

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 1 of 60

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Newsweek Bulletin](#)
- [3- Camo vs. Pink Day](#)
- [3- 1973 Class Reunion](#)
- [4- Nursing Home Day](#)
- [5- Pajama Day](#)
- [6- Ken's Food Fair Help Wanted Ad](#)
- [7- Flihs takes third at Redfield Golf Invitational](#)
- [7- Looking for C Match sponsor](#)
- [8- Community Transit Letter](#)
- [9- September Students of the Month](#)
- [10- Coming up on GDILIVE.COM](#)
- [11- SD Arts: A treasure you need to see for yourself](#)
- [11- Name Released in Brule County Fatal Crash](#)
- [12- Babcock welcomes Valley State graduates](#)
- [13- SD SearchLight: Enrollment grows by 2% at state universities](#)
- [13- SD SearchLight: Big gains projected in South Dakota corn and soybean production](#)
- [14- SD SearchLight: White House slams 'baseless' House GOP impeachment inquiry as 'political stunt'](#)
- [16- Weather Pages](#)
- [20- Daily Devotional](#)
- [21- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [22- Subscription Form](#)
- [23- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [24- News from the Associated Press](#)

## Thursday, Sept. 14

Dress Up Days: Class Color Day at MS/HS, Neon Day at Elementary  
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)

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



## Friday, Sept. 15

Spirit Day!  
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

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

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 2 of 60

## The Bulletin by Newsweek

### World in Brief

reelection in 2024 and called for a "new generation of leaders." Donald Trump called the news "fantastic."

An appeals court blocked a California law that bans firearms marketing that is attractive to children, saying it violates their First Amendment right to free speech and that it is unlikely to reduce "gun violence and the unlawful use of firearms by minors."

Republican presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy said that he would fire more than 75% of the federal workforce and close down several major agencies, including the FBI, if he were elected.

China hit back at a European Commission's investigation into Chinese electric vehicle subsidies, saying the probe will have a "negative impact on China-EU economic and trade relations."

Judge Andrew Hanen ruled against the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program that prevents the deportation of hundreds of thousands of immigrants brought to the U.S. as children, but declined to end the program altogether.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Kyiv's missile attack on the Russian Black Sea Fleet could have "reverberating impacts in the event of further Ukrainian strikes on Russian naval assets," the Institute for the Study of War said. Russia closed the Kerch Strait Bridge that links Crimea to the country after the attack..

### TALKING POINTS

"We have experience with this type of vaccine in billions of people. It's a safe vaccine. Of course, with the mRNA there's a very, very, very low risk, particularly in young men, of getting myocarditis. But if you look at the risk of myocarditis from COVID itself is greater than the risk of the vaccine." Dr. Anthony Fauci spoke about the latest COVID vaccines with ABC's This Week, prompting criticism about the link to myocarditis or heart inflammation.

"I'm completely heartbroken and moving through all of the emotions, but deeply touched and humbled by the support and love. Please keep me in your thoughts and prayers as I begin the healing process today. The night is darkest before the dawn. And I shall rise yet again," Aaron Rodgers posted in his first public comments since his season-ending injury.

"We believe that this is an important enough case to make it to the Supreme Court, and maybe that's where we prefer this case ends up, is at the Supreme Court because we believe it is that big of a free speech issue." Infowars host Owen Shroyer told his listeners after being sentenced to 60 days in prison for his role in the Capitol riot on January 6, 2021..

### What to Watch in the Day Ahead

Former Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly will host a long-form interview with Donald Trump, marking her first sit-down with the former president since 2016. The interview will air live on a special edition of The Megyn Kelly Show on SiriusXM from 12 p.m. ET.

Key economic data releases are scheduled for the day, including producer price index for August, retail sales, weekly initial jobless claims, and business inventories from 8:30 a.m. ET.

Russia's central bank will sell foreign currency worth 21.4 billion roubles (\$218.86 million) per day from today through September 22 as it ramps up efforts to support the local currency. The Russian ruble has fallen significantly amid sanctions imposed by the West over the Ukraine war.

Danelo Cavalcante was taken to custody nearly two weeks after he escaped from a Pennsylvania prison, ending a manhunt that drew more than 500 officers. A police dog, thermal technology for heat signals and an aircraft were involved in his capture.

Rescuers in Libya are racing against time to find bodies after two dams collapsed, causing devastating flooding in the city of Derna. The city's mayor estimates up to 20,000 people have died. Tens of thousands have been displaced.

GOP Utah Senator Mitt Romney said he will not seek





## Camo vs. Pink Day

In back, left to right, are Christian Ehresmann, junior, Gavin Englund, sophomore; Drake Peterson, sophomore; Axel Abeln, sixth grade; Layne Johnson, eighth grade; Mya Feser, eighth grade; Abby Fjeldheim, sixth grade; and McKenna Tietz, freshman; in front, left to right, are Addison Hoffman, freshman; Liam Johnson, sixth grade; Keegan Kucker, sixth grade and Sam Crank, seventh grade; and senior Anna Bisbee. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



**CLASS  
REUNION**

**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.**



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 4 of 60



## High School Nursing Home Day

Jacob Tewksbury behind Tristan McGannon, sophomores; Addison Hoffman, freshman; Teagen Hanten, freshman; Faith Flihs, senior; Camryn Kurtz, senior; and Emma Kutter, junior; not pictured are seniors Karsyn Jangula and Anna Bisbee. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



## Junior High Nursing Home

Left to right are Gavin Hanten, sixth grade; Jameson Penning, sixth grade; Shaydon Wood, eighth grade; Kinsleigh Furman, sixth grade; Chloe Witchy, sixth grade; Rylie Rose, eighth grade; not pictured is Wesley Borg, seventh grade. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 5 of 60



## Pajama Day

In back, left to right, are Trinity Dallaire, eighth grade; Ben Hoeft, sophomore; Asher Johnson, seventh grade; Avery Crank, freshman; Claire Schuelke, freshman; Chesney Weber, eighth grade; Ethan Kroll, eighth grade; and Christian Ehresmann, junior; in front, left to right, are Liam Lord, sixth grade; Trey Tietz, sixth grade; Jameson Penning, sixth grade; Treyton Smith, eighth grade; Owen Sperry, eighth grade; not pictured is eighth grader Kason Oswald and seniors Bradin Althoff and Dillon Abeln. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



**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.**



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 7 of 60

## Fliehs takes third at Redfield Golf Invitational

Brevin Fliehs took third place at the Redfield Invitational Golf Meet held Tuesday. He shot an 80, just one stroke behind the winners of Finn Anderson of Aberdeen Roncalli and Brody Torgerson of Watertown with scores of 79.

Logan Pearson shot an 83 for 13th place, Carter Simon an 84 for 17th place, Jace Johnson a 93 for 30th place, Jayden Schwan a 96 for 32nd place and Jarrett Erdmann a 111 for 44th place.

Watertown won the team title with 324 points followed by Sioux Valley with 330, Aberdeen Roncalli with 337, Milbank with 338, Groton Area 340, Redfield 365, Aberdeen Central 397 and Sisseton 416.

**G** Groton Area  
**T** Tigers

 **BECOME A SPONSOR**

**LADY TIGER**  
  
**VOLLEYBALL**

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](mailto: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~~

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 8 of 60



## Groton Community Transit

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

Dear Groton family,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

*Dam Hansen & Eugenia Strom*

Groton Transit

Steve Smith, Sherry Koehler, Topper Tostad, Dick Kolker



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 9 of 60



## September Students of the Month

From Back Left Gretchen Dinger (11th), Anna Fjeldheim (12th), Teagan Hanten (9th), Elizabeth Cole (8th)  
From Front Left: Wesley Borg (7th), Jayden Schwan (10th), Amelia Ewalt (6th).

**Groton Area School works to ensure that all levels of academic instruction also include the necessary life skills teaching, practicing, and modeling that encourages essential personal life habits that are universally understood to facilitate helping our students become good human beings and citizens.**

**It is learning with our heads, hearts, and hands to be caring and civil, to make healthy decisions, to effectively problem solve, to be respectful and responsible, to be good citizens, and to be empathetic and ethical individuals.**

**Students are selected based on individual student growth in the areas of: positive behavior, citizenship, good attendance, a thirst for knowledge, and high academic standards.**



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 10 of 60

**GDILIVE.COM**

Thursday Sept. 14, 2023  
at Clark/Willow Lake

Groton Area  
Tigers  
**GT**



C match starts at 5 p.m. sponsored by fans of Emerlee Jones JV to follow sponsored by Groton Chiropractic Clinic Varsity sponsored by Bary Keith at Harr Motors, BK Custom Ts & More, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Harry Implement, John Sieh Agency and Locke Electric

**GDILIVE.COM**

Groton Area  
Tigers  
**GT**

**Homecoming  
Parade  
Friday, Sept. 15  
1 p.m.**

GDI Subscribers can watch for free; otherwise a \$5 ticket is required. The ticket can be purchased online at [GDILIVE.COM](http://GDILIVE.COM). Once purchased, you can log in and the link will appear in the black horizontal bar. You can purchase your ticket any time on Friday.

**GDILIVE.COM**

Friday Sept. 15, 2023  
Deuel at Doney Field

Groton Area  
Tigers  
**GT**



Football game sponsored by Bary Keith at Harr Motors, BK Custom Ts & More, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Dairy Queen, Groton Ford, Harry Implement, John Sieh Agency, Krueger Brothers, Locke Electric and Rix Farms/R&M Farms



## A treasure you need to see for yourself

By Jim Speirs, Executive Director, Arts South Dakota

Our state rejoices in amazing attractions and destinations that are genuinely known around the world. Mount Rushmore is globally recognized. The Oscar Howe "Dakota Modern" exhibition has been stirring imaginations around the nation. And, to lovers of the rich panoply of musical history that defines civilization, South Dakota is known as the home of the National Music Museum. Right now, there are so many reasons why your family should plan a trip to Vermillion to see the latest enhancements to this cultural gem.

First of all, the National Music Museum is celebrating 50 years of collecting the finest assortment of musical instruments in the world—and sharing that collection through distinctive exhibits and programs. From Lionel Hampton's jazz vibraphone to harpsichords that may have enlivened a Viennese evening with the latest tunes from J.S. Bach, you see the ebb and flow of music's past and future. And sight is not the only sense engaged at NMM—weekly concerts and special performances bring musical instruments to life at the Vermillion museum.

The fascinating exhibits at NMM have never looked better, showcased in the newly remodeled facility on the USD campus. Following a multi-year renovation and reinstallation project that began in 2018, the entire first floor of the historic Carnegie Library building is filled with brand new galleries featuring permanent exhibitions showcasing the roles musical instruments play in our lives. Spanning hundreds of years of musical creativity, NMM displays present priceless Italian violins, celebrity guitars, dombaks and didgeridoos—everything from Stradivari to Sgt. Pepper.

I was so impressed on my recent visit—and I can't think of anyone who would not be simultaneously impressed and entertained by a visit to this South Dakota attraction. NMM is open 10 am to 4 pm Tuesday through Friday, and 12 to 4 pm on Saturdays, with seven new galleries plus a special exhibition space, concerts, events and more. You've got to experience this treasure for yourself!

Please visit [www.ArtsSouthDakota.org](http://www.ArtsSouthDakota.org) for more about South Dakota cultural attractions statewide.



## Name Released in Brule County Fatal Crash

What: Single-motorcycle fatal crash  
Where: I 90, mile marker 282, 2 miles west of Kimball  
When: 5:25 p.m., Saturday, September 9, 2023

Driver: Dewey Hembra, 69, Hartland, WI., Fatal injuries  
Vehicle: 2019 Harley Davidson FLHTK

Brule County, S.D.- A Hartland, WI man has been identified as the person who died Saturday evening in a single motorcycle crash 2 miles west of Kimball, S.D.

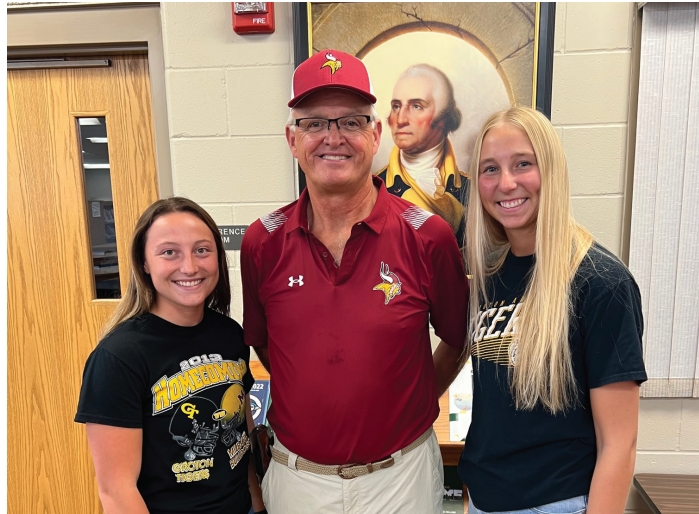
Preliminary crash information indicates a 2019 Harley Davidson FLHTK pulling a trailer was traveling westbound on I 90 near mile marker 282. The tire on the Harley Davidson FLHTK motorcycle went flat causing the motorcycle and trailer to fishtail. The motorcycle and trailer rolled several times.

The driver, 69-year-old Dewey Hembra, was taken by Kimball ambulance to the Sanford Chamberlain Hospital where he was pronounced deceased upon arriving.

He was wearing a helmet.

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 12 of 60



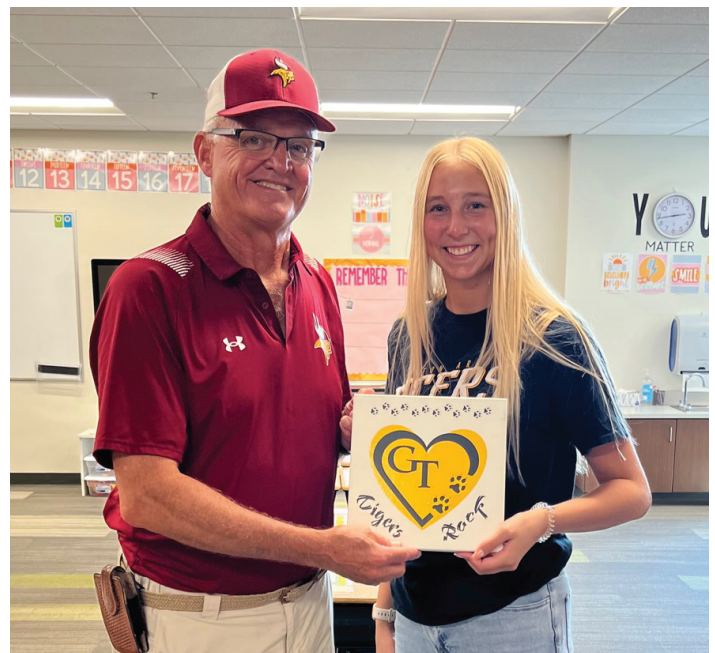
**Bruce Babcock, a local Valley City State University graduate, welcomes two new Groton teachers Brooke Nelson and Caitlyn Fischbach. Both Brooke and Caitlyn recently graduated from Valley City State University.**

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



**Bruce Babcock welcomes first year middle school teacher Brooke Malsom to Groton.**

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



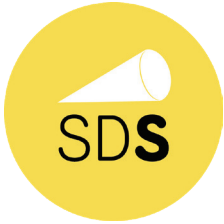
**Bruce Babcock welcomes first year elementary teacher Caitlyn Fischbach to Groton.**

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 13 of 60



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Enrollment grows by 2% at state universities**

**BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - SEPTEMBER 13, 2023 5:43 PM**

Enrollment is up 2% this fall across the state's public university system, according to the South Dakota Board of Regents.

It's the second consecutive year of enrollment growth.

"Back-to-back years of increased enrollment is a testament to the commitment of our faculty, staff and administration to providing an exceptional educational experience," said Regents Executive Director Nathan Lukkes in a news release.

Total system-wide enrollment is 34,370 students.

Enrollment at Dakota State University in Madison grew by 8.3% this fall to 3,509, and Northern State University in Aberdeen experienced 5.3% growth, pushing its headcount to 3,521. Enrollment is up 1.5% at both Black Hills State University in Spearfish, which has a headcount of 3,475, and South Dakota State University in Brookings, which is the largest university in the system, is up by 174 students to 11,505.

Enrollment is up 0.1% to 9,868 students at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, and South Dakota Mines enrollment in Rapid City is nearly unchanged at 2,492, down by one student from last fall.

Mines' number of first-time freshmen dropped by 7.8%, which was the only decline in that category among the six universities. Across the system as a whole, the number of first-time freshmen is up 2.6%.

### **Big gains projected in South Dakota corn and soybean production**

**BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - SEPTEMBER 13, 2023 1:04 PM**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is projecting South Dakota's 2023 corn harvest at 816 million bushels, up 23% from last year's production, based on new field and survey data.

South Dakota farmers will harvest corn on 5.59 million acres. That's 12% more than last year. The department estimates farmers will harvest an average of 146 bushels on each of those acres – 14 bushels more than last year.

Additionally, farmers are expected to harvest 217 million bushels of soybeans. That's 13% more than last year.

The soybean harvest will cover 5.05 million acres of land, which is slightly down from 2022. Yields are projected to be up 5 bushels, at 43 bushels per acre.

More acres are going to corn because of favorable economics and other factors, said Aberdeen farmer Craig Schaunaman.

"You had a shift off of wheat and oat acres, and decent rain meant better yields," he said, adding that the robust disaster insurance and subsidy programs for corn and soybeans make them a safer option.

The USDA projects the state's sorghum harvest at 21.7 million bushels, up 82% from last year. That harvest will come from 255,000 acres, up 46% from last year. Additionally, the yield per acre is forecast at 85 bushels, up 17 bushels from last year – and a record high if that happens.

Justin Vanneman plants some grain sorghum, commonly referred to as milo, at his farm near Winner. "We had good moisture early on in the summer," he said, which got things growing well and ensured moisture in the soil throughout the growing season. Conditions were also favorable later in the season. "Milo does well when it's a touch drier; it fills out nicely with a little heat later on in the season," he said.

*Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.*

## White House slams 'baseless' House GOP impeachment inquiry as 'political stunt'

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY - SEPTEMBER 13, 2023 3:47 PM

WASHINGTON — The White House is lambasting the House GOP's decision to open an impeachment inquiry into unproven allegations that President Joe Biden profited from his son's international business scheme during his time as vice president in the Obama administration.

Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy announced Tuesday that he directed several of the chamber's committees to open the formal inquiry.

The California Republican said in a press conference that the "allegations paint a picture, a picture of corruption."

But the White House calls the action "baseless" and a "political stunt."

"They have spent all year investigating the president, that's what they spent all year doing, and have turned up with no evidence, none, that he did anything wrong. I mean that is what we've heard over and over again from their almost year-long investigation. And that's because the president didn't do anything wrong," said press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre during Wednesday's White House press briefing.

"Even House Republicans have said the evidence does not exist," she said.

Jean-Pierre referred many reporters' questions to the White House counsel and said Biden, who is running for re-election in 2024, will continue to focus on "real issues that matter to Americans."

Biden is scheduled to deliver a "major economic address" in Maryland Thursday.

White House counsel spokesman Ian Sams sent a memo Wednesday morning to editors of major U.S. news outlets urging them to scrutinize the GOP inquiry.

"After nearly 9 months of investigating, House Republicans haven't been able to turn up any evidence of the President doing anything wrong. But House Republicans led by Marjorie Taylor Greene are nonetheless opening a baseless impeachment inquiry of President Biden – despite many House Republicans openly admitting there is no evidence on which to support it," wrote Sams, who is also a special assistant to the president and senior adviser.

Far-right GOP House members, including Georgia Republican Greene and Rep. Matt Gaetz of Florida, have pressured McCarthy to begin impeachment proceedings and threatened to oust the speaker if he did not and withhold their support for government funding.

McCarthy faces major hurdles in rallying far-right members to support a compromise funding deal.

The White House counsel memo cited several GOP House lawmakers who have spoken out against McCarthy's decision to start an impeachment inquiry now.

Sams referred to the words of GOP Rep. Don Bacon of Nebraska who said: "I think before we move on to (an) impeachment inquiry, we should ... there should be a direct link to the president in some evidence. We should have some clear evidence of a high crime or misdemeanor, not just assuming there may be one. I think we need to have more concrete evidence to go down that path."

The White House attached a 14-page document to the memo refuting seven Republican accusations that Biden is allegedly compromised by business dealings with foreign adversaries and that he interfered in a Trump-appointed special prosecutor's investigation of his son, Hunter, among other claims.

Not all Republicans are skeptical. U.S. Sen. Roger Marshall and Rep. Ron Estes, who both represent Kansas, expressed enthusiasm for the inquiry.

"The Biden family has demonstrated a long history and culture of corruption," Marshall said. "We know when there's smoke, there's fire. The American people deserve to know if the president of the United States is compromised, and I look forward to a full investigation and its findings."

McCarthy's move to open an impeachment inquiry allows the leader to avoid, for now, a House vote to launch the probe. It's unclear if he could garner the necessary 218 votes.

U.S. GOP Rep. James Comer of Kentucky, who chairs the House Oversight Committee, will lead the inquiry. House Judiciary Committee Chair Jim Jordan of Ohio and House Ways and Means Committee Chair Jason Smith of Missouri will assist, McCarthy said.



# Groton Daily Independent

**Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 15 of 60**

House Democrats immediately panned McCarthy's decision Tuesday.

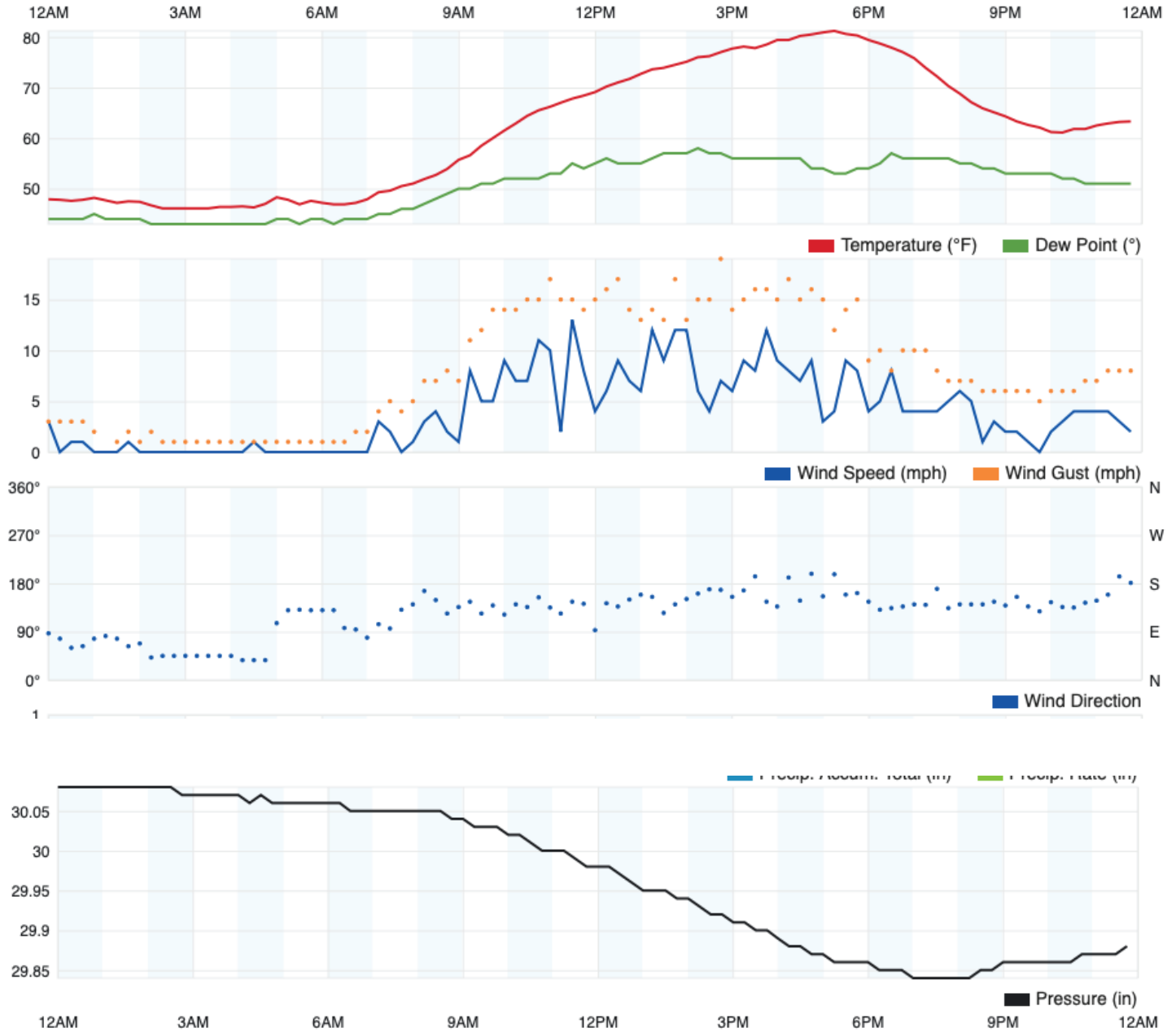
Rep. Pramila Jayapal, a Washington Democrat and chair of the House Progressive Caucus, posted on X, formerly Twitter, that the inquiry is a distraction "from the fact that the GOP can't even pass bills to fund the government."

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 16 of 60

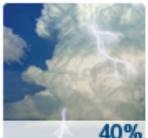






## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



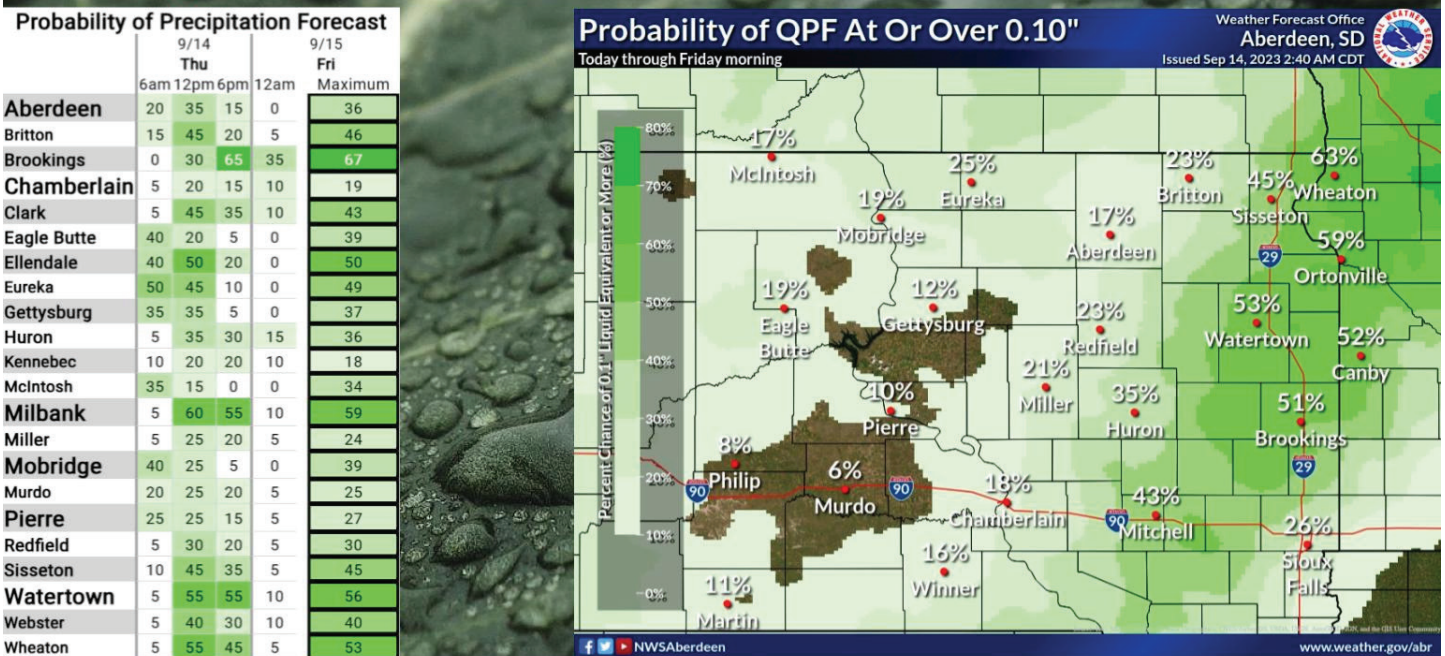


# Broton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 17 of 60

Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
40%	10%					
Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms and Patchy Fog then Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 76 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 76 °F	Low: 45 °F	High: 72 °F	Low: 43 °F	High: 75 °F

## Scattered Rain/Thunderstorms Today and Tonight



Highs: 72-82°      Lows: 50-57°

Scattered showers and thunderstorms continue this morning ahead of a cold front. Throughout the day and tonight, most areas have a 15-60% chance as this cold front pushes east. Areas east of the James River have a better chance (25-63%) of rainfall amounts at or over 0.10" thought late tonight, however, higher amounts are possible with thunderstorms.

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 18 of 60

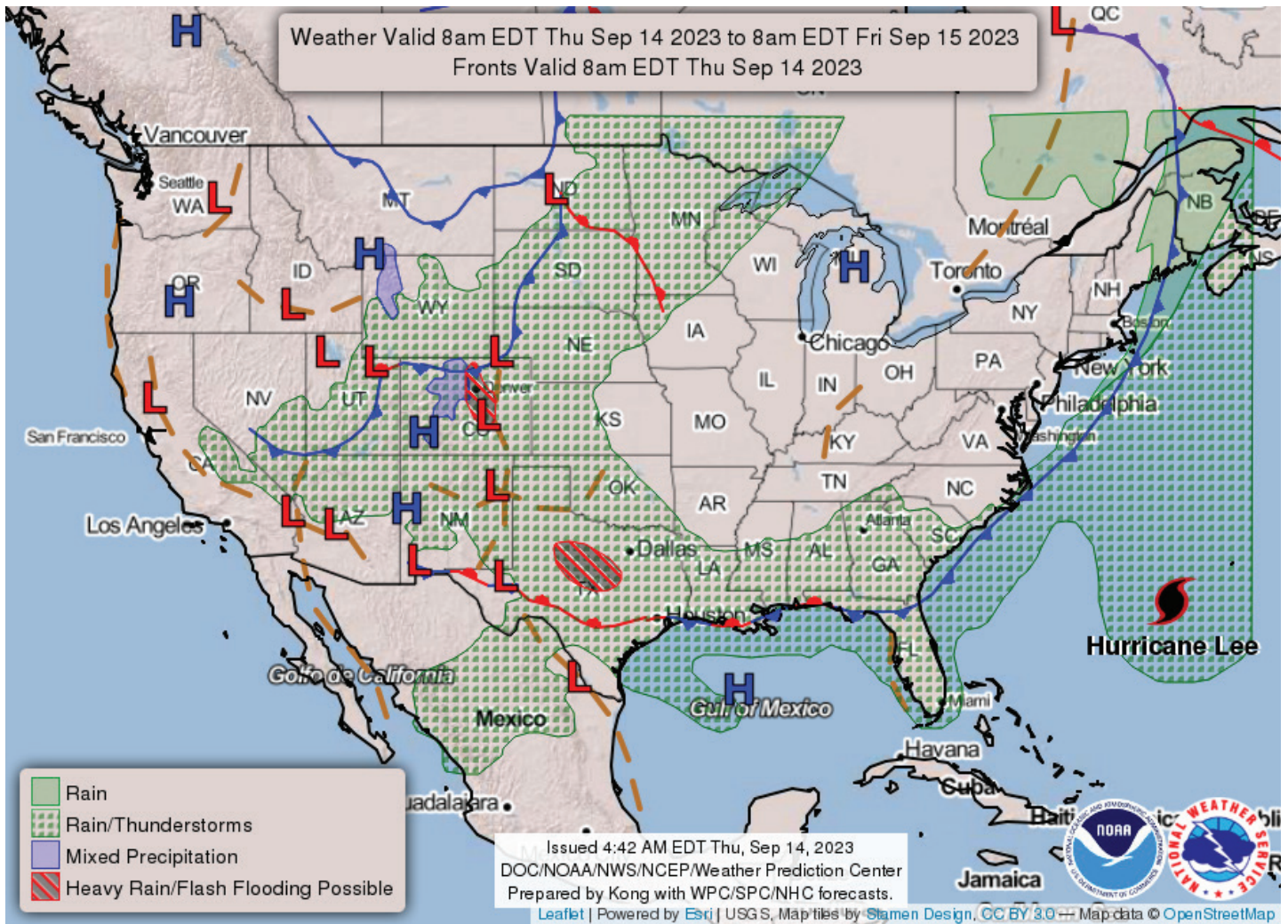
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 81 °F at 5:17 PM**  
**Low Temp: 46 °F at 2:48 AM**  
**Wind: 19 mph at 10:35 AM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 21 hours, 39 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 102 in 1948  
Record Low: 28 in 1949  
Average High: 76  
Average Low: 48  
Average Precip in Sept.: .95  
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.57  
Average Precip to date: 17.29  
Precip Year to Date: 19.16  
Sunset Tonight: 77:47:38 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:09:28 AM





# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 19 of 60

## 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 airmass 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

### A DISCOURAGING DAY

It began with a toaster that didn't work. Then the washing machine stopped in the middle of a large load of soiled clothes and dirty water. The garbage disposal quit, and the sink backed up. Deciding to take a walk outside to get the mail, Bev looked up at the clouds and shook her head.

Opening the one letter she found in the mailbox, she was overwhelmed when she discovered a bill that she could not pay. Her husband hadn't worked for two months. He was laid-off when work slowed down at the factory.

Walking back into the house she picked up her young toddler, placed him on her lap, hugged him tightly, and began to cry. Suddenly he struggled in her arms and when he got loose and without saying a word, took the pacifier from his mouth and placed it in hers.

He felt her pain and reached out, giving her all that he had.

If a child can feel our sorrow, how much more our Heavenly Father? Whatever concerns us concerned Him first. Certainly, then, our problems become His priorities.

That is why Jesus said, "You can ask for anything in My name, and I will do it." Need a toaster or washer, a plumber or a job? God is bigger than any of them. No wonder, then, that Jesus said: "ask for anything." We limit God when we put limits on our requests.

Prayer: We ask, Lord, that You will increase our faith to exceed the size of our problems. May we take You at Your Word - in faith, believing in Your promises. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it! John 14:13-14



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



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 21 of 60

## 2023 Community Events

- 01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center
- 01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 01/31/2023-02/03/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Drop Off 6-9pm, Community Center
- 02/04/2023-02/05/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Sale 1-5pm, Community Center
- 02/25/2023 Littles and Me, Art Making 10-11:30am, Wage Memorial Library
- 03/25/2023 Spring Vendor Fair, 10am-3pm, Community Center
- 04/01/2023 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
- 04/06/2023 Groton Career Development Event
- 04/08/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
- 04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
- 05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 06/16/2023 SDSU Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament
- 06/17/2023 Groton Triathlon
- 07/04/2023 Couples Firecracker Golf Tournament
- 07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
- 07/26/2023 GGA Burger Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 08/04/2023 Wine on Nine 6pm
- 08/10/2023 Family Fun Fest, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- 08/11/2023 GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
- 09/08/2023 Family Fun Fest 3:30-5:30pm
- 09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 09/09-10/2023 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
- 09/10/2023 Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
- 09/10/2023 Emmanuel Lutheran Church Sunday School Rally 9:00am
- 09/10/2023 7th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 4-6pm
- 09/15/2023 Homecoming Parade
- 10/13/2023 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
- 10/14/2023 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
- 10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
- 10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
- 11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
- 12/02/2023 Tour of Homes, Live & Silent Auctions at Olive Grove Golf Course 4pm-close
- 12/09/2023 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9-11am

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 22 of 60

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# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 23 of 60



## 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](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### **Israel's finance minister now governs the West Bank. Critics see steps toward permanent control**

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

ASA'EL, West Bank (AP) — With attention focused on its contentious judicial overhaul, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government has quietly taken unprecedented steps toward cementing Israel's control over the occupied West Bank — perhaps permanently.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, a leader of the settlement movement, assumed new powers over the occupied territory in his coalition agreement with Netanyahu. Smotrich moved swiftly to approve thousands of new settlement homes, legalize previously unauthorized wildcat outposts and make it more difficult for Palestinians to build homes and move about.

As the first government minister to oversee civilian life in the West Bank, his role amounts to a recognition that Israel's 56-year military occupation is not temporary but permanent, observers say.

"If Smotrich keeps this position for four years we will be at a point of no return," said Ilan Paz, former head of Israel's Civil Administration, a military body overseeing civilian affairs in the West Bank.

Hoping to return to power while facing a corruption trial, Netanyahu offered sweeping concessions to pro-settler lawmakers like Smotrich to form his governing coalition last year. The coalition agreement created a new Israeli settler agency, led by Smotrich, within the Defense Ministry to manage Jewish and Palestinian construction in the 60% of the West Bank over which Israel has control.

"It's a sort of revolution, transferring powers from the military, with its legal obligation to consider the well-being of occupied people, to those only committed to Israeli interests," said human rights lawyer Michael Sfard.

Smotrich has said he seeks to double the settler population, build up roads and neighborhoods and erase any remaining differences between life for Israelis in the West Bank and within Israel proper. Along the way, he hopes to destroy any Palestinian hopes of independence.

As finance minister, Smotrich can funnel taxpayer funds to West Bank infrastructure projects. Israel's 2024 budget earmarks an all-time high of \$960 million — a quarter of all Transportation Ministry funds — for a highway network better connecting Israel to the West Bank. The settlers are just over 5% of Israel's population.

Israel considers the West Bank the biblical heartland of the Jewish people. Smotrich and his supporters envision a single state from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea in which Palestinians can live quietly with second-class status or leave.

"We felt like the state never prioritized us because of where we lived. Smotrich is changing that," said Smotrich's spokesperson Eitan Fuld.

While Smotrich's new settler agency now handles the territory's land-use issues, COGAT, the military body that oversees the Civil Administration, retains specific responsibilities over more than 2 million Palestinians. Rights groups and others have compared the division along ethnic lines to "apartheid."

Some half-million settlers live in the West Bank, which Israel captured along with east Jerusalem and Gaza in the 1967 Mideast war. The international community overwhelmingly considers the settlements illegal.

Experts and officials say Smotrich's policies already have compounded Palestinian misery, emboldened violent settlers and unleashed turmoil within Israel's military establishment. Recent settlement expansion has also strained the Netanyahu government's ties with the White House.

Smotrich declined interview requests.

"Smotrich took over the Civil Administration, the only tool that Israel has to calm things down," said former West Bank military commander Gadi Shamni. "The West Bank will explode."

Monthly settler attacks have surged by over 30% this year, compared to 2022, U.N. figures show. The government has approved 13,000 settlement housing units and legalized 20 outposts built without autho-



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 25 of 60

rization, said anti-settlement watchdog Peace Now, the highest levels since the group started counting in 2012.

Under Smotrich, Israeli authorities have pressed on with the demolition of Palestinian construction built without permits. COGAT acknowledged in July that it rejects over 95% of Palestinian permit requests.

This year's demolitions are up slightly from last year, which saw the most demolitions since at least 2006, according to Israeli rights group B'Tselem.

Meanwhile Israeli authorities have scaled back efforts to evacuate unauthorized Jewish outposts, settlers say.

"This is the best government we've ever had," said 32-year-old Shulamit Ben Yashar from the outpost of Asa'el in the arid hills south of Hebron. The outpost — home to 90 families, including Smotrich's brother Tuvia — received legal approval on Sept. 6.

Renovation fever ran high at the Asa'el playground as mothers gushed about their plans to swap ramshackle caravans and wheezing generators for concrete and Israel's national electricity grid.

Their Palestinian neighbors — herders across dusty slopes known as Masafer Yatta — face expulsion by Israeli authorities and increased attacks by settlers. Residents in the rural area, which the Israeli military plans to seize, say Smotrich and his allies are squeezing the life from their communities.

"We can barely breathe," said 38-year-old Sameer Hammdeh, whose two camels were killed last month after stumbling over trip wires he said were placed by settlers. Residents say settler provocations — damaging Palestinian cars and hurting livestock — reflect a sense of impunity instilled by the government.

Smotrich and his allies have also vowed to hasten the pace of settlement construction. In July, the government slashed six stages of approval required for settlement advancement down to two: Smotrich and a planning committee.

"This makes it possible to build much more," said Zvi Yedidia Sukkot, lawmaker in Smotrich's Religious Zionist party.

The party has proposed allocating \$180 million to renovate settlement housing and build new hospitals and schools. Authorities are paving two new multimillion-dollar bypass roads to whisk Israeli settlers around Palestinian towns.

One of the roads goes around Hawara, a flashpoint town where settlers burned dozens of houses and cars in a rampage early this year following the deadly shooting of two settlers. At the time, Smotrich said the town should be "erased."

"Our government has finally figured out that withdrawing from land is a prize for terror," said Rabbi Menachem Ben Shachar, a teacher at a newly built yeshiva seminary at Homesh, one of four outposts that Israel evacuated in 2005.

Lawmakers repealed the legislation this year that had barred settlers from visiting the site. Over 50 students were rocking in prayer at the yeshiva on a recent visit.

Such decisions have unsettled Israel's defense establishment. Settlers said that Israeli forces in May tried to stop them from hauling heavy construction equipment to build a new yeshiva. But when Smotrich pressed, the government abruptly ordered troops to allow settlers to build.

"The political echelon ordered the military echelon not to obey the law," said Nitzan Alon, a retired general who once commanded the West Bank region.

The military and COGAT declined to comment on that incident. But a security official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the matter, said Smotrich's intervention has halted several planned demolitions in unauthorized outposts.

Last month, the tug-of-war between Smotrich stalwarts and security-minded military men burst into the open when Israeli authorities were filmed pumping cement into wells south of Hebron, permanently sealing Palestinian water sources in the heat of summer. Palestinians had drilled the wells without permits that Israel rarely provides.

The footage spread on social media, and COGAT was caught off-guard, said the security official. The agency promised any future demolitions of water cisterns "would be examined based on their merits."

Smotrich's men are "crossing all the lines," said Paz, the former general. "They don't care."

## Firefighters fear the toxic industrial PFAS in the gear could be contributing to rising cancer cases

By MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Boston firefighter Daniel Ranahan had heard about colleagues getting cancer but he was stunned when doctors discovered a large tumor in his chest.

He was only 30 and had been in the Boston Fire Department less than a decade. But as he investigated his diagnosis of Hodgkin's lymphoma in October 2020 and sought successful treatment, he learned he and others wore gear that contained the toxic industrial compound PFAS.

"You always hear about the dangers. You just never think it's going be you," said Ranahan, who stopped working due to the cancer and is among thousands of firefighters nationwide who sued PFAS manufacturers and companies that make firefighting gear and foam, seeking damages for their exposure.

"These guys put this on day in and day out to protect neighborhoods and wherever they are working," he said.

The multi-layered coats and pants worn by firefighters have become the latest battleground over PFAS, or per- and polyfluorinated substances. It's found in everything from food packaging to clothing and is associated with health problems including several types of cancer. In March, the Environmental Protection Agency for the first time proposed limits on the chemicals in drinking water.

The news that PFAS compounds are in their gear — primarily meant to repel water and contaminants like oil and prevent moisture-related burns — is worrisome to firefighters.

Cancer has replaced heart disease as the biggest killer of firefighters, and the International Association of Fire Fighters or IAFF attributes 66% of firefighter deaths between 2002 and 2019 to cancer. Firefighters are at higher risk of getting several types of cancer, according to IAFF, including twice as likely to get testicular cancer and mesothelioma than the general population.

Firefighters are exposed to a laundry list of carcinogens coming from fires burning hotter and faster than ever before — often due to increased petroleum products in homes. But as they learn more about PFAS, a growing number are convinced their personal protective equipment or PPE is sickening them.

"We had no idea that the gear that we were putting on every day was essentially loaded with PFAS," said IAFF General President Edward Kelly, who was elected in 2021 on a campaign in part to address dangers of PFAS in gear.

"As more scientific data availed itself, it became obvious that our greatest exposure to carcinogens is our a daily donning and doffing of PPE bunker gear," he continued.

One defendant in the lawsuits, 3M Co., said in a statement that it "manufactures a variety of personal protective equipment products that meet nationally recognized standards to help protect first responders facing high-hazard environments." Last year, the company announced it would stop manufacturing PFAS by the end of 2025 and would work to discontinue using the chemicals in its products.

Another defendant, W. L. Gore & Associates, says the PFAS compound PTFE used in its clothing is non-toxic and safe.

"Based on the body of available and reliable science, Gore concludes its firefighting products are not the cause of cancers impacting firefighters, who by the nature of their important work are sometimes exposed to cancer-causing chemicals from fires," said company spokesperson Amy Calhoun.

The American Chemistry Council said in a statement that "PFAS-based materials are the only viable options for some key equipment that meet the vital performance properties required for firefighting gear."

### HEIGHTENED CONCERNS ABOUT GEAR

The PFAS has been in the gear for decades. But the wife of retired Worcester, Massachusetts fire lieutenant Paul Cotter, who was diagnosed with prostate cancer in October 2014, raised concerns about it in 2016. Until then, many firefighters had not heard of PFAS or did not know it was in their gear.

Gear makers told Diane Cotter there were only trace amounts of PFAS and it was safe. "I was attacked by firefighters when discussing the idea that chemicals in the gear could be causing cancer," she said.



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 27 of 60

Cotter sent patches of gear to Graham Peaslee, a University of Notre Dame professor who studies PFAS, for testing.

"It was loaded with PFAS. That was the first eye opening moment that there may be more than just trace amounts," said Peaslee, who also found the chemicals on gloves and in firehouse dust.

"They come off and they pose risks," he said.

Courtney Carignan, an exposure scientist and epidemiologist at Michigan State University, said she found PFAS at twice the levels of the general population in the blood of more than half of the 18 firefighters she tested in Nantucket and Fall River, Massachusetts. She also found PFAS in gear was transferred to the skin of firefighters.

But Carignan is still investigating how much the gear contributed to increased levels of PFAS in the blood and whether PFAS exposure may be causing or contributing to cancer.

"Even though we know PFAS is in the gear, we still don't know how much exposure that is," she said.

## FIREFIGHTERS TAKE ACTION

The revelation of PFAS in the gear sparked a campaign by firefighters to find safer alternatives and to hold companies responsible.

Lawsuits on behalf of firefighters argue they were exposed to significant PFAS levels and companies knew the gear contained PFAS and that it can cause serious health problems. The suits also allege companies misrepresented their products as safe.

The IAFF, which represents more than 340,000 U.S. and Canadian firefighters, decided in 2021 to no longer accept sponsorships or advertising from the chemical industry and to oppose PFAS in turnout gear. A Congressional bill introduced in July would accelerate the search for safer alternatives and support firefighter training to reduce exposure from existing gear.

Seven states including Washington, New Hampshire and New York passed bills requiring companies to disclose PFAS in their gear, according to Safer States, a coalition of environmental health groups. Several more states introduced or enacted bills this year that provide funds to purchase PFAS-free gear or prohibit manufacture or sale of gear containing the chemicals, according to Emily Sampson, an environment policy analyst at the National Conference of State Legislatures.

## NO EASY FIX

For most fire departments, there is no easy fix. Replacing gear is expensive — one set can cost upwards of \$4,000 — and finding alternatives has proven challenging. Some companies are promoting a PFAS-free outer layer but that doesn't solve the problem because the other two layers still contain PFAS, the IAFF said.

Among the hurdles, according to a IAFF lawsuit filed in March, is that the National Fire Protection Association or NFPA standard for gear can only be met with PFAS-infused material. The suit accuses the NFPA of working with several gear makers to maintain that requirement. It seeks damages and an end to the standard.

Chris Dubay, NFPA vice president and chief engineer, said in a statement that the standard "does not specify or require the use of any particular materials, chemicals or treatments for that gear." He said the group has no "special agreements or relationships with any company or organization" in development of standards.

"The manufacturers who are producing this gear owe it to the fire service to come up with an alternative," Brockton Fire Chief Brian Nardelli, who has heard of companies promoting gear with less PFAS but is reluctant to buy it for his 231-member department without more proof.

Instead, his department tries to limit firefighter exposure to gear that's been integral to firefighter identity. They would take it everywhere, including charity events. Now, Brockton discourages firefighters from wearing turnout gear in living quarters and encourages them to wash it after fires. It's stored on trucks and is only to be worn for serious calls like fires and car accidents.

"Guys have seen everyone who has gotten cancer, guys dying from cancer," said William Hill, the president of the Brockton Fire Fighters Local 144 who was successfully treated for testicular cancer. "Being told that PFAS is in the gear, guys don't want to take the chance of being overexposed."

## No sign of Kim Jong Un as his Russia visit continues and Seoul expresses concern over Putin meetings

By KIM TONG-HYUNG and DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was to tour a Russian aircraft plant that builds fighter jets and then visit the country's Pacific Fleet, but his exact whereabouts remained uncertain, as South Korea on Thursday expressed "deep concern and regret" that his visit has focused so far on expanding military cooperation.

Washington has warned that the summit on Wednesday between Kim and Russian President Vladimir Putin could lead to a deal for North Korea to supply ammunition for Moscow's war in Ukraine. There's widespread concern in Seoul that North Korea in return would receive advanced weapons technologies from Russia, including those related to military spy satellites, which would increase the threat posed by Kim's military nuclear program.

"We express our deep concern and regret that despite repeated warnings from the international community, North Korea and Russia discussed military cooperation issues, including satellite development, during their summit," said Lim Soo-suk, South Korea's Foreign Ministry spokesperson.

"Any science and technology cooperation that contributes to nuclear weapons and missile development, including satellite systems that involve ballistic missile technologies, runs against U.N. Security Council resolutions," he said in a briefing.

Lim also pointed out that Kim's delegation in Russia includes several people sanctioned by the Security Council over involvement in illicit North Korean weapons development activities, including Korean People's Army Marshal Ri Pyong Chol and Jo Chun Yong, a ruling party official who handles munitions policies. Lim said Moscow should realize there will be "very negative impacts" on its relations with Seoul if it proceeds with military cooperation with North Korea.

South Korean Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho, who handles affairs with North Korea, warned that potential arms transfers between the North and Russia would invite stronger responses from South Korea, the U.S. and Japan, which have been stepping up their trilateral security cooperation to cope with regional threats.

White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said Wednesday that North Korea would face consequences if it supplies arms to Russia.

"No nation on the planet, nobody, should be helping Mr. Putin kill innocent Ukrainians," Kirby said. If the countries decide to move forward with an arms deal, the U.S. will take measure of the arrangement and "deal with it appropriately," he said.

He said that any deal that would improve North Korea's military capabilities "certainly would be of significant concern to us."

The world has been largely relying on Russian and North Korean media for information about Kim's diplomacy in Russia, which underscores an aligning interest between the nuclear-armed countries locked in escalating tensions with the West.

A day after giving intense coverage to the Putin-Kim summit, Russian media outlets were silent on Kim as of Thursday afternoon. North Korean state media have been reporting on Kim's activities in Russia a day late and crafting their reports to support the government's propaganda needs.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said on Thursday that Kim had invited Putin to visit North Korea at a "convenient time" and that Putin accepted with "pleasure and reaffirmed his will to invariably carry forward" the history of friendship between the nations.

Putin told Russian state TV after the summit that Kim will travel to two more cities in Russia's Far East on his own, flying to Komsomolsk-on-Amur, where he will visit an aircraft plant, and then go to Vladivostok to view Russia's Pacific Fleet, a university and other facilities.

During their meeting on Wednesday at Russia's spaceport in the Far East, Kim vowed "full and unconditional support" for Putin in what he described as a "just fight against hegemonic forces to defend its sovereign rights, security and interests," in an apparent reference to the war in Ukraine.



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 29 of 60

The decision to meet at the Vostochny Cosmodrome suggested that Kim is seeking Russian help in developing military reconnaissance satellites. He has previously said they are crucial to enhancing the threat of his nuclear-capable missiles, and North Korea has repeatedly failed to place spy satellites into orbit.

The aircraft plant in Komsomolsk-on-Amur would be another location that possibly hints at what Kim seeks to gain from Russia in exchange for help fueling Putin's war on Ukraine.

Some analysts question whether Russia, which has always closely guarded its sensitive weapons technologies, would be willing to share them with North Korea in exchange for what may end up being limited supplies of munitions moved slowly through their small land link.

They say military cooperation between the countries could be more about conventional capabilities, such as Russia possibly helping North Korea improve its badly aged air force that remains reliant on fighter jets sent by the Soviet Union in the 1980s.

Putin told reporters that Russia and North Korea have "lots of interesting projects" in spheres like transportation and agriculture and that Moscow is providing its neighbor with humanitarian aid. But he avoided talking about military cooperation, saying only that Russia is abiding by the sanctions prohibiting procuring weapons from North Korea.

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

## **New England has been hit by a likely tornado. Hurricane Lee is up next**

By MICHAEL CASEY and KATHY McCORMACK Associated Press

LEOMINSTER, Mass. (AP) — Hurricane Lee looks poised to wallop New England later this week even as the region still deals with the impact of days of wild weather that produced torrential rain, flooding, sinkholes and a likely tornado.

A hurricane watch stretches from Stonington, Maine to the U.S.-Canadian border, where hurricane conditions, heavy rainfall and coastal flooding are possible Friday night and Saturday, the National Hurricane Center said Wednesday night.

Areas from Watch Hill, Rhode Island, to Stonington, Maine — including Block Island, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket — are under a tropical storm watch. A storm surge watch has also been issued for Cape Cod Bay and Nantucket with the potential for life-threatening flooding there late Friday and Saturday.

The looming arrival of the hurricane threatened to unleash more violent storms on a region that earlier in the week saw 10 inches (25 centimeters) of rain that fall over six hours and on Wednesday saw communities in Massachusetts and Rhode Island deal with tornado warnings and more heavy rain that opened up sinkholes and brought devastating flooding to several areas.

The National Weather Service in Boston said radar data and videos showed it was likely that a tornado damaged trees and power lines in Rhode Island and Connecticut on Wednesday. In Lincoln, Rhode Island, photos after the storm showed at least one roof damaged and the press box at the high school stadium tipped into the bleachers.

Rhode Island Gov. Dan McKee said on social media that the state's emergency operations center was activated and would be monitoring the fast-changing weather conditions over the next few days.

"The best thing you can do right now: Stay tuned for frequent updates," McKee said.

In North Attleborough, Massachusetts, which was hit by heavy flooding Monday night, Sean Pope watched the forecast with unease. Heavy rain turned his swimming pool into a mud pit and filled his basement with 3 feet (91 centimeters) of water.

"I am hanging on, hoping and watching the forecast and looking for hot spots where it may rain and where there are breaks," he said. "We have to make sure the pumps are working."

Late Tuesday, Massachusetts Gov. Maura Healey issued a state of emergency following the "catastrophic flash flooding and property damage" in two counties and other communities. The torrential downpour in a six hour period earlier in the week was a "200-year event," said Matthew Belk, a meteorologist with the

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 30 of 60

National Weather Service in Boston.

Healey said Wednesday that the state's emergency management agency is watching the weather and is prepared to offer assistance. The state is monitoring the conditions of dams, she said, and she urged residents to take flood warnings seriously and to stay off the roads when ordered.

The rain created several sinkholes in Leominster, Massachusetts, including one at a dealership where several cars were swallowed up. In Providence, Rhode Island, downpours flooded a parking lot and parts of a shopping mall. Firefighters used inflatable boats to rescue more than two dozen people stranded in cars.

After a dry day, it started raining in Leominster again Wednesday afternoon. Parts of Massachusetts and Rhode Island were under a flash flood warning. Earlier in the day, there were heavy downpours in Danbury, Connecticut, where officials said they had to rescue several people from vehicles stuck in floodwaters.

Rain from Hurricane Lee didn't contribute to the flooding earlier this week. But the hurricane is traveling north and could make landfall in Nova Scotia, Canada, possibly as a tropical storm, forecasters said.

"The ground is saturated. It can't take in anymore," Leominster Mayor Dean Mazarella said at a news conference Wednesday.

Mazarella said up to 300 people were evacuated by Tuesday morning in the city, which has not seen such widespread damage since a 1936 hurricane. Most buildings downtown flooded and some collapsed.

He said early estimates on city infrastructure restoration projects could be anywhere from \$25 million to \$40 million.

New England has experienced its share of flooding this summer, including a storm that dumped up to two months of rain in two days in Vermont in July, resulting in two deaths. Scientists are finding that storms around the world are forming in a warmer atmosphere, making extreme rainfall a more frequent reality now.

## **At the University of North Carolina, two shootings 30 years apart show how much has changed**

By HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

Three decades ago, as a University of North Carolina student, he covered a deadly shooting for the school newspaper. Last month, as a journalism professor at the same school, Ryan Thornburg kept his students safe during a lockdown — after another shooting.

In some ways, the era of campus shootings has come full circle. Other UNC-Chapel Hill alumni who remember the 1995 tragedy now have children enrolled at their alma mater, where an associate professor was shot to death Aug. 28 (and where a second brief lockdown was imposed Wednesday). But vast changes in the way information spreads make their recent experiences less like replays and more like double exposures: new technology, new emotions superimposed upon the same setting.

Twenty-eight years ago, there was no way for university officials to alert the entire community that a gunman had opened fire on the edge of campus, killing two people and wounding two others. E-mail existed but wasn't widespread. Calling home meant long-distance surcharges and leaving messages on answering-machine tapes when no one picked up.

Thornburg, the former student journalist, didn't even think to call his parents in California about the 1995 shooting until he saw a television news van near the scene. As he said in an interview last week: "That made me go, 'Oh, my parents might know about this sooner rather than later, I better give them a call.'"

EXPERIENCES RELIVED, DIFFERENTLY

Thornburg was a sophomore when law student Wendell Williamson walked down the street firing a semiautomatic rifle on Jan. 26, 1995. Continuing to shoot even after he was wounded by police, Williamson eventually was tackled by two bystanders and later committed to a psychiatric hospital after being found not guilty by reason of insanity.

Thornburg, then the city editor at The Daily Tar Heel, was headed to the police station to get information for an unrelated story when the shooting began. He used a pay phone in the lobby to relay updates to the newsroom, then spent a long night working on the next day's edition.



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 31 of 60

"It's kind of embarrassing, but the exhilaration I felt at the end of that — I didn't feel like I wanted to go away from it or look away. I wanted to really engage and do more," he told his students at the start of this semester when one asked what sparked his passion for journalism.

A few days later, it was their turn to experience a campus shooting.

Thornburg was teaching "Introduction to Newswriting" when a campus-wide alert about an active shooter popped up on his computer and was projected on a screen behind him. The response began: As sirens blared with instructions to take cover, text messages went out to students, faculty and staff.

Thornburg hustled some students in from the hallway and locked the doors. At one point, he told them to hide under their desks. Together, they listened to a broadcast of police scanner traffic and watched a local news livestream. Rumors were flying.

"I said, 'I know you're all on social. What are you hearing? Let's talk about it, and let's talk about what's reliable and what's not,'" Thornburg said. "It was a little bit of a teachable moment."

EVERYTHING IS FAST NOW — THE BAD AND THE GOOD

While campus alert systems have become much more robust, so too has the spread of misinformation, said Paul Dean, president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators. Cutting through the clutter can be a challenge, as is finding the balance between security and anxiety. Students who grew up in the age of school shootings are arriving on campus extra jumpy, he said.

"These kinds of alerts trigger people, and I'm cognizant of that," said Dean, chief of police at the University of New Hampshire. "It's a difficult balance."

On one hand, there were no warnings in 1995 to prevent students from stumbling into the line of fire. On the other hand, many knew nothing of the shooting until hours later and thus were spared the fear and panic of lockdown.

Zoe Bright, a current UNC sophomore, was on the phone with her father when she received the first alert last month. After reassuring him she was safe in her dorm, she started checking on her friends. They were all doing the same. One friend sought shelter in the bathroom of a downtown bar after her building was evacuated before sprinting to Bright's dorm room.

"Basically everyone I've ever met in my entire life was texting me," Bright said. "Everybody at the school, every group chat on every platform that I have, was blowing up for the whole three hours."

She told her father, Mark, about hearing helicopters outside, something he had reported to his own parents when he was a senior at UNC in 1995. But beyond that, their experiences were vastly different.

Mark Bright remembers hearing shots and seeing the commotion downtown as he left class that day. He clustered with classmates in the doorway of a nearby building for a while, then went back to his dorm thinking maybe a beer truck had gotten robbed. His wife, fellow 1995 graduate Presley Bright, can't recall how she found about the shooting. But they both remember learning the details from the student newspaper the next day.

That front page featured Thornburg's lead story and four others about the shooting, a map of the crime scene and a photo of a victim's body covered by a sheet. In contrast, the current Daily Tar Heel staff filled the front page with oral history as it unfolded — emotional texts that students received during the lockdown. In Thornburg's view, this year's newspaper staff captured the moment far better.

"When I saw it, I viscerally knew that it captured the experience of being in our unique situation, but that it also transcended so many other lockdowns," he said.

JUST THE WAY WE ARE RIGHT NOW

This year alone, there have been at least 86 incidents of gunfire on K-12 schools and college campuses, resulting in 27 deaths and 57 injuries, according to Everytown for Gun Safety, a gun-control research and advocacy group. Over the last decade, such incidents have increased in frequency, says Dan Flannery, director of the Begun Center for Violence Prevention and Research at Case Western University.

"It's horrible to even think that that's just the way we are right now. People have accepted that this is a thing that's going to keep occurring and we're all kind of getting more desensitized to it as a more normal part of our culture," Flannery said.

Indeed, some UNC alumni were not particularly surprised by the recent shooting — not because they

had been through it before but because of what they know about American society.

"Once I got over the initial shock of what was happening and making sure that we were doing the right thing, it was sort of like, 'Okay, today's the day. This happens,'" said Thornburg, who called the lockdown "simultaneously surreal and the least surprising thing ever."

Likewise, Mark Bright said because his daughter had a lot of angst about where to go to college, he briefly thought: "If she had been at a different college, this wouldn't be happening."

Then the reality of the United States in 2023 quickly set in.

"Then my second thought after that was, 'It doesn't matter what college you go to,'" he said. "It doesn't really matter at all nowadays. It could be anywhere."

## **Son of Aung Sang Suu Kyi is worried about her health in detention and about Myanmar's violent crisis**

By GRANT PECK and TIAN MACLEOD JI Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — The younger son of ousted Myanmar leader Aung Sang Suu Kyi says he has always avoided talking to the media, but this time is different. He's increasingly worried about his imprisoned 78-year-old mother's health and about Myanmar's violent political crisis, which he calls desperate.

"I'd just really like to have some form of contact with her so that I know that she's OK, because at the moment she has no access to her legal counsel," Kim Aris said Wednesday in a video interview with The Associated Press from his home in London.

"She has no access to her personal doctors. She's not allowed any visitors, as far as I'm aware. She's not even allowed to mingle with the other prisoners, which means she's basically under a form of solitary confinement."

Suu Kyi was arrested in 2021 when the army seized power from her democratically elected government. She has since been prosecuted and convicted on more than a dozen charges for offenses her supporters say were concocted to keep her out of politics. She is serving a prison term of 27 years.

The military takeover triggered massive public resistance that was brutally suppressed, triggering a bloody civil war that has killed thousands of people.

Aris, 46, said he has tried to keep out of the spotlight for decades, seeking to avoid any political activism and "just trying to keep my head down and get on with my family life."

"I've always tried to avoid speaking to the media and (have been) avoiding social media all my life. But the situation in Burma at the moment is absolutely desperate," he said, referring to Myanmar by its former name. "The fact that I've not been allowed to communicate with my mother at all for over two and a half years now" is another reason he is speaking out, he said.

"So now I'm doing all I can to try and help the situation and bring awareness of this situation to the wider world," he said. He is getting active on social media and said he plans a campaign to "bring awareness and funding for humanitarian purposes."

Aris said he has heard that his mother has been extremely ill and has been suffering from gum problems and was unable to eat. "She was suffering from bouts of dizziness and vomiting and couldn't walk at one stage."

Aris said his information comes from independent Myanmar media and social media. Britain's Foreign Office and the International Red Cross have tried and failed to learn more on his behalf, he said. He has tried reaching out to Myanmar's military government, including its embassy in London, "but I don't get any response from them. They wouldn't even answer the door to me."

It's not the first time Suu Kyi has faced confinement. She spent nearly 15 years under house arrest under a previous military government starting in 1989, a year after co-founding her National League for Democracy party. But almost all of that time was at her family home in Yangon, the country's biggest city, and she was not completely isolated.

"At that time, it was in her own home and she was allowed visitors. At times, I was allowed to spend

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 33 of 60

time with her under house arrest. And we were allowed to send her care packages and letters and have communication with her. For the last two and a half years, we have had none of those basic human rights.”

“I realize that there’s so many natural disasters and humanitarian crisis all over the world now, and it’s hard for everybody to be exposed to that every day. We all need to try and do our bit to try and help everywhere that we can. And Burma is one country where we can change things very easily,” Aris said.

“If only 2% of what has been given to the Ukrainian forces had been given to the resistance forces in Burma, the situation would be very different now,” he said. “So I hope that people around the world can rally and try and help the people in Burma so that we can end this needless bloodshed.”

## **As all eyes are fixated on Pennsylvania manhunt, a DC murder suspect is on the run and off the radar**

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — While the nation has been transfixed by the two-week manhunt for escaped prisoner Danelo Souza Cavalcante in Pennsylvania, another fugitive drama has been playing out in the nation’s capital with comparatively minimal attention.

Christopher Haynes has been on the run for a week, since escaping from police custody at George Washington University Hospital on Sept. 6. Haynes, 30, had been arrested earlier in the day on murder charges relating to an Aug. 12 shooting in the district. His escape prompted a several-hour shelter-in-place order last week for the entire GW campus and brief roadblocks on nearby streets.

Cavalcante, a 34-year-old Brazilian national who was convicted of murdering his ex-girlfriend, was captured Wednesday morning in southeastern Pennsylvania after an extended pursuit that received wall-to-wall live coverage. Haynes is still at large and awaits a trial.

The contrast between the two manhunts has been stark: while the national media has tracked every development in Cavalcante’s flight, Haynes has basically dropped off the map. Police were able to provide an image last week of Haynes wearing a black t-shirt and gray briefs and moving through a local backyard. But the only updates since then have been the offering of a \$25,000 reward for information leading to his capture and a news release Tuesday increasing the reward to \$30,000 and providing additional details about the escape.

Brian Levin, a criminal justice professor at California State University San Bernardino, believes the difference in public attention and media coverage comes down to a number of factors. For starters, there’s the viral video of Cavalcante’s innovative escape from Chester County Prison as he braced himself between two walls and performed a sort of vertical crab-walk up and out of sight.

“There were all these aspects that were Hollywood-esque,” Levin said. “The video of that crab-walk up the wall looked like something out of a movie.”

Haynes also staged a dramatic-sounding escape, according to the Metropolitan Police Department. However, no video of that escape has yet emerged.

After being brought to the hospital complaining of ankle pain, he attacked the officers escorting him and escaped as they were attempting to handcuff him to a gurney. Police Chief Pamela Smith, who assumed the job six weeks ago amid spiraling violent crimes rates, later admitted that the officers had not properly secured Haynes, providing an opportunity for his escape.

Levin said the Cavalcante manhunt also featured a steady trickle of new developments that increased public interest as the hunt dragged on. There were repeated Cavalcante sightings, along with reports that he had shaved his facial hair and stolen a van and at one point stole a rifle and was shot at by an area resident.

“There was a new twist with virtually every news cycle. There were so many new twists that the public became fixated on what’s coming next,” Levin said. “Whereas with this D.C. fellow, there haven’t been any new details where the stakes and intensity would grow with each news cycle.”

Police in Washington couldn’t say if he was armed.

Cavalcante’s fugitive flight also spread fear across a wide rural and suburban community, with schools



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 34 of 60

closing and authorities sending out warnings to all area phones, telling residents to lock their doors and stay on alert. They were able to establish perimeters where they focused their hunt.

But Haynes escaped in the midst of a large city not far from a subway station. Police this week said that they had received multiple reports of possible sightings of Haynes. But other than the several-hour long shelter-in-place order for the GW campus on the day of his escape, there have been no other public signs of the pursuit.

"MPD continues the search for Christopher Haynes while the reward for information leading to his arrest has increased to \$30,000," police posted on the social network X, formerly called Twitter, on Tuesday.

The public's high interest in the Pennsylvania case was not that surprising.

Levin said the American public has a longstanding fascination with this sort of true-crime flight-from-justice tale. "The American crime narrative culture is something that dates back 100 years — to the days of Bonnie and Clyde, John Dillinger and Baby Face Nelson," he said.

## Paintings on pesos illustrate Argentina's currency and inflation woes

By ALMUDENA CALATRAVA Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — A jaguar lies beside George Washington. The United States' first president holds a rifle with one hand as he rests the other on the dead Argentine predator.

The backdrop is a U.S. dollar and an Argentine 500-peso note joined like a book, a clear allusion to the rapid depreciation of the local currency, the peso. That has made it difficult for Argentines to make ends meet. The peso has depreciated around 60% compared to the U.S. dollar over the past year. It has occurred in parallel to one of the world's highest inflation rates. Together, the economic travails have bolstered an anti-establishment candidate who admires former President Donald Trump.

As millions of Argentines express dismay and anger, a group of artists is seeking to show the economic damage the best way they know how, with art. And as they express themselves, the artwork increases the value of the increasingly worthless bills they use as material.

It's one of the starkest illustrations of how runaway inflation has taken its toll and is changing habits; from middle-class women giving up beauty-parlor visits to families buying secondhand clothes. Argentines with extra cash buy stockpiles of things they need, knowing prices are certain to rise next month.

The runaway inflation conversely means restaurants in the capital are packed, because there's no point in saving when a paycheck loses purchasing power every month.

Artist Sergio Díaz and other Argentine artists' Money Art movement uses moderately priced brushes and acrylics to paint banknotes of 10, 20, 100, or 1,000 pesos and then share their work on social media.

The artwork then fetches prices ranging from 40,000 to 70,000 pesos domestically and as much as \$300 abroad. Stringent capital controls in Argentina mean that access to the official foreign exchange market is extremely limited, so parallel rates have flourished.

The artists are reclaiming the currency at a time when the bills have often been the target of disdain from Argentina's neighbors. Brazilian soccer fans have torn up peso bills as a mockery to their Argentine rivals. In Paraguay, exchange offices have begun to reject Argentine pesos.

Inflation surged 12.4% in August from July, the highest rate of monthly consumer price increases since February 1991. Compared to August of last year, prices rose 124%, according to figures released Wednesday by the government's Indec statistics agency.

Diaz will exhibit the piece in which Washington is shown with the jaguar, along with others from the series, "The Art of Devaluation," in November in Salta, his hometown in northern Argentina.

"There is an element of transgression, of vandalism... but my idea is to go beyond that and transform the bills while addressing the issue of inflation that affects us all," explained Diaz.

The artist has painted portraits of Argentine soccer stars Diego Maradona and Lionel Messi on bills, along with the terrifying clown Pennywise from "It," and characters from "Harry Potter," among others.

He has also participated in Money Art exhibitions abroad and, along with other Argentine colleagues, maintains contact with Venezuelan artists who were pioneers in this form of art, as their country's bills

also suffered a sharp drop in value making many of them virtually worthless.

Fellow artist Cristian English began working on bills three years ago when, during the quarantine imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he found it difficult to get canvases and used bank notes as a substitute.

The government unveiled a new 2,000-peso bill in May, and English called it "a 2,000-peso bill that's worth nothing. It's just printing for the sake of printing."

English has received orders from fans in Paraguay and Chile, asking him to create one work he has made featuring Diego Maradona on a 10-peso bill, the number Maradona wore while playing for the national team.

English, 38, said that he has no plans to stop using the 2,000-peso bills for his art, in part because it's much cheaper than the traditional canvas.

He complains, however, that it isn't an easy material to work with because the paper is of a very low quality.

"What we're going though is unparalleled," he said.

## **Biden rules on clean cars face crucial test as Republican-led challenges go to appeals court**

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Efforts by the Biden administration to limit pollution from automobile tailpipes — a major source of planet-warming emissions — face a crucial test as legal challenges brought by Republican-led states head to a federal appeals court.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit will hear arguments Thursday and Friday on three cases challenging Biden administration rules targeting cars and trucks. Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming, and the legal cases could go all the way to the Supreme Court.

Republican attorneys general say the legal challenges are needed to curtail government overreach, while environmental groups and the Biden administration say an adverse ruling could jeopardize protections against deadly pollution that contributes to climate change.

The cases before the appeals court will test a 2021 Environmental Protection Agency rule that strengthened tailpipe pollution limits and a 2022 EPA decision that restored California's authority to set its own tailpipe pollution standards for cars and SUVs. At least 15 states and the District of Columbia have signed on to California's vehicle standards, which are stricter than federal rules and are designed to address the state's severe air pollution problems. Seven of the 10 U.S. cities with the worst ozone pollution are in California.

A third case challenges mileage standards set by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton is leading a coalition of GOP-leaning states and oil industry groups that are challenging the tailpipe rule.

"At a time when American gas prices are skyrocketing at the pump, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict shows again the absolute need for energy independence, (President Joe) Biden chooses to go to war against fossil fuels," said Paxton, who faces an impeachment trial in the Texas Senate on unrelated charges of corruption and bribery.

He said the rules will disadvantage Texas and other oil and gas producing states.

Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost, who is leading a separate case challenging the California standards, said the waiver was a delegation of federal authority to a state — and an improper one at that.

But Peter Zalzal, a senior attorney for the Environmental Defense Fund, an advocacy group that is involved in two of the legal cases, said the rules were "lawful, constitutional and vital."

The Natural Resources Defense Council, another environmental group, called the lawsuits "an unprecedented attack" on federal clean-air standards by the oil industry and Republican-led states.

"The fossil fuel industry and its allies want to kneecap the EPA and NHTSA so that the next round of clean car standards cannot achieve the carbon pollution reductions needed to address the climate crisis," NRDC lawyer Pete Huffman wrote in a memo this week.

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 36 of 60

A spokesman for the EPA declined to comment, citing ongoing litigation.

But Todd Kim, assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division, said in a legal filing that the EPA acted well within its authority to regulate tailpipe pollution.

The court cases come as the Biden administration pushes the auto industry to quickly adopt electric vehicles as part of its climate agenda. The 2021 infrastructure law and 2022 climate law include billions in incentives for purchase of new and used EVs and a national network of new charging stations. Fully electric vehicles represent just 6.7% of new vehicle sales in the U.S., but analysts expect that to rise rapidly in coming years. Major automakers, including General Motors and Ford, have pledged full commitment to EVs, and GM has said it will end sale of new gasoline-fueled passenger vehicles by 2035.

The Alliance for Automotive Innovation, which represents companies that make 98% of the new cars sold in the U.S., said in a court filing that EPA's tailpipe rule for model years through 2026 "will challenge the industry." But it said EPA designed the rule "to balance overall stringency with critically important flexibilities" that allow carmakers to use a range of pollution controls while also adopting EV technology.

"Reducing (greenhouse gas) emissions from all sectors of the U.S. economy is a national priority," the group wrote. "The members of Auto Innovators are committed to doing their part."

The Justice Department disputed a claim that the tailpipe rule falls under the so-called "major questions" doctrine cited by the Supreme Court in a landmark ruling that limited how the EPA can regulate carbon dioxide emissions from power plants. The court's June 2022 ruling in *West Virginia v. EPA* held that Congress must speak with specificity when it wants to give an agency authority to regulate on an issue of major national significance.

"Far from doing something unexpected or novel" in the tailpipe pollution rule, "EPA merely tightened existing standards," Kim wrote. In doing so, EPA was "using the same regulatory approach that it has used in every vehicle greenhouse-gas rule," he said.

In a separate filing, Kim said Ohio's complaint that the California waiver was illegal is "unsupported by text, history or precedent."

Ohio and other states don't have standing to challenge the California waiver because they are not regulated by the waiver, Kim said.

Zalzal, the EDF attorney, called Ohio's challenge ironic, noting that the state is not seeking the right to set its own standards. "They just want to deny California's traditional authority as guaranteed by federal law for more than 50 years," he said.

## **Biden White House strategy for impeachment inquiry: Dismiss. Compartmentalize. Scold. Fundraise.**

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — On Capitol Hill, House Republicans were all-in Wednesday on House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's announcement of an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden. Down Pennsylvania Avenue, the president was holding forth at the White House on the importance of bipartisanship in fighting cancer — and ignoring shouted questions about impeachment.

It was a clear sign of Biden's broader reelection pitch: the idea that if he simply does his job and governs, Americans will see the results and reward him with four more years. Never mind all that pesky impeachment talk across town.

"Look, I've got a job to do," the president said later, away from the cameras, to a roomful of supporters at a reelection fundraiser in Virginia in his most extensive comments yet about the inquiry. "I get up every day — not a joke — not focusing on impeachment. I've got a job to do. I've got to deal with the issues that affect the American people every single solitary day."

The we're-all-better-than-this attitude is central to the White House strategy for countering impeachment proceedings being launched ahead of the 2024 election by Republicans who are trying to link Biden to the business dealings of his son, Hunter. This as the GOP tries to shift attention away from Donald Trump's



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 37 of 60

own legal troubles.

The White House has been preparing for a potential impeachment essentially since Republicans won control of the House in the November elections. It has roughly two dozen staff members in the counsel's office detailed to the matter. The new chief counsel, Ed Siskel, is a former Obama administration attorney who helped craft the response to the congressional investigations into the 2012 Benghazi attack that killed four Americans, including the U.S. ambassador.

The White House impeachment playbook so far has been: Dismiss. Compartmentalize. Scold.

That is, shrug off the charges as baseless, stay focused on policy, leave the impeachment question to the lawyers and chide those who give too much credence to it all.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre had dismissed the inquiry as a "political stunt" and deflected questions about the details to the White House counsel's office. House Republicans? "We think they should work with us on legitimate issues — things that actually matter to the American people," she said.

Still, the impeachment inquiry is a tricky matter for Biden because the thing is so personal, focused on his relationship with his 53-year-old son, a source of pain and pride whose questionable choices have landed the president here.

The White House has said that Joe Biden was not involved in his son's business affairs. And so far, despite months of investigations, Republicans have unearthed no significant evidence of wrongdoing by the elder Biden, who spoke often to his son and as vice president did stop by a business dinner with his son's associates. Hunter Biden is not a public figure.

Hunter Biden's attorneys were on message, too.

"Rather than waste time and taxpayer dollars on this political sideshow, Mr. McCarthy should lead the Congress to do real work of governing," Abbe Lowell said in a statement. "Americans deserve better."

Meanwhile, lawyers for Hunter Biden filed a suit Wednesday in Los Angeles accusing former Trump White House aide Garrett Ziegler of violating computer privacy laws. The suit accuses Ziegler, a vocal Biden critic, and his researchers of "accessing, tampering with, manipulating, altering, copying and damaging computer data that they do not own," purportedly from Hunter Biden's laptop and iPhone data.

Before now, most of the questions from reporters fielded by the president on the topic were about a criminal investigation into Hunter's business dealings running parallel to the House investigations. His responses were brief and upbeat: He's done nothing wrong; we support him.

While the overall White House strategy is not expected to change, this week's announcement of a formal inquiry shifts the dynamics somewhat. It will be harder to just shrug off questions. And the Biden reelection campaign is starting to blast out fundraising emails and texts denouncing the probe.

Even the donation pitches reflect the broader strategy. An email from Vice President Kamala Harris on Wednesday made this plea to potential donors: "It's clear: They're going to throw everything they have at Joe, because they know they can't run against our record. If you're waiting for a moment to show your support for him, trust me when I say: This is it."

Threats of impeachment used to be rare so there's not much basis for comparison. While Trump was twice impeached, neither was about personal conduct. The inquiry into Biden is more akin to the late 1990s impeachment of President Bill Clinton led by the Republican House speaker at the time, Newt Gingrich of Georgia. In that endeavor, the White House stonewalled, making then-special counsel Lanny Davis the public face of its response. By his account, it worked.

"Take a look at how things went for Speaker Gingrich and the GOP House members after the midterm congressional elections in November 1998," Davis emailed Wednesday. "They lost five seats to the Democrats, defying U.S. history."

He predicted McCarthy would suffer the same fate, praising the White House response so far.

"The Biden White House has begun to speak forcefully to rebut the misinformation and false innuendo that is the only basis Speaker McCarthy and House leaders can express as the basis of a House inquiry."

Andrew Johnson was the other president impeached. Trump is the only president to face it twice — acquitted both times — and he is the first to face criminal charges in four separate indictments, including

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 38 of 60

for trying to overturn the 2020 election he lost to Biden.

Rep. Ted Lieu, a top Democrat, said Wednesday there are no similarities between the Democratic impeachments of Trump and the Republicans' pursuit of Biden.

"We had mountains of evidence," he said. "That's why articles of impeachment ... were passed, and that's why we had a bipartisan vote of U.S. senators to convict Donald Trump." Lieu added that while the Democratic majority didn't ultimately have enough support to remove Trump from office, they were able to get a handful of members from the other side to join them.

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 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 said at the Capitol.

Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer, R-Ky., says he doesn't want the inquiry to last into election season. "I hope not. I hope we can get it through as quickly as possible. I'm an impatient person. We wouldn't have to do impeachment inquiry if this administration would cooperate with us."

As impeachment talk swirled elsewhere, Biden and first lady Jill Biden gathered with top administration officials on Wednesday afternoon to talk about battling cancer, one of the president's top goals. Their elder son, Beau, died of brain cancer.

After the Bidens finished speaking, reporters erupted with questions about the impeachment inquiry. Four boom mics dangled above the table, ready to catch any response from the president.

He didn't respond.

## North Korea's Kim vows full support for Moscow at a summit with Putin in Russia

By KIM TONG-HYUNG and DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea's Kim Jong Un vowed "full and unconditional support" for Russia's Vladimir Putin on Wednesday as the two leaders isolated by the West held a summit that the U.S. warned could lead to a deal to supply ammunition for Moscow's war in Ukraine.

The meeting, which lasted over four hours at Russia's spaceport in the Far East, underscores how the two countries' interests are aligning: Putin is believed to be seeking one of the few things impoverished North Korea has in abundance — stockpiles of aging ammunition and rockets for Soviet-era weapons.

Such a request would mark a role reversal from the 1950-53 Korean War, when Moscow gave weapons to support Pyongyang's invasion of South Korea — and in the decades that followed, when the Soviet Union sponsored North Korea.

Reporting on the meeting Thursday, North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said Kim invited Putin to visit North Korea at a "convenient time" and that Putin accepted with "pleasure and reaffirmed his will to invariably carry forward" the history of friendship between the nations.

The decision to meet at the Vostochny Cosmodrome, Russia's most important launch center on its own soil, suggests Kim is seeking Russian help in developing military reconnaissance satellites. He has previously said that is crucial to enhancing the threat of his nuclear-capable missiles, and North Korea has repeatedly failed to put its first military spy satellite into orbit.

Putin met Kim's limousine, brought from Pyongyang in the North Korean leader's armored train, at the launch facility, greeting his guest with a handshake of about 40 seconds. Putin spoke of the Soviet Union's wartime support for North Korea and said the talks would cover economic cooperation, humanitarian issues and the "situation in the region."

Kim, in turn, pledged continued support for Moscow, making 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," he said.

North Korea may have tens of millions of aging artillery shells and rockets based on Soviet designs that

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 39 of 60

could bolster Russian forces in Ukraine, analysts say.

Washington has accused North Korea of providing Russia with arms, including selling artillery shells to the Russian mercenary group Wagner. Russian and North Korean officials deny such claims.

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

It would both underscore and deepen Russia's isolation in the 18 months after its invasion of Ukraine drew increasing sanctions that have cut off Moscow's economy from global markets and shrunk the circle of world leaders willing to meet with Putin. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are also at their highest point in years as the pace of both Kim's weapons demonstrations and the United States' combined military exercises with South Korea have intensified. There are concerns the North would seek advanced weapons technologies from Russia that would increase the threat posed by Kim's military nuclear program in exchange for fueling Putin's war on Ukraine.

Jeon Ha Gyu, spokesperson of South Korea's Defense Ministry, said Seoul was closely monitoring the diplomacy between Moscow and Pyongyang and urged Russia to "properly follow" U.N. Security Council resolutions.

When asked whether North Korean arms shipments to Russia would inspire Seoul to change its policy of limiting its support of Ukraine to non-lethal supplies, Jeon said "there's no change in the government's stance of not providing lethal weapons" to Kyiv.

Moscow's priority is success in Ukraine, "and it would do pretty much anything in order to achieve that," said James Nixey, director of the Russia and Eurasia program at Chatham House, a London-based think-tank.

"Russia possibly wants to settle in for a longer war, but it can't meet the necessary industrial capacity," he said. In return, Pyongyang is likely to get food and missile technology from Moscow, "a relatively easy gift" for the Kremlin, Nixey said.

As the leaders toured a Soyuz-2 rocket launch facility on Wednesday, Kim peppered a Russian space official with questions.

Kim and Putin met together with their delegations and later one-on-one, said Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov. After the talks, there was an official lunch for Kim, Russian state media reported.

Kim has described space-based reconnaissance capabilities as crucial for enhancing the threat of nuclear-capable missiles designed to target the United States and its Asian allies, South Korea and Japan.

Following repeated failures, North Korea may want to launch a spy satellite on a Russian space launch vehicle, said Yang Uk, a military expert at South Korea's Asian Institute for Policy Studies. He said North Korea could also ask Russia to build a more powerful spy satellite than the one it has been trying to launch.

"It's possible that North Korea pushes to participate in the production process of the satellite, rather than just acquiring a finished product, to set up a natural transfer of technologies," Yang said.

Putin told Russian state TV that Kim will visit two more cities in the Far East on his own after the summit, flying to Komsomolsk-on-Amur, where he will visit an aircraft plant, and then go to Vladivostok to view Russia's Pacific Fleet, a university and other facilities.

Russia and North Korea have "lots of interesting projects" in spheres like transportation and agriculture, Putin said. Moscow is providing its neighbor with humanitarian aid, but there also are opportunities for "working as equals," he added.

He dodged the issue, however, of military cooperation, saying only that Russia is abiding by the sanctions prohibiting procuring weapons from Pyongyang. "There are certain restrictions, Russia is following all of them. There are things we can talk about, we're discussing, thinking. Russia is a self-sufficient country, but there are things we can bring attention to, we're discussing them," he said.

James O'Brien, head of the Office of Sanctions Coordination at the U.S. State Department, said Russia was "scraping the bottom of the barrel looking for help because it's having trouble sustaining its military,"

A deal between the countries would violate existing sanctions, O'Brien said, and would trigger the U.S. to try to identify the individuals and the financial mechanisms used to "at least limit their ability to be effective."

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said at a news conference that "any form of cooperation of any



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 40 of 60

country with North Korea must respect the sanctions regime that was imposed by the Security Council.”

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

Japan’s Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said they landed in waters outside the country’s exclusive economic zones and there were no reports of damage.

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

Kim also brought Jo Chun Ryong, who heads munitions policies and had joined him on tours of factories producing artillery shells and missiles.

South Korea’s Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, said it was the first time the North launched a missile while Kim was abroad.

Kim could have ordered them to show he is in control of military activities even while outside the country, said Moon Seong Mook of the Seoul-based Korea Research Institute for National Strategy.

Asked whether Moscow will help North Korea build satellites, Putin was quoted by Russian 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 acronym for North Korea’s formal name. Asked about military cooperation, Putin said: “We will talk about all issues without a rush. There is time.”

Noting what he called the “laconic” official presentation of the summit’s outcome, Alexander Vorontsov of the Russian Academy of Science’s Institute of Asian Studies was quoted as saying by the Tass news agency that “we can assume that ... most of the agreements reached ... will remain secret for the time being.”

At their lunch, which reportedly featured regional delicacies such as Kamchatka crab dumplings and taiga lingonberries with pine nuts, Kim said he and Putin agreed to deepen their “strategic and tactical cooperation.”

## **Federal judge again declares that DACA is illegal with issue likely to be decided by Supreme Court**

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — While a federal judge on Wednesday declared illegal a revised version of a federal policy that prevents the deportation of hundreds of thousands of immigrants brought to the U.S. as children, he declined to order an immediate end to the program and the protections it offers to recipients.

U.S. District Judge Andrew Hanen agreed with Texas and eight other states suing to stop the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program. The judge’s ruling was ultimately expected to be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, sending the program’s fate before the high court for a third time.

“While sympathetic to the predicament of DACA recipients and their families, this Court has expressed its concerns about the legality of the program for some time,” Hanen wrote in his 40-page ruling. “The solution for these deficiencies lies with the legislature, not the executive or judicial branches. Congress, for any number of reasons, has decided not to pass DACA-like legislation ... The Executive Branch cannot usurp the power bestowed on Congress by the Constitution — even to fill a void.”

Hanen’s order extended the current injunction that had been in place against DACA, which barred the government from approving any new applications, but left the program intact for existing recipients during the ongoing legal review.

Hanen also declined a request by the states to order the program’s end within two years. Hanen said his order does not require the federal government to take any actions against DACA recipients, who are known as “Dreamers.”

Thomas Saenz, president and general counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, or MALDEF, which is representing DACA recipients in the lawsuit, said it will ultimately be up to higher courts, including the Supreme Court, to rule on DACA’s legality and whether Texas proved it had

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 41 of 60

been harmed by the program.

"Judge Hanen has consistently erred in resolving both of these issues, and today's ruling is more of the same flawed analysis. We look forward to continuing to defend the lawful and much-needed DACA program on review in higher courts," Saenz said.

The Biden administration criticized the judge's ruling.

"We are deeply disappointed in today's DACA ruling from the District Court in Southern Texas," press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement Wednesday night. "... As we have long maintained, we disagree with the District Court's conclusion that DACA is unlawful, and will continue to defend this critical policy from legal challenges. While we do so, consistent with the court's order, DHS will continue to process renewals for current DACA recipients and DHS (the Department of Homeland Security) may continue to accept DACA applications."

The Texas Attorney General's Office, which represented the states in the lawsuit, and the U.S. Department of Justice, which represented the federal government, didn't immediately return emails or calls seeking comment.

The states have argued the Obama administration didn't have the authority to first create the program in 2012 because it circumvented Congress.

In 2021, Hanen had declared the program illegal, ruling it had not been subject to public notice and comment periods required under the federal Administrative Procedures Act.

The Biden administration tried to satisfy Hanen's concerns with a new version of DACA that took effect in October 2022 and was subject to public comments as part of a formal rule-making process.

But Hanen, who was appointed by then-President George W. Bush in 2002, ruled the updated version of DACA was still illegal as the Biden administration's new version was essentially the same as the old version, started under the Obama administration. Hanen had previously said DACA was unconstitutional.

Hanen also had previously ruled the states had standing to file their lawsuit because they had been harmed by the program.

The states have claimed they incur hundreds of millions of dollars in health care, education and other costs when immigrants are allowed to remain in the country illegally. The states that sued are Texas, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, South Carolina, West Virginia, Kansas and Mississippi.

Those defending the program — the federal government, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the state of New Jersey — had argued the states failed to present evidence that any of the costs they allege they have incurred have been tied to DACA recipients. They also argued Congress has given the Department of Homeland Security the legal authority to set immigration enforcement policies.

There were 578,680 people enrolled in DACA at the end of March, according to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The program has faced a roller coaster of court challenges over the years.

In 2016, the Supreme Court deadlocked 4-4 over an expanded DACA and a version of the program for parents of DACA recipients. In 2020, the high court ruled 5-4 that the Trump administration improperly ended DACA, allowing it to stay in place.

In 2022, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans upheld Hanen's earlier ruling declaring DACA illegal, but sent the case back to him to review changes made to the program by the Biden administration.

President Joe Biden and advocacy groups have called on Congress to pass permanent protections for "dreamers." Congress has failed multiple times to pass proposals called the DREAM Act to protect DACA recipients.

"We continue to urge Congress and President Biden to create permanent solutions for all immigrants to ensure none are left in the perilous road DACA has been on for the past decade," Veronica Garcia, an attorney with the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, an advocacy organization, said in a statement.

## Searchers race to recover bodies in Libyan city where 5,100 died in flooding after 2 dams collapsed

By SAMY MAGDY and YOUSEF MURAD Associated Press

DERNA, Libya (AP) — Search teams combed streets, wrecked buildings and even the sea Wednesday to look for bodies in a coastal Libyan city where the collapse of two dams unleashed a massive flash flood that killed at least 5,100 people.

The Mediterranean city of Derna has struggled to get help after Sunday night's deluge washed away most access roads. Aid workers who managed to reach the city described devastation in its center, with thousands still missing and tens of thousands left homeless.

"Bodies are everywhere, inside houses, in the streets, at sea. Wherever you go, you find dead men, women, and children," Emad al-Falah, an aid worker from Benghazi, said over the phone from Derna. "Entire families were lost."

Mediterranean storm Daniel caused deadly flooding Sunday in many towns of eastern Libya, but the worst-hit was Derna. Two dams in the mountains above the city collapsed, sending floodwaters roaring down the Wadi Derna river and through the city center, sweeping away entire city blocks.

As much as a quarter of the city has disappeared, emergency officials said.

Waves rose as high as 7 meters (23 feet), Yann Fridez, head of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Libya, told broadcaster France24.

Teacher Mohammed Derna said he, his family and neighbors rushed to the roof of their apartment building, stunned at the volume of water rushing by. It reached the second story of many buildings, he said. They watched people below, including women and children being washed away.

"They were screaming, 'Help, help,'" he said over the phone from a field hospital in Derna. "It was like a Hollywood horror movie."

Derna lies on a narrow coastal plain, under steep mountains. The only two usable roads from the south take a winding route through the mountains.

Collapsed bridges over the river split the city center, further hampering movement.

Search teams went through shattered apartment buildings and retrieved the dead floating offshore in the Mediterranean Sea, al-Falah said.

Ossama Ali, a spokesman for an ambulance center in eastern Libya, said at least 5,100 deaths were recorded in Derna, along with around 100 others elsewhere in eastern Libya. More than 7,000 people in the city were injured.

A spokesman for the eastern Libyan interior ministry put the death tally in Derna at more than 5,300, according to the state-run news agency.

The number of deaths was likely to increase since teams are still collecting bodies, Ali said. At least 9,000 people are missing, but that number could drop as communications are restored.

At least 30,000 people in Derna were displaced by the flooding, the U.N.'s International Organization for Migration said.

The storm hit other areas in eastern Libya, including the towns of Bayda, Susa and Marj. Rescuers retrieved at least 150 bodies Wednesday from the sea off Bayda, bringing the death tally in the town to about 200, Ali said.

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.

Ahmed Abdalla, a survivor who joined the search-and-rescue effort, said they were putting bodies in the yard of a hospital before taking them for burial in mass graves at Derna'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.

Derna is 250 kilometers (150 miles) east of Benghazi, where international aid started to arrive on Tuesday. Neighboring Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia, as well as Turkey, Italy and the United Arab Emirates, sent rescue



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 43 of 60

teams and aid. The U.K. and German governments sent assistance too, including blankets, sleeping bags, sleeping mats, tents, water filters and generators.

U.S. President Joe Biden also said the United States would send money to relief organizations and coordinate with Libyan authorities and the United Nations to provide additional support.

Authorities transferred hundreds of bodies to morgues in nearby towns. More than 300, including 84 Egyptians, were brought to the morgue in the city of Tobruk, 169 kilometers (105 miles) east of Derna, the local Medical Center reported.

The victims' lists reflected how Libya, despite its turmoil, was always a magnet for workers from around the region because of its oil industry.

More than 70 of Derna's dead hailed from a single southern Egyptian village, el-Sharif. On Wednesday morning, hundreds attended a mass funeral in the village for 64 people.

Rabei Hanafy said his extended family lost 16 men in the flooding, 12 of whom were buried Wednesday. Another funeral for four others was held in a town in the northern Nile Delta.

Among those killed in Libya was the family of Saleh Sariyeh, a Palestinian originally from the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon who had lived in Derna for decades. The 62-year-old, his wife and two daughters were all killed when their home in Derna was washed away, his nephew Mohammed Sariyeh said.

The four were buried in Derna. Because of ongoing gunbattles in Ein el-Hilweh, the family there could not hold a gathering to receive condolences from friends and neighbors, Mohammed said.

Derna, about 900 kilometers (560 miles) east of the capital, Tripoli, 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.

Derna 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.

## Rain-soaked New England hit by likely tornado amid wild weather ahead of Hurricane Lee's arrival

By MICHAEL CASEY and KATHY McCORMACK Associated Press

LEOMINSTER, Mass. (AP) — Hurricane Lee barreled north toward New England on Wednesday and threatened to unleash violent storms on the region just as communities in Massachusetts and Rhode Island were dealing with tornado warnings and another day of heavy rain that opened up sinkholes and brought devastating flooding to several communities.

The National Hurricane Center issued a hurricane watch for portions of Maine. A tropical storm watch was issued for a large area of coastal New England from parts of Rhode Island to Stonington, Maine, including Block Island, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket.

The National Weather Service in Boston said that looking at radar data and videos it appears likely that a tornado toppled trees and knocked down power lines in Rhode Island and Connecticut on Wednesday. Rob Megnia, a meteorologist with the weather service, said they received reports of about 20 trees down in Killingly, Connecticut, and trees and power lines down in Foster, Rhode Island.

The agency said it would survey the storm damage in both states on Thursday to help determine the tornado's strength, maximum wind speed and its path.

Emergency sirens could be heard late Wednesday afternoon in parts of Providence, Rhode Island, as cellphones pinged with a tornado warning. In Lincoln, Rhode Island, photos after the storm showed at least one roof damaged, a trampoline blown into some trees and the press box at the high school stadium tipped into the bleachers.

The weather service also issued a flash flood warning for parts of Connecticut until 9:45 p.m.

In North Attleborough, Massachusetts, which was hit by heavy flooding Monday night, Sean Pope was watching the forecast with unease.

Heavy rains had turned his swimming pool into a mud pit and filled his basement with 3 feet (91 cen-

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 44 of 60

timeters) of water. He has been able to get the power back on in the first and second floor of the home he shares with his wife and three children, but he worried about more flooding.

"I am hanging on, hoping and watching the forecast and looking for hot spots where it may rain and where there are breaks," he said. "It's raining really hard again so we have to make sure the pumps are working."

Elsewhere in the state, Leominster resident Zac Brown was still cleaning up his home and backyard Wednesday after flood waters from a nearby stream flooded his basement, washed away part of his retaining walls and dumped rocks, boulders and other debris in his backyard.

He remembers his frantic efforts to survive the floods, including rushing to shut down the power, knocking on roommates' and tenants' doors and telling them to leave. While he built a "blockade" of cement bags, he said there wasn't much he could do if more rain came.

"I have no physical attachment to the house, so if it goes, it goes and that's what God wants, and if it doesn't, it doesn't and that's awesome," Brown said.

Late Tuesday, Massachusetts Gov. Maura Healey issued a state of emergency following the "catastrophic flash flooding and property damage" in two counties and other communities. The 10 inches (25 centimeters) of rain over six hours earlier in the week was a "200-year event," said Matthew Belk, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Boston.

Healey said Wednesday that while there aren't plans to call up the National Guard, the state's emergency management agency is keeping a close eye on the weather and is prepared to offer assistance.

She said the state is monitoring the conditions of dams in many communities and urged residents to take seriously any flood warnings and to stay off the roads when ordered.

"Something that looks pretty minor can, just within a couple of hours, turn into something very serious, potentially deadly and very, very destructive," Healey said.

The rain created several sinkholes in Leominster, Massachusetts, including one at a dealership where several cars were swallowed up. In Providence, Rhode Island, downpours flooded a parking lot and parts of a shopping mall. Firefighters used inflatable boats to rescue more than two dozen people stranded in cars.

Parking lots at several businesses briefly became lakes in Leominster and North Attleborough, and many front yards were still partially covered in water. The sounds of generators filled the air in many neighborhoods, as residents worked to remove water from their basements.

John DeCicco, a retired school teacher in Leominster who loaned generators to neighbors, said residents of the close-knit community about 40 miles (65 kilometers) northwest of Boston were helping each other clean up and opening their homes to others whose residences are uninhabitable.

Dawn Packer, who runs a North Attleborough home preschool, had looked across the street Monday evening to see a UPS truck floating in several feet of water. Soon her yard was flooding.

"All of sudden, the door smashed open. The water was so forceful. It just smashed the door open and poured in, 4 feet," she said.

After a dry day, it started raining in Leominster again Wednesday afternoon. Parts of Massachusetts and Rhode Island were under a flash flood warning. Earlier in the day, there were heavy downpours in Danbury, Connecticut, where officials said they had to rescue several people from vehicles stuck in floodwaters.

"The ground is saturated. It can't take in anymore," Leominster Mayor Dean Mazzarella said at a news conference Wednesday. But he said the city had emergency resources at the ready "for whatever the weather brings."

Mazzarella said up to 300 people were evacuated by Tuesday morning in the city, which has not seen such widespread damage since a 1936 hurricane. Most buildings downtown flooded and some collapsed. He said the city was trying to help get assistance to homeowners and businesses that suffered damage. He said early estimates on city infrastructure restoration projects could be anywhere from \$25 million to \$40 million.

New England has experienced its share of flooding this summer, including a storm that dumped up to two months of rain in two days in Vermont in July, resulting in two deaths. Scientists are finding that storms

around the world are forming in a warmer atmosphere, making extreme rainfall a more frequent reality now. A warming world will only make that worse.

## **There's no sign of widespread COVID-19 mandates in the US. Republicans are warning of them anyway**

By ALI SWENSON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — As Americans fend off a late summer COVID-19 spike and prepare for a fresh vaccine rollout, Republicans are raising familiar fears that government-issued lockdowns and mask mandates are next.

It's been a favorite topic among some of the GOP's top presidential contenders. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis told reporters that people are "lurching toward" COVID-19 restrictions and "there needs to be pushback." South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott posted online that the "radical Left" seeks to bring back school closures and mandates. And former President Donald Trump urged congressional Republicans to stop the Biden administration from bringing back COVID-19 "mandates, lockdowns or restrictions of any kind."

"The radical Democrats are trying hard to restart COVID hysteria," Trump told supporters in Rapid City, South Dakota, during a recent campaign stop. "I wonder why. Is there an election coming up by any chance?"

While some individual schools and colleges have implemented temporary mask requirements, there is no sign that anyone in federal or state leadership is considering widespread COVID-19 restrictions, requirements or mask mandates. The administrations of several Democratic governors denied that any such moves are even under discussion. The overriding sentiment is to leave the decisions to individuals.

"No COVID-19 public health restrictions or mask requirements are being considered by the Murphy administration," said Christi Peace, spokesperson for New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy.

"There are no impending mass lockdowns or mask mandates for New Mexico," said Jodi McGinnis Porter, spokeswoman for the New Mexico Department of Public Health.

It was largely the same message from Democratic governors' offices in several other states that responded to an inquiry about whether any COVID-19 mandates were under consideration. That included Connecticut, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan and Oregon.

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, made clear his opposition to COVID-19 lockdowns as well as mask and vaccine mandates when he was campaigning for office last year: "This is an area where I think folks got it wrong," he said of school and business shutdowns. His office echoed the same sentiment in its response to the AP this week, saying, "The administration's view is that there is no need to impose restrictions."

In the two most populous Democratic-led states, California and New York, the state health departments recommend getting the updated vaccine, but have no requirements for the shot or mask wearing. New York Gov. Kathy Hochul was asked during a news conference Wednesday about whether she would consider mask or vaccine mandates: "We are in a place where we're seeing low numbers; not requiring such actions today," she said.

Elisabeth Shepard, spokesperson for Oregon's Democratic governor, Tina Kotek, noted that the federal public health emergency for the virus outbreak ended in May.

"Currently, COVID-19 lockdowns and mask mandates are not being discussed and the governor has no plans to institute these measures," she said.

Still, the misleading narrative has proven a convenient scare tactic for Republicans in their efforts to woo voters who see Democrats as oppressive leaders targeting their freedoms.

The GOP presidential hopefuls hammering this message in the last week join a chorus of conservative lawmakers and far-right pundits who have spent the last month warning that tyrannical COVID-19 measures are looming.

In August, conspiracy theorist Alex Jones claimed an anonymous "high-level manager in the TSA" and an unnamed "Border Patrol-connected" source told him that Transportation Security Administration workers



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 46 of 60

would soon need to wear masks and that COVID-19 lockdowns would return in December.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the claims were “utterly false,” but they still were amplified by influential Republicans, including Rep. Lauren Boebert of Colorado, who posted on X that she wrote to the TSA demanding answers.

Later last month, when a Black liberal arts college in Atlanta announced it had reinstated a temporary mask mandate in response to student infections, Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Republican from Georgia, posted on X that “Americans have had enough COVID hysteria. WE WILL NOT COMPLY!”

The school, Morris Brown College, has since lifted the requirement but is keeping in place other policies, including contact tracing and temperature checks on campus.

Some of the outcry from conservatives has been in response to President Joe Biden’s comments last month on COVID-19’s recent uptick, which has led to an increase in hospitalizations and deaths nationwide — though a fraction of what the country saw in past surges.

“As a matter of fact, I signed off this morning on a proposal we have to present to the Congress a request for additional funding for a new vaccine that is necessary — that works,” Biden told reporters during a visit to South Lake Tahoe. “And tentatively — not decided finally yet — tentatively, it is recommended that, it will likely be recommended that everybody get it no matter whether they’ve gotten it before or not.”

The CDC on Tuesday endorsed those new shots for everyone 6 months and older, and the vaccines will be available at pharmacies, health centers and some doctor offices as soon as this week. But a new federal vaccine mandate is not under consideration, according to a White House official who requested anonymity to discuss the administration’s thinking.

A federal mask mandate is also not on the table.

“To be clear, the rumors of a federal mask mandate are not true,” said Jeff Nesbit, assistant secretary for public affairs for Health and Human Services. “We now have a range of tools for people to protect themselves from the impact of COVID-19, including vaccines, at-home testing and treatments. Masking is one of several steps people may choose to take to protect themselves if they wish.”

Reinstated mask requirements across the country have so far been limited to a handful of local schools and businesses. One example is a Maryland elementary school that required students who were exposed in a classroom’s outbreak to wear masks at school for 10 days.

But these isolated measures have sparked outrage from conservatives who have used them to energize their supporters.

Sen. J.D. Vance of Ohio last week unveiled the “Freedom to Breathe Act,” a bill that would block the federal government from imposing mask mandates for domestic flights, public transit and schools. His call for unanimous passage of the bill failed, with Democratic Sen. Ed Markey of Massachusetts calling it a “red herring” meant to deflect from the GOP’s prioritization of “gimmicks over people.”

Greene, the Republican from Georgia, introduced a companion bill in the House. She has said she won’t vote to avoid a government shutdown unless the government ends coronavirus mandates, which have already largely been reversed.

Misinformation experts say there’s a strategy to Republicans’ foreboding claims about impending mandates: They remind voters of the negative feelings they had early in the pandemic — and associate those with Democrats.

“Wearing a mask doesn’t have to be connected to anxiety, fear, anger and other strong emotions, but for many people it is,” said Lisa Fazio, a Vanderbilt University psychology professor who studies the spread of false claims. “No one wants to go back to those feelings, so Republicans are trying to tie those negative feelings and memories to their political opponents.”

Meanwhile, some of the Republican-led states where state leaders are railing against COVID-19 measures have been the hardest hit by the recent surge. Data shows Mississippi had the highest COVID-19 death rate per 10,000 people in the last week of August.

Early that week, the state’s Republican governor, Tate Reeves, pledged to block any widespread restrictions, posting online that the state would “live in self-determination, not top-down fear.”

## Judge blocks suspension of right to carry firearms in public, siding against New Mexico governor

By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — A federal judge has blocked part of a public health order that suspended the right to carry guns in public across New Mexico's largest metro area, with criticism mounting and political divides widening over the Democratic governor's action.

The ruling Wednesday by U.S. District Judge David Urias marks a setback for Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

The second-term governor imposed an emergency public health order Friday that suspended the right to openly carry or conceal guns in public places based on a statistical threshold for violent crime that applied only to Albuquerque and the surrounding area. She cited recent shootings around the state that left children dead, saying something needed to be done.

Urias, who was appointed to the federal bench by President Joe Biden, agreed Wednesday with plaintiffs who have accused Lujan Grisham of trampling on constitutional rights. Urias granted a temporary restraining order to block the governor's suspension of gun rights until another hearing is held in early October.

Urias said he doesn't blame Lujan Grisham for trying to do something "in the face of these terrible deaths," but his duty is to decide a much more narrow question regarding the rights afforded under the U.S. Constitution.

The governor in a statement issued Wednesday said she would not be resigned to the status quo.

"I see the pain of families who lost their loved ones to gun violence every single day, and I will never stop fighting to prevent other families from enduring these tragedies," she said, although she acknowledged previously that criminals likely would ignore her order.

Lujan Grisham also pledged to increase state police presence in Bernalillo County and to focus on arresting those with outstanding warrants. She also said she would direct the health care system to expand capacity to deal with drug addiction and homelessness.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs told the judge that the governor had other options to address the problem but chose the inflict what some critics have described as a punishment on law-abiding residents.

"The Second Amendment has no exception," said Jason Bowles, an Albuquerque attorney who is representing the National Association for Gun Rights. "It has no part that says as long as a state governor can issue an emergency, you're allowed to take our citizens' firearms. It doesn't say that, there's no case that ever said that, there's no historical evidence of that, there's no support for it."

Connecticut-based attorney Cameron Atkinson, who represents We The Patriots USA and Bernalillo County resident Dennis Smith, characterized the governor's action as an emotional reaction to heartbreaking tragedies.

"We get that people's hearts are broken," he said outside the courthouse, "but the answer to tragedy is not to take away from the people who need it the most – the means to protect themselves and their families."

State police had authority under the order to assess civil penalties and a fine of up to \$5,000. The sheriff and Albuquerque's police chief had refused to enforce the firearms ban.

The rest of the public health order, including directives for monthly inspections of firearms dealers state-wide, reports on gunshot victims at New Mexico hospitals and wastewater testing for illicit substances, remains intact.

Holly Agajanian, the governor's chief counsel, said the order will save lives.

"I wish when our police officers walked down the street, they could see people wearing a shirt that said 'good guy' and somebody with the shirt that said 'bad guy,'" she said. "But that doesn't exist."

Republicans in the legislative majority have called for impeachment proceedings against the governor, saying that her actions make for a slippery slope when it comes to the use of public health orders to effect policy changes.

Those concerns have resonated with the residents who have protested in Albuquerque's public plazas. They say the governor is testing the boundaries of her executive authority again after using public health

orders for aggressive lockdowns during the outset of the coronavirus pandemic.

Even top Democrats — including New Mexico Attorney General Raúl Torrez — have suggested that the governor's time would have been better spent developing comprehensive legislation to tackle the issue.

New Mexico is an open carry state, so the governor's order suspending the open and concealed carry of firearms affected anyone in Bernalillo County who can legally own a gun, with some exceptions. Just over 14,500 people in Bernalillo County had an active concealed carry license, according to an Associated Press analysis of data provided by the New Mexico Department of Public Safety for the 2023 fiscal year.

Statewide, including Bernalillo County, the 2023 fiscal year data showed just over 45,000 active concealed carry licenses.

The New Mexico Chiefs of Police Association, other top law enforcement officials and Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller are among those who are calling for a special legislative session to tackle gun violence.

Keller and Albuquerque Police Chief Harold Medina on Tuesday outlined what the city has been doing to address crime, saying law enforcement and judicial officials have been meeting since 2021 to develop legislative priorities and other efforts to fix what they referred to as a "broken criminal justice system."

The officials said many of the proposals have been watered down to the point of being ineffective and vital programs have gone without needed funding.

"Albuquerque families can't afford political debates that distract us from fighting violent crime," Keller said. "This is a powerful moment to listen to police and behavioral health professionals to create the change we need in a special session."

## **Man who threw flagpole at police during Jan. 6 riot gets more than 6 years in prison**

The Associated Press undefined

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Tennessee man who wrote on social media about wanting to "take over the Capitol building" before the Jan. 6, 2021, riot, where he threw a flagpole at a police officer's head, was sentenced on Wednesday to more than six years in prison.

Joseph Padilla, of Cleveland, Tennessee, was convicted in May of assault with a dangerous weapon, obstruction of Congress and other charges after a bench trial in Washington's federal court.

Padilla has been behind bars since his February 2021 arrest. U.S. District Judge John D. Bates, who found him guilty after the bench trial, ordered him this week to serve 6 1/2 years in prison.

Prosecutors say Padilla, a former prison corrections officer, spent hours the day of the riot verbally and physically attacking police, who were trying to beat back the angry mob of Donald Trump supporters as lawmakers met in the Capitol to certify then-President-elect Joe Biden's electoral victory.

After other rioters attacked police with objects such as crutches and a hockey stick, Padilla launched a flagpole toward officers, hitting one of them in the head, prosecutors said in court records. Prosecutors say he then lied under oath on the witness stand about it, claiming he was trying to hit another rioter.

A day after the riot, Padilla wrote on social media that he was "proud" of his actions, adding: "It's guns next, that's the only way," prosecutors said. Prosecutors also pointed to several of Padilla's social media comments calling for a revolution ahead of Jan. 6.

"We've gotta do it on the 6th or never at all. We have to take over the Capitol Building, immediately pass acts dissolving the current Legislative body, and fill the places with uncompromising Patriots from among those of us there," Padilla wrote in one post in late December 2020.

Padilla's lawyer told the judge that his client, a U.S. Army veteran, "regrets ever having gone to the Capitol on January 6th, 2021." Padilla's lawyer said the man has lived an "exemplary life" despite a "troubled upbringing," which included a stint of homelessness, and that his actions on Jan. 6 were "not typical of his life pattern."

Padilla "states that every day is torture having to live with the fact that his actions are the direct reason for his family's separation and hardship. He understands that his actions on January 6th caused himself and his family the pain and suffering they now deal with daily," defense attorney Michael Cronkright wrote



in court papers.

An email seeking comment was sent to Conkright after Wednesday's hearing.

More than 1,100 people have been charged with federal crimes stemming from the riot, which left dozens of police officers injured and halted Congress' certification of Biden's victory. Over 650 defendants have pleaded guilty. More than 600 have been sentenced, with over half receiving terms of imprisonment ranging from three days to 22 years.

## **Loudspeaker message outside NYC migrant shelter warns new arrivals they are 'not safe here'**

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A New Yorker upset that the city has been housing homeless migrants on his block has set up a loudspeaker to deliver an unwelcoming message to his new neighbors: "Immigrants are not safe here."

The message, recorded in six languages, blares all day from a loudspeaker on Scott Herkert's well-groomed front lawn on Staten Island, exhorting migrants to "go back" to another part of the city because the community doesn't want them. It urges people brought to a temporary shelter inside a long-vacant Roman Catholic high school not to get off the bus. The message also claims the building has rats and cockroaches.

It is one of several ways some people have let shelter residents know they are not welcome. Hundreds of protesters have also held a large rally outside the former school, urging the city to house migrants elsewhere.

The women and families placed by the city inside the former Saint John Villa Academy have heard the message loud and clear.

"We have to close our eyes and close our ears," said Aminetou El Alewai, a 39-year-old woman from Mauritania who moved into the shelter last week. "We are good people. We are not criminals. We came because of problems in our country."

As thousands of migrants continue to arrive in New York City, officials have scrambled to open new emergency shelters, turning to tent facilities, school gyms and parks to comply with a state law requiring housing for the homeless. Though Staten Island is home to only a small fraction of those shelters, they have generated an outsize share of animosity.

The hostile reception coincides with increasingly dire rhetoric from Mayor Eric Adams, who warned last week that the migrant crisis would "destroy New York City." The Democrat has insisted that the more than 100,000 who have arrived so far are welcome, but he has said the cost of housing tens of thousands of people could be as much as \$12 billion over the next three years. Adams has rejected allegations from advocates of using migrants as "props" in an ongoing bid for federal money.

Staten Island is known for leaning conservative and Republican in a mostly liberal, Democratic city.

Herkert, a New York state court system employee, also has a tarp on his lawn painted with a profane version of the phrase, "No way!" Gesturing at the largely empty street in front of his home Tuesday, Herkert said the new shelter has upended his block's quiet charm and brought toilets and dumpsters to the other side of his fence.

While the loudspeaker message — in Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Urdu, Chinese and English — warns that the former school is infested with roaches and mold, Alewai said she has found it to be perfectly clean, if a bit uncomfortable.

As Alewai spoke to Associated Press reporters on a sidewalk, parents picked up their children from a neighboring private school, directing nervous glances and, in one case, harsh words at the new arrivals.

"I am sorry for the trouble of the woman who was just talking," Alewai said in French. "I came as a refugee to New York and they brought me here. Indeed, I am not comfortable here."

Both employees and residents of the shelter said protesters have cursed at and threatened them, frequently playing loud music late into the night. Employee and lifelong Queens native Gabrielle Dasilva said

she was recently told to go back to her home country.

A spokesperson for the mayor's office, Kayla Mamelak, said the administration was "disturbed to learn about the false messages being played outside the St. John's Villa Academy respite site" and police are working to "maintain the peace in the area."

"As always, New York City continues to provide care for asylum seekers with compassion and care," she said.

City Councilman David Carr, a Republican who attended Saint John Villa Academy, defended the audio recording as protected First Amendment activity and said his constituents have good reason to worry about the high cost of housing migrants.

"This is an opportunity for folks in the neighborhood who are angry to demonstrate that constructively," Carr said. "They're just trying to ensure that their voices are heard."

John Tabacco, a right-wing media personality and candidate for city comptroller, said he collaborated on the effort with Herkert and the loudspeakers messages have clearly resonated with neighbors.

"There have been a lot of concerned citizens out there, and they've been spending a lot of time doing some good old fashioned civil disobedience," he said.

Around the corner, John Gurriera, a 72-year-old resident of Staten Island, said he was disappointed by the reaction from some of his neighbors, which he described as "not very Christian."

"This is New York City," he added. "We all came from someplace else."

## **Escaped murderer Danelo Cavalcante is captured in Pa. with the help of dogs and a heat-sensing plane**

By MARYCLAIRE DALE, MARC LEVY and MICHAEL RUBINKAM Associated Press

POTTSTOWN, Pa. (AP) — A murderer who brazenly escaped from a Pennsylvania jail was captured Wednesday in the woods by a team of tactical officers, bringing an end to an intensive search that terrified residents as the fugitive broke into homes for food, changed his appearance and stole a van and rifle during two weeks on the run.

Law enforcement's big break came overnight as a plane fitted with a thermal imaging camera picked up Danelo Souza Cavalcante's heat signal, allowing teams on the ground to secure the area, surround him and move in with search dogs.

"They were able to move in very quietly. They had the element of surprise," Pennsylvania State Police Lt. Col. George Bivens said at a news conference. "Cavalcante did not realize he was surrounded until that had occurred."

Still armed with the rifle he stole from a homeowner's garage, the fugitive tried to escape by crawling through underbrush. But a search dog subdued him, Bivens said, adding that he continued to resist as he was taken into custody after 8 a.m.

Cavalcante, 34, was bitten on the scalp and suffered a minor wound, Bivens said. A dog also latched onto his thigh, Deputy U.S. Marshal Robert Clark told The Associated Press, "at which time, Cavalcante submitted."

"I think he was in pain at that point," Clark said. "He was probably in excruciating pain."

Aerial news footage showed an officer wiping Cavalcante's bloody head and face with a towel.

No shots were fired. About two dozen officers in tactical gear posed for a group photo with Cavalcante, drawing criticism from policing reform advocates and some members of the public who called it inappropriate.

"Our nightmare is finally over, and the good guys won," Chester County District Attorney Deb Ryan said.

Cavalcante was taken to a nearby state police barracks in an armored vehicle surrounded by a convoy with lights flashing and sirens blaring as it traveled down the highway. Two police helicopters followed above.

Some residents watched the convoy pass. Kathleen Brady, who lives near where Cavalcante stole the gun Monday night, did so as she and her young daughter returned home after staying elsewhere Tuesday night.

"The streets are quiet once again. There were no checkpoints. The sun is coming out. The heat has

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 51 of 60

dropped," Brady said, describing the community's elation. "Poetic justice, and justice, all at the same time."

Cavalcante was arraigned at the Avondale barracks on an escape charge, according to the office of Judge Matthew Seavey. A preliminary hearing was scheduled for Sept. 27. He was led out with his hands and bare feet shackled, wearing what appeared to be a hospital gown. Cavalcante was driven to a state prison outside Philadelphia to continue serving the life sentence he received last month for killing his ex-girlfriend.

The endgame for Cavalcante unfolded in southeastern Pennsylvania just beyond Philadelphia's heavily populated western suburbs, in an area of woods, rolling farmland and a county park. Police brought in hundreds of law enforcement personnel with dogs, armored carriers, horses and helicopters that circled overhead.

The long search led to school closures right at the start of the academic year, warnings for homeowners to lock their doors and blocked roads over the busy Labor Day weekend. Overnight into Wednesday, heavily armed officers searched through downpours and thunder.

A Drug Enforcement Administration plane picked up Cavalcante's heat signature around 1 a.m., but the storms grounded the aircraft for a time, delaying his capture by several hours, Bivens said.

Cavalcante escaped from the Chester County jail in southeastern Pennsylvania on Aug. 31 by crab-walking up between two walls that were topped with razor wire, then jumping from the roof.

Authorities said over the weekend that Cavalcante had slipped out of the initial search area, shaved and changed his clothing, stole a vehicle to travel miles to seek aid from former co-workers in the northern part of the county, and then abandoned the vehicle, at least in part because it was low on fuel.

Authorities have declined to say how they think Cavalcante escaped the first search area, and officials have pushed back against questions about whether they blew a chance at that time to catch him.

Late Monday, a motorist alerted police to a man matching Cavalcante's description crouching in the darkness along a line of trees near a road in northern Chester County. Police found footprints and tracked them to prison shoes identical to those he had been wearing. A pair of work boots was reported stolen from a porch nearby.

State police said they believe he was looking for a place to hide when he saw an open garage. There, he 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, state police said.

That led hundreds of law enforcement personnel to search an area of about 8 to 10 square miles (21 to 26 square kilometers) near South Coventry Township, roughly 30 miles (50 kilometers) northwest of Philadelphia. Cavalcante was captured just inside the search perimeter.

"He was desperate, and it was just a matter of time," Gov. Josh Shapiro said at the news conference.

People had the "intent and intended to assist" Cavalcante during his time on the run, Bivens said Wednesday, but authorities thwarted those attempts. He did not elaborate or say anyone had been charged criminally.

Clark, the deputy U.S. marshal, said Cavalcante's sister was evasive and gave police conflicting information during his time on the loose, leading authorities to detain her and take steps to start her deportation.

"We believe that she was trying to mislead law enforcement. And she quite possibly had the resources to aid her brother should he be able to get in contact," Clark told AP. "We thought she needed to be taken out of the equation."

It wasn't immediately clear where the sister lives. Authorities do not have evidence that Cavalcante obtained a cellphone or had any direct conversations with friends and family, Clark said, and they are not aware of anyone offering him material aid.

Cavalcante's escape and capture were big news in Brazil, where prosecutors in Tocantins state say he is accused of "double qualified homicide" in the 2017 slaying of Válder Júnior Moreira dos Reis. Authorities say it was over a vehicle-repair debt the victim owed him.

Pennsylvania authorities even broadcast a recording of Cavalcante's mother speaking in Portuguese imploring him to surrender peacefully.

Cavalcante was convicted of killing his ex-girlfriend, Deborah Brandao, in front of her children in 2021. Prosecutors say he wanted to stop her from telling police he was wanted in the Brazil killing. He was ar-



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 52 of 60

rested in Virginia, and authorities say they believe he was trying to return to Brazil.

The jail tower guard on duty when Cavalcante escaped was fired. The escape went undetected for more than an hour until guards took a headcount.

Cavalcante was captured in a gray Philadelphia Eagles sweatshirt that he either found or stole. Aerial footage showed an officer cutting it off as he was loaded into a police truck.

The governor promised the owner a new one.

"Whoever had their Eagles hoodie stolen, if you could let us know," Shapiro said, "I'll do my best to get you one of those new kelly green ones."

## **NFL players union renews call for grass fields after Aaron Rodgers' injury**

By TERESA M. WALKER AP Pro Football Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Skin scraped down to bloody patches. Sore bodies stinging in post-game showers. Aching shoulders, backs, hips, knees and ankles.

Add in season-ending injuries like four-time MVP Aaron Rodgers tearing his left Achilles tendon in his debut with the New York Jets on Monday night and Buffalo pass rusher Von Miller tearing his ACL, an incident that he blames on artificial turf.

Yes, NFL players prefer playing on natural grass. It's why the NFL Players Association called on the league Wednesday to switch all fields to grass in what executive director Lloyd Howell said was "the easiest decision the NFL can make."

It's a matter of career preservation.

"I mean the NFL is already 'Not For Long,' right?" Carolina linebacker Shaq Thompson said. "It sucks it had to happen that way. ... Hopefully they run with it. Hopefully they blow it up and shout it out loud and everybody puts it on social media, takes a stand and does something."

The players union repeated its call for grass less than 48 hours after Rodgers' injury. Howell said players know the change would cost money but argue the bigger cost is losing the NFL's best players to "unnecessary injuries."

Thompson has criticized Carolina owner David Tepper for replacing grass with an artificial surface at the Panthers' stadium in 2021 — in part to host Charlotte's new Major League Soccer team.

When the 2026 World Cup is held in North America, all 11 U.S. venues will be at NFL stadiums.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said Wednesday on ESPN he is meeting with the head of FIFA next week about the World Cup. Plans currently call for host stadiums to use grass mixed with artificial surface. Lambeau Field has featured Kentucky bluegrass sod weaved in with synthetic fibers since 2018.

"Something that we're working to try to see is that a better surface for us?" Goodell said. "Because you have to look at climate too. This is not just about is the field going to be good in September? Is it also going to be good in December and January?"

The current collective bargaining agreement uses science to measure injuries, with the NFL and the union using the same data. Goodell noted Rodgers had one of two Achilles tendon tears in the NFL's first week — the other, suffered by Baltimore's J.K. Dobbins, occurred on grass.

"That is where we make decisions, on the basis of science, not because I see an injury that I don't like," Goodell said.

The union has wanted all grass fields for years. In April, the union released studies from 2012-22 arguing a significant increase in non-contact injuries on artificial surfaces vs. grass. The NFL has defended artificial turf, pointing to 2021 when the numbers for injuries on both surfaces were close.

Rodgers argued for grass all over the league last November while with the Green Bay Packers. He said some artificial surfaces are softer, creating more wobble when the foot hits the ground. Grass allows cleats to pull away, leaving a divot.

New York Giants wide receiver Sterling Shepard tore his Achilles tendon late in 2021 at MetLife Stadium, then he tore an ACL last season on the same field. A new artificial surface was installed this year, and Shepard said it might be a little softer but "turf is turf."

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 53 of 60

Jets coach Robert Saleh said Tuesday that he didn't see the surface as being an issue in Rodgers' injury. The 39-year-old quarterback got hurt when he was taken down by Bills defender Leonard Floyd.

"If it was a non-contact injury, then I think that would be something to discuss, obviously," Saleh said. "But ... I think that was trauma-induced. I do know the players prefer grass and there is a lot invested in those young men."

Miller joined a campaign lobbying for grass at all NFL stadiums after his injury. Cincinnati quarterback Joe Burrow said a league standard for artificial surfaces would help. Two-time NFL MVP Patrick Mahomes, who plays on grass in Kansas City, said it's simple.

"The numbers say that grass is healthier for the players, and I want to play on the surface that keeps me healthy," Mahomes said.

Green Bay left tackle David Bakhtiari, who was busy on social media after Rodgers was hurt, said he knows the NFL is a business. Owners can wait to demand something in return during the next contract negotiations, and artificial surfaces help them make money hosting other events.

"That's the bottom dollar, bottom line. Follow the money. Simple as that," Bakhtiari said.

The Tennessee Titans will debut the NFL's newest artificial surface Sunday in their home opener against the Los Angeles Chargers after trying, and struggling, to grow grass in Nashville for 24 seasons.

Their fake turf is anchored by shredded coconut husks and cork, not rubber pellets. The Titans cited NFL data putting Nissan Stadium among the league leaders for games where players suffered lower-body injuries.

Nissan also hosts the annual CMA Fan Fest each June. Taylor Swift, Ed Sheeran and George Strait performed there this summer. The stadium is home to the annual Music City Bowl each December.

Titans coach Mike Vrabel, who played 14 NFL seasons in stadiums that featured original artificial turf, said technology has improved and he likes what Tennessee installed.

"I understand that we need to do everything that we can to keep our players safe and understand that sometimes injuries are unavoidable based on whatever you're doing and playing professional sports," Vrabel said.

Virginia nose tackle Oluwatobiloba Ajakaiye was carted off the field with torn patellar tendons on both knees after slipping as he celebrated recovering a fumbled punt in a college game against Tennessee at Nissan Stadium.

Keeping stars on the field keeps money flowing in the NFL, so Bakhtiari called grass a matter of smart business.

"You have enough great players not out there, the quality of the game and the sport goes down," Bakhtiari said. "No one wants that. Like I said before, we already play a violent enough game. Don't add to it."

## 4 former officers plead not guilty to federal civil rights charges in Tyre Nichols beating

By ADRIAN SAINZ Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Four former Memphis police officers pleaded not guilty Wednesday to federal civil rights charges in the violent beating and death of Tyre Nichols after a traffic stop nine months ago.

Tadarrius Bean, Demetrius Haley Desmond Mills and Justin Smith were led by U.S. Marshals into a courtroom wearing handcuffs and leg restraints for their first hearing since they were charged Tuesday with using excessive force and conspiring to lie about the Jan. 7 beating of Nichols as he cried out for his mother just steps from his home.

Magistrate Judge Charmiane G. Claxton accepted the not guilty pleas from lawyers for the four officers, who were fired for violations of Memphis Police Department policy after Nichols died three days after he was punched, kicked and hit with a baton in a pummeling that was caught on police video.

A fifth officer who was also fired and indicted by a federal grand jury, Emmitt Martin, was scheduled to make his first appearance Thursday. All five were charged 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 five officers also have been charged in state court with second-degree murder and other alleged offenses in the beating death of Nichols, which is one of several violent encounters between police and Black people that have sparked protests and renewed debate about police brutality and police reform in the U.S.

The five former officers, all Black like Nichols, have pleaded not guilty to the state charges as well.

Claxton ordered the release of the four officers who were present in court Wednesday on a \$50,000 unsecured bond, which means that they don't have to pay any money unless they fail to appear in court.

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

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.

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 Smith's protective vest and pulled on the officers' duty belts.

Attorneys for several of the former officers said the federal indictment was no surprise. Blake Ballin, Mills' lawyer, told reporters outside the federal courthouse that Mills is taking the charges very seriously, and he is looking forward to defending himself in court.

"It's especially scary and uncomfortable for somebody who dedicated his life to being a law enforcement officer and now finds himself on the other side of things," Ballin said.

## Utah GOP Sen. Mitt Romney won't seek reelection in 2024, marking end to decadeslong political career

By MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

Utah Republican Sen. Mitt Romney said Wednesday that he will not run for reelection, ending a storied two-decade political career that included the 2012 Republican GOP nomination for president and a term as Massachusetts governor.

Romney, 76, said the country's many challenges call for a younger generation of leaders. He said the U.S. would be better served if the two front-runners for their parties' 2024 presidential nominations — Democratic President Joe Biden and Republican former President Donald Trump — stepped aside. Biden is 80 and Trump is 77.

"The times we're living in redemand the next generation step up and express their point of view and to make the decisions that will shape American politics over the coming century," Romney said in a news conference at the Capitol. He said baby boomers like him are "not the right ones to be making the decisions for tomorrow."

He said after he leaves the Senate he plans to focus on getting more young people voting and involved



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 55 of 60

in the political process.

As the GOP's 2012 nominee for the White House, Romney campaigned across America as a buttoned-up former Massachusetts governor and private equity executive. But with Trump's populist rise as the party's dominant figure, Romney's brand of Republicanism shifted from establishment to outlier. He was the only GOP member of Congress to vote to convict Trump at both of his impeachment trials.

Romney said at the news conference that he belongs to the "wise wing of the Republican Party" and doesn't think it will fade away.

"My wing of the party talks about policy and about issues that will make a difference in the lives of the American people. The Trump wing of the party talks about resentments of various kinds and getting even and settling scores and revisiting the 2020 election."

Romney said he spoke to Biden on Wednesday, and the president wished him well.

He is the sixth incumbent senator to announce plans to retire after the end of the term in 2025, joining Republican Mike Braun of Indiana and Democrats Tom Carper of Delaware, Ben Cardin of Maryland, Dianne Feinstein of California and Debbie Stabenow of Michigan.

Republican Senate leader Mitch McConnell praised Romney in a statement, noting the breadth of experience he brought to the chamber and saying his deep faith and integrity had inspired his colleagues.

"The U.S. Senate is known to attract bright and proven public servants. However, we rarely get to welcome new Senators already as accomplished and well-regarded as Mitt Romney," McConnell said.

His departure creates a wide-open contest in a state that heavily favors Republicans and is expected to attract a crowded field.

Utah House Speaker Brad Wilson expressed interest in Romney's seat earlier this year, launching an exploratory committee in April while saying the state needed a "conservative fighter" who represents its values, not a "professional career politician."

Wilson, in a statement Wednesday, thanked Romney for his service and wished him the best. "I've been encouraged so far by the record-breaking fundraising, groundswell of grassroots support, and unprecedented endorsements we've received so far," Wilson said. "Stay tuned."

Romney easily won election to the Senate in 2018 but was expected to face more resistance from his own party after he emerged as one of the most visible members to break with Trump.

Romney in 2020 became the first senator in U.S. history to vote to convict a president from their own party in an impeachment trial. Romney was the only Republican to vote against Trump in his first impeachment and one of seven to vote to convict him in the second.

Trump was acquitted by the Senate both times.

Romney was booed by a gathering of the Utah Republican Party's most active members months after his vote at the second impeachment trial, and a measure to censure him narrowly failed. Members of the party even flung the term "Mitt Romney Republican" at their opponents on the campaign trail in last year's midterm elections.

Still, Romney has been broadly popular in Utah, which has long harbored a band of the party that's favored civil conservatism and resisted Trump's brash and norm-busting style of politics.

The state is home to the anti-Trump Lincoln Project; the anti-Trump Republican Evan McMullin, who launched a long-shot 2016 presidential campaign; and GOP Gov. Spencer Cox, who has been critical of Trump and is also up for reelection in 2024.

More than a majority of the state's population are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The faith arrived in the western state with pioneers fleeing religious persecution and spread globally with the religion's missionaries, a legacy that's left the church's conservative members embracing immigrants and refugees.

Romney, a Brigham Young University graduate and one of the faith's most visible members, has been a popular figure in the state for two decades. He burnished his reputation there by turning around the bribery scandal-plagued 2002 Winter Olympics in Utah, making it a global showcase for Salt Lake City.

Romney served as governor of Massachusetts from 2003 to 2007. During his tenure, he signed a health

care law that had some of the same core features as the 2010 federal health care law signed by President Barack Obama, who would go on to defeat Romney in the 2012 White House election.

During his presidential campaign, Romney struggled to shake the perception that he was out of touch with regular Americans. The image crystallized with his comment, secretly recorded at a fundraiser, that he didn't worry about winning the votes of "47% of Americans" who "believe they are victims" and "pay no income tax."

He moved to Utah after his defeat for the presidency.

In 2016, he delivered a scathing speech in Utah denouncing Trump, then a GOP presidential candidate, as a "phony" and a "fraud" who was unfit for the White House.

After Trump won, Romney dined with Trump as the president-elect dangled the prospect of naming him secretary of state. Trump chose Exxon Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson instead.

Romney accepted Trump's endorsement during the primary race for his 2018 Senate run but also pledged in an op-ed that year that he would "continue to speak out when the president says or does something which is divisive, racist, sexist, anti-immigrant, dishonest or destructive to democratic institutions."

In 2020, Romney marched in a Washington protest against the police mistreatment of minorities and posted an image of his participation online with the caption "Black Lives Matter," a rare statement for a member of his party.

On Jan. 6, 2021, as a mob of Trump's supporters were storming the Capitol to stop Biden from becoming president, Romney nearly came face to face with the rioters. A U.S. Capitol Police officer directed him to turn around, prompting Romney to break into a run for safety.

Trump hailed the news of Romney's retirement, saying the senator "did not serve with distinction."

"Fantastic news for America, the great state of Utah, & for the Republican Party," Trump wrote on his social media site all in caps. "A big primary fight against him was in the offing, but now that will not be necessary. Congrats to all. Make America great again!"

## **Ukrainian attack damages 2 ships, injures 24 people and sets port on fire in Russia-annexed Crimea**

By DASHA LITVINOVA and ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A Ukrainian attack on a strategic shipyard early Wednesday in Russian-annexed Crimea wounded 24 people, damaged two ships undergoing repairs and caused a fire at the facility, 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 offensives killed at least three civilians and injured 14 across Ukraine, the president's office said.

A pre-dawn drone onslaught in southern Ukraine's Odesa region damaged port and civilian infrastructure in the region's Izmail district, about 350 kilometers (220 miles) across the Black Sea from Sevastopol, and wounded seven people, three seriously, Gov. Oleh Kiper said.

Russian attacks on residential areas in 10 cities and villages in the Donetsk region killed three people and wounded three. Fighting in the Zaporizhzhia region injured one resident in Orikhiv, while shelling in southern Kherson damaged homes and a kindergarten, the government said.

The skirmishes occurred as Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during a summit that the U.S. has warned could lead to a deal to supply arms to Moscow's depleted troops in Ukraine. Kim offered his full support for Russia's "just" fight and said the two reached an agreement to deepen their "strategic and tactical cooperation and solidarity in the struggle to defend sovereign rights and security."

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 Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than 18 months ago.

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 57 of 60

Last month, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy vowed to do all he could to bring back Crimea and has urged international allies to support the effort.

On Monday, Ukraine claimed it had recaptured strategic gas and oil drilling platforms in the Black Sea that Russia seized in 2015. Russia had used the platforms for electronic warfare equipment and to launch helicopters, and Ukraine said getting control of them would help it regain Crimea.

Wednesday's attack on the Sevastopol Shipyard appeared to be 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.

A senior Ukrainian official posted a picture of the burning port on social media and described the strike as a "professional and meaningful statement" in its efforts to keep a crucial shipping corridor open to deliver grain to Asia and Africa.

Putin recently said he wouldn't renew a landmark deal allowing Ukraine to export grain safely through the Black Sea until the West meets Moscow's demands on its own agricultural exports.

"The demilitarization of the Russian Black Sea fleet is a real long-term guarantee of security for regional trade routes and the 'grain corridor,'" said Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Zelenskyy. "This is the only correct response to Russia's attempts to turn hunger into a weapon and the only way to ensure uninterrupted grain supplies to the countries of the east and Africa."

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.

The Russian Defense Ministry said the Russian warships damaged at the Sevastopol shipyard would be fully repaired and return to naval service.

In other developments, Romania said it is investigating what appear to be fragments of a drone similar to those used by Russia, near its border with Ukraine on the Danube River. It's the third time over the past week that the NATO member has found suspected drone remains amid recent attacks by Russian forces on Ukraine's ports across the river from Romania.

The discoveries have rattled residents nearby, but NATO Deputy-General Secretary Mircea Geoana said there's no chance the nation will be drawn into the war.

## High gas prices push up inflation, but prices overall are slowly moving in the right direction

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inflation jumped last month largely because of a spike in gas prices but other costs rose more slowly, suggesting price pressures are easing at a gradual pace.

In a set of conflicting data released Wednesday, the Labor Department said the consumer price index rose 3.7% in August from a year ago, up from a 3.2% annual pace in July. Yet excluding the volatile food and energy categories, so-called core prices rose 4.3%, a step back from 4.7% in July and the smallest increase in nearly two years. That is still far from the Federal Reserve's 2% target.

The big rise in gas prices accounted for more than half of the monthly inflation increase, the government said.

Despite the seemingly divergent figures, the decline in the core measure points to inflation coming under control, but at a much more gradual pace than earlier this year. The Federal Reserve closely tracks core prices because they are seen as a better indicator of future inflation trends.

The Fed is widely expected to skip an interest rate hike at its meeting next week. Wednesday's figures



# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 58 of 60

keep the prospect of another rate increase later this year on the table, however, perhaps at its November or December meetings, economists said, because core prices ticked up a bit faster in August than in July.

Wednesday's report suggested that after inflation faded quickly over the spring and the summer, future declines will be much more gradual. Inflation dropped to 3% in June, down from a 9.1% peak in June 2022. Some of the forces that pulled down prices earlier this year — such as lower gas prices and improving supply chains, which reduced the cost of goods like furniture — have largely played out, economists say.

"We're getting to the stage where we've basically had all the low hanging fruit in terms of disinflation," said Blerina Uruci, an economist at T. Rowe Price. "The progress on core inflation over the coming months is going to be slow and it's going to be uneven."

On a monthly basis, consumer prices jumped 0.6% in August, the biggest increase in more than a year. Gas prices spiked nearly 11%, though they have since leveled off: According to AAA, the average nationwide price at the pump was \$3.85 on Wednesday, unchanged from a month ago.

Excluding food and energy, core prices increased just 0.3% in August from July, though that is up from 0.2% in the two previous months.

Energy costs rose 5.6% just in August, the biggest monthly increase since June 2022. Auto insurance prices also soared, rising 2.4% last month and 19.1% compared with a year ago. The sharp increase in new car prices in the past two years has also made them more expensive to insure and repair.

Airfares soared 4.9% in August from July, though after two months of sharp declines. At the same time, used car costs dropped 1.2%, the third straight decrease, while hotel prices fell 3%, also the third consecutive fall.

Grocery prices moved up 0.2%, a trend that has strained many household's finances. But food cost increases are cooling: They rose 3% compared with a year ago, down from double-digit increases last year.

Prices increase are slowing yet, as any American can attest, food, rent, automobiles, appliances, all cost considerably more than they did two years ago.

While filling up her car with gas Tuesday night in Falls Church, Virginia, Francesca, who declined to give her last name, said she still notices how much higher her grocery bill has gotten.

"We're not buying crazy things, like caviar, just the basics," she said, referring to her weekly food shopping. "And it's like \$150," compared to a tab of closer to \$100 before the pandemic.

Still, Federal Reserve officials are becoming more open to the idea that inflation is coming under control, though chair Jerome Powell warned last month it was still "too high."

In his high-profile speech at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Powell said the Fed would proceed "carefully" with any further rate hikes, which many economists saw as an opening for the Fed to skip a rate increase at its September 19-20 meeting. When the Fed increases its key rate, it typically raises the cost of mortgages, auto loans, and business borrowing.

The Fed has lifted its benchmark interest rate 11 times in the past 12 meetings to about 5.4%, the highest level in 22 years. It increased the rate a quarter-point in July after leaving it unchanged in June.

Lorie Logan, president of the Federal Reserve's Dallas branch, said last week that "another skip could be appropriate" at its next meeting September 19-20, "but skipping does not imply stopping."

Wall Street traders see only a 3% chance of a rate hike next week, according to CME's FedWatch. But they have priced in a 40% chance for an increase at the Fed's subsequent meeting in November.

Wednesday's report shows prices are sticky enough "to have another rate hike this year," said Tim Duy, chief U.S. economist at SGH Macro.

Duy said that the economy is expanding at a healthy pace, confounding long-standing fears that a recession is imminent. Americans boosted their spending at restaurants and retailers in July, and hiring has remained solid. Yet Duy added that one risk posed by the steady growth is that it could keep inflation pressures high. Companies are boosting pay to find and keep employees, which is great for workers, but can lead businesses to raise prices to offset the higher labor costs.

Strikes and labor disputes this year could lead to more healthy pay gains. The Teamsters won robust wage increases in recent negotiations with UPS, while American Airline pilots also secured higher pay in a

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 59 of 60

new contract. The United Auto Workers is also seeking higher pay from the three major U.S. automakers. The push for higher pay, however, comes after incomes for most Americans trailed inflation for much of the past two years. A report from the Census Bureau Tuesday showed that the inflation-adjusted income for a typical household dropped 2.3% last year. Economists expect workers to keep pushing to make up for lost ground.

The European Central Bank is also contemplating lifting its key interest rate at its next meeting Thursday, though officials could choose to also skip an increase. The European economy is nearing recession as it struggles with high inflation and rising borrowing costs.

The 20 countries that use the euro currency are expected to grow just 0.8% this year, according to a gloomy forecast issued Monday by the European Commission, the European Union's executive arm. Germany's economy, the EU's largest, is projected to shrink 0.4%. Inflation in the EU is higher than in the U.S. — it was 5.3% in July — though that is half of the 10.6% peak reached in October.

## Fire in Vietnam's capital kills at least 56 when it engulfs an apartment building

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — A fire in a nine-story apartment building in Vietnam's capital killed at least 56 people, including at least four children, and injured at least 37, authorities said Wednesday.

The fire started just before midnight Tuesday in a building housing about 150 residents. Firefighters contained the blaze, but the building's location at end of a narrow alley made rescue operations difficult. Dozens of people remained trapped in the building until after dawn, state media reports said.

Of the 56 people confirmed dead, the police have identified 39 victims, the state-owned Viet Nam News said Wednesday evening, citing Hanoi police. State-owned national television channel VTV said four children were among those killed. Initial reports about the death toll were unclear since the injured and dead were taken to different hospitals across the city.

Many of the dozens being treated at hospitals suffered from smoke inhalation and injuries sustained during desperate attempts to escape the building.

Authorities are investigating the cause of the fire, which started around midnight in the parking area of the building, which had no emergency exit. The police have detained the building's owner as part of their investigation.

The building was a 'tube house' — a narrow, elongated house that is several stories high — and its residents included families and students. Images of the building showed its walls blackened by soot, with wires around it mangled by the heat.

Vietnamese Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chinh visited the building and extended his condolences to families of the victims.

"We must take this as a lesson" to improve fire prevention and firefighting, he said, adding that "regulations must be taken seriously so we can avoid a tragedy like this."

Last year, a blaze at a karaoke parlor in southern Vietnam's Binh Duong province killed 32 people.

## Today in History: September 14

### President William McKinley dies of infection from gunshot wounds

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Sept. 14, the 257th day of 2023. There are 108 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 14, 1901, President William McKinley died in Buffalo, New York, of gunshot wounds inflicted by an assassin; Vice President Theodore Roosevelt succeeded him.

On this date:

# Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 082 ~ 60 of 60

In 1814, Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the poem "Defence of Fort McHenry" (later "The Star-Spangled Banner") after witnessing the American flag flying over the Maryland fort following a night of British naval bombardment during the War of 1812.

In 1847, during the Mexican-American War, U.S. forces under Gen. Winfield Scott took control of Mexico City.

In 1861, the first naval engagement of the Civil War took place as the USS Colorado attacked and sank the Confederate private schooner Judah off Pensacola, Florida.

In 1867, the first volume of "Das Kapital" by Karl Marx was published in Hamburg, Germany.

In 1927, modern dance pioneer Isadora Duncan died in Nice, France, when her scarf became entangled in a wheel of the sports car she was riding in.

In 1982, Princess Grace of Monaco, formerly film star Grace Kelly, died at age 52 of injuries from a car crash the day before; Lebanon's president-elect, Bashir Gemayel (bah-SHEER' jeh-MAY'-el), was killed by a bomb.

In 1991, the government of South Africa, the African National Congress and the Inkatha (in-KAH'-tah) Freedom Party signed a national peace pact.

In 1994, on the 34th day of a strike by players, Acting Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig announced the 1994 season was over.

In 2001, Americans packed churches and clogged public squares on a day of remembrance for the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks. President George W. Bush prayed with his Cabinet and attended services at Washington National Cathedral, then flew to New York, where he waded into the ruins of the World Trade Center and addressed rescue workers in a flag-waving, bullhorn-wielding show of resolve.

In 2009, death claimed "Dirty Dancing" star Patrick Swayze at 57; former White House press secretary Jody Powell at age 65; and comic character actor Henry Gibson at age 73.

In 2012, fury over an anti-Muslim film ridiculing the Prophet Muhammad spread across the Muslim world, with deadly clashes near Western embassies in Tunisia and Sudan, an American fast-food restaurant set ablaze in Lebanon, and international peacekeepers attacked in the Sinai.

In 2015, Rowan County, Kentucky, clerk Kim Davis returned to work for the first time since she was jailed for defying a federal court and announced that she would no longer block her deputies from issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

In 2018, Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh denied an allegation of sexual misconduct from when he was in high school, saying, "I did not do this back in high school or at any time." (Kavanaugh would later be confirmed by the Senate.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor Walter Koenig (KAY'-nihg) is 87. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Larry Brown is 83. Singer-actor Joey Heatherton is 79. Actor Sam Neill is 76. Singer Jon "Bowzer" Bauman (Sha Na Na) is 76. Actor Robert Wisdom is 70. Rock musician Steve Berlin (Los Lobos) is 68. Country singer-songwriter Beth Nielsen Chapman is 67. Actor Mary Crosby is 64. Singer Morten Harket (a-ha) is 64. Country singer John Berry is 64. Actor Melissa Leo is 63. Actor Faith Ford is 59. Actor Jamie Kaler is 59. Actor Michelle Stafford is 58. Rock musician Mike Cooley (Drive-By Truckers) is 57. Actor Dan Cortese is 56. Contemporary Christian singer Mark Hall is 54. Actor-writer-director-producer Tyler Perry is 54. Actor Ben Garant is 53. Rock musician Craig Montoya (Tri Polar) is 53. Actor Kimberly Williams-Paisley is 52. Actor Andrew Lincoln is 50. Rapper Nas is 50. Actor Austin Basis is 47. Country singer Danielle Peck is 45. Pop singer Ayo is 43. Chef/TV personality Katie Lee is 42. Actor Sebastian Sozzi is 41. Actor Adam Lamberg is 39. Singer Alex Clare is 38. Actor Chad Duell (TV: "General Hospital") is 36. Actor Jessica Brown Findlay is 36. Actor-singer Logan Henderson is 34. Actor Emma Kenney is 24.