's Trojan Explosion, he finally got a chance to join the auxiliary line and was the only male twirler in the Battle of the Bands.

Wearing black slacks and a sequined royal blue shirt, Spann dazzled with a flawless performance, a huge smile never leaving his face. When the crowd showered the band with applause, it was better than anything Spann could have imagined.

"It felt so amazing," he said. "It felt like I was in a dream."

All those nights the Texas Southern band rehearsed atop that parking garage it was the thought of this event that kept the students focused. With the showcase taking place in their city, they had no choice but to bring it.

"You have to represent your city," Simmons said. "You have to make people proud that they share a ZIP code with you, that they share a city with you."

On a night that was also a celebration of the 50th anniversary of hip hop, the Ocean of Soul wove that connection into its show. The band brought down the house when Simmons handed a microphone and a bucket hat to a band member, and he rapped Run DMC's hit "It's Tricky" while the band performed the song.

Conner, fellow drum major Kevin Smith and head drum major KamRon Hadnot wowed the crowd with a choreographed dance during the piece. It included the Kid 'n Play dance from the 1990 movie House Party and the Druski dance, which went viral in 2021.

"We brought them on that emotional ride with us," Simmons said. "So, in the end when you turn around and you get to see that standing ovation, it means job well done."

Anyone not in Houston missed quite a show. But college football has begun and basketball is not far away, which means every week there will be HBCU bands around the country entertaining crowds and showcasing Black excellence.

5 former officers charged with federal civil rights violations in Tyre Nichols beating death

By ADRIAN SAINZ and JONATHAN MATTISE Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Five former Memphis police officers were charged Tuesday with federal civil rights violations in the beating death of Tyre Nichols as they continue to fight second-degree murder charges in state courts arising from the killing.

Tadarrius Bean, Desmond Mills, Demetrius Haley, Emmitt Martin and Justin Smith were indicted in U.S. District Court in Memphis. The four-count indictment charges them with deprivation of rights under the color of law through excessive force and failure to intervene, and through deliberate indifference; conspiracy to witness tampering; and obstruction of justice through witness tampering.

The charges come nine months after the violent beating during a Jan. 7 traffic stop near Nichols' Memphis home, in which they punched, kicked and slugged the 29-year-old with a baton as he yelled for his mother. Nichols died at a hospital three days later. The five former officers, all Black like Nichols, have pleaded not guilty to state charges of second-degree murder and other alleged offenses in the case.

"We all heard Mr. Nichols cry out for his mother and say 'I'm just trying to go home,'" Attorney General

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Merrick Garland said in a video statement after the indictment. "Tyre Nichols should be alive today."

U.S. Attorney Kevin Ritz in West Tennessee said at an afternoon news briefing that the state and federal cases are on separate tracks. Ritz declined to predict how quickly they would proceed.

Kristen Clarke, who leads the U.S. Department of Justice's civil rights division, said at the appearance that the five former officers used excessive force, failed to advise medical personnel about Nichols' injuries and conspired to cover up their misconduct.

"In our country, no one is above the law," she said, adding she met earlier Tuesday with Nichols' mother and stepfather.

Caught on police video, the Nichols beating was one in a string of violent encounters between police and Black people that sparked protests and renewed debate about police brutality and police reform in the U.S.

Nichols' mother, RowVaughn Wells, said she was surprised that the federal charges "happened so quickly." The investigation that led to the indictment was announced in the weeks after the Jan. 7 beating death.

She said her son was a "free spirit."

"He should be here today," she said during a news conference at a Memphis church. "Because of those five officers, he's not."

Attorneys for several of the former officers said the indictment was no surprise, and some added that their clients will defend themselves against the charges.

The indictment says the officers failed to tell dispatchers, their supervisor and emergency medical technicians they knew Nichols had been hit repeatedly, trying to cover up their use of force and shield themselves from criminal liability.

Additionally, the indictment alleges instances where the officers used their body cameras to limit what evidence could be captured at the scene: Martin moved his body camera where it wouldn't show video of the beating; Haley and Smith activated theirs only after the assault; and Haley and Mills took theirs off when emergency medical personnel were on the scene.

At the arrest scene, the officers afterward discussed hitting Nichols with "straight haymakers," even as Nichols' condition deteriorated and he became unresponsive, the indictment said. Nichols could be seen on police video on the ground, slumped against a police car.

The indictment accuses the officers of gathering after the beating and saying, among other things, that "I thought when he wasn't going to fall, we about to kill this man." The indictment does not specify which officer made that statement.

The indictment also alleges the officers falsely stated Nichols actively resisted arrest at the beating scene and that he grabbed on Smith's protective vest and pulled on the officers' duty belts.

A hearing was set for Friday morning in a federal lawsuit filed by Nichols' mother against the five ex-officers, the city of Memphis and its police department. The former officers then have a scheduled appearance Friday afternoon in state court.

The Justice Department announced an investigation in July into how Memphis Police Department officers use force and conduct arrests, one of several "patterns and practices" investigations it has undertaken in other U.S. cities.

In March, the Justice Department said it was conducting a separate review concerning use of force, de-escalation strategies and specialized units in the Memphis Police Department.

The officers were part of a crime-suppression team that officials disbanded after Nichols' death. However, members of that "Scorpion" unit have been moved to other teams.

Elsewhere, a federal civil rights case was filed last year against four Louisville, Kentucky, police officers over a drug raid that led to the death of Breonna Taylor, a Black woman whose fatal shooting helped fuel racial justice protests that swept the nation in 2020. In Minneapolis, former police officers were convicted of violating the civil rights of George Floyd, whose death sparked those protests. Former officer Derek Chauvin was sentenced to 21 years after pinning Floyd to the pavement for more than nine minutes as the Black man pleaded, "I can't breathe."

Google exploited exclusive search engine deals to maintain its advantage over rivals, DOJ argues

By PAUL WISEMAN and MICHAEL LIEDTKE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Google has exploited its dominance of the internet search market to lock out competitors and smother innovation, the Department of Justice said Tuesday at the opening of the biggest U.S. antitrust trial in a quarter century.

"This case is about the future of the internet and whether Google's search engine will ever face meaningful competition," said Kenneth Dintzer, the Justice Department's lead litigator.

Over the next 10 weeks, federal lawyers and state attorneys general will try to prove Google rigged the market in its favor by locking in its search engine as the default choice in a plethora of places and devices. U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta likely won't issue a ruling until early next year. If he decides Google broke the law, another trial will decide what steps should be taken to rein in the Mountain View, California-based company.

Top executives at Google and its corporate parent Alphabet Inc., as well as those from other powerful technology companies are expected to testify. Among them is likely to be Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai, who succeeded Google co-founder Larry Page four years ago. Court documents also suggest that Eddy Cue, a high ranking Apple executive, might be called to the stand.

The Justice Department filed its antitrust lawsuit against Google nearly three years ago during the Trump administration, alleging that the company has used its internet search dominance to gain an unfair advantage against competitors. Government lawyers say Google protects its franchise through a form of payola, shelling out billions of dollars annually to be the default search engine on the iPhone and on web browsers such as Apple's Safari and Mozilla's Firefox.

"Google pays more than \$10 billion per year for these privileged positions," Dintzer said.

"Google's contracts ensure that rivals cannot match the search quality ad monetization, especially on phones," he said. "Through this feedback loop, this wheel has been turning for more than 12 years. It always turns to Google's advantage."

Google counters that it faces a wide range of competition despite commanding about 90% of the internet search market. Its rivals, the company argues, range from search engines such as Microsoft's Bing to websites like Amazon and Yelp, where consumers can post questions about what to buy or where to go. "There are lots of way users access the web other than default search engines, and people use them all the time," said attorney John Schmittlein, a partner at the law firm Williams & Connolly which is representing Google.

But the more searches Google processes, the more data it collects, data that can be used to improve future searches and give it an even bigger advantage over its rivals, Dintzer said. "User data is the oxygen for a search engine," he said. Because of its market dominance, "Google search and ad products are better than its rivals can hope to be."

That is why, he said, Google pays so much for its search engine to be the default option on products from Apple and other companies.

Google "began weaponizing defaults" more than 15 years ago, Dintzer said, citing an internal Google document calling its arrangements an "Achilles Heel" for rival search engines offered by Yahoo and MSN.

He also alleged that Google strong-armed Apple into giving its search engine a default position on its devices as a condition for revenue sharing. "This is not a negotiation," Dintzer said. "This is Google saying: Take it or leave it."

Litigators argue the company's anticompetitive tactics prevented Apple from developing a search engine of its own.

And Dintzer said Google deleted documents to keep them out of court proceedings and sought to hide others under attorney-client privilege.

"They destroyed documents for years," Dintzer said. "They turned history off, your honor, so they could rewrite it in this court."

While questioning Google chief economist Hal Varian – the trial’s first witness – Dintzer produced a July 2003 memo in which Varian urged Google employees to be cautious about how they discussed competition with Microsoft, lest they raise antitrust concerns. “We should be careful about what we say in both public and private,” Varian wrote. References to “cutting off their air supply” and similar comments, for instance, “should be avoided.”

From Google’s perspective, perpetual improvements to its search engine explain why people almost reflexively keep coming back to it, a habit that long ago made “Googling” synonymous with looking things up on the internet. Schmidlein said Google’s tweaks simply made its search better than key rival Bing. “At every critical juncture,” he said, “they were beaten in the market.”

The trial begins just a couple weeks after the 25th anniversary of the first investment in Google — a \$100,000 check written by Sun Microsystems co-founder Andy Bechtolsheim that enabled Page and Sergey Brin to set up shop in a Silicon Valley garage.

Today, Google’s corporate parent, Alphabet, is worth \$1.7 trillion and employs 182,000 people, with most of the money coming from \$224 billion in annual ad sales flowing through a network of digital services anchored by a search engine that fields billions of queries a day.

The Justice Department’s antitrust case echoes the one it filed against Microsoft in 1998. Regulators then accused Microsoft of forcing computer makers that relied on its dominant Windows operating system to also feature Microsoft’s Internet Explorer — just as the internet was starting to go mainstream. That bundling practice crushed competition from the once-popular browser Netscape.

Several members of the Justice Department’s team in the Google case — including Dintzer — also worked on the Microsoft investigation.

Google could be hobbled if the trial ends in concessions that undercut its power. One possibility is that the company could be forced to stop paying Apple and other companies to make Google the default search engine on smartphones and computers.

Or the legal battle could cause Google to lose focus. That’s what happened to Microsoft after its antitrust showdown with the Justice Department. Distracted, the software giant struggled to adapt to the impact of internet search and smartphones. Google capitalized on that distraction to leap from its startup roots into an imposing powerhouse.

Jets QB Aaron Rodgers has a torn left Achilles tendon and will miss the rest of the season

By DENNIS WASZAK Jr. AP Pro Football Writer

Aaron Rodgers’ debut season with the New York Jets is already over. It didn’t even last one quarter.

The 39-year-old quarterback has a torn left Achilles tendon that will require season-ending surgery, coach Robert Saleh announced Tuesday. The Jets placed Rodgers on the injured reserve list.

An MRI revealed the severity of the four-time NFL MVP’s injury, confirming what the Jets feared after their 22-16 overtime win over Buffalo on Monday night. Saleh said during a video call he was not immediately certain when the quarterback would have surgery.

Torn Achilles tendons typically take several months of recovery due to the extensive rehabilitation needed.

“I feel more for Aaron than anyone,” Saleh said. “He’s invested so much into this organization, so much into this journey that he’s embarked on and wanting to be a part of what we’ve got going here. And how much he’s invested in not only this organization, but his teammates, himself, this fan base, the city, so I have a lot of emotions for him.”

On his fourth regular-season snap in a Jets uniform, Rodgers tried to avoid a rushing Leonard Floyd, who wrapped up the quarterback and spun him down to the MetLife Stadium turf. Rodgers stood up after a few moments, looked over to the Jets’ sideline and then sat on the turf — seemingly knowing he was seriously hurt.

He needed help from trainers to get to the sideline, where he was taken to the blue medical tent to be

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examined. Rodgers then got on a cart to go to the locker room, hopped off near the tunnel and limped inside.

Zach Wilson replaced Rodgers just 3:45 into the game and finished 14 of 21 for 140 yards with a touchdown pass to Garrett Wilson and an interception in the victory.

The third-year quarterback will now start for the Jets on Sunday at Dallas — and the foreseeable future. Saleh said third-stringer Tim Boyle would be promoted from the practice squad and the Jets would explore their options to find a backup quarterback.

"We are going to look through some things, but I do want to make it very clear: Zach's our quarterback," Saleh said. "We've got a lot of faith in Zach. We're really excited about his opportunity, but we're rolling with Zach and and excited for this and excited for him."

Wilson praised the work Rodgers did with him during the offseason and training camp, helping him feel "a lot more prepared" to take the next step in his development.

"The hardest part is now putting it into a game and I've got to be able to do that," Wilson said Monday night. "Going into this week, it's applying everything that he's kind of helped walk us through and being able to watch him and the coaches, how they've handled this offense. I've got to be able to handle that efficiently."

Rodgers, who spent his first 18 seasons with Green Bay, was acquired by the Jets in April and immediately raised expectations for the frustrated franchise.

He gave the Jets their most accomplished quarterback since Brett Favre, who was acquired from Green Bay in 2008 — clearing the way for Rodgers to become the Packers' signal caller.

Rodgers, who repeatedly has said he won't be one-and-done with the Jets, agreed in July to a restructured contract that gives him \$75 million in fully guaranteed money over this season and next.

But now, he'll have to focus on a lengthy recovery and rehabilitation process, which could make his playing future uncertain.

Saleh expects Rodgers to continue to remain with the team and help throughout the rest of the season.

"I think I speak for everyone in the organization, we all want him here," Saleh said. "We all want him to be connected, and I think he wants to be here."

The situation evoked eerily similar memories of 1999, when Vinny Testaverde — who, coincidentally, was the Jets' honorary captain Monday night — ruptured his Achilles tendon early in New York's season opener against New England.

Like this year's squad, those Jets had Super Bowl aspirations after going to the AFC championship game the previous season. New York instead finished 8-8 and missed the playoffs.

Rodgers' injury brought up some debate in football circles as to whether the playing surface was a contributing factor. Saleh said he didn't think it was because it wasn't a noncontact injury. MetLife Stadium has been criticized for its turf the last few years because of several noncontact injuries, but the playing surface was replaced before this season.

With Rodgers out for the season, New York will not give up a first-round draft pick to Green Bay next year as part of the trade's terms. It will remain a second-round pick that could have become a first-rounder if Rodgers had played 65% of the Jets' plays this season.

The Packers also received the 13th overall pick, a second-rounder and a sixth-rounder in this year's draft in exchange for Rodgers, the No. 15 overall pick and a fifth-rounder this year.

What's ahead now that Republicans are opening an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Kevin McCarthy said he is launching an impeachment inquiry against President Joe Biden, yielding to mounting pressure from former President Donald Trump and his allies in what's shaping up as an election-year clash between Congress and the White House.

In a statement Tuesday, McCarthy said the House investigations into the Biden family this year have

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uncovered a "culture of corruption" that demands deeper review.

"These are allegations of abuse of power, obstruction and corruption," McCarthy said.

McCarthy said he will direct the chairmen of the House Judiciary, Oversight and Ways and Means committees to lead the impeachment inquiry. The panels have been working together for months on various probes related to the Biden family and have yet to directly connect the president to any of it.

The White House called the effort "extreme politics at its worst."

"House Republicans have been investigating the President for 9 months, and they've turned up no evidence of wrongdoing," Ian Sams, a White House spokesperson said in a statement. "His own Republican members have said so."

Here's a look at what happens next as House Republicans inch closer to possible impeachment charges against Biden:

WHAT IS AN IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY?

An impeachment inquiry is an investigation of possible wrongdoing by a federal official, such as the president of the United States, Cabinet officials or judges. The process is written into the Constitution and is the most powerful check that Congress has on the executive branch.

While the House of Representatives wields the power to impeach a federal official, only the Senate has the ability to convict and remove an individual from office.

To date, no president has ever been forced from the White House through impeachment. But former Republican President Richard Nixon resigned in 1974 as the House was preparing to take a vote on impeachment articles against him.

WHY ARE REPUBLICANS PURSUING IT AGAINST BIDEN?

Since gaining the House majority in January, House Republicans have aggressively investigated Biden and his son, claiming without evidence that they engaged in an influence-peddling scheme. The allegations echo those that former President Donald Trump has made for years against Biden and his family.

Republicans have focused much attention on an unverified tip to the FBI that alleged a bribery scheme involving Biden when he was vice president. The bribery claim, which emerged in 2019 and was part of Trump's first impeachment, relates to the allegation that Biden pressured Ukraine to fire its top prosecutor in order to stop an investigation into Burisma, the oil-and-gas company where Hunter Biden was on the board.

Democrats have reiterated that the Justice Department investigated the Burisma claim when Trump was president and closed the matter after eight months, finding "insufficient evidence" to pursue it further. Other countries were also pushing for the firing of the Ukrainian official, viewing him as corrupt. And a former business partner of Hunter Biden's has testified to Congress that the bribery allegation is untrue.

Nonetheless, three House committees have been pursuing lines of inquiry related to the president and his son, including the ways that Hunter used the "Biden brand" to advance his business with foreign clients. They've also delved deeply into the Justice Department investigation into the younger Biden, citing whistleblower testimony, to suggest that Hunter has received special treatment.

And while Republicans have sought to directly connect Hunter Biden's financial affairs to his father, they have failed to produce evidence that the president directly participated in his son's work, though he sometimes had dinner with Hunter Biden's clients or said hello to them on calls.

DOES THIS MEAN THAT BIDEN WILL BE IMPEACHED?

Not necessarily. While all inquiries opened in recent history have resulted in the impeachment of a president, Republicans have been treading carefully around the term and its potential political implications.

To impeach Biden, the House would have to approve at least one impeachment charge against him, which requires a majority vote. An impeachment inquiry can also be closed without charges being brought.

McCarthy has said an impeachment inquiry is necessary to ensure Congress can use the full weight of its oversight authority to pursue its investigation of the Biden family.

"Everyone should understand, impeachment is not the goal," Rep. Darrell Issa, a senior Republican on House Judiciary Committee, one of the panel's tasked with investigating Biden, told reporters recently. "Impeachment is a way of saying this is not a legislative oversight, but in fact an oversight of possible

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wrongdoing.”

Regardless, the inquiry will loom over Biden as the probe potentially drags into next year when the president, who is running for reelection, confronts a Republican field led by Trump, who was impeached twice.

WHAT EVIDENCE DO THEY HAVE?

House Republicans — led by Rep. James Comer, the chairman of the House Oversight Committee — have obtained thousands of pages of financial records from various members of the Biden family and their associates through subpoenas to the Treasury Department and various financial institutions.

Comer has repeatedly claimed — without substantial evidence — that there is enough in those documents to draw a clear line between Hunter Biden trading on his father’s name and policy decisions Biden made while vice president. No such connection has been proven.

Comer also joined forces in June with the Republican chairmen of the Judiciary, and Ways and Means committees to launch a larger investigation into the yearslong Justice Department probe of Hunter Biden. The FBI and IRS have been investigating Hunter Biden for years and the case appeared headed toward a plea deal this summer until a judge rejected the terms of that agreement.

The breakdown happened after two IRS agents claimed in congressional testimony that the Justice Department improperly interfered in the case, which was first opened in 2018.

Attorney General Merrick Garland last month appointed the prosecutor investigating Hunter Biden as a special counsel, likely extending the investigation further.

HOW WILL THE IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY WORK?

McCarthy said he’s asked Comer to take the lead on the impeachment inquiry, working alongside House Judiciary chairman Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, and House Ways and Means Chairman Jason Smith, R-Mo.

While McCarthy had previously said the House would hold a vote to launch the inquiry, he made no such promise on Tuesday.

The Constitution does not require a vote to start an impeachment inquiry, and neither do the rules governing the House. But authorizing resolutions have been passed in previous presidential impeachments.

It’s not clear McCarthy would have enough votes in the House to approve an impeachment resolution. Some House Republicans are opposed to launching an inquiry, saying there is insufficient evidence against the president.

Once an impeachment inquiry is complete, the House has traditionally tasked the Judiciary Committee — the panel authorized to introduce articles of impeachment — to hold hearings and draft impeachment charges.

HOW LONG WILL THE INQUIRY TAKE?

There are no rules to how long an impeachment inquiry can or must last. The probe into Biden could last as short as a few months or as long as a year, depending on what McCarthy and Republican leadership believe is the right time to conclude or move to articles of impeachment.

The only real deadline would be the end of this Congress, which is Jan. 2, 2025.

WHAT HAPPENS IF REPUBLICANS DO DECIDE TO IMPEACH?

If Republicans decide there is enough evidence of wrongdoing and abuse of power by Biden to move forward, the Judiciary Committee would likely mark up the articles of impeachment. If those articles are voted out of committee by a simple majority, it would come to the House floor where a majority vote would be required to impeach Biden.

Only three other presidents have been impeached: Andrew Johnson, Bill Clinton and Trump, who was impeached twice.

The impeachment charges would then move to the Senate, where Democratic leaders would likely have no choice but to hold a trial.

The trial is similar to what’s seen in the legal system, with the senators acting as jurors and select House members acting as prosecutors, or impeachment managers. The chief justice of the Supreme Court presides over that process. If the Senate approves an article of impeachment with a two-thirds vote of “guilty,” the president is convicted and removed from office. If all the articles are rejected, the president is acquitted.

If Biden were convicted by the Senate, he would be the first president to ever be removed from office.

But such an outcome seems far-fetched, given that Democrats have a 52-48 majority.

Rescue teams are frustrated that Morocco did not accept more international help after earthquake

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The text-message alert came in the middle of the night: A massive earthquake had hit Morocco. French volunteers scrambled to pull together a nine-person search-and-rescue team, listening devices and other gear to look for people buried under rubble.

The only thing the French aid workers didn't have was a green light from Morocco to hop on a flight, which could have landed them in the North African country's disaster zone little more than 24 hours after the Sept. 8 quake that killed more than 2,900 people and injured at least 5,530 others in flattened villages and townhouses.

"The green light never came," said Arnaud Fraisse, the team's coordinator and founder of aid group Rescuers Without Borders. "All of our team members who train regularly year-round for this type of thing are miserable that they couldn't leave and put their skills to use."

Aid groups in Europe are frustrated that Morocco did not throw open its doors to outside assistance as Turkey did for a devastating quake in February. Quickly grasping the vast scale of the disaster, Turkey within hours appealed for international help, which enabled rescue crews from 90 countries to pull hundreds of people out alive.

Morocco has taken a more limited approach. It accepted government-offered search-and-rescue crews from Spain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the U.K., but it has not taken up other offers of emergency assistance from the United States, France and elsewhere.

The reasons appear partly logistical. Aid experts said rescue teams can be more of a hindrance than a help if they all rush in uninvited and without coordination.

And quickly getting them to Morocco's disaster zone in the Atlas Mountains could have been tough. Roads and dirt tracks that can be hard to navigate at the best of times were destroyed and blocked by fallen rocks. Morocco also has bad memories of chaotic international aid that followed another deadly quake in 2004.

After the latest temblor, the Interior Ministry cautioned that poorly coordinated aid "would be counter-productive."

Moroccan Sen. Lahcen Haddad, who also previously served as the country's tourism minister, said the immediate priority was clearing roads and reaching survivors.

"We don't need numbers. We need speedy work to get to the population. We have enough people to do that," he said in an Associated Press interview.

"If there is aid, it will be later," he added. "In any case, for those people who are impatient to help, there will be enough work for everyone."

Caroline Holt of the International Federation of the Red Cross agreed that accessing some quake-hit areas "is extremely complex" and said "the Moroccan government is taking careful steps with regard to opening up."

"One of the worst things to do in an already chaotic situation is to introduce further uncertainty and potential chaos by opening the doors and everybody coming in," she said.

Fraisse acknowledged that dozens of well-meaning search teams arriving together from overseas could have been overwhelming. And he noted that other countries have also rejected help from rescue teams like his, including Armenia in 1988.

But he also knows how precious time is when there are lives to be saved. Whisked part of the way by military helicopter, his team reached a disaster zone in Turkey about 48 hours after the quake that killed more than 50,000 people. Rescue deployments were "extremely well-coordinated," he said. But the French rescuers were still too late — sometimes by agonizing margins — to recover survivors.

Some dead bodies they found were still warm, Fraisse recalled.

He suspects that political tensions between France and Morocco are another reason why his team's offer wasn't acted upon. They contacted the Moroccan Embassy in Paris within hours of the quake, but "it's been radio silence since then," he said.

"We are paying the price for the quarrel," he said. "We accept it. It's part of the game. We're not going to fight states to say 'You absolutely have to accept us.'"

Germany, which also has had tensions with Morocco in recent years but now has warmer relations than France, was not taken up on its offer to send a 50-person rescue team and dogs. The team assembled in the quake's immediate aftermath at a German airport before being told to stand down.

A Czech rescue service also readied a 70-person team that stayed grounded.

"It could be political, religious or any other reasons," Vladimir Vlcek, its director general, told Czech public radio Tuesday. "The longer it's delayed, the slimmer is a chance for someone to survive under the rubble."

Patricia McIlreavy, CEO of the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, said Morocco's response does not seem to be slowing aid from charities and nonprofits. Her Washington-based nonprofit advises donors on effective giving following disasters.

"It's very easy from the outside to criticize and say, 'Well, if they just took all this assistance that we're offering, everything would be fine,'" she said. "But it's actually a lot of work to coordinate an international response."

Cash bail disproportionately impacts communities of color. Illinois is the first state to abolish it

By CLAIRE SAVAGE and COREY WILLIAMS Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — It took four and a half months for Shannon Ross' life to unravel.

Ross, who describes himself as Indigenous and a person of color, was arrested in Chicago in October 2019 on weapons charges and ultimately found not guilty. But that came only after he spent months in jail awaiting trial, lost his home, car, job and countless moments with his children.

Ross couldn't afford the \$75,000 bond set during a hearing that he recalls lasted only a few minutes.

"I had to lose everything to prove that I wasn't guilty," he told The Associated Press. "It messes with you mentally, psychologically. It messes up relationships; it messes up the time you put in to build your life up."

But Illinois is about to overhaul the system that upended Ross' life. Illinois' Pretrial Fairness Act, which abolishes cash bail as a condition of pretrial release, will take effect Sept. 18, making Illinois the first state to end cash bail and a testing ground for whether — and how — it works on a large scale.

Judges can still keep people accused of serious crimes behind bars pretrial, but first would have to go through a more rigorous review of each case.

Critics say cash bail policies are especially unfair to Black people and other people of color. A 2022 federal civil rights report on cash bail systems found that courts tend to impose higher pretrial detention penalties on Black and Latino people, citing a study that showed Black men received bail amounts 35% higher than white men, and Latino men received bail amounts 19% higher than white men.

Cook County Public Defender Sharone Mitchell Jr. described Illinois' previous cash bail system as "a cousin to slavery."

"The vast majority of people in the system are poor, and they're Black and brown, and they have no power. It is an incredibly unfair system," he said. "You go to a bond hearing, it sounds like a slave auction. People are talking very fast. They're putting price tags on people's freedom."

Between 1970 and 2015, there was a fivefold increase in the number of people jailed before trials, according to the 2022 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights report. Data shows more than 60% of defendants were detained prior to trial because they couldn't afford to post bail, and that nearly 74% of the 631,000 people jailed daily in the United States are awaiting trial.

Typically in state courts, a judge decides if a defendant poses too much of a threat to the community to be released, or if they can be freed with conditions, according to the nonprofit Bail Project.

Some states have tried to ease cash bail rules.

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In 2017, New Jersey essentially replaced its cash bail system with a risk assessment process that gauged the potential danger a released defendant could pose to the community. But cash bail is still allowed in some instances in that state and others that have curtailed the practice, such as New York and Alaska.

California has made several efforts to reform its cash bail system, but lawmakers balked at sweeping reform.

Proponents of cash bail argue that it ensures released defendants show up for court proceedings, and say that without it, violent criminals who are released pending trial could have the opportunity to commit more crimes. But New Jersey data showed that after the state moved away from cash bail, the number of defendants who were charged with a new crime or who failed to appear in court remained steady.

Illinois state Senate minority leader John Curran, a Republican representing suburbs southwest of Chicago, said he's not opposed to changing the system but wants judges to retain more power than Illinois' new law grants.

"I've always said that New Jersey has done this mostly right," Curran said. "All felonies are put before a judge and a judge can consider if a person is a danger to the community or a willful flight risk or whether there is a history of intimidating witnesses, and they can detain on those standards and it gives judges full discretion."

The loudest opposition to the change in Illinois has come from law enforcement. Jim Kaitschuk, executive director of the Illinois Sheriffs' Association, said members' focus is now on trying to "work through it the best we can."

"I think we'll be searching for a lot of people" because defendants who don't post bond have no incentive to return to court, Kaitschuk said.

Although setting people free before trial will become the default in Illinois, there will still be cases that warrant detention, including for those accused of violent or sexual offenses or facing charges involving a gun, according to the public defender Mitchell.

In such cases, the judge must weigh several factors in deciding whether to keep someone jailed, including evidence, previous convictions, and whether that person is a flight risk.

"It won't make the system perfect for everybody. But what it will do, we think, is puts us in a better position to make a more thoughtful decision," Mitchell said.

Race certainly seemed to play a role when Nikuya Brooks' bond was set at \$150,000 after her first-time arrest on drug charges in 2017, according to the Chicago mother of three. No one in her family could pull together 10% of the bond for her to walk free. Brooks, who is Black, said a white woman she was jailed with had prior convictions and the same charges as Brooks, but received a lower bond.

According to Brooks, she didn't know her ex was transporting ecstasy while she was in the car. Police stopped the vehicle and arrested both. She said she spent a year in DuPage County Jail before her trial, unable even to hug her children.

"I really wanted to fight my case because I'm not a criminal," she said. "I'm not a drug dealer. I'm a mom. You know, I bake cookies for the PTA. I ran a Girl Scout troop."

Brooks said other women in jail told her if she pleaded guilty, prison visits offered more freedom and that she might be able to hug or kiss her children. She told her public defender she wanted to make a deal, and ended up serving about two more years in prison.

Years later, she still struggles to find employment because of her criminal record.

"You're already being punished because you're being detained," she said. "But you're also being punished twice because you're poor."

Ross, who was cleared of the weapons charges that put him in jail, said he also struggles to find secure housing and income four years later. He lost his job as a forklift operator while jailed. Once he made bail with the help of the Chicago Community Bond Fund, Ross started a business online during pretrial house arrest. But he said his credit score tanked after he couldn't make payments from jail.

"I feel like it was a Catch-22," Ross said. "And the worst part about it is I knew I was not guilty."

Reflecting on their experiences, Brooks and Ross said being locked up pretrial harmed their chances in court. "You're automatically stigmatized if you're incarcerated and you're fighting your case, especially

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Black women," Brooks said. They hope the new law will change that for others in Illinois.

"It's more equal for everyone," said Ross. "I feel like it's more justice in the criminal justice system."

What to know about the Morocco earthquake and the efforts to help

By SAM METZ Associated Press

An earthquake has sown destruction and devastation in Morocco, where death and injury counts continue to rise after rescue crews dug out people both alive and dead in villages that were reduced to rubble.

Law enforcement and aid workers — both Moroccan and international — have arrived in the region south of the city of Marrakech that was hardest hit by the magnitude 6.8 tremor Friday night, along with several aftershocks. Residents in most places have been provided food and water, and most of the giant boulders blocking steep mountain roads have been cleared. But worries remain about shelter, particularly with forecasts predicting rain early this week.

Here's what you need to know:

WHAT ARE THE AREAS MOST AFFECTED?

The epicenter was high in the Atlas Mountains about 70 kilometers (44 miles) south of Marrakech in Al Haouz province. The region is largely rural, made up of red-rock mountains, picturesque gorges and glistening streams and lakes. The earthquake shook most of Morocco and caused injury and death in other provinces, including Marrakech, Taroudant and Chichaoua.

WHO WAS AFFECTED?

Of the 2,901 deaths reported as of Tuesday, 1,643 were in Al Haouz, a region with a population of around 570,000, according to Morocco's 2014 census. In certain villages such as Tafeghaghte, residents say more than half the population died.

People speak a combination of Arabic and Tachelhit, Morocco's most common Indigenous language. Villages of clay and mud brick built into mountainsides have been destroyed.

Most of the dead have already been buried. The government reports 2,501 injuries.

WHO IS PROVIDING AID?

Morocco has deployed ambulances, rescue crews and soldiers to the region to help assist with emergency response efforts. Aid groups said the government has not made a broad appeal for help and accepted only limited foreign assistance.

The Interior Ministry said it was accepting search and rescue-focused international aid from nongovernmental organizations as well as Spain, Qatar, Britain and the United Arab Emirates, bypassing offers from French President Emmanuel Macron and U.S. President Joe Biden.

HOW CAN PEOPLE HELP?

Experts say the most direct way to provide aid to those affected in the city of Marrakech and the rural areas in the Atlas Mountains is to donate to organizations that have operations already on the ground. That includes the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, which quickly released \$1.1 million from its Disaster Response Emergency Fund to support Moroccan Red Crescent relief efforts in the country. It also includes World Central Kitchen, Doctors Without Borders, and GlobalGiving, which created a Morocco Earthquake Relief Fund and had raised more than \$500,000 as of Tuesday morning.

WHY IS MARRAKECH HISTORIC?

The earthquake cracked and crumbled parts of the walls that surround Marrakech's old city, a UNESCO World Heritage site built in the 12th century. Videos showed dust emanating from parts of the Koutoubia Mosque, one of the city's best-known historic sites.

The city is Morocco's most widely visited destination, known for its palaces, spice markets, madrasas and Jemaa El Fna — its noisy square full of food vendors and musicians.

HOW DOES THIS COMPARE TO OTHER QUAKES?

Friday's earthquake was Morocco's strongest in over a century. Although such powerful tremors are rare, it isn't the country's deadliest: Just over 60 years ago, Morocco was rocked by a magnitude-5.8 quake that killed over 12,000 people on its western coast, crumbling the city of Agadir, southwest of Marrakech.

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That quake prompted changes in construction rules in Morocco, but many buildings — especially rural homes — are not built to withstand such force.

There had not been any earthquakes stronger than magnitude 6.0 within 310 miles (500 kilometers) of Friday's tremor in at least a century, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Northern Morocco experiences earthquakes more often, including tremors of magnitude 6.4 in 2004 and magnitude 6.3 in 2016.

Elsewhere this year, a magnitude 7.8 temblor that shook Syria and Turkey killed more than 50,000 people. Most of the most devastating earthquakes in recent history have been above magnitude 7.0, including a 2015 tremor in Nepal that killed over 8,800 people and a 2008 quake that killed 87,500 in China.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Emergency response efforts are likely to continue as teams traverse mountain roads to reach villages hit hardest by the earthquake. Many communities lack food, water, electricity and shelter. But once aid crews and soldiers leave, the challenges facing hundreds of thousands who call the area home will probably remain.

Members of the Moroccan Parliament convened Monday to create a government fund for earthquake response at the request of King Mohammed VI. Moroccan Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch said afterward that the government was committed to compensating victims and helping them rebuild. Enaam Mayara, the president of Morocco's House of Councilors, said that it would likely take five or six years to rebuilt some affected areas.

American researcher doing well after rescue from a deep Turkish cave, calling it a 'crazy adventure'

By ROBERT BADENDIECK and SUZAN FRASER Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — An American researcher was "doing well" at a Turkish hospital, officials said Tuesday, after rescuers pulled him out of a cave where he fell seriously ill and became trapped 1,000 meters (more than 3,000 feet) below its entrance for over a week.

Rescuers from Turkey and across Europe cheered and clapped as Mark Dickey, a 40-year-old experienced caver, emerged from Morca cave in southern Turkey's Taurus Mountains strapped to a stretcher at 12:37 a.m. local time Tuesday. He was whisked to the hospital in the nearby city of Mersin in a helicopter.

Dickey fell ill on Sept. 2 with stomach bleeding. What caused his condition remained unclear.

Lying on the stretcher surrounded by reporters shortly after his rescue, he described his nine-day ordeal as a "crazy, crazy adventure."

"It is amazing to be above ground again," he said. A well-known cave researcher and a cave rescuer who had participated in many international expeditions, Dickey thanked the international caving community, Turkish cavers and Hungarian Cave Rescue, among others.

Dickey, who is from Croton-on-Hudson, New York, was part of an expedition to map the Morca Cave, Turkey's third deepest, when he became sick. As he was too frail to climb out himself, cave rescue teams from Europe scrambled to help save him, mounting a challenging operation that involved pulling him up the cave's steep vertical sections and navigating through mud and water at low temperatures in the horizontal sections.

Rescuers had to widen some of the cave's narrow passages, install ropes to pull him up vertical shafts on a stretcher and set up temporary camps along the way before the operation could begin.

"It was great to see him finally get out because it was very dire in the early days of this rescue," Carl Heitmeyer of the New Jersey Initial Response Team and a friend of Dickey's told NBC's "Today" show.

Asked whether he believes Dickey would return to caving, Heitmeyer said: "I hope his mom's not watching, but I would bet on it."

Among those who rushed to the Taurus Mountains was Dr. Zsofia Zador, a caving enthusiast and medical rescuer from the Hungarian rescue team, who was among the first to treat Dickey inside the cave.

Zador, an anesthesiologist and intensive care specialist from Budapest, was on her way to the hospital to start her early morning shift on Sept. 2, when she got news of Dickey's condition.

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The 34-year-old quickly arranged for a colleague to take her shift and rushed to gather her caving gear and medical equipment, before taking a plane to Turkey to join the rescue mission, she told The Associated Press by telephone from the camp near the entrance of the cave.

"He was relieved, and he was hopeful," she said when asked to describe Dickey's reaction when he saw her in the cave. "He was quite happy. We are good friends."

Zador said Dickey was hypovolemic — or was suffering from loss of fluid and blood — but said he was in a "stable condition" by the time she reached him because paramedics had "treated him quite well."

"It was a tricky situation because sometimes he was quite stable and it felt like he could get out on his own, but he could (deteriorate) once again," she said. "Luckily he didn't lose any consciousness and he saw the situation through."

Around 190 experts from Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Turkey took part in the rescue, including doctors, paramedics and experienced cavers. Teams comprised of a doctor and three to four other rescuers took turns staying by his side at all times.

Zador said she had been involved in cave rescues before but Dickey's rescue was the "longest" she experienced.

Dickey said after his rescue that he had started to throw up large quantities of blood inside the cave.

"My consciousness started to get harder to hold on to, and I reached the point where I thought 'I'm not going to live,'" he told reporters.

A statement from the Mersin governor's office said Dickey's "general health" condition was "good", without providing further details.

The Italian National Alpine and Speleological Corps said the rescue operation took more than 100 rescuers from around 10 counties a total of 60 hours. "Mark Dickey was in the cave for roughly 500 hours," it said.

Today in History: September 13

Attica prison standoff ends with 32 inmates and 11 hostages dead

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 13, the 256th day of 2023. There are 109 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 13, 1971, a four-day inmates' rebellion at the Attica Correctional Facility in western New York ended as police and guards stormed the prison; the ordeal and final assault claimed the lives of 32 inmates and 11 hostages.

On this date:

In 1788, the Congress of the Confederation authorized the first national election, and declared New York City the temporary national capital.

In 1803, Commodore John Barry, considered by many the father of the American Navy, died in Philadelphia.

In 1814, during the War of 1812, British naval forces began bombarding Fort McHenry in Baltimore but were driven back by American defenders in a battle that lasted until the following morning.

In 1948, Republican Margaret Chase Smith of Maine was elected to the U.S. Senate; she became the first woman to serve in both houses of Congress.

In 1962, Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett rejected the U.S. Supreme Court's order for the University of Mississippi to admit James Meredith, a Black student, declaring in a televised address, "We will not drink from the cup of genocide."

In 1993, at the White House, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat shook hands after signing an accord granting limited Palestinian autonomy.

In 1996, rapper Tupac Shakur died at a Las Vegas hospital six days after he was wounded in a drive-by shooting; he was 25.

In 1997, a funeral was held in Calcutta, India, for Nobel peace laureate Mother Teresa.

In 1998, former Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace died in Montgomery at age 79.

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In 2001, two days after the 9/11 terror attacks, the first few jetliners returned to the nation's skies, but several major airports remained closed and others opened only briefly. President George W. Bush visited injured Pentagon workers and said he would carry the nation's prayers to New York.

In 2008, rescue crews ventured out to pluck people from their homes in an all-out search for thousands of Texans who had stubbornly stayed behind overnight to face Hurricane Ike.

In 2010, Rafael Nadal beat Novak Djokovic to win his first U.S. Open title and complete a career Grand Slam.

In 2021, school began for about a million New York City public school students in the nation's largest experiment of in-person learning during the coronavirus pandemic.

In 2022, Ken Starr, a former federal appellate judge and a prominent attorney whose criminal investigation of Bill Clinton led to the president's impeachment, died at age 76.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Barbara Bain is 92. Actor Eileen Fulton (TV: "As the World Turns") is 90. Rock singer David Clayton-Thomas (Blood, Sweat & Tears) is 82. Actor Jacqueline Bisset is 79. Singer Peter Cetera is 79. Actor Christine Estabrook is 73. Actor Jean Smart is 72. Singer Randy Jones (The Village People) is 71. Record producer Don Was is 71. Actor Isiah Whitlock Jr. is 69. Actor-comedian Geri Jewell is 67. Country singer Bobbie Cryner is 62. Rock singer-musician Dave Mustaine (Megadeth) is 62. Radio-TV personality Tavis Smiley is 59. Rock musician Zak Starkey is 58. Actor/comedian Jeff Ross is 58. Actor Louis Mandylor is 57. Olympic gold medal runner Michael Johnson is 56. Rock musician Stephen Perkins is 56. Actor Roger Howarth is 55. Actor Dominic Fumusa is 54. Actor Louise Lombard is 53. Former tennis player Goran Ivanisevic (ee-van-EE'-seh-vihch) is 52. Country singer Aaron Benward (Blue County) is 50. Country musician Joe Don Rooney (Rascal Flatts) is 48. Actor Scott Vickaryous is 48. Singer Fiona Apple is 46. Actor Ben Savage is 43. Rock singer Niall Horan (One Direction) is 30. Actor Mitch Holleman is 28. Actor Lili Reinhart (TV: "Riverdale") is 27.