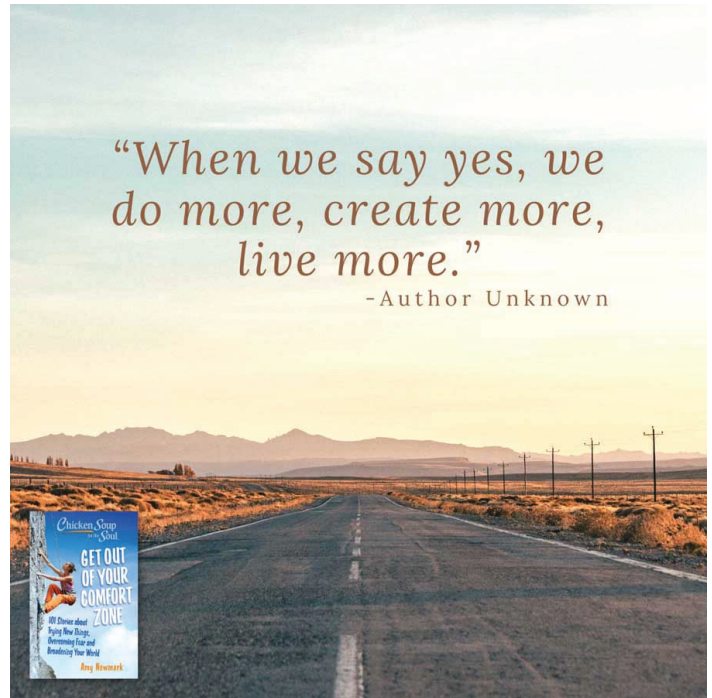


# Groton Daily Independent

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*"When we say yes, we do more, create more, live more."*

-Author Unknown

Main, open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.  
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.  
Junior High Football hosts Sisseton, 4 p.m.  
Volleyball at Warner: 7th at 5:15, 8th at 6:30, JV at 6:30 with varsity to follow.  
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.; Conde Ad Council

## Wednesday, Sept. 20

Senior Menu: Sloppy Joe on bun, oven roasted potatoes, mixed vegetables, acini depepi fruit salad.  
St. John's Lutheran Bible Study, 2:45 pm.; Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.  
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.  
Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm  
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.

## Thursday, Sept. 21

Senior Menu: Chicken Alfredo, California blend, peaches, whole wheat bread.  
Boys Golf at Sisseton, 10 a.m.  
Boys Soccer hosts James Valley Christian, 4 p.m.

**OPEN!** Recycling Trailer in Groton  
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

## Monday, Sept. 18

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

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

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

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

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

Cross Country at Clear Lake, 4 p.m.

Junior High Football hosts Webster, 4 p.m.

Junior Varsity Football hosts Webster, 5 p.m.

Youth Football hosts Doland, 7 p.m.

## Tuesday, Sept. 19

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

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

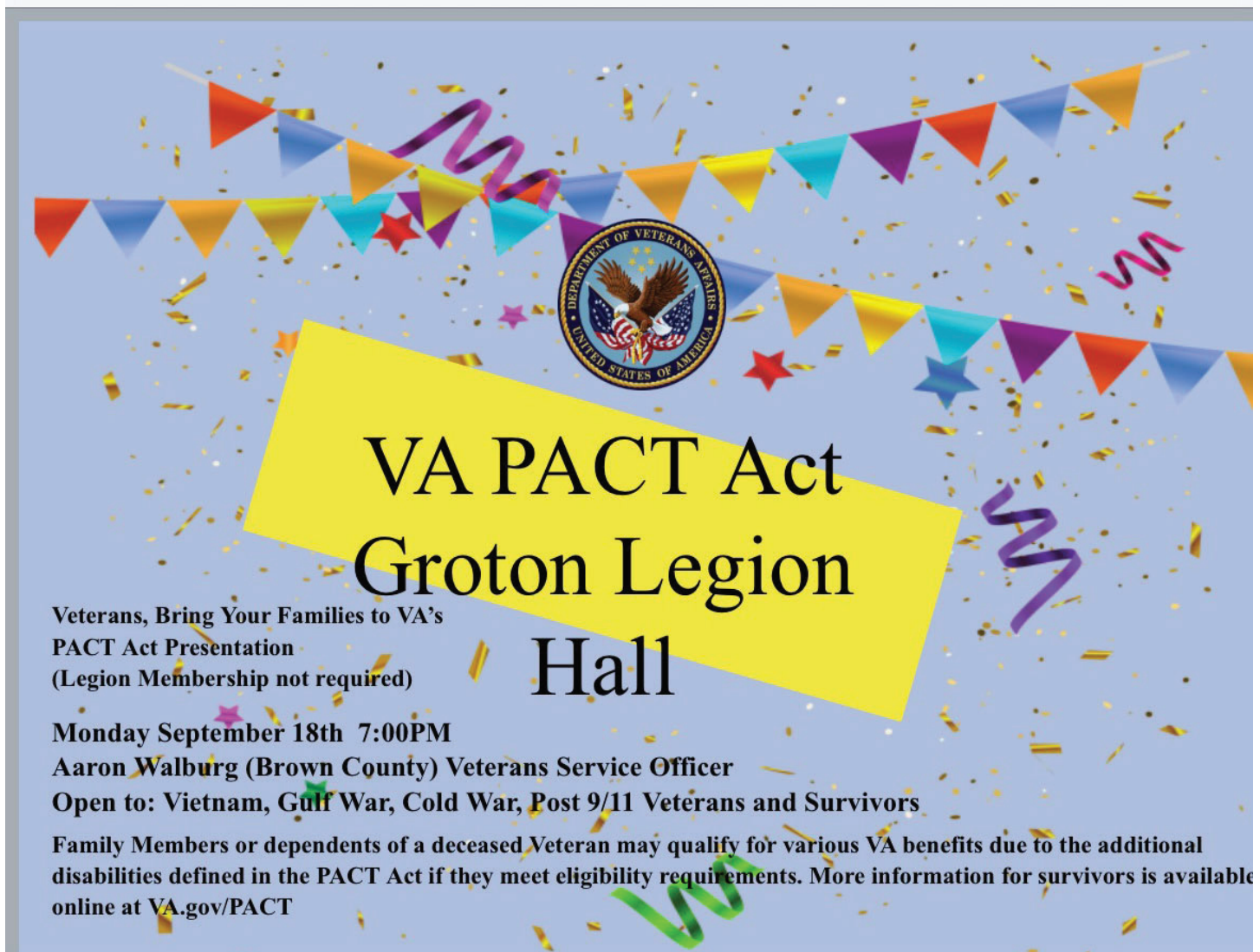
The Pantry at Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N

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

The shop. cans.

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A festive poster for a VA PACT Act presentation. The background is light blue with colorful triangular bunting (red, blue, yellow, purple) and gold confetti. A central yellow banner contains the text 'VA PACT Act Groton Legion Hall'. Above the banner is the official seal of the Department of Veterans Affairs, featuring an eagle with wings spread, holding an olive branch and arrows, with the text 'DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS' and 'UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'. Below the banner, text provides details about the event: 'Veterans, Bring Your Families to VA's PACT Act Presentation (Legion Membership not required)', 'Monday September 18th 7:00PM', 'Aaron Walburg (Brown County) Veterans Service Officer', and 'Open to: Vietnam, Gulf War, Cold War, Post 9/11 Veterans and Survivors'. A final paragraph explains that family members of deceased veterans may qualify for VA benefits under the PACT Act and provides the website VA.gov/PACT.

**VA PACT Act  
Groton Legion  
Hall**

Veterans, Bring Your Families to VA's  
PACT Act Presentation  
(Legion Membership not required)

**Monday September 18th 7:00PM**  
**Aaron Walburg (Brown County) Veterans Service Officer**  
**Open to: Vietnam, Gulf War, Cold War, Post 9/11 Veterans and Survivors**

Family Members or dependents of a deceased Veteran may qualify for various VA benefits due to the additional disabilities defined in the PACT Act if they meet eligibility requirements. More information for survivors is available online at [VA.gov/PACT](https://VA.gov/PACT)

## Jackson County Fatal Crash

What: Vehicle-pedestrian crash

Where: Interstate 90 mile marker 164, one mile east of Belvidere

When: 2:07 a.m., Sat., Sept. 16, 2023

Driver No. 1: Male, 55, no injuries

Vehicle No. 1: 2018 Chevrolet Silverado pickup

Pedestrian: Male, 55, fatal injuries

Belvidere, S.D.: One person died early Saturday morning in a vehicle-pedestrian crash east of Belvidere, S.D.

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

Preliminary crash information indicates that a 2018 Chevrolet Silverado pickup was traveling east on Interstate 90 near mile marker 164. A male pedestrian entered the roadway from the median. The driver of the Silverado applied his brakes but was unable to avoid a collision with the pedestrian. The pedestrian received fatal injuries.

The 55-year-old male driver of the Silverado was not injured. He was wearing a seat belt.

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



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

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

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

**Apply at Ken's in Groton SD.**



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**When you are helping with GDILIVE.COM, you just never know what you are going to get yourself into. At the Clark/Willow Lake volleyball match, the guy operating their livestream equipment asked if they could use our commentary over their network. Instead of wearing two hats, Ryan Tracy was wearing two headsets during the volleyball match.**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

**Coach Shaun Wanner has taped up his share of ankles over his 37 years of coaching. Here he is taping up Teylor Diegel's ankle prior to the Deuel football game.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



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BROWN COUNTY  
BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA  
REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2023, 8:45 A.M.

COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS, COURTHOUSE ANNEX - 25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD

1. Call To Order - Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Opportunity for Public Comment
4. Rachel Kippley, Fair Manager – Bid Opening for Fair Entertainment Contracts
5. Mike Scott, Landfill Manager – Bid Opening for Landfill Scale
6. Second Reading & Possible Adoption: Ordinance #255 – Amending Portions of Title 4 Zoning
7. First Reading of Ordinance #256 – Amend Portions of Title 4 Zoning & Addition for Solar Energy Systems
8. Judy Dosch, Building Superintendent – Review Quotes for replacing A/C Unit at 1<sup>st</sup> Street Building
9. Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent
  - a. Surplus Equipment
  - b. Discuss Speed Zone Change
  - c. FEMA Update
  - d. Elm Lake Bridge Certification – Approve & Authorize Chairman to sign certifications
  - e. Department Update
10. Consent Calendar
  - a. Approval of General Meeting Minutes from September 5, 2023
  - b. Claims/Payroll
  - c. HR Report
  - d. Landfill Tonnage Report for August
  - e. Leases
  - f. Travel Requests
  - g. Claim Assignments
  - h. Auditors Report of Accounts for July 2023
11. Other Business
12. Executive Session (if requested per SDCL 1-25-2)
13. Adjourn

Brown County Commission Meeting

**Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone.**

<https://meet.goto.com/BrCoCommission>

**You can also dial in using your phone.** United States: [+1 \(872\) 240-3311](tel:+18722403311)

**Access Code:** 601-168-909 #

Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://meet.goto.com/install>

Public comment provides an opportunity for the public to address the county commission - Presentations may not exceed 3 minutes.

Public comment will be limited to 10 minutes (or at the discretion of the board)

Public comment will be accepted virtually when the virtual attendance option is available.

**Official Recordings of Commission Meetings along with the Minutes can be found at <https://www.brown.sd.us/node/454>**

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BUDGET WORK SESSION FOLLOWING THE COMMISSION MEETING












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## Girls soccer team at number two

The Groton Area soccer team remains at the number two spot in the state according to the SDHSAA seeding. Groton Area and Tea Area will battle it out in Tea on Saturday in a game that will be broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM.













#	Name	Season				Seed Pts
		W	L	T	PCT	<u>PTS</u>
1	 Tea Area	6	2	1	.722	43.500
2	 Groton Area	6	1	1	.812	43.312
3	 Sioux Falls Christian	6	3	1	.650	42.722
4	 West Central	8	2	0	.800	42.000
5	 Dakota Valley	5	5	0	.500	40.111
6	 Vermillion	4	5	0	.444	39.556
7	 St. Thomas More	3	7	0	.300	39.000
8	 Garretson	1	8	0	.111	35.889
9	 Belle Fourche	0	11	0	.000	35.091

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## Boys Soccer standings

The Groton Area boys soccer team will be hosting James Valley Christian on Thursday in an effort to avenge an earlier loss to the Vikings.

#	Name	Season				Seed	Pts
		W	L	T	PCT		<u>PTS</u>
1	 Sioux Falls Christian	11	0	1	.958		44.458
2	 Tea Area	5	4	0	.556		41.444
3	 Vermillion	6	2	0	.750		41.125
4	 Freeman Academy	3	1	2	.667		40.333
5	 Belle Fourche	4	5	0	.444		40.111
6	 James Valley Christian	3	4	2	.444		39.556
7	 St. Thomas More	2	7	0	.222		37.444
8	 Dakota Valley	0	4	2	.167		37.333
9	 Custer	3	3	2	.500		36.714
10	 West Central	0	7	1	.062		36.562
11	 Groton Area	2	5	0	.286		36.429
12	 Hot Springs	1	6	1	.188		36.062

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## Groton Community Transit

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

Dear Groton family,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

*Dam Hansen & Eugenia Strom*

Groton Transit

Steve Smith, Sherry Koehler, Topper Tostad, Dick Kolker



## “Breast Cancer Can Affect Anyone”

My mother had 6 siblings, 16 aunts and uncles, and innumerable cousins. She was the first of them all to be diagnosed with breast cancer.

I think of my mom every time one of my patients tells me they aren't concerned about breast cancer because it doesn't run in their family. Unfortunately, that is true of most people who are diagnosed with the disease.

I also think of my mother every time I do a breast exam, or teach someone else how to do a self exam. Her breast cancer was one not detectable by the mammogram technology available in the early 2000s. Even today, with 3D mammograms, not all breast cancer can be seen on routine screenings. She found her cancer herself, by noticing a change in her breast. Her diagnosis was delayed, however, because, having had multiple previous biopsies that turned out to be “nothing,” she prioritized all the other things she had to do that spring over going to her doctor.

The importance of being vigilant for these changes is not limited to one gender. Although most breast cancer patients are female, approximately 1% are male. Anyone who notices a change in their breast should be seen by a clinician.

Breast cancer detection has changed dramatically since my mother was diagnosed. 3D mammograms, which present clearer images to the radiologist, are routine. Contrast Enhanced Spectral mammography and breast MRI offer new tools to high risk individuals, women with abnormal screening mammograms, and their health care teams. People known to be at high risk might take medication to reduce that risk, and might undergo more frequent imaging and exams. Genetic counseling and genetic testing help us identify those who could benefit from this close follow up.

Breast cancer treatment has also changed dramatically. Advances in surgical treatment have reduced the risk of post operative complications, such as lymphedema: chronic swelling caused by the disruption in the flow of fluid through the lymph nodes. Specialized testing of a person's cancer lets oncologists identify those patients most likely to benefit from chemotherapy. Conversely, it also lets them identify those who might skip it. New classes of medications offer hope even to people whose cancer has spread, and improve the tolerability and effectiveness of old medications. We've gotten better at helping patients, and their families, navigate the challenges that come with the disease and its treatments.

Many things in medicine have changed over the 25 years I've been practicing. The advances in cancer treatment may well be some of the most exciting. But some old wisdom still holds true: If you notice a change in your breast, please get it checked out. Even if you had a normal mammogram a few months ago.

Debra Johnson, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org) and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show providing health information based on science, built on trust for 22 Seasons, on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



Based on Science, Built on Trust



**Debra Johnson, M.D.**

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: How can I be a more environmentally responsible parent? – Betsy E., Boston, MA

Sustainable parenting isn't easy given all the ways modern society has become largely a profusion of disposable products. Besides making conscious decisions about the products you buy, you also have to think about teaching your kids to do the right thing—and you can never start too early.

One way to do the right thing by the planet is opting for reusable diapers. The average American baby uses 7,000 disposable diapers over the course of a typical three-year run. Some 200,000 trees are cut down each year in the U.S. alone to provide the wood pulp found in diapers. To make matters worse, the diaper's plastic and absorbent polymers are not recyclable.

Nowadays you can purchase reusable diapers at a local Walmart or Target, or online. Popular brands include Cotton Babies, Nora's Nursery and Green Mountain. Many people are concerned about the washing process, but it is relatively simple. For liquid waste, you should pre-rinse the diaper with water. For solid waste, you should allocate a spatula or knife as a "scraper" and dispose of the waste in the toilet. You can purchase a dry pail to hold the diapers until laundry day. Keep in mind, reusable diapers must be washed with water that is at least 140 degrees Fahrenheit (60 degrees Celsius) to kill bacteria.

Another environmental hazard of parenthood is baby wet wipes. Almost all, even the "flushable" ones, contain microplastics which do not biodegrade. This causes buildup in pipes because grease tends to accumulate on the plastic. Also, these microplastics can get into local water bodies and be ingested by marine wildlife. A solution is to create your own reusable wet wipes. Buy cotton or bamboo baby washcloths and cut them into eight-inch by eight-inch squares. For the wipe solution, oft-used ingredients include aloe vera, gentle baby wash or Castile soap, natural oils, and water. Other recipes can be found online. You can keep this solution in a spray bottle to use when needed. Store not-yet-used wipes in a clean airtight container. Spray them thoroughly with the solution before use. Store soiled wipes in a dry pail until you do laundry. As with reusable diapers, you should scrape off solid waste before washing.

Another major source of waste from kids is toys, most of which are made of cheap plastic and end up in landfills. According to the Yale Environmental Review, toys constitute six percent of landfill plastics worldwide. Today, there are many online services where you can order a monthly subscription for rentable plastic and wooden toys. If your child gets bored, you can send the old toys in and receive new ones in the mail in the matter of days. The toys that you send in are sanitized and sent to other families.

Aside from these options, you could also make homemade food to reduce packaging waste. Buying second-hand clothes is also a simple and cheaper way to reduce your landfill footprint. But arguably, the most important thing you can do is to educate your children about environmental issues and encourage sustainable practices..



**Teaching your kids the importance of sustainability makes parenting more complex these days than ever before.** Credit: Pexels.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Child care shortage drives construction contractor to create his own solution

**Community throws support behind effort to fill need in town of 1,300**

**BY: JOHN HULT - SEPTEMBER 17, 2023 7:00 AM**

Platte has been good to Tyler Samuelson and his family.

Over the past 15 years, the owner of Summit Contracting has seen his family's business grow into the largest employer in the south-central South Dakota town.

Lately, Platte's meager 1,300 population has become a problem for the growing business, which manufactures "anything on the farm for a farmer," as Samuelson describes his company's work.

"People were turning down job opportunities because they couldn't find child care," Samuelson said.

It's the sort of scenario lawmakers and advocates discuss when they talk about a child care crisis in South Dakota, and it's talk that's appeared more frequently in the past few years.

The state received \$100 million for child care from the federal American Rescue Plan Act in 2021, of which \$62 million was awarded as stabilization grants to 600 providers across the state. The other \$38 million is being used for grants to new and expanding child care centers, and for related initiatives to bolster the child care industry.

The Sioux Falls Child Care Collaborative recently released a road map for dealing with the issue that includes a list of steps private companies can take to help solve the problem.

Samuelson didn't know a thing about road maps or child care talking points last fall. He only knew the problem had been a hiring roadblock for at least five years.

What he moved to do at that point, however – and quickly found support for doing across his community — was almost exactly what the collaborative's report suggests that private companies ought to: partner with child care professionals to start a day care center.

At first, the idea was a center for Summit employees alone.

That plan changed early on in the information-gathering phase of the project. Platte has at least 175 kids of day care age, just one child care center with a capacity of 42, and a handful of in-home day cares.

"We quickly realized that the need was a heck of a lot bigger than just Summit," he said.

#### **Seating a board, hiring a boss**

Samuelson didn't know much about child care, but he knew someone who did: Rachel Lampy.

Lampy has a degree in early childhood education and more than a decade of experience in the business, mostly in Pierre, a city up the Missouri River from Platte.

Lampy had long wanted to start her own nonprofit child care center, but it wasn't in the cards for her in the capital city.

"There's a building in Pierre that I always thought should be a day care," Lampy said. "I looked at how I would renovate it, what I would do, but I never had any type of funding to be able to do it. I never had that community support, which you need to be successful."

She'd find that support in Platte. Samuelson had the capital and the team to build, and other businesses and community leaders were on board. He knew it ought to be a nonprofit, and Lampy helped guide Samuelson through the process of founding one.

"I told him, 'If you're going to do a nonprofit, you need a board, and then you need to hire me — like do



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an interview, do everything you guys need to do, because I might not be your right person," Lampy said.

The nonprofit Platte Community Development Corporation, meanwhile, pitched in as a way station for donations as Samuelson built a board of directors and filed organizational paperwork.

"We took their donations until they got their 501(c)(3) status," said Colette Mesman, the development corporation's director. "We didn't have the money to back them, but we worked to back them in any way we could."

That support was one reason the center, dubbed Panther Cubs Academy (the local school's mascot is the Black Panther), went from idea to open doors in less than a year.

Local contractors were hired for the plumbing, windows and door frames, and local businesses later donated items to a fundraising raffle.

The other day care center in town, also a nonprofit, was a helpful collaborator and threw its support behind the project, largely as a way to ease its own burden in a town with more young kids than both centers could handle, even combined.

"We didn't pull any kids from the existing nonprofit day care in town, nor did we pull any employees," said Samuelson.

By mid-August, Panther Cubs Academy was complete. There are currently six employees, counting Lampy, who care for about 50 children, and the center has space to expand.

"It's been a whirlwind, honestly," she said. "I thought it was never going to happen."

## Concert rallies community

The support has been meaningful and helpful, but it hasn't met every financial need.

Samuelson didn't donate the building and the work it took to put it up. Instead, he said, the company did the job at cost and diverted employees from their typical on-farm work to build the center.

"The time we spent doing it, we could have been using those crews and those individuals on projects that would generate profit," Samuelson said. "So we gave up profit in order to do the project. So I mean, that's a number, it's hard to put a value on, but it's a lot."

Samuelson and his wife have also donated to the nonprofit, he said, but there's still a funding gap.

In hopes of covering some of the \$1.2 million cost of the project, the academy hired a Sioux Falls company to plan a fundraiser. Organizers went all-in on the kind of event rarely associated with child care: a formal dinner and concert.

The proceeds from ticket sales for the recent show with the Nashville band Hudson Valley went to support the center, as did proceeds from a three-course dinner served that evening. Those who didn't want to spend their evening with the country band were encouraged to bid during live and silent auctions, or to simply donate online.

The auction items, the food and drinks, even the stage for the band, came in as donations to the center, Lampy said, all in hopes of finding firm financial footing to break even in daily operations.

"That's our goal," Lampy said. "We want to be sustainable."

Just under 300 people attended the show. Mesman, director of the Platte Development Corporation, said her organization helped rally local businesses for support.

Those Main Street businesses "get hit up for everything" when local fundraising needs emerge, Mesman said, but support for the center was an easy sell. Those business owners were as happy to see Samuelson and Lampy pick up the cause of child care as anyone else in town, she said.

"Both of them kind of went out on a limb, so we're blessed to have them in our community," Mesman said.

Final fundraising figures are still being tallied, according to the event's organizers, but Samuelson said he's already been impressed by the number of people who've pulled out a checkbook. Summit is doing well enough that it was able to "hold the elephant in its mouth" and absorb the building costs up front, Samuelson said, but the donations collected before the event signal the community's intention to pull its share of the weight.

The project did get a boost from one of the child care grants offered by the state, but the \$362,000 sent to the center through that program can only be used for health and safety items, appliances and

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upgrades. The money can't be used for construction.

The donations collected at the event will help cover the cost of the building. Donations beyond that in the coming years will help fund the operations.

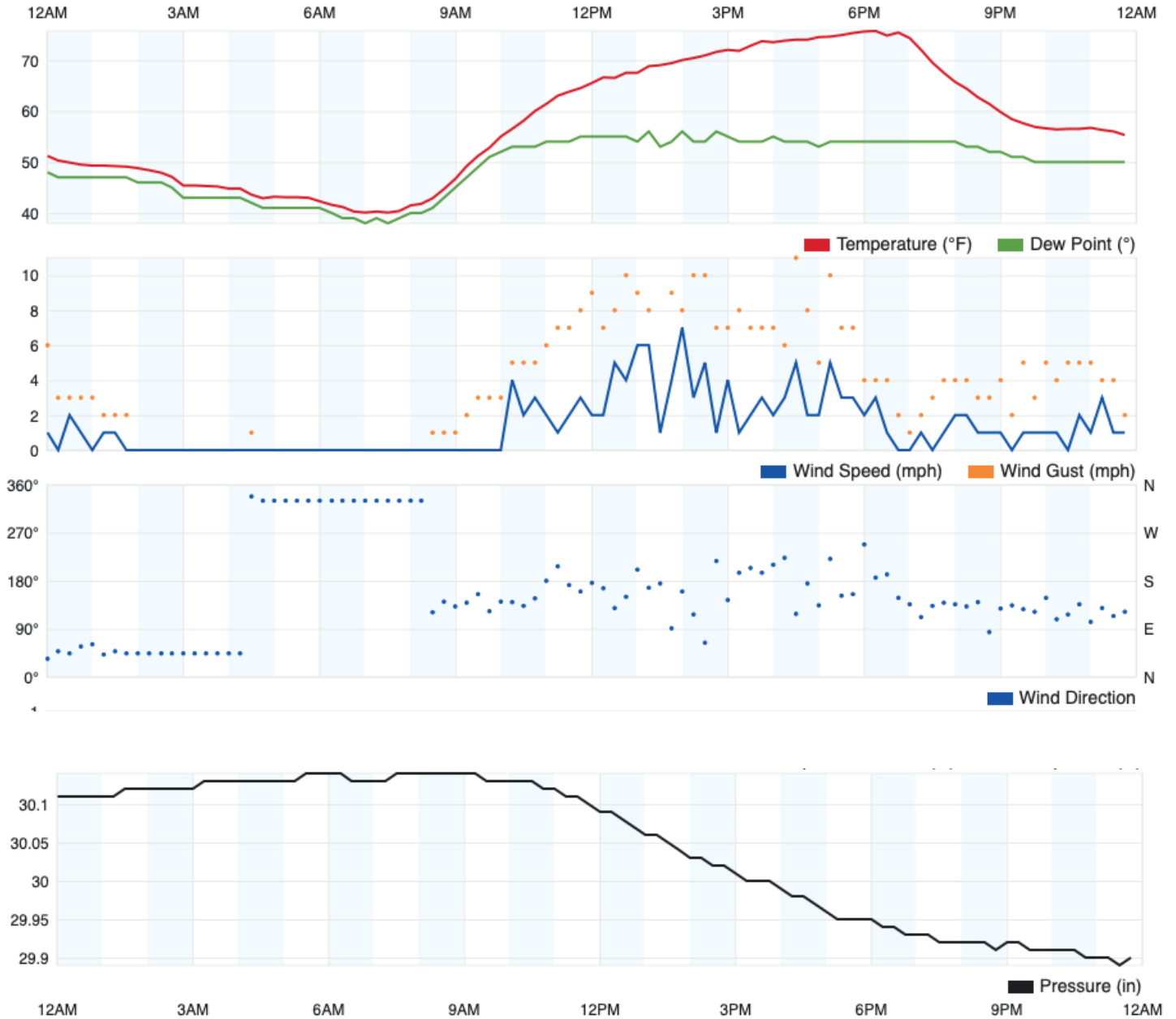
"It's our hope that after this weekend's event, we will have covered half the project cost," Samuelson said. "That's exceeded our expectations."

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

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



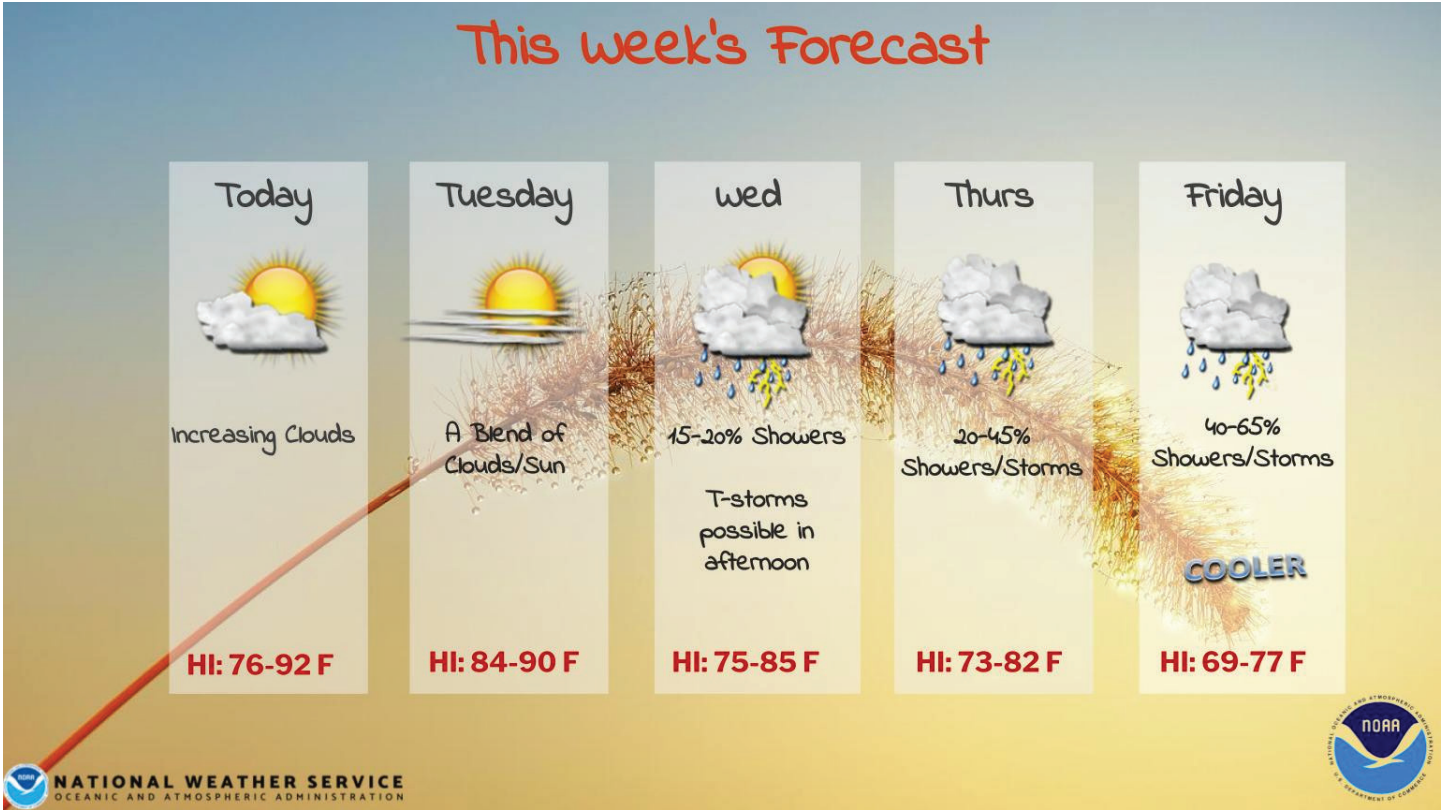


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Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
						
Increasing Clouds	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance Showers then Chance T-storms
High: 79 °F	Low: 51 °F	High: 87 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 80 °F	Low: 57 °F	High: 78 °F

## This week's Forecast



It is going to feel a little more like Summer for the next few days as temperatures will be above average ranging from the upper 70s to around 90. Temps will cool back down to around average towards the weekend. Our attention turns to the end of the week and into the weekend as confidence is increasing on chances of showers and thunderstorms. As the models are not lining up quiet yet, low confidence exists on timing and precip amounts.

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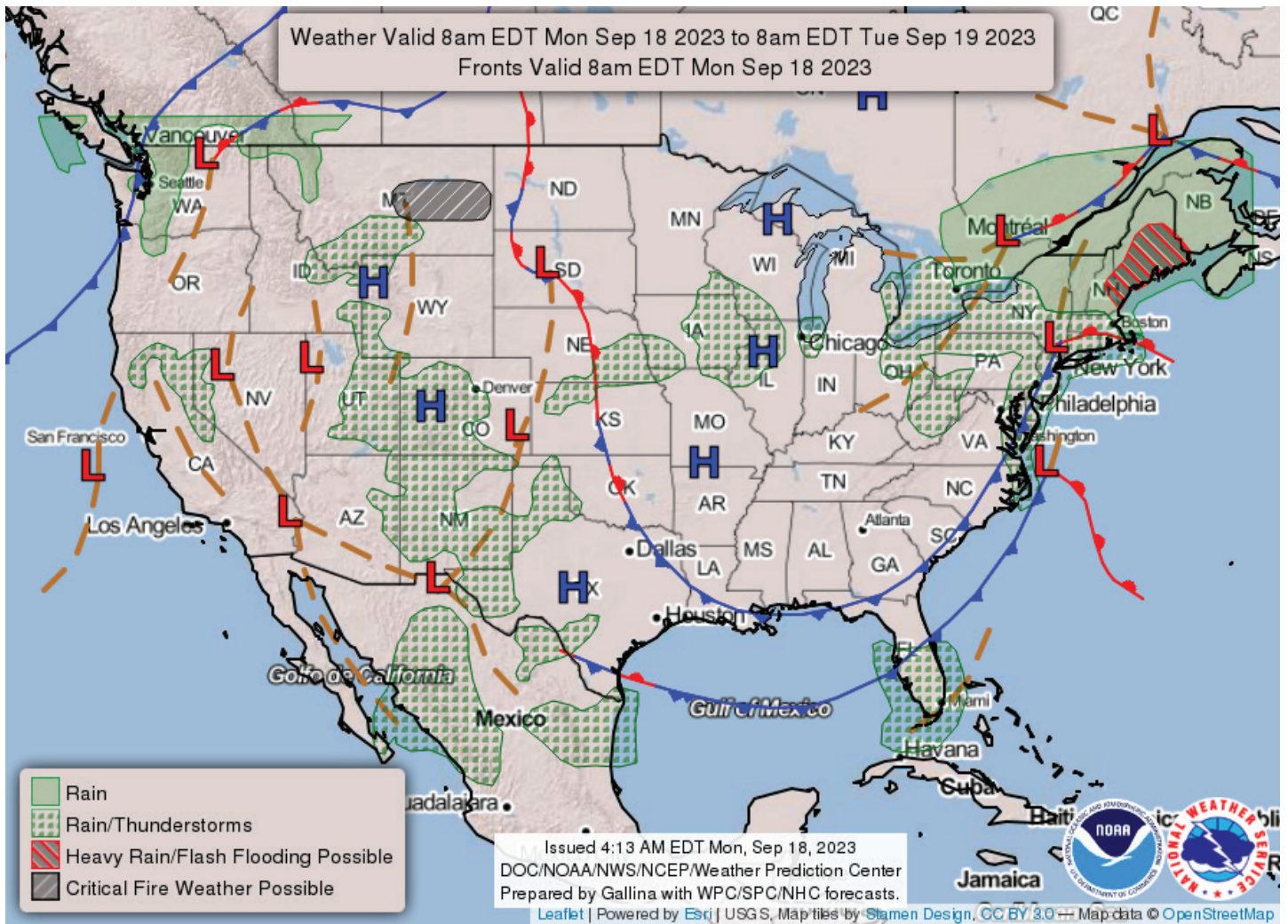
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 76 °F at 6:12 PM**  
**Low Temp: 40 °F at 6:57 AM**  
**Wind: 11 mph at 4:29 PM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 21 hours, 26 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 95 in 2000  
Record Low: 22 in 1896  
Average High: 74  
Average Low: 46  
Average Precip in Sept.: 1.20  
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.57  
Average Precip to date: 17.54  
Precip Year to Date: 19.16  
Sunset Tonight: 7:39:54 PM  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:14:21 AM



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## Today in Weather History

September 18, 2000: Mid-September record to near record heat occurred across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. Aberdeen, Kennebec, Pierre, and Wheaton all set record highs for the day. Aberdeen and Wheaton set record highs of 95 degrees. Kennebec rose to a record high of 99 degrees while Pierre rose to 104 degrees on this day in 2000. Some of the near record highs occurred at Timber Lake and Mobridge with 92 degrees and 97 degrees, respectively.

1926: The great "Miami Hurricane" produced winds of 138 mph that drove ocean waters into the Biscayne Bay drowning 135 persons. The eye of the hurricane passed over Miami, at which time the barometric pressure reached 27.61 inches. Tides up to twelve feet high accompanied the storm, which claimed a total of 372 lives.

1941: One of the greatest aurora borealis or northern lights ever observed in the central Atlantic and mid-central portions of the U.S. occurred on the night of September 18-19th. The displays continued from twilight until just before dawn and were observed as far south as Florida and southern California.

1987 - Early morning thunderstorms in northern Texas produced wind gusts to 65 mph at Sulphur Springs, and 2.50 inches of rain in one hour at Commerce, which caused widespread street flooding. Bonham TX received 4.50 inches of rain which also resulted in widespread street flooding as Pig Branch overflowed its banks. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A strong cold front produced severe thunderstorms in the north central U.S. High winds behind the cold front gusted to 92 mph at Fort Collins CO, and up to a foot of snow blanketed the mountains of Montana, with seven inches reported at Great Falls. High winds in Colorado caused three million dollars damage. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Hurricane Hugo hit Puerto Rico, producing wind gusts to 92 mph at San Juan, and wind gusts to 120 mph at Roosevelt Roads. Hugo produced a storm surge of four to six feet, and northeastern sections of the island were deluged with more than ten inches of rain. Hugo claimed the lives of a dozen persons in Puerto Rico, and caused a billion dollars damage, including 100 million dollars damage to crops. Thunderstorms representing what remained of Hurricane Octave continued to bring heavy rain to the valleys of northern California. Heavier 24 hour rainfall totals included 3.15 inches at Redding, and 2.66 inches at Red Bluff. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### HE BOWLED THREE HUNDRED!

Tombstones are lasting reminders of what people accomplished in life. One that is very interesting and impressive is in Wisconsin. It reads: "He bowled 300 in 1962."

Do you wonder, as I do, if that was his greatest achievement in life? Or, how many games did he bowl before he had a perfect game? Or, was it the first game he ever bowled and it surprised him so very much that he never bowled again? We'll never know.

But one thing we do know is that we will all be remembered by someone for something. Paul made a most interesting observation about life's accomplishments. He was writing to the Philippians about his achievements. Reading them is like reading the resume of one of the world's great leaders. They are very impressive. But, after mentioning them, he pulled the rug out from under his own feet. After what sounds like someone bragging about what they had accomplished, he concluded his resume by adding: "But because of Christ, I decided that all of my worldly accomplishments are worth nothing."

Paul always had the proper perspective. Whatever he achieved in his life before his conversion did not matter to him. However, after he became a follower of Christ, he simply wanted to be remembered for one thing: his relationship with Christ and what he did for Him. Everything else, for him, was "worthless trash." What will your tombstone read?

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to place serving You first and foremost in our lives. May we be remembered for what we did for You and through You, because of You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. Philippians 3:4-11



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

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## 2023 Community Events

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

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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.15.23

5 13 29 50 53 25

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$183,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 13  
DRAW: Mins 19 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.16.23

23 30 34 40 41 3

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$2,150,000**

NEXT 16 Hrs 28 Mins 19  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.17.23

11 15 17 24 48 13

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 16 Hrs 43 Mins  
DRAW: 20 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.16.23

5 12 19 28 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$46,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 43  
DRAW: Mins 20 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.16.23

10 27 30 43 47 6

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 12 Mins 20  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.16.23

8 11 19 24 46 5

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$638,000,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 12 Mins 20  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### Stricker wins 6th of the year on PGA Tour Champions and sets record for season earnings

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Steve Stricker holed a 20-foot eagle putt to catch K.J. Choi and then picked up a pair of late birdies that sent him to a 4-under 66 on Sunday to win the Sanford International for his sixth victory this year on the PGA Tour Champions.

Stricker earned \$300,000, leaving him just short of \$4 million for the year and setting a record for most money in a single season on the 50-and-older circuit.

He has not finished worse than eighth all year, and three of those six wins have come in majors on the senior circuit. He won the Sanford International for the third time.

"It was a battle," Stricker said. "Always on these Sunday when you're trying to win, it's a battle. But it's so rewarding when you do it."

Stricker started the final round with a one-shot lead but found himself trying to catch Choi, who got off to a fast start and closed with a 65.

Stricker was two behind when he hit a good tee shot down the left side of the fairway on the par-5 12th at Minnehaha Country Club, leaving him a mid-iron to 20 feet that set up his eagle. He drove into a bunker and got-up-and-down for birdie on the 15th for a one-shot lead.

On the par-5 16th, he was out of position off the tee and had to lay up. But he hit wedge to 8 feet and holed the birdie putt to stay one ahead. Choi played in the group in front of him and bogeyed the last, giving Stricker a two-shot lead and room for error.

Stricker three-putted the 18th from long range and finished at 16-under 194.

"I kind of limped it in," Stricker said. "But I knew I had a couple of shots to play with."

Choi, trying to win for the second time on the PGA Tour Champions, shot 30 on the front to set the target and didn't make a bogey until the final hole.

Joe Durant birdied his last three holes for a 68 to finish alone in third. He was followed by Bernhard Langer, who shot a 64 to finish alone in fourth.

Stricker is still three wins away from the record for most titles in a single, and only five tournaments remain on the PGA Tour Champions. For now, he has a lead of more than \$2 million in the Charles Schwab Cup.

AP golf: <https://apnews.com/hub/golf>

### Republican legislatures flex muscles to keep power in closely divided North Carolina and Wisconsin

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI and GARY ROBERTSON Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — In 2020, North Carolina seemed the model of an evenly-divided swing state. Then-President Donald Trump barely won, beating Democrat Joe Biden by just over a percentage point. Meanwhile, the state's Democratic governor, Roy Cooper, won reelection by a relatively comfortable 5 points.

Even last year, as Republicans won two seats on the state Supreme Court, North Carolina's congressional delegation split evenly between Democrats and the GOP.

But it's the Republican Party that is making the decisions in the state, thanks to recent seat gains in the legislature and aggressive stances from GOP lawmakers. It has passed voting changes over Democrats' objections and this week could vote to wrest power from the governor over how the state's elections are run.

In both cases, Republicans are expected to override the governor's veto thanks to their legislative supermajorities.

Those major changes will come on the heels of similar power plays by the Republican legislative majority

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in Wisconsin, another battleground state where the GOP has lost a series of statewide races.

Republican lawmakers there are trying to fire the state's nonpartisan elections director and are considering impeaching a newly elected justice on the state Supreme Court. Her victory earlier this year gave the court a liberal majority that could strike down the Republican gerrymander that has given the party its outsized statehouse clout. Wisconsin voters have elected Democrats to all but one of the statewide executive offices that are decided on a partisan basis.

While both parties engage in gerrymandering, the dynamics in North Carolina and Wisconsin go beyond mere redistricting fights and offer a vivid illustration of how Republicans are attempting to maintain power regardless of their level of support among voters. The moves could give the GOP disproportionate influence over everything from partisan redistricting to the certification of next year's presidential election.

"The fact that these are both purple states is ironically what leads to the brass knuckles politics we see in Wisconsin and North Carolina," said Chris Cooper, a political scientist at Western Carolina University. In both states, he said, Republican politicians feel "they need to act because they could legitimately lose power."

Republicans in Wisconsin and North Carolina are aided by their parties' geographic distribution during statehouse elections. Democrats are clustered in two metro areas of each state — Milwaukee and Madison in Wisconsin, and Charlotte and the Raleigh-Durham area in North Carolina. That makes it more likely that even fairly drawn legislative districts covering urban areas will be overloaded with Democrats, leaving fewer of the party's voters to compete elsewhere and giving the GOP an edge in the remaining seats.

In North Carolina, even with the congressional delegation splitting evenly last year, Republicans won close to a supermajority of seats in the state legislature. They achieved that status this year when a Democratic House member switched her party.

Michael Bitzer, a political science professor at North Carolina's Catawba College, said less than 15% of the precincts were competitive statewide in 2022.

"It doesn't take much creativity to tilt districts one way or another," he said.

The GOP-controlled North Carolina General Assembly had tried to tilt districts more aggressively, drawing maps that favored them even more. Their plan was struck down by the Democratic majority on the state Supreme Court as an illegal gerrymander.

But Republicans are now in the majority on the court, which has signaled that the legislature is clear to draw the districts to more aggressively favor the party next year. That could lock in their supermajority status for several more election cycles.

That's occurring as the legislature muscled through two election bills that are propelled partly by Republican voters' lingering beliefs of Trump's lies that voter fraud cost him the 2020 election. One bill would end the state's three-day grace period for mailed ballots arriving after Election Day and loosen poll-watching rules in a way that critics worry could lead to intimidation of voters.

The other is potentially more consequential. It would strip the governor of the power to appoint members of the state election board and give that authority to the legislature.

Bill proponents say having leaders of both major parties picking equal numbers of board members would promote bipartisanship and consensus election policies.

But critics say having a board split evenly between the two parties would lead to gridlock, creating a situation where the stalemates would be settled by the Republican-controlled legislature or the Republican-dominated courts — a possibility that could include next year's presidential contest.

The legislation also could lead to the possible ouster of the state's respected elections director just months before the presidential election. There have been no widespread problems or concerns with voting in North Carolina under her watch.

"I've spoken out against these moves that are not about election security," Cooper told reporters this past week. "They are only about keeping and gaining power for Republicans."

Republicans contend the legislature should have more supervision of voting and other key regulatory functions. A bill already vetoed by Cooper would erode his appointment powers to boards that set electricity rates, make environmental policies and build roads.

"The legislature is the elected body closest to the people of North Carolina and has the ability to recruit



a qualified, diverse roster of appointees," Republican state Sen. Warren Daniel, a sponsor of the broader appointments bill, said recently.

That's been a theme of North Carolina governance for centuries. The state has stood out for having an unusually strong legislature and weak governor, who was the last in the nation to be able to veto legislation, only gaining that power in 1997.

"Our state was founded with the notion that the legislative branch would be the branch with the most authority," House Speaker Tim Moore told reporters in June. "Our state's not set up with three separate co-equal branches. It was clearly contemplated and spelled out in the (state) Constitution that the legislative branch was to have the most authority because it's the closest to people."

That stands in sharp contrast with Wisconsin, where until recently the Legislature acted like a fairly typical law-making body. But since Republicans won the statehouse in 2010 and drew heavily gerrymandered maps that guaranteed their party's control of both chambers, the Legislature has become increasingly confrontational with the states' Democratic governor, Tony Evers.

Republican lawmakers blocked Evers from installing many appointees on state boards. Last week, the state Senate voted to fire the state's nonpartisan election director, drawing an immediate legal challenge. After voters overwhelmingly elected a Democratic-backed justice to the state Supreme Court earlier this year, flipping the majority from conservative to liberal for the first time in 15 years, the Legislature threatened to impeach her — even before she had heard a case.

Last week, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos offered to drop the impeachment if Democrats agreed to a new redistricting process he cast as nonpartisan, something Evers rejected as a sham proposal. To Dale Schultz, a former Republican state senator, the sharpness of Evers' rejection symbolized the depths to which Wisconsin politics have plunged.

"Nobody wants half a loaf; they'd rather starve," Schultz said. He reserved most of his scorn, however, for the Legislature's maneuvers.

"We see increasingly desperate measures to hang onto power," he said.

Riccardi reported from Denver. Associated Press writers Scott Bauer and Harm Venhuizen in Madison, Wisconsin, contributed to this report.

## **Judge will hold hearing on ex-DOJ official's request to move Georgia election case to federal court**

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A federal judge who rejected efforts by former Trump White House chief of staff Mark Meadows to move his charges in the Georgia election subversion case to federal court is set to hear arguments Monday from former Justice Department official Jeffrey Clark on the same issue.

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis has accused Clark and Meadows, along with former President Donald Trump and 16 others, of participating in a wide-ranging scheme to overturn Democrat Joe Biden's presidential election victory and keep Trump in power. The 41-count indictment includes charges under the state's anti-racketeering law. All 19 defendants have pleaded not guilty.

Clark is one of five defendants seeking to move his case to federal court. U.S. District Judge Steve Jones, who will preside over Monday's hearing, rejected Meadows' attempt for removal earlier this month, saying the actions outlined in the indictment were taken on behalf of the Trump campaign and were not part of his official duties. While the ruling could signal an uphill battle for Clark and the others, Jones made clear he would assess each case individually.

The practical effects of moving to federal court would be a jury pool that includes a broader area than just overwhelmingly Democratic Fulton County and a trial that would not be photographed or televised, as cameras are not allowed inside federal courtrooms. But it would not open the door for Trump, if he's reelected in 2024, or another president to issue pardons because any conviction would still happen under state law.

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The indictment says Clark wrote a letter after the November 2020 election that said the Justice Department had "identified significant concerns that may have impacted the outcome of the election in multiple States, including the State of Georgia" and asked top department officials to sign it and send it to Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp and state legislative leaders. Clark knew at the time that that statement was false, the indictment alleges.

In a court filing seeking to move the charges against him to federal court from Fulton County Superior Court, lawyers for Clark argued that the actions outlined in the indictment "relate directly to his work at the Justice Department as well as with the former President of the United States." Clark was the assistant attorney general overseeing the environment and natural resources division and was the acting assistant attorney general over the civil division at the time.

"Indeed, the State has no authority whatsoever to criminalize advice given to the President by a senior Justice Department official concerning U.S. Department of Justice law enforcement policy based on a County District Attorney's disagreement with the substance or development of that advice," Clark's lawyers wrote.

They accused Willis, a Democrat, of persecuting political rivals: "It is not a good-faith prosecution; it is a political 'hit job' stretched out across 98 pages to convey the false impression that it has heft and gravity."

Prosecutors argued that Clark's two roles gave him no authority over elections or criminal investigations.

He was told by top department officials that the central claim in his letter was false, that he didn't have authority to make that claim and that it was outside the department's role, prosecutors wrote in their response. Richard Donoghue, the acting deputy attorney general, told him the letter "amounted to 'nothing less than the Department meddling in the outcome of a presidential election.'"

The law allowing federal officers to move a case to federal court "is designed to protect legitimate federal authority from state and local interference, not to afford a federal forum to individuals who blatantly sought to misuse the weight of federal authority to interfere with matters of state control," prosecutors wrote.

Meadows, who is appealing Jones' ruling, took the stand and testified for nearly four hours last month, answering questions from his own lawyer, a prosecutor and the judge. He talked about his duties as Trump's last chief of staff and sometimes struggled to recall the details of the two months following the election.

It's unclear whether Clark will also choose to testify. His lawyers on Thursday filed a 10-page sworn statement from Clark outlining his service in the Justice Department, perhaps as a substitute for having him testify and subject himself to questioning by prosecutors.

Clark was also identified as one of six unnamed co-conspirators in an indictment filed by special counsel Jack Smith charging Trump with seeking to illegally overturn the results of the 2020 election and block the peaceful transfer of power to Biden. He has not been charged in that case.

Federal agents searched Clark's Virginia home in the summer of 2022, and video emerged of him standing in his driveway, handcuffed and wearing no pants.

## Iran-US prisoner swap likely set in motion as \$6 billion of once-frozen Iranian assets reaches Qatar

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran and the United States will exchange prisoners on Monday after some \$6 billion once frozen in South Korea reached Qatar, a key element of the planned swap, officials said.

The planned exchange comes just ahead of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, where Iran's hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi will speak. However, the swap won't mean that tensions have been lowered between the U.S. and Iran, which now enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani was the first to acknowledge the swap would take place Monday. He said the cash sought for the exchange was now in Qatar.

An individual with direct knowledge of the deal, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity given the exchange had yet to be concluded, later said that both Iranian and U.S. officials had been notified by Qatar that the money had been transferred from Switzerland into the Gulf Arab nation.

Kanaani made his comments during a news conference aired on state television, but the feed cut im-

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mediately after his remarks without explanation.

"We witnessed freezing of parts Iranian assets in some countries including South Korea," Kanaani said. "As part of our policy of active foreign diplomacy, fortunately Iran's frozen assets in South Korea were released and God willing today the assets will start to be fully controlled by the government and the nation."

"On the subject of the prisoner swap, it will happen today and five prisoners, citizens of the Islamic Republic, will be released from the prisons in the U.S.," Kanaani added. "Five imprisoned citizens who were in Iran will be given to the U.S. side reciprocally, based on their will. We expect these two issues fully take place based on the agreement."

He said two of the Iranian prisoners will stay in the U.S.

Iranian news agencies immediately afterward reported, quoting Kanaani, that the prisoner swap would be done on Monday. There was no other information immediately released by the agencies and Washington did not acknowledge the comments.

However, a Qatar Airways Airbus A320 landed on Monday morning at Mehrabad International Airport in Tehran, where previous prisoner releases have taken place, according to flight-tracking data analyzed by the AP. Qatar Airways uses Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport for its commercial flights.

The announcement by Kanaani comes weeks after Iran said that five Iranian-Americans are now under house arrest as part of a confidence-building move while Seoul allowed the frozen assets, held in South Korean won, to be converted into euros. That money was then sent to Qatar, an interlocutor between Tehran and Washington in the negotiations.

The planned swap has unfolded amid a major American military buildup in the Persian Gulf, with the possibility of U.S. troops boarding and guarding commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of all oil shipments pass.

The deal has also already opened President Joe Biden to fresh criticism from Republicans and others who say that the administration is helping boost the Iranian economy at a time when Iran poses a growing threat to U.S. troops and Mideast allies. That could carry over into his reelection campaign as well.

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

U.S. officials have so far declined to identify the fourth and fifth prisoner.

The five prisoners Iran has said it seeks are mostly held over allegedly trying to export material to Iran.

The final dollar amount from Seoul could be anywhere between \$6 billion to \$7 billion, depending on exchange rates. The cash represents money South Korea owed Iran — but had not yet paid — for oil purchased before the Trump administration imposed sanctions on such transactions in 2019.

The U.S. maintains that, once in Qatar, the money will be held in restricted accounts and will only be able to be used for humanitarian goods, such as medicine and food. Those transactions are currently allowed under American sanctions targeting the Islamic Republic over its advancing nuclear program.

Iranian government officials have largely concurred with that explanation, though some hard-liners have insisted, without providing evidence, that there would be no restrictions on how Tehran spends the money.

Iran and the U.S. have a history of prisoner swaps dating back to the 1979 U.S. Embassy takeover and hostage crisis following the Islamic Revolution. Their most recent major exchange happened in 2016, when Iran came to a deal with world powers to restrict its nuclear program in return for an easing of sanctions.

Four American captives, including Washington Post journalist Jason Rezaian, flew home from Iran at the time, and several Iranians in the U.S. won their freedom. That same day, President Barack Obama's administration airlifted \$400 million in cash to Tehran.

Iran has received international criticism over its targeting of people with dual citizenship. The West accuses Iran of using foreign prisoners as bargaining chips, an allegation Tehran rejects.

Negotiations over a major prisoner swap faltered after then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the nuclear deal in 2018. From the following year on, a series of attacks and ship seizures



attributed to Iran have raised tensions.

Meanwhile, Iran's nuclear program now enriches closer than ever to weapons-grade levels. While the head of the United Nations' nuclear watchdog has warned that Iran now has enough enriched uranium to produce "several" bombs, months more would likely be needed to build a weapon and potentially miniaturize it to put it on a missile — if Iran decided to pursue one. The U.S. intelligence community has maintained its assessment that Iran is not pursuing an atomic bomb.

Iran has taken steps in recent months to settle some issues with the International Atomic Energy Agency. But the advances in its program have led to fears of a wider regional conflagration as Israel, itself a nuclear power, has said it would not allow Tehran to develop the bomb. Israel bombed both Iraq and Syria to stop their nuclear programs, giving the threat more weight as it also is suspected in carrying out a series of killings targeting Iran's nuclear scientists.

Iran also supplies Russia with the bomb-carrying drones Moscow uses to target sites in Ukraine in its war on Kyiv, which remains another major dispute between Tehran and Washington.

## **Libya was mired in chaos and corruption. For years, warnings the Derna dams may burst went unheeded**

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — The warnings were clear but went unheeded.

Experts had long said that floods posed a significant danger to two dams meant to protect nearly 90,000 people in the northeast of Libya. They repeatedly called for immediate maintenance to the two structures, located just uphill from the coastal city of Derna. But successive governments in the chaos-stricken North African nation did not react.

"In the event of a big flood, the consequences will be disastrous for the residents of the valley and the city," Abdelwanees Ashoor, a professor of civil engineering, wrote in a study published last year in the Sabha University Journal of Pure and Applied Sciences.

The warnings came true in the early hours of Sept. 11, when residents of Derna woke up to loud explosions before floodwaters pounded the Mediterranean city. They found that two dams had broken, unleashing a wall of water two stories high that wreaked destruction and swept entire neighborhoods out to sea.

The deluge proved deadly for thousands in just seconds, uprooting apartment buildings and washing away roads and bridges. More than 11,300 people were reported killed, including foreigners, and over 10,000 remained missing a week after the disaster, according to the Libyan Red Crescent and the United Nations.

Neglect and corruption are rife in Libya, a country of about 7 million people that lies on a wealth of proven oil and natural gas reserves. As of 2022, the country ranked 171 out of 180 on the transparency index compiled by Transparency International.

The North African nation has been in chaos since 2011, when an Arab Spring uprising, backed by NATO, ousted longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi, who was later killed.

The country has since divided between rival administrations: one in the west backed by an array of lawless armed groups and militias, and the second in the east allied with the self-styled Libyan National Army, which is commanded by powerful Gen. Khalifa Hifter.

The dams, Abu Mansour and Derna, were built by a Yugoslav construction company in the 1970s above Wadi Derna, which divides the city. Abu Mansour, 14 kilometers (8.6 miles) from the city, was 74 meters (243 feet) high and could hold up to 22.5 million cubic meters of water. The Derna dam, also known as Belad, is much closer to the city and could hold 1.5 million cubic meters of water.

The dams, built from clay, rocks and earth, were meant to protect the city from flash floods, which are not uncommon in the area. Water collected behind the dams was used to irrigate crops downstream.

"Both dams had not been maintained for many years, despite repeated floods that struck the city in the past," said Saleh Emhanna, a geological researcher with the University of Ajdabia in Libya. "They were dilapidated."

The dams suffered major damage in a strong storm that hit the region in 1986, and more than a decade

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later a study commissioned by the Libyan government revealed cracks and fissures in their structures, Libya's general prosecutor, al-Sediq al-Sour, said late Friday.

At a news conference in the stricken city, al-Sour said prosecutors would investigate the collapse of the two dams, as well as the allocation of maintenance funds.

"I reassure citizens that whoever made mistakes or negligence, prosecutors will certainly take firm measures, file a criminal case against him and send him to trial," al-Sour said.

A report by a state-run audit agency in 2021 said the two dams hadn't been maintained despite the allocation of more than \$2 million for that purpose in 2012 and 2013. No work was done in the area, and the audit agency blamed the Ministry of Works and Natural Resources for failing to cancel the contract and give it to a company that would do the work.

A Turkish firm was contracted in 2007 to carry out maintenance on the two dams and build another dam in between. The firm, Arsel Construction Company Ltd., says on its website that it completed its work in November 2012.

Arsel was one of dozens of Turkish companies that had projects worth more than \$15 billion in Libya before the 2011 uprising. Many of these companies fled the Libya chaos before returning in the past couple of years, especially when the Turkish government stepped in to help the Tripoli-based government fend off an attack by Hifter's forces in 2019.

Arsel didn't respond to an email seeking further comment on the two dams. No third dam appeared to have ever been built, recent satellite photos show.

Ahead of Mediterranean storm Daniel, authorities also gave contradicting messages. They imposed a curfew in Derna and other areas in the east. The municipality of Derna published statements on its website urging residents to evacuate the coastal areas for fear of a surge from the sea.

However, many residents said they received text messages on their phones urging them not to leave their homes.

The floods flattened Derna and officials have estimate that as much as a quarter of the city has been erased. Such devastation reflected the storm's intensity, but also Libya's vulnerability. The country's infrastructure has suffered widespread neglect despite Libya's oil wealth.

Al-Sour, the chief prosecutor, said prosecutors would probe local authorities in Derna as well as previous governments. He appointed investigators from different parts of the country to carry out the investigation.

East Libya's government suspended Derna's mayor, Abdel-Moneim al-Gaithi, pending an investigation into the disaster. The mayor didn't respond to phone calls seeking comment.

Since 2014, eastern Libya has been under the control of Hifter and his forces. The rival government based in the capital, Tripoli, controls most national funds and oversees infrastructure projects. Neither tolerates dissent.

Activists are calling for an international probe, fearing that a local investigation would be fruitless in a country largely ruled by armed groups and militias. The "predatory" behavior of these groups and militias has resulted in "the misappropriation of Libyan State funds and the deterioration of institutions and infrastructure," according to a report by the U.N. panel of experts.

Libya has suffered from weak public institutions, internal conflict and deep instability, which allowed corruption to become rife with few to no checks on public sector abuse, according to Transparency International.

An online petition signed in recent days by hundreds of people, including Libyan rights groups and NGOs, said an independent international committee is needed to "uncover the causes of this catastrophe" and hold those responsible accountable.

Jalel Harchaoui, an expert on Libya at the London-based Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, said an investigation into the disaster would face towering challenges since it could reach top officials in west and east Libya.

Such an inquiry "might potentially reach into the highest ranks of responsibility," he said. "This presents a unique challenge."

## **Pennsylvania police search for 9 juveniles who escaped from detention facility during a riot**

MORGANTOWN, Pa (AP) — Authorities in Pennsylvania launched a search Sunday night for nine people who escaped from a juvenile detention facility following a riot.

The Reading division of the Pennsylvania State Police and other agencies were searching for nine juveniles who escaped from Abraxas Academy around 8 p.m., Pennsylvania State Police Trooper David Boehm said in a post on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter.

State and local police were called to take control of the juvenile center in Morgantown, about 49 miles (78.8 kilometers) northwest of Philadelphia, after the riot began inside the facility, the Caernarvon Township Police Department said in a statement on its website.

The juveniles were wearing white or grey shirts," the department said, advising anyone encountering them to immediately call 911.

Abraxas Academy is a secure residential treatment program providing "specialized care for delinquent male youth between the ages of 14 to 18 in 9th grade or above," according to the facility's website.

The Pennsylvania State Police did not immediately respond to a message from The Associated Press seeking additional information.

The search for the escaped juveniles follows shortly after the capture of an escaped murderer who eluded Pennsylvania authorities for several days despite an extended manhunt.

## **2 years ago, the Taliban banned girls from school. It's a worsening crisis for all Afghans**

By RIAZAT BUTT Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Two years after the Taliban banned girls from school beyond sixth grade, Afghanistan is the only country in the world with restrictions on female education. Now, the rights of Afghan women and children are on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly Monday in New York.

The U.N. children's agency says more than 1 million girls are affected by the ban, although it estimates 5 million were out of school before the Taliban takeover due to a lack of facilities and other reasons.

The ban triggered global condemnation and remains the Taliban's biggest obstacle to gaining recognition as the legitimate rulers of Afghanistan. But the Taliban defied the backlash and went further, excluding women and girls from higher education, public spaces like parks, and most jobs.

Here's a look at the ban on girls' education:

### **WHY DID THE TALIBAN EXCLUDE GIRLS FROM HIGH SCHOOL?**

The Taliban stopped girls' education beyond sixth grade because they said it didn't comply with their interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia. They didn't stop it for boys. In the past two years, they've shown no signs of progress in creating the conditions they say are needed for girls to return to class.

Their perspective on girls' education partly comes from a specific school of 19th century Islamic thought and partly from rural areas where tribalism is entrenched, according to regional expert Hassan Abbas.

"The ones who went on to develop the (Taliban) movement opted for ideas that are restrictive, orthodox to the extreme, and tribal," said Abbas, who writes extensively about the Taliban. The Taliban leadership believes women should not participate in anything social or public and should especially be kept away from education, said Abbas.

The Taliban also stopped girls' education when they ruled Afghanistan in the late 1990s.

### **WHAT DO MUSLIM-MAJORITY COUNTRIES SAY ABOUT THE BAN?**

There's a consensus among clerics outside Afghanistan that Islam places equal emphasis on female and male education. "The Taliban have no basis or evidence to claim the contrary," said Abbas. But pleas from individual countries and groups, like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, have failed to sway the Taliban.

Syed Akbar Agha, a former Taliban front-line commander, said the insurgents espoused an Islamic system the day they entered Kabul in August 2021.



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"They also gave Afghans and the outside world the idea that there would be an Islamic system in the country," said Agha. "There is currently no (other) Islamic system in the world. The efforts of the international community are ongoing to implement democracy in Islamic countries and turn them away from the Islamic system."

## WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE BAN ON WOMEN?

Roza Otunbayeva, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' special representative for Afghanistan and the head of the U.N. mission in Afghanistan, said one of the obvious impacts of an education ban is the lack of training of aspiring health care professionals.

Female medical students had their studies halted after last December's Taliban edict banning higher education for women. Afghan women work in hospitals and clinics -- health care is one of the few sectors open to them — but the pipeline of qualified people will dry up. Afghan women cannot see male doctors, so children will also lose out on medical attention if women are their primary carers.

"Looking into the future and a scenario where nothing changes, where will the female doctors, midwives, gynecologists, or nurses come from?" Otunbayeva said in an email to The Associated Press. "In a strictly gender segregated society, how will Afghan women be able to get the most basic healthcare services if there are no female professionals to treat them?"

## WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON AFGHANISTAN'S WIDER POPULATION?

The high school ban is not just about girls' rights. It's a worsening crisis for all Afghans.

Tens of thousands of teachers have lost their jobs. Support staff are also unemployed. Private institutions and businesses that benefited financially from girls' education have been hit. Afghanistan has a shattered economy and people's incomes are plummeting. Excluding women from the job market hurts the country's GDP to the cost of billions of dollars, says UNICEF.

The Taliban are prioritizing Islamic knowledge over basic literacy and numeracy with their shift toward madrassas, or religious schools, paving the way for a generation of children with no contemporary or secular education to improve their or the country's economic future.

There are other consequences for the general population, like public health and child protection.

U.N. data says birth rates are higher among Afghan girls aged 15-19 who don't have secondary or higher education. A woman's education can also determine if her children have basic immunization and if her daughters are married by the age of 18. The lack of women's education is among the major drivers of deprivation, says the U.N.

Aid groups say girls are at increased risk of child labor and child marriage because they're not at school, amid the growing hardships faced by families.

## WILL THE TALIBAN CHANGE THEIR MINDS?

The Taliban waged a decades-long jihad to implement their vision of Sharia. They are not backing down easily. Sanctions, frozen assets, the lack of official recognition, and widespread condemnation has made little difference.

Countries that have a relationship with the Taliban could make an impact. But they have different priorities, reducing the prospects of a united front on girls' education.

Pakistan has concerns about a resurgence of militant activity. Iran and Central Asian countries have grievances about water resources. China is eyeing investment and mineral extraction opportunities.

There's a bigger likelihood of pressure coming from within Afghanistan.

The Taliban rule of today is different from that of decades ago. Senior leaders, including the chief spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, rely on social media for key messaging to Afghans at home and abroad.

They point to their success in eradicating narcotics and cracking down on armed groups like the Islamic State. But improving security and wiping out poppy crops will only satisfy people to a point.

While Afghans are concerned about the loss of girls' education, they have more immediate worries like earning money, putting food on the table, keeping a roof over their heads, and surviving droughts and harsh winters.

There is a desire within Afghanistan for the Taliban to have some kind of international acceptance, even

if it's not recognition, so the economy can thrive.

Public opinion is much more relevant and influential today than it was during Taliban rule in the 90s, said Abbas. "Internal pressure from ordinary Afghans is going to ultimately push Kandahar in the corner and make a difference."

But it could take years for the ban's consequences to hit Afghan men and trigger a groundswell of unrest. Right now, it only affects girls and it's mostly women who have protested the slew of restrictions.

Agha said Afghans will support the ban if the end goal is to enforce hijab, the Islamic headscarf, and finish gender mixing. But they won't if it's simply to end girls' education outright.

"I think only the nation can lead the way," he said.

## As Slovakia's trust in democracy fades, its election frontrunner campaigns against aid to Ukraine

By KAREL JANICEK Associated Press

MICHALOVCE, Slovakia (AP) — A populist former prime minister whose party is favored to win Slovakia's early parliamentary election plans to reverse the country's military and political support for neighboring Ukraine, in a direct challenge to the European Union and NATO, if he returns to power.

Robert Fico, who led Slovakia from 2006 to 2010 and again from 2012 to 2018, is the frontrunner to occupy the prime minister's office after the Sept. 30 election. He and his left-wing Direction, or Smer, party have campaigned on a clear pro-Russian and anti-American message.

His candidacy is part of a wider trend across Europe. Only Hungary has an openly pro-Russian government, but in other countries, including Germany, France, and Spain, populist parties skeptical of intervention in Ukraine command significant support. Many of these countries have national or regional elections coming up that could tip the balance of popular opinion away from Kyiv and towards Moscow.

"If Smer is part of the government, we won't send any arms or ammunition to Ukraine anymore," Fico, who currently holds a seat in Slovakia's parliament and is known for foul-mouthed tirades against journalists, said in an interview with The Associated Press before a recent campaign rally.

Fico, 59, also opposes EU sanctions on Russia, questions the Ukrainian military's ability to force out the invading Russian troops and wants to use Slovakia's membership in NATO to block Ukraine from joining. His return to power could lead Slovakia to abandon its democratic course in other ways, following the path of Hungary under Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and to a lesser extent, Poland under the Law and Justice party.

The small Central European nation created in 1993 following the breakup of Czechoslovakia has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine since Russia invaded more than 18 months ago. Slovakia was the second NATO member to agree to give its fleet of Soviet-era MiG-29 fighter jets to Kyiv and also donated an S-300 air defense system.

But it also has seen public trust in liberal democracy and Western organizations decline to a greater extent than other parts of the region that shook off decades of Soviet domination.

According to a March survey commissioned by the Bratislava-based Globsec think tank, a majority of Slovak respondents, 51%, believe the West or Ukraine are responsible for the war. Half saw the United States as posing a security threat for their country, up from 39% in 2022. Of the eight nations surveyed, Slovaks were by far the most distrustful of the U.S.; Bulgaria was a distant second with 33% and Hungary third on 25%.

"We have a big problem," Katarina Klingova, a senior research fellow at Globsec's Center for Democracy and Resilience, said.

The survey was conducted in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. Each of the eight Central and Eastern European countries had 1,000 respondents, and the survey findings had a margin of error of plus or minus 3%.

Only 48% of Slovaks consider liberal democracy good for their country, the second-lowest result after Lithuania (47%).

In February 2022, Slovakia opened its borders to Ukrainian refugees, as well as sending arms to Kyiv.

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Nonetheless, many Slovaks still have a soft spot for their Russian Slavonic brothers and sisters and are grateful for the Red Army for liberating the country at the end of WWII. Russian disinformation operations have also played their part: pro-Moscow propaganda is now widespread in the Slovak media.

The views reflected in the Globsec survey reflect frustration following the chaotic tenure of a center-right coalition government that collapsed in December and a pro-Russian disinformation campaign that intensified after the invasion of Ukraine, Klingova said.

"A number of local politicians have adopted the narratives and terminology of the Russian propaganda," and amplified its impact, she said. Fico, whose party also campaigns against immigration and LGBTQ+ rights, is among them.

In his interview with the AP, he maintained that no amount of Western weapons going to Ukraine would change the course of the war. He said the European Union and the United States should use their influence to force Russia and Ukraine to strike a compromise peace deal.

"It's naive to think that Russia would leave Crimea," Fico said, referring to the peninsula that Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014. "It's naive to think that Russia would ever abandon the territory it controls" in Ukraine.

Fico was speaking in Michalovce, a small town near Slovakia's border with Ukraine. Not far away lies the city of Uzhhorod, one of the main border crossings for freight and individuals. In the spring of 2022, thousands of Ukrainian refugees entered Slovakia here, while humanitarian aid — and sometimes foreign fighters — flowed the other way.

More recently, shipments of Ukrainian grain have crossed the border, much to the unhappiness of local farmers, who say it's undercutting their markets. When an EU deal to keep Ukrainian grain in transit and out of local markets lapsed earlier this month, Slovakia said it would extend its own ban on imports until the end of the year.

But at the same time as the war in Ukraine was driving down grain prices in Europe, it was pushing up the cost of energy. Until the invasion of Ukraine triggered EU sanctions, Russia supplied most of Slovakia's oil and gas.

In 2022, inflation rose to 12.13% percent, driven by soaring energy prices. In September 2022, thousands joined a protest organized by Fico's party at which he said the government's support for Ukraine was partially responsible for the rise in inflation.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, with backing from his country's Western supporters, has ruled out negotiating with Moscow until Russian troops withdraw from his country. He has also pressed NATO to provide a clear path for his country's membership.

At their summit in July, NATO leaders pledged to keep supplying arms and ammunition to Ukraine but offered no protection under the alliance's security umbrella. Fico told the AP he opposes "on principle" putting Ukraine on a membership path, saying, "That would result in the Third World War."

Fico's position could further complicate Ukraine's aspirations to join the alliance. At the summit, NATO allies said that "We will be in a position to extend an invitation to Ukraine to join the alliance when allies agree and conditions are met."

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The former prime minister and his party have shown pro-Russia tendencies during their on-off relationship with voters. In 2015, after Russia annexed Crimea, Fico was one of the few European leaders to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow to discuss business, despite EU sanctions.

However, Fico in office also took care to cultivate ties with the U.S. In 2018, he began negotiations on a defense treaty with Washington. The agreement was ratified last year, but not before Fico had organized a protest where he told a crowd of thousands that the treaty was "treason." He said the pact would compromise Slovakia's sovereignty and provoke Russia - claims rejected by the Slovak and U.S. governments.



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Now, Fico repeats the Russian narrative about the causes of the Ukraine war, including Putin's unsupported claim that the current Ukrainian government runs a Nazi state from which ethnic Russians living in the country's east needed protection.

"I say it loud and clear and will do so: The war in Ukraine didn't start yesterday or last year. It began in 2014. when the Ukrainian Nazis and fascists started to murder the Russian citizens in Donbas and Luhansk," Fico told a cheering crowd of supporters in his hometown of Topolcany on Aug 30.

Grigorij Meseznikov, president of the Institute for Public Affairs, a pro-democracy non-governmental organization based in Bratislava, said the Fico voters are seeing now is "the most authentic of all his career" as well as "the worst and the most radical."

"The position of anti-system forces has never been so strong here since 1989," Meseznikov said, referring to the year of Czechoslovakia's anti-communist Velvet Revolution.

Fico used to be more pragmatic. During his first four-year term as prime minister, Slovakia was accepted into the EU's visa-free Schengen Area in 2007 and adopted the euro as the national currency in 2009. Following the fall of the government that replaced his, Fico returned to office in 2012.

He unsuccessfully ran for president in 2014 and reclaimed the premiership in 2016, but was forced to resign two years later after the slaying of an investigative journalist, Jan Kuciak, and his fiancée.

Shortly before his death, Kuciak had been writing about alleged ties between the Italian mafia and people close to Fico and about corruption scandals linked to Fico's party. The killings prompted major street protests and led to the collapse of Fico's coalition government. Fico's deputy in Smer, Peter Pellegrini, took over as prime minister.

The scandal-tainted Smer, campaigning on a anti-migrant ticket, lost the 2020 election and ended up in opposition with Pellegrini leaving Fico to create a new leftist party, the Voice. The four-party coalition government that took over made fighting corruption a key focus.

Dozens of senior officials, police officers, judges, prosecutors, politicians and business people linked to Smer have been convicted of corruption and other crimes.

Fico himself faced criminal charges last year for creating a criminal group and misuse of power, but Slovakia's pro-Russian prosecutor general stepped in and threw out the indictment.

Almost all public polls predict Smer will place first in the snap parliamentary election, with about 20% of the vote. Fico would then need the support of other parties in order to form a government.

He said he hopes to join forces with the Voice.

Another option would be The Republic, a far-right group currently on 5-10% in the polls. The ultra-nationalist Slovak National Party is another possibility.

"His strong motivation is to avoid criminal investigation," Meseznikov of the Institute for Public Affairs said, adding: "His return to power will be a problem for Slovakia in every aspect."

Fico threatened to dismiss the investigators at the National Criminal Agency and special prosecutor Daniel Lipsic who investigate the most serious crimes and corruption after the election.

Fico vowed to "be more sovereign in expressing my views" but said it's not his intention to lead his country out of the EU or NATO.

"The international public should know that NATO is currently extremely unpopular in Slovakia," he warned. "If we hold a referendum today, I can guarantee that people would say no to NATO."

Find more of AP's Europe coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/europe>

## **A Black student was suspended for his hairstyle. The school says it wasn't discrimination**

By CHEYANNE MUMPHREY AP Education Writer

The same week his state outlawed racial discrimination based on hairstyles, a Black high school student in Texas was suspended because school officials said his locs violated the district's dress code.

Darryl George, a junior at Barbers Hill High School in Mont Belvieu, received an in-school suspension

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after he was told his hair fell below his eyebrows and ear lobes. George, 17, wears his hair in thick twisted dreadlocks, tied on top of his head, said his mother, Darresha George.

George served the suspension last week. His mother said he plans to return to the Houston-area school Monday, wearing his dreadlocks in a ponytail, even if he is required to attend an alternative school as a result.

The incident recalls debates over hair discrimination in schools and the workplace and is already testing the state's newly enacted CROWN Act, which took effect Sept. 1.

The law, an acronym for "Create a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair," is intended to prohibit race-based hair discrimination and bars employers and schools from penalizing people because of hair texture or protective hairstyles including Afros, braids, dreadlocks, twists or Bantu knots. Texas is one of 24 states that has enacted a version of the CROWN Act.

A federal version of the CROWN Act passed in the House of Representatives last year, but was not successful in the Senate.

For Black people, hairstyles are more than just a fashion statement. Hair has always played an important role across the Black diaspora, said Candice Matthews, national minister of politics for the New Black Panther Nation. (Her group is not affiliated with another New Black Panther organization widely considered antisemitic.)

"Dreadlocks are perceived as a connection to wisdom," Matthews said. "This is not a fad, and this is not about getting attention. Hair is our connection to our soul, our heritage and our connection to God."

In George's family, all the men have dreadlocks, going back generations. To them, the hairstyle has cultural and religious importance, his mother said.

"Our hair is where our strength is, that's our roots," Darresha George said. "He has his ancestors locked into his hair, and he knows that."

Historians say braids and other hairstyles served as methods of communication across African societies, including to identify tribal affiliation or marriage status, and as clues to safety and freedom for those who were captured and enslaved.

After slavery was abolished, Black American hair became political. Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and national origin, Black people continued to face professional and social stigma for not adopting grooming habits that fit white, European beauty standards and norms.

The issue of race-based hair discrimination in the workplace has long existed alongside concerns in public and private schools. In 2018, a white referee in New Jersey told a Black high school wrestler to cut his dreadlocks or forfeit a match. Viral video of the wrestler having his hair cut with scissors as the crowd watched prompted the referee's suspension and spurred passage of the state's CROWN Act.

Darresha George said her son has been growing his dreadlocks for nearly 10 years and the family never received pushback or complaints until now. When let down, his dreadlocks hang above his shoulders. She said she couldn't understand how he violated the dress code when his hair was pinned up.

"I even had a discussion about the CROWN Act with the principal and vice principal," she said. "They said the act does not cover the length of his hair."

Barbers Hill Independent School District prohibits male students from having hair extending below the eyebrows, ear lobes or top of a t-shirt collar, according to the student handbook. Additionally, hair on all students must be clean, well-groomed, geometrical and not an unnatural color or variation. The school does not require uniforms.

The school previously clashed with another Black male student over the dress code. Barbers Hill officials told a student he had to cut his dreadlocks to return to school or participate in graduation in 2020, which garnered national attention.

Greg Poole, who has been district superintendent since 2006, said the policy is legal and teaches students to conform as a sacrifice benefitting everyone.

"When you are asked to conform ... and give up something for the betterment of the whole, there is a

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psychological benefit," Poole said. "We need more teaching (of) sacrifice."

Nearby districts have less stringent policies in place. For example, Poole noted others allow students to wear jeans with holes in them, while Barbers Hill does not. He said parents come to the district because of its strict standards and high expectations, which he credits for the district's academic success.

Attorney Allie Booker, who represents the family, said the school's argument doesn't hold up because length is considered part of a hairstyle, which is protected under the law.

"We are going to continue to fight, because you can't tell someone that hairstyles are protected and then be restrictive. If style is protected, then style is protected," she said.

Darresha George said she and her son refuse to conform to a standard set by someone who is uncomfortable or ignorant.

"My son is well-groomed, and his hair is not distracting from anyone's education," Darresha George said. "This has everything to do with the administration being prejudiced toward Black hairstyles, toward Black culture."

The district defends its dress code, which says its policies are meant to "teach grooming and hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards and teach respect for authority."

George's situation has drawn solidarity from young Black people around the nation, who say they have long dealt with discriminatory dress codes and comments from adults about their hair.

"When I was in fifth grade, I had a teacher tell me that my blue hair, my pink hair, was unnatural and too distracting for the other students in the class," said Victoria Bradley, 19, who lives in Detroit. Michigan passed the CROWN Act into law this year.

Bradley, whose hair is braided and currently dyed multiple colors, said she attributes a lot of her hair confidence to her mother, Bernita Bradley, a longtime hair stylist and director of parent voice for the National Parents Union.

Bernita Bradley said her first introduction to the CROWN Act was in 2021, when a biracial, 7-year-old girl in Michigan had her hair cut by a school worker without her parents' permission. The girl's father, Jimmy Hoffmeyer, filed a \$1 million lawsuit against the school district, alleging racial discrimination and ethnic intimidation. The lawsuit was settled earlier this year.

"That was modern-day scalping of this Black child," Bradley said.

Darryl George completed his suspension Friday, but his mother is concerned about what will happen Monday when he returns to school with his dreadlocks in a ponytail.

"He will be up to dress code on Monday with his dreadlocks, which do not go past his eyebrows or ear lobes," Darresha George said. School officials told her they planned to enroll her son in an alternative school if they believed he continued to violate the dress code.

After the suspension, "his grades are suffering, which also means he is not able to play football or participate in any extracurriculars," Darresha George said. "He was on track to graduate early, and now he is falling behind and will have to work double time just so he can still graduate."

The family has considered switching school districts, she said. "That's a fight in its own right."

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Mumphrey reported from Phoenix.

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The Associated Press education team receives support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **As leaders convene, the UN pushes toward its crucial global goals. But progress is lagging**

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The commitments were far-reaching and ambitious. Among them: End extreme poverty and hunger. Ensure every child on Earth gets a quality secondary education. Achieve gender

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equality. Make significant inroads in tackling climate change. Create “universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.” And achieve all of this by 2030.

Halfway to that goal, progress is lagging badly — and in some cases going backward.

At a two-day summit that begins Monday, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will be trying to kick-start action to achieve the 17 goals adopted by world leaders in 2015, which developing countries in particular consider crucial to closing the widening inequality gap between the world’s rich and poor countries.

The goals, Guterres said, are “about righting historic wrongs, healing divisions and putting our world on a path to lasting peace.”

A 10-page political declaration to be adopted by leaders at the start of the summit recognizes that the goals are “in peril” and expresses alarm that progress is either moving too slowly or regressing to pre-2015 levels. It reaffirms more than a dozen times, in different ways, leaders’ commitment to achieve the SDGs, or sustainable development goals, reiterating their individual importance.

How can this be done in the next seven years?

## A DECLARATION SHORT ON SPECIFICS

The leaders have committed to accelerating action. But the declaration they’re working with is short on specifics.

At Saturday’s start of an “SDG Action Weekend,” Guterres reviewed for activists the grim findings in a U.N. report in July: Only 15% of some 140 specific targets to achieve the 17 goals are on track. Many are going in the wrong direction.

At the current rate, the report said, 575 million people will still be living in extreme poverty and 84 million children won’t even be going to elementary school in 2030 – and it will take 286 years to reach equality between men and women.

“The SDGs need a global rescue plan,” the U.N. chief said. He called the summit “the moment for governments to come to the table with concrete plans and proposals to accelerate progress.”

It isn’t just governments that need to step up, Guterres said. He urged activists as well as the business community, scientists, academics, innovators, women and young people to join in working to achieve the goals.

U.S. First Lady Jill Biden echoed the secretary-general at a reception Sunday evening organized by the U.N. children’s agency, UNICEF, for global champions of education. She said progress on achieving the SDGs “looks steep.” But she said the United States “will continue to be a partner with you every step of the way.”

As an educator for 39 years, she urged every country’s leader to invest in children, saying they will “help us build a more peaceful, stable world.”

## A PLAN TO CLEAR OBSTACLES FROM THE PATH

Guterres said the most important initiative to rescue the overall plan is the proposal of an “SDG stimulus,” which aims to offset challenging market conditions faced by developing countries.

It calls for immediate action in three areas:

- tackling the high cost of debt and rising risks of debt distress;
- massively scaling up affordable long-term financing for development, especially by public and multi-lateral banks;
- expanding contingency financing to countries in need.

A February U.N. report on the SDG Stimulus said debt is battering the economies of many developing countries. It said that as of last November, 37 of the world’s 69 poorest countries were either at high risk or already in debt distress, while one in four middle-income countries, which contain the majority of the extreme poor, were at “high risk of fiscal crisis.”

There are narrow rays of hope. Guterres said he was encouraged that at the recent meeting of the G20, the world’s 20 leading economies welcomed the SDG Stimulus. And he said he’s hopeful that the political declaration to be adopted by leaders on Monday will lead to major action.

The declaration says leaders will push forward the stimulus plan “to tackle the high cost of debt and rising risks of debt distress, to enhance support to developing countries and to massively scale up affordable long-term financing for development and expand contingency financing to countries in need.”



Whether those administrative promises and the momentum of a big week at the United Nations will translate into actual progress, though, remains — as before — deeply uncertain.

## Everything you need to know about this year's meeting of leaders at the UN General Assembly

By MALLIKA SEN Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — For two years, it was the coronavirus pandemic. Then, it was Russia's war in Ukraine. Throughout it all, the perils of climate change, poverty and inequality have steadily, increasingly thrummed through each convening of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly.

As the 78th session opens, there's no single clear crisis set to dominate the General Debate, as none of the aforementioned ones have been resolved. The high-level meeting will be set against the backdrop of an ongoing war, new political crises in West Africa and Latin America, a lingering coronavirus, economic instability, widening inequality and fresh natural disasters in the forms of devastating earthquakes, floods and fires.

In the face of this tumult, the theme for this year's General Debate will be "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all."

We've updated last year's backgrounder for the 2023 high-level meeting. Here's what to know about this year's U.N. General Assembly, presided over by Trinidad and Tobago's Dennis Francis.

### WHAT IS THE POINT OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY?

While the effectiveness of the United Nations has been questioned for as long as it has existed, the benefits of attendance are undeniable. From the dais, countries broadcast their agendas, grievances and calls to action to the entire world and for the permanent record.

The exercise in multilateralism was born in the wake of World War II, and grounded in the hope for lasting peace. This week is a key chance for countries often drowned out by what they decry as a hegemonic world order to grab the attention of a larger audience. It's also a chance for leaders to engage in meetings on the sidelines in neutral territory.

### WHO IS COMING TO NEW YORK THIS YEAR?

Heads of state and government from at least 145 countries are expected to take the dais at the river's edge. Among them will be Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, U.S. President Joe Biden and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy — all expected in the first day. This will be Zelenskyy's first in-person appearance at the United Nations since the Russian invasion of his country — in 2022, the General Assembly voted to grant him special dispensation to submit a prerecorded speech.

But the parade of speakers will be marked by some key absences: While they're all sending representatives, the leaders of the rest of the permanent U.N. Security Council members — France, the United Kingdom, China and Russia — will not make the trip. The presence of Vladimir Putin would certainly have been surprising, but Emmanuel Macron is a regular attendee and this would have been British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's first opportunity to address the General Assembly. Macron cited King Charles III's imminent visit; Sunak, a busy schedule.

Top leaders from other major countries, including India — who just played host to the G20 summit in New Delhi this month — and Mexico, are also slated to send ministers in their steads.

### WHAT DOES THE GENERAL DEBATE LOOK LIKE?

We might be in the midst of U.S. presidential primary debate season, but the structure of the General Debate at the United Nations bears little resemblance. It doesn't lend itself to obvious fireworks — booing or interruptions or immediate rebuttals are not permitted — but that doesn't mean intrigue and drama are absent.

Each speech alone offers a rich text and the delivery adds subtext. Speeches can be fonts of evocative language, barbs and gauzily veiled messages. They're supposed to run for 15 minutes, but many miss that mark. Last year, speeches averaged around 19 minutes, drawing a wry chiding from Slovakian President

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Zuzana Čaputová — clocking in under 12 minutes, her speech ended with: “And since obeying even the smallest of rules matters, let me finish here to respect the agreed time limit.” The longest speech in history ran to 269 minutes, and was delivered by Cuba’s Fidel Castro in 1960.

Member states are also allowed to exercise the right of reply, in which they can rebut criticism voiced during the General Debate. These are often fiery exchanges at day’s end, but aren’t typically delivered by heads of state or heads of government — rather, lower-level members of a country’s delegation. Last year, there were 21 exercises of the right of reply.

**HOW LONG DOES THIS YEAR’S GENERAL DEBATE RUN?**

It’s still six days, as usual, but this year’s General Debate ends a day later — Tuesday, Sept. 26. While past General Debates usually ran from Tuesday through Monday, with a break only on Sunday, this year there’s a two-day break. A U.N. spokesperson confirmed that there will be no speeches on the usually final Monday in observance of the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur.

**WHY DOES BRAZIL SPEAK FIRST AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY?**

It’s tradition. Early on, Brazil ventured forward when no other country would volunteer to speak first. Decades later, the South American country retains the pole position. As the host country, the United States typically speaks second (though last year, President Joe Biden had to delay his speech by a day because he was attending Queen Elizabeth II’s funeral ).

For the scores of speeches that follow, the order is determined by multiple variables, including whom a country is sending to deliver the speech (heads of state precede heads of government, who precede mere ministers and other representatives), countries’ own preferences and geographic balance.

**ARE NON-UN MEMBERS ALLOWED TO ATTEND?**

Some. While all member states are invited to speak, not all necessarily make avail of the opportunity. But the United Nations also has permanent observers, which have access to “most meetings and relevant documentation,” per the U.N. website.

The European Union, Palestine and the Holy See (the Vatican) are permanent observers again on the docket this year. Last year, Palestine had the longest speech, with President Mahmoud Abbas clocking in at more than 47 minutes.

**HOW DO I KEEP ABREAST OF WHAT’S HAPPENING AT THE UN?**

You’re in the right place. The Associated Press, which reports on the United Nations year-round, will have extensive coverage through the end of the General Debate. Visit <https://apnews.com/hub/united-nations-general-assembly> for all our stories.

While the General Assembly is not open to the public, the United Nations streams proceedings.

Follow Mallika Sen at <http://twitter.com/mallikavsen>

## Clinton Global Initiative will launch network to provide new humanitarian aid to Ukrainians

By GLENN GAMBOA AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Clinton Global Initiative will announce the launch of the CGI Ukraine Action Network, as well as numerous financial pledges, to support nonprofits working in the country, as the annual conference opens in New York on Monday morning.

The CGI Ukraine Action Network is the result of a collaboration between former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Olena Zelenska, first lady of Ukraine, that began last year. The new organization, which will be formally announced Tuesday, is designed to mobilize existing CGI partners, as well as new leaders from around the world, to create and finance new commitments for Ukrainians, according to CGI. Numerous monetary commitments for Ukraine are also set to be announced Tuesday,

Continuing support is part of the Clinton Global Initiative, or CGI, theme of “Keep Going” this year, as Hillary Clinton, former President Bill Clinton and Clinton Foundation Vice Chair Chelsea Clinton say they will convene political, business and philanthropic leaders to build on the momentum of the conference’s

return last year after a six-year hiatus.

"The focus will be on what we can do, not what we can't," wrote the Clintons in a letter to the conference community, "and will highlight how even seemingly small actions, when taken together, can turn the tide on even our most stubborn challenges."

Pope Francis and Bill Clinton will discuss climate change, the refugee crisis, caused in part by the war in Ukraine, and other pressing issues to open the conference on Monday morning.

In 2022, CGI announced more than 140 commitments, including a \$1 billion plan from Water.org, co-founded by actor Matt Damon, to help 100 million people in Africa, Asia and Latin America get lasting access to water and sanitation. This year, leaders including World Bank President Ajay Banga, Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky, World Central Kitchen founder Jose Andres and Ford Foundation CEO Darren Walker, will attend and make their own commitments, which are required for attendance at the conference.

However, for nonprofits working in Ukraine, the spotlight CGI is offering them, 18 months after Russia's invasion of the country, may be just as important as the monetary commitments.

The nonprofit Save Ukraine, which has opened community centers across the country to help families and especially children traumatized by the war and works to rescue Ukrainian children who have been detained in Russia, is set to receive commitments of support during CGI that it plans to use to open more centers, said Olga Yerokhina, spokeswoman for the charity.

"We know that we have no choice — we must work hard and we are ready for that," said Yerokhina, who is based in Kyiv. "But we also have this feeling of, 'Guys, please don't leave us because we want to be with you.' If we are not with you, Russia is going to just erase us from the map of the world."

Actor Liev Schreiber, co-founder of BlueCheck Ukraine, which vets small Ukrainian nonprofits doing humanitarian work in their communities so that donors can learn about these smaller organizations and feel comfortable funding them, said reminding people about what Ukrainians are still going through may be the most important part of CGI.

"The best possible outcome is keeping people aware that they are still in an existential situation," Schreiber said. "Democracies are designed to push back against impossible odds. And it's worked. It's been a miracle in many respects. .. It really is a David and Goliath story. It's extraordinary. And it's not just them. It's us supporting them. How can we give that up now?"

Schreiber will speak on a panel Monday morning about Ukraine's short-term and long-term needs, along with Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Fran Katsoudas, Cisco's Chief People, Policy & Purpose Officer, and actor Orlando Bloom, who serves as UNICEF's Goodwill Ambassador. Bloom is expected to announce a commitment for new technology for Ukrainian schoolchildren on Monday, organizers say.

"I'm super proud of the global community," Schreiber said. "This is a test for us. Do we really care? I think so far we've had remarkable success so far in supporting them. So many countries did something extraordinary to help. That's significant. We can't forget that."

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Associated Press coverage of philanthropy and nonprofits receives support through the AP's collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The AP is solely responsible for this content. For all of AP's philanthropy coverage, visit <https://apnews.com/hub/philanthropy>.

## **Trial of 3 Washington officers charged with murder, manslaughter in death of Black man set to begin**

By MARTHA BELLISLE Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Jury selection is scheduled to begin Monday in the trial of three Tacoma, Washington, police officers charged in the death of a 33-year-old Black man who was tackled, punched, shocked with a Taser and held face-down on a sidewalk in March 2020, just two months before George Floyd met a similar fate.

Officers Christopher Burbank and Matthew Collins have been charged with second-degree murder, and

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Timothy Rankine with first-degree manslaughter, in the death of Manuel "Manny" Ellis. All three officers are white. They pleaded not guilty.

Opening statements are expected to start Oct. 2 in Pierce County Superior Court in Tacoma. The trial is expected to run four days each week until December.

Ellis purchased a box of doughnuts and some water at a convenience store at about 11:21 p.m. that Tuesday night and walked across the street, where he encountered Burbank and Collins sitting in a patrol car, according to a probable cause statement filed by the Washington Attorney General's Office.

Burbank and Collins said Ellis tried to get into a stranger's car and then attacked the officers when they confronted him. But witnesses say the officers jumped out of their car as Ellis walked by and knocked him to the ground. Several witnesses recorded the encounter with their cell phones as they screamed for the officers to stop, the document said.

A video taken by a woman sitting in a car behind the officers shows Burbank wrapping his arms around Ellis, lifting him into the air and slamming him onto the pavement, striking him with his fist in the process, the statement said.

"Collins then moves in towards Ellis and brings his weight down onto him," the document said. "With Ellis underneath him, Collins begins striking Ellis's head with his fist. Meanwhile, Burbank draws his Taser gun and walks close in towards Ellis. Collins can be seen on S.M.'s video striking Ellis's head four times, with Ellis screaming after each strike."

Collins wrapped his arm around Ellis' neck while squeezing and his head fell limply to the sidewalk. The officer also pressed on Ellis' back while pushing his face into the ground, the document said.

A doorbell security camera across the street picked up Ellis saying, "Can't breathe, sir. Can't breathe," and one of the officers responded by saying, "Shut the (expletive) up, man."

The officers then wrapped a hobble restraint device around Ellis' legs and linked it to his handcuffs behind his back in a "hog-tie" position while he remained in the prone position. They also pulled a spit-hood over his head. After the hobble was applied, he stopped moving, the statement said.

All three witnesses said Ellis was not fighting back during the struggle, the prosecutor said.

Ellis was pronounced dead at the scene.

The Pierce County Medical Examiner said the cause of death was "hypoxia," a lack of oxygen, "due to physical restraint" and found the manner of death was homicide.

Lawyers for the officers filed reports saying Ellis was resisting and trying to get away, so the officers needed to use force to get him into custody.

Experts hired by the officers blamed his death on methamphetamine use and heart problems. They called it an "accident."

The Pierce County Sheriff's Office initially investigated the death, but months later when it was revealed sheriff's personnel were involved in the detention, Gov. Jay Inslee ordered the Washington State Patrol to take over the investigation and referred the charging decision to the Washington Attorney General's Office.

Charges were filed on May 27, 2021, marking the first time the attorney general's office has charged a law enforcement officer with murder. It was only the second time an officer has been charged with murder in Washington state since voters approved Initiative 940 in 2018, which removed the requirement that prosecutors show an officer acted with malice in order to be charged with murder.

Auburn Officer Jeffrey Nelson was charged in 2020 with second-degree murder and first-degree assault in the shooting death of Jesse Sarey on May 31, 2019. His trial is pending.

Ellis' family filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the county and officers and the Pierce County Council approved a \$4 million settlement agreement in 2022. The deal ended the county's involvement, but Ellis' sister, Monet Carter-Mixon, and mother, Marcia Carter, continue to pursue their wrongful death lawsuit against the city of Tacoma.



## Centuries after Native American remains were dug up, a new law returns them for reburial in Illinois

By JOHN O'CONNOR and MELISSA PEREZ WINDER Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — For centuries, Europeans carving up the prairie to suit their own idea of settlement dug up the graves of Native Americans as they conquered lands and pushed tribes to the West.

Now, Native Americans whose ancestors' remains ended up held for study in sterile, nondescript boxes on shelves in educational facilities or displayed in cultural locales hope a new Illinois law will speed their recovery for proper reburial in their homeland.

"I always have a bit of unease because I know if I'm going to a university or to a museum ... that chances are pretty high that we've got some ancestors sitting in a basement or in a closet somewhere," said Raphael Wahwassuck, tribal preservation officer for the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation in Mayetta, Kansas. "I hope that this (law) will help ease those concerns, knowing that we are working on correcting that and taking care of our ancestors to put them in a good resting place."

Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed The Human Remains Protection Act last month, which updates a rudimentary 1989 state statute. It also complements a federal law adopted a year later, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. It requires the return of human remains and funerary, sacred and cultural objects unearthed in the past 200 years by plows and bulldozers, by archeologists, or by profiteering marauders to the associated tribe.

Key to the measure is first-time authority for tribes to rebury recovered remains in Illinois, which they much prefer to relocating them to states to which the U.S. government forced their relocation nearly two centuries ago.

The Illinois State Museum, which holds remains from about 7,000 individuals, is prepared to reunify 1,100 of them with their tribes, according to Brooke Morgan, the museum's curator of anthropology. Overall, institutions in Illinois can identify nearly 13,000 individuals that must be repatriated.

What the soil produced often ended up in scholarly institutions across the state, from Chicago's Field Museum to Southern Illinois University, as well as the state museum.

Illinois is the nation's fifth-largest repository of human remains, according to the National Park Service, which administers the repatriation program. And large numbers of remains recovered from Illinois are held by institutions in other states. Nationally, the remains of nearly 209,000 individuals have been reported to the federal government and must be surrendered to descendants.

Information about past cultures and lives lived gleaned from anthropologists' study of the remains is not without merit, Morgan said, but research must be "ethically informed."

"While there's a lot that can be learned, it's not it's not without consequences or outcomes that could be damaging to modern communities," Morgan said.

The law also toughens monetary penalties, including required restitution, for disturbing human remains and items buried with them or for displays — something the Illinois State Museum did at Dickson Mounds in Lewistown, 200 miles (322 kilometers) southwest of Chicago, before disbanding the feature in 1992.

While repatriation in Illinois during the federal law's first three decades has been sluggish, at best, in 2020, the late Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko, the museum's director, pushed her staff to gauge interest with Native American tribes in repatriating the Dickson Mounds holdings.

Now, the museum is on the cusp of returning the remains of 1,100 individuals from Dickson Mounds to 10 tribes whose ancestors were laid to rest there, Morgan said. The process has wrought stronger relationships with affected tribes, which could prove critical as the new state law requires consultation — meaningful dialog among holding institutions and tribes about handling and transferring remains — rather than simple notification.

"It can be emotionally taxing. It can be really traumatic to learn about how their ancestors have been studied or how they've been housed or how they've been cared for or not cared for," Morgan said.

What scholars now call a period of ethnic cleansing began with President Andrew Jackson's signature on the Indian Removal Act of 1830. It forced indigenous people to move west of the Mississippi River, clear-

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ing the eastern United States for white settlers, particularly for expansive cotton cultivation in the south. Prior to the new law, "repatriation" meant turning remains over to tribes who had little choice but to take them back to the states to which they were forcibly removed.

"The tribes that I talked to — one, specifically, the Cherokee of Oklahoma — said, that is like recreating the Trail of Tears," said the legislation's sponsor, Rep. Mark Walker, a Democrat from the Chicago suburb of Arlington Heights. He was referring to the 1838-39 westward death march which claimed the lives of 4,000 Cherokee.

Walker said the Cherokee told him, "Our ancestors were buried where our ancestors wanted to be buried. And now you've dug up their bones and you're going to bring them to where we were forced to go."

Walker said negotiators have compiled a list of 30 potential sites for burial. Tribes will ultimately choose which sites will be used.

Matthew Bussler, tribal historic preservation officer for the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi in Dowagiac, Michigan, said the practice and ceremony of final rites differs by tribe. Generally, he said, it is critical to see that ancestors are returned "to the womb of Mother Earth" not only so they may continue their journey in the hereafter, but to "redeem all of the pain and the suffering" of their tribe, especially their descendants.

There are costs associated with repatriation, of course, for the tribes as well as the state. The law provides money for travel and other expenses the tribes incur. The account is partially funded by fines for desecrating burial grounds, including for the first time, restitution to cover collecting, cleaning and reburying remains illegally taken, just as other remains before them had been for centuries.

"Those human remains were never treated as human beings..." Bussler said. "Those who had been deceased for hundreds of years who are just being found, or your grandmother who just passed away — we need to treat them all with utmost respect."

## Tens of thousands march to kick off climate summit, demanding end to warming-causing fossil fuels

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Yelling that the future and their lives depend on ending fossil fuels, tens of thousands of protesters on Sunday kicked off a week where leaders will try once again to curb climate change primarily caused by coal, oil and natural gas.

But protesters say it's not going to be enough. And they aimed their wrath directly at U.S. President Joe Biden, urging him to stop approving new oil and gas projects, phase out current ones and declare a climate emergency with larger executive powers.

"We hold the power of the people, the power you need to win this election," said 17-year-old Emma Buretta of Brooklyn of the youth protest group Fridays for Future. "If you want to win in 2024, if you do not want the blood of my generation to be on your hands, end fossil fuels."

The March to End Fossil Fuels featured such politicians as Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and actors Susan Sarandon, Ethan Hawke, Edward Norton, Kyra Sedgewick and Kevin Bacon. But the real action on Broadway was where protesters crowded the street, pleading for a better but not-so-hot future. It was the opening salvo to New York's Climate Week, where world leaders in business, politics and the arts gather to try to save the planet, highlighted by a new special United Nations summit Wednesday.

Many of the leaders of countries that cause the most heat-trapping carbon pollution will not be in attendance. And they won't speak at the summit organized by U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in a way that only countries that promise new concrete action are invited to speak.

Organizers estimated 75,000 people marched Sunday.

"We have people all across the world in the streets, showing up, demanding a cessation of what is killing us," Ocasio-Cortez told a cheering crowd. "We have to send a message that some of us are going to be living on, on this planet 30, 40, 50 years from now. And we will not take no for an answer."

This protest was far more focused on fossil fuels and the industry than previous marches. Sunday's rally attracted a large chunk, 15%, of first-time protesters and was overwhelmingly female, said Ameri-

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can University sociologist Dana Fisher, who studies environmental movements and was surveying march participants.

Of the people Fisher talked to, 86% had experienced extreme heat recently, 21% floods and 18% severe drought, she said. They mostly reported feeling sad and angry. Earth has just gone through the hottest summer on record.

Among the marchers was 8-year-old Athena Wilson from Boca Raton, Florida. She and her mother Ma-leah, flew from Florida for Sunday's protest.

"Because we care about our planet," Athena said. "I really want the Earth to feel better."

People in the South, especially where the oil industry is, and the global south, "have not felt heard," said 23-year-old Alexandria Gordon, originally from Houston. "It is frustrating."

Protest organizers emphasized how let down they felt that Biden, who many of them supported in 2020, has overseen increased drilling for oil and fossil fuels.

"President Biden, our lives depend on your actions today," said Louisiana environmental activist Sharon Lavigne. "If you don't stop fossil fuels our blood is on your hands."

Nearly one-third of the world's planned drilling for oil and gas between now and 2050 is by U.S. interests, environmental activists calculate. Over the past 100 years, the United States has put more heat-trapping carbon dioxide in the atmosphere than any other country, though China now emits more carbon pollution on an annual basis.

"You need to phase out fossil fuels to survive our planet," said Jean Su, a march organizer and energy justice director for the Center for Biological Diversity.

Marchers and speakers spoke of increasing urgency and fear of the future. The actress known as V, formerly Eve Ensler, premiered the anthem "Panic" from her new climate change oriented musical scheduled for next year. The chorus goes: "We want you to panic. We want you to act. You stole our future and we want it back."

Signs included "Even Santa Knows Coal is Bad" and "Fossil fuels are killing us" and "I want a fossil free future" and "keep it in the ground."

That's because leaders don't want to acknowledge "the elephant in the room," said Ugandan climate activist Vanessa Nakate. "The elephant is that fossil fuels are responsible for the crisis. We can't eat coal. We can't drink oil, and we can't have any new fossil fuel investments."

But oil and gas industry officials said their products are vital to the economy.

"We share the urgency of confronting climate change together without delay; yet doing so by eliminating America's energy options is the wrong approach and would leave American families and businesses beholden to unstable foreign regions for higher cost and far less reliable energy," said American Petroleum Institute Senior Vice President Megan Bloomgren.

Activists weren't having any of that.

"The fossil fuel industry is choosing to rule and conquer and take and take and take without limit," Rabbi Stephanie Kolin of Congregation Beth Elohim of Brooklyn said. "And so waters are rising and the skies are turning orange (from wildfire smoke) and the heat is taking lives. But you Mr. President can choose the other path, to be a protector of this Earth."

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Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears

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Associated Press climate and environmental coverage receives support from several private foundations. See more about AP's climate initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## North Korea's Kim Jong Un heads home after Russian journey that raised concern about weapons deals

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, HYUNG-JIN KIM and ELISE MORTON Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is on his way home Sunday from Russia, ending a six-day trip that triggered global concerns about weapons transfer deals between the two countries locked in separate standoffs with the West.

Kim's armored train departed to the sound of the Russian patriotic march song "Farewell of Slavianka" at the end of a farewell ceremony at a railway station in Artyom, a far eastern Russian city about 200 kilometers (124 miles) from the border with North Korea, Russia's state news agency RIA reported.

Senior officials including Russia's Minister of Natural Resources Alexander Kozlov and Primorye regional Gov. Oleg Kozhemyako were present at the ceremony, which featured a Russian military band playing both North Korean and Russian national anthems.

It was Kim's longest foreign travel since he took power in late 2011. Observers said Kim was expected to return to Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, around Monday afternoon.

Since entering Russia last Tuesday in his first overseas trip in more than four years, Kim had met President Vladimir Putin and visited key military and technology sites, underscoring the countries' deepening defense cooperation in the face of separate, intensifying confrontations with the U.S. and its allies. Foreign officials and experts have said North Korea could provide badly needed munitions for Moscow's war on Ukraine in exchange for sophisticated Russian weapons technology that would advance Kim's nuclear ambitions.

North Korea may have tens of millions of aging artillery shells and rockets based on Soviet designs that could bolster Russian forces in Ukraine, analysts say, even though its old artillery systems have a reputation for poor accuracy. Both sides have been reportedly firing thousands of artillery rounds a day.

U.N. Security Council resolutions — which Russia, a permanent member, previously endorsed — ban North Korea from exporting or importing any arms. Observers say Russia's alleged attempts to receive ammunitions and artillery shells from North Korea suggest Moscow's desperation to refill its arsenal exhausted in the war with Ukraine.

"Military cooperation between North Korea and Russia is illegal and unjust as it contravenes U.N. Security Council resolutions and various other international sanctions," South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said in written responses Sunday to questions from The Associated Press. "The international community will unite more tightly in response to such a move."

In return for supplying conventional arms to Russia, experts say North Korea would seek Russian economic and food aid but also transfers of technologies to build powerful missiles, a nuclear-propelled submarine and a spy satellite. North Korea has publicly sought to introduce such high-tech weapons systems citing what it called intensifying U.S.-led hostilities.

Earlier Sunday, Kim was in a lighter mode, touring a university and watching a walrus show at a Russian aquarium. Russia's state media released videos of Kim, accompanied by his top officials, talking with Russian officials through translators at the campus of the Far Eastern Federal University in Russky Island.

At the island's Primorsky Aquarium, Russia's largest, Kim watched performances featuring beluga whales, bottlenose dolphins, fur seals and "Misha" the walrus, which he seemed to particularly enjoy, according to Russian media.

Kozhemyako, the Primorye governor, said a delegation from Russia's Far East would visit North Korea. According to Russian state media, Kozhemyako said he'll be part of the delegation that will travel with specialists from trade, tourism and agricultural sectors. The exact timing for the visit to North Korea hasn't been announced.

On Saturday, Kim traveled to an airport near Vladivostok, where Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and other senior military officials gave him an up-close look at Russia's strategic bombers and other warplanes. Kim and Shoigu later in the day went to Vladivostok, where they inspected the Admiral Shaposhnikov frigate.

On Friday, Kim visited an aircraft plant in the city of Komsomolsk-on-Amur that produces Russia's most powerful fighter jets.



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The Russian warplanes shown to Kim on Saturday were among the types that have seen action in Ukraine, including the Tu-160, Tu-95 and Tu-22 bombers that have regularly launched cruise missiles. During Kim's visit, Shoigu and Lt. Gen. Sergei Kobylash, the commander of the Russian long-range bomber force, confirmed for the first time that the Tu-160 had recently received new cruise missiles with a range of more than 6,500 kilometers (over 4,040 miles).

Shoigu, who had met Kim during a rare visit to North Korea in July, also showed Kim another of Russia's latest missiles, the hypersonic Kinzhal, carried by the MiG-31 fighter jet, that saw its first combat during the war in Ukraine.

North Korea's state media reported that Kim and Shoigu talked about the regional security environment and exchanged views on "practical issues arising in further strengthening the strategic and tactical coordination, cooperation and mutual exchange between the armed forces of the two countries."

Kim's summit with Putin was held at Russia's main space launch site, a location that pointed to his desire for Russian assistance in his efforts to acquire space-based reconnaissance assets and missile technologies. In recent months, two North Korean launches to send a spy satellite into space ended in failure, and the North vowed to conduct a third attempt in October.

During the meeting with Putin, Kim said his country would offer its "full and unconditional support" for Russia's fight to defend its security interests, in an apparent reference to the war in Ukraine. Kim invited Putin to visit North Korea at "a convenient time," and Putin accepted.

It was Kim's second summit meeting with Putin. The previous meeting took place in Vladivostok in April 2019, two months after Kim's high-stakes nuclear diplomacy with then U.S. President Donald Trump fell apart during their second summit in Vietnam.

\_\_\_ Morton reported from London.

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## **The spotlight is on Ukraine at UN leaders' gathering, but is there room for other global priorities?**

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The war in Ukraine and its visiting president take center stage at the United Nations this week, but developing countries will be vying for the spotlight as well as they push for faster action on poverty and inequality at the first full-on meeting of world leaders since the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted travel three years ago.

The annual meeting at the U.N. General Assembly takes place at a polarizing and divisive juncture in history — the most fraught and dangerous since the Cold War, according to many analysts and diplomats.

They point to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, which upended already difficult relations among major powers as well as the ongoing impact of the pandemic, high food prices, the worsening climate emergency, escalating conflicts, and the world's failure to tackle poverty, hunger and gender inequality.

For developing countries, the top priority is the U.N.'s two-day summit starting Monday aimed at generating action by world leaders to achieve 17 wide-ranging and badly lagging global goals by 2030. In addition to ending extreme poverty and hunger, the goals include ensuring quality secondary education for all children, achieving gender equality and taking urgent action to combat climate change. At current rates, not a single one will be achieved.

High-level meetings on issues including pandemic prevention and universal health care are also on tap. "We find ourselves at a critical juncture in human history," former Liberian president and Nobel peace laureate Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said last week.

LOTS OF LEADERS ARE ON THE WAY — AND SOME ARE NOT

When the annual high-level meeting of the 193-member General Assembly begins Tuesday, presidents, prime ministers and monarchs from 145 countries are scheduled to speak, a very high number that reflects the multitude of global crises and lack of action.

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For the first time in years, U.S. President Joe Biden will be the only leader from the five powerful veto-wielding nations on the U.N. Security Council attending in person. This has sparked private grumbling from developing-country diplomats that key global players won't be listening to their demands, which need billions of dollars to implement.

Chinese President Xi Jinping attended last month's Johannesburg summit of the BRICS bloc of developing economies — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Russian President Vladimir Putin, sought by the International Criminal Court for alleged war crimes in Ukraine, didn't go to South Africa and isn't coming to New York. French President Emmanuel Macron, who attended last year, opted out to host Britain's King Charles in Paris next week, and Rishi Sunak will be the first British prime minister to skip the General Assembly in a decade, officially due to a busy schedule.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters last week that he didn't think a leader's presence "is more relevant or less relevant." What counts, he said, is whether their government is prepared to make commitments on the U.N. goals and many other issues during the week. "So this is not a vanity fair," he said.

Richard Gowan, U.N. director of the International Crisis Group, said that after the recent meeting in New Delhi of the Group of 20 major economic powers, "for some European leaders right now there is not a lot of political capital in going to big summits, and you need to be seen at home a lot more."

He called the situation at the United Nations "bleak," saying "it feels like we are a lot closer to a cliff edge in U.N. diplomacy" than a year ago. "Major power tensions are having a more and more serious effect on the organization," he said.

With the four leaders sending lower-ranking ministers, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is certain to grab even more attention, with the war in its 19th month and no end in sight. Biden, who speaks Tuesday, will also be closely watched for U.S. views on Ukraine, China and Russia.

Zelenskyy also addresses the assembly Tuesday and will attend a Security Council meeting Wednesday on Ukraine focusing on the principles of the U.N. Charter, which require every country to respect others' sovereignty and territorial integrity. The meeting could create the unique spectacle of placing Zelenskyy and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in the same room.

## GROWING GLOBAL DIVISIONS ARE MAKING THE UN'S JOB HARDER

Underlying the entire week is the prospect that the very reason for the United Nations' existence — to bring countries together to foster peace and security — is becoming more difficult because of divisions between the West, Russia and China, and the rise of regional and like-minded groups that are creating a multipolar world.

Guterres, who will deliver his state-of-the-world address at Tuesday's opening of what is called the General Debate, says he will tell world leaders that now is not a time for "posturing or positioning," or for "indifference or indecision."

"This is a time to come together for real, practical solutions," the U.N. chief said. "It is time for compromise for a better tomorrow."

Guterres, who says the Ukraine war has aggravated divisions, said the current shift to a fragmented "multipolar world" isn't going to solve the planet's myriad issues.

At the same time, he argues that the multilateral institutions established after World War II — the United Nations and its powerful Security Council, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund — are outdated and need reform "to make them more fair and more equitable, and more representative of the world today."

Recently published IMF research found that if the world fractured into different economic, financial and trade systems, "the loss is of around \$7 trillion annually," Guterres said, making it crucial to have one global economy and agreement on how to govern "disruptive technologies like artificial intelligence."

Switzerland's U.N. ambassador, Pascale Baeriswyl, said the summit on the 17 U.N. goals is the most important event this week apart from one-on-one meetings between world leaders. She expressed concern that with so many crises, it may be difficult to generate enough attention and political will to find solutions.

U.S. President Joe Biden arrived in New York on Sunday evening, well ahead of his Tuesday address to the General Assembly, so he and first lady Jill Biden could celebrate a granddaughter's birthday with family. On Monday, Biden will take part in two campaign fundraisers in New York.

Gowan said Zelensky's visit to New York is an opportunity for him to engage leaders from the global South and others he hasn't met. But Gowan said there is growing pressure for a diplomatic solution to the war, and if Zelenskyy says that "this is not a moment for diplomacy" and insists Ukraine has to fight on, "I think he will get a lot of pushback."

Guterres was asked how to keep the focus broader than only Ukraine and emphasize the U.N. goals. "We don't want to have only one spotlight," he replied. "We have the possibility, like in several theaters, to have different spotlights."

Aamer Madhani contributed to this report. Edith M. Lederer, chief U.N. correspondent for the AP, has been covering international affairs for more than 50 years.

## **Dominican Republic's president stands resolute on his closing of all borders with Haiti**

By MARTÍN ADAMES ALCÁNTARA Associated Press

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — The president of the Dominican Republic on Sunday defended his decision to close air, sea and land traffic with neighboring Haiti in their dispute over construction of a canal targeting a river that runs through both countries.

President Luis Abinader said in a televised speech that the border closures begun Friday will remain in place until construction is halted on the canal, which seeks to use water from the Massacre River to alleviate a drought in Haiti's Maribaroux plain.

"We do not desire or seek confrontation, but we are confronting the uncontrollable people who keep Haiti insecure, and who, due to their private interests, now also conspire against the stability of their government and the security of our water resources," Abinader said during his brief speech, referring to gang violence that has engulfed Haiti.

Accusing Haiti of violating a 1929 treaty between both countries, he said that the Massacre River is a key resource for Dominican farmers and that construction could damage the environment, including a wetland.

"The precedent of an irrigation project built unilaterally can lead to an escalation of constructions that would destroy the river," Abinader said.

The river is named after a bloody battle between French and Spanish colonizers, and it was the site of a mass killing of Haitians by the Dominican army in 1937.

The full border shutdowns came four days after Abinader announced that his administration had stopped issuing visas to Haitians and had closed the border near the northern town of Dajabon.

He said it was important to raise awareness in the international community so it comes to Haiti's aid.

"There is no Dominican solution to Haiti's problem," Abinader said. "We cannot be asked for more than what we already do."

A spokesperson for the office of Haiti's prime minister declined comment Sunday and referred to a Friday statement condemning Abinader's decision to shutter all borders while both sides were meeting to find a solution. Haiti's government has said it supports the canal project.

Haiti also has requested help to help quell a surge in gang violence, with the U.S. saying it would submit a U.N. Security Council resolution that would authorize Kenya's offer to lead a multinational police force.

A resolution has yet to be submitted, and no timetable has been provided.

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## AP Top 25: No. 13 Alabama is out of the top 10 for the first time since 2015. Georgia remains No. 1

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

No. 13 Alabama is out of the top 10 of The Associated Press college football poll for the first time in eight years, and Georgia remained No. 1 on Sunday.

Georgia received 57 first-place votes in the AP Top 25. Michigan held at No. 2 with two first-place votes. No. 3 Texas flipped spots with No. 4 Florida State. The Longhorns received three first-place votes and the Seminoles got one.

After scraping by South Florida on Saturday, Alabama (2-1) saw its streak of consecutive AP poll appearances ranked in the top 10 snapped at 128. That was the second-longest such streak in the history of the poll behind Miami's 137 from 1985-93.

The Crimson Tide are out of the top 10 for the first time since Sept. 27, 2015. The Tide dropped out of the top 10 that September after losing at Mississippi but moved back in on Oct. 3 and went on to win a national championship.

Georgia now has the longest active run of top-10 rankings with 37.

The ugly 17-3 win against USF marked Alabama's first game against a non-Power Five conference opponent since 2007 in which the Tide failed to score at least 20 points. In its previous 42 games against non-Power Five opponents, Alabama was unbeaten, with an average margin of victory of 40 points.

The rest of the top 10 included No. 6 Ohio State, No. 7 Penn State, No. 8 Washington, No. 9 Notre Dame and No. 10 Oregon.

The Buckeyes will visit the Fighting Irish next Saturday as the centerpiece of a huge schedule of ranked vs. ranked games.

### POLL POINTS

Alabama still has the longest streak in the country of consecutive weeks being ranked at 249.

That's the second best of all time but still a long way behind the record. Nebraska, under Tom Osborne, was ranked for 348 straight weeks from 1981-2002.

The next-best active streak behind Alabama belongs to Ohio State at 182, though the Buckeyes were not eligible for the first few regular-season polls of the 2020 season.

Georgia's streak is at 102. Michigan is fourth best at 34 and Utah has the fifth-longest active Top 25 streak at 25.

### IN AND OUT

Kansas State was the only team to fall out of the ranking this week after losing at Missouri on a 61-yard field goal as time expired.

No. 25 Florida moved back in for the first time since Sept. 24 of last season after upsetting Tennessee.

"It validates your plan, what you're selling to a degree," Florida coach Billy Napier said after the game. "That's what you want as a leader. ... That's a lot more fun."

The Vols dropped 12 spots to No. 23.

With the Gators back in the AP Top 25, Florida State, Miami and Florida are all ranked for the first time since Sept. 17, 2017.

### CONFERENCE CALL

The only two ranked teams in the Big 12 this week are the ones leaving after this season, Texas and Oklahoma.

Though, to be fair, Colorado and Utah will be joining from the Pac-12 and the Utes are No. 11 and Buffaloes No. 19, after winning a double-overtime thriller against Colorado State.

Pac-12 — 8 (Nos. 5, 8, 10, 11, 14, 19, 21, 22).

SEC — 6 (Nos. 1, 12, 13, 15, 23, 25).

ACC — 4 (Nos. 4, 17, 18, 20).

Big Ten — 4 (Nos. 2, 6, 7, 24).

Big 12 — 2 (Nos. 3, 16).



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Independent — 1 (No. 9).

RANKED vs. RANKED

Doesn't get much better than this slate of games.

No. 6 Ohio State at No. 9 Notre Dame. For the second straight year, it's a top-10 matchup.

No. 15 Ole Miss at No. 13 Alabama. Tide leads series 9-3 when both are ranked.

No. 22 UCLA at No. 11 Utah. The second meeting with both teams ranked. The first was last year.

No. 19 Colorado at No. 10 Oregon. First regular-season meeting with both teams ranked.

No. 14 Oregon State at No. 21 Washington State. The Beavers and Cougars, the Pac-12's left-behinds, have played 98 times but never before when both teams were ranked.

No. 24 Iowa at No. 7 Penn State. Three of the last four meetings came when both were ranked.

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AP Sports Writer Mark Long in Gainesville, Florida, contributed to this report.

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AP college football: <https://apnews.com/hub/college-football> and <https://apnews.com/hub/ap-top-25-college-football-poll>

## **UAW justifies wage demands by pointing to CEO pay raises. So how high were they?**

By ALEXANDRA OLSON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — It's been a central argument for the United Auto Workers union: If Detroit's three automakers raised CEO pay by 40% over the past four years, workers should get similar raises.

UAW President Shawn Fain has repeatedly cited the figure, contrasting it with the 6% pay raises autoworkers have received since their last contract in 2019. He opened negotiations with a demand for a similar 40% wage increase over four years, along with the return of pensions and cost of living increases. The UAW has since lowered its demand to a 36% wage increase but the two sides remain far apart in contract talks, triggering a strike.

Fain's focus on CEO pay is part of a growing trend of emboldened labor unions citing the wealth gap between workers and the top bosses to bolster demand for better pay and working conditions. In June, Netflix shareholders rejected executive pay packages in a nonbinding vote, just days after the Writers Guild of America wrote letters urging investors to vote against the pay proposals, saying it would be inappropriate amid Hollywood's ongoing strike by writers. The WGA wrote similar letters targeting the executive pay at Comcast and NBCUniversal.

Fain has pushed back against arguments that a big pay bump for the union would jack up costs of vehicles and put the Big Three automakers — General Motors, Ford and Stellantis (formerly Chrysler) — at a disadvantage against foreign competitors with lower-cost workforces in the race to transition to electric vehicles.

"The reason we ask for 40% pay increases is because in the last four years alone, the CEO pay went up 40%. They're already millionaires," Fain told CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday. "Our demands are just. We're asking for our fair share in this economy and the fruits of our labor."

CEO pay has ballooned for decades, while wages for ordinary workers have lagged. But did the Big Three chief executives really get 40% pay increases? Not exactly.

"I don't know where the 40% came from," said General Motors CEO Mary Barra at a new conference when asked if the UAW's numbers were accurate.

Executive pay is notoriously complicated to calculate because so much of it comes in the form of stock grants or stock options. A detailed look at the compensation packages at all three companies shows how the UAW's claim both overstates and understates reality, depending on the view.

THE BIG THREE CEO PAY PACKAGES

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Barra, the only one of the three who held the role since 2019, is the highest paid, with a compensation package of worth \$28.98 million in 2022. The single biggest component was \$14.62 million in stock grants, which vest over three years and whose ultimate value depends on stock performance and other metrics.

Her pay has increased 34% since 2019, according data from public filings analyzed for AP by Equilar.

Ford CEO James Farley received nearly \$21 million in total compensation in 2022, a 21% increase over the \$17.4 million then-CEO Jim Hackett received in 2019, according to the company's proxy statements. Farley's package last year included \$15.14 million in stock awards, which also vest over three years with an ultimate value dependent on performance.

Where the the comparison gets complicated is at Stellantis, which was formed in 2021 with the merger of Italian-American conglomerate Fiat Chrysler Automobiles and French PSA Group. Because it is a European company, the way Stellantis discloses executive pay differs significantly from GM and Ford.

In its annual remuneration report, Stellantis reported CEO Carlos Tavares' 2022 pay was 23.46 million euros. That's a nearly 77% increase over then Fiat Chrysler CEO Mike Manley's 2019 pay of 13.28 million euros.

Those are the numbers used by the UAW when it calculated that three automakers have, collectively, increased CEO pay by 40.1% since 2019, according to the methodology the union provided to The AP.

But there's a catch: Stellantis' figures reflect "realized pay," which include the value of previously granted equity that vested during the reporting year. U.S. companies, in contrast, use grant date value of stock packages awarded to executives during the reporting year.

In its analysis, Equilar used the "grant date" method to make an equivalent comparison between all three CEOs. By that measure, Tavares' 2022 compensation was in 21.95 million euros in 2022, including 10.9 million in stock awards with a three-year vesting period.

That's actually 24% decline from Manley's compensation package in 2019, which was 29.04 million euros, according to Equilar.

## THE VOLATILITY OF CEO PAY

So, is Tavares really making less than Manley was four years ago? Not really.

That's because in some years, talking about a CEO's "realized pay" can obscure exorbitant pay packages approved by company boards.

Take Tavares' 2021 compensation package, which included special incentive award of 25 million euros in cash as well as stock worth 19.56 million euros — all contingent on long-term performance goals — granted to Tavares in recognition of "his essential role" in leading the company through the merger.

That one-time award, which came on top of millions of more in regular compensation, alone pushed Tavares' 2021 compensation package far above what Manley got in 2019.

Stellantis shareholders voted 52.1% to reject the pay proposal in their annual meeting, though the vote was only advisory and the board approved his package anyway.

The CEOs of GM and Ford also saw their compensation packages peak in 2021, before declining slightly in 2022.

## HOW DOES ALL THIS COMPARE TO REGULAR WORKER PAY?

However you slice the numbers, the gap between CEO pay and rank-and-file workers at all three companies is gigantic.

At GM, the median worker pay was \$80,034 in 2022. It would take that worker 362 years to make Barra's annual compensation.

At Ford, where the median pay was \$74, 691, it would take 281 years.

At Stellantis, with a median pay of 64,328 euros, it would take 365 years, although the company noted its annual report that the disparity includes expenses related to Tavares' one-time grant. Excluding that, the pay ratio is 298-1.

How extreme that disparity? It depends on the comparison.

It's far above the typical pay gap at S&P 500 companies, which was 186-1 according to AP's annual CEO pay survey, which uses data analyzed by Equilar.

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And it's astronomical by historical standards. According to a study of the 350 largest publicly traded U.S. firms by the left-leaning Economic Policy Institute, the CEO-to-Worker pay ratio was just 15-1 in 1965.

The automakers, for their part, emphasize that their foreign competitors pay their workers much less. Including benefits, workers at the Detroit 3 automakers receive around \$60 an hour, according to Harry Katz, a labor professor at Cornell University. At foreign-based automakers with U.S. factories, the compensation is about \$40 to \$45.

Then there's Tesla.

CEO Elon Musk's 2022 compensation was reported as zero in the company's proxy statement, rendering its official pay ratio meaningless. Of course, that's because Tesla hasn't awarded Musk new packages since a 2018 long-term compensation plan that could potentially be worth more than \$50 billion and is facing a legal challenge from shareholders.

But the proxy offers glimpse at the mind-boggling wealth disparity between its nonunion workers and one of the world's richest men.

The filing reported Musk's total "realized compensation" in 2021 at more than \$737 million. A typical Tesla worker earned \$40,723 that year.

According to the proxy, for that worker to make Musk's "realized compensation" that year, it would take more than 18,000 years.

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This story has been corrected to reflect Ford's CEO and his compensation in 2019. The CEO was Jim Hackett, not William Clay Ford, and his compensation was \$17.4 million, not \$16.76 million.

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AP Auto Writer Tom Krisher in Detroit contributed to this story.

## Road collision kills 4 Greek rescue workers dispatched to flood-stricken Libya, health minister says

CAIRO (AP) — Four Greek rescue workers dispatched to Libya following devastating flooding in the eastern city of Derna were killed in a road collision Sunday, Libya's health minister said.

Some 11,300 people died when two dams collapsed during Mediterranean storm Daniel last week sending a wall of water gushing through the city, according to the Red Crescent aid group. A further 10,000 people are missing, and presumed dead.

Rescue workers from Greece, Turkey, Egypt and other countries have flocked to the decimated port city to offer help.

On Sunday, a bus carrying 19 Greek rescue workers collided with a vehicle carrying five Libyan nationals on the road between the cities of Benghazi and Derna, health minister Othman Abduljaleel said at a news conference. Three Libyans in the oncoming vehicle were also killed.

Seven of the surviving Greek rescue workers were in critical condition, the minister said.

In a parallel statement, the Greek Foreign Ministry acknowledged the crash but said only three of its nationals had died while two others were missing. The Associated Press was not immediately able to reconcile the conflicting reports.

The disaster has brought some rare unity to oil-rich Libya, which has been divided between rival governments in the country's east and west that are backed by various militia forces and international patrons. Residents from the nearby cities of Benghazi and Tobruk have offered to put up the displaced, while volunteers have helped hunt for survivors buried beneath the rubble.

But the opposing governments have struggled to respond to the crisis. Their recovery efforts have been hampered by confusion, difficulty getting aid to the hardest-hit areas, and the destruction of Derna's infrastructure, including several bridges.

More than 3,283 bodies were buried as of Sunday, Abduljaleel said, many in mass graves outside Derna, while others were transferred to nearby towns and cities.

On Saturday, Libya's general prosecutor, al-Sediq al-Sour, opened an investigation into the collapse of

the two dams, built in the 1970s, as well as the allocation of maintenance funds. Derna's mayor, Abdel-Moneim al-Gaithi, was suspended pending an investigation into the disaster.

Authorities and aid groups have voiced concern about the spread of waterborne diseases and shifting of explosive ordnance from Libya's recent conflicts.

Haider al-Saeih, head of Libya's center for combating diseases, said in televised comments Saturday that at least 150 people had suffered from diarrhea after drinking contaminated water in Derna.

To prevent disease outbreak, Abduljaleel said his ministry had began "vaccinations against diseases that usually occur after disasters such as this one."

## First two cargo ships arrive in Ukrainian port after Russia's exit from grain deal

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Two cargo ships arrived in one of Ukraine's ports over the weekend, using a temporary Black Sea corridor established by Kyiv following Russia's withdrawal from a wartime agreement designed to ensure safe grain exports from the invaded country's ports.

Two Palau-flagged bulk carriers, Aroyat and Resilient Africa, docked Saturday at the seaport of Chornomorsk in the southern Odesa region, according to an online statement by the Ukrainian Sea Ports Authority. The vessels are the first civilian cargo ships to reach one of the Odesa ports since Russia exited the grain deal.

Oleksandr Kubrakov, Ukraine's deputy prime minister, said in an online statement Saturday that the two ships will be delivering some 20,000 tons of wheat to countries in Africa and Asia.

For months, Ukraine, whose economy is heavily dependent on farming, was able to safely export its grain from Black Sea ports under a deal brokered by the United Nations and Turkey to ensure safe shipments. But Russia withdrew from the deal on July 17, with Kremlin officials arguing their demands for the facilitation of Russian food and fertilizer shipments had not been met.

Following the withdrawal, the Russian Defense Ministry said it would regard any vessels in the Black Sea headed to Ukrainian ports as military targets.

Since then, Kyiv has sought to reroute transport through the Danube River, and road and rail links into Europe. But transport costs that way are much higher. Some European countries have balked at the consequential local grain prices, and the Danube ports can't handle the same volume as seaports.

The interim corridor in the Black Sea, which Kyiv has asked the International Maritime Organization to ratify, was opened on Aug. 10 as United States and Ukrainian officials warned of possible Russian attacks on civilian vessels. Sea mines also make the voyage risky, and ship insurance costs are likely to be high for operators.

Ukrainian officials said the corridor will be primarily used to evacuate ships stuck in the Ukrainian ports of Chornomorsk, Odesa and Pivdennyi since the war broke out. Kubrakov said Saturday that five vessels have since used the corridor to leave Ukrainian ports.

After tearing up the grain deal, Russia intensified attacks on the southern Odesa region, targeting its port infrastructure and grain silos with missiles and drones.

On Sunday, Ukraine's Air Force Command reported another attack overnight in which the Odesa region was the main target. Russian forces fired 10 cruise missiles and six Iranian-made Shahed drones, the statement said. All drones and six missiles were downed, while the rest hit an agricultural facility in the Odesa region.

In other developments:

— Ukraine's military said Sunday it captured the village of Klishchiivka from Russian troops after months of fierce fighting. The village lies south of the Russian-held city of Bakhmut in the eastern Donetsk region, and its recapture comes days after Ukrainian forces said they liberated the nearby village of Andriivka. There was no immediate comment from Russian officials on the recapture.

Gaining Klischiivka signifies an important tactical victory for Ukrainian forces. The commanding heights of the village offers a view into the Russian-occupied town of Bakhmut and opens up new opportunities for Ukrainian forces to encircle the town. It also potentially allows Ukrainians a better view into Russian



logistic lines.

— Russian authorities on Sunday reported that Ukrainian drones targeted the annexed Crimean peninsula and a number of Russian regions overnight and in the morning. Two drones were downed overnight in the Moscow region that surrounds the Russian capital, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said. A third drone was intercepted over the Voronezh region that borders Ukraine, Russia's Defense Ministry said. Another one hit a fuel tank in the neighboring Oryol region, Oryol Gov. Andrei Klychkov said, igniting a fire that was quickly put out. A drone also fell on a logistics facility in the Tula region south of Moscow, local authorities said. In the annexed Crimea, the Russian Defense Ministry reported downing six Ukrainian drones in the early hours of Sunday. Ukrainian officials have not commented on the attacks,

## **Drew Barrymore and 'The Talk' postpone their daytime talk shows until after the Hollywood strikes**

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Drew Barrymore, who drew criticism for taping new episodes of her daytime talk show despite the ongoing writers and actors strikes, now says she'll wait until the labor issues are resolved. Hours later CBS' "The Talk" did the same.

"I have listened to everyone, and I am making the decision to pause the show's premiere until the strike is over," Barrymore posted on Instagram on Sunday. "I have no words to express my deepest apologies to anyone I have hurt and, of course, to our incredible team who works on the show and has made it what it is today."

Barrymore's initial decision to return to the air Monday — without her three union writers and with picketers outside her studio — was met with pushback on social media. Her show resumed taping in New York last week and was picketed by striking writers.

"We support Drew's decision to pause the show's return and understand how complex and difficult this process has been for her," said a CBS Media Ventures spokesperson.

Other daytime shows have resumed. "The View" has returned for its 27th season on ABC, while "Tamron Hall" and "Live With Kelly and Ryan" — neither are governed by writers guild rules — have also been producing fresh episodes. "The Jennifer Hudson Show" is to restart Monday.

But "The Talk" scrapped its restart, planned for Monday. "We will continue to evaluate plans for a new launch date," CBS said in a statement Sunday.

Ariel Dumas, head writer and supervising producer for "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" reacted on X, formerly Twitter: "This is really great," she wrote, saying "The Drew Barrymore Show" "decided to do the right thing. I hope @TheView and others will follow suit."

As long as the hosts and guests don't discuss or promote work covered by television, theatrical or streaming contracts, they're not technically breaking the strike. That's because talk shows are covered under a separate contract — the so-called Network Code — from the one actors and writers are striking. The Network Code also covers reality TV, sports, morning news shows, soap operas and game shows.

Barrymore's stance prompted the National Book Awards to uninvite her as host in November. The organization rescinded her invitation "in light of the announcement that 'The Drew Barrymore Show' will resume production."

The ongoing strike pits Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists against the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which represents Disney, Netflix, Amazon and others.

## Trump refuses to say in a TV interview how he watched the Jan. 6 attack unfold at the US Capitol

By MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former President Donald Trump repeatedly declined in an interview aired Sunday to answer questions about whether he watched the Capitol riot unfold on television, saying he would “tell people later at an appropriate time.”

Trump, the current front-runner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, refused to say on NBC’s “Meet the Press” how he spent Jan. 6, 2021, once the insurrection began and whether he made phone calls as his supporters stormed the seat of American democracy.

“I’m not going to tell you. I’ll tell people later at an appropriate time,” Trump told moderator Kristen Welker after she asked if he spent that afternoon watching the attack on television in a dining room at the White House.

Trump’s former aides have said he sequestered himself in the room off the Oval Office to watch, at times even rewinding and rewatching some parts.

In the interview, taped Thursday at Trump’s golf club in New Jersey, Trump refused to say who he called as the violence unfolded. “Why would I tell you that?” he said.

Trump said in response to Welker’s pressing him about his public silence during the violence that he had made “beautiful statements” on the day of the attack.

Trump’s supporters, fueled by his lies about the 2020 presidential election, stormed the building as Congress prepare to certify the victory of Democrat Joe Biden. Trump is facing federal criminal charges for his efforts to overturn his loss in that election but he is not facing charges related to the insurrection.

Trump said he might consider pardoning some of the rioters charged for their actions that day.

More than 1,000 people have been charged with federal crimes related to the Jan. 6 riot and more than 600 have pleaded guilty or been convicted.

“I’m going to look at them, and I certainly might if I think it’s appropriate” to pardon them, the former president said.

Trump also said he would consider pardoning former Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrio, who was sentenced to 22 years in prison orchestrating a failed plot to keep Trump in power. Trump said Tarrio was treated “horribly,” according to a full transcript of the NBC interview, which included parts that were not aired.

Trump is facing 91 criminal charges across four cases in federal and state courts related to his efforts to overturn the 2020 election results, the mishandling of classified documents and charges related to allegations of hush-money paid to cover up extramarital affairs. He has denied wrongdoing.

Trump was asked if he fears going to jail.

“No, I don’t really. I don’t even think about it. I’m built a little differently I guess,” he said.

As he pushed to overturn the election, Trump relied on a band of outside allies who undertook what federal prosecutors have called a “criminal scheme” to fraudulently overturn the 2020 results instead of relying on the advice of attorneys in the White House who urged him to accept his loss to Biden.

Trump was asked in the interview why he didn’t listen to those lawyers.

“I didn’t respect them,” Trump said.

“In many cases, I didn’t respect them. But I did respect others. I respected many others that said the election was rigged.”

Trump said he was listening both to his instincts and “different people” to guide his actions around the election’s results.

The NBC appearance was Trump’s first broadcast network interview since leaving office and marked Welker’s debut show as host.

Trump also said he was pleased to hear Russian President Vladimir Putin’s recent remarks praising Trump for suggesting that he were elected to the White House again, he would negotiate an end to Russia’s war in Ukraine. Putin on Tuesday said Trump’s statements were “good” and brought “happiness.”

“Well, I like that he said that. Because that means what I’m saying is right,” Trump said on NBC.

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Trump said he had had a good relationship with Putin, something he has said several times before, and denied that any deal he would seek in Ukraine would be a win for Russia and allow it to keep territory it has seized.

"That's something that could have been negotiated," Trump said. He went on and said, "They could have made a deal where there's lesser territory right now than Russia's already taken, to be honest."

Trump repeatedly declined to say whether he would support a federal ban on abortion and he criticized a ban on abortion after six weeks of pregnancy that was signed by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, one of Trump's top rivals in the presidential primary.

"I think what he did is a terrible thing and a terrible mistake," Trump said.

Trump said he did not care whether abortion was ultimately banned at a federal level or settled by laws in each state. The U.S. Supreme Court, with the support of three justices appointed by Trump, last year overturned the federal right to an abortion.

"From a pure standpoint, from a legal standpoint, I think it's probably better" to be handled at the state level, Trump said.

"But I can live with it either way. It's much more important, the number of weeks is much more important."

## Atlantic storm Lee delivers high winds and rain before forecasters call off all warnings

By ROBERT F. BUKATY and DAVID SHARP Associated Press

BAR HARBOR, Maine (AP) — Atlantic storm Lee — which made landfall at near-hurricane strength, bringing destructive winds and torrential rains to New England and Maritime Canada — kept weakening Sunday after officials withdrew warnings and predicted the storm would disappear early this week.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Sunday morning that the post-tropical cyclone was about 135 miles (215 kilometers) west of Channel-Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland. The top sustained wind speed was 45 mph (70 kph) with some higher gusts expected.

"Gradual weakening is forecast during the next couple of days, and Lee could dissipate on Tuesday," the U.S. hurricane center said.

The sky was sunny in Maine on Sunday morning. Gov. Janet Mills suspended a state of emergency. Less than 5% of electricity customers were still without power, down from 11% by midday Saturday during the height of the storm. In Canada, 14% of Nova Scotia had no electricity, down from 27% on Saturday, with smaller numbers in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

The center discontinued a tropical storm warning for the coast of Maine late Saturday. It reported late Sunday morning that all tropical storm warnings for Canada were discontinued.

Storm surges were expected to subside on Sunday after being forecast as up to 3 feet (0.91 meters) on Saturday along coastal areas, the hurricane center said.

A 51-year-old motorist in Searsport, Maine, died Saturday after a large tree limb fell on his vehicle on U.S. Highway 1 during high winds. The limb brought down live power lines and utility workers had to cut power before removing the man, who died later at a hospital, Police Chief Brian Lunt said.

A driver suffered minor injuries Saturday, after a tree downed by Lee went through his windshield on Route 11 in Moro Plantation, Maine, according to Maine State Police. John Yoder, 23, of Apple Creek, Ohio, attempted to stop but couldn't avoid the tree. Yoder suffered minor cuts but the other five passengers in the van were not injured. Police blamed high winds for the downed tree.

The storm was tracked as moving around 22 mph (35 kph) and expected to proceed northeast, taking the weather system across the Canadian Maritimes. Rainfall was expected to be an additional 1 inch (25 millimeters) or less for portions of eastern Maine, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the U.S. storm center said.

In Bar Harbor, Maine, the touristy gateway to Acadia National Park, a whale watch vessel broke free of its mooring and crashed ashore Saturday. Authorities worked to offload 1,800 gallons (6,813 liters) of diesel fuel to prevent it from spilling into the ocean.

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Lee flooded coastal roads in Nova Scotia and took ferries out of service while fanning anxiety in a region still reeling from wildfires and severe flooding this summer. The province's largest airport, Halifax Stanfield International, canceled all flights.

"People are exhausted," said Pam Lovelace, a councilor in Halifax. "It's so much in such a small time period."

Hurricane-force winds extended as far as 140 miles (220 kilometers) from Lee's center, with tropical storm-force winds extending as far as 320 miles (515 kilometers), enough to cover all of Maine and much of Maritime Canada.

The storm skirted some of the most waterlogged areas of Massachusetts that experienced severe flash flooding days earlier, when fast water washed out roads, caused sinkholes, damaged homes and flooded vehicles.

In eastern Maine, winds died down enough by late afternoon Saturday for utility workers to begin using bucket trucks to make repairs.

The entire region has experienced an especially wet summer, ranking second in the number of rainy days in Portland, Maine — and Lee's high winds toppled trees stressed by the rain-soaked ground in Maine, the nation's most heavily wooded state.

Cruise ships found refuge at berths in Portland, Maine, while lobstermen in Bar Harbor and elsewhere pulled traps from the water and hauled boats inland.

Billy Bob Faulkingham, House Republican leader of the Maine Legislature, and another lobsterman survived after their boat overturned while hauling traps ahead of the storm Friday, officials said.

The boat's emergency locator beacon alerted authorities and the pair clung to the hull until help arrived, said Winter Harbor Police Chief Danny Mitchell. The 42-foot (12.8-meter) boat sank.

"They're very lucky to be alive," Mitchell said.

Lee shared some characteristics with 2012's Superstorm Sandy. Both storms were once-strong hurricanes that became post-tropical cyclones — cyclonic storms that have lost most of their tropical characteristics — before landfall. But Sandy caused billions of dollars in damage and was blamed for dozens of deaths in New York and New Jersey.

Lee also was not anywhere near as severe as the remnants of Hurricane Fiona, which a year ago washed houses into the ocean in eastern Canada, knocked out power to most of two provinces and swept a woman into the sea.

Destructive hurricanes are relatively rare so far north. The Great New England Hurricane of 1938 brought gusts as high as 186 mph (300 kph) and sustained winds of 121 mph (195 kph) at Massachusetts' Blue Hill Observatory. There have been no storms that powerful in recent years.

Separately, Tropical Storm Nigel was strengthening and expected to become a hurricane by Monday, the U.S. hurricane center said. It appeared to pose no threats to the U.S. or Canada. It was about 990 miles (1,595 kilometers) northeast of the Lesser Antilles and about 1,115 miles (1,790 kilometers) east-southeast of Bermuda. It had maximum sustained winds of 60 mph (95 kph) and was moving north-northwest at 13 mph (20 kph).

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Sharp reported from Portland, Maine. Associated Press journalists Robert Bumsted in Cape Elizabeth, Maine; Patrick Whittle in Portland, Maine; Michael Casey in Boston; Rio Yamat in Las Vegas; Mark Thiessen in Anchorage, Alaska; Rob Gillies in Toronto; and Kathy McCormack in Concord, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.



## Missing the Emmy Awards? What's happening with the strike-delayed celebration of television

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — In a normal year — if there is any such thing in Hollywood anymore — the 75th Emmy Awards ceremony would be Monday night, and the many nominees from shows like “Succession” and “Ted Lasso” would be claiming their trophies or happily clapping for the winners.

Instead, the actors and writers strikes brought a postponement until January.

Here's a look at what's happening, and what may happen, with the awards that have been thrown off course.

### HOW THE STRIKES AFFECTED NOMINATIONS

A shadow hung over this year's Emmys from the start. Writers, who are essential to the process both as nominees and the people who provide jokes and patter for the show, had been on strike for more than two months when the nominees were announced June 11. Then just three days after “Succession,” “White Lotus,” “The Last of Us” and “Ted Lasso” were named as the top nominees, leaders of the actors union announced they would join writers in a historic Hollywood work stoppage.

With union rules allowing no interviews, panels or awards-show participation, acting nominees had just a few days to do the kind of media promotion that is usually rampant after a nomination. Writers couldn't do it at all.

### NEW DATE PUTS THE EMMYS IN PRIME AWARDS SEASON

The Television Academy and Fox TV, which was scheduled to air the show this year, initially kept the original Sept. 18 show date in place, with hopes the strikes would end quickly.

But with no realistic prospects for resolution, Fox and the academy decided in mid-August to change the show date to Jan. 15, 2024, Martin Luther King Day, at the Peacock Theater in downtown Los Angeles. No host has been announced.

The January date in many ways makes sense. Because they are still tied to the traditional fall-through-spring broadcast television season, the Emmys have been among the few awards shows held in September. That TV model, as the strikers know all too well, has been upended by cable and streaming structures that observe no such conventions. That traditional Emmy scheduling was starting to create odd situations. Voters were casting ballots for season one of the “The Bear” — which got 13 nominations — after season two had already aired. And now the results won't be known until nearly a year after the second season premiere.

The January date will put the Emmys within the rest of Hollywood's awards season, when red carpets rule and performers are on the promotional prowl. The show is slated for about a week after the Golden Globes and about six weeks before the Screen Actors Guild Awards — both ceremonies that honor television along with movies.

The date also puts it in line with the Emmys' early years in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when they were held in January or February.

The delay is the first time the Emmys have been postponed since 2001, when the 9/11 attacks came just five days before the planned ceremony. Then the launch of the war in Afghanistan, which came hours before the rescheduled October show, prompted another postponement until November, when a small, restrained show hosted by Ellen DeGeneres finally ran.

The 2020 ceremony, dominated by “Schitt's Creek” and dubbed the “Pandemmies” by host Jimmy Kimmel was seriously scaled back because of the coronavirus, with nominees accepting trophies and making speeches from remote locations, but the date was never moved.

### THE VOTES ARE ALL IN

With nothing else normal about the Emmys, the Television Academy at least wanted the voting process to go on as planned, and for the results to be as close as possible to what they would have been without the upheaval.

The Emmys are decided by votes from the nearly 20,000 members of the Television Academy. The mem-

bership is divided into 31 peer groups including animators, performers, directors and writers. Members of each group vote for Emmy winners in those categories, and all eligible voters can cast ballots for the awards that go to entire shows, including best drama series and best drama series.

This year's ballots went out as planned on Aug. 17 and had to be returned by Aug. 28. That means the winners are already decided, but it will be four months — at least — before the envelopes are opened revealing them.

#### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The new date looked a long way off when it was scheduled, but Emmy organizers may have to face the prospect that the strikes could still be going on in January. Writers have currently been off the job for 4 1/2 months, the actors for two months. The stoppages spilling into next year would make them historically long, and go well past initial predictions.

Negotiations between writers and studios have been slow in restarting. There have been no talks, and none are planned, between studios and actors.

Prolonged strikes could mean another Emmys postponement, or a show transformed into a glorified news conference, as happened with some awards during the pandemic.

It would also throw the Oscars, and the entire awards season, into doubt.

For more on the actors and writers strikes, visit: <https://apnews.com/hub/hollywood-strikes/>

## Rural hospitals are closing maternity wards. People are seeking options to give birth closer to home

By CLAIRE RUSH and LAURA UNGAR Associated Press

Alisha Alderson placed her folded clothes and everything she needed for the last month of her pregnancy in various suitcases. She never imagined she would have to leave the comfort of her home in rural eastern Oregon just weeks before her due date. But following the abrupt closure in August of the only maternity ward within 40 miles, she decided to stay at her brother's house near Boise, Idaho — a two-hour drive through a mountain pass — to be closer to a hospital.

"We don't feel safe being so far away from a birthing center," said Alderson, noting her advanced maternal age of 45. "I was sitting in a hair salon a few days ago and some people started joking about me giving birth on the side of the road. And in that moment, I just pictured all the things that could go wrong with my baby and broke down in tears in front of strangers."

A growing number of rural hospitals have been shuttering their labor and delivery units, forcing pregnant women to travel longer distances for care or face giving birth in an emergency room. Fewer than half of rural hospitals now have maternity units, prompting government officials and families to scramble for answers. One solution gaining ground across the U.S. is freestanding midwife-led birth centers, but those also often rely on nearby hospitals when serious complications arise.

The closures have worsened so-called "maternity care deserts" — counties with no hospitals or birth centers that offer obstetric care and no OB providers. More than two million women of childbearing age live in such areas, the majority of which are rural.

Ultimately, doctors and researchers say, having fewer hospital maternity units makes having babies less safe. One study showed rural residents have a 9% greater probability of facing life-threatening complications or even death from pregnancy and birth compared to those in urban areas — and having less access to care plays a part.

"Moms have complications everywhere. Babies have complications everywhere," said Dr. Eric Scott Palmer, a neonatologist who practiced at Henry County Medical Center in rural Tennessee before it ended obstetric services this month. "There will be people hurt. It's not a question of if — simply when."

#### Reasons behind the closures

The issue has been building for years: The American Hospital Association says at least 89 obstetric units closed in rural hospitals between 2015 and 2019. More have shuttered since.

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The main reasons for closures are decreasing numbers of births; staffing issues; low reimbursement from Medicaid, the federal-state health insurance program for low-income people; and financial distress, said Peiyin Hung, deputy director of the University of South Carolina's Rural and Minority Health Research Center and co-author of research based on a survey of hospitals.

Officials at Saint Alphonsus, the hospital in Baker City where Alderson wanted to give birth, cited a shortage of OB nurses and declining deliveries.

"The results are devastating when safe staffing is not provided. And we will not sacrifice patient safety," according to an emailed statement from Odette Bolano and Dina Ellwanger, two leaders from the hospital and the health system that owns it.

While they said financial concerns didn't factor into the decision, they underlined that the unit had operated in the red over the last 10 years.

A lack of money was the major reason why Henry County Medical Center in Paris, Tennessee, closed its OB unit. CEO John Tucker told The Associated Press that it was a necessary financial step to save the hospital, which has been struggling for a decade.

The percentage of births there covered by Medicaid — 70% — far exceeded the national average of 42%. Tennessee's Medicaid program paid the hospital about \$1,700 per delivery for each mom, a fraction of what the hospital needed, Tucker said.

Private insurance pays hospitals more — the median topped \$16,000 for cesarean sections in Oregon in 2021. State data shows that's more than five times what Medicaid doles out.

Tucker also said the number of deliveries had dropped in recent years.

"When volumes go down, losses actually get bigger because so much of that cost is really fixed," he said. "Whether we've got one baby on the floor or three, we still staff at the same level because you kind of have to be prepared for whatever comes in."

The last week in a delivery ward

Six days before the Tennessee unit closed, just one woman was there to deliver. All of the other rooms contained empty beds and bassinets. The special care nursery was silent — no beeping machines or infants' cries. Art had been removed from the walls.

Lacy Kee, who was visiting the ward, said she'll have to drive 45 minutes and cross the state line into Kentucky to give birth to her third child in early October. She's especially concerned because she has gestational diabetes and recently had a scare with her fetus' heart rate.

Kee also had to switch from the Henry County obstetrician she trusted for her other pregnancies, Dr. Pamela Evans, who will stay at the hospital as a gynecologist.

Evans fears that things like preterm deliveries, infant mortality and low-birthweight babies — a measure in which the county already ranks poorly — are bound to get worse. Prenatal care suffers when people must travel long distances or take lots of time off work for appointments, she said. Not all insurance covers deliveries out of state, and some alternative in-state hospitals families are looking at are an hour or more away.

Evans' office and exam rooms contain bulletin boards covered with photos of infants she's brought into the world. During a recent visit, Katie O'Brien of Paris handed her a new photo of her son Bennett — the third of her children Evans delivered. The two women cradled the baby and hugged.

The closure "makes me absolutely want to cry," said O'Brien, 31. "It's a horrible thing for our community. Any young person looking to move here here won't want to come. Why would you want to come somewhere where you can't have a baby safely?"

A place to turn

About two hours away, inside a house in the woods, a handful of women sat in a circle on pillows for a prenatal group meeting at The Farm Midwifery Center, a storied place in Summertown, Tennessee, that's more than a half-century old.

Led by midwife Corina Fitch, the women shared thoughts and concerns, and at one point tied on scarves and danced together. One by one, Fitch pulled them into a bedroom to measure bellies, take blood, listen to fetal heartbeats and ask about things like nutrition.

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Betsy Baarspul of Nashville said she had an emergency C-section in a hospital for her first child. She's now pregnant with her third, and described the difference between hospital care and birth center care as "night and day."

"This is the perfect place for me," she said. "It feels like you're held in a way."

Some states and communities are taking steps to create more freestanding birth centers. Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont recently signed legislation that will license such centers and allow them to operate as an alternative for low-risk pregnancies.

Alecia McGregor, who studies health policy and politics at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, called midwife-led birth centers "a major sort of contender among the possible solutions" to the maternity care crisis.

"The kinds of lifesaving procedures that can only be conducted in a hospital are important for those very high-risk cases," McGregor said. "But for the majority of pregnancies, which are low-risk, birth centers can be a very important solution to lowering costs within the U.S. health care system and improving outcomes."

A lack of data and the small number of births in freestanding centers or homes prevents researchers from fully understanding the relationship between birth settings and maternal deaths or severe injuries and complications, according to a 2020 report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

The Farm said fewer than 2% of clients end up having C-sections, and a report on deliveries in its first 40 years showed 5% of clients were transported to the hospital — which Fitch said can happen because of things like water breaking early or exhaustion during labor. Clients usually give birth at The Farm or in their own homes.

"We always have a backup plan," she said, "because we know birth is unpredictable and things can come up."

Rural hospitals will need to be part of the equation, doctors told the AP, and they believe governments must do more to solve the maternal care crisis.

Oregon politicians mobilized when the Baker City hospital announced in June that it was shutting down its birth center — including Oregon Gov. Tina Kotek, U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden and Baker County Commissioner Shane Alderson, Alisha's husband. As a temporary fix, they suggested using OB nurses from the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, a branch of the country's uniformed services that largely responds to natural disasters and disease outbreaks.

It was a novel and "innovative" idea to request federal nurses to boost staffing at a rural maternity unit, Wyden's office said. While it didn't end up panning out, the public health service sent experts to Baker City to assess the situation and recommend solutions — including looking into establishing a freestanding birth center.

Shane Alderson wants to help people who are facing the same tough decisions his family had to make. He said rural communities shouldn't be stripped of health care options because of their smaller size or because of the number of low-income people with public insurance.

"That's not equitable," he said. "People can't survive like that."

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Rush reported from Baker City, Oregon, and Kuna, Idaho. Ungar reported from Paris, Tennessee, and Summertown, Tennessee.

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## Donald Trump's GOP rivals try to attract social conservatives in Iowa at an event he skipped

By WILL WEISSERT and THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Hoping to cut into Donald Trump's support at a major Iowa gathering of evangelical Christians, several of his top rivals on Saturday mostly avoided direct criticism of him on abortion and other issues key to social conservatives.

The Iowa Faith and Freedom Coalition's annual banquet is traditionally a marquee event on the Republican primary calendar. But the former president skipped it, leaving a mostly muted crowd of more than 1,000 pastors and activists to instead hear from several candidates running far behind Trump.

The primary field's split on abortion was once again on display, with Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis saying restrictions on the procedure should be left to the states — a position similar to Trump's — while former Vice President Mike Pence referred to Trump as his "former running mate" and said he was wrong to oppose a national abortion ban.

While the audience was overwhelmingly anti-abortion, Pence's push for a 15-week ban got only tepid applause, reflecting some national Republicans' concerns that Democrats are winning on abortion rights issues after last year's Supreme Court ruling overturning the Roe v. Wade decision.

DeSantis, who has struggled to solidify himself as the GOP primary's No. 2 behind Trump, declined to say he'd back a federal abortion ban. Instead, he said, states have done more on the issue.

"Congress has really struggled to make an impact over the years," DeSantis said.

That's similar to Trump, who recently has refused to back a federal ban, arguing that the issue should be left up to the states. The former president also has also previously cautioned top Republicans from championing abortion positions that are outside the political mainstream.

Pence said he disagreed with Trump and argued all Republican presidential candidates should back a federal abortion ban at a minimum of 15 weeks of pregnancy.

"I believe it's an idea whose time has come," Pence said. "We need to stand for the unborn all across America."

A Trump attack came from former Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, who is a frequent critic of the former president. He said "there's another candidate, that I respect, but who is not here tonight" before slamming Trump for saying he wants "to make both sides happy" on abortion.

Hutchinson said that unlike Trump, "both sides aren't going to like me. This is going to be a fight for life."

Unlike other high-profile events, no one in the audience booed that or any other comment Saturday. That might have been because Ralph Reed, chairman of the Faith and Freedom Coalition, admonished the audience before things started: "Let's conduct ourselves in a way that honors these candidates but honors our lord and savior Jesus Christ."

Those criticizing Trump didn't agree on everything. Hutchinson suggested that a House Republican push to open an impeachment inquiry against President Joe Biden might be premature given the facts that have been uncovered so far. Pence said he supported that effort.

The event featured many devout and well-connected social conservatives who can play a decisive role in Iowa's first-in-the-nation Republican caucuses in January. Texas Sen. Ted Cruz used strong appeals to evangelical Republicans to win the GOP's 2016 caucuses.

This time, however, Trump's rivals face a much tougher task because he has built a large early GOP primary lead. The former president has also remained popular with evangelical Christians and social conservatives in Iowa and elsewhere who were delighted to see his three Supreme Court picks vote to overturn Roe v. Wade.

Saturday's banquet is the last scheduled opportunity for a large group of Iowa evangelical conservatives have the chance to see the candidates side-by-side, meaning they won't see Trump. He skipped similar events with crowds of thousands in Iowa in April and June.

South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, a longtime bachelor, was asked about reports that he has a girlfriend who hasn't been publicly identified. On Saturday, he called her a "lovely Christian girl" and asked the crowd,

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"Can we just pray together for me?"

He added, "I just say praise the living God," seemingly joking about the Lord's work in finally ensuring he has a girlfriend.

DeSantis was asked specifically to talk about his personal faith and deeply held Catholic beliefs. He noted that when his wife was diagnosed with breast cancer, he was thankful for "the amount of prayers we received. It lifted my wife's spirits up." He said prayer was a key reason she was now cancer-free.

Candidates discussing their personal faith has been a hallmark of successful Iowa caucus candidates for decades — including George W. Bush who in 1999 famously said, when asked to identify his favorite political philosopher, named Jesus Christ "because he changed my heart."

Robin Star of Waukee, just west of Des Moines, attended DeSantis' address at the church and said she was glad the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade — but that Trump doesn't deserve all the credit. Star said she'd nonetheless vote for Trump if he's the Republican nominee, but fears he cannot unify the Republican Party enough heading into the general election against Biden.

"We've got to win," Star said. "We've just got to win."

Her husband, Jerry Star, was more definitive, saying "I believe it's time for new leadership."

A retired Air Force officer, Jerry Star said he was very supportive of most of Trump's time in the White House until Jan. 6, 2021, when a mob of the former president's supporters overran the U.S. Capitol.

"He did a heck of a job in his four years, but he knocked it all down that day," he said. "It's time for someone else."

## **A Supreme Court redistricting ruling gave hope to Black voters. They're still waiting for new maps**

By GARY FIELDS and ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court's decision siding with Black voters in an Alabama redistricting case gave Democrats and voting rights activists a surprising opportunity before the 2024 elections.

New congressional maps would have to include more districts in Alabama and potentially other states where Black voters would have a better chance of electing someone of their choice, a decision widely seen as benefiting Democrats.

It's been more than three months since the justice's 5-4 ruling, and maps that could produce more districts represented by Black lawmakers still do not exist.

Alabama Republicans are hoping to get a fresh hearing on the issue before the Supreme Court. Republican lawmakers in Louisiana never even bothered to draw a new map.

Khadijah Stone, a plaintiff in the Alabama case, said the continuing opposition was "appalling" but "not surprising." She noted that Alabama is where then-Gov. George Wallace blocked Black students from integrating the University of Alabama in 1963.

"There is a long history there of disobeying court orders to deny Black people our rights," she said.

A similar dynamic is playing out in Florida, where Republicans are appealing a ruling favorable to Black voters to the Republican-majority state Supreme Court.

Lawsuits over racially gerrymandered congressional maps in several other states, including Georgia, South Carolina and Texas, quickly followed the Supreme Court's landmark Voting Rights Act decision in June. But the continued pushback from Republican legislatures in control of redistricting means there is great uncertainty about whether — or how soon — new maps offering equal representation for Black voters will be drawn.

Whether the Republican strategy proves to be a defiance of court orders that the Supreme Court will shoot down or a deft political move will become clearer over the next month.

Shawn Donahue of the State University of New York at Buffalo, an expert on voting rights and redistricting, said the Supreme Court could put a quick end to the delays and "summarily affirm" the decision of a lower court panel that rejected the latest Alabama congressional map. That map continued to provide just one majority Black district out of seven in a state where Black residents comprise 27% of the population.

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"You could have some of (the justices) just kind of say — 'You know what, I didn't agree, but that's what the ruling was,'" Donahue said.

The Supreme Court also could agree to hear Alabama's challenge, bringing the state's redistricting plans back to the court less than a year after it rendered its opinion in the previous case.

Republicans want to keep their map in place as the state continues to fight the lower court ruling ordering them to create a second district where Black voters constitute a majority or close to it. The state contends the Supreme Court set no such remedy and that the new map complies with the court's decision by fixing the problems it identified — such as how the state's Black Belt region was split into multiple districts.

"A stay is warranted before voters are sorted into racially gerrymandered districts that are by their very nature odious," the state attorney general's office wrote in the stay request.

The stakes are high. With Republicans holding a slim majority in the U.S. House, the redistricting cases have the potential to switch control of the chamber next year.

Shortly after its decision in the Alabama case, the Supreme Court lifted its hold on a similar case from Louisiana, raising hopes among Democrats that the state would be forced to draw another Black majority congressional district.

But even if the court rejects Alabama's latest plan, it would not necessarily bring an instant end to the case in Louisiana, where U.S. District Court Judge Shelly Dick has ruled that a second majority-Black district must be drawn.

Dick has three days of hearings scheduled to begin Oct. 3. But her initial order blocking the 2022 congressional map drawn by Louisiana's GOP-controlled Legislature -- which maintains white majorities in five of six districts in a state where about one-third of voters are Black — remains on appeal. The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals is to hear arguments Oct. 6.

Louisiana's lawyers argue that the Black communities the plaintiffs and the district court seek to include in a second majority Black district are too far-flung, even under the Alabama precedent.

The high court's decision in the Alabama case "did not present a free pass to future plaintiffs to establish (Voting Rights Act) liability without proving that the relevant minority population is itself compact," Louisiana said in its argument.

The voting rights advocates suing the state argue that the plans they have suggested so far are "on average more compact" than the plan the state is trying to preserve.

Stuart Naifeh, who is a plaintiff as part of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, said in Louisiana that the court is considering the maps drawn by only the plaintiffs because the Legislature chose not to draw any. Louisiana state Rep. Sam Jenkins Jr., a Democrat, said he is optimistic now that the matter is in the courts.

"We had the opportunity to do the right thing, which would have been fair for all the people of Louisiana," he said. "I am disappointed that the court still has to come in and make our state do what is right."

Louisiana's argument against a second district has less merit than Alabama's, said state Sen. Royce Duplessis, a Democrat. Louisiana has just one majority Black congressional district out of six even though Black residents account for one-third of the state's population. That lone district encompasses both New Orleans and Baton Rouge.

"These are two distinct cities, two distinct regions, two distinct interests and needs, and it only makes sense to have these two large communities to anchor individual congressional districts," Duplessis said. "We have shown that there is a multitude of ways to draw a map that has two majority Black districts that meet all the criteria for fair redistricting."

A similar case is playing out in Florida, though not in federal court.

A state judge ruled earlier this month that a redistricting plan pushed by Gov. Ron DeSantis, a GOP presidential contender, should be redrawn because it diminishes the ability of Black voters in north Florida to pick a representative of their choice.

The state is appealing that ruling, and the case might be fast-tracked to the Florida Supreme Court, where five of the seven justices were appointed by DeSantis. Both sides are requesting a quick resolution before the next legislative session in case districts need to be redrawn for the 2024 elections.

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The new map essentially drew Democratic U.S. Rep. Al Lawson, who is Black, out of office by carving up his district and dividing a large number of Black voters into conservative districts represented by white Republicans. DeSantis contended the previous district extended 200 miles just to link Black communities, violating the constitutional standards for compactness.

Angie Nixon, a Black state representative from Jacksonville, was one of the Democratic lawmakers who led a protest against the DeSantis map. She said she is still hopeful the state's high court will ultimately deliver the outcome wanted by voting rights groups.

Nixon said groups have been organizing to get more people engaged.

"We are going to use this as an opportunity to serve as a catalyst to get people moving and get people out to vote," she said.

Gomez Licon reported from Miami. Associated Press writers Kim Chandler in Montgomery, Alabama, and Kevin McGill in New Orleans contributed to this report.

## Today in History: September 18, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg dies

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Sept. 18, the 261st day of 2023. There are 104 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 18, 2020, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a towering women's rights champion who became the court's second female justice, died at her home in Washington at the age of 87 of complications from pancreatic cancer.

On this date:

In A.D. 14, the Roman Senate officially confirmed Tiberius as the second emperor of the Roman Empire, succeeding the late Augustus.

In 1793, President George Washington laid the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol.

In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act, which created a force of federal commissioners charged with returning escaped slaves to their owners.

In 1851, the first edition of The New York Times was published.

In 1947, the National Security Act, which created a National Military Establishment and the position of Secretary of Defense, went into effect.

In 1961, United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld (dahg HAWM'-ahr-shoold) was killed in a plane crash in Rhodesia.

In 1970, rock star Jimi Hendrix died in London at age 27.

In 1975, newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst was captured by the FBI in San Francisco, 19 months after being kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Army.

In 1987, the psychological thriller "Fatal Attraction," starring Michael Douglas and Glenn Close, was released by Paramount Pictures.

In 2001, a week after the Sept. 11 attack, President George W. Bush said he hoped to "rally the world" in the battle against terrorism and predicted that all "people who love freedom" would join.

In 2005, "Everybody Loves Raymond" won the Emmy for best comedy in its final season; first-year hit "Lost" was named best drama.

In 2013, former heavyweight boxing champion Ken Norton died in Las Vegas at age 70.

In 2014, voters in Scotland rejected independence, opting to remain part of the United Kingdom in a historic referendum.

In 2017, Hurricane Maria intensified into a dangerous Category 5 storm, surging into the eastern Caribbean on a path that would take it near many of the islands recently devastated by Hurricane Irma.

In 2018, the death toll from Hurricane Florence rose to at least 37 in three states.

In 2021, a billionaire and three other amateur space tourists safely ended a three-day trip to space aboard



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a SpaceX capsule, becoming the first crew to orbit the earth without a professional astronaut.

In 2022, President Joe Biden paid his respects at Queen Elizabeth II's coffin as thousands of police, hundreds of British troops and an army of officials made final preparations for the queen's state funeral.

Today's Birthdays: Gospel singer Bobby Jones is 85. Singer Frankie Avalon is 83. Actor Beth Grant is 74. Rock musician Kerry Livgren is 74. Actor Anna Deavere Smith is 73. Former U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson, is 72. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Rick Pitino is 71. Sen. Tommy Tuberville, R-Ala., is 69. College Football Hall of Famer and retired NFL player Billy Sims is 68. Movie director Mark Romanek is 64. Baseball Hall of Famer Ryne Sandberg is 64. Alt-country-rock musician Mark Olson is 62. Singer Joanne Catherall (Human League) is 61. Actor Holly Robinson Peete is 59. R&B singer Ricky Bell (Bell Biv DeVoe and New Edition) is 56. Actor Aisha Tyler is 53. Former racing cyclist Lance Armstrong is 52. Opera singer Anna Netrebko is 52. Actor Jada Pinkett Smith is 52. Actor James Marsden is 50. Actor Emily Rutherford is 49. Actor Travis Schuldt is 49. Rapper Xzibit is 49. Comedian-actor Jason Sudeikis is 48. Actor Sophina Brown is 47. Actor Barrett Foa is 46. Talk show host Sara Haines (TV: "GMA3: Strahan, Sara & Keke") is 46. Actor/comedian Billy Eichner is 45. Actor Alison Lohman is 44. Designer Brandon Maxwell is 39. Congressman and former NFL player Anthony Gonzalez, R-Ohio, is 39. Actors Brandon and Taylor Porter are 30. Actor Patrick Schwarzenegger is 30. Country singer Tae Kerr (Maddie and Tae) is 28. Actor C.J. Sanders is 27.