

Groton Daily Independent

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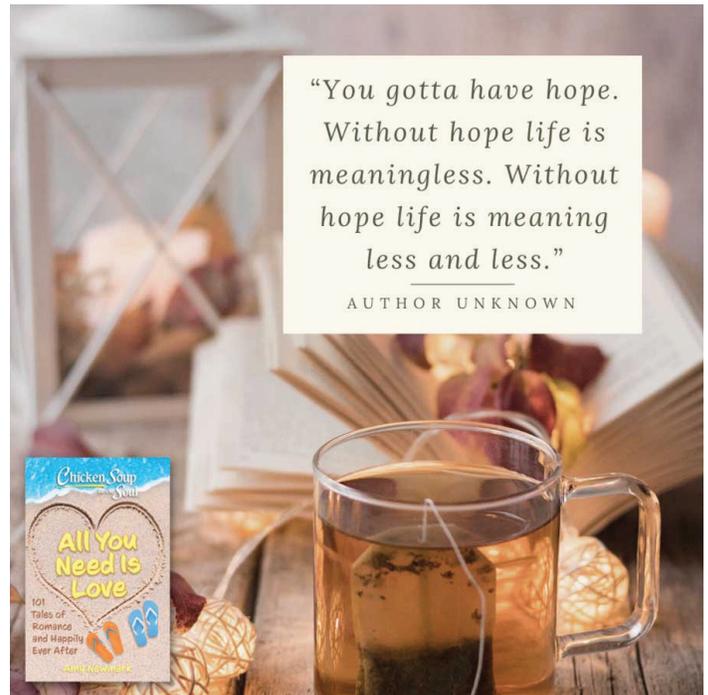
The Boys Soccer Game with Dakota Valley scheduled on Saturday, September 30th has been rescheduled to Monday, September 25th at 4pm.

Sunday, Sept. 24

St. John's Lutheran/Zion worship: St. John's at 9 a.m., Sunday school at 9:45 a.m., Zion at 11 a.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.;

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

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



Worship, 11 a.m.

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

Monday, Sept. 25

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Junior Varsity Football hosts Aberdeen Roncalli after JH game.

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

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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Names Released in Todd County Fatal Crash

What: Two semi fatal crash

Where: S.D. Highway 63, mile marker 36, 5 miles north of Parmelee, S.D.

When: 3:53 p.m., Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Driver 1: Richard Bauer, 82, Kilgore, NE., Not injured

Vehicle 1: 1999 Freightliner FLD120 semi with trailer

Driver 2: Peter Ferguson, 51, Norris, S.D., Fatal injuries

Vehicle 2: 1993 Peterbilt Conventional semi with trailer

Todd County, S.D.- A Norris, S.D. man has been identified as the person who died Tuesday afternoon in a two vehicle crash 5 miles north of Parmelee, S.D.

Preliminary crash information indicates a 1999 Freightliner FLD120 semi with trailer was traveling west on 277th Street near its intersection with S.D. Highway 63. The driver stopped at the intersection and then turned south on S.D. 63. A 1993 Peterbilt Conventional semi with trailer was traveling north on S.D. 63 and struck the Freightliner's trailer which caused the Freightliner and trailer to rollover.

The driver of the Freightliner, Richard Bauer, age 82, of Kilgore, NE. was not injured. He was wearing a seatbelt.

The driver of the Peterbilt, Peter Ferguson, age 51, of Norris, S.D., sustained fatal injuries and was pronounced deceased at the scene. He was not wearing a seatbelt.

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

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Winona State Stifles Northern State in Road Football NSIC Action

Winona, Minn. – Winona State tested Northern State early and ultimately came away with their second win of the 2023 season. The Wolves fell 39-16, scoring in three of the four quarters.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 16, WSU 39

Records: NSU 1-3 (1-3 NSIC), WSU 2-2 (2-1 NSIC)

Attendance: 3323

HOW IT HAPPENED

Winona State opened the contest with a 34-yard field goal at 11:03, and the Wolves answered with a 28-yarder by Drew Smook at 6:45

The Warriors closed out the first quarter with a touchdown and safety, taking a 12-3 lead into the second

The two teams traded scores in the second, led off by a 61-yard rushing touchdown by WSU

Anthony Vespo connected with Dakota Larson for the pair's first touchdown of the season, a 20-yard receiving score at 10:26

Entering halftime, Winona State held a 19-10 lead and extended that lead on their first drive of the third with 47-yard receiving touchdown

Larson continued to chip away for the Wolves with a 70-yard touchdown pass from Colton Hackel just seconds later, however it was all Winona State from there on out

The Warriors recorded a receiving touchdown in the third quarter and added two field goals in the fourth

Northern tallied a game leading 278 yards passing, averaging 27.8 yards per completion and added 99 yards rushing

They tallied 377 yards of total offense and 13 first downs in the game

The Wolves defense recorded two sacks and held WSU in the red-zone without scoring on two occasions

Dakota Larson had a day for NSU with 190 yards receiving and two touchdowns, his first 100-plus yard game of 2023

Stanley Haskins Jr. was just shy of a 100-yard game himself with 88 yards rushing, averaging 14.7 yards per carry

Charlie Larson led the Wolves defense with a single game career high of 15 tackles, while Brock Longville and Jaden Feterl notched the team's two sacks

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Anthony Vespo: 175 yards passing, 1 touchdown

Colton Hackel: 103 yards passing, 1 touchdown

Stanley Haskins Jr.: 88 yards rushing, 54-yard long

Dakota Larson: 190 yards receiving, 2 touchdowns

Charlie Larson: 17 tackles, 1.5 tackles for a loss,

Ar'Shon Willis: 9 tackles

UP NEXT

Northern travels to MSU Moorhead next Saturday, September 30 for a 12 p.m. kick against the Dragons.

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No. 6 St. Cloud State Defeats the Wolves in Three in volleyball

St. Cloud, Minn. – The Northern State University volleyball team suffered their first NSIC loss of 2023 this afternoon, dropping a 3-set match to No. 6 St. Cloud State. With the win, the Huskies now sit atop the NSIC standings with a 4-0 record in league play.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 0, SCSU 3

Records: NSU 10-2 (3-1 NSIC), SCSU 11-2 (4-0 NSIC)

Attendance: 614

HOW IT HAPPENED

The Huskies took the match with set scores of 25-18, 26-24, and 25-6

Northern hit just .071 in the loss, while St. Cloud State tallied a .307 attack percentage

In total the Wolves notched 24 kills, 22 assists, 34 digs, five blocks, and two aces

Natalia Szybinska led the Wolves offense with six kills, while Abby Brooks it a team leading .556 with five kills

Mia Hinsz led the defense with a career high eight digs

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Natalia Szybinska: 6 kills, 2 digs

Keri Walker: 21 assists, 5 digs, 4 blocks

Abby Brooks: 5 kills, .556 attack%, 1 block

Mia Hinsz: 8 digs

UP NEXT

Northern State returns to Wachs Arena next Friday and Saturday versus Winona State and Concordia-St. Paul. Match start times are set for 6 p.m. on Friday against the Warriors and 2 p.m. on Saturday versus the Golden Bears.

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Hamlin Tourney 7th Grade Champions

Front: (L-R) Aspen Beto, Raquel Tracy, Maddie Herrick, Ari Dinger, Kaedy Bonn, Maddie Little
Back: (L-R) Coach Kelby Tracy, Kenzie Anderson, Brooklyn Spanier, Neely Althoff, Tevan
Hanson, Abby Fjeldheim, Adeline Kotzer (Photo courtesy Chelsea Hanson)

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Soccer: Groton Area girls remain at number two in the state

The number one and two seeded teams in the state in Class A played Saturday at Tea Area. Tea Area had a 1-0 lead at halftime, but quickly added three points in the second half for the 4-0 win over the Tigers. The top four seeded teams will host the first round of the playoffs.

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, with Tricia Keith providing the commentary, sponsored by Bary Keith at Harr Motors, BK Custom Ts & More, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Dairy Queen, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Locke Electric and Love to Travel by Becah Flihs.

The girls will travel to Garretson on Sept. 30 with the first round of the playoffs on Oct. 3.

#	Name	Season				Seed Pts
		W	L	T	PCT	<u>PTS</u>
1	 Tea Area	8	2	2	.750	44.500
2	 Groton Area	6	2	1	.722	43.167
3	 Sioux Falls Christian	8	3	1	.708	42.955
4	 West Central	8	3	1	.708	42.375
5	 Vermillion	5	5	0	.500	39.700
6	 Dakota Valley	6	6	0	.500	39.545
7	 St. Thomas More	4	7	1	.375	39.458
8	 Garretson	1	10	0	.091	36.455
9	 Belle Fourche	0	11	0	.000	35.091

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Soccer: Boys need to climb two more spots to make playoffs

The boys team lost to James Valley Christian earlier this week. The top eight teams will advance to the playoffs. Groton Area is currently at the number 10 spot. The boys will host Dakota Valley on Monday with the playoffs starting October 3.

#	Name	Season				Seed Pts
		W	L	T	PCT	PTS
1	 Sioux Falls Christian	12	0	1	.962	44.423
2	 Tea Area	6	5	0	.545	41.545
3	 Vermillion	7	3	0	.700	41.200
4	 Freeman Academy	6	1	2	.778	40.889
5	 Belle Fourche	4	5	1	.450	39.950
6	 James Valley Christian	6	4	2	.583	39.917
7	 Custer	3	5	3	.409	37.833
8	 St. Thomas More	2	8	0	.200	37.200
9	 Dakota Valley	0	6	2	.125	37.000
10	 Groton Area	2	6	0	.250	36.750
11	 West Central	0	10	1	.045	36.318
12	 Hot Springs	1	8	1	.150	36.250

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JIM CAVIEZEL



S O U N D O F

FREEDOM

A FILM BY ALEJANDRO MONTEVERDE

BASED ON THE INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY

ANGEL STUDIOS PRESENTS A SANTA FE FILMS PRODUCTION AN EDUARDO VERÁSTEGUI PRODUCTION "SOUND OF FREEDOM" JIM CAVIEZEL WITH MIRA SORVINO AND BILL CAMP
CASTING BY DEANNA BRIGIDI, CSA MUSIC BY JAVIER NAVARRETE EDITED BY F. BRIAN SCOFIELD DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY GORKA GÓMEZ ANDREU AEC PRODUCED BY EDUARDO VERÁSTEGUI
EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY JAIME HERNÁNDEZ WRITTEN BY ROD BARR & ALEJANDRO MONTEVERDE DIRECTED BY ALEJANDRO MONTEVERDE angel.com/freedom

ANGEL
STUDIOS

Sunday, Oct. 1 - 6:30 p.m.
C & MA Church, 706 N. Main St., Groton
Tickets are \$5 at the door for Teens and Adults
A children's movie/activity will be provided
downstairs for ages 12 and under

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**BROWN COUNTY
BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 26, 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. Adopt 2024 Annual Budget
5. Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent
 - a. R-O-W for Northern Electric (3)
 - b. 5-year Highway Plan
6. Joe Adam, IT
 - a. New Website Demonstration
7. Rachel Kippley, Fair Manager
 - a. BCF Entertainment Consultant Bid Recommendation & Authorize Chairman to sign contract
8. Mike Scott, Landfill Manager & Leif Redinger, Project Engineer
 - a. Landfill Truck Scale Recommendation & Authorize Chairman to sign contract
9. Kylie Lange, Summit Carbon Solutions Project Manager
 - a. Project update
10. Consent Calendar
 - a. Approval of General Meeting Minutes from September 19, 2023
 - b. Claims/Payroll
 - c. HR Report
 - d. Leases
 - e. Abatements/Refunds
 - f. Travel Request
 - g. Plats
 - h. Set Hearing Date & Authorize Publication for Ordinances #257, #258 & #259 – Rezones
 - i. Review Safety Benefits Survey Results
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

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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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

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

They took the ornate robe back to their father and said, "We found this. Examine it to see whether it is your son's robe." He recognized it and said, "It is my son's robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces." Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days.

🌀 GENESIS 37: 32-34 🌀



Detail of "Jacob Weeping for Joseph"
by Marc Chagal, 1956

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BIBBLE
TRIVIA
by Wilson Casey

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

2. Who killed 69 of his brethren, but spared Jotham for he hid himself? *Abimelech, Jeroboam, Uzziah, Horam*

3. From Proverbs 25, “Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without _____.” *Meaning, Hope, Breeze, Rain*

4. Who was the wife of Ananias, who died along with her husband after lying about an offering? *Jezebel, Anna, Sapphira, Jael*

5. Which two foods were said to flow in the land of Canaan? *Peaches/Cream, Figs/Apples, Milk/Honey, Manna/Bison*

6. What were the Israelites, as slaves of Egypt, mainly forced to make? *Bread, Bricks, Staffs, Spears*

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Abimelech, 3) Rain, 4) Sapphira, 5) Milk/Honey, 6) Bricks

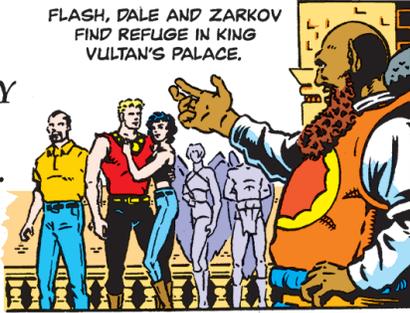
“*Test Your Bible Knowledge,*” a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.

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OUR
STORY
SO
FAR...

FLASH, DALE AND ZARKOV
FIND REFUGE IN KING
VULTAN'S PALACE.



DUROK AND
HIS MEN
DISCOVER
FLASH'S
WHEREABOUTS!



THORNE ATTEMPTS TO
STOP DUROK FROM
SETTLING A SCORE
WITH DALE...



...AND PAYS THE PRICE!

KNOWING FLASH IS DALE'S ONLY
HOPE, THORNE FREES HIM...



...NOW FLASH MUST FACE
THE WRATH OF DUROK!

FLASH GORDON

BY JIM KEEFE 9-24

GRABBING A WEAPON FROM
ONE OF DUROK'S FALLEN
MEN, THE STANDOFF BEGINS!

THROW DOWN YOUR
WEAPON, EARTHMAN,
OR I'LL DO
MORE THAN
JUST DISFIGURE
HER!



SO...THE "MIGHTY"
DUROK NEEDS A HELPLESS
WOMAN IN
ORDER TO
DEFEND
HIMSELF?!



GRRRAH?!

I'VE DROPPED
MY WEAPON.
NOW, RELEASE
DALE...



...OR ARE YOU
STILL AFRAID
TO FACE ME?!



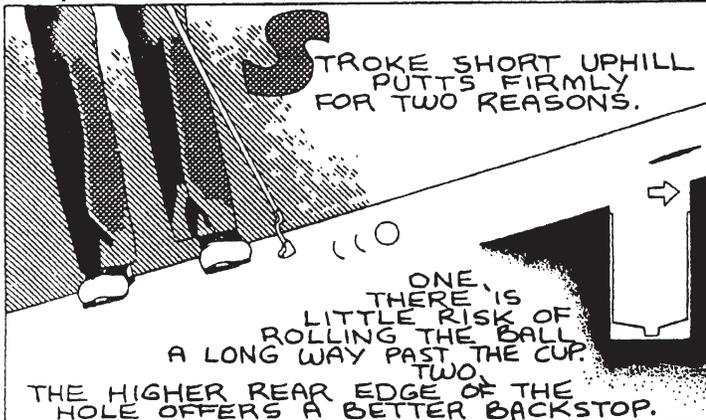
RAHHRRR!!

I'LL CRUSH YOU WITH
MY BARE HANDS!

SCRASH!!

NEXT: PURSUED BY
A DEMON!

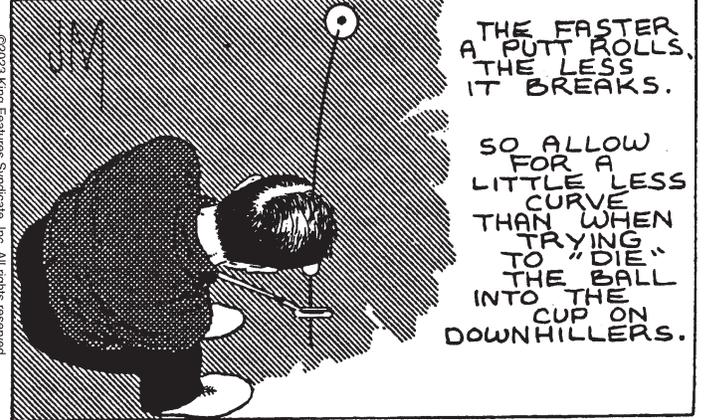
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



STROKE SHORT UPHILL
PUTTS FIRMLY
FOR TWO REASONS.

ONE, THERE IS
LITTLE RISK OF
ROLLING THE BALL
A LONG WAY PAST THE CUP.

TWO,
THE HIGHER REAR EDGE OF THE
HOLE OFFERS A BETTER BACKSTOP.



THE FASTER
A PUTT ROLLS,
THE LESS
IT BREAKS.

SO ALLOW
FOR A
LITTLE LESS
CURVE
THAN WHEN
TRYING
TO "DIE"
THE BALL
INTO THE
CUP ON
DOWNHILLERS.



How to Best Utilize Compression Stockings

DEAR DR. ROACH: Would you please address how to use compression socks? I sit most of the day, so wearing the socks helps my legs to feel less heavy and tired by the end of the day. Are there people who should not wear them? And what about wearing them during exercise? — C.S.

ANSWER: Compression stockings are most commonly used in people with chronic venous insufficiency, a common condition in middle-aged to older people. The major symptom is swelling in the feet and lower legs. The swelling is usually minimal or gone in the morning and gets worse during the day, especially with prolonged standing and even sitting.

The underlying problem is that the veins, which carry blood from the legs back to the heart, get leaky over decades, and the fluid accumulates in the legs under the force of gravity. Your doctor can prescribe the right size, length and strength of stocking based on your personal condition.

The fact that you feel better with compression stockings suggests that you might have venous insufficiency, but it's still a good idea to ask your doctor about them. Compression stockings are pretty safe, but should not be worn by people with serious reduction in arterial blood flow to the legs.

Arterial disease is completely different from venous insufficiency. It's caused by blockages in the arteries that carry blood from the heart to the legs. An expert, such as a vascular surgeon, is an appropriate consultant for a person with arterial insufficiency before they consider using compression stockings.

arterial disease (in which case you should check with your doctor if you aren't sure), there is no harm from wearing compression stockings during exercise. There may even be some benefit.

Compression stockings should not be worn by those with an acute clot in a major leg vein (a deep venous thrombosis). Once the clot is stabilized for a few days with medication, compression stockings can help treat and even prevent swelling in the affected leg.

People with moderate to severe heart failure should exercise care before using compression stockings, which put the leaked-out fluid back into the circulation and can worsen heart failure. Again, this is an issue to discuss with your regular doctor or cardiologist prior to using compression stockings on your own.

Finally, severe venous insufficiency can cause breakdown in the skin. A person with ulcers or open wounds, or with any kind of acute infection, should be evaluated and treated prior to using compression stockings. A wound care nurse is an ideal consultant in this case.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a friend who is 75 years old and has large blue veins directly under the skin on her hands, arms, feet and calves. What causes them, and can they be treated? They are noticeable, and I think she is unhappy because of this issue. — P.G.

ANSWER: In fair-skinned people, it is common to see blue veins under the skin. This is not a problem. (The blood isn't really blue. The color is due to light scattering.)

People with enlarged veins, such as varicose veins, may have more noticeable veins, but they do not need to be treated unless they are symptomatic, or if it is cosmetically important to the patient. There are many different types of treatments available, and an expert, such as a vascular surgeon, can discuss these options with the patient.

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

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Kaitlyn Dever stars in "No One Will Save You."

Courtesy of Hulu

"Elemental" (PG) -- Pixar's latest film is out now on streaming after garnering \$484.2 million in the box office and getting deemed a "sleeper hit." Starring Leah Lewis ("Nancy Drew") and Mamoudou Athie ("Archive 81"), this film for the whole family follows fire element Ember as she starts to run her father's convenience store, The Fireplace, in Fire Town. But when Ember accidentally floods the store, city inspector and water element Wade files a report that could get the business shut down. It's up to Ember to save the store, alongside Wade, if she can control her fiery temper. Catherine O'Hara and Wendi McLendon-Coverly co-star. (Disney+)

"No One Will Save You" (PG-13) -- Kaitlyn Dever ("Booksmart") leads this sci-fi thriller out now. Dever stars as Brynn Adams, a young woman living a lonely life in her childhood home. One night, Brynn is awoken in the middle of the night by home intruders. As the intruders creep into her home, Brynn realizes that they are far from human. With no choice but to face off with these extraterrestrial beings, Brynn is pushed forward to her new future by confronting the demons of her past. The film is directed by Brian Duffield, whose previous work includes "The Babysitter" and "Underwater." (Hulu)

"Wilderness" (TV-MA) -- In this six-episode thriller series out now, Will (Oliver Jackson-Cohen) and Liv (Jenna Coleman) are a couple who are seemingly put-together on the outside, but only a handful know the dark cloud of infidelity that envelops their relationship. Liv works to get over Will's infidelity as the two go on a cross-county trip to repair their marriage, but the trip ends in a fatality that transforms their entire lives. Critics are predicting that the series, which had its premiere on Sept. 15, will get renewed for a second season. "Pretty Little Liars" star Ashley Benson plays the role of Will's mistress, Cara. (Amazon Prime Video)

"Young Love" (TV-PG) -- After Matthew A. Cherry's short film "Hair Love" won Best Animated Short Film at the 92nd Academy Awards, a series based on the short film was put into development, and it has now made its way to streaming platforms. Starring Kid Cudi ("House Party") and Issa Rae ("Insecure"), the series follows young millennial parents Stephen and Angela and their daughter, Zuri (and their cat, Rocky). Stephen and Angela juggle work-life balance, social issues and multi-generational dynamics, along with raising Zuri and helping her achieve her best life. The show is reminiscent of "The Proud Family," providing much-needed authentic representation. (Max)

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1. In Elton John's 1974 song, who were Bennie and the Jets?
2. Name the artist who had a hit with "I Honestly Love You."
3. Who wrote and released "Higher Love"?
4. What was Billy Ocean's first No. 1 single?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Jubilation, she loves me again, I fall on the floor and I'm laughing."

Answers

1. They were a band, and the song is from the viewpoint of one of their fans. The music video was a winner at the

Cannes Film Festival in 2017.

2. Olivia Newton-John. The song snagged Grammys for Record of the Year and Best Pop Female Vocal Performance in 1975. A small piece of the song was used in the 1975 film "Jaws."

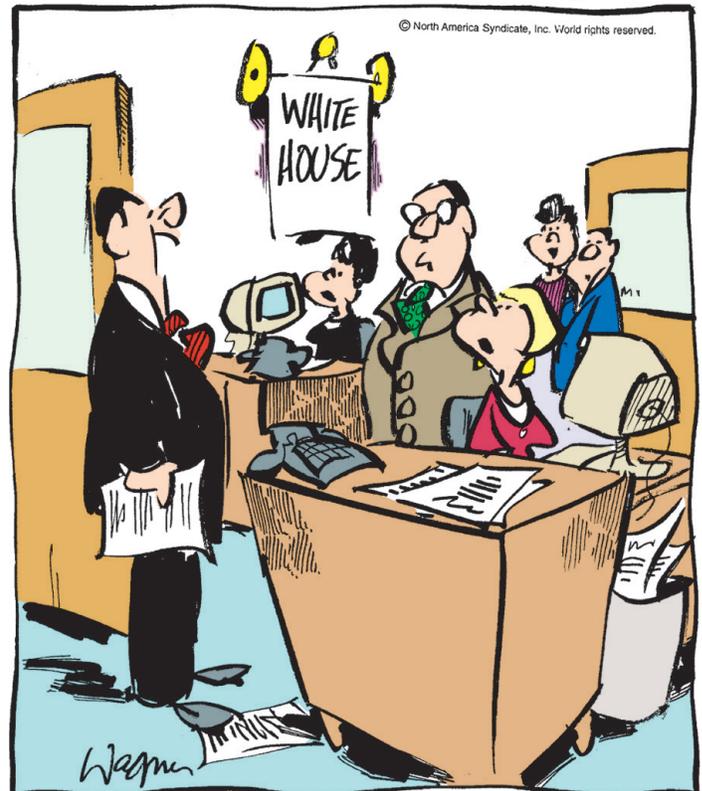
3. Steve Winwood, in 1986. It was Winwood's first Billboard chart topper and later snagged a Grammy for Best Male Pop Vocal and Record of the Year.

4. "Caribbean Queen (No More Love on the Run)" in 1984.

5. "Cecilia," by Simon and Garfunkel, in 1970. The song's melody was first created for fun at a party using a tape recorder, a guitar and some friends before lyrics were ever written.

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GRIN and BEAR IT by Wagner



"Does anyone remember where we hid the vice president?"

Just Like Cats & Dogs

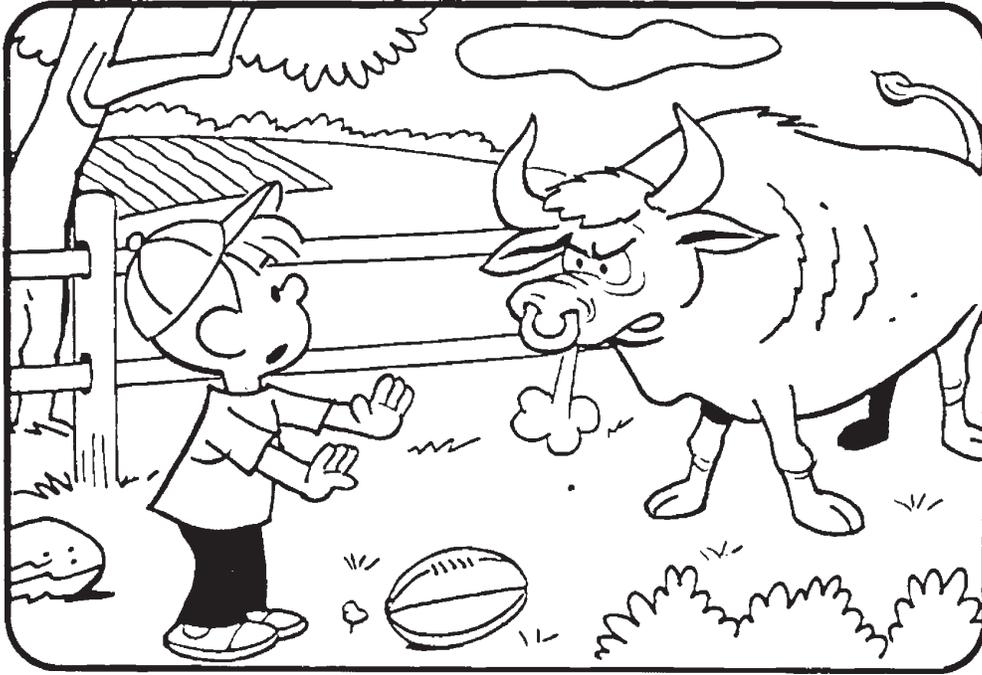
by Dave T. Phipps



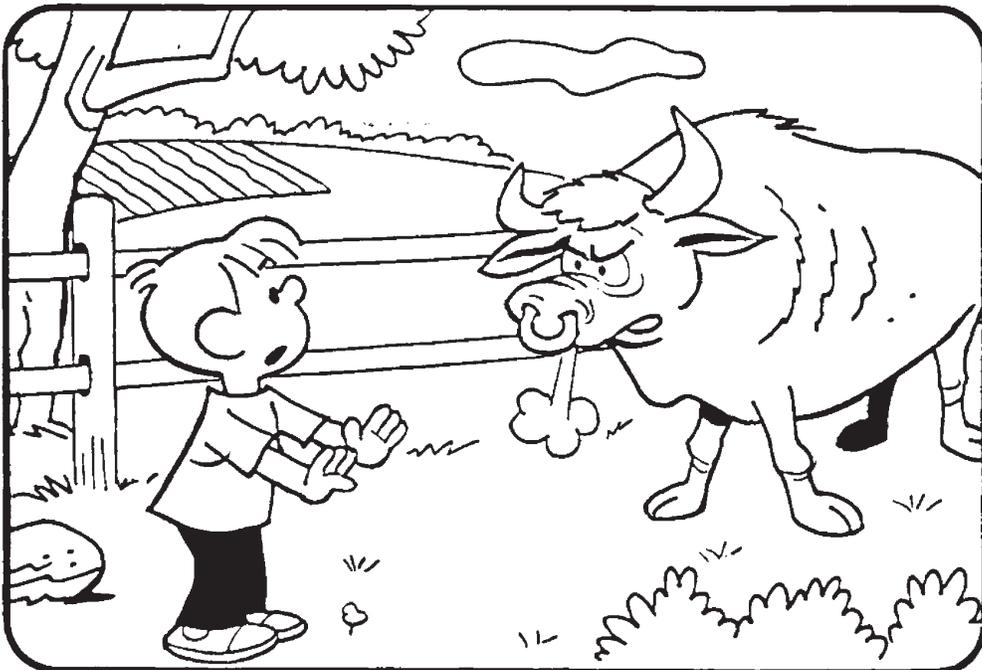
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Cap is missing. 2. Arm is missing. 3. Football is missing. 4. Cloud is different. 5. Horn is smaller. 6. Bull's tail is missing.

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* Cellphones get dirty, especially touch-screen phones. Be sure to wipe the surface of your phone daily during cold and flu season. Use an approved antiseptic wipe for electronics.

* I used to hate planning our family's weekly meals. Now we decide together at dinner on Friday night. We agree on meals for the week, and I can get a shopping list together in time for weekend shopping. It's made for less groans at mealtime, and the kids have been surprisingly creative and flexible about trying new things now that they are part of the choosing process. -- T.L. in Minnesota

* To keep things running smoothly in the morning, all four of my children must be dressed, with shoes, and seated for breakfast before any television can come on.

There's suddenly a lot of peer pressure to get up and dressed, and much more helpfulness in my morning routine. -- A.M. via email

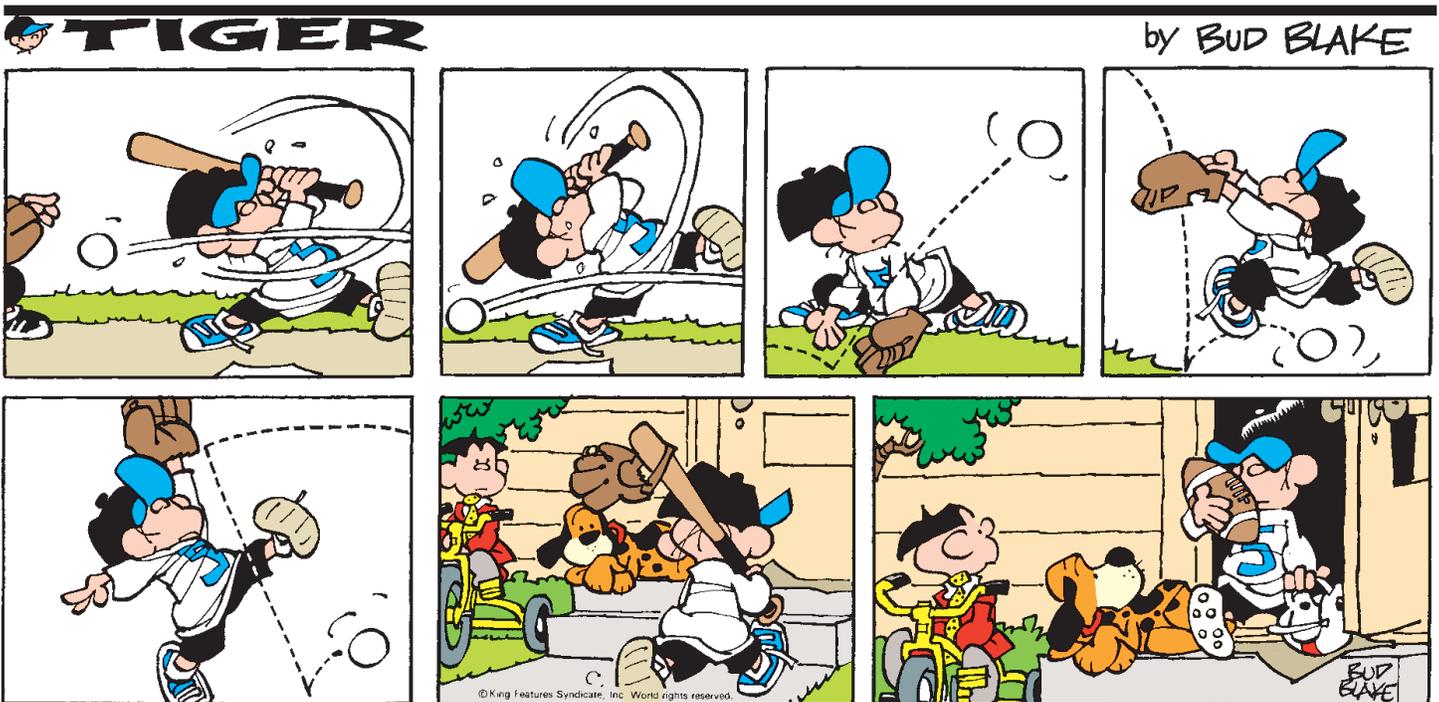
* I have found myself with an abundance of peppers from my garden, so I cleaned and chopped them, then froze them. I am able to take out what I need, and they won't spoil. -- C.E. in Florida

* Creative uses for kids' artwork: Tape to cardstock for a homemade greeting card for any occasion. Hang from the bathroom mirror. Laminate and use as placemats. Large pieces can be used as wrapping paper. Frame and donate to local senior centers.

* To keep windshield wipers clean between replacement periods, dampen a soft cloth with rubbing alcohol and wipe the length of the blade.

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

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Filly's brother
- 5 Group of seals
- 8 Old U.S. gas brand
- 12 Sandwich cookie
- 13 Sailor's "yes"
- 14 "Pygmalion" writer
- 15 Nevada city
- 16 Tropical fruit
- 18 Nebraska river
- 20 Demons
- 21 Towel word
- 23 Bol. neighbor
- 24 Engages in make-believe
- 28 Tibia's place
- 31 PC key
- 32 Hotel offering
- 34 Bond rating
- 35 Brusque
- 37 Tormenting
- 39 Spanish gold
- 41 IRS agent
- 42 Rustic homes
- 45 TV type
- 49 Table protector
- 51 Inky stain
- 52 Italian wine region
- 53 Notable time
- 54 Booty
- 55 Slugger Sammy
- 56 Letter sealer

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16			17				
18				19			20					
			21			22		23				
24	25	26					27		28		29	30
31				32				33		34		
35			36		37				38			
		39		40		41						
42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49						50			51			
52					53				54			
55					56				57			

- 57 Like custard
- 9 Chinese city
- 30 Pester
- DOWN**
- 10 Uttered
- 33 Alike (Fr.)
- 1 Business abbr.
- 11 Has
- 36 One of the Nixons
- 2 Hurler
- 17 Actress Long
- 38 Powerless
- 3 Sultry Horne
- 19 Afternoon affairs
- 40 Low digit
- 4 Like some grins
- 22 Long-legged shorebird
- 42 Bookkeepers (Abbr.)
- 5 Drink-to-go holder
- 24 Chest muscle
- 43 To boot
- 6 Popeye's Olive
- 25 Baton Rouge sch.
- 44 Diving duck
- 7 Hearing-impaired
- 26 Circus gymnasts
- 46 Trudge
- 8 Aromatic
- 27 Short-lived levy of 1765
- 47 Synthesizer pioneer
- 29 Author
- 48 ABA member
- 50 Notre Dame's Parseghian

— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

C	O	L	T		P	O	D		E	S	S	O
O	R	E	O		A	Y	E		S	H	A	W
R	E	N	O		P	L	A	N	T	A	I	N
P	L	A	T	T	E		F	I	E	N	D	S
				H	E	R	S		A	R	G	
P	L	A	Y	A	C	T	S		S	H	I	N
E	S	C		S	U	I	T	E		A	A	A
C	U	R	T		P	L	A	G	U	I	N	G
			O	R	O		T	M	A	N		
C	A	B	I	N	S		P	L	A	S	M	A
P	L	A	C	E	M	A	T		B	L	O	T
A	S	T	I		E	R	A		L	O	O	T
S	O	S	A		W	A	X		E	G	G	Y

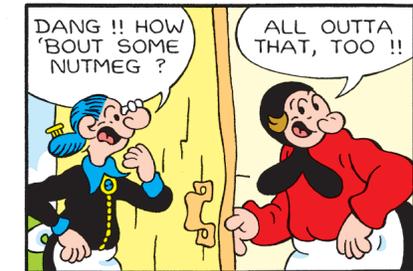
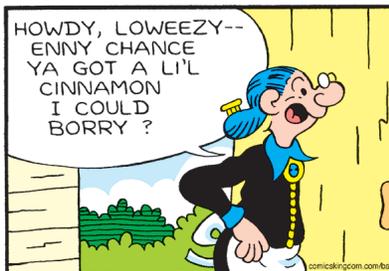
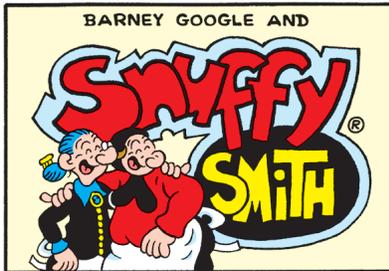
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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HAL FOSTER'S **Prince Valiant**
BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES

VAL DOES NOT LIKE WHAT HE SEES OF LOCKBRAMBLE AND ITS APPOINTED CARETAKER, SIR ROGER. HE HAS DECIDED NOT TO TELL OF THE KIDNAPPING OF LORD GRUNYARD FROM CAMELOT UNTIL HE LEARNS MORE OF THIS UNEASY LAND. INSTEAD OF STAYING IN THE CASTLE, WHICH WOULD BE CUSTOMARY, HE AND GAWAIN REPAIR TO A HUMBLE INN.

YEATES 7/22/12 3937



VAL CONSIDERS THE FACTS BEFORE HIM: "ROGER WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE HAPPY IF GRUNYARD NEVER RETURNED. BUT WHY KIDNAP GRUNYARD IF HIS LORD SHOWED NO EAGERNESS TO RETURN? AND ALL THIS TALK ABOUT BRIGANDS..."

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GAWAIN IS LESS THAN INTERESTED, IT BEING WELL PAST HIS MEALTIME. HE GAZES HUNGRILY AT THE MARKET BELOW UNTIL, SUDDENLY: "HOLD! THAT MAN—IT CAN'T BE— BUT HIS GREAT SIZE..."

... "IT IS! THAT MAN PULLING THE CART! I RECOGNIZE HIM AS ONE OF THOSE SERVING THE WENCH WHO KIDNAPPED LORD GRUNYARD!"

lockbramble Inn

NEXT: Undercover

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

HOW DO YOU LIKE MY NEW RUNNING SHOES?

THOSE AREN'T RUNNING SHOES.

THEY SURE ARE... THEY RAN ME OVER A HUNDRED BUCKS!!

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PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

The Scams Just Keep Coming

In the world of scams, just when you think scammers can't possibly come up with new ideas, they do.

One of the worst now is the fake fraud alert for protection services. You'll get an emergency message or call saying that someone is trying to access your account. The "helper" from your "bank" asks if you want to temporarily transfer your money to a safe, protected account while officials work it out, and you say yes. And ... there goes your money, never to be seen again. If you ever get a call such as this, hang up and call your bank to ask if they called you.

And then, of course, there are all the old standard scams. There is the grandparent scam where a thief calls and pretends to be a grandchild who is in jail and desperate to be bailed out. There is the romance scam where a supposed suitor pretends to get close to you over time and then asks for money or wants to do a joint financial investment. And the driveway repaving/home repair scam where they promise to do a fine job on the work, but you'll need to pay a bit upfront for materials and supplies. And lest we forget, there are the computer repairs wherein they need remote access to your computer, the work from home scams, fake Amazon text alerts, etc.

Beware any calls or text messages that push you to act now, that insert urgency or fear into the situation. Don't fall for it. Hang up and don't click links. Make a call yourself to see if the situation was legitimate and carefully delete the text message.

To learn about even more current scams, check AARP at www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-2023/top-scammer-tactics-2023.html.

With the holidays coming, the scams are just going to get worse. Stay alert!

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1. What Japanese-born outfielder won World Series titles with the St. Louis Cardinals (2006) and the Philadelphia Phillies (2008)?

2. Marathoner Abebe Bikila, who won the gold medal while running barefoot at the 1960 Rome Summer Olympics, represented what country?

3. Name the head coach for the Houston Oilers (1975-80) and New Orleans Saints (1981-85) who said, "The harder we played, the behinder we got."

4. Basketball Hall of Famer Patrick Ewing was born in 1962 in what Caribbean nation?

5. What NASCAR driver was killed in a head-on collision with the wall during practice at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in July 2000?

6. What national ice hockey team won the eight-game Super Series 72 (also known as the Summit Series) between the Soviet Union and Canada held in September 1972?

7. What LSU Tigers quarterback was selected No. 1 overall by the Oakland Raiders in the 2007 NFL Draft?



by Ryan A. Berenz

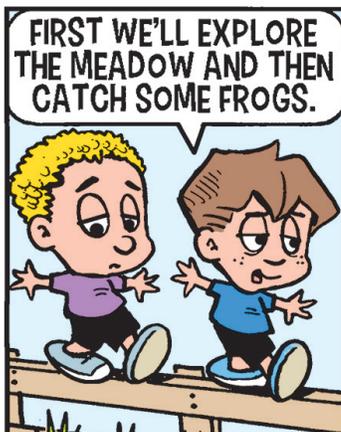
Answers

1. So Taguchi.
2. Ethiopia.
3. Bum Phillips.
4. Jamaica.
5. Kenny Irwin Jr.
6. Canada, 4-3-1.
7. JaMarcus Russell.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Cats Get Allergies, Too

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My cat, Tushy, sneezes several times a day, and her eyes water almost nonstop. This has been happening for a couple of weeks. She didn't seem to have this issue before. My local veterinarian's office is booked up for another two months, so I'm not sure what I can do in the meantime. Can you help? -- Harriet G., Roanoke, Virginia

DEAR HARRIET: It sounds like your cat is suffering from an allergy to something in her environment. That could be airborne irritants like pollen, dust or molds. Or, it could be a reaction to something in her food.

You can try to figure out what's causing her reaction in a couple of ways. First, dust and clean your home thoroughly, and consider adding an air purifier with a HEPA filter in the room that Tushy spends the most time in.

Next, try a different brand of pet food for a couple of weeks to see if that makes any difference. Some cats are sensitive to certain ingredients in pet foods, and because those ingredients vary from brand to brand, it's difficult to figure out which one is causing the allergy.

When Tushy is able to see the veterinarian, bring along your notes about her symptoms and what effect, if any, the environmental and dietary changes above had on improving her condition. The vet can offer additional treatment and support, such as adding essential fatty acids to her diet or prescribing a steroid to help with her symptoms.

In the meantime, monitor Tushy's symptoms closely. If they suddenly get much worse, or if she becomes lethargic, vomits frequently or shows other signs of serious illness, take her to an emergency vet immediately.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* The small dots on strawberries are known as "drupelets" and are not seeds, as often thought, but do contain seeds.

* A dog named Chickie seemed like anything but man's best friend when she chewed up her owner's passport just days before his wedding in Italy. Fortunately, with a little help from local lawmakers as well as the community, a new one was issued in time for the nuptials to take place. As for Chickie, she was later given a mock "pupster passport"!

* Culinary icon Ina Garten, aka the "Barefoot Contessa," was a nuclear policy analyst for the White House before embarking on a career in cookery.

* A roll-on deodorant ball was the inspiration for Apple's first mouse prototype.

* Despite their widely different climates, Alaska and Hawaii share a highest recorded temperature of 100 F.

* Popular video game character Super Mario's original name was Jumpman. He was rechristened in honor of Mario Segale, Nintendo of America's landlord.

* A 2016 study by Yale University found that people over the age of 50 who read books for more than three and a half hours per week had a 20% lower mortality risk over a 12-year period than nonbook readers.

* Lachanophobia refers to the irrational fear of vegetables.

* All the nearly 6,000 residents of Suloszowa village in Poland live along one 9-kilometer street.

* While it's difficult to imagine anyone but Bruce Willis in the role of "Die Hard" hero John McClane, the part was originally offered to crooner Frank Sinatra, due to the film's technically being a sequel to "The Detective," in which Sinatra had played the lead.

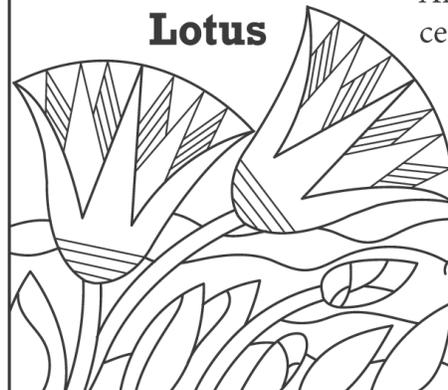
* To own a rabbit in Queensland, Australia, you must first prove you'll display it for an acceptable purpose.

Thought for the Day: "Don't go through life, grow through life."
-- Eric Butterworth

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The Garden Bug

Lotus



One of the first flowers represented in the arts may be the lotus flower. It is sacred in many ancient cultures, including in ancient Egypt as a symbol of death and rebirth to the afterlife.

Ancient Egyptians adorned amulets, ceramics, papyrus paintings, jewelry and household items with it.

In King Tutankhamun's tomb, collar necklaces made of cut blossoms that included blue lotuses were found among his many trinkets and treasures.

— Brenda Weaver

Source: www.segmation.com



by Freddy Groves

Wait Times for Community Care

Despite the amount of attention paid to it over the years, the Department of Veterans Affairs still struggles with wait times for medical appointments. Wait time eligibility becomes crucial when a veteran seeks medical care through Community Care. With the wrong wait time, the veteran can be denied treatment out in the community. The calculation of wait times has to be exact, either 20 or 28 days depending on the type of care.

If you are a VA staffer in charge of making Community Care medical appointments for a veteran patient, which of the following options do you choose in setting the appointment for a patient and starting the wait time clock? The date the provider wants the patient to be seen ... the date the patient wants to be seen ... the date the care provider or the veteran makes a request for an appointment?

Only one of those is correct. The correct answer is that the starting date for calculating wait time is that moment when a care provider or veteran asks for an appointment.

Unfortunately, in one location, staff was using a combination of methods for calculating wait times using their own unauthorized wait time calculator they created from an online app. It threw off the numbers by 12 days, making it look like veterans were not eligible for Community Care.

The ongoing mistake only came to light when a trainer used that same calculator in another facility. At the same time, a veteran had been denied Community Care because the inaccurate calculations indicated that he was not wait-time eligible and he was given a VA facility appointment instead. As a result, there was a congressional inquiry.

The Office of Inspector General for the VA stepped in and discovered a great big mess of confusion and inconsistency at both facilities due to staffers using a calculator that a member of staff had made.

If you want Community Care, you need VA approval first. To see if you qualify, read the fine print at www.va.gov/CommunityCare.

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Wishing Well®

5	2	3	6	4	5	8	7	3	8	3	4	5
Y	D	C	B	L	O	Y	B	L	O	O	I	U
4	6	4	3	7	8	3	2	7	4	6	7	5
F	E	E	U	E	U	D	I	E	I	I	X	P
3	5	4	8	4	6	2	8	7	5	4	7	3
S	R	S	W	W	N	S	I	P	I	O	R	A
8	6	2	8	4	5	8	2	6	4	7	5	7
L	V	C	L	N	Z	G	O	E	D	E	E	S
5	3	6	5	3	2	8	4	7	8	5	3	7
F	R	N	R	E	U	O	E	S	F	I	G	I
6	5	3	5	3	8	7	3	5	7	4	2	5
T	E	O	N	N	A	V	E	D	E	R	N	S
8	2	4	6	2	4	2	6	2	4	2	6	2
R	T	F	I	F	U	E	V	A	L	R	E	S

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

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1. LITERATURE: What is the name of the clown in Stephen King's horror novel "It"?
2. ASTRONOMY: How often does Halley's Comet appear in the Earth's sky?
3. U.S. STATES: Which state has the most electoral votes in 2024?
4. MOVIES: In "Jurassic Park," what kind of container is used to store stolen dinosaur embryos?
5. ART: Which art movement is Salvador Dali associated with?
6. AD SLOGANS: Which car manufacturer used the ad slogan "Quality is Job 1"?
7. TELEVISION: Which TV show spawned the spinoff comedy/drama "Maude"?
8. FOOD & DRINK: What is the main ingredient in falafel?
9. GEOGRAPHY: What is the world's shortest river?
10. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What are a crab's pincers called?

Answers

1. Pennywise.
2. On average, every 76 years.
3. California (54).
4. A canister that looks like a Barbasol Shaving Cream can.
5. Surrealism.
6. Ford Motor Company.
7. "All in the Family."
8. Chickpeas.
9. Roe River, Montana.
10. Chelae.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Cybersecurity: South Dakota's Next Big Industry

When I first ran for governor, I promised the people of South Dakota that I would bring the next big industry to our state. We want to keep our kids and grandkids living and working in South Dakota, so we're focused on bringing the jobs of the future to keep them here. Careers in technology and innovation are the future. And South Dakota has the opportunity to build a future for our kids and grandkids.

Cybersecurity is South Dakota's next big industry. Our fastest growing sector is "Scientific, and Technical Services," with 4,000 jobs added in the past five years – a growth of 25%.

South Dakota already has one of the top universities in the nation for cybersecurity and emerging technology. Dakota State University has received designations in cyber operations, cyber defense, and cyber research from the NSA and Homeland Security. There are only ten institutions in the entire country that can say that!

DSU was also the first school in America to create a Ph.D. program in cyber operations. And earlier this year, Dakota State University established an Educational Partnership Agreement with the U.S. Army Cyber Command. This partnership allows students to experience work and educational opportunities at the top classification level. In fact, DSU was the only school in America to send four students to compete for Team USA at the World Cyber Games.

South Dakota is in the middle of the country – and we're landlocked, so foreign spy ships and subs can't reach us. It makes a lot of sense for cybersecurity resources to be centered here.

Dakota State's "MadLabs" is the heart of this. It is the key facility in Madison, and we've built partnerships with private industry to expand it to Sioux Falls. They are doing incredible work to drive innovation throughout both the South Dakota economy and the entire nation. They focus on cybersecurity, AI, machine learning, digital forensics, and so much more.

We are also training kids even before they get to college. The Governor's Cyber Academy provides opportunities for high school students to get some of this training early. Students can attend the academy to get dual-credit training opportunities during the summer. They earn digital badges as they learn skills that will help them get in-demand jobs in the future.

Dakota State University is giving students the kind of career opportunities that they can't get anywhere else. These opportunities not only encourage our kids to stay in South Dakota to earn their college degree, they also put our state on the map and attract students from across America to choose South Dakota for their education.

I ran for governor to make sure that the next generation would inherit an America that they could be proud of. Accomplishing that goal starts with education.

I recently had the opportunity to be a member of a panel on the future of U.S. regional innovation at the Global Emerging Technology Summit. During this discussion, I got to tell South Dakota's story and how we are making real progress right here in the heartland. I am so proud that South Dakota schools understand the importance of educating our students in the fields of the future – and I can't wait to continue our hard work.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



No End in Sight for the Biden Border Crisis

For two and a half years, a crisis has raged at the southern border. Recently, in less than one week, more than 35,000 illegal immigrants were caught trying to cross the border. That's more than the population of Aberdeen, South Dakota, crossing the border in just four days. This crisis continues to strain resources at the border, but there appears to be no end in sight as the Biden administration fails to take simple steps to stop the flow of illegal immigrants.

Approximately 6 million illegal immigrants have been apprehended at the border since the start of the Biden administration, which doesn't include 1.5 million known "gotaways" who entered the country after evading Border Patrol. The sheer number of illegal immigrants coming into the country is concerning on its own, but equally concerning is that very few are being removed from the United States when they are caught. According to one report, only about one in seven migrants was removed in July of this year. Those who aren't removed sometimes receive court dates years in the future. This is exactly the sort of policy that keeps fueling this crisis, not to mention the fact that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has lost track of 177,000 individuals the agency released into the country pending a court date.

This crisis is the predictable outcome of decisions made early in – and throughout – the Biden administration. The president's team was warned of the possibility of a migrant surge, yet the president wasted no time dismantling the immigration policies of his predecessor and weakening our nation's border security. And it wasn't long before the border was overwhelmed.

The few proactive measures the Biden administration has taken have been too little, too late, with recent data demonstrating that its efforts have been ineffective. The fact that both border communities and places far from the southern border like New York, Chicago, and Massachusetts are being strained by the influx of illegal immigrants indicates the administration's actions are just not working.

I'm also deeply concerned about some of the new policies the administration is considering. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is reported to be considering requiring some illegal immigrants to remain in Texas while they await asylum screening. Forcing border communities to shoulder even more of the burden of this crisis is a terrible idea. The White House has also requested additional funding for ICE, not to be used for law enforcement or other security measures, but instead for shelters and migrant services. The White House appears to be focused on anything other than border security.

The situation at the border remains high on Americans' list of concerns, and, unsurprisingly, most Americans don't approve of how the Biden administration is handling the issue. The American people can tell that our borders are open, our laws aren't being enforced, and that the security and humanitarian crises are not getting better.

The current situation is unsustainable. Ultimately, the solution is simple: The president has the power to end this crisis – he just needs to enforce the law. I'll continue working to ensure Border Patrol has the resources it needs to keep the border secure, but absent presidential leadership, I'm afraid there will continue to be no end in sight for the crisis at the southern border.

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



The Big Three

BIG Update

Our national debt is skyrocketing. At this rate, it's going to increase by \$20 trillion in the next ten years. This is a crisis.

If we don't act now, we know the impact it'll have on Americans:

Higher cost of living

Higher interest for borrowers

Higher inflation

Private investment and economic growth is crowded out

Funding for our national priorities, like defense is stopped

But House Republicans' have a plan:

Rein in out-of-control spending. President Biden has added \$17 trillion to the national debt over the next decade. This is reckless. We must right-size government spending post-Covid.

Restore fiscal responsibility. \$2 trillion of wasteful spending is due to improper payments—either payments that should not have been made or were made in the incorrect amount. The government should not be authorizing incorrect payments. We need to steward taxpayer dollars in a responsible way.

Reverse the curse. Our deal sets next year's spending to the Fiscal Year 2022 levels and limits government spending growth to 1% for the next ten years. By returning to pro-growth, pro-work, pro-energy policies that re-ignite our economy, we can turn the tide of our economy, benefiting all Americans.

Our current fiscal trajectory is simply unsustainable. We need to solve these problems. We owe it to our children and grandchildren.

BIG Idea

A lot of folks out in cattle country are still looking for small and local options to process their cattle. I met with the Livestock Marketing Association to discuss how livestock marketers are currently prohibited from having an ownership stake in livestock processors. My bill, the A-PLUS Act, would fix this by expanding the opportunity for investment in small and local packers. This would also increase processing capacity and diversify market options for producers.

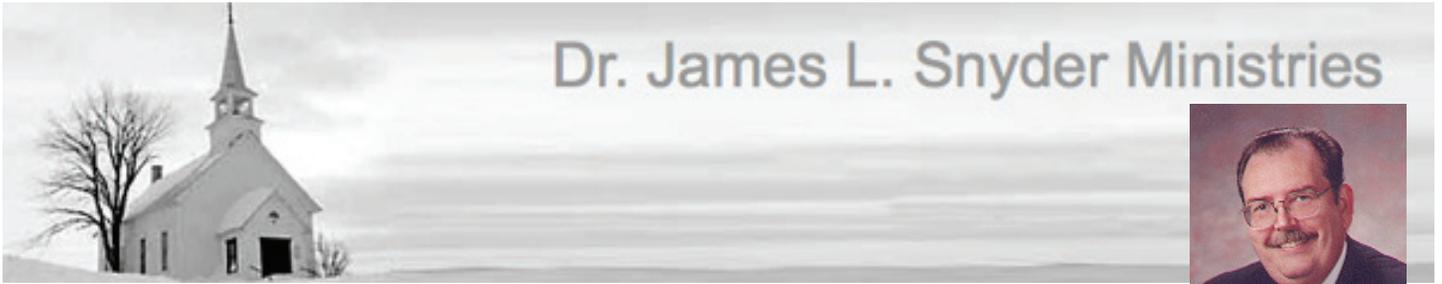
BIG News

BIG NEWS! My bill to protect and preserve the site of the Wounded Knee Massacre passed out of the U.S. House. This is an important step forward to getting this bill signed into law, so the land can be maintained as sacred for generations to come. The lives lost that day should be remembered and honored.

I introduced the bill in May. Not many bills receive a vote on the House Floor, and it is even more rare for a bill to receive a vote so soon after being introduced. I'm grateful for the work the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe contributed to the process of the Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act and look forward to getting it across the finish line.

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What's the Harm with a Little Treat?

The last month has been crazy for me and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Every month has its crazy element, but this past month beats them all.

First, my main computer crashed, and I lost a lot of stuff.

Second, we had a hurricane that came through; fortunately, it was only thunder, rain and loss of electricity.

Third, I came down with what the doctor said was acute bronchitis. I told him I did not think any of this bronchitis was cute.

Fourth, my next book manuscript is due this month.

That was just the main highlight of the past month, and by the time it was over, I was over the hill. I just felt washed out and needed a little bit of rest.

I resumed working on my book. Then, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came and said she would be gone for the day with one of our daughters—thrift store shopping.

I told her to have a great time, and she said she would be back sometime in the afternoon and that I had to get my lunch. That was okay with me. I sat back in my chair with my computer and resumed working on my manuscript. I was finally getting caught up and would soon be finished.

Taking a break, I got up, got a fresh cup of coffee, returned to my chair, sat down and relaxed. There was this strange thought in the back of my head that I could not clarify.

After several sips of coffee, I leaned back and looked around to see what was missing. Something was missing, and I just could not put my finger on it.

After my kind of week, it is no wonder my brain is not working as well as it should. However, I thought I would relax and see if anything came to mind.

The whole day was before me, and I was thinking of what I would do for lunch when I could not get this gnawing thought out of my head. It was like a rat gnawing up in the attic and was so unsettling. It was right before me, but I could not get my focus clear.

Oh well, I sighed, took another sip of coffee, set my cup down, and was about to go back to work when the thought suddenly jumped out in front of me.

I love it when a plan comes together.

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I saw for the very first time what was missing. After a month of all kinds of hectic activity, I needed something to relax me. At first, I could not figure out what it was, but then it came to me.

What I needed was a little treat. What harm is a little treat when you need to relax?

I looked at my watch, saw the time, and realized that The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage would not return for another four hours. That gave me plenty of time to deal with my treat.

You guessed it, that treat was an Apple Fritter. What harm does a little treat like that have when you deserve it? And, boy, do I?

I quickly got into my truck and headed to Publix. I was about to buy one Apple fritter when another thought came to mind. Why not buy two apple fritters? What harm do two little treats have?

Without hesitation, I got the two apple fritters and took them to the cash register, hoping nobody would recognize me. My bad luck was that the cashier was a friend of my wife and knew about the apple fritters controversy.

"Does your wife know you're getting these apple fritters?"

After stuttering for a few seconds, I said, "Well, she's away for the day and gave me permission to get my own lunch for today." I smiled at her, paid for the apple fritters, left the store and went home.

Getting a fresh cup of coffee, I took that and the apple fritters to my easy chair to sit back and enjoy this little treat. After all, I earned every bite.

After a few hours of work, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage finally came home and walked into the kitchen area with a bag of groceries. I noticed on the bag was the word Publix. I hoped she had a different cashier than I did.

"So," my wife said as she entered my room, "I hear you were at Publix this morning."

"Yes, my dear, you told me I needed to get my own lunch for the day and that's why I went to Publix."

"Did you get an Apple fritter?"

Now, my words need to be very precise. "No, my dear. I did not get 'AN' Apple fritter."

The look she gave me made me realize she did not believe me. What I said was true but it was not the whole truth. That got me remembering what Solomon said, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

According to Solomon, half a truth is still a lie if it makes the other person believe what is not the whole truth. I knew what I had to do. As much as it pained me, I had to confess to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage that I had two Apple Fritters.

Smiling at me she simply said, "I know."

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: How are recent heat waves around the world affecting wildlife? – T.C., via email

It would be hard to ignore the heat waves that have plagued North America, Europe and Asia in recent months. If you did not experience them yourself, chances are that you read about them, or their effects. Abnormal thermal extremes like this have become more regular, intense and long-lasting over the last few decades as global temperatures have risen. In addition to their severe consequences for vulnerable human communities, heat waves have a drastic effect on many wildlife populations. While there is no one single consequence felt by all wildlife populations, heat waves universally disrupt the ecosystems where they occur, which, due to the interconnectedness of biodiversity, has implications for all living things.

Heat waves are different from the rising global average temperature. They are the peak, extreme, temperatures that happen for a finite duration of time. If the global average temperature warms by 4.4 C (the highest emission scenario projected by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 41 percent of species will experience extreme heat waves. But if global average temperature maxes out at 1.8 C of warming (the IPCC identifies 1.5C of warming to be the lowest emissions scenario), only 6.1 percent of species will experience extreme heat waves.

In any circumstance, the change in wellbeing or population size of one species in a local area sets off a ripple effect in that ecosystem. The secondary consequences of heat waves' effect on oyster populations are a case in point. Heat waves reduce oyster population size as oysters are a stationary species and cannot move from uninhabitable water temperatures. When at a healthy population size, oysters limit algal bloom and are thus key to ensuring consistent oxygen levels in bodies of water. Therefore, experts warn of consequences for other marine animals in those bodies of water now faced with reduced oxygen levels.

Some wildlife populations, particularly insects, have actually increased in size due to heat waves over the last few decades. The length of mosquito season has increased in some parts of the world by 30 days or more over the last four decades, spiking reproduction rates and therefore population size. However, for some regions in the Southern hemisphere that are already very hot, increased temperature and dryness has actually shortened mosquito season, prompting a dip in reproduction rates.

In addition to mass mortality events, certain wildlife populations have been forced to migrate or change existing migration patterns. In the ocean and other bodies of water, the phenomenon that occurs when species migrate due to temporary changes in ocean surface temperatures caused by marine heatwaves is called thermal displacement. Some groups of non-stationary species like whales or sea turtles have moved tens of thousands of kilometers to reach a new region at their preferred temperature. This changes the food chain and equilibrium of the ecosystem they have moved to and that they have moved from.

Ultimately, global average temperature rise will have many of the same effects on wildlife populations, but recent heat waves have had large effects in a small fraction of the time. Limiting global average temperature rise will limit the extremity of heat waves and reduce potential consequences for wildlife.



The recent uptick in heat waves has sent many different species of wildlife scurrying for new habitat where they can keep cool. Credit: Belle Co, FlickrCC.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

COMMENTARY

A little advice for the next leader of South Dakota's Democrats

State's super-minority party needs candidates and an identity

DANA HESS

Shane Merrill is a farmer, so it's a given that he knows all about hard work. Yet Merrill has set himself up to take on the hardest job in the state as chairman of the South Dakota Democratic Party.

Merrill had the chance to move up from interim chairman after the previous chairwoman, Jennifer Slight-Hansen, was drummed out of office for a variety of management and personnel problems. Now that Merrill has the job, it means he will have to bring back to relevance a party that has suffered a near fatal dip in stature and membership.

Reestablishing the South Dakota Democratic Party won't be easy. Merrill is likely to get all kinds of guidance about how to make it happen. Here's some more unsolicited advice.

First, and most importantly, find more candidates. Currently there are seven Democrats in the state House and four in the state Senate. There are none in any of the statewide offices.

The Democratic Party has this super-minority status because it has for too long failed to offer candidates for office. In the last legislative election, Democrats gave the state Senate majority to Republicans by failing to field candidates for 25 of 35 Senate openings. The situation wasn't much better in the House where Democrats failed to field candidates for 32 of 70 openings.

Democrats were scarce at the top of the ticket as well, failing to run candidates against Dusty Johnson for U.S. House and Marty Jackley for state attorney general. Republicans at the party convention put up more of a fight to defeat Jackley than Democrats did during the entire election cycle.

Leaving blank spots on the ballot means that South Dakotans don't get the debate on the issues that they deserve. Lately most debates between candidates have been in Republican primaries where candidates try to out-conservative each other.

Second, no more whining about "one-party rule." Republicans earned the super majorities in the House and Senate and filled every other statewide elected office the old-fashioned way, by offering candidates for office. Complaining about their majorities makes Democrats sound weak and highlights their past failures to find enough candidates to fill out a ballot.

Third, candidacy for office has to be a long-term deal. No more one and dones, especially at the top of the ticket. Granted South Dakota is a small state, but it's hard to build name recognition when there's a rotating list of candidates at the top of the ballot. Sure, losing is tough. But quitting after one try won't build name recognition, create trust or help with fundraising.

Fourth, pick an identity and stick with it. Stop anyone on the street these days and they'd be hard-pressed to tell you what the South Dakota Democratic Party stands for. I've heard Democratic leaders in this state say that they don't like being lumped in with Schumer, Pelosi and the Washington crowd. They say that their values are different. To build an identity, Democrats in this state must prove that they are striving to help working families.

The next election may help them build that identity. That election will likely feature a ballot issue to cut the state sales tax on groceries. This has long been an issue backed by Democrats, and the party's candidates should grab it with both hands and make it their own.

Republicans erred in the last session when they chose cut the state sales tax from 4.5% to 4.2% rather than follow the governor's lead and cut the sales tax on groceries. It's hard to make a case that saving 30 cents on a \$100 purchase is going to help working families. Cutting the state sales tax on groceries is

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popular, easy to understand and makes an impact on the pocketbook with each trip to the store. Championing that initiative would go a long way toward establishing the Democratic Party's identity.

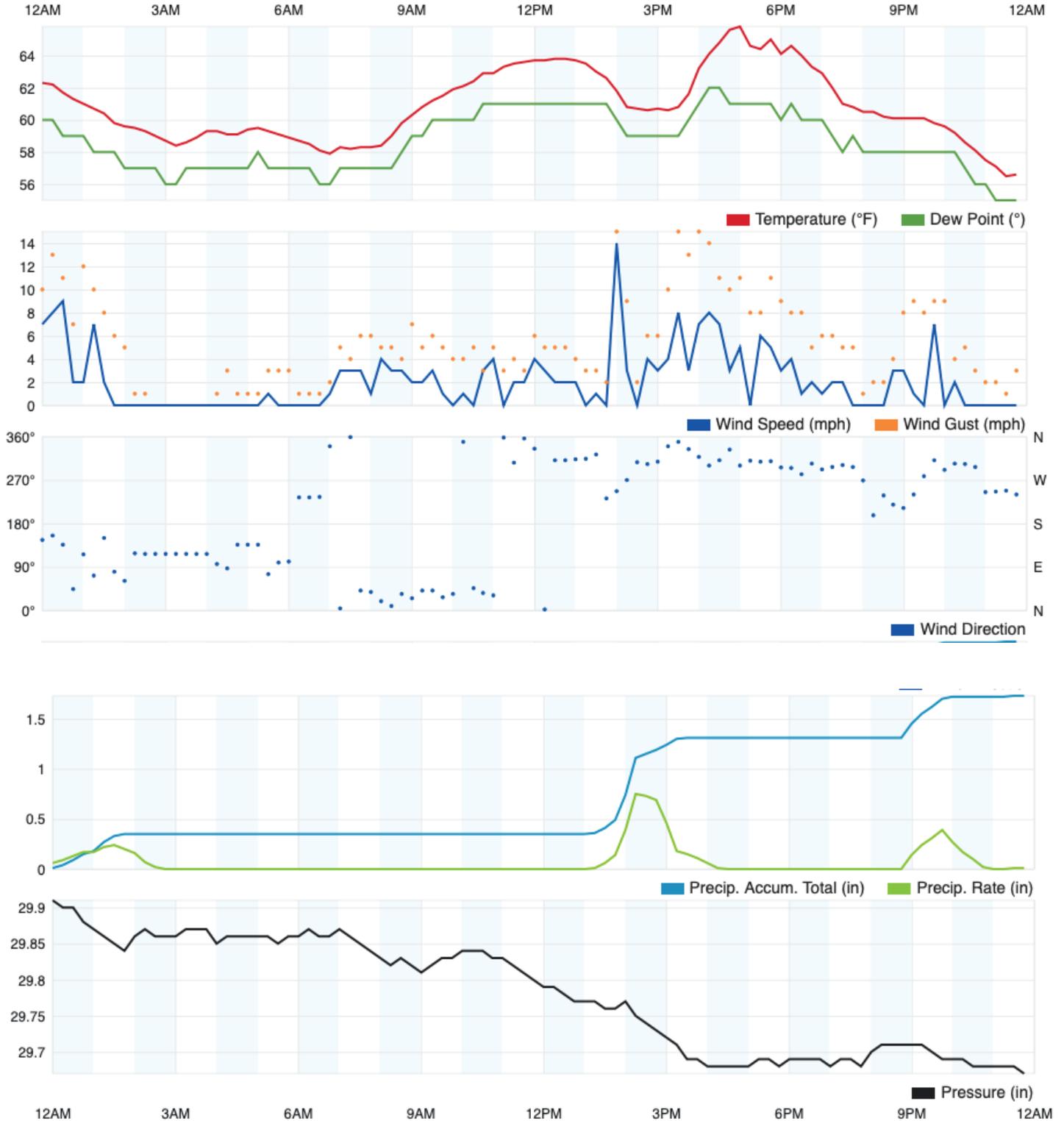
Fifth, stop the internal bickering. The next time the Democratic Party is in the news it should be to tout the quality of the many candidates it has running for election in the Legislature. There's not much time left to make that happen. As the new chairman, Merrill has his work cut out for him. No one expects the party to be rejuvenated overnight, but if Merrill can be successful, it will be a positive step for governance and politics in South Dakota.

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

Groton Daily Independent

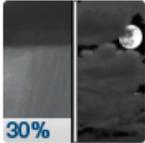
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Showers Likely	Chance Showers then Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy then Slight Chance Showers	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 65 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 67 °F	Low: 51 °F	High: 68 °F	Low: 50 °F	High: 72 °F



A Slow And Steady Warm Up For The Next 7 Days

September 24, 2023
4:44 AM

	Maximum Temperature Forecast							Minimum Temperature Forecast						
	9/24 Sun	9/25 Mon	9/26 Tue	9/27 Wed	9/28 Thu	9/29 Fri	9/30 Sat	9/24 Sun	9/25 Mon	9/26 Tue	9/27 Wed	9/28 Thu	9/29 Fri	9/30 Sat
Aberdeen	66	69	69	72	78	79	77	54	51	49	49	54	57	58
Britton	63	64	67	70	75	77	75	53	52	51	51	54	58	59
Brookings	68	68	68	72	78	82	80	52	51	53	53	52	57	57
Chamberlain	71	73	72	77	84	84	82	51	49	53	49	54	59	61
Clark	63	65	68	71	77	79	77	54	51	51	51	54	60	61
Eagle Butte	67	71	68	74	77	74	70	53	48	48	50	53	54	49
Ellendale	63	66	66	69	74	76	74	54	55	49	49	53	55	53
Eureka	62	66	66	70	74	75	72	52	53	49	49	52	52	51
Gettysburg	65	69	68	73	78	77	74	51	49	49	49	54	55	56
Huron	71	72	72	75	82	84	82	53	51	50	50	54	60	62
Kennebec	70	72	70	77	82	82	79	50	49	49	49	54	58	58
McIntosh	64	68	67	70	73	69	67	55	49	49	51	52	50	49
Milbank	66	66	68	70	78	81	79	55	53	54	50	52	57	57
Miller	66	68	68	73	79	80	78	53	54	49	49	54	59	60
Mobridge	67	71	70	75	77	77	74	56	53	49	51	54	52	51
Murdo	70	73	71	79	82	80	77	50	48	48	49	54	54	52
Pierre	72	74	73	79	84	82	79	52	51	51	52	56	56	57
Redfield	66	69	69	73	79	81	79	55	55	50	50	54	59	60
Sisseton	63	65	67	69	76	79	77	53	53	51	51	53	57	57
Watertown	65	66	68	72	79	82	79	54	51	49	49	52	57	60
Webster	61	62	65	68	74	77	75	54	53	51	51	54	59	57
Wheaton	63	66	68	70	75	79	78	54	53	54	50	52	55	56

*Table values in °F

*Table values in °F



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Cool to start the week off. But getting gradually warmer as the week wears on.

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Precipitation Chances Bookend The Seven Day Forecast

September 24, 2023
4:44 AM

Probability of Precipitation Forecast

	9/24 Sun						9/25 Mon			9/25 Mon		9/26 Tue		9/27 Wed		9/28 Thu		9/29 Fri		9/30 Sat	
	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	12pm	12am	12pm									
Aberdeen	35	35	60	70	45	15	5	5	0	5	5	5	0	0	5	5	5	25	30	25	
Britton	40	50	60	70	60	20	10	10	15	20	5	10	0	0	5	5	10	30	35	25	
Brookings	25	35	45	55	35	20	5	10	15	15	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	15	30	15	
Chamberlain	40	10	10	15	10	5	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	10	15	10	
Clark	55	45	45	70	55	25	15	10	5	15	5	10	0	0	5	5	10	20	35	20	
Eagle Butte	5	5	5	10	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	10	15	15	20	
Ellendale	30	50	55	65	50	15	0	5	5	5	0	5	0	0	5	10	5	30	25	25	
Eureka	75	80	65	65	45	20	5	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	5	10	25	20	25	
Gettysburg	60	45	55	50	15	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	5	5	20	15	20	
Huron	70	65	50	45	25	10	5	5	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	5	5	20	25	20	
Kennebec	15	5	0	10	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	10	15	15	
McIntosh	10	15	20	25	15	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	5	10	15	15	20	
Milbank	45	45	35	60	55	30	10	5	5	25	5	10	0	0	5	5	10	20	35	20	
Miller	55	50	55	45	20	5	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	5	5	20	25	20	
Mobridge	55	40	50	50	20	10	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	5	15	15	20	
Murdo	0	5	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	5	10	15	15	
Pierre	20	5	5	15	10	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	5	5	15	15	15	
Redfield	55	55	65	50	30	10	5	0	0	10	0	5	0	0	0	5	5	25	25	20	
Sisseton	25	55	60	60	65	25	10	10	15	30	10	10	0	0	5	5	10	25	35	25	
Watertown	40	40	30	65	55	25	10	5	5	20	10	20	0	0	5	5	10	25	35	20	
Webster	50	35	40	65	55	25	20	10	10	15	5	10	0	0	5	5	10	25	35	25	
Wheaton	30	40	50	65	65	40	15	10	10	30	15	10	0	0	5	5	15	25	40	25	

*Table values in %



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

After this low pressure system departs, rain chances basically go away, that is until late in the week, when the next chance for rain starts to show up.

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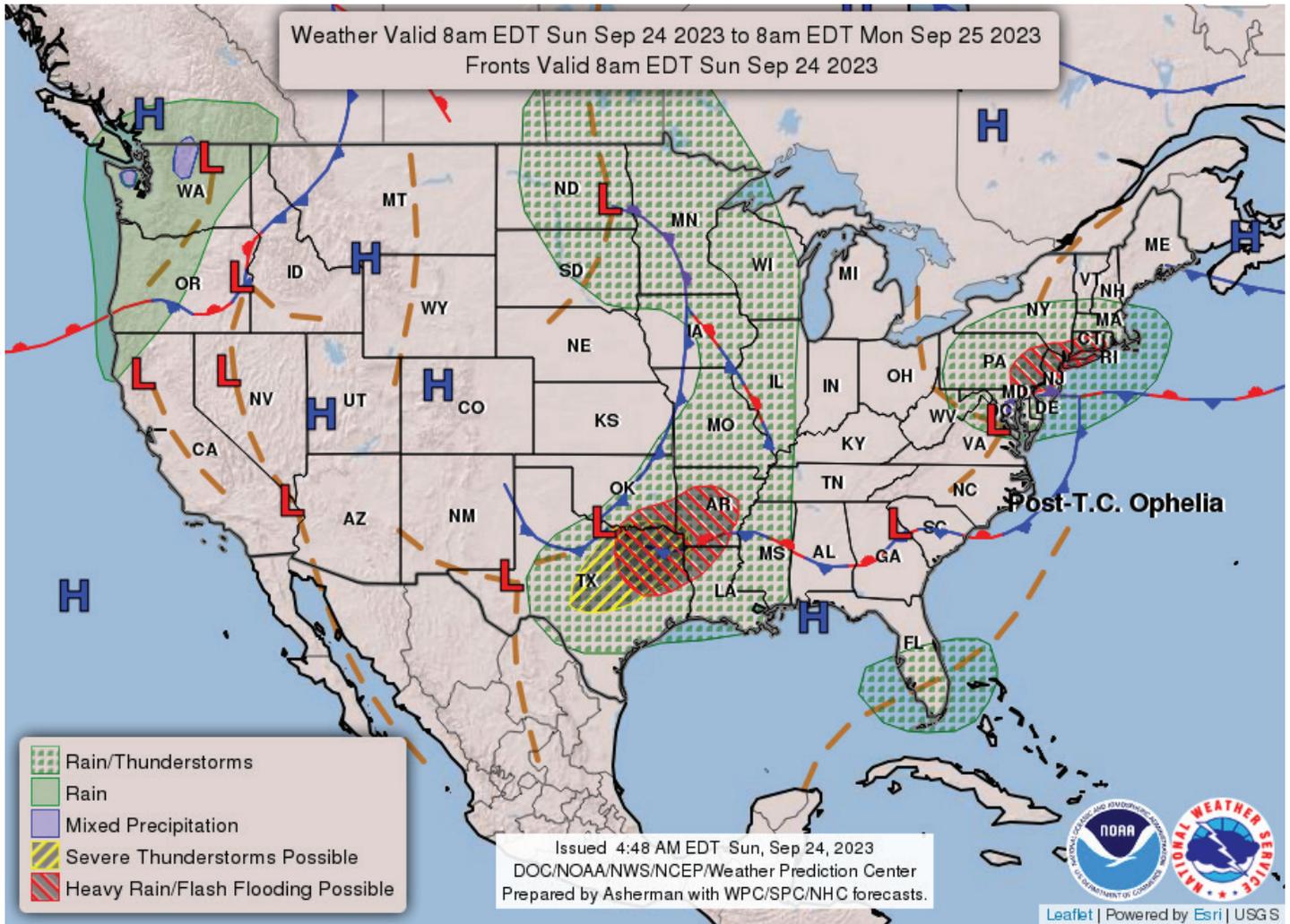
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 66 °F at 4:54 PM
Low Temp: 56 °F at 11:28 PM
Wind: 16 mph at 2:01 PM
Precip: : 1.73

Day length: 12 hours, 07 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 90 in 1935
Record Low: 23 in 2000
Average High: 72
Average Low: 43
Average Precip in Sept.: 1.59
Precip to date in Sept.: 2.45
Average Precip to date: 17.93
Precip Year to Date: 21.04
Sunset Tonight: 7:28:18 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:21:44 AM



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Today in Weather History

September 24, 1986: Thunderstorms brought high winds along with several tornados to parts of western and central South Dakota from the late evening in the morning hours of the 25th. Winds were estimated up to 80 mph. Many trees and power poles were downed along with damage to many buildings. The tornadoes occurred near Newell, east of Cedar Butte, west of Murdo, 20 miles northwest of Pierre, and northwest of Ridgeview in Dewey County.

September 24, 1992: South winds gusting to 50 to 55 mph across northeast South Dakota during the day toppled several trees and light poles. In Aberdeen, a front window was blown out of a store.

1926 - The temperature at Yellowstone Park dipped to nine degrees below zero. It was the coldest reading of record in the U.S. during September. Severe freezes were widespread over the northwestern U.S. causing great crop destruction. In Washington State, Spokane County experienced their earliest snow of record. Harney Branch Experiment Station in Oregon reported a temperature of 2 degrees above zero to establish a state record for the month of September. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1939: A thunderstorm on this day dropped 6.45 inches in six hours at Indio, CA. This rainfall preceded "El Cordonazo" or "The Lash of St. Francis", an actual tropical storm. For the entire storm, which started on this day and ended on the 26th, four inches of rain fell across the deserts and mountains as a dying tropical cyclone moved across Baja California into southwestern Arizona. This storm was the second tropical cyclone to impact California during this month. A strong El Niño may have contributed to the activity. The tropical storm produced 50 mph winds over the ocean and estimated seas of 40 feet. September rain records were set in Los Angeles with 5.66 inches and 11.6 inches at Mt. Wilson. 45 people died from sinking boats, and harbors were damaged. Total damage was estimated at \$2 million. Californians were unprepared and were alerted to their vulnerability to tropical storms. In response, the weather bureau established a forecast office for Southern California, which began operations in February of 1940.

1950 - A smoke pall from western Canada forest fires covered much of the eastern U.S. Daylight was reduced to nighttime darkness in parts of the Northeast. The color of the sun varied from pink to purple, blue, or lavender. Yellow to grey-tan was common. (24th-30th) (The Weather Channel)

1956: Hurricane Flossy made landfall near Destin, Florida as a Category 1 storm.

1972 - Lightning struck a man near Waldport, OR, a young man who it so happens was carrying thirty-five pieces of dynamite. (The Weather Channel)

1986: An F2 tornado, unusually strong for one in California, touched down just southeast of Vina on this day and traveled two miles through an agricultural area. A mobile home was destroyed, injuring a 22-year-old occupant. Eleven other buildings were damaged or demolished, and 50 acres of walnut orchards were flattened.

1987 - The first full day of autumn proved to be a pleasant one for much of the nation, with sunny skies and mild temperatures. Thunderstorms again formed over Florida and the southwestern deserts, and also formed along a cold front in the northeastern U.S. A storm spotter at Earp CA sighted a couple of funnel clouds, one on the California side of the state line, and the other on the Arizona side. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing along a stationary front produced large hail and damaging winds in the southeastern U.S., with reports of severe weather most numerous in North Carolina. Golf ball size hail was reported at Tick Creek and a number of other locations in North Carolina. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Forty-seven cities between the Rockies and the Appalachians reported record low temperatures for the date. Lows of 38 degrees at Abilene TX, 34 degrees at Jackson KY, and 36 degrees at Midland TX established records for the month of September. The low of 36 degrees at Midland smashed their previous record for the date by thirteen degrees. Fayetteville AR and Springfield MO reported their earliest freeze of record. Thunderstorms produced torrential rains in northeastern Florida. Jacksonville was deluged with 11.40 inches of rain, and flash flooding resulted in two deaths. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005: Early on the morning of September 24, 2005, Major Hurricane Rita came ashore near the Texas/Louisiana border.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

START WHERE YOU ARE!

A pastor once thought that it was his responsibility to change the world. For years he struggled and worked. He finally became so discouraged that he decided to quit pastoring.

However, one day while thinking about things, he had a moment of insight. He decided to utilize a new strategy. "I'll change my Elders. That's the place for me to begin." But he soon realized that this was not going to happen. Their resistance was fierce and he soon gave up.

"Since they didn't respond," he said to himself, "I'll change the order of service." So, he rearranged the hymns, the responsive reading, when the offering was taken and when the choir would sing, but that didn't work either. People still complained about everything: the length of the service and even the sermons. Finally, they threatened to quit supporting the church financially.

Suddenly he felt threatened, and said to himself, "I wonder, Could it be me?"

David had it right when he faced himself and said: "Search me, O God, and know my heart. Test me and know my thoughts."

It is easier to look at the lives of others and see things in them that we think they need to change. It is also much easier to want them to change than to have the courage to change ourselves. God will work through us. But, He wants us to work on ourselves - to see the sin that is in our lives that He sees. And when He removes the sin and shortcomings from our lives, we will become like Him. And, when we do, we will become an example for others to change.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us not to be concerned about what others need to change in their lives, but what we need to change in our lives to be more like You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you and lead me along the path of everlasting life. Psalm 139:23-24



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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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.22.23

10 13 14 57 66 3

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$230,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.23.23

15 32 34 39 50 10

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,300,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.23.23

15 18 30 44 46 6

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 29 Mins 48 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.23.23

2 5 9 14 23

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.23.23

14 16 26 41 57 24

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.23.23

1 12 20 33 66 21

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$785,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL

Brandon Valley 52, Rapid City Stevens 0
Leola-Frederick High School 16, Ipswich 12
Omaha Nation, Neb. 38, Flandreau Indian 0
Rapid City Christian 47, Lakota Tech 0

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

Israeli military raid kills 2 Palestinians in West Bank. Israel says its troops came under fire

AREF TUFANA undefined

NOUR SHAMS REFUGEE CAMP, West Bank (AP) — Two Palestinians were killed during an Israeli military raid Sunday in the northern West Bank, Palestinian health officials said, the latest bloodshed in a surge of violence during a sensitive Jewish holiday period.

The Israeli military said it moved into the Nour Shams refugee camp, near the town of Tulkarem, to destroy what it described as a militant command center and bomb-storage facility in a building.

It said that engineering units detonated a number of bombs planted under roads and that militants opened fire and hurled explosives, as troops responded with live fire.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said two men — Asid Abu Ali, 21, and Abdulrahman Abu Daghsh, 32 — were killed by Israeli fire. The raid caused heavy damage to the camp's main road, severing water pipes and flooding parts of the street. The ground floor of the targeted building was heavily damaged, while part of the exterior wall of the second floor collapsed.

Elsewhere in the West Bank, Birzeit University, a major Palestinian institution, said the Israeli army carried out a rare raid on its campus near the city of Ramallah and arrested nine students, including the head of the student council. It said the students were all supporters of the Hamas militant group. The university denounced the raid, which it said caused damage to university property.

The Israeli military claimed the suspects were plotting an attack on Israeli targets.

Israel has been carrying out stepped-up military raids, primarily in the northern West Bank, for the past year and a half in what it says is a campaign to root out Palestinian militants and thwart future attacks.

But Palestinians say the raids entrench Israel's 56-year occupation over the West Bank. The raids have shown little sign of slowing the fighting and contributed to the weakening of the Palestinian Authority, the self-rule government that administers parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Some 190 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank since the start of the year, according to a tally by The Associated Press. Israel says most of those killed have been militants, but youths protesting the incursions and others not involved in the confrontations have also been killed.

At least 31 people have been killed in Palestinian attacks against Israelis this year.

The tensions have begun to spread over the past week to the Gaza Strip, where hundreds of Palestinians have been holding daily demonstrations along the fence separating the territory from Israel.

On Saturday, Israeli airstrikes hit a militant site for the second time in as many days, after Palestinians sent incendiary balloons into Israeli farmland and Palestinian protesters threw stones and explosives at soldiers at the separation fence

The spike in violence comes during the Jewish New Year holiday season. Jews are set to mark Yom Kippur, the holiest day on their calendar, on Sunday night followed by the weeklong Sukkot festival later in

the month.

During Sukkot, large numbers of Jews are expected to visit Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site, revered by Jews as the Temple Mount and Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary. The compound, home to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, is often a focal point for violence.

Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians seek those territories for their hoped-for independent state.

Biden to open embassies in Cook Islands, Niue as he welcomes Pacific leaders for Washington summit

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is set to announce the opening of new U.S. embassies on Cook Islands and Niue on Monday as the Democratic administration aims to demonstrate to Pacific Island leaders that it remains committed to increasing American presence in the region.

The announcement about the new diplomatic missions in the South Pacific comes as Biden prepares to welcome leaders to Washington for the two-day U.S.-Pacific Island Forum Summit. Talks are expected to heavily focus on the impact of climate change in the region.

Biden has put a premium on improving relations in the Pacific amid rising U.S. concern about China's growing military and economic influence. Plans about the embassies were confirmed by two senior administration officials who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity before the formal announcement.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden would use the summit to strengthen "ties with the Pacific Islands and discuss how we address complex global challenges, like tackling the existential threat of climate change, advancing economic growth, and promoting sustainable development."

The leaders were scheduled to be feted on Sunday at a Baltimore Ravens football game and to visit a Coast Guard cutter in Baltimore Harbor for a briefing by the commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard on combatting illegal fishing and other maritime issues.

Pacific Island leaders have been critical of rich countries for not doing enough to control climate change despite being responsible for much of the problem, and for profiting from loans provided to vulnerable nations to mitigate the effects.

At last year's summit, the White House unveiled its Pacific strategy, an outline of its plan to assist the region's leaders on pressing issues like climate change, maritime security and protecting the region from overfishing. The administration pledged the U.S. would add \$810 million in new aid for Pacific Island nations over the next decade, including \$130 million on efforts to stymie the impacts of climate change.

The forum includes Australia, Cook Islands, Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Biden will welcome the leaders to the White House on Monday morning for talks and a working lunch. They also will meet on Monday with Biden's special envoy on climate, John Kerry, for talks focused on climate change. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.N. ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield will host the leaders at the State Department for a dinner.

Kerry and USAID administrator Samantha Power will host the leaders on Tuesday for climate talks with members of the philanthropic community. The leaders also are slated to meet with members of Congress and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is to host a roundtable with the leaders and members of the business community.

Power last month travelled to Fiji to open a new USAID mission that will manage agency programs in nine Pacific Island countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. The U.S. this year has opened embassies in Solomon Islands and Tonga, and is on track to open an embassy in Vanuatu early next year.

The White House said most members of the 18-member forum were dispatching their top elected official or foreign minister to the summit.

But the administration was “very disappointed” Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, who was in New York last week for the U.N. General Assembly, opted not to stick around for the White House summit, according to an administration official. The Solomon Islands last year signed a security pact with China.

Prime Minister Meltek Sato Kilman Livtuvanu of Vanuatu also is expected to miss the summit. He was elected by lawmakers earlier this month to replace Ishmael Kalsakau, who lost a no-confidence vote in parliament.

Biden earlier this year had to cut short a planned visit to the Indo-Pacific, scrapping what was to be a historic stop in Papua New Guinea, as well as a visit to Australia for a gathering with fellow leaders of the so-called Quad partnership so he could focus on debt limit talks in Washington. He would have been the first sitting U.S. president to visit Papua New Guinea.

The U.S. president is set to honor Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese with a state visit next month.

The threat of wildfires is rising. So is new artificial intelligence solutions to fight them

By KELVIN CHAN AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — Wildfires fueled by climate change have ravaged communities from Maui to the Mediterranean this summer, killing many people, exhausting firefighters and fueling demand for new solutions. Enter artificial intelligence.

Firefighters and startups are using AI-enabled cameras to scan the horizon for signs of smoke. A German company is building a constellation of satellites to detect fires from space. And Microsoft is using AI models to predict where the next blaze could be sparked.

With wildfires becoming larger and more intense as the world warms, firefighters, utilities and governments are scrambling to get ahead of the flames by tapping into the latest AI technology — which has stirred both fear and excitement for its potential to transform life. While increasingly stretched first responders hope AI offers them a leg up, humans are still needed to check that the tech is accurate.

California’s main firefighting agency this summer started testing an AI system that looks for smoke from more than 1,000 mountaintop camera feeds and is now expanding it statewide.

The system is designed to find “abnormalities” and alert emergency command centers, where staffers will confirm whether it’s indeed smoke or something else in the air.

“The beauty of this is that it immediately pops up on the screen and those dispatchers or call takers are able to interrogate that screen” and determine whether to send a crew, said Phillip SeLegue, staff chief of intelligence for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The cameras, part of a network that workers previously had to watch, provide billions of bytes of data for the AI system to digest. While humans still need to confirm any smoke sightings, the system helps reduce fatigue among staffers typically monitoring multiple screens and cameras, alerting them to look only when there’s possible fire or smoke, SeLegue said.

It’s already helped. A battalion chief got a smoke alert in the middle of the night, confirmed it on his cellphone and called a command center in San Diego to scramble first responders to the remote area.

The dispatchers said that if they hadn’t been alerted, the fire would have been much larger because it likely wouldn’t have been noticed until the next morning, SeLegue said.

San Francisco startup Pano AI takes a similar approach, mounting cameras on cell towers that scan for smoke and alert customers, including fire departments, utility companies and ski resorts.

The cameras use computer vision machine learning, a type of AI.

“They’re trained very specifically to detect smoke or not, and we train them with images of smoke and images of not smoke,” CEO Sonia Kastner said.

The images are combined with feeds from government weather satellites that scan for hotspots, along with other data sources, such as social media posts.

The technology gets around one of the main problems in the traditional way of detecting wildfires — re-

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lying on 911 calls from passers-by that need confirmation from staffers before crews and water-dropping planes can be deployed.

"Generally, only one in 20 of these 911 calls are actually a wildfire. Even during fire season, it might be a cloud or fog or a barbecue," Kastner said.

Pano AI's systems do still rely on final confirmation, with managers playing a time lapse of the camera feed to ensure it's smoke rising.

For fighting forest fires, "technology is becoming really essential," said Larry Bekkedahl, senior vice president of energy delivery at Portland General Electric, Oregon's largest utility and a Pano AI customer.

Utility companies sometimes play a role in sparking wildfires, when their power lines are knocked down by wind or struck by falling trees. Hawaii's electric utility acknowledged that its power lines started a devastating blaze in Maui this summer after apparently being downed by high winds.

PGE, which provides electricity to 51 cities in Oregon, has deployed 26 Pano AI cameras, and Bekkedahl said they have helped speed up response and coordination with emergency services.

Previously, fire departments were "running around looking for stuff and not even really knowing exactly where it's at," he said. The cameras help detect fires quicker and get teams on the ground faster, shaving up to two hours off response times.

"That's significant in terms of how fast that fire can spread and grow," Bekkedahl said.

Using AI to detect smoke from fires "is relatively easy," said Juan Lavista Ferres, chief data scientist at Microsoft.

"What is not easy is to have enough cameras that cover enough places," he said, pointing to vast, remote areas in northern Canada that have burned this summer.

Ferres' team at Microsoft has been developing AI models to predict where fires are likely to start. They have fed the model with maps of areas that burned previously, along with climate and geospatial data.

The system has its limitations — it can't predict random events like a lightning strike. But it can sift through historical weather and climate data to identify patterns, such as areas that are typically drier. Even a road, which indicates people are nearby, is a risk factor, Ferres said.

"It's not going to get it all perfectly right," he said. "But what it can do is it can build a probability map (based on) what happened in the past."

The technology, which Microsoft plans to offer as an open source tool, can help first responders trying to figure out where to focus their limited resources, Ferres said.

Another company is looking to the heavens for a solution. German startup OroraTech analyzes satellite images with artificial intelligence.

Taking advantage of advances in camera, satellite and AI technology, OroraTech has launched two mini satellites about the size of a shoebox into low orbit, about 550 kilometers (340 miles) above Earth's surface. The Munich-based company has ambitions to send up eight more next year and eventually put 100 into space.

As wildfires swept central Chile this year, OroraTech said it provided thermal images at night when aerial drones are used less frequently.

Weeks after OroraTech launched its second satellite, it detected a fire near the community of Keg River in northern Alberta, where flames burned remote stretches of boreal forest repeatedly this summer.

"There are algorithms on the satellite, very efficient ones to detect fires even faster," CEO Thomas Gruebler said.

The AI also takes into account vegetation and humidity levels to identify flare-ups that could spawn devastating megafires. The technology could help thinly stretched firefighting agencies direct resources to blazes with the potential to cause the most damage.

"Because we know exactly where the fires are, we can see how the fires will propagate," Gruebler said. "So, which fire will be the big fire in one day and which will stop on their own."

AP Technology Writer Barbara Ortutay in San Francisco contributed.

Mid-Atlantic coast under flood warnings as Ophelia weakens to post-tropical low and moves north

By BRIAN WITTE and JONATHAN MATTISE Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Tropical Storm Ophelia was downgraded to a post-tropical low on Saturday night but continued to pose a threat of coastal flooding and flash floods in the mid-Atlantic region, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said.

Residents in parts of coastal North Carolina and Virginia experienced flooding Saturday after the storm made landfall near a North Carolina barrier island, bringing rain, damaging winds and dangerous surges.

At 11 p.m. Saturday, the center said Ophelia, reduced to a weak form of a tropical storm, was located about 30 miles (50 kilometers) south-southwest of Richmond, Virginia, and about 85 miles (135 kilometers) southeast of Charlottesville, Virginia. The storm had maximum sustained winds of 35 mph (55 kph) with higher gusts.

Coastal flood warnings and flood watches remained in effect for portions of the region, the center said.

"The center of Ophelia is expected to turn toward the north-northeast and northeast, moving across eastern Virginia and the Delmarva Peninsula through Sunday," the center said.

Areas from Virginia to New Jersey are likely to receive 1 to 3 inches (2.5 to 7.6 centimeters) of rain and up to 5 inches (12.7 centimeters) in some places, the center said. Some New Jersey shore communities, including Sea Isle City, had already experienced flooding Saturday.

Areas of southeastern New York and southern New England also could receive 1 to 3 inches of rain, while surf swells are expected to affect much of the East Coast through the weekend, the center said.

Philippe Papin, a hurricane specialist with the center, said the primary risk of the storm system going forward will be the threat of floods from the rain.

"There have been tropical storm-force winds observed, but those are starting to gradually subside as the system moves further inland," Papin said in an interview early Saturday. "However, there is a significant flooding rainfall threat for a large portion of eastern North Carolina into southern Virginia over the next 12 to 24 hours."

The storm came ashore near Emerald Isle, North Carolina, on Saturday morning with near-hurricane-strength winds of 70 mph (113 kph), but winds weakened as the system traveled north, the center said.

Videos from social media showed riverfront communities in North Carolina such as New Bern, Belhaven and Washington experiencing significant flooding. The extent of the damage was not immediately clear.

Even before making landfall, Ophelia proved treacherous enough that five people, including three children 10 or younger, had to be rescued by the Coast Guard on Friday night. They were aboard a 38-foot (12-meter) catamaran anchored in Lookout Bight in Cape Lookout, North Carolina, stuck in choppy water with strong winds.

The sailboat's owner called the Coast Guard on a cellphone, prompting a nighttime rescue mission in which the crew used flares to navigate to the sailboat, helped the people aboard and left the boat behind. A Coast Guard helicopter lit up the path back to the station. There were no injuries reported.

Tens of thousands of North Carolina homes and businesses remained without electricity across several eastern counties as of Saturday afternoon, according to poweroutage.us, which tracks utility reports. A Duke Energy map showed scattered power outages across much of eastern North Carolina, as winds toppled tree limbs and snagged power lines.

"When you have that slow-moving storm with several inches of rain, coupled with a gust that gets to 30, 40 miles per hour, that's enough to bring down a tree or to bring down limbs," Duke Energy spokesperson Jeff Brooks told WTVD-TV on Saturday.

Brian Haines, a spokesperson for the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, said there were reports of downed trees but no major road closings.

At the southern tip of North Carolina's Outer Banks, Carl Cannon Jr. said he hoped to salvage some of this weekend's long-running Beaufort Pirate Invasion, a multiday event centering on the 1747 Spanish attack on the town. The winds tore down the big tent for a banquet planned for Saturday and several other

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tents were damaged or shredded.

Cannon Jr. hoped soggy, windy conditions would allow pirate reenactors to clash Sunday in Beaufort. "If I can get the boats out there, we will have an attack and the people will fight on the shore," he said.

The governors of North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland each declared a state of emergency on Friday. It is not uncommon for one or two tropical storms, or even hurricanes, to develop off the East Coast each year, National Hurricane Center Director Michael Brennan said.

"We're right at the peak of hurricane season. We can basically have storms form anywhere across much of the Atlantic basin," Brennan said in an interview Friday.

Scientists say climate change could result in hurricanes expanding their reach into mid-latitude regions more often, making storms like this month's Hurricane Lee more common.

One study simulated tropical cyclone tracks from pre-industrial times, modern times and a future with higher emissions. It found that hurricanes would track closer to the coasts, including around Boston, New York City and Virginia, and be more likely to form along the Southeast coast.

In some areas where the storm struck Saturday, the impact was modest. Aaron Montgomery, 38, said he noticed a leak in the roof of his family's new home in Williamsburg, Virginia. They were still able to make the hour-long drive for his wife's birthday to Virginia Beach, where he said the surf and wind were strong but the rain had stopped.

"No leak in a roof is insignificant, so it's certainly something we have to deal with Monday morning," he said.

Mattise reported from Nashville, Tennessee. AP Radio reporter Jackie Quinn in Washington and AP writers Ron Todt in Philadelphia, Sudhin Thanawala in Atlanta and Christopher Weber in Los Angeles contributed.

Follow AP's climate coverage at: <https://apnews.com/hub/climate-and-environment>

A Ukrainian train is a lifeline connecting the nation's capital with the front line

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KRAMATORSK, Ukraine (AP) — Among the hundreds of trains criss-crossing Ukraine's elaborate railway network every day, the Kyiv-Kramatorsk train stands apart, shrouded in solemn silence as passengers anticipate their destination.

Every day, around seven in the morning, passengers of this route leave the relative safety of the capital and head east to frontline areas where battles between Ukrainian forces and Russian troops rage and Russian strikes are frequent with imprecise missiles that slam into residential areas.

The passengers are a mix of men and women that offer up a slice of Ukrainian society these days. They include soldiers returning to the front after a brief leave, women making the trip to reunite for a few days with husbands and boyfriends serving on the battlefields, and residents returning to check on homes in the Donetsk region.

They are all lost in thought and rarely converse with each other.

Nineteen-year-old Marta Banakh anxiously awaits the train's next brief stop at one of its nine intermediate stations on the way to Kramatorsk. She disembarks at the station for a quick cigarette break, shifting her weight back and forth from one foot to the other.

Her family doesn't know she has made this journey from western Ukraine, crossing the entire country, to meet her boyfriend, who has been serving in the infantry since the onset of Russia's full-fledged invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. He rarely gets a break, and Marta has decided to surprise him with a visit.

"I worry that every day could be his last, and we may never see each other again," she said wearing her hair down, crowned with a pearl-studded headband.

It's the only high-speed day train that drives to Kramatorsk. The city is about 30 kilometers (less than 20 miles) from the front line, which makes it susceptible to Russian strikes. And just a few kilometers away

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from the city, battles near the Russian-held city of Bakhmut rage for the second year.

The war has become an integral part of the lives of millions of Ukrainians, and the country's vast railway system has remained operational despite the war. Night trains that rattle across the country still welcome customers with hot tea and clean sheets in the sleeping compartments. The trains also carry cargo, aid and gear.

The popularity of the Kyiv-Kramatorsk route highlights the reality of war.

Around 126,000 passengers used this route during the summer months this year, according to national railway operator Ukrzaliznytsia. It holds the fourth position for passenger volume among all intercity high-speed trains and maintains one of the highest occupancy rates — 94% — among all Ukrainian trains.

The connection was suspended for six months early in the war. The halt in April last year followed a Russian missile strike on the Kramatorsk railway station while passengers were waiting for evacuation. The strike killed 53 people and wounded 135 others in one of the deadliest Russian attacks.

Alla Makieieva, 49, used to regularly travel on this route even before the war. Returning from a business trip to the capital back to Dobropillia, a town not far from Kramatorsk, she reflects on the changes between then and now.

"People have changed, now they seem more somber," she says. "We've already learned to live with these missiles. We've become friends," she joked. "In Kyiv, the atmosphere is completely different; people smile more often."

Kyiv is regularly attacked by Russian missiles and drones. But unlike Kramatorsk in the Donetsk region, the capital has powerful air defense protection, which gives residents an illusion of safety.

As the morning light gradually gives way to the midday sun, it fills the spacious train carriages in warm radiance. The train shelves are mostly filled with military backpacks and small bags. Occasionally, a waiter breaks the silence in the aisle, offering coffee, tea, and snacks. Along the way, one can order dishes like bolognese pasta or a cappuccino.

The high-speed train ride from Kyiv to Kramatorsk costs approximately \$14. In nearly seven hours, passengers cover a distance of around 700 kilometers (400 miles).

Twenty-six-year-old Oleksandr Kyrylenko sits in the train's lobby with a coffee in hand, gazing thoughtfully out of the window as the landscapes change rapidly.

It's his first time heading to the front line, and he admits he didn't expect to travel to the epicenter of the grinding war with such comfort.

He had been working as a warehouse manager in Poland when Russia invaded Ukraine. "I helped as much as I could," he said. "Then I decided I needed to go myself."

"There is no fear. I simply want it to end sooner," he says of the war, dressed in military attire.

His parents were not thrilled about this idea, but this summer the young man returned to Ukraine and immediately went to the military enlistment office.

"It even feels lighter on my conscience," he said, adding that this decision came naturally to him. "Human resources are running out. Something needs to be done about it."

The train arrives at its final destination on time, and the platform quickly fills with people.

Some, wearing military-colored backpacks slung over their shoulders, stride forward swiftly, while others linger on the platform in long-awaited embraces.

Twenty-year-old Sofiia Sidorchuk embraces her boyfriend, who has been serving since the beginning of the full-scale invasion. The 20-year-old soldier refrains from disclosing his name for security reasons.

He holds Sofiia tightly, as if trying to make up for all the lost time during their longest separation in seven years of the relationship.

"We missed each other," Sofiia explains her decision to come from the northwestern Rivne region to Kramatorsk.

"It's love," added her partner, wearing military fatigues.

His commander granted him a few days alone with his beloved to recharge. In five days, he will embark on an assault.

Migrants hoping to reach US continue north through Mexico by train amid historic migration levels

By MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

IRAPUATO, Mexico (AP) — As a train roared in the distance, some 5,000 mostly Venezuelan migrants hoping to make it to the U.S. snapped into action.

Families with young children sleeping on top of cardboard boxes and young men and women tucked away in tents under a nearby bridge scrambled to pack their things. After the train arrived on the outskirts of the central Mexican city of Irapuato, some swung their bodies over its metal trailers with ease, while others tossed up bags and handed up their small children swaddled in winter coats.

"Come up, come up," migrants atop the train urged those below. Others yelled, "God bless Mexico!"

After three days of waiting for the train that many in the group worried would never come, this was their ticket north to Mexico's border with the United States.

Thousands of other migrants were stranded in other parts of the country last week after Mexico's biggest railroad said it halted 60 freight trains. The company, Ferromex, said so many migrants were hitching rides on the trains that it became unsafe to move the trains. The company said it had seen a "half dozen regrettable cases of injuries or deaths" in a span of just days.

When the train arrived Saturday, "Ferromex" was painted on many of the gondolas. Local police were stationed around the improvised camp where the migrants had been waiting, but when the train stopped for about 30 minutes there was no attempt to stop migrants from climbing aboard.

Despite violence from drug cartels and the dangers that come with riding atop the train cars, such freight trains — known collectively as "The Beast" — have long been used by migrants to travel north.

The closures temporarily cut off one of the most transited migratory routes in the country at a time of surging migration, and left families like Mayela Villegas' in limbo.

Villegas, her partner and their six children had spent three days sleeping on the concrete ground surrounded by masses of other migrants. Before boarding the train, the Venezuelan family said they had packed food for only a few days of train rides and struggled to feed their kids.

"The more days we are here, the less food we have. Thankfully people here have helped us, have given us bread," Villegas said. "We're sleeping here because we don't have anything to pay for a room or hotel. We don't have the funds."

The halting of the train routes also underscores the historic numbers of people heading north in search of a new life in the United States, and the dilemma it poses for countries across the Americas as they struggle to cope with the sheer quantities of migrants traversing their territories.

When several thousand migrants crossed into Eagle Pass, Texas, over a few days the border town declared an emergency.

In August, the U.S. Border Patrol made 181,509 arrests at the Mexican border, up 37% from July but little changed from August 2022 and well below the high of more than 220,000 in December, according to figures released Friday.

It reversed a plunge in the numbers after new asylum restrictions were introduced in May. That comes after years of steadily rising migration levels produced by economic crisis and political and social turmoil in many of the countries people are fleeing.

Once, just dozens of migrants from Central American countries would pass through Irapuato by train each day, said Marta Ponce, a 73-year-old from who has spent more than a decade providing aid to those who travel the tracks running through her town.

Now, that number often reaches the thousands.

"We once thought that 50 or 60 people was massive, now it's normal," Ponce said. "It has grown a lot, a lot, a lot."

And migrants come from all over. Ponce noted that Venezuelan migrants fleeing economic crisis in their country are in the overwhelming majority, but she's seen people from around the world, including African nations, Russia and Ukraine.

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Most travel through the Darien Gap, a dayslong trek across the rugged Colombia-Panama border. The crossing was once so dangerous that few dared to attempt it, but now so many migrants flood through its dense jungles that it's rapidly become a migratory highway similar to the trains winding through Mexico.

Crossings of the Darien Gap have shot up so much they could approach 500,000 people this year alone.

Villegas, whose family spent three days in Irapuato waiting for the train, was among many who saw the Darien Gap as an opportunity. The family was among 7.7 million people to leave Venezuela in recent years, and spent three years in neighboring Colombia.

The family was able to set up a small barbershop business on the fringes of the Colombia's capital, but rising xenophobia and low pay left the family of eight struggling to scrape by.

This summer, when a gang threatened them for not paying extortion money, Villegas and her partner, 32-year-old Yorver Liendo, decided it was time to go to the U.S. For them, the dangers are worth it if it means a change for their children, who ate yogurt out of plastic bottles and snuggled together on the ground.

"It's the country of a thousand opportunities, and at least my kids are still small. They can keep studying, and have a better quality of life," Liendo said.

But it's not just Ferromex that has been overwhelmed by the crush of people. Regional governments have also struggled with what to do.

Colombia, which has taken on the brunt of the exodus from Venezuela, has long called on the international community for aid. Panama and Costa Rica, meanwhile, have tightened migratory restrictions and demanded that something be done about hundreds of thousands of people passing through the Darien Gap.

Panama even launched a campaign dubbed "Darien is a jungle, not a highway."

Meanwhile, the Biden administration has pushed Mexico and Central American nations to control migratory flows and now requires asylum seekers to register through an app known as CBP One.

On Thursday, the Biden administration announced it would grant temporary protected status to nearly a half million more Venezuelans already in the country.

Meanwhile, activists like Ponce say they expect migration along the train line to grow.

As bleary-eyed migrants climbed onto the train early Saturday morning, they cheered as the train picked up speed and continued them on their winding route north.

Back in full force, UN General Assembly shows how the most important diplomatic work is face to face

By MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — There are two opposing theses about the U.N. General Assembly: It's a place that shows the true power of words, where leaders inspire action with rousing speeches on the urgent issues of our times; or it's a talking shop, where leaders perform for domestic audiences with political rhetoric on the cause of the day.

These dueling viewpoints were tested when the coronavirus pandemic shut down much in-person diplomacy for several years. After three years of virtual, then hybrid General Debates, the scores of top leaders who attended the annual U.N. summit this week exhibited the return of in-person diplomacy, and provided ammunition to those who advocate for its importance.

It wasn't just drama, like whether Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy would be addressing the Security Council in the presence of Russia's top diplomat (the two ultimately did not cross paths).

Many of the formal speeches delivered before the green stone in the General Assembly could have been performed straight to camera, with few other people in the room (and in 2020, they were). More than the speeches, at the heart of the annual meetings is the face-to-face interaction between leaders. And as important to day-to-day relations between countries is the face-to-face interaction between lower-level staff, shown this year as diplomatic delegations and non-governmental organizations packed the U.N. headquarters and hotels and meeting spaces nearby.

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The diplomatic agreements worked out in informal interactions have been key to accomplishments that weren't formally laid out in the U.N.'s founding document — activities like peacekeeping in recent years and decolonization decades ago, said Katie Laatikainen, a professor of political science and international relations at Adelphi University.

Much of the world looks at the General Assembly like a world government body, she said, and ignores the less high-profile work that's advanced in behind-the-scenes interactions.

"People expect governance but that's not really what the U.N. does," she said. The General Assembly, she said, actually "overshadows what the U.N. does well."

Side meetings on themes running from conservation to Middle East peace were taking place throughout the week. In-person relations are as important, if not more so, for non-governmental organizations with stakes in the outcomes, attendees said.

The La Jolla, California-based Waitt Institute works on ocean conservation and during the pandemic, "we were all on Zoom, of course ... it actually served an enormously important function," in communicating with the small island nations where Waitt does much of its work, said executive director Kathryn Mengerink.

However, real life is not "how we engage when we're in a box on a screen," she said, from midtown Manhattan, where she was engaging in the sort of in-person communication that she called essential to her group's work.

Scott Hamilton, a former State Department official who has worked in Cuba, among other locations, described how the pandemic hurt diplomacy because "face-to-face, you can build trust and comfort between people."

Despite the more robust attendance, this year did see some notable absences: With the exception of U.S. President Joe Biden, the leaders of China, France, Russia and the United Kingdom — the four other permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — did not attend.

United Nations officials say it's a mistake to confuse in-person attendance, particularly by national leaders, as a referendum on the meeting's importance.

"We're fully aware that there are competing demands on heads of states, domestic demands," said Stéphane Dujarric, spokesperson for U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres. "So, we're not taking it personally."

Even without a president or a prime minister in town, delegations still get work done — and the in-person contact helps set the agenda for the year ahead.

"The really hard work is what happens the rest of the year," Laatikainen said.

Many at the General Assembly, and those observing it closely from afar, declined to discuss the substance of negotiations that may never ultimately come to fruition. But they said that the 2023 summit underscored how essential it was to meet in person again, providing an invaluable way to interact that was more confidential and efficient than virtual communications.

"Technology provides a facility to carry those (interactions) without personal contact, but it's inferior to personal contact," said Jeff Rathke, president of the American-German Institute at Johns Hopkins University and a retired State Department official who focused mainly on U.S. relations with Europe.

But the General Assembly week "provides a critical mass that allows you to do all the things that you would prefer to do in person," Rathke said.

"You can exchange papers all day and have video calls," Hamilton echoes, "but it's all about doing what diplomats are supposed to do: It's easy to understand people's positions by exchanging papers but it's more important to understand people's interests."

Michael Weissenstein, an editor for The Associated Press in New York, is a veteran international correspondent who has been stationed in Cuba, Britain and Mexico.

Leading Egyptian opposition politician targeted with spyware, researchers find

By FRANK BAJAK AP Technology Writer

BOSTON (AP) — A leading Egyptian opposition politician was targeted with spyware multiple times after announcing a presidential bid — including with malware that automatically infects smartphones, security researchers have found. They say Egyptian authorities were likely behind the attempted hacks.

Discovery of the malware last week by researchers at Citizen Lab and Google's Threat Analysis Group prompted Apple to rush out operating system updates for iPhones, iPads, Mac computers and Apple Watches to patch the associated vulnerabilities.

Citizen Lab said in a blog post that attempts beginning in August to hack former Egyptian lawmaker Ahmed Altantawy involved configuring his phone's connection to the Vodaphone Egypt mobile network to automatically infect it with Predator spyware if he visited certain websites not using the secure HTTPS protocol.

Citizen Lab said the effort likely failed because Altantawy had his phone in "lockdown mode," which Apple recommends for iPhone users at high risk, including rights activists, journalists and political dissidents in countries like Egypt.

Prior to that, Citizen Lab said, attempts were made beginning in May to hack Altantawy's phone with Predator via links in SMS and WhatsApp messages that he would have had to click on to become infected.

Once infected, the Predator spyware turns a smartphone into a remote eavesdropping device and lets the attacker siphon off data.

Given that Egypt is a known customer of Predator's maker, Cyrox, and the spyware was delivered via network injection from Egyptian soil, Citizen Lab said it had "high confidence" Egypt's government was behind the attack.

Bill Marczak of the University of Toronto-based internet watchdog obtained the exploit chain with Google researcher Maddie Stone.

"It's scary the fact that the government can essentially select anyone on Vodafone Egypt's network and perhaps other networks for infections and they just flip a switch" and select them for targeting, he said. Marczak said "the most likely scenario here is that, yes, there is this cooperation from from Vodafone."

In a separate incident in 2021, Citizen Lab determined that Altantawy — who announced his candidacy in March — was successfully hacked with Predator.

Egyptian officials did not respond Saturday to requests for comment.

Altantawy, a former journalist, announced in March his bid to challenge incumbent President Abdel Fatah el-Sissi in 2024, who has overseen a sharp crackdown on political opposition. Rights groups accuse el-Sissi's administration of targeting dissent with brutal tactics — forced disappearances, torture and long-term detentions without trial.

Altantawy, family members and supporters have complained of being harrassed, which led him to ask Citizen Lab researchers to analyze his phone for potential spyware infection.

Altantawy said Saturday in written responses to questions relayed by a trusted intermediary, who requested anonymity for personal security, that he contacted Citizen Lab after receiving a series of suspicious and anonymous messages embedded with links he suspected were malicious.

He said he believed the hacking attempts were "inextricably linked to my political candidacy and my opposition role in the country against the Sisi regime" and sought "not only to surveil, but perhaps also to find compromising material that could be used to discredit or defame me."

Altantawy also said the incident raises questions about whether telecommunications companies operating in Egypt might be complicit.

Previously, Citizen Lab documented Predator infections affecting two exiled Egyptians, and in a joint probe with Facebook determined that Cyrox had customers in countries including Armenia, Greece, Indonesia, Madagascar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Serbia.

In July, the U.S. added Predator's maker, Cytrox, to its blacklist for developing surveillance tools deemed to have threatened U.S. national security as well as individuals and organizations worldwide. That makes it illegal for U.S. companies to do business with them. Israel NSO Group, maker of the Pegasus spyware, was similarly sanctioned in November 2021. The reported use of Predator in Greece helped precipitate the resignation last year of two top government officials, including the national intelligence director.

The latest discovery brings to five the number of zero-day vulnerabilities to Apple software for which patches have been released this month.

AP reporter Maggie Hyde in Cairo contributed.

Six young activists devote years to climate fight with 32 governments. Now comes their day in court

By BARRY HATTON and HELENA ALVES Associated Press

COSTA DA CAPARICA, Portugal (AP) — Sofia Oliveira was 12 years old when catastrophic wildfires in central Portugal killed more than 100 people in 2017. She "felt it was now or never to raise our voices" as her country appeared to be in the grip of deadly human-caused climate change.

Now a university student, Sofia and five other Portuguese young adults and children between 11 and 24 years of age are due on Wednesday at the European Court of Human Rights, where they are accusing 32 European governments of violating their human rights for what they say is a failure to adequately address climate change. It's the first climate change case filed with the court and could compel action to significantly slash emissions and build cleaner infrastructure.

Victory for them in Strasbourg would be a powerful instance of young people taking a legal route to force their governments to adopt a radical recalibration of their climate measures.

The court's rulings are legally binding on member countries, and failure to comply makes authorities liable for hefty fines decided by the court.

The courts are increasingly seen by activists as a way of sidestepping politics and holding governments to account. Last month, in a case brought by young environmental activists, a judge in the U.S. state of Montana ruled that state agencies were violating their constitutional right to a clean and healthful environment by allowing fossil fuel development.

When the Portuguese group decided in 2017 they would pursue legal action, Sofia wore braces on her teeth, stood taller than her younger brother André and was starting seventh grade at school. The braces are long gone and André, who is now 15, is taller than her by a few centimeters (an inch or so).

The past six years, André noted in an interview with The Associated Press, represent almost half of his life.

What has kept them going through the piles of legal documents gathered by the nonprofit group supporting them and through lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic is what they call the pressing evidence all around them that the climate crisis is getting worse.

The Praia do Norte beach at Costa da Caparica near where Sofia and André live, just south of the Portuguese capital Lisbon, was about 1 kilometer (3,000 feet) long when his father was his age, André says. Now, amid coastal erosion, it measures less than 300 meters (1,000 feet). Evidence like that led him to attend climate demonstrations even before he became a teen.

The other four members of the Portuguese group — Catarina, Cláudia, Martim and Mariana — are siblings and cousins who live in the region of Leiria in central Portugal where summer wildfires are common.

Scientists say the climate of the Sahara is jumping across the Mediterranean Sea to southern European countries like Portugal, where average temperatures are climbing and rainfall is declining. Portugal's hottest year on record was 1997, followed by 2017. The four driest years on record in the country of 10.3 million people have all occurred since 2003.

It's a similar story across Europe, and the legal arguments of the six Portuguese are backed by science. The Earth sweltered through its hottest Northern Hemisphere summer ever measured, with a record warm August capping a season of brutal and deadly temperatures, according to the World Meteorological

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Organization.

The world is far off its pledge to curb global warming, scientists say, by cutting emissions in line with the requirements of the 2015 Paris climate accord. Estimates say global average temperatures could rise by 2 to 4 degrees Celsius (2.6 to 7.2 Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times by 2100 at current trajectories of warming and emissions reductions plans.

Among the specific impacts listed by the young Portuguese are being unable to sleep, concentrate, play outside or exercise during heat waves. One of their schools was closed temporarily when the air became unbreathable due to wildfire smoke. Some of the children have health conditions such as asthma that makes them more vulnerable to heat and air pollution.

They are being assisted by the Global Legal Action Network, an international nonprofit organization that challenges human rights violations. A crowdfunding campaign has drawn support from around the world, with messages of support coming from as far away as Japan, India and Brazil.

Gerry Liston, a GLAN legal officer, says the 32 governments have "trivialized" the case. "The governments have resisted every aspect of our case ... all our arguments," he said.

André describes the governments as "condescending." Sofia adds: "They don't see climate as a priority."

Portugal's government, for example, agrees the state of the environment and human rights are connected but insists the government's "actions seek to meet its international obligations in this area" and cannot be faulted.

At the same time, some governments in Europe are backsliding on commitments already made.

Poland last month filed legal challenges aimed at annulling three of the European Union's main climate change policies. Last week, the British government announced it is delaying by five years a ban on new gas and diesel cars that had been due to take effect in 2030. The Swedish government's state budget proposal last week, meanwhile, cut taxes on gas and diesel and reduced funding for climate and environmental measures.

Amid those developments, the courts are seen by activists as a recourse.

The London School of Economics says that globally, the cumulative number of climate change-related cases has more than doubled since 2015 to more than 2,000. Around one-fourth were launched between 2020 and 2022, it says.

The Portuguese activists, who are not seeking any financial compensation, will likely have to wait some more. The verdict in their case could take up to 18 months, though they see the court's decision in 2020 to fast-track the proceedings as an encouraging sign.

A precedent is also giving the activists heart. The Urgenda Foundation, a Dutch organization that promotes sustainability and innovation, brought against the Dutch Government the first case in the world in which citizens argued that their government has a legal obligation to prevent dangerous climate change.

In 2019, the Dutch Supreme Court found in Urgenda's favor, ruling that the emissions reduction target set by the government was unlawfully low. It ordered authorities to further reduce emissions.

The government consequently decided to shut down coal-fired power plants by 2030 and adopted billion-euro packages to reduce energy use and develop renewable energy, among other measures.

Dennis van Berkel, Urgenda's legal counsel, accused governments of choosing climate change targets that are "politically convenient" instead of listening to climate scientists. Judges can compel them to justify that what they are doing on climate issues is enough, he said.

"Currently there is no such scrutiny at any level," he told the AP. "That is something incredibly important that the courts can contribute."

Associated Press writers Samuel Petrequin in Brussels and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen contributed to this report.

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.

With House Republicans in turmoil, colleagues implore GOP holdouts not to shut down government

By LISA MASCARO and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Working furiously to take control of a House in disarray, allies of Speaker Kevin McCarthy implored their Republican colleagues Saturday to drop their hardline tactics and work together to approve a conservative spending plan to prevent a federal shutdown.

In public overtures and private calls, Republican lieutenants of the embattled speaker pleaded with a handful of right-flank holdouts to resist further disruptions that have ground the House to a halt and back McCarthy's latest plan to keep government open before next weekend's Sept. 30 deadline for a shutdown.

Republican Rep. Garrett Graves of Louisiana said the holdouts are "absolutely hallucinating" if they think they can wrap up work without the need for a temporary measure that many of them have shunned before time runs out.

"An important part of this strategy is going to be ensuring that we do everything we can to avoid a government shutdown," Graves said after a Saturday afternoon conference call with lawmakers.

But in a sign of the deep divisions still ahead, one of the conservative holdouts, Rep. Matt Rosendale, R-Mont., walked past the McCarthy allies' news conference at the Capitol, telling reporters he remained firm in his position.

Asked if he was worried about a potential shutdown, Rosendale said: "Life is going to go on."

President Joe Biden on Saturday chided the "small group of extreme Republicans" who were threatening a shutdown in which "everyone in America could be forced to pay the price."

"If the government shuts down, that means members of the U.S. military are going to have to continue to work and not get paid," he told a Congressional Black Caucus Foundation dinner. "A government shutdown could impact everything from food safety to cancer research to Head Start programs for children. Funding the government is one of the most basic responsibilities of Congress. It's time for Republicans to start doing the job America elected them to do."

Congress had largely emptied out for the weekend as the House ground to a standstill, and the White House instructed federal agencies to begin preparing for a possible shutdown. The House Rules Committee held a rare Saturday session to begin setting up the process for next week's voting.

Time is running out for Congress to act, but McCarthy is pushing ahead with plan urged on by his right flank to start voting on some of the dozen bills needed to fund the various government departments.

Under the current strategy, the House would start voting as soon as Tuesday to advance some of the dozen bills needed to fund the government. Then, with time running short, the House would turn toward a stopgap measure to keep government open for about a month while work continues.

"Well, people have been holding back, not wanting to do anything — now is not the time," McCarthy said before an afternoon call with his Republican colleagues.

McCarthy said his message to the holdouts was: "You've got to stop that."

At issue is the House conservatives' drive to undo the deal McCarthy reached with Biden earlier this year setting government funding levels. They are insisting on the lower spending levels McCarthy promised the Republican hardliners in January during his own race to become House speaker. But that would require severe budget cuts to government services and programs even other Republicans don't want to make.

Even if McCarthy can secure Republican support to move forward next week on the first four bills for the Defense Department, Homeland Security, Agriculture and State and Foreign Operations — and it's not at all certain he has the votes to do it — it's a laborious task.

Usually it takes weeks, if not months, to process the big bills and hundreds of amendments. And once those House bills are approved, often in round-the-clock voting, they still would go for negotiations with the Senate, which has its own legislation.

One big issue for debate will be amendments to strip funding for the war in Ukraine being pushed by allies of Donald Trump, the Republican frontrunner in the 2024 race for the White House.

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As the floor debate potentially grinds on next week, McCarthy and his allies want the holdouts to be prepared to consider a stopgap measure, called a continuing resolution, or CR, to keep the government funded while talks continue.

His plan is for the CR to be at lower levels than the government currently spends, and it would include provisions important to Republicans, including to beef up border security and establish a new debt commission.

But many of the holdouts notably Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., a top Trump ally, say they will never vote for any CR — all but ensuring a shutdown, as the former president urges them on.

Exasperated McCarthy's allies used the megaphone Saturday to broadcast their case to their colleagues, and to Americans watching the standoff in Congress.

"Folks can go out there and create these imaginary solutions," Graves said. "Anyone who says that we're going to finish all 12 appropriations bills between now and Saturday is absolutely hallucinating."

The other option is for McCarthy to work with Democrats to pass a continuing resolution with their votes, and the Senate is preparing such a bipartisan measure that could be sent to the House in a matter of days.

But if McCarthy joins with Democrats, he will almost certainly face a vote from Gaetz and others for his ouster.

Associated Press writer Aamer Madhani contributed to this report.

Southern East Coast hit by flooding as Ophelia weakens to tropical depression and moves north

By BRIAN WITTE and JONATHAN MATTISE Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Residents in parts of coastal North Carolina and Virginia experienced flooding Saturday after Tropical Storm Ophelia made landfall near a North Carolina barrier island, bringing rain, damaging winds and dangerous surges.

The storm came ashore near Emerald Isle with near-hurricane-strength winds of 70 mph (113 kph), but winds weakened as it traveled north with the center of the storm crossing into Virginia by evening, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said. Ophelia is expected to sweep northeast Sunday along the mid-Atlantic coast to New Jersey.

At 7:44 p.m. EDT, the center said that Ophelia had slowed to become a tropical depression, which is a weak form of a tropical storm, and all storm surge and tropical storm warnings had been discontinued.

Still, videos from social media showed riverfront communities in North Carolina such as New Bern, Belhaven and Washington experiencing significant flooding. The extent of the damage was not immediately clear.

Winds were decreasing, and the system was expected to track toward the northeast by Sunday. "Additional weakening is expected, and Ophelia is likely to become a post-tropical cyclone tomorrow," said a Saturday night hurricane center statement.

Even before it made landfall, Ophelia proved treacherous enough that five people had to be rescued by the Coast Guard on Friday night from a boat anchored down near the North Carolina coastline.

Ophelia promises a weekend of windy conditions and heavy rain as it churns up the East Coast, with the storm moving north at about 12 mph (19 kph) as of Saturday evening. Parts of North Carolina and Virginia can expect up to 5 inches (13 centimeters) of rain, with 1 to 3 inches (3 to 8 centimeters) forecast in the rest of the mid-Atlantic region through Sunday. Some New Jersey shore communities, including Sea Isle City, had already experienced flooding Saturday.

Philippe Papin, a hurricane specialist with the National Hurricane Center, said the primary risk of the storm system over the next couple of days will be the threat of floods from the rain.

"There have been tropical storm-force winds observed, but those are starting to gradually subside as the system moves further inland," Papin said in an interview early Saturday. "However, there is a significant flooding rainfall threat for a large portion of eastern North Carolina into southern Virginia over the next

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12 to 24 hours.”

Power outages spread through more states beyond North Carolina, where tens of thousands of homes and businesses remained without electricity across several eastern counties as of Saturday afternoon, according to poweroutage.us, which tracks utility reports. A Duke Energy map showed scattered power outages across much of eastern North Carolina, as winds toppled tree limbs and snagged power lines.

“When you have that slow-moving storm with several inches of rain, coupled with a gust that gets to 30, 40 miles per hour, that’s enough to bring down a tree or to bring down limbs,” Duke Energy spokesperson Jeff Brooks told WTVD-TV on Saturday. “And that’s what we’ve seen in most of the areas where we’ve experienced outages.”

Brian Haines, a spokesperson for the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, said there were also reports of downed trees, but no major road closings.

“North Carolina Emergency Management continues to monitor the situation and to work with our county partners, who are currently not reporting any resource needs,” Haines said Saturday morning.

Five people, including three children 10 or younger, needed the Coast Guard’s help on the water when conditions worsened Friday. They were aboard a 38-foot (12-meter) catamaran anchored in Lookout Bight in Cape Lookout, North Carolina, stuck in choppy water with strong winds.

According to the Coast Guard, the sailboat’s owner called them on a cellphone, prompting a nighttime rescue mission in which the crew used flares to navigate to the five people using a Coast Guard boat, then helped them aboard and left the sailboat behind. A Coast Guard helicopter lit up the path back to the station. There were no injuries reported.

At the southern tip of North Carolina’s Outer Banks, Carl Cannon Jr. said he hopes he can salvage some of this weekend’s long-running Beaufort Pirate Invasion, a multiday event centering on the 1747 Spanish attack on the town. He said three ships battle it out and attack the shore, and “Blackbeard” even gets beheaded (though the real-life pirate was actually killed decades before the Spanish attack).

But the storm’s winds tore down the big tent for a banquet that was planned for Saturday, and several other tents were damaged or shredded. Cannon Jr. worries the financial hit will be significant, even with people helping clean up and offering to run online fundraisers.

“It’s been pretty devastating,” said Cannon Jr., CEO of the nonprofit running the event. “I’m just hoping that we somehow will be able to recover.”

Cannon Jr. also hopes that soggy, windy conditions will allow for pirate reenactors to clash Sunday in Beaufort.

“If I can get the boats out there, we will have an attack and the people will fight on the shore,” he said. Elsewhere, the impact was more modest.

Aaron Montgomery, 38, said as the rain started coming down hard on Saturday, he noticed a leak in the roof of the home his family just moved into in Williamsburg, Virginia. Still, they were able to safely make the hour-long drive for his wife’s birthday to Virginia Beach, where he said the surf and wind were strong but it had stopped raining.

“No leak in a roof is insignificant, so it’s certainly something we have to deal with Monday morning,” he said.

The governors of North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland each declared a state of emergency on Friday. It is not uncommon for one or two tropical storms, or even hurricanes, to develop right off the East Coast each year, National Hurricane Center Director Michael Brennan said.

“We’re right at the peak of hurricane season. We can basically have storms form anywhere across much of the Atlantic basin,” Brennan said in an interview Friday.

Scientists say climate change could result in hurricanes expanding their reach into mid-latitude regions more often, making storms like this month’s Hurricane Lee more common.

One study simulated tropical cyclone tracks from pre-industrial times, modern times and a future with higher emissions. It found that hurricanes would track closer to the coasts, including around Boston, New York and Virginia, and be more likely to form along the Southeast coast.

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Mattise reported from Nashville, Tennessee. AP Radio reporter Jackie Quinn in Washington and AP writers Ron Todt in Philadelphia, Sudhin Thanawala in Atlanta and Christopher Weber in Los Angeles contributed.

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Speaker McCarthy is giving hard-right Republicans what they want. But it never seems to be enough.

By STEPHEN GROVES, LISA MASCARO and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Staring down a fast-approaching government shutdown that threatens to disrupt life for millions of Americans, Speaker Kevin McCarthy has turned to a strategy that so far has preserved his tenuous hold on House leadership but also marked it by chaos: giving hard-right lawmakers what they want.

In his eight months running the House, McCarthy has lived by the upbeat personal mantra of “never give up” as he dodges threats to his speakership and tries to portray Republicans as capable stewards of the U.S. government. He has long chided Washington for underestimating him.

But with the House GOP majority in turmoil, all but certain to hurl the country into a shutdown, McCarthy has set aside the more traditional tools of the gavel to keep rebels in line. Instead, he has acceded to a small band led by those instigating his ouster, even if that means closing federal offices.

It's an untested strategy that has left McCarthy deeply frustrated, his allies rushing to his side and his grip on power ever more uncertain with the Sept. 30 deadline to fund the government a week away.

“We still have a number of days,” McCarthy said Saturday as he arrived at the Capitol.

“I think when it gets crunch time people will finally, that have been holding off all this time blaming everybody else, will finally hopefully move off,” the California Republican said. “Because shutting down — and having border agents not be paid, your Coast Guard not get paid — I don't see how that's good.”

Governing with a narrow House majority, the speaker is facing a more virulent strain of the hard-right tactics that chased the two most recent Republican speakers before him, Reps. John Boehner of Ohio and Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, into early retirement. Like them, McCarthy has tried various tactics to restore order. But more than ever, McCarthy finds himself swept along as far-right lawmakers, determined to bend Washington to their will, take control in the House.

McCarthy tried to win conservatives' support by agreeing to their demand for impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden and then by meeting their calls for spending cuts, only to be turned back whenever a few of them hold out for more concessions.

All the while, McCarthy has retreated from his budget deal with Biden months ago that established the spending threshold for the year. Instead, he is trying to reduce spending more in line with the level he promised the right flank during his tumultuous fight to become the House speaker.

Yet all the concessions seem to never be enough.

Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., who is leading the fight, crowed to reporters Thursday that, “if you look at the events of the last two weeks, things seem to be kind of coming my way.”

Gaetz said he was delivering a eulogy for short-term funding legislation known as a continuing resolution — a mechanism traditionally used to keep the government functioning during spending debates.

Democrats have been eager to lay blame for the impending shutdown on McCarthy and the dysfunction in the House. Biden has called on McCarthy to stick to the annual spending numbers they negotiated to raise the nation's borrowing limit.

“He handed over the gavel to the most extreme in his party,” said Massachusetts Rep. Jim McGovern, a senior Democrat.

With the House at a standstill and lawmakers at home for the weekend, McCarthy has turned to the plan advanced by Gaetz to start processing some of the nearly dozen annual spending bills needed to fund the various government departments and shelving for now the idea of stopgap approach while the work continues.

It's a nearly impossible task as Congress runs out of time to find a short-term spending plan.

"We can in no way pass 11 bills in eight days," said Connecticut Rep. Rosa DeLauro, the top Democrat appropriator, referring to the number of bills the House would have to approve before Sept. 30.

DeLauro, a veteran lawmaker, estimated it would take at least six weeks to pass the bills in both chambers of Congress, then negotiate them between the House and Senate. She urged Republicans to embrace a continuing resolution to allow government agencies to stay open.

Republican Rep. Patrick McHenry of North Carolina, one of McCarthy's closest allies, has pointed out that the Senate has advanced legislation at spending levels above those in the deal reached with Biden. He argues that House Republicans need to pass their own bills at the lower numbers to strengthen their hand in negotiations.

For Congress to solve the current impasse, many expect that it will take a bipartisan coalition that leaves McCarthy's right flank behind. That would be certain to spark a challenge to his leadership.

In the Senate, Democratic and Republican leaders are working on a package that would fund the government at levels far higher than the House Republicans are demanding and include emergency disaster aid and money for Ukraine, which some GOP House members oppose.

"Eventually, we're going to get something back from the U.S. Senate and it's not going to be to our liking," said Arkansas Rep. Steve Womack, a leading Republican on the House Appropriations Committee. "Then the speaker will have a very difficult decision."

Associated Press writer Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

Auto workers still have room to expand their strike against car makers. But they also face risks

By DAVID KOENIG AP Business Writer

Even after escalating its strike against Detroit automakers on Friday, the United Auto Workers union still has plenty of leverage in its effort to force the companies to agree to significant increases in pay and benefits.

Only about 12% of the union's membership is so far taking part in the walkout. The UAW could, if it chose to, vastly expand the number of workers who could strike assembly plants and parts facilities of General Motors, Ford and Stellantis, the owner of the Jeep and Ram brands.

Yet the UAW's emerging strategy also carries potentially significant risks for the union. By expanding its strike from three large auto assembly plants to all 38 parts distribution centers of GM and Ford, the UAW risks angering people who might be unable to have their vehicles repaired at service centers that lack parts.

The union's thinking appears to be that by striking both vehicle production and parts facilities, it will force the automakers to negotiate a relatively quick end to the strike, now in its second week. To do so, though, some analysts say the union might have to act even more aggressively.

"We believe the next step for UAW is the more nuclear option — going for a much more widespread strike on the core plants in and around Detroit," said Daniel Ives, an analyst with Wedbush Securities. "That would be a torpedo."

Sam Abuelsamid, an analyst at the consulting firm Guidehouse Insights, suggested that with so many workers and factories still running, the union has a number of options with which to squeeze the companies harder.

"They could add more assembly plants to the list," Abuelsamid said. "They could target more of the plants that are building the most profitable vehicles."

As examples, he mentioned a plant in Flint, Michigan, where GM builds heavy-duty pickups, and a Stellantis factory in Sterling Heights, Michigan, that produces Ram trucks.

All three companies said that talks with the union continued on Saturday, though officials said they expected no major announcements.

In Canada on Saturday, Ford workers began voting on a tentative agreement that their union said would

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increase base pay by 15% over three years and provide cost-of-living increases and \$10,000 ratification bonuses. The tentative deal was forged earlier this week, hours before a strike deadline.

The union, Unifor, said the deal, which covers 5,600 workers, also includes better retirement benefits. If the deal is ratified in voting that will end Sunday morning, the union will use it as a pattern for new contracts at GM and Stellantis plants in Canada.

In the United States, the UAW began its walkout more than a week ago by striking three assembly plants — one each at GM, Ford and Stellantis. In expanding the strike on Friday, the UAW struck only the parts-distribution centers of GM and Stellantis. Ford was spared from the latest walkouts because of progress that company has made in negotiations with the union, said UAW President Shawn Fain.

Striking the parts centers is designed to turn up pressure on the companies by hurting dealers who service vehicles made by GM and Stellantis, the successor to Fiat Chrysler. Service shops are a profit center for dealers, so the strategy could prove effective. Millions of motorists depend on those shops to maintain and repair their cars and trucks.

"It severely hits the dealerships, and it hurts the customers who purchased those very expensive vehicles in good faith," said Art Wheaton, a labor expert at Cornell University. "You just told all your customers, 'Hey we can't fix those \$50,000 to \$70,000 cars we just sold you because we can't get you the parts.'"

The more combative union has declined to discuss its strike strategy publicly. Fain has said repeatedly that a critical part of its plan is to keep the companies guessing about the UAW's next move. Indeed, the union has shown unusual discipline in sticking to its talking points.

On a picket line Friday, Fain was asked whether striking against the spare-parts centers would hurt — and potentially alienate — consumers.

"What has hurt the consumers in the long run is the fact the companies have raised prices on vehicles 35% in the last four years," he shot back. "It's not because of our wages. Our wages went up 6%, the CEO pay went up 40%."

Selling parts and performing service is highly profitable for car dealers. AutoNation reported a gross profit margin of 46% from service shops at its dealerships last year. The problem for the companies is that dealerships and other repair shops typically have lean inventories and depend on receiving parts quickly from the manufacturers' warehouses.

Mike Stanton, president of the National Automobile Dealers Association, said his members want to avoid anything that would impair customer service, "so we certainly hope automakers and the UAW can reach an agreement quickly and amicably."

To make up for the loss of striking workers, the automakers are weighing their options, including staffing the parts warehouses with salaried workers.

"We have contingency plans for various scenarios and are prepared to do what is best for our business and customers," said David Barnas, a GM spokesman. "We are evaluating if and when to enact those plans."

Similarly, Jodi Tinson, a Stellantis spokeswoman, said, "We have a contingency plan in place to ensure we are fulfilling our commitments to our dealers and our customers." She declined to provide additional details.

In negotiating with the companies, the union is pointing to the carmakers' huge recent profits and high CEO pay as it seeks wage increases of about 36% over four years. The companies have offered a little over half that amount.

The companies have said they cannot afford to meet the union's demands because they need to invest profits in a costly transition from gas-powered cars to electric vehicles. They have dismissed out of hand some of the demands, including 40 hours' pay for a 32-hour work week.

Associated Press writer Alexandra Olson in New York contributed to this report.

UNGA Briefing: There's one more day to go after a break — but first, here's what you missed

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — It's almost the end of the U.N. General Assembly high-level meeting that brings world leaders together at U.N. headquarters in New York. Here are the highlights of what happened Saturday at the United Nations and what to keep an eye on Tuesday, the last day (Monday's off for Yom Kippur).

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON SATURDAY

— Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov made no mention of his country's war in Ukraine from the dais, but was naturally asked about it in a subsequent press conference. He had harsh words for the United States and the West in both places.

— Armenia and Azerbaijan both spoke at the General Debate. Both critiqued the international community's response to the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, albeit for different reasons. Neither, interestingly, made use of the right of reply after speeches concluded Saturday night (only Iran and the United Arab Emirates did).

— As Venezuela's foreign minister spoke at the United Nations, The Associated Press visited the hotel just blocks away that's become a center for asylum-seekers from the country.

— Speech count: 30

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE LAST DAY

— Key speeches: representatives from India, Syria, North Korea, Canada and Morocco

— Canada and India's percolating diplomatic row over the killing of a Canadian citizen of Indian origin — and Sikh separatist — could burst into the General Assembly Hall, with each country's representative scheduled to speak Tuesday.

— Morocco, which recently experienced its worst earthquake in decades, is on the schedule as the very last speaker.

— The truncated last day could be extended by last-minute exercises of the right of reply. Technically, any of the 193 member states could invoke the right about any of the speeches delivered over the course of the six days. India and Pakistan have already traded words once so far, but they could go again, especially after Pakistan's interim prime minister denounced India over Kashmir in an interview with the AP.

QUOTABLE

"People will respect you naturally if you're doing well as a leader and they see your people are not suffering. You don't beg people to respect or partner with you."

— Grace Agbu, a Nigerian citizen. At the United Nations, African leaders have been clear that they want a seat at the global table, especially considering the continent's ascendance. But challenges remain, including domestic divisions and chronic corruption.

NUMBER OF THE DAY

0: Geese spotted on the placid U.N. grounds, despite signs entreating wanderers not to feed the often hostile birds.

For more coverage of this year's U.N. General Assembly, visit <https://apnews.com/hub/united-nations-general-assembly>

Menendez gains a primary opponent as calls for his resignation grow after indictment

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rep. Andy Kim of New Jersey announced on Saturday that he will run against Sen. Robert Menendez in the state's Democratic primary for Senate next year, saying he feels compelled to run against the three-term senator after he and his wife were indicted on sweeping corruption charges.

Kim's surprise announcement came as a growing number of Democrats are calling for Menendez to

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step down. Pennsylvania Sen. John Fetterman became the first Democratic senator to do so, and several members of New Jersey's congressional delegation, along with the state's Democratic governor, have said he should resign.

"This is not something I expected to do, but I believe New Jersey deserves better," Kim said in a statement. "We cannot jeopardize the Senate or compromise our country's integrity. I believe it's time we restore faith in our democracy, and that's why I am stepping up and running for Senate."

The calls for Menendez, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, come after he and his wife Nadine were indicted on Friday for using his powerful position to aid the authoritarian government of Egypt and also to pressure federal prosecutors to drop a case against a friend. The three-count indictment lists a series of bribes they were paid by three New Jersey businessmen in exchange for the corrupt acts — gold bars, a luxury car and cash.

It is the second indictment on bribery charges for Menendez — and the second time he has had to relinquish his post as the top Democrat on the Foreign Relations panel. He regained the leadership spot in 2018 after the case ended with a deadlocked jury.

The immediate calls for his resignation are a contrast from when he was first charged eight years ago, signaling that he could be in deep trouble with his party, and with his voters, as his 2024 reelection approaches.

Menendez was defiant after Friday's indictment, saying in a statement Friday evening that "I am not going anywhere." Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., announced that Menendez would have to step down as chairman per Senate Democratic caucus rules, since he has been charged with a felony. But he did not call for Menendez to step down.

In a statement on Saturday, Fetterman became the first Senate Democrat to do so, saying that his Senate colleague is "entitled to the presumption of innocence under our system, but he is not entitled to continue to wield influence over national policy, especially given the serious and specific nature of the allegations. I hope he chooses an honorable exit and focuses on his trial."

Several Democrats in New Jersey's House delegation also called on Menendez to go, including Reps. Donald Norcross, Josh Gottheimer, Frank Pallone, Bill Pascrell, Mikie Sherrill and Bonnie Watson Coleman.

"This is a sad day for our great state," said Pascrell, a senior member of the House who has served in the New Jersey delegation with Menendez for almost three decades. "The hallmark of our justice system is the presumption of innocence and the senator deserves his day in court. But given the gravity of these charges, I do not believe that Senator Menendez can continue to carry out the important duties of his office for our state."

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy also demanded Menendez's immediate resignation, saying the allegations were "so serious" that they compromise the senator's ability to serve.

Two notable New Jersey Democrats who have not called on Menendez to step down: Democratic Sen. Cory Booker, his New Jersey colleague in the Senate, and his son, Rep. Rob Menendez, who said in a statement that he has "unwavering confidence" in his father.

Authorities who searched Menendez's home last year found more than \$100,000 worth of gold bars, as well as over \$480,000 in cash — much of it hidden in closets, clothing and a safe, prosecutors say. The indictment includes photos of cash stuffed in envelopes in jackets bearing Menendez's name and of a luxury car that prosecutors say was given to the couple as a bribe from the businessmen.

Prosecutors say Menendez directly interfered in criminal investigations, including by pushing to install a federal prosecutor in New Jersey he believed could be influenced in a criminal case against a businessman and associate of the senator. He also tried to use his position of power to try to meddle in a separate criminal investigation by the New Jersey Attorney General's office, the indictment says.

Other accusations include repeated actions by Menendez to benefit Egypt despite U.S. government misgivings over the country's human rights record that in recent years have prompted Congress to attach restrictions on aid. His efforts include ghostwriting a letter to fellow senators encouraging them to lift a hold on \$300 million in aid to Egypt, one of the top recipients of U.S. government support, as well as

transmitting nonpublic information to Egyptian officials through communications with the businessmen.

Menendez responded that there was an "active smear campaign" against him.

"For years, forces behind the scenes have repeatedly attempted to silence my voice and dig my political grave," he said in a statement.

David Schertler, a lawyer for Menendez's wife, Nadine, said she "denies any criminal conduct and will vigorously contest these charges in court."

Ukraine targets a key Crimean city a day after striking Russia's Black Sea Fleet headquarters

By SUSIE BLANN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine on Saturday morning launched another missile attack on Sevastopol on the occupied Crimean Peninsula, a Russian-installed official said, a day after an attack on the headquarters of Russia's Black Sea Fleet that left a serviceman missing and the main building smoldering.

Sevastopol was put under an air raid alert for about an hour after debris from intercepted missiles fell near a pier, Gov. Mikhail Razvozhayev wrote on the messaging app Telegram. He later added that another missile fragment fell in a park in northern Sevastopol, parts of which had to be cordoned off. Ferry traffic in the area was also halted and later resumed.

Loud blasts were also heard near Vilne in northern Crimea, followed by rising clouds of smoke, according to a pro-Ukraine Telegram news channel that reports on developments on the peninsula. Crimea, illegally annexed by Russia in 2014, has been a frequent target for Ukrainian forces since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Ukraine's intelligence chief, Kyrylo Budanov, told Voice of America on Saturday that at least nine people were killed and 16 others wounded as a result of Kyiv's attack on the Black Sea Fleet on Friday. He claimed that Alexander Romanchuk, a Russian general commanding forces along the key southeastern front line, was "in a very serious condition" following the attack.

Budanov's claim couldn't be independently verified, and he didn't comment on whether Western-made missiles were used in Friday's attack. The Russian Defense Ministry initially said that the strike killed one service member at the Black Sea Fleet headquarters, but later issued a statement that he was missing.

Ukraine's military also offered more details about Friday's attack. It said the air force conducted 12 strikes on the Black Sea Fleet headquarters, targeting areas where personnel, military equipment and weapons were concentrated. It said that two anti-aircraft missile systems and four Russian artillery units were hit.

Crimea has served as the key hub supporting Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Sevastopol, the main base of Russia's Black Sea Fleet since the 19th century, has had a particular importance for navy operations since the start of the war.

Ukraine has increasingly targeted naval facilities in Crimea in recent weeks while the brunt of its summer counteroffensive makes slow gains in the east and south of Ukraine, the Institute for the Study of War said. Military experts say it is essential for Ukraine to keep up its attacks on targets in Crimea to degrade Russian morale and weaken its military.

In other developments, U.S. President Joe Biden told his Ukrainian counterpart at their White House meeting Thursday that the U.S. would give Ukraine a version of the longer-range ATACMS ballistic missiles, without specifying how many or when they would be delivered, according to two U.S. officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the matter before an official announcement.

Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and other Ukrainian leaders have long pushed the U.S. and other Western allies to provide longer-distance weapons that would enable Kyiv to ramp up its strikes behind Russian lines while themselves staying out of firing range.

The U.S. has balked so far, worried that Kyiv could use the weapons to hit deep into Russian territory and escalate the conflict. The Army Tactical Missile System, known as ATACMS, could give Ukraine the ability to strike Russian targets from as far away as about 180 miles (300 kilometers), but the U.S. also

has other variants of the missile that have a shorter range.

Elsewhere, Ukraine's military said Saturday that Russia launched 15 Iranian-made Shahed drones at the front-line Zaporizhzhia region in the southeast, as well as Dnipropetrovsk province farther north. It claimed to have destroyed 14 of the drones.

Separately, Zaporizhzhia regional Gov. Yuri Malashko said that Russia over the previous day carried out 86 strikes on 27 settlements in the province, many of them lying only a few kilometers (miles) from the fighting. Malashko said that an 82-year-old civilian was killed by artillery fire.

In the neighboring Kherson region, Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin said that a 65-year-old woman was killed on Saturday as a Russian shell struck her yard, while a 78-year-old man was hospitalized with life-threatening injuries after a Russian drone dropped explosives.

Prokudin said earlier in a separate statement that at least one person died and three other people were wounded over the previous day because of Russian shelling. Russia fired 25 shells targeting the city of Kherson, which lies along the Dneiper River that marks the contact line between the warring sides, Prokudin said.

Residential quarters were hit, including medical and education institutions, government-built stations that serve food and drinks, as well as critical infrastructure facilities and a penitentiary, he added.

In the eastern Donetsk region, where heavy fighting is ongoing on the outskirts of Bakhmut, Russian shelling killed one civilian and wounded another on Friday and overnight, local Gov. Ihor Moroz reported Saturday.

AP Diplomatic Writer Matthew Lee contributed to this report from Washington.

For more coverage of the war in Ukraine, visit: <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

Birthplace of the atomic bomb braces for its biggest mission since the top-secret Manhattan Project

By SUSAN MONTROYA BRYAN Associated Press

LOS ALAMOS, N.M. (AP) — Los Alamos was the perfect spot for the U.S. government's top-secret Manhattan Project.

Almost overnight, the ranching enclave on a remote plateau in northern New Mexico was transformed into a makeshift home for scientists, engineers and young soldiers racing to develop the world's first atomic bomb. Dirt roads were hastily built and temporary housing came in the form of huts and tents as the outpost's population ballooned.

The community is facing growing pains again, 80 years later, as Los Alamos National Laboratory takes part in the nation's most ambitious nuclear weapons effort since World War II. The mission calls for modernizing the arsenal with droves of new workers producing plutonium cores — key components for nuclear weapons.

Some 3,300 workers have been hired in the last two years, with the workforce now topping more than 17,270. Close to half of them commute to work from elsewhere in northern New Mexico and from as far away as Albuquerque, helping to nearly double Los Alamos' population during the work week.

While advancements in technology have changed the way work is done at Los Alamos, some things remain the same for this company town. The secrecy and unwavering sense of duty that were woven into the community's fabric during the 1940s remain.

James Owen, the associate lab director for weapons engineering, has spent more than 25 years working in the nuclear weapons program.

"What we do is meaningful. This isn't a job, it's a vocation and there's a sense of contribution that comes with that," Owen said in an interview with The Associated Press following a rare tour of the facility where workers are preparing to piece together plutonium cores by hand. "The downside is we can't tell people about all the cool things we do here."

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While the priority at Los Alamos is maintaining the nuclear stockpile, the lab also conducts a range of national security work and research in diverse fields of space exploration, supercomputing, renewable energy and efforts to limit global threats from disease and cyberattacks.

The welcome sign on the way into town reads: "Where discoveries are made."

The headline grabber, though, is the production of plutonium cores.

Lab managers and employees defend the massive undertaking as necessary in the face of global political instability. With most people in Los Alamos connected to the lab, opposition is rare.

But watchdog groups and non-proliferation advocates question the need for new weapons and the growing price tag.

"For some time Los Alamosans have seemed numbed out, very involved in superficial activities but there is a very big hole in the middle where thoughtful discourse might live," Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group, a nonprofit that has been challenging the lab over safety, security and budget concerns, said in an email.

Town officials are grappling with the effects of expansion at the lab, much like the military generals who scrambled to erect the secret city on the hill in 1943.

The labor market is stressed, housing is in short supply and traffic is growing. There are few options for expansion in a town bordered by the national forest, a national park and Native American land, leaving county officials to reconsider zoning rules to allow developers to be more creative with infill projects.

Still, officials acknowledge it will take time for those changes to catch up with demand and for prices to normalize in what is already one of the most affluent counties in the U.S. With the lab being the largest employer, Los Alamos also boasts the highest per-capita levels of educational attainment with many residents holding master's degrees and Ph.Ds.

Owen is originally from Peñasco, a Hispanic village in neighboring Taos County. His fascination with science was sparked by a high school field trip where he learned about explosions and implosions. It wasn't long before he landed a summer job at the lab and went on to earn engineering degrees that helped him move up through the ranks.

Los Alamos taps into regional schools as a generational pipeline. Grandfathers work as machinists. Mothers solder key components. And daughters become experts at tracking radiation.

Alexandra Martinez, 40, grew up in nearby Chimayo and is the latest in her family to work at Los Alamos. She chuckles when asked if she was born into it.

"That's what I wanted — the ability to do something great," said Martinez, a radiation control technician who is stationed at PF-4, the highly classified complex that is being transformed into a more modern plutonium pit factory.

She must pass through fencing topped with concertina wire and checkpoints manned by armed guards. The layers of security are more sophisticated than those from the Manhattan Project era, when all incoming and outgoing mail was censored and telephone calls were monitored.

Los Alamos became an open city when the security gates came down in 1957. Still, many parts — including historic sites related to the Manhattan Project — remain off limits. Tourists have to settle for selfies near the town square with the bronze statue of physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer.

Across the street, rangers at the Manhattan Project National Historical Park visitor center answer questions about where scientists lived and where parties and town halls were held. A chalkboard hangs in the corner, covered in yellow sticky notes left by visitors. Some of the hand-written notes touch on the complicated legacy left by the creation of nuclear weapons.

It's a conversation that was reignited with the release of Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer." The film put the spotlight on Los Alamos and its history, prompting more people to visit over the summer.

The attention also boosted an ongoing effort to expand the federal government's radiation compensation program to cover people in several western states, including residents in southern New Mexico where the Trinity Test of the first atomic bomb was conducted in 1945.

Aside from pressing questions about the morality of nuclear weapons, watchdogs argue the federal gov-

ernment's modernization effort already has outpaced spending predictions and is years behind schedule. Independent government analysts issued a report earlier this month that outlined the growing budget and schedule delays.

For lab managers, the task has not been easy. Modern health and safety requirements mean new constraints Manhattan Project bosses never had to contemplate. And yet, just like their predecessors, Owen said officials feel a sense of urgency amid intensifying global threats.

"What's being asked is that we all need to do better in a faster amount of time," he said.

National Cathedral replaces windows honoring Confederacy with stained-glass homage to racial justice

By PETER SMITH Associated Press

The landmark Washington National Cathedral unveiled new stained-glass windows Saturday with a theme of racial justice, filling the space that had once held four windows honoring Confederate Gens. Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson.

The new windows depict a march for justice by African Americans, descendants of the very people who would have remained in slavery after the Civil War if the side for which the officers fought had prevailed.

The cathedral had removed the old windows after Confederate symbols featured prominently in recent racist violence.

The dedication service was attended by many clergy from the Washington area's historically Black churches, as well as leaders of social justice organizations. The prayers, Bible readings and brief speeches were interspersed with gospel music and spirituals, as well as the contemporary song, "Heal Our Land."

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court, read excerpts from the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail" from 1963.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," she read from King's famed message while jailed in Alabama. "The goal of America is freedom. ... We will win our freedom." A week earlier, she had spoken at the 60th anniversary of Birmingham church bombing that killed four young Black girls.

The new windows, titled "Now and Forever," are based on a design by artist Kerry James Marshall. Stained glass artisan Andrew Goldkuhle crafted the windows based on that design.

In the new work, African Americans are shown marching — on foot or in a wheelchair — from left to right across the four windows. Some march in profile; some directly face the viewer with signs proclaiming "FAIRNESS" and "NO FOUL PLAY." Light floods in through the sky-bright panes of white and blue above the figures.

Marshall, who was born in Birmingham in 1955, invited anyone viewing the new windows, or other artworks inspired by social justice, "to imagine oneself as a subject and an author of a never-ending story is that is still yet to be told."

The setting is particularly significant in the massive neo-Gothic cathedral, which regularly hosts ceremonies tied to major national events. It is filled with iconography depicting the American story in glass, stone and other media. Images range from presidents to famous cultural figures and state symbols.

But the Lee and Jackson windows "were telling a story that was not a true story," according to the Very Rev. Randolph Marshall Hollerith, dean of the cathedral. They were installed in 1953 and donated by the United Daughters of the Confederacy,

The windows extolled generals fighting for a cause that sought to "enshrine slavery in our country for all time," Hollerith said.

He added: "You can't call yourself the National Cathedral, a house of prayer for all people, when there are windows in there that are deeply offensive to a large portion of Americans."

The cathedral has accompanied the window replacement with a number of public forums discussing the legacy of racism and how monuments were used to burnish the image of the Confederacy as a noble "Lost Cause."

The new windows will also be accompanied by a poem by scholar Elizabeth Alexander, president of the

Mellon Foundation. The poem "American Song" will be engraved beneath the windows.

"A single voice raised, then another," it says. "We must tell the truth about our history. ... May this portal be where the light comes in."

Alexander said in an interview Friday that the poem referred both to the literal light from the windows, which she said beautifully illumines the surrounding stonework, and the figurative light that "enables us to see each other wholly and in community."

The setting is important in a sanctuary that is also "a communal space, a space that tourists visit, a space where the nation mourns," Alexander said. "The story (the windows) tell is one of collective movement, of progress, of people struggling and asserting the values of fairness for all."

The old windows' removal followed the use of Confederate imagery by the racist gunman who massacred members of a Black church in Charleston, South Carolina, in 2015, and by marchers at a 2017 far-right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, that ended with a counterprotester's death.

The original windows, complete with Confederate battle flags, had depicted Lee and Jackson as saintlike figures, with Lee bathed in rays of heavenly light and Jackson welcomed by trumpets into paradise after his death. Those windows are now stored by the cathedral.

The cathedral also is the seat of the Episcopal Church's presiding bishop and Diocese of Washington.

The bishop of the diocese, the Right Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde, joined Hollerith in delivering opening remarks at the dedication.

Hollerith recalled the decision to remove the Confederate windows.

"They were antithetical to our call to be a house of prayer for all," he said, adding, "There is a lot of work yet to be done."

Biden has gotten the updated COVID-19 vaccine and the annual flu shot, the White House says

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has gotten the updated COVID-19 vaccine and annual flu shot, the White House said Saturday.

The White House physician, Dr. Kevin O'Connor, said in a memo that Biden received both shots on Friday. O'Connor said Biden, 80, also was vaccinated several weeks ago against the respiratory illness known as RSV.

"As we enter the cold and flu season, the President encourages all Americans to follow his example and to check with their healthcare provider or pharmacist to assure that they are fully vaccinated," O'Connor wrote.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention earlier this month endorsed the new COVID-19 shot for everyone 6 months and older. The severity of the COVID-19 pandemic has faded, but there are still thousands of hospitalizations and hundreds of deaths in the United States each week.

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

First lady Jill Biden tested positive for COVID-19 earlier this month but experienced only mild symptoms.

The CDC recommends that people who have COVID-19 and are in isolation should wait to get vaccinated until their symptoms are gone and isolation guidelines have been met. Children and adults who have multisystem inflammatory syndrome should wait to get vaccinated until recovering from being sick and 90 days have passed since the diagnosis, according to the CDC.

Biden tested positive for COVID-19 in July 2022 and a second time slightly more than three days after he was cleared to exit coronavirus isolation. The second incident was a rare case of "rebound" infection following treatment with an anti-viral drug.

A Black student was suspended for his hairstyle. Now his family is suing Texas officials

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — The family of a Black high school student in Texas who was suspended over his dreadlocks filed a federal civil rights lawsuit Saturday against the state's governor and attorney general, alleging they failed to enforce a new law outlawing discrimination based on hairstyles.

Darryl George, 17, a junior at Barbers Hill High School in Mont Belvieu, has been serving an in-school suspension since Aug. 31. Officials with the Houston-area school say his dreadlocks fall below his eyebrows and ear lobes and violate the district's dress code.

George's mother, Darresha George, and the family's attorney deny the teenager's hairstyle violates the dress code, saying his hair is neatly tied in twisted dreadlocks on top of his head.

Darryl George's supporters allege the ongoing suspension by the Barbers Hill Independent School District violates the state's CROWN Act, which took effect Sept. 1.

The lawsuit also alleges that Gov. Greg Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton, in their official duties, have failed to protect George's constitutional rights against discrimination and against violations of his freedom of speech and expression. George "should be permitted to wear his hair in the manner in which he wears it ... because the so-called neutral grooming policy has no close association with learning or safety and when applied, disproportionately impacts Black males," Allie Booker, the family's attorney, wrote in the lawsuit.

Spokespeople for Abbott and Paxton, both Republicans, did not immediately return emails seeking comment Saturday.

The lawsuit seeks a temporary restraining order to stop George's in-school suspension while the case is in court.

"Time to bring the fight to Barbers Hill ISD. We're going to drop the hammer of accountability in the face of racism," Candice Matthews, national minister of politics for the New Black Panther Nation and a spokesperson for George's family, said in a statement Saturday.

The lawsuit, filed in Houston federal court by George's mother, is the latest legal action taken related to the suspension.

On Tuesday, Darresha George and her attorney filed a formal complaint with the Texas Education Agency, alleging Darryl George is being harassed and mistreated by school district officials over his hair and that his in-school suspension violates the CROWN Act.

They allege that during his suspension, George is forced to sit for eight hours on a stool and that he's being denied the hot free lunch he's qualified to receive. The agency is investigating the complaint.

Darresha George said she was recently hospitalized after a series of panic and anxiety attacks brought on from stress related to her son's suspension.

On Wednesday, the school district filed its own lawsuit in state court asking a judge to clarify whether its dress code restrictions limiting student hair length for boys violates the CROWN Act.

Barbers Hill Superintendent Greg Poole has said he believes the dress code is legal and that it teaches students to conform as a sacrifice benefiting everyone.

The school district said it would not enhance the current punishment against Darryl George while it waits for a ruling on its lawsuit.

The CROWN Act, 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 have enacted a version of the act.

A federal version passed in the U.S. House last year, but was not successful in the Senate.

State Rep. Rhetta Bowers, who authored Texas' version of the CROWN Act, said Friday that George's hairstyle is protected by the new law and she called on the Barbers Hill school district to end his suspension.

"The Texas CROWN Act was passed to prevent situations like this, and it is very disappointing to see

Barbers Hill ISD attempt to find loopholes to skirt the law and perpetuate hair discrimination,” Bowers said in a statement.

George’s school previously clashed with two other Black male students over the dress code.

Barbers Hill officials told cousins De’Andre Arnold and Kaden Bradford they had to cut their dreadlocks in 2020. The two students’ families sued the school district in May 2020, and a federal judge later ruled the district’s hair policy was discriminatory. Their case, which garnered national attention and remains pending, helped spur Texas lawmakers to approve the state’s CROWN Act law. Both students withdrew from the school, with Bradford returning after the judge’s ruling.

Follow Juan A. Lozano on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter: <https://twitter.com/juanlozano70>

Meet Lachlan Murdoch, soon to be the new power behind Fox News and the Murdoch empire

By DAVID HAMILTON AP Business and Technology Writer

For Lachlan Murdoch, this moment has been a long time coming. Assuming, of course, that his moment has actually arrived.

On Thursday, his father Rupert Murdoch announced that in November he’ll step down as the head of his two media companies: News Corp. and Fox Corp. Lachlan will become the chair of News Corp. while remaining chief executive and chair at Fox Corp., the parent of Fox News Channel.

The changes make Rupert’s eldest son the undisputed leader of the media empire his father built over decades. There’s no real sign that his siblings and former rivals James and Elisabeth contested him for the top job; James in particular has distanced himself from the company and his father’s politics for several years. But Rupert, now 92, has long had a penchant for building up his oldest children only to later undermine them — and sometimes to set them against one another — often flipping the table without notice.

Given Rupert Murdoch’s advanced age, this might be his last power move. But there’s a reason the HBO drama “Succession” was often interpreted as a thinly disguised and dark satire of his family business. In Murdoch World, as in the fictional world of the Roy family, seemingly sure things can go sideways in an instant, particularly when unexpected opportunities arise.

Lachlan Murdoch has lived that first hand. Born in London, he grew up in New York City and attended Princeton, where he focused not on business, but philosophy. His bachelor’s thesis, titled “A Study of Freedom and Morality in Kant’s Practical Philosophy,” addressed those weighty topics alongside passages of Hindu scripture. The thesis closed on a line from the Bhagavad Gita referencing “the infinite spirit” and “the pure calm of infinity,” according to a 2019 article in The Intercept.

Béatrice Longuenesse, Lachlan’s thesis advisor at Princeton, confirmed the accuracy of that report via email.

After graduation, though, Lachlan plunged headlong into his father’s business, moving to Australia to work for the Murdoch newspapers that were once the core of News Corp.’s business. Many assumed he was being groomed for higher things at News Corp., and they were not wrong. Within just a few years, Lachlan was deputy CEO of the News Corp. holding company for its Australian properties; shortly thereafter, he took an executive position at News Corp. itself and was soon running the company’s television stations and print publishing operations.

Lachlan’s ascent came to an abrupt halt in 2005, when he resigned from News Corp. with no public explanation. According to Paddy Manning, an Australian journalist who last year published a biography of Lachlan Murdoch, the core problem involved two relatively minor issues on which Lachlan disagreed with Roger Ailes, who then ran Fox News.

“The real point was that Lachlan felt Rupert had backed his executives over his son,” Manning said in an interview. “So Lachlan felt, ‘If I’m not going to be supported, then what’s the point?’” Manning did not have direct access to Lachlan for his book “The Successor,” but said he spoke in depth with the people closest to his subject.

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Lachlan returned to Australia, where he has often described feeling most at home, and founded an investment group that purchased a string of local radio stations among other properties.

While he was away, News Corp. entered choppy waters. The U.K. phone-hacking scandal, in which tabloid journalists at the News of the World and other Murdoch-owned publications had found a way to listen to voicemails of the British royal family, journalistic competitors and even a missing schoolgirl, had seriously damaged the company. The fracas led to resignations of several News Corp. officials, criminal charges against some, and the closure of News of the World as its finances went south.

Manning said that the damage the scandal inflicted on News Corp. — and on both Lachlan Murdoch's father and his brother James, chief executive of News' British newspaper group at the time — helped pull Lachlan back to the company.

"He was watching the family tear itself apart over the phone-hacking scandal," Manning said. Lachlan was "instrumental in trying to circle the wagons and turn the guns outwards, and stop Rupert from sacking James."

While it took more convincing, Lachlan eventually returned to the company in 2014 as co-chairman of News Corp. alongside James.

Not long afterward, Ailes was forced out of his job at Fox News following numerous credible allegations of sexual harassment.

Lachlan Murdoch has drawn criticism from media watchdogs for what many called Fox News' increasingly conspiratorial and misinformation-promoting broadcasts. The network hit a nadir following the 2020 election when voting machine company Dominion Voting Systems sued Fox News for \$1.6 billion, alleging that Fox knowingly promoted false conspiracy theories about the security of its voting machines.

Fox settled that suit for \$787.5 million in March of this year. A similar lawsuit filed by Smartmatic, another voting-machine maker, may go to trial in 2025, Fox has suggested.

In certain respects, though, Lachlan Murdoch's behavior suggests some ambivalence about his role at News Corp. In 2021 he moved back to Sydney and has been mixing commuting and remote work from Australia ever since. "I think there's a legitimate question about whether you can continue to do that and for how long" while running companies based in the U.S., Manning said.

Associated Press climate and environmental coverage receives funding from the Quadrivium foundation, founded by James and Kathryn Murdoch. More information about AP climate initiative can be found [here](#). The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Pope Francis insists Europe doesn't have a migrant emergency and challenges countries to open ports

By NICOLE WINFIELD, SYLVIE CORBET and TRISHA THOMAS Associated Press
MARSEILLE, France (AP) — Pope Francis challenged French President Emmanuel Macron and other European leaders to open their ports to people fleeing hardship and poverty, insisting Saturday that the continent isn't facing a migration "emergency" but rather a long-term reality that governments must deal with humanely.

For a second straight day in the French port city of Marseille, Francis took aim at European countries that have used "alarmist propaganda" to justify closing their doors to migrants, and tried to shame them into responding with charity instead. He called for migrants to have legal pathways to citizenship, and for the Mediterranean Sea that so many cross to reach Europe to be a beacon of hope, not a graveyard of desperation.

The Mediterranean, Francis told Macron and a gathering of regional bishops, "cries out for justice, with its shores that on the one hand exude affluence, consumerism and waste, while on the other there is poverty and instability."

The pope's visit to the city in southern France, which drew an estimated 150,000 well-wishers Saturday, comes as Italy's far right-led government has reacted to a new wave of arriving migrants by threatening

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to organize a naval blockade of Tunisia and to step up repatriations. The French government, for its part, has beefed up patrols on its southern border to stop migrants in Italy from crossing over.

After the bishops' meeting ended, Macron and Francis held a private, half-hour meeting. They spoke about migration issues and a series of other topics, the French presidency said, adding that both leaders share a "joint will" to bring human solutions to the situation.

France is a "host country" to migrants — especially to asylum seekers — and is supporting European solidarity policies, including through financing and fighting human trafficking, the French presidency said. The Vatican provided no readout of the meeting.

Macron's centrist government has taken a harder line on migration and security issues after coming under criticism from French conservatives and the far right. With elections for the European Union's parliament set for next year, Macron is pushing for the EU to strengthen its external borders and to be more efficient in deporting individuals who are denied entry.

Macron greeted Francis on a wind-swept promenade overlooking Marseille's old port, and helped him walk into the Palais du Pharo for the Mediterranean bishops meeting. With his wife by his side, the French leader listened as a young Italian volunteer working in Greece and the bishop of Tirana, Albania, who fled to Italy during Albania's communist rule, spoke of the welcomes they received in foreign countries.

"May we let ourselves be moved by the stories of so many of our unfortunate brothers and sisters who have the right both to emigrate and not to emigrate, and not become closed in indifference," Francis said. "In the face of the terrible scourge of the exploitation of human beings, the solution is not to reject but to ensure, according to the possibilities of each, an ample number of legal and regular entrances."

Francis' two-day trip was scheduled months ago, but it is taking place as mass migration to Europe is once again making headlines. Nearly 7,000 migrants who boarded smugglers boats in Tunisia came ashore on the tiny Italian island of Lampedusa within a day last week, briefly outnumbering the resident population.

Nevertheless, Francis said talk of a migration "emergency" only fuels "alarmist propaganda" and stokes peoples' fears.

"Those who risk their lives at sea do not invade, they look for welcome, for life" he said. "As for the emergency, the phenomenon of migration is not so much a short-term urgency, always good for fueling alarmist propaganda, but a reality of our times."

In addition to Macron, the pope's audience on Saturday included European Commission Vice President Margaritis Schinas, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde and French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin, who has said France would not take in new migrants from Lampedusa.

The French president and first lady Brigitte Macron later attended Francis' final Mass at the Marseille Velodrome that drew an estimated 50,000 people and featured a giant banner of the pope hoisted up in the stands. The Vatican, citing local organizers, said 100,000 more lined Marseilles' central Avenue du Prado to cheer as his popemobile passed by.

History's first Latin American pope has made the plight of migrants a priority of his 10-year pontificate. For his first trip as pope, he traveled to Lampedusa to honor migrants who had drowned while attempting to cross the sea.

In the years since, he has celebrated Mass on the U.S.-Mexico border, met with Myanmar's Rohingya refugees and, in a visible display of his commitment, brought home 12 Syrian Muslims on his plane after visiting a refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece.

Migrants and their advocates living in Marseille, which has a long tradition of multicultural hospitality, said Francis' call for charity and paths to citizenship gave them hope that at least someone in Europe was sympathetic to their plight.

"It is a very beautiful opportunity for us," said Francky Domingo, who is part of a Marseille-based association representing migrants seeking official identification documents. "We really want the pope to be our spokesperson to the politicians because the European policy on migration is very, very repressive for us migrants."

Stephanie Tomasini, a 48-year-old Marseille resident who attended the mass, said the pope sent an important message. "We must be able to ... extend a hand and share, all of us should do that. Today, we're

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not faced with difficulties, but we could be tomorrow, and we will want someone to open the doors for us," she said.

Many faithful came from across French regions to see the pope, who last visited the country almost a decade ago. Catherine Etienne, from Brest in western France, watched Francis' parade with joy. "We are really happy to have seen the Pope. We're very moved," she said.

In his remarks, Francis also repeated his opposition to euthanasia, which he has long decried as a symptom of a "throwaway culture" which treats the elderly and infirm as dispensable. Listing euthanasia as a "social evil," he criticized supporters of assisted suicide as providing "false pretenses of a supposedly dignified and 'sweet' death that is more 'salty' than the waters of the sea."

The issue is current in France, where Macron is expected in the coming weeks to unveil a bill that would legalize end-of-life options in France. French media reported that he delayed the presentation of the measure until after the pope's visit to keep the sensitive topic from interfering.

No details of the government's proposal have been released, but several options are under consideration, including legalizing assisted suicide and euthanasia for adult patients with incurable conditions under strict conditions that guarantee their free and informed consent.

The French presidency said Francis and Macron discussed the issue during their bilateral meeting but didn't enter into the details.

Biden faces foreign policy trouble spots as he aims to highlight his experience on the global stage

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — This probably wasn't how President Joe Biden envisioned his big foreign policy week ending.

Biden spent much of the time trying to make the case to world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly as well as to Democratic donors and voters that his decades of foreign policy experience and demonstrated moral clarity set him apart from Donald Trump, the early front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination.

But just as Biden is looking to spotlight his foreign policy chops with his 2024 reelection bid heating up, he is facing a growing list of national security headaches, several of which emerged in recent days.

There is a diplomatic spat between U.S. allies Canada and India over the killing of a Sikh activist on Canadian soil, growing concern about the future of U.S. funding for Ukraine, and the indictment of the influential chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J. Each will test Biden and his administration.

Menendez and his wife were indicted Friday on federal bribery charges that allege the lawmaker provided sensitive government information and took other steps to secretly aid Egypt's government in exchange for some \$480,000 in cash, gold bars and a luxury car.

Under Senate Democratic caucus rules, Menendez was forced to step down as chairman of his committee at a moment when the administration is trying to push Congress to pass an additional \$24 billion in assistance to help Ukraine repel Russian forces in the 19-month-old war.

"It just adds to voter fatigue," said Ross Baker, a distinguished professor of political science at Rutgers University in New Jersey, speaking about the impact of the Menendez charges. "It's moments like these that popularity wears, credibility wears thin — especially with a segment of the electorate that's already cynical. No politician wants to have to compensate for something like this."

The president is also facing growing global concern that future U.S. aid for Ukraine could become captive to a looming U.S. government shutdown.

Biden on Thursday hosted Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the White House. The Ukrainian leader also visited with lawmakers on Capitol Hill to urge that the United States keep up its assistance.

Biden wants the money included in a government funding measure. But some in the most conservative wing of the Republican Party aligned with Trump are pushing for that aid to be left out of the bill. The

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vast majority of Republicans and Democrats favor continued support for Ukraine.

"I'm counting on the good judgment of the United States Congress," Biden told reporters as he and his top advisers met with Zelenskyy. "There's no alternative."

Biden has stepped up his attacks on Trump's foreign policy record, casting the former president and his close Republican allies as lackeys for Russian President Vladimir Putin. In his U.N. address, Biden also took credit for galvanizing allies to stand up to Putin and for renewing American leadership around the globe.

Biden, 80, has faced increasing skepticism about his age from voters, including some Democrats. He offered perhaps his most fulsome argument this past week about the benefits of having a veteran politician in the White House at a delicate moment for the world.

"When Russia invaded Ukraine, I knew what to do -- because I've been doing it for a long, long time," Biden told donors at a New York City fundraiser this week.

He will need that experience as he tries to navigate tensions between Canada and India over the June killing of the Indian-born Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in suburban Vancouver. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Monday that there were "credible allegations" of Indian involvement in the killing by masked gunmen of Nijjar, who had been wanted by India for years.

The claim has been dismissed by Indian officials as absurd. India on Thursday stopped issuing visas to Canadian citizens and ordered Ottawa to reduce its diplomatic presence in the country. The Canadian foreign ministry said it was adjusting its staff levels at missions in India over concerns about the safety of its diplomats.

Biden has not publicly commented on the matter. White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan on Thursday said the U.S. has had and will continue to have "high-level" contact with New Delhi on the matter.

The situation could complicate Biden's dealings with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a critical ally as Biden seeks to put greater focus on the Indo-Pacific in the face of China's growing economic might and military assertiveness.

In addition to shared concerns about China, the U.S. and India want to work more closely on the challenges posed by climate change, artificial intelligence, global supply chain resilience and other issues.

The dispute between Canada and India "will probably lead to a little bit more consternation in the U.S.-Canada relationship, but I think we're willing to risk that a little bit for the upside, which is building this relationship with India," said Richard Rossow, chair of U.S.-India policy studies at the Center for Strategic and Independent Studies in Washington.

The corruption allegations against Menendez, a fellow Democrat who plays an important role on foreign matters, is a distraction that Biden could do without.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre declined to comment Friday on the indictment.

The Biden administration hasn't always seen eye to eye with Menendez.

Last year, the senator blasted the White House after Biden administration officials visited Caracas for talks with members of Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro's government in an effort to bring home detained Americans and rebuild relations with the South American oil giant. Menendez also has been critical of the administration's efforts to resurrect the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement sealed under President Barack Obama and scuttled by the Trump administration in 2018.

John Feeley, a retired U.S. diplomat and longtime observer of Latin America, said the Menendez indictment was an "own goal" for U.S. foreign policy — using the soccer term for when players inadvertently put the ball into their own net.

"Without prejudging outcome, the indictment alone is a gift to dictators and authoritarians in Havana, Caracas and Nicaragua," said Feeley, who resigned as U.S. ambassador to Panama in 2018 over what he saw as the moral failings of the Trump administration. "They will point to all of his allegations of their corruption as standard U.S. hypocrisy by jumping to the conclusion he's guilty."

The federal government is headed into a shutdown. What does it mean, who's hit and what's next?

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The federal government is heading toward a shutdown that will disrupt many services, squeeze workers and roil politics as Republicans in the House, fueled by hard-right demands for deep cuts, force a confrontation over federal spending.

While some government entities will be exempt — Social Security checks, for example, will still go out — other functions will be severely curtailed. Federal agencies will stop all actions deemed non-essential, and millions of federal employees, including members of the military, won't receive paychecks.

A look at what's ahead if the government shuts down on Oct. 1.

WHAT IS A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN?

A shutdown happens when Congress fails to pass some type of funding legislation that is signed into law by the president. Lawmakers are supposed to pass 12 different spending bills to fund agencies across the government, but the process is time-consuming. They often resort to passing a temporary extension, called a continuing resolution or CR, to allow the government to keep operating.

When no funding legislation is enacted, federal agencies have to stop all nonessential work and will not send paychecks as long as the shutdown lasts.

Although employees deemed essential such as air traffic controllers and law enforcement officers still have to report to work, other federal employees are furloughed. Under a 2019 law, those same workers are slated to receive backpay once the funding impasse is resolved.

WHEN WOULD A SHUTDOWN BEGIN AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

Government funding expires Oct. 1, the start of the federal budget year. A shutdown will effectively begin at 12:01 a.m. if Congress is not able to pass a funding plan that the president signs into law.

It is impossible to predict how long a shutdown would last. With Congress divided between a Democratic-controlled Senate and Republican-led House, and Speaker Kevin McCarthy's hard-right conservatives looking to use the shutdown as leverage for spending cuts, many are bracing for a stoppage that could last weeks.

WHO DOES A SHUTDOWN AFFECT?

Millions of federal workers face delayed paychecks when the government shuts down, including many of the roughly 2 million military personnel and more than 2 million civilian workers across the nation.

Nearly 60% of federal workers are stationed in the department of Defense, Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security.

Federal workers are stationed in all 50 states and have direct interaction with taxpayers -- from Transportation Security Administration agents who operate security at airports to Postal Service workers who deliver mail.

Some federal offices will also have to close or face shortened hours during a shutdown.

Beyond federal workers, a shutdown could have far-reaching effects on government services. People applying for government services like clinical trials, firearm permits and passports could see delays.

Businesses closely connected to the federal government, such as federal contractors or tourist services around national parks, could see disruptions and downturns. The travel sector could lose \$140 million daily in a shutdown, according to the U.S. Travel Industry Association.

Lawmakers also warn that a shutdown could rattle financial markets. Goldman Sachs has estimated that a shutdown would reduce economic growth by 0.2% every week it lasted, but growth would then bounce back after the government reopens.

Others say the disruption in government services has far-reaching impacts because it shakes confidence in the government to fulfill its basic duties. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce warned, "A well-functioning economy requires a functioning government."

WHAT ABOUT COURT CASES, THE WORK OF CONGRESS AND PRESIDENTIAL PAY?

The president and members of Congress will continue to work and get paid. However, any members of their staff who are not deemed essential will be furloughed.

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The judiciary will be able to continue to operate for a limited time using funds derived from court filings and other fees, as well as other approved funding.

Notably, funding for the three special counsels appointed by Attorney General Merrick Garland would not be affected by a government shutdown because they are paid for through a permanent, indefinite appropriation, an area that's been exempted from shutdowns in the past.

That means the two federal cases against Donald Trump, the former president, as well as the case against Hunter Biden, the son of President Joe Biden, would not be interrupted. Trump has demanded that Republicans defund the prosecutions against him as a condition of funding the government, declaring it their "last chance" to act.

HAS THIS HAPPENED BEFORE?

Prior to the 1980s, lapses in government funding did not result in government operations significantly shuttering. But then-U.S. Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti, in a series of legal opinions in 1980 and 1981, argued that government agencies cannot legally operate during a funding gap.

Federal officials have since operated under an understanding they can make exemptions for functions that are "essential" for public safety and constitutional duties.

Since 1976, there have been 22 funding gaps, with 10 of them leading to workers being furloughed. But most of the significant shutdowns have taken place since Bill Clinton's presidency, when then-Speaker Newt Gingrich and his conservative House majority demanded budget cuts.

The longest government shutdown happened between 2018 and 2019 when then-President Trump and congressional Democrats entered a standoff over his demand for funding for a border wall. The disruption lasted 35 days, through the holiday season, but was also only a partial government shutdown because Congress had passed some appropriations bills to fund parts of the government.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO END A SHUTDOWN?

It's the responsibility of Congress to fund the government. The House and Senate have to agree to fund the government in some way, and the president has to sign the legislation into law.

Congress often relies on a so-called continuing resolution, or CR, to provide stopgap money to open government offices at current levels as budget talks are underway. Money for pressing national priorities, such as emergency assistance for victims of natural disasters, is often attached to a short-term bill.

But hardline Republicans say any temporary bill is a non-starter for them. They are pushing to keep the government shut down until Congress negotiates all 12 bills that fund the government, which is historically a laborious undertaking that isn't resolved until December, at the earliest.

Trump, who is Biden's top rival heading into the 2024 election, is urging on the Republican hardliners. If they are successful, the shutdown could last weeks, perhaps even longer.

Associated Press writers Fatima Hussein, Lindsay Whitehurst, Josh Boak and Lisa Mascaro contributed to this report.

Many states are expanding their Medicaid programs to provide dental care to their poorest residents

By MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — For months, Carlton Clemons endured crippling pain from a rotting wisdom tooth. He couldn't sleep, barely ate and relied on painkillers to get by.

The 67-year-old from Nashville, Tennessee, could not afford to see a dentist on the \$1,300-a-month his family gets in Social Security and disability payments. So he waited for the state to roll out a program this year that offers dental care to the more than 650,000 Medicaid recipients like him who are 21 and older. Tennessee is spending about \$75 million annually on the program.

"Man, I thought I had made it to heaven because the pain was over," he said after the tooth was pulled in July at the Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry. "When they did pull it out, I was so happy. I was so glad. Everything just changed after that."

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His wife, Cindy, who also is on Medicaid, has had her teeth pulled at the clinic.

Medicaid, the federal and state health insurance program for the poor, requires states to provide dental coverage for children but not adults. But with a growing recognition of the economic and health costs of poor dental health and an influx of federal pandemic dollars, six states began or expanded their Medicaid programs this year to provide coverage for adults.

Access remains difficult in many of those states with some dentists refusing to treat Medicaid patients. Even those who want to expand their practice are finding themselves caught up in red tape.

Dr. Victor Wu, the chief medical officer for Tennessee's Medicaid program, said he was pleased with the rollout of Medicaid dental benefits that started in January, but he acknowledges the state needs to build out its network and increase the participation rate among dentists.

While dental care often is seen as routine, the poor often go without any care for years or even decades. Doing so has significant costs, both to taxpayers and to those who cannot afford treatment.

One study from Texas A&M University found that treatment for preventable dental conditions represents up to 2.5% of emergency room visits, at a cost of \$2 billion a year. An additional \$45 billion is lost year in productivity in the United States annually from untreated oral disease, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"You put off care and you get sicker and then it becomes a crisis where you're missing work or you end up going to the emergency department where you get a big bill and you don't get the tooth actually taken care of," said Dr. Rhonda Switzer-Nadasdi, the chief executive officer of Interfaith Dental Clinic which has offices in Nashville and Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

"You need good teeth to have good employment," Switzer-Nadasdi said.

All states provide some Medicaid dental benefits for adults, but some limit it to only specific segments of the population, like pregnant women or those who have intellectual disabilities, or cover only emergency care, according to CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, a nonprofit that advocates for expanded dental care.

Hawaii, Tennessee, Kentucky, Michigan, Maryland and New Hampshire were the latest to begin or expand their dental coverage; they did so this year.

In New Hampshire, the state is spending \$33.4 million over 12 months to provide dental care to its 88,000 Medicaid recipients.

"There is an increasing understanding that oral health is inseparable from health care," said New Hampshire Democratic Rep. Joe Schapiro, who was the prime sponsor of the expanded dental benefits bill. "The amount of money spent on other health care problems that are related to oral health and the amount of money spent on emergency care when people can't get any kind of preventive or restorative care is not only unfortunate for those people's health but cost a tremendous amount of money."

In Kentucky, Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear pressed ahead with emergency regulations ensuring that about 900,000 Kentuckians would continue having access to dental care after the Republican-led legislature rejected his proposal.

"We are focused on removing roadblocks that prevent people from getting back into the workforce, and this program does just that," he said.

Virginia expanded its Medicaid program in 2021, budgeting \$282 million for the 2022 and 2023 fiscal years to cover dental procedures for more than a million recipients. Last year, Kansas gave dental access to nearly 137,000 Medicaid recipients at a cost of \$3.5 million in 2022 and \$1.2 million in 2023.

While advocates are welcoming these changes, Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Utah and Louisiana still only offer limited benefits.

Even as states add dental coverage, millions of beneficiaries are being culled from the Medicaid program nationwide as part of a review of eligibility, something states were prohibited from doing during the pandemic.

There are also plenty of hiccups in states that have expanded care, including Tennessee. Among the biggest is that too few dentists, especially in rural areas, are taking Medicaid patients, resulting in long waiting times and hours-long drives in search of care. Only about 15% of dentist take Medicaid in New

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Hampshire, 24% in Tennessee and 27% in Virginia.

Many dentists and groups advocating for expanded care blame Medicaid reimbursement rates. New Jersey only covers 13.3% of what a dentist normally charge, Michigan covers 17% and Rhode Island 22.4%, according to 2022 data analyzed by the American Dental Association. Illinois, New York, Ohio and Oregon each cover a little more than 28%.

Most states, though, cover between 30% and 50% with Alaska and North Dakota covering at least 55% and Delaware, 76.9%.

Dr. Heather Taylor, an assistant professor at the Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health at Indiana University, said some of Indiana's Medicaid reimbursement rates for dental have not increased since 1998.

"It's almost like we're incentivizing our dentists not to treat the ones that are in need, because we don't pay them even half of what they could get from private insurers," she said.

Tennessee Family Dental, which has four clinics in the state, has experienced overwhelming demand from Medicaid patients. Dr. Ryan O'Neill, a dentist who owns the business, said he got some 300 calls on the first day and that some of his patients have traveled from 30 minutes away or more.

He wants to hire more dentists but said it can take upward of four months to get one certified under Medicaid. He also is struggling with a Medicaid billing system that routinely rejects some claims and he said there is "a lot of inconsistency over what is approved and what is denied."

"Offices are hesitant to go in network because there's a lot of unknowns," O'Neill said. "We're still learning what the rules are and, you know, trial and error in terms of how we're supposed to deal with a particular situation."

Danielle Wilkes, a 26-year-old mother of five from Ashland, Tennessee, drove 90 minutes to see O'Neill after calling dozens of dentists in her area and finding none who takes Medicaid. Her cousin, June Renee Pentecost, also came with her for treatment.

For the past five years, Wilkes had been waiting to see a dentist after getting several teeth knocked out in a car wreck. She was told it would cost her thousands of dollars for multiple crowns, which she could not afford.

"I was mad at first but I was like there nothing she could do. I'm just going to have to wait until my kids are grown up," she said, adding that the pain often brought her to tears.

But here she was in a dental chair, her pink hair standing out against O'Neill and dental assistant Jasmine Webb in black scrubs. Afterward, the soft-spoken Wilkes said she was "just happy" to finally get the work done, even if she had to pay \$400 that Medicaid did not cover.

In a different room, Pentecost was getting examined for a root canal. It had been more than a decade since she last saw a dentist because she was deterred by the cost despite years of pain. A mother of five, she figured dental care would take away from spending on her children.

"I couldn't play with my kids because my head was hurting," she said.

The 30-year-old was relieved to get the work done but wondered why the state had not offered the benefit sooner.

"I'm hoping my pain would ease up and quit once I get my teeth fixed and then I won't have so many headaches and feel so bad," she said.

Associated Press writer Bruce Schreiner in Frankfort, Kentucky, contributed to this report.

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Today in History: September 24 Dodgers play final game in Brooklyn

By The Associated Press

Today is Sunday, Sept. 24, the 267th day of 2022. There are 98 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 24, 1957, the Los Angeles-bound Brooklyn Dodgers played their last game at Ebbets Field, defeating the Pittsburgh Pirates 2-0.

On this date:

In 1789, President George Washington signed a Judiciary Act establishing America's federal court system and creating the post of attorney general.

In 1869, thousands of businessmen were ruined in a Wall Street panic known as "Black Friday" after financiers Jay Gould and James Fisk attempted to corner the gold market.

In 1960, the USS Enterprise, the first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, was launched at Newport News, Virginia.

In 1963, the U.S. Senate ratified a treaty with Britain and the Soviet Union limiting nuclear testing.

In 1968, the TV news magazine "60 Minutes" premiered on CBS.

In 1969, the trial of the Chicago Eight, later the Chicago Seven, began. (Five were later convicted of crossing state lines to incite riots at the 1968 Democratic convention, but the convictions were ultimately overturned.)

In 1976, former hostage Patricia Hearst was sentenced to seven years in prison for her part in a 1974 bank robbery in San Francisco carried out by the Symbionese Liberation Army.

In 2001, President George W. Bush ordered a freeze on the assets of 27 people and organizations with suspected links to terrorism, including Islamic militant Osama bin Laden, and urged other nations to do likewise.

In 2013, a powerful 7.7-magnitude earthquake rocked southwest Pakistan, killing at least 376 people.

In 2015, a stampede and crush of Muslim pilgrims occurred at an intersection near a holy site in Saudi Arabia; The Associated Press estimated that more than 2,400 people were killed, while the official Saudi toll stood at 769.

In 2017, more than 200 NFL players kneeled or sat during the national anthem after President Donald Trump criticized the players' protests in a speech and a series of tweets.

In 2018, as the president and top GOP lawmakers continued an aggressive drive to rally the public behind his Supreme Court nomination, Brett Kavanaugh reiterated to Fox News that he had never sexually assaulted anyone.

In 2019, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi launched a formal impeachment inquiry against President Donald Trump; the probe focused partly on whether Trump abused his presidential powers and sought help from the government of Ukraine to undermine Democratic foe Joe Biden.

In 2020, President Donald Trump's refusal to commit to a peaceful transfer of power if he were to lose the November election drew swift blowback from both parties in Congress, with Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell saying that the winner "will be inaugurated on January 20th."

In 2022, Russian forces launched new strikes on Ukrainian cities as Kremlin-orchestrated votes took place in occupied regions of Ukraine to create a pretext for their annexation by Moscow.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Phyllis "Jiggs" Allbut Sirico (The Angels) is 81. Political commentator Lou Dobbs is 78. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Joe Greene is 77. Actor Gordon Clapp is 75. Actor Harriet Walter is 73. Songwriter Holly Knight is 67. Actor Kevin Sorbo is 65. Actor-writer Nia Vardalos is 61. Rock musician Shawn Crahan (AKA Clown) (Slipknot) is 54. Actor Megan Ward is 54. Singer-musician Marty CINTRON (No Mercy) is 52. Contemporary Christian musician Juan DeVevo (Casting Crowns) is 48. Actor Ian Bohen is 47. Actor Justin Bruening is 44. Olympic gold medal gymnast Paul Hamm (hahm) is 41. Actor Erik Stocklin is 41. Actor Spencer Treat Clark is 36. Actor Grey Damon is 36. Actor Kyle Sullivan is 35. Actor Ben Platt is 30.