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Wednesday, Oct. 4

Senior Menu: Teriyaki chicken, almond rice with peas, pineapple strawberry ambrosia, cookie, dinner roll.

School Breakfast: Cereal.

School Lunch: Super nachos.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m. (elect officers); Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

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

Chamber Board meeting at City Hall, noon.

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

Fall Planning Day and Career Expo at NSU for juniors

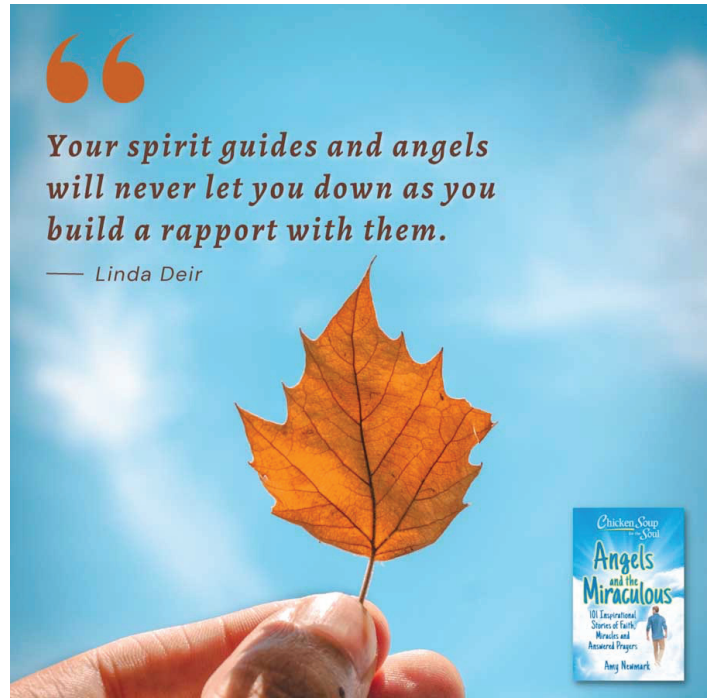
Thursday, Oct. 5

Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, Italian blend, peaches, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.

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

OPEN: **Recycling Trailer in Groton**
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.
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Your spirit guides and angels will never let you down as you build a rapport with them.

— Linda Deir

School Lunch: Sloppy joes, fries.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m. (elect officers)
Fall Picture Day
Northeast Conference cross country meet at Webster, 1 p.m.
Junior high football at Milbank, 4 p.m.
Volleyball hosts Milbank: 7th/C at 5 p.m.; 8th/JV at 6 p.m. with varsity to follow

Friday, Oct. 6

Senior Menu: BBQ pork riblet on bun, potato salad, mixed vegetables, tropical fruit.

School Breakfast: Biscuits

School Lunch: Pizza, corn.

Saturday, Oct. 7

Thrift Store open, 10 a.m. to 1 pm.
State Soccer Semifinal at Groton

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The Bulletin by Newsweek

World in Brief

18 others were injured after a bus carrying tourists crashed off an overpass near Venice in northern Italy and caught fire, city officials said.

The 2023 Nobel Prize in chemistry has been awarded to American scientists Moungi Bawendi and Louis Brus, and their Russian counterpart Alexei Ekimov for their discovery and development of quantum dots, used in LED lights, as well as by surgeons when removing cancerous tissue.

75,000 healthcare workers at Kaiser Permanente are set to strike for three days after contract talks stalled on Tuesday. If no last-minute deal is agreed, staff will walk out at 9 a.m. EST today, marking the largest healthcare strike in U.S. history.

Azerbaijan has pulled out of E.U.-mediated peace talks with Armenia, due to be held in Spain, after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said he would not be attending the summit.

Canada wants to "engage privately" with India to resolve the ongoing feud over the killing of a Sikh activist, Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said, a day after New Delhi asked the country to recall more than 40 of its diplomats.

Dish Networks has been hit with a fine of \$150,000 for failing to properly dispose of its broadcast satellites, marking the first time the Federal Communications Commission has levied a fine for space debris.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, it is "highly likely" that Russian friendly fire downed an Su-35S "Flanker M," one of Moscow's most advanced frontline fighter jets, over the southern Ukrainian city of Tokmak in late September, the U.K. defense ministry said.

What to Watch in the Day Ahead

The Powerball drawing will be held at 10:59 p.m. ET. The jackpot has reached an estimated \$1.2 billion with a cash value of \$551.7 million after no winner was declared Monday night. The drawing is the third largest and the seventh largest in U.S. Powerball history.

The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency is conducting a nationwide test of its Emergency Alert System for TVs and radios and Wireless Emergency Alerts for phones by sending a flash message "THIS IS A TEST," beginning around 2:20 p.m. ET.

ADP employment figures for September are expected to show that the labor market is losing steam, with private payrolls expected to rise by 150,000 jobs in September, down from 177,000 jobs in August. S&P and ISM services PMI and factory orders data are also on the calendar at 8:15 a.m. ET.

Pope Francis opens a global summit of bishops, known as the synod, on various issues for the Roman Catholic Church, including women in leadership roles and the attitude toward homosexuality. The meeting — which will run through October 28 — will highlight the divide between the progressives and conservatives within the Church.

Judge Arthur Engoron issued a gag order during the second day of Donald Trump's civil trial after the former president made "personal attacks" towards the judge's clerk. Trump has confirmed that he will testify "at the appropriate time."

At least five people were injured in a shooting after a homecoming event at Morgan State University, a historically Black College in Baltimore. The police urged students on campus to shelter in place and avoid the area.

At least 21 people have died, including two children and

Water rate increase, stop sign take center stage at City Council meeting

Water bills are on the rise in Groton.

The City Council approved the first reading of an ordinance to amend water rates in response to a rate increase from the town's water provider WEB Water.

"It seems like we do this every six month," said Councilman Brian Bahr.

The city was notified that WEB Water would increase their water rates in October. The WEB Water rate would go up 33 cents per 1,000 gallons of water used and 68 cents per 1,000 gallons over the contract rate, according to a letter from WEB Water presented at the council's Sept. 19 meeting.

On Tuesday, the council approved the first reading of an ordinance to increase the contract-use rate by 70 cents and the over-the-contract rate by 35 cents.

For residential and general service customers, that would mean a minimum charge of \$23.65 per month, which includes 0-2,000 gallons. The previous charge was \$22.95.

Anything over 2,000 gallons would be \$8.35 per 1,000 gallons, up from \$8 per 1,000 gallons.

"I guess we have to pass it on," Bahr said before asking the council for a motion on the ordinance.

Councilman Kevin Nehls made the first motion to approve the first reading of the ordinance. Councilwoman Karyn Babcock seconded the motion, followed by a unanimous vote by the council.

Safety, slowing down advised near Groton schools

A new stop sign is coming to town.

The council approved adding a north-south facing stop sign to the intersection of North Second Street and East Seventh Avenue.

A couple of people have approached city staff about adding some type of stop sign at the intersection north of the high school and east of the elementary school.

"They're seeing a lot more high school traffic, speeding cars, kids walking home," said Assistant Finance Officer Kellie Locke.

The council reviewed a summary of traffic accidents at the intersection from Police Chief Stacy Mayou. In a letter to the council, Mayou wrote there have been four accidents at that intersection in the last 20 years, and one accident 85 feet west of the intersection.

"I wouldn't consider those numbers to indicate a high accident rate at that intersection," he wrote. "You're looking at one accident on the average of every five years."

Council members were hesitant about the issue early in discussion about it.

"I think we all know what happened last time we put up stop signs," said Councilman Brian Bahr. "...I guess if it saves one kid from getting hit, it's worth it."

Councilwoman Shirley Wells suggested enforcing traffic fines more heavily on that street, as it might get the message across to high school students driving down the street toward the high school.

The council floated the idea of moving the temporary stop sign used during the summer at the swimming pool to the intersection. However, council members were hesitant because North Second Street is more narrow than North Main Street.

Councilwoman Karyn Babcock said she doesn't live in that area and doesn't see the traffic day-to-day, but a stop sign may get a high schooler to slow or stop near the schools.

"I guess we should throw up some stop signs and see what happens," she said.

Babcock made the motion to add stop signs facing north and south on North Second Street, with Councilman Jason Wambach seconding the motion.

"I'm going to get so many calls tomorrow," Babcock said.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

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Surplus items sold

The council opened bids for items declared surplus in early September.

The city received three bids for three zero-turn mowers. Two were from Trent Anderson for two separate mowers at \$55.50 each, and one bid at \$150 for all three mowers from Dustin Cooper.

Councilwoman Karyn Babcock asked how the council could accept one bid for all three mowers at \$50 per mower, while there were other bids for individual mowers at a higher price, but only for two of the mowers.

City Attorney Drew Johnson advised the council to accept the bid that would bring the most money to the city, which would be the \$150 bid for all three mowers.

Councilwoman Shirley Wells added, "If it was thousands of dollars, I would question it, but it's only \$50."

The council also opened bids for a 1988 GMC Sierra single-axle truck and a 1940s Allis Chalmers road grader.

Cody Monson had the highest bid for the GMC Sierra at \$5,800, followed by Jerry Johnson with a \$2,259 bid, Greg Bonn with a \$2,023 bid and Dylan Anderson with a \$1,000 bid.

Jerry Johnson had the highest bid for the 1940s Allis Chalmers road grader at \$2,555.50, followed by Dylan Anderson with a \$600 bid.

The council voted to award the highest bidders – Cody Monson for the GMC Sierra, Jerry Johnson for the Allis Chalmers and Dustin Cooper for the three mowers – the purchase of the equipment.

No bids were received for three booster pumps also declared surplus.

- City staff are working to spread the word about sump pump ordinance changes, including fines residents who violate the ordinance may face. Wastewater Superintendent Dwight Zerr presented a draft letter to be sent to residents warning them that those violating the ordinance that was amended earlier this year may be liable for a fine of up to \$500 per day. "It's something that is going to be strictly enforced," he said.

- The council discussed options for improving the skating rink on the west side of town south of the soccer fields. Councilwoman Babcock went through some ideas previously presented, including laying down sand or clay, scraping down the rink before filling the area with water or bringing in a tarp to reduce water drainage. "I want to try tarping it, at least for one year," she said. "Sioux Falls didn't have success with the tarp, but I feel like in order to make this, 'We tried. We made an effort.' ... at least if it flops, we tried and we can try something else next." Councilman Kevin Nehls was hesitant about some of the options, as "I'm afraid we're going to make something worse." The skating rink is set to come back to the council at its next meeting.

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Szybinska and Thompson Rally Wolves in 5-Set Victory from UMary

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 3, MARY 2

Records: NSU 13-3 (5-2 NSIC), MARY 4-11 (0-7 NSIC)

Attendance: 561

HOW IT HAPPENED

The Marauders and Wolves traded set victories in the first four sets with UMary recorded 25-20 and 29-27 wins in the first and third, and Northern recording 25-20 wins in both the second and fourth sets

NSU tallied solid defensive play in the decisive set, holding MARY to a -0.143 attack percentage with just two kills

Ultimately Northern recorded a match high 71 kills, 68 assists, and 85 digs, adding seven aces and six blocks

The offense recorded more kills than the Marauders in each of the five sets

Three Wolves recorded double figure kills offensively and four notched double figure digs defensively

Natalia Szybinska had a career evening with 25 kills, hitting .400

Abby Meister and Keri Walker led the defensive effort with 24 and 23 digs respectively, while Walker dished out 53 assists and led the team with three aces

Abby Brooks and Szybinska led the net defense with four and three blocks apiece

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Natalia Szybinska: 25 kills (career high), .400 attack%, 3 blocks

Hanna Thompson: 13 kills, 2 blocks, 2 digs

Morissen Samuels: 10 kills

Keri Walker: 53 assists, 23 digs, 3 aces

Reese Johnson: 13 digs, 7 assists, 1 ace, 1 kill

Sara Moberg: 13 digs, 5 assists, 2 aces

Abby Brooks: 4 blocks, 9 kills

UP NEXT

Northern continues their split week road trip on Saturday against Minnesota State. First serve is set for 11 a.m. versus the Mavericks.



Girls soccer team advances to state semifinals

The Groton Area girls soccer team posted a 4-0 win over St. Thomas More in the state soccer quarterfinals. The game was played in Groton Tuesday afternoon. Laila Roberts scored with 26:47 left in the first half, McKenna Tietz scored with 34:36 left in the second half. Jerica Locke scored on a penalty kick with 21:52 left and Brooklyn Hanson scored with 15:56 left in the game. Groton will host the next round on Saturday.

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Avantara Groton, Bahr Spray Foam, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, BK Custom T's & More, Blocker Construction, Farmers Union Co-op Assoc., Groton Dairy Queen, Groton Ford, Locke Electric, Lori's Pharmacy, Love to Travel by Becah Flihs, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., Northern State University, Rix Farms / F&M Farms, Weismantel Agency



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

U.S. House votes to remove McCarthy as speaker; SD's Johnson calls move a 'huge error'

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT, ARIANA FIGUEROA AND ASHLEY MURRAY - OCT. 3, 2023 4:26 PM

WASHINGTON — Dissident Republicans in the U.S. House voted with Democrats on Tuesday to oust Kevin McCarthy as speaker, a historic move that came just nine months after he secured the gavel following days of negotiating with the GOP's right flank and 15 rounds of voting.

It wasn't immediately clear after the vote how the House would proceed in the coming days, having entered uncharted territory. No speaker has ever before been removed by the House. North Carolina Rep. Patrick McHenry was named speaker pro tem until the election of a new speaker, and he sent the House into a recess.

The 216-210 vote on a motion to vacate, which Florida Republican Rep. Matt Gaetz filed Monday evening, capped off months of growing dissent among a small group of House Republicans.

Republican Reps. Andy Biggs of Arizona, Ken Buck of Colorado, Tim Burchett of Tennessee, Eli Crane of Arizona, Gaetz, Bob Good of Virginia, Nancy Mace of South Carolina and Matt Rosendale of Montana voted to remove McCarthy.

They also voted against tabling the motion, which took place just before the vote and would have stopped the process from moving forward.

Warren Davidson of Ohio, Cory Mills of Florida and Victoria Spartz of Indiana voted against tabling, but for keeping McCarthy as speaker.

All House Democrats present voted to declare the office of the speaker vacant.

Immediately after the House was declared in recess Republicans crowded McCarthy for handshakes, hugs and pats on the back.

Only three motions to vacate in history

So far, there have only been three instances where a motion to vacate was filed, one in March 1910, one in July 2015 and the one this month.

McCarthy said before the vote that he was calling Gaetz's bluff, though he appeared to accept he would be ousted as speaker.

"At the end of the day, if you throw a speaker out that has 99% of their conference, that kept the government open and paid the troops — I think we're in a really bad place for how we're going to run Congress," McCarthy said.

The California Republican said he believed his support for passing a bipartisan short-term spending bill on Saturday, preventing a partial government shutdown, was the "right decision."

"I stand by that decision and at the end of the day, if I have to lose my job over it, so be it," McCarthy said. "I'll continue to fight."

McCarthy excoriated

Gaetz and other hard-line conservatives have publicly rebuked McCarthy for not holding to a private deal he struck with them in January in order to secure the speakership.

The group of GOP lawmakers, some of whom are in the Freedom Caucus, have lamented McCarthy striking an agreement with President Joe Biden in May to avoid a default on the nation's debt and for relying on Democratic votes to pass the short-term government spending bill.

Gaetz, speaking Monday on the floor, called on McCarthy to detail whether he had brokered a private deal with Biden to hold a vote on legislation that would provide additional aid to Ukraine in its fight against

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the Russian invasion. He also criticized McCarthy for reportedly adding border security to those talks.

"I get that a lot of folks might disagree with my perspectives on the border or Ukraine," Gaetz said. "But could we at least agree that no matter how you feel about Ukraine or the Southern border, they each deserve the dignity of their own consideration and should not be rolled together."

House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries released a "Dear Colleague" letter just before the vote announcing House Democrats would vote to vacate the chair.

"Given their unwillingness to break from MAGA extremism in an authentic and comprehensive manner, House Democratic leadership will vote yes on the pending Republican Motion to Vacate the Chair," Jeffries wrote.

The group of Republican dissenters who voted to remove McCarthy represents a small fraction of the House Republican Conference, many of whom backed McCarthy on the floor Tuesday and defended his record.

SD's Johnson slams 'middle school grudges'

"He's being punished because he did the right thing on Saturday and made sure that the government didn't shut down, and we bought more time to continue the appropriations process," GOP Rep. Tom Cole of Oklahoma told reporters.

Cole offered the motion to table on behalf of McCarthy.

Arkansas GOP Rep. Steve Womack told reporters before the vote the motion to vacate was a distraction and a "fool's errand."

Womack, who sits on the Appropriations Committee, said Republicans should focus on clearing all 12 appropriations bills before the new mid-November deadline.

"We just took the country to the brink of a shutdown for the purpose of what? Moving the rest of our appropriation bills," Womack said. "We need to finish our work, and the only way to do that is to pass the rule and get these bills across the floor and move to the Senate in conference."

Rep. Dusty Johnson of South Dakota told reporters Gaetz's push for a motion to vacate showed there are "middle school grudges" against McCarthy.

"I think that Matt (Gaetz) is making a huge error," Johnson said. "I think America is gonna be less well off because of his efforts. I think chaos has not served this country."

Republican Rep. Stephanie Bice of Oklahoma told reporters she was skeptical of the motivations some have stated for removing McCarthy as speaker.

"This isn't about the appropriations process, and don't be fooled. (Gaetz) wants to talk about the fact that we should have been doing our (appropriations) work in August. Look, it didn't happen. So now is the time, and instead of focusing on that for the next 43 days, we're going to be focusing on this," Bice said.

GOP Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania told reporters that Republicans should focus on clearing legislation to fully fund the government and work on getting aid to Ukraine.

"If we vacate the chair, the government will shut down, our credit rating will go down, interest rates will go up," Fitzpatrick said. "Ukraine will be victimized and lose that war to Russia. That is what is at stake here."

Democrats cheer behind closed doors

Democrats huddled behind closed doors for nearly 90 minutes Tuesday morning to plot a path forward and allow members to speak for up to one minute about the motion to vacate. Rounds of applause and some cheering could be heard from the hallway outside the meeting.

Democratic lawmakers said after the meeting that McCarthy hadn't built trust.

New Hampshire Democratic Rep. Annie Kuster told reporters the party had "unity of purpose" ahead of the vote.

"What has happened that all of you have witnessed and the American people have witnessed is that the current speaker has chosen to cater to a very extreme element that, in my view, it's sort of a post-truth world," Kuster said. "I think you can see that within his own caucus, but you can certainly see it in the way he's treated us and the American people."

Congressional Progressive Caucus Chair Pramila Jayapal, a Washington state Democrat, told reporters

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that the House GOP could “wallow in their pigsty of incompetence and inability to govern.”

Jayapal said that Republican infighting about who their speaker should be was not an issue that Democrats felt the need to solve. She also noted that McCarthy has repeatedly broken trust with Democrats, making the party reluctant to help him keep the speakership.

“Nobody trusts Kevin McCarthy, and why should we? He has broken his commitment over and over again,” Jayapal said.

McCarthy, Jayapal said, has made a series of decisions that have eroded any support he would have had from Democrats. Those include his public comments following the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol by pro-Trump rioters, his decision to walk away from a spending agreement he and Biden brokered earlier this year and his decision to withhold bringing a bill to the floor that would provide additional aid to Ukraine.

“Kevin McCarthy stood on the House floor and said one thing and then talked to Donald Trump and immediately did something else,” Jayapal said. “He has supported the insurrectionist president that enabled January 6 to happen and tried to obstruct the peaceful transfer of power.”

Jeffries, a New York Democrat, told reporters before the vote the party would “continue to put people over politics and to fight to make life better for everyday Americans.”

“From the very beginning that has been our objective and it will continue to be our sole focus,” Jeffries said. “We encourage our Republican colleagues, who claim to be more traditional, to break from the extremists.”

Jeffries said that Democrats were “ready, willing and able to work together with GOP lawmakers.

“But it is on them to join us to move the Congress and the country forward,” Jeffries said.

Following the vote to remove McCarthy, Jeffries called the ouster “a solemn moment for the country and the House of Representatives.”

“The Constitution gifted us a government of the people, by the people and for the people. House Democrats will continue to put people over politics and work together in a bipartisan way to make life better for everyday Americans. It is our hope that traditional Republicans will walk away from MAGA extremism and join us in partnership for the good of the country,” Jeffries said in a statement.

Rep. Richard Neal, a Massachusetts Democrat, told reporters after the closed-door meeting there wasn’t “a lot of goodwill in that room for Kevin McCarthy.”

“If you’re gonna negotiate, you have to negotiate with somebody you can trust who can actually keep their word,” Neal said. “And there’s not been a lot of evidence that Kevin McCarthy has kept his word along the way.”

Disputes over spending, Ukraine

Just hours before a shutdown would have begun this weekend, Congress approved a short-term bill to fund the government until Nov. 17. The House passed the stopgap measure in a 335-91 vote, with 90 Republicans opposing it. Senators approved the bill 88-9, with nine Republicans opposed.

The deal didn’t include additional funding for Ukraine, though Biden said Sunday that he and McCarthy agreed to find the votes needed to pass a supplemental package with military assistance and humanitarian relief for the war-torn country as it resists further invasion by Russia.

The stopgap funding bill to avert a government shutdown was not the only time McCarthy worked with Democrats to avert financial calamity. In May the speaker brokered a deal with Biden to raise the debt ceiling and keep the U.S. from defaulting on its loans.

The deal, signed into law as the Fiscal Responsibility Act, included agreed-upon spending levels for the fiscal year that began Oct. 1.

McCarthy has been unable to unify his far-right members around the established spending levels during this year’s appropriations process, bringing the federal government within hours of a partial shutdown.

House lawmakers on the far-right of the spectrum have been browbeating McCarthy since before he took the gavel.

McCarthy’s path to the speakership in January took 15 ballots as more than a dozen far-right conservatives blocked him during a four-day stalemate.

The California Republican won on the 15th ballot after several concessions to the ultra-conservative wing of his party, including a change to the motion to vacate that will allow any one member to essentially call for a no-confidence vote on the speaker.

McCarthy also reserved spots on key committees for far-right members and entered a handshake deal with members of the House Freedom Caucus, promising to cut spending levels.

Samantha Dietel contributed to this report.

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

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

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

State says 2023 Buffalo Roundup set attendance record

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - OCTOBER 3, 2023 5:24 PM

A record 22,590 visitors attended the 58th annual Buffalo Roundup at Custer State Park on Friday morning, according to the state Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

The previous record was 22,078 visitors set in 2015 during the 50th anniversary event.

This year, 60 horseback riders wrangled the herd of 1,500 bison into the corrals for their annual health check.

Custer State Park also hosted its three-day arts festival in conjunction with the Buffalo Roundup.

The annual roundup serves as a tool to help manage the park's buffalo herd. Approximately 500 bison will be sold at the park's annual auction on Nov. 4.

Summit will make new pipeline permit application in South Dakota

BY: JARED STRONG - OCTOBER 3, 2023 4:59 PM

It could take more than a year for Summit Carbon Solutions to get approval for its proposed carbon dioxide pipeline in South Dakota.

That's because the company, which was denied a pipeline permit by utility regulators in that state last month, will reapply after it identifies a new route that complies with county ordinances.

"Moving forward, we are committed to working with the counties in South Dakota to find a mutually agreeable path through each county," said Sabrina Zenor, a spokesperson for the company. "This means working within ordinances regarding applicability of waivers, etc. and more dynamic conversations around routing."

Summit applied for a permit to construct a carbon dioxide transmission pipeline in that state in February 2022. The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission denied the application about 19 months later in September, citing the route's conflicts with ordinances in four counties.

Summit had asked the commission to overrule those ordinances but withdrew that request after the commission upheld the ordinances in regard to another pipeline proposal by Navigator CO2. That company has since suspended its negotiations for land easements in South Dakota and requested to suspend its permit process in Iowa.

Both companies have sought permission to build multistate pipeline systems to transport captured carbon dioxide from ethanol plants and other facilities. South Dakota is crucial for Summit's proposal because it has eight of the 31 ethanol plants that would connect to Summit's system and because it is a link between North Dakota and most of the remaining plants in Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska. The company plans to sequester the greenhouse gas underground in North Dakota.

South Dakota law allows counties to adopt restrictions on the pipelines, but state regulators can overrule them if they are "unreasonably restrictive."

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The state has four counties — Brown, McPherson, Minnehaha and Spink — that have adopted ordinances that require the pipelines to be certain distances from residences, livestock facilities, nursing homes and other buildings. But they also have exceptions to those restrictions in some cases if county officials and landowners approve of them.

“We issue conditional use permits for lots of things that people don’t like,” said Scott Anderson, director of planning and zoning for Minnehaha County. “I don’t think it was the intent of the county commission to set up an ordinance to block anything. ... It is a complicated situation with lots of people having strong emotions.”

Summit has begun discussions with Minnehaha and other counties to plot a new route. A company representative who spoke to county officials in Brown “basically said, ‘We’re starting at ground zero, we have to look at it like we don’t have a route,’” according to Scott Bader, planning and zoning director for Brown County.

Tracey Millar, zoning administrator for Spink County, said the company is seeking the county’s input on its route and has indicated it is moving the pipeline path farther away from people who oppose the project.

A Spink ordinance precludes the pipeline from being built within a half mile of a property line of a residence, but it can be built closer if the owner signs a waiver.

It’s unclear when Summit might reapply for a South Dakota permit.

“We plan to refile our application once we have a path through the state,” Zenor said.

State law requires the Public Utilities Commission to make a decision about permit requests within a year of the application. Summit’s first permit request took longer because the company sought a deadline extension for submitting its evidence and updating its application.

Company takes different approach in North Dakota

Summit has renewed its request with North Dakota utility regulators to nullify the effects of two county ordinances that restrict the placement of its proposed carbon dioxide pipeline.

The company recently filed the motion with that state’s Public Service Commission, which denied its permit request in August. At that time, the commission did not issue a ruling about the county ordinances because it was denying the permit for other reasons.

The commission has since agreed to reconsider the company’s permit request, and Summit wants a ruling on the ordinances before any further hearings are held for the reconsideration.

“This threshold issue will affect the evidence presented in the upcoming hearing by both (Summit) and intervenors, and thus a pre-hearing decision will save both the parties and the commission time and resources,” wrote Lawrence Bender, an attorney for Summit.

The company has argued that the Burleigh County and Emmons County ordinances are so restrictive that they prevent any possible pipeline route through them. It further points to part of state law that says: “Except as provided in this section, a permit for the construction of a gas or liquid transmission facility within a designated corridor supersedes and preempts any local land use or zoning regulations.”

Opponents of the pipeline route argue that other elements of the law — and the intent of legislators who adopted it — give counties a right to restrict the siting of pipelines. They also say Summit is exaggerating the effects of the ordinances.

It’s unclear when state regulators will rule on Summit’s request. They have not yet scheduled a new hearing to reconsider the company’s proposal, which is being modified to allay some of the concerns about the route.

Permit hearing continues in Iowa

An evidentiary hearing for Summit’s hazardous liquid pipeline permit request in Iowa began its seventh week on Tuesday with the Iowa Utilities Board.

Landowners who have declined to give Summit land easements to build its pipeline — and who are subject to eminent domain requests — testified about their concerns about the project. That included safety threats posed by pipeline ruptures, damage to farmland, potential inability to get liability insurance and other concerns.

Their testimony was scheduled to continue Wednesday and Thursday.

Also on Tuesday, the IUB granted Navigator's request to suspend its permit proceedings. The company wants to pause its process in Iowa until Illinois utility regulators decide whether to approve the project in that state, which is where Navigator plans to sequester carbon dioxide.

The Sierra Club of Iowa resisted Navigator's request to cancel a meeting next week to discuss the project. The IUB was poised to hold a scheduling conference to help determine a timeline for the remainder of the company's permit process.

The Sierra Club argued the meeting should be used for a public update on the status of the project.

"The landowners impacted by Navigator's project, the public, and for that matter, the board, deserve to know the facts surrounding the status of the Navigator project," wrote Wally Taylor, a Sierra Club attorney. "There has been some indication that Navigator is dropping the portion of its proposed project in South Dakota, and even some portions of the project in northwest Iowa. But Navigator has been less than transparent about the situation."

The IUB denied Taylor's request for the meeting because it "would not provide substantive information."

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

Jared Strong is the senior reporter for the Iowa Capital Dispatch. He has written about Iowans and the important issues that affect them for more than 15 years, previously for the Carroll Times Herald and the Des Moines Register. His investigative work exposing police misconduct has notched several state and national awards. He is a longtime trustee of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council, which fights for open records and open government. He is a lifelong Iowan and has lived mostly in rural western parts of the state.

McCarthy abandons another bid for U.S. House speaker, votes on spending bills canceled

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - OCTOBER 3, 2023 8:58 PM

WASHINGTON — California Republican Rep. Kevin McCarthy announced Tuesday evening he will not try to become speaker for a second time, ending his tenure holding the gavel after eight GOP lawmakers and Democrats voted to remove him from leadership.

"I will not run for speaker again. I'll have the conference pick somebody else," McCarthy said. "I hope you realize that every day I did the job regardless of whether you underestimated me or not."

The California Republican said he "wouldn't change a thing" about how he ran the House during the nine months he was speaker.

A few minutes before a McCarthy press conference began, House Republican leaders announced they were canceling votes for the rest of the week and that the chamber will meet in session again at a time to be announced. The House was supposed to debate two spending bills later this week, one for programs at the Energy Department and one that would fund the Legislative Branch, including Congress.

McCarthy argued during the press conference that Florida Republican Rep. Matt Gaetz did not file the motion to vacate on Monday evening out of genuine concern for the direction the House GOP was heading.

"Look, you all know Matt Gaetz. You know, it was personal. It had nothing to do about spending," McCarthy said. "It all was about getting attention from you. I mean, we're getting email fundraisers from him as he's doing it."

McCarthy said Gaetz's conduct was "not becoming of a member of Congress."

The next speaker

House Republicans could vote to name a new speaker as soon as next week. McCarthy said he might endorse someone in that race, though he said he didn't yet know who would run.

The remaining House GOP leadership team includes Majority Leader Steve Scalise of Louisiana, Whip Tom Emmer of Minnesota and conference chair Elise Stefanik of New York.

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North Carolina Republican Rep. Patrick McHenry, a close McCarthy ally, was named Tuesday as the speaker pro tempore. He will likely hold that role until the chamber elects another speaker.

Other members of the House Republican Conference can run for the role of speaker as well, though they'll need to secure the support of nearly all of the 221 Republicans in the House.

One of the more challenging tasks for the next House speaker will be figuring out a path forward on the annual government funding process ahead of a Nov. 17 deadline set in the stopgap spending bill passed last weekend, the same bill that led in part to McCarthy's downfall.

The Republican controlled House, Democratically controlled Senate and President Joe Biden must reach agreement on all 12 of the full-year spending bills before then, or pass another short-term spending bill. If that doesn't happen, a partial government shutdown would begin.

One significant challenge for the next speaker will be deciding whether to abide by the spending levels for defense and domestic discretionary programs that McCarthy and Biden brokered during debt limit talks.

Both chambers approved those spending levels with broad bipartisan votes, but the House has written its bills tens of billions of dollars below those levels and loaded them up with conservative policy language that Democrats say is a nonstarter.

McCarthy press conference

McCarthy's decision not to seek re-election as speaker was announced during a freewheeling, 45-minute press conference inside the U.S. Capitol where he rebuked lawmakers who voted against him and told stories about private conversations he's had with both Republican and Democratic lawmakers.

That press conference began just hours after eight dissident Republicans and the chamber's Democrats voted to remove McCarthy as speaker, the first time in history such a move had been successfully made against a speaker.

Republican Reps. Andy Biggs of Arizona, Ken Buck of Colorado, Tim Burchett of Tennessee, Eli Crane of Arizona, Gaetz, Bob Good of Virginia, Nancy Mace of South Carolina and Matt Rosendale of Montana voted to remove McCarthy as speaker.

The vote to eject McCarthy came about nine months after he was elected to the role, following 15 rounds of voting over several days. McCarthy secured the votes needed after brokering an agreement with several of the party's especially conservative members.

Several of those members claimed during the last few weeks that McCarthy wasn't abiding by that agreement. They also rebuked him for passing the short-term spending bill last weekend that wouldn't have gotten through the House without Democratic votes.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, said in a written statement that McCarthy has his "sincere thanks for his service to our nation in what is often a thankless role."

"I am particularly grateful to the Speaker for our close working partnership," McConnell said. "As Congressional Republicans continue the essential work begun during his tenure, Speaker McCarthy's unapologetic patriotism and unshakeable optimism will remain a valuable guide."

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a written statement that Biden "hopes the House will quickly elect a Speaker."

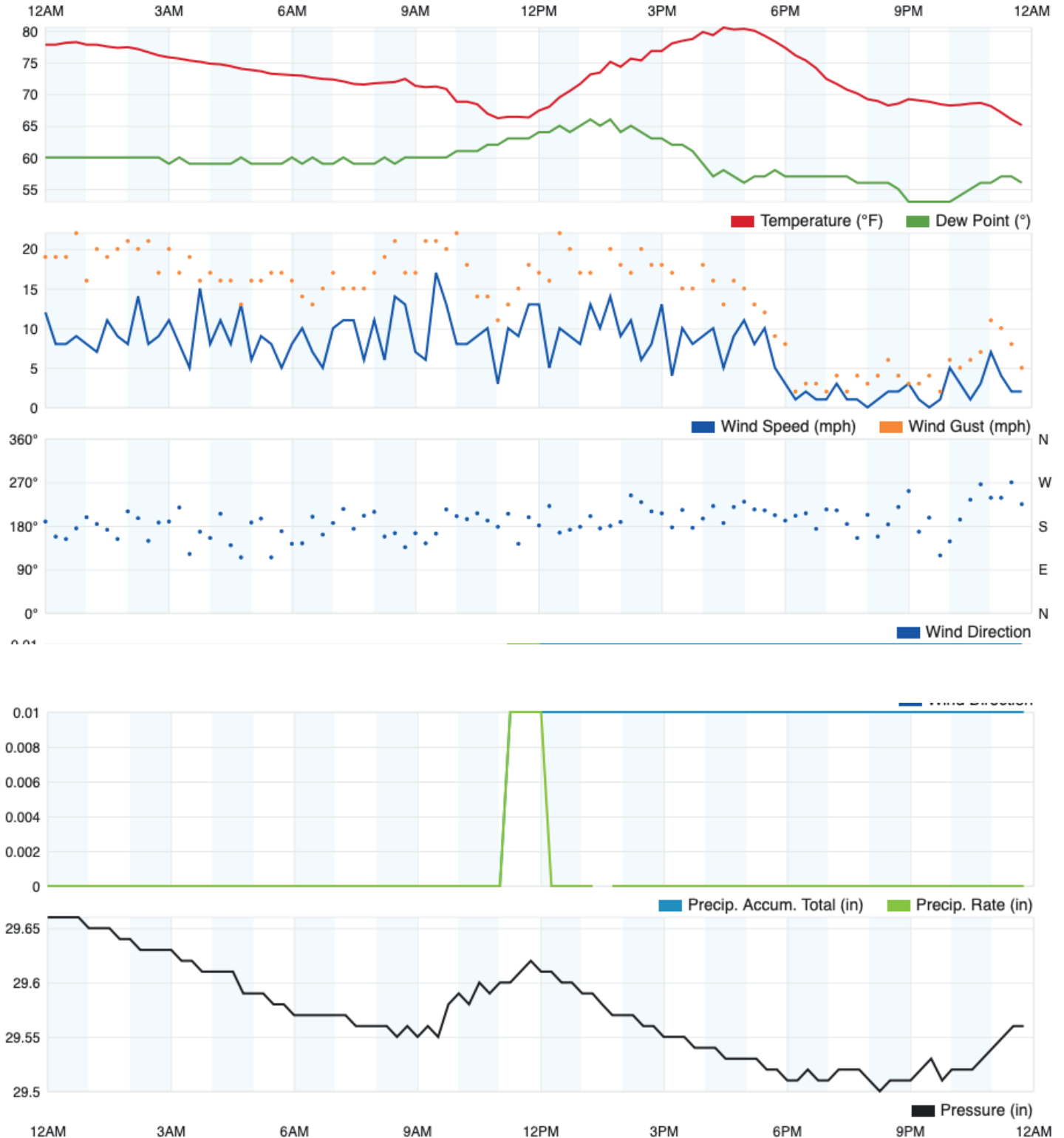
"The American people deserve leadership that puts the issues affecting their lives front and center, as President Biden did today with more historic action to lower prescription drug prices," Jean-Pierre said. "Once the House has met their responsibility to elect a Speaker, he looks forward to working together with them and with the Senate to address the American peoples' priorities."

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

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Day	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
Date	Oct 4	Oct 5	Oct 6	Oct 7	Oct 8	Oct 9	Oct 10
Icon							
High	67°F	58°F	48°F	54°F	64°F	67°F	64°F
Low	49°F	38°F	30°F	34°F	39°F	43°F	46°F
Wind Dir	WNW	W	NW	W	S	SE	S
Wind Spd	17 MPH	26 MPH	21 MPH	10 MPH	9 MPH	10 MPH	12 MPH
Humidity			20%				



Rest of the Week

Today

Highs: 64 - 69 °F

Lows: 45 - 49 °F



Thursday

Highs: 57 - 62 °F

Lows: 33 - 39 °F

windy



Friday

Highs: 46 - 52 °F

Lows: 27 - 35 °F

windy, chance of showers early



Temperatures will be cooling through the rest of the week culminating in almost 20 degree below normal highs on Friday. Expect strong, gusty winds on Thursday and Friday with 35+ mph gusts possible.

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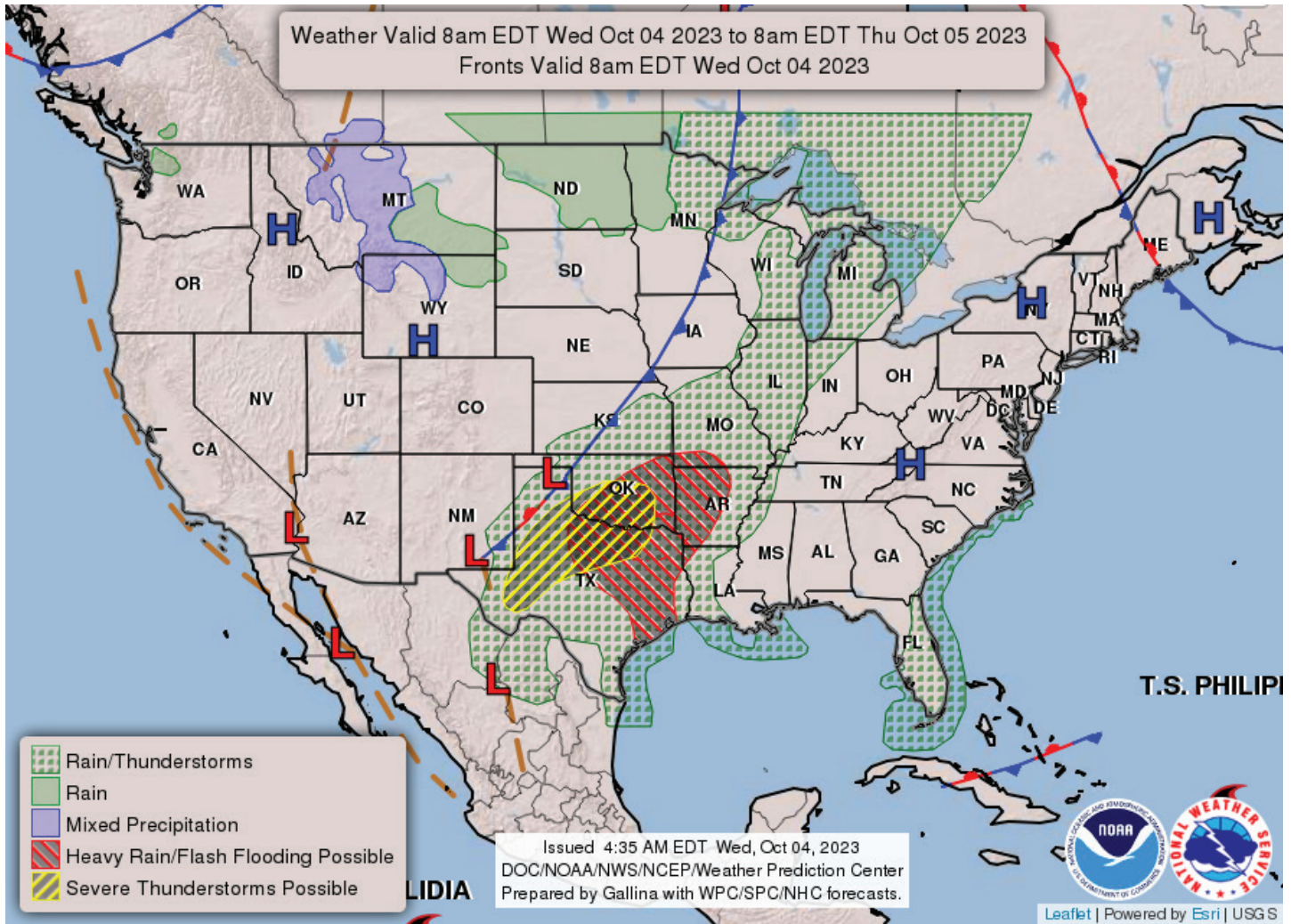
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 81 °F at 4:35 PM
Low Temp: 66 °F at 11:30 PM
Wind: 24 mph at 2:05 AM
Precip: : 0.01

Day length: 11 hours, 36 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 93 in 1975
Record Low: 13 in 1894
Average High: 66
Average Low: 39
Average Precip in Oct.: 0.32
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.01
Average Precip to date: 18.65
Precip Year to Date: 21.78
Sunset Tonight: 7:09:12 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:34:15 AM



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Today in Weather History

October 4, 2005: An intense low-pressure system developed over the Central Rockies and moved through the Northern Plains, bringing heavy snow to much of the northern Black Hills and far northwest South Dakota. Precipitation started as rain during the day and changed over to snow during the late afternoon and early evening, mixed with freezing rain and sleet. Heavy snow fell during the night and ended in the morning. Snowfall amounts were generally in the 6 to 12-inch range, with locally more substantial amounts across northern and western Harding County. The heavy, wet snow resulted in many downed trees, large branches, and power lines, which caused numerous power outages and some minor property damage. A few locations had some of the highest daily snowfall amounts ever recorded in October. Camp Crook received 12 inches of snow, which tied the daily record for snow in October. Redig also tied its record for most snowfall in one day in October with 9 inches. Lemmon had its second-highest daily total snowfall for October (6.5 inches). Bison received 6 inches, which was tied for the 3rd highest daily total in October. Spearfish tied for the 8th highest daily snow total for October with 7 inches.

1777: The Battle of Germantown was fought in a morning fog that grew denser with the smoke of battle, causing great confusion. Americans firing at each other contributed to the battle's loss.

1869 - A great storm struck New England. The storm reportedly was predicted twelve months in advance by a British officer named Saxby. Heavy rains and high floods plagued all of New England, with strong winds and high tides over New Hampshire and Maine. Canton CT was deluged with 12.35 inches of rain. (David Ludlum)

1957: The world's first artificial satellite, Sputnik, was launched on October 4th, 1957 by the Soviet Union. Sputnik was about the size of a beach ball and weighed 183.9 pounds. It took about 98 minutes to orbit Earth on an elliptical path.

1969 - Denver, CO, received 9.6 inches of snow. October of that year proved to be the coldest and snowiest of record for Denver, with a total snowfall for the month of 31.2 inches. (Weather Channel)

1986 - Excessive flooding was reported along the Mississippi River and all over the Midwest, from Ohio to the Milk River in Montana. In some places it was the worst flooding of record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987: A storm brought record snows to the northeastern U.S. Snowfall totals ranged up to 21 inches at North Springfield, VT. It was the earliest snow of record for some locations. The storm claimed 17 lives in central New York State, injured 332 persons, and in Vermont caused seventeen million dollars damage. The six-inch snow at Albany, NY, was their earliest measurable snow in 117 years of records.

1988 - Temperatures dipped below freezing in the north central U.S. Five cities in North Dakota and Nebraska reported record low temperatures for the date, including Bismarck ND with a reading of 17 degrees above zero. Low pressure brought snow and sleet to parts of Upper Michigan. (The National Weather Summary)

2005: Hurricane Stan, a minimal Category 1 Hurricane with 75 mph maximum sustained surface winds, made landfall near Punta Roca Partida, Mexico, at 4 AM EDT on this day. While not a particularly strong hurricane, the torrential rains caused flooding and landslides, which resulted in 1,513 deaths in Guatemala.

2013: While western South Dakota was dealing with a crippling blizzard, the tri-state region of Nebraska, South Dakota, and Iowa saw several tornadoes, including an EF-4. This violent tornado started 2 miles southwest of Climbing Hill, Iowa, flattening corn crops and snapping tree trunks. As the tornado moved northeast, it intensified and struck a farmstead approximately 5 miles west-northwest of Correctionville, Iowa. Sheds and other buildings were severely damaged or destroyed, with the residence being severely damaged. The tornado continued to increase in both size and magnitude as it continued on its trek northeast. The tornado reached its maximum intensity 2.5 miles south of Pierson, Iowa, when this mile-wide tornado struck two farmsteads. Numerous outbuildings and barns were destroyed, with farm equipment being tossed over 400 yards. It was here that the tornado was rated EF-4. The tornado stayed southeast of Pierson, Iowa, and to the west of Washta, Iowa. Before lifting, the tornado produced more tree damage and downed power poles and lines 2 miles west of Washta, Iowa.

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

HOW DID GOD GET IN YOUR LIFE?

The new pastor wanted to get to know the members of his congregation. One evening, at a church dinner, he asked Mark, a deacon, how he came to know the Lord as his Savior.

To his surprise, Mark replied, "Well pastor, I believe God is at work in our family."

One thing is for certain: If our faith is real and at work, it will be real and at work in our homes. Family relationships always seem to be "on the edge." There are so many different wants and needs, so many competing priorities and interests, that relationships always seem to be stressed to the point of breaking.

The letter to the Ephesians has some sound advice for families. It very clearly states that children are to obey their parents as long as parents act in the will and way of God. Parents have every right to make expectations of their children that are in keeping with His Word. Ideally, parents will act with thoughtfulness, gentleness, and love. While this may seem difficult, if family member's actions follow the teachings of God's Word, each will put the other's interests ahead of their own and selfishness will be replaced with selflessness because the real Father is the head of the home and worshipping Him will come first.

Fathers are also advised to "Bring up your children with the discipline and instruction approved by the Lord." If parents are submissive to God's rules first, then God will bless their efforts,

Prayer: We pray, Father, for families that are struggling to survive, dealing with overwhelming problems that leave them hopeless. Give courage to follow your teachings. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: If you honor your father and mother, "things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth." Ephesians 6:1-4



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

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2023 Community Events

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

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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.03.23

3 19 32 39 59 24

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$350,000,000

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 54
DRAW: Mins 9 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.02.23

4 5 21 36 51 3

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,500,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 9 Mins 9
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.03.23

3 11 16 18 33 1

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 24 Mins 10
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.30.23

5 20 26 33 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 24 Mins 10
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.02.23

11 26 35 40 43 24

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 53 Mins 9
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.02.23

12 26 27 43 47 5

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$1,200,000,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 53 Mins 9
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the  Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Langford, 25-22, 25-13, 27-25

Arlington def. Deuel, 25-12, 25-6, 25-23

Belle Fourche def. Faith, 25-23, 25-17, 21-25, 25-20

Bon Homme def. Freeman, 25-16, 25-18, 20-25, 25-14

Burke def. Avon, 25-10, 25-16, 25-22

Canistota def. Menno, 25-23, 25-19, 26-24

Castlewood def. Florence/Henry, 25-13, 25-20, 23-25, 25-8

Chester def. Tri-Valley, 25-7, 25-13, 25-12

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-12, 25-15, 25-11

Estelline/Hendricks def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-11, 25-11, 25-9

Ethan def. Wessington Springs, 25-15, 25-9, 25-7

Faulkton def. Ipswich, 25-17, 25-15, 25-8

Flandreau def. Beresford, 25-22, 25-23, 26-24

Garretson def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-13, 25-17, 25-17

Gayville-Volin High School def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-16, 25-7, 25-17

Great Plains Lutheran def. Clark/Willow Lake, 20-25, 25-16, 21-25, 25-21, 15-6

Hanson def. Centerville, 25-20, 25-23, 24-26, 24-26, 15-10

Harding County def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-13, 25-8, 25-11

Herreid/Selby Area def. Potter County, 25-23, 21-25, 25-15, 25-17

Hill City def. Sundance, Wyo., 25-17, 21-25, 25-11, 25-13

Howard def. McCook Central/Montrose, 17-25, 25-20, 14-25, 26-24, 15-13

Huron def. Pierre T F Riggs High School, 25-20, 25-23, 25-22

Iroquois/ Lake Preston Co-op def. DeSmet, 25-15, 25-21, 25-20

James Valley Christian def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 25-21, 15-25, 22-25, 25-19, 15-3

Kadoka Area def. Lyman, 25-19, 25-17, 25-14

Kimball/White Lake def. Chamberlain, 25-15, 25-8, 25-18

Lakota Tech def. St. Francis Indian, 19-25, 25-22, 25-4, 25-13

Lennox def. Parker, 25-16, 25-17, 25-15

Leola-Frederick High School def. North Central Co-Op, 25-11, 25-22, 25-19

Madison def. Tea Area, 25-23, 25-10, 25-12

Marty Indian def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 17-25, 25-22, 17-25, 25-17, 15-10

Milbank def. Deubrook, 25-23, 25-19, 25-9

Miller def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 25-20, 25-18, 25-22

Northwestern def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-9, 25-15, 23-16

Philip def. St. Thomas More, 22-25, 25-16, 18-25, 25-20, 15-5

Platte-Geddes def. Parkston, 25-20, 24-26, 25-15, 25-22

Red Cloud def. Bennett County, 14-25, 25-9, 25-15, 25-22

Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-18, 25-10, 25-12

Sioux Falls Christian def. Canton, 25-16, 25-17, 25-14

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Brookings, 25-17, 25-8, 25-11

Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-14, 25-21, 25-15

Sioux Valley def. Hamlin, 25-16, 25-21, 20-25, 20-25, 15-13

Sully Buttes def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-16, 25-22, 26-24

Timber Lake def. Lemmon High School, 25-20, 25-22, 25-17
Wagner def. Scotland, 25-13, 25-8, 25-14
Wakpala def. Standing Rock, N.D., 25-23, 25-21, 25-18
Wall def. New Underwood, 25-11, 25-16, 25-23
Warner def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-12, 25-17, 25-16
Watertown def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 20-25, 25-15, 25-22, 25-22
Webster def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-17, 17-25, 25-16, 25-14
White River def. Todd County, 25-13, 22-25, 25-21, 25-15
Winner def. Gregory, 25-19, 25-14, 25-21
Wood River Triangular=
Rapid City Christian def. Chadron, Neb., 29-27, 25-15, 25-17
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=
Dell Rapids vs. Vermillion, ppd.

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

A bus plummeted 50 feet from an elevated road in Venice, killing 21 people in a fiery crash

By COLLEEN BARRY Associated Press

VENICE (AP) — A bus carrying dozens of people plummeted 15 meters (50 feet) from an elevated road in Venice, causing a fiery crash that killed 21 people and injured at least 15, mostly foreign tourists returning to a nearby campsite.

Those who died in the Tuesday night crash included at least four Ukrainians and a German citizen, according to Venice prefecture.

At least two of the dead were children, Venice prefect Michele Di Bari said, adding that many of the people involved in the accident were “young.”

Firefighters worked until dawn Wednesday to clear the wreckage. Later in the morning, traffic was slowly passing the spot where the bus burst through a guardrail and a rusted fence.

The accident scene drew the attention of passersby. A couple of locals said that the overpass was more than 60 years old and that nothing similar had ever happened there, while a man wearing a biker jacket stopped his motorcycle to tie to a post a bouquet of plastic flowers.

The bus was carrying foreign tourists from Venice’s Piazzale Roma to the Hu campground on Tuesday evening when it fell from an elevated street next to railway tracks in the borough of Mestre, catching fire. Tourists frequently stay in boroughs across the lagoon from the canals of Venice’s famous historic center to find cheaper accommodations.

The injured, including five in serious condition, included French, Spanish, Austrian and Croatian nationals, local officials said. The Spanish Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday that two people from Spain were injured in the accident, and both were in hospital and in good condition.

The driver, Alberto Rizzotto, was killed in the crash. Venice city councilor Renato Boraso said he was an experienced driver, and local prosecutors are investigating if he felt ill.

Rescuers noted that the fact that the bus was electric contributed to the massive fire and made rescue operations more difficult.

Godstime Erheneden was in his apartment near the accident when he heard a crash outside. He rushed outside and was among the first to enter the bus.

“When we went in, we saw the driver right away. He was dead. I carried a woman out on my shoulders, then a man,” Erheneden told the local newspaper *il Gazzettino*.

“The woman was screaming, ‘my daughter, my daughter,’ and I went back in. I saw this girl who must have been 2 years old. I have a son who is a year and 10 months old, and they are the same size. I felt like I was holding my son in my arms. It was terrible. I don’t know if she survived. I thought she was alive

but when the rescuers arrived they took her away immediately," Erheneden said.

Venice Mayor Luigi Brugnaro wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, that the scene was "apocalyptic" and declared a state of mourning.

In 2017, 16 people on a bus carrying Hungarian students died in an accident near the northern city of Verona. And in 2013, 40 people were killed in one of Italy's worst vehicle accidents when a bus plunged off a viaduct close to the southern city of Avellino.

AP journalist Giada Zampano in Rome contributed to this story.

Point of no return: Pope challenges leaders at UN talks to slow global warming before it's too late

By NICOLE WINFIELD and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis shamed and challenged world leaders on Wednesday to commit to binding targets to slow climate change before it's too late, warning that God's increasingly warming creation is fast reaching a "point of no return."

In an update to his landmark 2015 encyclical on the environment, Francis heightened the alarm about the "irreversible" harm to people and planet already under way and lamented that once again, the world's poor and most vulnerable are paying the highest price.

"We are now unable to halt the enormous damage we have caused. We barely have time to prevent even more tragic damage," Francis warned.

He took square aim at the United States, noting that per-capita emissions in the U.S. are twice as high as China and seven times greater than the average in poor countries. While individual, household efforts are helping, "we can state that a broad change in the irresponsible lifestyle connected with the Western model would have a significant long-term impact," he said.

The document, "Praise God," was released on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the pontiff's nature-loving namesake, and was aimed at spurring negotiators to commit to binding climate targets at the next round of U.N. talks in Dubai.

Using precise scientific data, sharp diplomatic arguments and a sprinkling of theological reasoning, Francis delivered a moral imperative for the world to transition away from fossil fuels to clean energy with measures that are "efficient, obligatory and readily monitored."

"What is being asked of us is nothing other than a certain responsibility for the legacy we will leave behind, once we pass from this world," he said.

As it is, Francis' 2015 encyclical "Praise Be" was a watershed moment for the Catholic Church, the first time a pope had used one of his most authoritative teaching documents to recast the climate debate in moral terms.

In that text, which has been cited by presidents, patriarchs and premiers and spurred an activist movement in the the church, Francis called for a bold cultural revolution to correct a "structurally perverse" economic system where the rich exploit the poor, turning Earth into an "immense pile of filth."

Even though encyclicals are meant to stand the test of time, Francis said he felt an update to his original was necessary because "our responses have not been adequate, while the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point."

He excoriated people, including those in the church, who doubt mainstream climate science about heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions, sarcastically deflating their arguments and showing his impatience with their profit-at-all-cost mentality.

Shaming them for their reliance on "allegedly solid scientific data," he said the doubters' arguments about potential job losses from a clean energy transition were bunk. And he cited data showing that increased emissions and the corresponding rise in global temperatures have accelerated since the Industrial Revolution, and particularly in the last 50 years.

"It is no longer possible to doubt the human – 'anthropic' – origin of climate change," he asserted.

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While acknowledging that "certain apocalyptic diagnoses" may not be grounded, he said inaction is no longer an option. The devastation is already under way, he said, including with some already "irreversible" harm done to biodiversity and species loss that will only snowball unless urgent action is taken now.

"Small changes can cause greater ones, unforeseen and perhaps already irreversible, due to factors of inertia," he noted. "This would end up precipitating a cascade of events having a snowball effect. In such cases, it is always too late, since no intervention will be able to halt a process once begun."

The document was unusual for a papal exhortation and read more like a U.N. scientific report or a speech to a "Fridays for Future" youth climate rally. It carried a sharp, no holds barred tone and its footnotes had far more references to U.N. climate reports, NASA and Francis' own previous encyclicals than Scripture.

"Praise God," was issued ahead of the next round of U.N. climate talks which begin Nov. 30 in Dubai. Just as he did with his 2015 encyclical "Praise Be," which was penned before the start of the Paris climate conference, Francis aimed to cast the issue of global warming in stark moral terms to spur courageous decisions by world leaders.

In the 2015 landmark Paris Agreement, countries of the world agreed to try to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) or at least 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times. It's already warmed about 1.1 degrees (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since the mid-1800s.

Francis said that it was clear that the Paris target will be breached and will soon reach 3 degrees Celsius, and that already the effects are obvious, with oceans warming, glaciers melting and the world registering record heat waves and extreme weather events.

"Even if we do not reach this point of no return, it is certain that the consequences would be disastrous and precipitous measures would have to be taken, at enormous cost and with grave and intolerable economic and social effects," he warned.

Since 2015, the world has spewed at least 288 billion metric tons (317 billion U.S. tons) of heat-trapping carbon dioxide in the air, not including this year's emissions, according to the scientists at Global Carbon Project. In August 2015, there were 399 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the air and in August 2023 it was up to 420 parts per million, a 5% jump.

The record-hot summer of 2023 is one-third of a degree Celsius (six-tenths of a degree Fahrenheit) warmer than the summer of 2015, according to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Antarctica and Greenland have lost more than 2,100 billion metric tons (2,300 billion U.S. tons) of land ice, since the summer of 2015, according to NASA.

And in the United States alone, there have been 152 climate or weather disasters that caused at least \$1 billion in damage since the pope's first climate message, with costs adjusted for inflation, according to NOAA.

Francis concluded his document by noting the emissions rate in the U.S. and shaming it to do better.

"Praise God" is the title of this letter. For when human beings claim to take God's place, they become their own worst enemies," he wrote.

Trio wins Nobel Prize in chemistry for work on quantum dots, used in electronics and medical imaging

By DAVID KEYTON and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Three scientists based in the U.S. won the Nobel Prize in chemistry Wednesday for their work on quantum dots — tiny particles just a few atoms in diameter that can release very bright colored light and whose applications in every day life include electronics and medical imaging.

Moungi Bawendi, of MIT; Louis Brus, of Columbia University; and Alexei Ekimov, of Nanocrystals Technology Inc., were honored for their work with the particles that "have unique properties and now spread their light from television screens and LED lamps," according to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, which announced the award in Stockholm.

"They catalyze chemical reactions and their clear light can illuminate tumor tissue for a surgeon," the academy said.

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Quantum dots' electrons have constrained movement, which affects how they absorb and release visible light, allowing for very bright colors.

The dots are nanoparticles that glow blue, red, or green when illuminated or exposed to light. The color they emit depends on the size of the particles. Larger dots shine red, and smaller dots shine blue. The color change is due to how electrons act differently in more or less confined spaces.

While physicists had predicted these color-change properties as early as the 1930s, creating quantum dots of specific controlled sizes was not possible in the lab for another five decades.

In a highly unusual leak, Swedish media reported the names of the winners before the prize was announced.

"There was a press release sent out for still unknown reasons. We have been very active this morning to find out exactly what happened," Hans Ellegren, the secretary-general of the academy, said during the news conference where the award was announced. "This is very unfortunate and we deeply regret what happened."

The academy, which awards the physics, chemistry and economics prizes, asks for nominations a year in advance from thousands of university professors and other scholars around the world.

A committee for each prize then discusses candidates in a series of meetings throughout the year. At the end of the process, the committee presents one or more proposals to the full academy for a vote. The deliberations, including the names of nominees other than the winners, are kept confidential for 50 years.

Ekimov, 78, and Brus, 80, are early pioneers of the technology recognized Wednesday, while Bawendi, 62, is credited with revolutionizing the production of quantum dots "resulting in almost perfect particles. This high quality was necessary for them to be utilized in applications," the academy said.

Bawendi told the news conference that he was "very surprised, sleepy, shocked, unexpected and very honored."

"The community realized the implications in the mid 90s, that there could potentially be some real world applications," Bawendi said.

Asked about the leak, he said he didn't know about the prize until he was called by the academy.

On Tuesday, the physics prize went to French-Swedish physicist Anne L'Huillier, French scientist Pierre Agostini and Hungarian-born Ferenc Krausz for producing the first split-second glimpse into the superfast world of spinning electrons.

On Monday, Hungarian-American Katalin Karikó and American Drew Weissman won the Nobel Prize in medicine for discoveries that enabled the creation of mRNA vaccines against COVID-19.

The chemistry prize means Nobel season has reached its halfway stage. The prizes in literature, peace and economics follow, with one announcement every weekday until Oct. 9.

The Nobel Foundation raised the prize money by 10% this year to 11 million kronor (about \$1 million). In addition to the money, winners receive an 18-carat gold medal and diploma when they collect their Nobel Prizes at the award ceremonies in December.

The US warns of a Chinese global disinformation campaign that could undermine peace and stability

By DIDI TANG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For much of the world, China's Xinjiang region is notorious, a place where ethnic Uyghurs face forced labor and arbitrary detention. But a group of visiting foreign journalists was left with a decidedly different impression.

On a tour in late September sponsored by Beijing, the 22 journalists from 17 countries visited bazaars and chatted with residents over dates and watermelon slices. They later told state media they were impressed with the bustling economy, described the region as "full of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity," and denounced what they said were lies by Western media.

The trip is an example of what Washington sees as Beijing's growing efforts to reshape the global nar-

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native on China. It's spending billions of dollars annually to do so.

In a first-of-its-kind report, the State Department last week laid out Beijing's tactics and techniques for molding public opinion, such as buying content, creating fake personas to spread its message and using repression to quash unfavorable accounts.

The Global Engagement Center, a State Department agency that's tasked with combating foreign propaganda and disinformation and that released the 58-page report, warned that Beijing's information campaign could eventually sway how decisions are made around the world and undermine U.S. interests.

"Unchecked, the (Chinese government's) information manipulation could in many parts of the world diminish freedom to express views critical of Beijing," said Jamie Rubin, who heads the center. He said Beijing's efforts could "transform the global information landscape and damage the security and stability of the United States, its friends, and partners."

"We don't want to see an Orwellian mix of fact and fiction in our world," he said. "That will destroy the secure world of rules and rights that the United States and much of the world relies upon."

China over the weekend slammed the report, calling it "in itself disinformation as it misrepresents facts and truth."

"In fact, it is the U.S. that invented the weaponizing of the global information space," the Chinese foreign ministry said. It called the State Department agency "a source of disinformation and the command center of 'perception warfare.'"

In a written statement, Liu Pengyu, spokesman for the Chinese Embassy in Washington, said the report was "just another tool to keep China down and buttress American hegemony."

Beijing argues that Western media have long held biases against China and at times have demonized it. Chinese President Xi Jinping has demanded that China tell its story to the world so Beijing would be trusted and respected.

But U.S. government officials say Beijing is advancing its agenda through coercion and lies. In one case outlined by the report, the Chinese government created a fake commentator named Yi Fan, whose pro-Beijing writings have appeared in publications in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

In social media, Beijing deploys armies of bots, trolls and coordinated campaigns to suppress critical content and boost pro-Beijing messages, the report said. China-made phones sold overseas have been found to come with censorship capabilities.

A national security law in Hong Kong has allowed authorities to prosecute those who live overseas but criticize Beijing's policy in the territory, according to the report. On Ukraine, Beijing has cooperated with Moscow to amplify the Kremlin's false claims, it said.

In Xinjiang, Beijing has brought in diplomats and foreign journalists on tightly orchestrated trips with minders in tow.

The aim is to counter allegations that Beijing has mistreated the country's 11 million ethnic Uyghurs through arbitrary detention and labor programs that send Uyghurs to work in factories far from their homes.

A United Nations report last year said the acts by Beijing in Xinjiang might constitute crimes against humanity. The U.S. government went further, saying the actions constitute genocide against the Uyghurs, most of whom are Muslim.

On the latest such trip to Xinjiang, the journalists praised Beijing's efforts in preserving the region's traditional culture, creating a harmonious and prosperous life for people of all ethnicities and religions, the party-run Global Times newspaper reported.

One Iranian journalist described the northwestern region as a beautiful Persian rug with different colors and patterns weaved together, according to China News, another state-run news agency.

Meanwhile, Beijing has banned independent reporting in Xinjiang by Western journalists, and it has sought to silence criticism from Uyghurs overseas by threatening to punish their family members at home and deny them entry into China.

While the State Department report focused on Beijing's global influence efforts outside the United States, its findings are similar to those documented in the U.S. by think tanks and advocacy groups.

Testifying before the Senate Intelligence Committee last week, Sarah Cook, a senior adviser for China,

Hong Kong and Taiwan at Freedom House, said Beijing's disinformation campaign targeting the U.S. could sow discord and might influence election results at the local level, especially in districts with large Chinese American voters. They are more likely to be using WeChat, a popular Chinese-language messaging app heavily controlled by Beijing, she said.

Glenn Tiffert, who co-chairs a project on China's influence campaigns at the Hoover Institute, told the committee that the use of new technology, such as artificial intelligence, could allow Beijing to better interfere with U.S. elections.

Pope Francis opens a big Vatican meeting on the church's future and says 'everyone' is welcome

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis said the Catholic Church was in need of repair to make it a place of welcome for "everyone, everyone, everyone," as he opened a big meeting on the future of the faith that has sparked hope among progressives and alarm among conservatives.

Francis presided over a solemn Mass in St. Peter's Square to formally open the meeting. But he warned both camps in the church's culture wars to put their "human strategies, political calculations or ideological battles" aside and let the Holy Spirit guide debate.

"We're not here to create a parliament, but to walk together with the gaze of Jesus," he said.

Rarely in recent times has a Vatican gathering generated as much hope, hype and fear as this three-week, closed-door meeting, known as a synod. It won't make any binding decisions and is only the first session of a two-year process. But it nevertheless has drawn an acute battle line in the church's perennial left-right divide and marks a defining moment for Francis and his reform agenda.

On the table are calls to take concrete steps to elevate more women to decision-making roles in the church, including as deacons, and for ordinary Catholic faithful to have more of a say in church governance.

Also under consideration are ways to better welcome of LGBTQ+ Catholics and others who have been marginalized by the church, and for new accountability measures to check how bishops exercise their authority to prevent abuses.

Even before it started, the gathering was historic because Francis decided to let women and laypeople vote alongside bishops in any final document produced. While fewer than a quarter of the 365 voting members are non-bishops, the reform is a radical shift away from a hierarchy-focused Synod of Bishops and evidence of Francis' belief that the church is more about its flock than its shepherds.

"It's a watershed moment," said JoAnn Lopez, an Indian-born lay minister who helped organize two years of consultations prior to the meeting at parishes where she has worked in Seattle and Toronto.

"This is the first time that women have a very qualitatively different voice at the table, and the opportunity to vote in decision-making is huge," she said.

In his homily, Francis recalled that his namesake St. Francis of Assisi, whose feast day is celebrated Wednesday, also faced divisions and tensions in his lifetime and responded with prayer, charity, humility and unity when he was told: "Go and rebuild my church."

"Let us do the same!" Francis said. "And if God's holy people with their shepherds from all over the world have expectations, hopes and even some fears about the synod we are beginning, let us continue to remember that it is not a political gathering, but a convocation in the spirit; not a polarized parliament, but a place of grace and communion."

Before the opening Mass got under way, advocates for women priests unfurled a giant purple banner at a piazza nearby reading "Ordain Women."

Women have long complained they are treated as second-class citizens in the church, barred from the priesthood and highest ranks of power yet responsible for the lion's share of church work — teaching in Catholic schools, running Catholic hospitals and passing the faith down to next generations.

They have long demanded a greater say in church governance, at the very least with voting rights at the periodic synods at the Vatican but also the right to preach at Mass and be ordained as priests or deacons.

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Lopez, 34, and other women are particularly excited about the potential that the synod might in some way endorse allowing women to be ordained as deacons, a ministry that is currently limited to men.

For years supporters of female deacons have argued that women in the early church served as deacons and that restoring the ministry would both serve the church and recognize the gifts that women bring to it.

Francis has convened two study commissions to research the issue and was asked to consider it at a previous synod on the Amazon, but he has so far refused to make any change.

In his homily opening the synod, Francis said such "preconceived" ideas had no place in the gathering. But repeating his new mantra about the church as a place of welcome, he said "tutti, tutti, tutti" must be allowed in: Everyone, everyone, everyone.

In such difficult times, he said, there is a temptation to be "a rigid church, which arms itself against the world and looks backward; a lukewarm church, which surrenders to the fashions of the world; a tired Church, turned in on itself."

He offered an alternate vision: "A church that is united and fraternal, that listens and dialogues; a church that blesses and encourages, that helps those who seek the Lord, that lovingly stirs up the indifferent, that opens paths in order to draw people into the beauty of faith. A church that has God at its center and, therefore, is not divided internally and is never harsh externally."

The potential that this synod process could lead to real change on previously taboo topics has given hope to many women and progressive Catholics and sparked alarm from conservatives who have warned its call for radical inclusion of LGBTQ+ people could lead to schism.

They have written books, held conferences and taken to social media claiming that Francis' reforms are sowing confusion, undermining the true nature of the church and all it has taught over two millennia. Among the most vocal are conservatives in the U.S.

On the eve of the meeting, one of the synod's most outspoken critics, American Cardinal Raymond Burke, delivered a stinging rebuke of Francis' vision of "synodality" as well as his overall reform project for the church.

"It's unfortunately very clear that the invocation of the Holy Spirit by some has the aim of bringing forward an agenda that is more political and human than ecclesial and divine," Burke told a conference entitled "The Synodal Babel."

He blasted even the term "synodal" as having no clearly defined meaning and said its underlying attempt to shift authority away from the hierarchy "risks the very identity of the church."

In the audience was Cardinal Robert Sarah, who along with Burke and three other cardinals had formally challenged Francis to affirm church teaching on homosexuality and women's ordination before the synod.

In an exchange of letters made public Monday, Francis didn't bite and instead said the cardinals shouldn't be afraid of questions that are posed by a changing world. Asked specifically about church blessings for same-sex unions, Francis suggested they could be allowed as long as such benedictions aren't confused with sacramental marriage.

Russia says it has foiled a major Ukrainian drone attack as concerns grow about weapons supplies

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

Russian air defenses shot down 31 Ukrainian drones during a concerted nighttime attack by Kyiv's forces on border regions, the Russian Defense Ministry said Wednesday, even as uncertainty grew over Ukraine's future access to weapons and ammunition from its Western allies.

The drone attack appeared to be Kyiv's largest single cross-border drone assault reported by Moscow since it launched its invasion 20 months ago.

Ukraine is pressing on with a slow-moving counteroffensive it launched three months ago, though mounting concerns about replenishing its military stocks cast a cloud over its efforts

Adm. Rob Bauer, the head of NATO's Military Committee, sounded the alarm about depleted stockpiles.

With the war of attrition likely continuing through winter into next year, Bauer said of weapons systems

and ammunition supplies: "The bottom of the barrel is now visible."

He urged the defense industry to boost production "at a much higher tempo. And we need large volumes," he told the Warsaw Security Forum, an annual two-day conference that continued Wednesday.

The Russian Defense Ministry didn't provide any evidence for its claims about intercepting Ukrainian drones nor any details about whether there were any damage or casualties.

It also said Russian aircraft thwarted a Ukrainian attempt to deploy a group of soldiers by sea to the western side of Russian-annexed Crimea.

The force attempted to land on Cape Tarkhankut, on Crimea's western end, using a high-speed boat and three jet skis, the ministry said.

Moscow's claims could not be independently verified, and Ukrainian officials made no immediate comment.

The Crimean Peninsula, which Russia illegally annexed from Ukraine in 2014, has been a frequent target of Ukrainian attacks. The region has been the key hub supporting the invasion.

Fears over the resupply of Ukraine's armed forces have deepened in recent weeks.

The Pentagon has warned Congress that it is running low on money to replace weapons the U.S. has sent to Ukraine.

Concern about the commitment of Kyiv's allies has also grown amid political turmoil in the United States amid the unprecedented and dramatic ouster Tuesday of House Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

Some in the House Republican majority, and many GOP voters, oppose sending more military aid to Ukraine. The U.S. is by far Ukraine's largest military supplier.

Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, publicly questioned the motives of what he called "Western conservative elites."

"Why are you so insistently against ... destroying the Russian army, which has been terrifying," he wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

The funding concerns prompted U.S. President Joe Biden to hold a phone call Tuesday with key allies in Europe, as well as the leaders of Canada and Japan, to coordinate support for Ukraine.

The call came three days after Biden signed legislation hastily sent to him by Congress that kept the federal government funded but left off billions in funding for Ukraine's war effort that the White House had vigorously backed.

US appeals court to hear arguments over 2010 hush-money settlement of Ronaldo rape case in Vegas

By KEN RITTER and SCOTT SONNER Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A United States appeals court planned to hear Wednesday from lawyers trying to revive a woman's bid to force international soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo to pay millions more than the \$375,000 in hush money he paid her after she accused him of raping her in Las Vegas in 2009.

An attorney for the woman is asking the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to overturn the dismissal of the case in June 2022 and reopen the civil lawsuit she first filed in Nevada in 2018.

The appeal argues the federal court judge in Nevada erred in repeatedly rejecting the woman's attempts to unseal and include as evidence the confidentiality agreement she signed in 2010 in accepting payments from Ronaldo.

A three-judge panel of the San Francisco-based appellate court isn't expected to issue an immediate ruling after it's scheduled to question attorneys for Ronaldo and his accuser, Kathryn Mayorga, during oral arguments Wednesday at a special sitting at the law school on the campus of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

The Associated Press generally does not name people who say they are victims of sexual assault, but Mayorga gave consent through her lawyers, including Leslie Mark Stovall, to make her name public.

Ronaldo is one of the most recognizable and richest athletes in the world. He leads his home country Portugal's national team and has played for the Spanish team Real Madrid, the Italian club Juventus, Man-

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chester United in England and now plays for the Saudi Arabian professional team Al Nassr.

Las Vegas police reopened a rape investigation after Mayorga's lawsuit was filed, but Clark County District Attorney Steve Wolfson decided in 2019 not to pursue criminal charges. He said too much time had passed and evidence failed to show that Mayorga's accusation could be proved to a jury.

Mayorga, a former teacher and model from the Las Vegas area, was 25 when she met Ronaldo at a nightclub in 2009 and went with him and other people to his hotel suite. She alleges in her lawsuit filed almost a decade later that the soccer star, then 24, sexually assaulted her in a bedroom.

Ronaldo, through his lawyers, maintained the sex was consensual. The two reached a confidentiality agreement in 2010 under which Stovall acknowledged that Mayorga received \$375,000.

In dismissing the case last year, U.S. District Judge Jennifer Dorsey in Las Vegas took the unusual step of levying a \$335,000 fine against Mayorga's lead lawyer, Stovall, for acting in "bad faith" in filing the case on his client's behalf.

Stovall's appeal on Mayorga's behalf, filed in March, calls Dorsey's ruling "a manifest abuse of discretion" and seeks to open the records and revive the case.

It alleges Mayorga wasn't bound by the confidentiality agreement because Ronaldo or his associates violated it before a German news outlet, Der Spiegel, published an article in April 2017 titled "Cristiano Ronaldo's Secret" based on documents obtained from what court filings called "whistleblower portal Football Leaks."

Ronaldo's lawyers argued — and the judge agreed — the "Football Leaks" documents and the confidentiality agreement are the product of privileged attorney-client discussions, there is no guarantee they are authentic and can't be considered as evidence.

Stock market today: World shares are mostly lower, tracking a rates-driven tumble on Wall Street

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Markets in Europe and Asia were mostly lower Wednesday after Wall Street tumbled as investors focused on the downside of a surprisingly strong job market: the likelihood that interest rates will stay high.

U.S. futures and oil prices edged lower.

European markets fell far less than those in Asia. Germany's DAX lost 0.1% to 15,071.35. In Paris, the CAC 40 edged 0.1% higher, to 7,005.23. Britain's FTSE 100 was down less than 0.1%, at 7,466.94.

On Wall Street, the future for the S&P 500 was down 0.1% and that for the Dow was unchanged.

In Asian trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index sank 2.3% to 30,526.88 and the Kospi in South Korea dropped 2.4% to 2,405.69.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng skidded 0.8% to 17,195.84. Troubled property developer China Evergrande was down 12.2% after plunging 28% on Tuesday.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 shed 0.8% to 6,890.20. In Bangkok, the SET recovered from early losses, gaining 0.3%.

On Tuesday, the S&P 500 lost 1.4%. The Dow sank 1.3% and the Nasdaq composite led the market lower with a 1.9% drop. Big Tech stocks were among the market's biggest losers.

Amazon fell 3.7%, Microsoft dropped 2.6% and Nvidia lost 2.8%.

The Dow is down 0.4% for the year so far, after being up nearly 8% at the start of August. The S&P 500, which is the index more 401(k) investments are benchmarked against, has sliced its gain for the year so far to 10.2%.

Stocks fell after a report showed U.S. employers have many more job openings than expected. Expectations that interest rates will stay high are pressuring stocks as Treasury yields rise in the bond market.

Such weight has been the main reason the S&P 500 has lost more than 40% of its value since the end of July, after charging higher for much of the year.

The 10-year Treasury yield climbed Tuesday to 4.79% from 4.69% late Monday and from just 0.50%

early in the pandemic. It touched its highest level since 2007.

When bonds are paying so much more in interest, they pull investment dollars away from stocks and other investments prone to bigger price swings than bonds. High yields also make borrowing more expensive for companies and households across the economy, which can hurt corporate profits.

Investors increasingly are taking the Federal Reserve at its word that it will keep its main interest rate high for a long time in order to drive down inflation. The Fed has already yanked its federal funds rate to the highest level since 2001, and it indicated last month it may keep the rate higher in 2024 than it earlier expected.

Tuesday's report showed employers were advertising 9.6 million job openings in late August, much higher than the 8.9 million economists expected. That could keep upward pressure on wages to attract employees.

Several other challenges are also tugging at Wall Street besides higher yields. The resumption of student-loan repayments could drag on spending by U.S. households, which has been strong enough to help keep the economy out of a recession despite high interest rates. Higher oil prices are threatening to worsen inflation, and economies around the world look shaky.

Oil prices ticked higher a day after slumping sharply to trim their big gains since the summer.

A barrel of benchmark U.S. crude lost 98 cents to \$88.25 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 41 cents to settle at \$89.23 on Tuesday. Brent crude, the international standard, gave up 87 cents to \$90.05 per barrel.

The dollar rose to 149.07 Japanese yen from 149.04 yen. The yen's weakness against the dollar has drawn protests from Japanese officials, and analysts said they believed regulators had intervened Tuesday to prevent the dollar from surpassing the 150 yen level.

The government did not confirm if it had acted to support the yen. However, Japanese Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki told reporters that rapid currency moves were "undesirable." He said Japan was prepared to respond appropriately, with "all options on the table."

The euro rose to \$1.0492 from \$1.0468.

5 people were wounded in a shooting after a homecoming event at Morgan State University in Baltimore

By LEA SKENE and DENISE LAVOIE Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — A shooting interrupted a homecoming week celebration at Baltimore's Morgan State University on Tuesday, wounding five people and prompting an hourslong lockdown of the historically Black college.

Students hunkered down for about four hours, as police went room to room looking for suspects. No arrests were made.

Police Commissioner Richard Worley said the five victims, four men and one woman, are between the ages of 18 and 22. Their injuries were not life-threatening, he told reporters at a news conference early Wednesday.

Morgan State Police Chief Lance Hatcher said four of the victims are students at the university. The police did not release information about a suspect or suspects, and Worley said that investigators didn't know how many shooters were involved.

The shooting happened shortly after the coronation of Mister & Miss Morgan State at the Murphy Fine Arts Center, as students were heading to a campus ball.

Konnor Crowder, a sophomore from Baltimore, said he and his friends had been waiting for the coronation ball to start when they saw people running.

"First I was wondering what they were running for, then I was wondering where we should go," he said.

Worley said police heard gunshots and several dorm windows shattered, so officials initially thought there was an active shooter on campus and acted accordingly. He said they ended the shelter-in-place order around 12:30 a.m., after SWAT officers cleared a building where a suspect was feared to be hiding.

Shortly after midnight, dozens of students wearing gowns and suits started trickling out of the arts center, where they had been waiting. Many were trying to process the chaos and fear that overwhelmed an evening of festivities.

Orange evidence markers were visible on the ground in front of a building next to the dorm where the shooting occurred. Yellow crime tape encircled the area as officers used flashlights to search for evidence.

Parents gathered outside a police blockade at the south entrance to campus. James Willoughby, a Morgan State alum whose daughter is a freshman, said he wasn't leaving until he laid eyes on her. "I'm gonna be here until I can physically see her," he said.

Glenmore Blackwood came to the campus after hearing from his son, a senior who told him the shooting occurred just as the coronation was concluding.

Blackwood said his son was in the arts center's auditorium. He sang in the ceremony and was planning to host a prayer service afterward.

"That's my son. He's going to make sure I know he's OK," Blackwood said. "It's just sad. They were doing a good thing — an event to promote positivity — and all this negativity happens."

Morgan State University President David Wilson said he had canceled Wednesday's classes, and would hold an emergency meeting Wednesday morning to decide whether to hold other events planned for the runup to the school's homecoming game, which is scheduled to be played on Saturday.

"It is unfortunate that this tragedy happened here tonight," he said. "By no means will it define who we are as a university."

The university, which has about 9,000 students, was founded in 1867 as the Centenary Biblical Institute with an initial mission of training men for ministry, according to its website. It moved to its current site in northeast Baltimore in 1917, and was purchased by the state of Maryland in 1939 as it aimed to provide more opportunities for Black citizens.

Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott noted recent declines in the city's homicide rate and said the shooting Tuesday indicates a need for national gun reform.

"We have to deal with this issue nationally," he said. "We have to get serious about guns."

Bus crash across lagoon from Venice's historic center kills 21 people, including Ukrainian tourists

By GIADA ZAMPANO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — At least 21 people were killed and 18 injured in a fiery bus crash in a borough of Venice, Italy, across the lagoon from its historic center, where firefighters and other emergency responders worked into the night trying to extract bodies and squelch the flames.

The bus was carrying foreign tourists, including Ukrainians, according to a Venice official, when it fell from an elevated street Tuesday in Mestre en route to a camping site near the community of Marghera.

"The people in the bus found themselves surrounded by flames," said Mauro Luongo, commander of the Venice firefighters team. "The scene we found was terrible. It took about one hour to extract some of the bodies."

Venice Mayor Luigi Brugnaro wrote on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter, that the crash scene was "apocalyptic" and declared the city in a state of mourning.

Four of the injured were in serious condition following the accident, which happened on the mainland just 9 km (3.7 miles) northwest of the old city of Venice, said Renato Boraso, a Venice city official. Two of the dead were children, Venice prefect Michele Di Bari said.

The injured were transferred to five different hospitals in the region.

According to local media, the bus fell a few meters before crashing close to Mestre's railway tracks, where it caught fire.

The Veneto region governor, Luca Zaia, told RAI state television that the cause of the accident was still unclear.

"This is an important tragedy, but it's difficult to understand how it happened," he said. "The bus was

new and electric, and that street wasn't particularly problematic."

In 2017, 16 people on a bus carrying Hungarian students died in an accident near the northern city of Verona. And in 2013, 40 people were killed in one of Italy's worst vehicle accidents when a bus plunged off a viaduct close to the southern city of Avellino.

Haitian students play drums and strum guitars to escape hunger and gang violence

By EVENS SANON and DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Woodberson Seïde held his stepsister's hand as they walked through Haiti's capital on their way to an afterschool music program.

They avoided cars, motorcycles, and territory controlled by the gangs whose predation prompted this week's U.N. Security Council vote for the deployment of a multinational armed force. Once he arrived at the school that hosts the program, 11-year-old Woodberson didn't think much about how he sometimes eats once a day. His family sleeps on the floor of a church, something they've done since losing their home to gangs.

The boy was neatly dressed and ready to play drums. Across Port-au-Prince, hundreds of children like Woodberson are playing percussion, piano and bass guitar to drown out the violence and hunger around them.

"When I play drums, I feel proud," Woodberson said.

To many, Haiti feels hopeless. Children are mostly kept indoors for safety. Their parents worry about gangs recruiting children as young as 8.

Woodberson and other young musicians in a U.S.-sponsored music program refuse to let circumstances dictate their future, helping both themselves and their parents.

"Seeing my son performing makes me very happy," said Jean Williams Seïde, his father.

Woodberson took his first lesson two years ago as part of the after-school music program founded in 2014 by U.S. nonprofit Music Heals International. The program started with 60 children and has grown into a group of 400 enrolled in the \$160,000-a-year program offered at eight schools. Many play at church and in local concerts, some after founding their own band.

"It's very rare ... that you can provide a little bit of peace in such craziness, such a hellish landscape," said Ann Lee, CEO and co-founder of Community Organized Relief Effort, a California nonprofit organization that sponsors the program.

Haitian musical traditions range from rara to compas to mizik rasin, or roots music. The program's teachers and students decide together what music they'll play, picking from genres that include compas, reggae, rock, Latino music and African music.

Many of them meet twice a week to play for two hours as the rat-tat-tat of gunfire echoes across Port-au-Prince.

"Music transforms," said Mickelson Pierre, who learned how to play guitar in the program and now teaches it. "It's something extraordinary, and it leads to peace of mind."

Gangs are estimated to control up to 80% of Port-au-Prince and fight over territory daily, with more than 2,400 people reported killed this year. Rapes and kidnappings also have spiked. Families are reluctant to send their children to school, let alone allow them to play outdoors.

Gang violence also has left nearly 200,000 people homeless.

Woodberson and his family once lived in Canaan, a makeshift community established on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince by people who survived the devastating 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck in 2010. In April, gangs raided the community and forced many to flee.

"The bandits took everything from my house and left me with nothing," said Jean Williams Seïde.

The family sought shelter inside a small room at a church in Port-au-Prince, where they have been sleeping on the floor for several months.

Woodberson would like his own drum kit, but his father can barely afford to help feed his four children despite his job as a mailman. His wife, Nelise Chadic Seide, washes laundry for a living and is anemic, so she often feels weak. They don't have money for her treatment or three meals a day, but are grateful they aren't starving.

"God never lets us go a day without food," she said.

On a recent weekday afternoon, Woodberson stood up to play a compas song on the drums. He grabbed the cymbal with his left hand, struck a syncopated beat with his right, stuck out his tongue and rocked to the rhythm while playing.

He's part of a band called "Hope," and that day, he and several other students jammed to "Yo Palem Male," Haitian Creole for "They Speak Evil About Me."

Not to be left behind was PMF, which stands for Plezi Music au Feminin, meaning "Enjoy Feminine Music." It's an all-female band that formed after a coed band decided it only wanted boys and kicked out the girls. They played on stage after Woodberson and opened with "Como la Flor," by slain Tejano singer Selena Quintanilla.

"When I am playing the piano, I release a vibe that I did not know I have in me," said Ester Ceus, 17. "It makes me feel relaxed."

Students in the program are allowed to choose any instrument. Available are 90 guitars, 62 keyboards, 24 bass guitars, 15 maracas, five ukeleles, two tambourines and a couple of cowbells.

As a result of the program, the budding musicians perform better in school, and their parents are less worried that they'll join gangs, music program manager Emmanuel Piervil said.

There are a limited number of instruments, so teacher Raymond Jules Josue, 24, tells kids to practice by using their hands to thump the beat on their bodies while they take turns playing the drums.

Woodberson is the first to show up to class and often serves as a substitute when his professor takes a call or arrives late because of roadblocks or gang fights in his area.

"These schools are often the lifeline for kids to have something else other than lockdown," said Lee. "To be transported to a place where that is not the first thing that comes to mind when you're away from your family and home, it's a gift."

Cleanup from Maui fires complicated by island's logistical challenges, cultural significance

By MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

Cleanup of areas destroyed in the Maui wildfires could end up being one of the most complex to date, federal officials said, given the island's significant cultural sites, its rich history including a royal residence and possibly remains of people who died in the disaster.

The first stage of cleanup started in late August, with around 200 Environmental Protection Agency workers in white protective gear removing toxic household debris from Upper Kula and the town of Lahaina including gas cylinders, pesticides, fertilizers and battery packs used in solar power. They have monitored the air quality and sampled for heavy metals and asbestos.

The EPA expects to hand over responsibility later this month or in November to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which will oversee removing the remaining debris over the next six to 12 months. About \$400 million has been budgeted, but the cost could go higher to remove an estimated 400,000 to 700,000 tons of building debris from about 1,600 parcels that once had homes and businesses.

"This will be the most complex fire response to date," said Corps' debris subject matter expert Cory Koger, who since 2017 has responded to cleanups of seven wildfires sites including the Paradise, California fire that killed 85 people and destroyed 19,000 structures as well as several others in Oregon, Colorado and New Mexico.

"We need to expedite the cleanup for a number of reasons. One, they're still residents living within the area. There are businesses still functional ... That's a public health issue," Koger continued, adding that

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there are also significant “cultural concerns” associated with the debris removal.

“There is this push-pull of doing it quickly but doing it right,” he said.

The Aug. 8 wildfire killed at least 97 people and destroyed more than 2,000 buildings, most of them homes. Seven weeks on, the first group of residents returned to survey the remains of their property and collect any belongings they could find.

Compared to fire cleanups in Oregon or California, this one poses what EPA Incident Commander Steve Calanog calls “unique challenges” for his team. The debris removal not only is occurring on an island in the Pacific Ocean, but Maui has no landfills certified to take hazardous waste. So the EPA is forced to ship hazardous waste to licensed disposal sites on the West Coast.

Cultural monitors, who are Native Hawaiians from Maui, are also accompanying the EPA and eventually the Corps during the cleanup. Lahaina was once the royal residence of King Kamehameha, who unified Hawaii under a single kingdom by defeating the other islands’ chiefs. His successors made it the capital from 1820 to 1845, according to the National Park Service.

Before any work begins on a parcel, a cultural assessment will be done to determine if anything might have cultural significance such as burial plots or markers and certain types of plants or trees. The monitors are there to ensure there isn’t further harm to anything flagged in the assessment.

“Lahaina has a huge cultural and historic significance. We have to work with great precision, care and respect,” Calanog said. “And then, of course, the death toll. There’s considerable loss of life. Those are unique facets that make this work particularly challenging for us.”

Hawaiian kings and queens are buried in the graveyard of the 200-year-old historic Waiola Church, which along with the nearby Lahaina Hongwanji Mission, was engulfed in flames. The fire also decimated historic Front Street — home to restaurants, bars and tourist shops — and heavily damaged what is believed to be the United States’ largest banyan tree.

“There is going to be more attention to detail. They have to go at a slower pace,” said Native Hawaiian Micah Kamohoali’i, an archeologist and cultural specialist. “They can’t dig too far into the ground because there are so many generations of history buried in the ground.”

As of Sept. 29, the EPA had completed cleanup on over 1,000 of the 1,598 parcels that need to be cleared across Maui. All parcels cleared so far are residential properties, and the agency expects to finish the remaining residential sites in the coming weeks. It started work on the first of about 150 commercial parcels, which officials acknowledge will take longer.

After that, the Corps will bring in excavators, bulldozers and dump trucks to remove debris such as standing structures, vehicles and dead trees. Owners must approve the Corps coming onto their property, and a bill being debated at the Maui County Council will give residents an option of having the Corps do the cleanup for free or allowing them to hire their own contractors. Work would be stopped if human remains are found.

Much of the debate around waste removal is over environmental concerns versus the desire to rebuild. Authorities last month said the Hawaii Department of Health reported that sampling and monitoring of the burn sites did not “show evidence of poor air quality or any hazardous levels of contaminants in the air.” County officials, however, warned that ash “may contain toxic, cancer-causing chemicals with debris including broken glass, exposed electric wire and other objects.”

There are also discussions around where to put the waste removed by the Corps.

There are two landfills on Maui, a spokesperson for the county Joint Information Center said, and the island doesn’t currently have landfill space to handle all the waste from the fire. One of the landfills, Central Maui, was nearing capacity and had a more than \$17 million expansion project planned to start next year. Emergency planners are looking at accelerating plans for that expansion.

The Corps said plans are being worked out to move debris to a temporary site then eventually to permanent disposal sites in Maui County. Some of the concrete and metal would be recycled.

“Of course, there is the huge need to respect and accommodate the desire of those who wish to return to their former homes and businesses,” said Wayne Tanaka, the executive director of Sierra Club of Hawaii. “But we do not want their trauma and suffering to be compounded by future harm to themselves, their

families, or even future generations from avoidable toxic exposure.”

Based on the timeline of past disasters like the Paradise, California fire in 2018, rebuilding will happen but it could take years. Much of Lahaina is still littered with torched vehicles, blackened rubble, crumbled metal roofs, shattered glass, propane tanks and the foundations of what were homes and businesses.

Even so, Maui County Council Vice-Chair Yuki Lei Sugimura often hears from many anxious residents looking to return and build a new home.

“People are anxious for us to move forward because they want to be build, and that is that is probably just the predominant thing that we hear,” she said. “You know how fast this is going to be and, you know how do we get in line?”

Stock market today: Asian shares are sharply lower, tracking a rates-driven tumble on Wall Street

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Asian markets were sharply lower on Wednesday after Wall Street tumbled as it focused on the downside of a surprisingly strong job market: the likelihood that interest rates will stay high. U.S. futures and oil prices edged lower.

Tokyo’s Nikkei 225 index sank 2.2% to 30,551.85 and the Kospi in South Korea dropped 2.3% to 2,408.68. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng skidded 1% to 17,151.61. Troubled property developer China Evergrande was down 8.5% after plunging 28% on Tuesday.

Australia’s S&P/ASX 200 shed 1% to 6,873.90. In Bangkok, the SET fell 0.2%.

On Tuesday, the S&P 500 lost 1.4% to 4,229.45. The Dow sank 1.3% to 33,002.38, wiping out the last of its gains for the year so far. The Nasdaq composite led the market lower with a 1.9% drop to 13,059.47 as Big Tech stocks were among the market’s biggest losers.

Amazon fell 3.7%, Microsoft dropped 2.6% and Nvidia lost 2.8%.

The Dow is down 0.4% for the year so far, after being up nearly 8% at the start of August. The S&P 500, which is the index more 401(k) investments are benchmarked against, has sliced its gain for the year so far to 10.2%.

Stocks fell after a report showed U.S. employers have many more job openings than expected. Expectations that interest rates will stay high are pressuring stocks as Treasury yields rise in the bond market.

Such weight has been the main reason the S&P 500 has lost more than 40% of its value since the end of July, after charging higher for much of the year.

The 10-year Treasury yield climbed Tuesday to 4.79% from 4.69% late Monday and from just 0.50% early in the pandemic. It touched its highest level since 2007.

When bonds are paying so much more in interest, they pull investment dollars away from stocks and other investments prone to bigger price swings than bonds. High yields also make borrowing more expensive for companies and households across the economy, which can hurt corporate profits.

Investors increasingly are taking the Federal Reserve at its word that it will keep its main interest rate high for a long time in order to drive down inflation. The Fed has already yanked its federal funds rate to the highest level since 2001, and it indicated last month it may keep the rate higher in 2024 than it earlier expected.

Fed Gov. Michelle Bowman said in a speech Monday that she expects it will likely be appropriate “to raise rates further and hold them at a restrictive level for some time.”

Tuesday’s report showed employers were advertising 9.6 million job openings in late August, much higher than the 8.9 million economists expected. That could keep upward pressure on wages to attract employees.

Several other challenges are also tugging at Wall Street besides higher yields. The resumption of student-loan repayments could drag on spending by U.S. households, which has been strong enough to help keep the economy out of a recession despite high interest rates. Higher oil prices are threatening to worsen inflation, and economies around the world look shaky.

Oil prices ticked higher a day after slumping sharply to trim their big gains since the summer.

A barrel of benchmark U.S. crude lost 8 cents to \$89.15 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 41 cents to settle at \$89.23 on Tuesday. Brent crude, the international standard, gave up 9 cents to \$90.83 per barrel.

The dollar rose to 149.26 Japanese yen from 149.04 yen. The yen's weakness against the dollar has drawn protests from Japanese officials, and analysts said they believed regulators had intervened Tuesday to prevent the dollar from surpassing the 150 yen level.

The euro fell to \$1.0462 from \$1.0468.

Suspect charged in rapper Tupac Shakur's fatal shooting will appear in a court in Las Vegas

By RIO YAMAT and KEN RITTER Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A self-described gangster who police and prosecutors say masterminded the shooting death of Tupac Shakur in Las Vegas in 1996 is due to make his first appearance Wednesday before a Nevada judge.

Duane "Keffe D" Davis, 60, was arrested Friday during an early-morning walk near his home in suburban Henderson. A few hours later a grand jury indictment was unsealed in Clark County District Court charging him with murder.

Grand jurors also voted to add sentencing enhancements for the use of a deadly weapon and alleged gang activity. If Davis is convicted, that could add decades to his sentence.

Davis denied a request from The Associated Press for an interview from jail where he's being held without bond. Court records don't list an attorney who could comment on his behalf.

Davis had been a suspect in the case, and publicly admitted his role in the killing in interviews ahead of his 2019 tell-all memoir, "Compton Street Legend."

"There's one thing that's for sure when living that gangster lifestyle," he wrote. "You already know that the stuff you put out is going to come back; you never know how or when, but there's never a doubt that it's coming."

Davis' own comments revived the police investigation that led to the indictment, police and prosecutors said. In mid-July, Las Vegas police raided Davis' home, drawing renewed attention to one of hip-hop music's most enduring mysteries.

Prosecutors allege Shakur's killing stemmed from a rivalry and competition for dominance in a musical genre that, at the time, was dubbed "gangsta rap." It pitted East Coast members of a Bloods gang sect associated with rap music mogul Marion "Suge" Knight against West Coast members of a Crips sect that Davis has said he led in Compton, California.

Tension escalated in Las Vegas the night of Sept. 7, 1996, when a brawl broke out between Shakur and Davis' nephew, Orlando "Baby Lane" Anderson, at the MGM Grand hotel-casino following a heavyweight championship boxing match won by Mike Tyson.

Knight and Shakur went to the fight, as did members of the South Side Crips," prosecutor Marc DiGiacomo said last week in court. "And (Knight) brought his entourage, which involved Mob Piru gang members."

After the casino brawl, Knight drove a BMW with Shakur in the front passenger seat. The car was stopped at a red light near the Las Vegas Strip when a white Cadillac pulled up on the passenger side and gunfire erupted.

Shot multiple times, Shakur died a week later at age 25. Knight was grazed by a bullet fragment.

Davis has said he was in the front passenger seat of the Cadillac and handed a .40-caliber handgun to his nephew in the back seat, from which he said the shots were fired.

In Nevada, a person can be convicted of murder for helping another person commit the crime.

Among the four people in the Cadillac that night, Davis is the only one still alive. Anderson died in a May 1998 shooting in Compton. Before his death, Anderson denied involvement in Shakur's death. The other backseat passenger, DeAndre "Big Dre" or "Freaky" Smith, died in 2004. The driver, Terrence "Bubble Up" Brown, died in a 2015 shooting in Compton.

Knight, now 58, is now serving a 28-year prison sentence for running over and killing a Compton businessman outside a burger stand in January 2015.

Sheriff Kevin McMahill, who oversees the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, has acknowledged criticism that his agency was slow to investigate Shakur's killing.

"That was simply not the case," McMahill said. He called the investigation "important to this police department."

Shakur's sister, Sekyiwa "Set" Shakur, issued a statement describing the arrest as "a pivotal moment" but didn't praise authorities who investigated the case.

"The silence of the past 27 years surrounding this case has spoken loudly in our community," she said.

Child care programs just lost thousands of federal dollars. Families and providers scramble to cope

By LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

WILLIAMSON, W.Va. (AP) — Kaitlyn Adkins is studying law to help families in her community impacted by the opioid epidemic at the heart of West Virginia coal country.

But to do that, she needs someone to help look after her three toddlers. The first-generation college graduate said she wouldn't be able to finish law school without access to reliable daycare.

Providers say millions of children and their families are now at risk of losing that vital service. After two years of receiving federal subsidies, 220,000 child care programs across the country were cut off from funding Saturday. The largest investment in child care in U.S. history, the monthly payments ranged from hundreds to tens of thousands of dollars, and stabilized the industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It feels like they're just setting everyone up for failure," Adkins said, dropping her 2-year-old and 1-year-old twins at daycare on a recent morning before an hour-and-a-half drive to class.

For years, providers have been raising alarm about an unsustainable business model that burdens families with high costs and leaves centers with razor-thin profit margins — issues only exacerbated by inflation and a significant workforce shortage.

Now, providers say that without additional investment, they face the possibility of shutdown. The Century Foundation, a progressive think tank in Washington, D.C., analyzed a provider survey and government data, and concluded that in six states — Arkansas, Montana, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, as well as Washington, D.C. — up to half of all providers may be forced to close.

Many families and providers are calling on Congress to create a permanent funding solution to the crisis, warning of the ripple effects on the nation's economy. A Democratic proposal failed last month without any Republican support. It would have continued the grants for five years with \$16 billion allocated annually.

The most at-risk providers are those in rural communities that predominately serve low-income families. In West Virginia, where a quarter of all children live in poverty, the situation is especially dire.

Adkins brings her children to a center affiliated with a church in Williamson, West Virginia, where nearly 90% of families qualify for federal aid to help cover child care costs. For a family of four, that means making less than \$45,000 a year. Williamson is the seat of Mingo County, where one in three residents live below the poverty line, and more than 75% of children in the county school system are being raised by someone other than their parents, often grandparents.

Most mornings, Adkins wakes up at 5:30 a.m. to shuttle her kids to Living Water Child Care Center. She typically gets home late, and plays with and bathes her children before studying until early morning.

The proud daughter of a former coal miner, Adkins said she's witnessed the loss of coal jobs and the influx of opioids in the state with the highest rate of overdoses. She said taxpayers will end up paying more in the long run to welfare programs if the government doesn't make investments now in child care.

"We're seeing our kids really suffer — and that's a big problem," said Adkins, who wants to practice law focused on child abuse and neglect. "If they have no structure and no guidance, we're going to keep repeating cycles."

Starting in October 2021, Democrats' American Rescue Plan Act disbursed \$24 billion in payments to

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providers across the country, with varied funding based on program size and quality rating. In West Virginia, centers received an average \$5,000 to \$27,000 a month and family providers got between \$750 to \$3,200. The legislation also included \$15 billion to expand the block grant program that subsidizes the cost of child care for low-income families, though it is set to expire in September 2024.

At Living Water, a \$7,000 monthly subsidy went to purchasing new curriculum and advancing employee certifications, according to Director Jackie Branch. The investment paid off: In April, the center moved up a tier in its state quality rating, increasing its monthly stabilization funding to \$11,000.

When staffers realized many children didn't get outside playtime at home, they installed a rubber playground and colorful sunshades.

School-aged kids can finally work on homework assignments in the after-school program thanks to recently purchased computers.

Like most providers in the state, Living Water was also able to offer staff bonuses.

As of May 2022, the median pay for a child care worker in the U.S. was \$13.71, compared with \$10.47 in West Virginia, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor. Wage growth in the industry has fallen behind other low-wage professions.

Over the years, Goldie Huff, a waitress at a steakhouse in Williamson, has cared for more than two dozen foster care children. There are just two child care centers in the entire county, and the community can't afford to lose either one, she said.

"It would be horrible," she said, if Living Waters closed. All of her foster children have attended Living Water, along with kids, grandchildren and other family members. The state has the highest number of youth in foster care in the country.

She said a lot of the kids she cares for are recovering from traumatic childhood experiences and need structure. "How many kids do you know that don't wake up to breakfast? They don't know where the meals are coming from. They've not had baths. They've never had nice clothes."

The center serves three meals a day, plus snacks. They also distribute donations such as clothes and school supplies.

Branch said it will be an uphill battle to find other grants to make up for lost funds.

Policymakers should not only be worried about shuttering centers, but also about the quality of care and education available with such limited resources, said Melissa Colagrosso, CEO of A Place To Grow Children's Center, in Fayetteville, West Virginia. Since they opened 28 years ago, the number of accredited centers in the state has been halved.

"Right in the beginning, that's our opportunity to really change the brain and change a child's future," she said. "You invest in early childhood, then you invest less in prisons."

West Virginia's Department of Health and Human Resources announced last week it was sending providers a final bonus payment as September drew to a close, but that funds were tapped. The agency also allocated \$24 million in TANF funds to reimburse providers for children whose costs are subsidized based on enrollment rather than attendance for another year.

But providers say what they need instead is a permanent, long-term funding solution.

If West Virginia wants to grow its economy, child care is part the infrastructure necessary for that to happen, Tiffany Gale said. She isn't a parent herself, but just months before the pandemic started, she began caring for six children at her home in West Virginia's northern panhandle.

In just three years, she's moved up a level in the state's quality rating status and expanded into an empty commercial space downtown. She has five staff members and 18 children — 24 split between the two sites — who would have otherwise been waitlisted. Three-quarters of them are considered low-income, and qualify for government-subsidized care.

With the help of federal subsidies, Gale was able to purchase the two units next door. But now that the pandemic-era support is ending, Gale doesn't know if she'll be able to stay in business.

Policymakers have relied on the passion of child care providers — who are mostly women — to find a way to make ends meet without the resources and support they really need, Gale said.

"They're still going to do it, whether they're living in poverty and having to go to the food bank every

week or not," she said, of child care workers' commitment to work. "I think we really take advantage of that instead of lifting them up, lifting children up and lifting our communities up."

Speaker McCarthy ousted in historic House vote, as scramble begins for a Republican leader

By LISA MASCARO and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Kevin McCarthy was voted out of the job Tuesday in an extraordinary showdown — a first in U.S. history, forced by a contingent of hard-right conservatives and throwing the House and its Republican leadership into chaos.

It's the end of the political line for McCarthy, who has said repeatedly that he never gives up, but found himself with almost no options remaining. Neither the right-flank Republicans who engineered his ouster nor the Democrats who piled on seem open to negotiating.

McCarthy told lawmakers in the evening he would not run again for speaker, putting the gavel up for grabs. Next steps are highly uncertain with no obvious successor to lead the House Republican majority. Action is halted in the House until next week, when Republicans try to elect a new speaker.

"I may have lost this vote today, but as I walk out of this chamber I feel fortunate to have served," McCarthy said at a press conference at the Capitol, alternating between upbeat assessment of his speakership and angry score-settling of those who ousted him.

Still, he said, "I wouldn't change a thing."

McCarthy's chief rival, Rep. Matt Gaetz of Florida, orchestrated the rare vote on the obscure "motion to vacate," and pushed ahead swiftly into a dramatic afternoon roll call.

While McCarthy enjoyed support from most Republicans in his slim majority, eight Republican detractors — many of the same hard-right holdouts who tried to stop him from becoming speaker in January — essentially forced him out.

Stillness fell as the presiding officer gavelled the vote closed, 216-210, saying the office of the speaker "is hereby declared vacant."

Moments later, a top McCarthy ally, Rep. Patrick McHenry, R-N.C., took the gavel and, according to House rules, was named speaker pro tempore, to serve in the office until a new speaker is chosen.

The House then briskly recessed as lawmakers met privately to discuss the path forward.

It was a stunning moment for McCarthy, a punishment fueled by growing grievances but sparked by his weekend decision to work with Democrats to keep the federal government open rather than risk a shutdown.

But in many ways, McCarthy's ouster was set in motion when, in deal-making with hard-right holdouts at the start of the year, he agreed to a series of demands — including a rules change that allowed any single lawmaker to file the motion to vacate.

As the House fell silent, Gaetz, a top ally of Donald Trump, rose to offer his motion.

Leaders tried to turn it back, but the vote was 218-208, with 11 Republicans against tabling the motion, a sign of trouble to come.

The House then opened a floor debate unseen in modern times, and Republicans argued publicly among themselves for more than an hour.

"It's a sad day," Republican Rep. Tom Cole of Oklahoma said as debate got underway, urging his colleagues not to plunge the House Republican majority "into chaos."

But Gaetz shot back during the debate, "Chaos is Speaker McCarthy."

As the fiery debate dragged on, many of the complaints against the speaker revolved around his truthfulness and his ability to keep the promises he has made.

Almost alone, Gaetz led his side of the floor debate, criticizing the debt deal McCarthy made with President Joe Biden and the vote to prevent a government shutdown, which conservatives opposed as they demanded steeper spending cuts.

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But a long line of McCarthy supporters stood up for him, including Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, a leader of the conservative Freedom Caucus, who said, "He has kept his word." Rep. Garret Graves, R-La., waved his cellphone, saying it was "disgusting" that hard-right colleagues were fundraising off the move in text messages seeking donations.

McCarthy, of California, insisted he would not cut a deal with Democrats to remain in power — not that he could have relied on their help even if he had asked.

Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries said in a letter to colleagues that he wants to work with Republicans, but he was unwilling to provide the votes needed to save McCarthy.

"It is now the responsibility of the GOP members to end the House Republican Civil War," Jeffries said, announcing the Democratic leadership would vote for the motion to oust the speaker.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden "hopes the House will quickly elect a Speaker." Once that happens, she said, "he looks forward to working together with them."

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell issued a statement thanking McCarthy for "what is often a thankless role."

At the Capitol, both Republicans and Democrats met privately ahead of the historic afternoon vote.

Behind closed doors, McCarthy told fellow Republicans: Let's get on with it.

McCarthy invoked Republican Speaker Joseph Cannon, who more than 100 years ago confronted his critics head-on by calling their bluff and setting the vote himself on his ouster. Cannon survived that take-down attempt, which was the first time the House had actually voted to consider removing its speaker. A more recent threat against John Boehner in 2015 didn't make it to a vote but led him to early retirement.

Gaetz was in attendance, but he did not address the room.

Across the way in the Capitol, Democrats lined up for a long discussion and unified around one common point: McCarthy cannot be trusted, several lawmakers in the room said.

"I think it's safe to say there's not a lot of good will in that room for Kevin McCarthy," said Rep. Richard Neal, D-Mass.

"At the end of the day, the country needs a speaker that can be relied upon," said Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif. "We don't trust him. Their members don't trust him. And you need a certain degree of trust to be the speaker."

Removing the speaker launches the House Republicans into chaos heading into a busy fall when Congress will need to fund the government again or risk a mid-November shutdown.

Typically, top leaders would be next in line for the job, but Majority Leader Steve Scalise is battling cancer and Majority Whip Tom Emmer, like any potential candidate, may have trouble securing the vote. Another leading Republican, Rep. Elise Stefanik of New York, is also a Trump ally.

One of McHenry's first acts in the temporary position was to oust Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi from her honorary office at the Capitol while she was away in California to pay tribute to Sen. Dianne Feinstein.

"No matter who is going to be the speaker, the challenges still remain," Scalise said. "But I think the opportunity is there to continue moving forward."

Asked if he was physically up to the job, Scalise said, "I feel great."

It took McCarthy himself 15 rounds in January over multiple days of voting before he secured the support from his colleagues to gain the gavel.

Trump, the former president who is the Republican front-runner in the 2024 race to challenge Biden, complained about the chaos. "Why is it that Republicans are always fighting among themselves," he asked on social media.

Asked about McCarthy's ouster as he exited court in New York, where he is on trial for business fraud, Trump did not respond.

One key McCarthy ally, Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., who is also close with Trump, took to social media urging support for "our speaker."

Republicans left the chamber in a daze, totally uncertain about next steps. "I honestly don't know," said Rep. Debbie Lesko, R-Ariz. "This is a total disaster."

Many had lined up to hug McCarthy, some to shake his hand.

Democrats, who have bristled at McCarthy's leadership — cajoling them one minute, walking away from deals the next — said they were just holding back, waiting for Republicans to figure out how to run the House.

Rep, Don Bacon, R-Neb., the leader of a centrist group, said the only option was to leave the eight hardliners behind and try to work across the aisle. "We're going to stay with Kevin," he said. "He told us earlier he'll never quit."

But McCarthy made it clear Tuesday night that he would not try to win back the job.

Lahaina residents deliver petition asking Hawaii governor to delay tourism reopening

By AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Residents from fire-stricken Lahaina on Tuesday delivered a petition asking Hawaii Gov. Josh Green to delay plans to reopen a portion of West Maui to tourism starting this weekend, saying the grieving community is not ready to welcome back visitors.

The petition signed by 3,517 people from West Maui zip codes comes amid a fierce and anguished debate over when travelers should return to the region home to the historic town of Lahaina that was destroyed in the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century. At least 98 people died in the Aug. 8 blaze and more than a dozen are missing. The first phase of the plan to reopen Maui to tourists begins Sunday, the two-month anniversary of the disaster.

Though many residents say they are not ready, others say they need tourism so they can work in hotels and restaurants to earn a living.

"We are not mentally nor emotionally ready to welcome and serve our visitors. Not yet," restaurant bartender Pa'ele Kiakona said at a news conference before several dozen people delivered the petition. "Our grief is still fresh and our losses too profound."

Tamara Paltin, who represents Lahaina on the Maui County Council, said two months may seem like a long time, but she noted Lahaina residents didn't have reliable cellphone service or internet for the first month after the fire and have been coping with uncertain housing. She said many people, including herself, can't sleep through the night.

Paltin urged the governor to decide on when to reopen after consulting residents in an "open and transparent way."

Several dozen people dressed in red T-shirts went to Green's koa wood-paneled executive chambers to deliver the signatures in person. Green was not in his office, so his director of constituent services, Bonnelley Pa'uulu, accepted the box on his behalf. Altogether, 14,000 people signed the petition as of midday Tuesday.

Green told the Hawaii News Now interview program "Spotlight Now" shortly afterward that he was "utterly sympathetic" to people's suffering. But he said more than 8,000 people have lost their jobs due to the fire and getting people back to work was part of recovering.

"It's my job as governor to support them, to be thoughtful about all people and to make sure Maui survives, because people will otherwise go bankrupt and have to leave the island, have to move out of Maui," he said. "Local people — these are middle-class people that lived in Lahaina — will have to leave if they don't have jobs."

Maui, which is famous around the world for its beaches and waterfalls, is among the most tourism-dependent islands in Hawaii.

The number of visitors plummeted 70% after the fire when Green and tourism officials discouraged "non-essential travel" to the island. University of Hawaii economists estimate unemployment will top 10% on Maui, compared to 2.5% in July. The resulting economic downturn is expected to depress state tax revenues.

A few weeks after the fire, the tourism industry began urging travelers to respectfully visit parts of Maui

unaffected by the blaze, like Wailea and Makena. Then last month Green announced that West Maui — a long expanse of coastline encompassing Lahaina and hotels and condos to its north — would reopen to tourists on Oct. 8.

Maui Mayor Richard Bissen last week narrowed the geographic scope of this plan, saying that only the northernmost section of West Maui — a 3-mile (5-kilometer) stretch including the Ritz-Carlton Kapalua — would resume taking tourists. The rest of the region, where most of Lahaina's evacuees are staying, would reopen at a later, unspecified date.

The first phase to be reopened under the mayor's plan — from Kapalua to the Kahana Villa — is 7 to 10 miles (11 to 16 kilometers) and a 15- to 20-minute drive north of the area that burned. Bissen said second and third phases, both covering zones closer to the burned parts of Lahaina, would reopen after officials assess earlier phases.

Green said only one or two hotels would reopen on Sunday, calling it a "gentle start."

Restaurant bartender Kiakona said he's among those not ready to go back to work. He said he doesn't want to constantly be asked if he lost his home and to have "somebody consistently reminding you of the disaster that you just went through."

Green said people who aren't ready to go back to work won't need to. He said they would continue to receive benefits and housing.

"But what I say to them is think of your neighbor or think of the business next door to you," Green said. "Or think of the impact of having only, say, 40% of the travelers that we normally have to Maui."

The governor said a lack of tourism would make it harder for the state to rebuild the elementary school that burned in the fire and provide residents with healthcare coverage.

Charles Nahale, a musician who lost all his gigs singing and playing the ukulele and guitar for tourists, recounted recently seeing tourists at a restaurant a few miles from the burn zone. They appeared oblivious and unsympathetic to those around them, he said.

"This is not a normal tourist destination like it was prior to the fire," he said by telephone from Lahaina. "You shouldn't be there expecting people to serve you your mai tais and your food."

Nahale said grieving was more critical to him than getting back to work.

"What is more important to me is that these thousands, including me, have the time to heal," he said. "What's more important to me is that we have the time to be normal again."

Twins stop record 18-game postseason skid on strength of Royce Lewis home runs

By DAVE CAMPBELL AP Sports Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Royce Lewis felt a jolt of confidence from his inclusion on Minnesota's roster for the AL Wild Card Series, ending the uncertainty around his hamstring strain.

Pablo López found inspiration in his closet, wearing a throwback jersey of his boyhood hero Johan Santana who just happened to be the last Twins pitcher to win a game in the playoffs.

The Twins and their fans fed off the energy, finally stopping that record 18-game postseason skid.

Lewis smashed the streak into the seats, homering in each of his first two at-bats to carry the Twins to a 3-1 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays in the opener of their AL Wild Card Series on Tuesday.

"It was a blessing to play today. That atmosphere was electric," said Lewis, whose two-run shot off Kevin Gausman in the first inning and leadoff drive in the third sent the sellout crowd into a frenzy.

The bigger celebration occurred a few hours later when Jhoan Duran pitched a hitless ninth to close the first victory for the Twins in the playoffs since Oct. 5, 2004, and vanquish the longest postseason skid in major North American professional sports.

"This was my team growing up. It's still my team," said Caleb Thielbar, a Minnesota native who pitched a perfect seventh. "I know how people feel, and I know what weight was lifted off everyone's backs today."

It was the first home win for the Twins in the playoffs since Game 1 of the ALCS in 2002 at the Metrodome. Lewis was a 3-year-old then. He's the type of big-time player — with five grand slams in 70 career

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games — that could lead the Twins on an actual postseason run instead of just hanging a division title banner and leaving the party after three or four days.

"I thought the place was going to split open and melt, honestly," Twins manager Rocco Baldelli said. "It was out of this universe out there on the field. The fans took over the game. They helped us win today."

López also had a strong playoff debut for Minnesota, permitting one run and five hits in 5 2/3 innings. After wearing his Santana jersey to the ballpark, he delivered a performance that was reminiscent of his fellow Venezuelan.

"Sometimes things line up too perfectly to pass up on those opportunities," López said.

Game 2 is Wednesday afternoon. The entire series is at Target Field.

"You don't want to say like an over sense of urgency, but these guys know it's going to take everybody to get to Game 3," Blue Jays manager John Schneider said.

The Blue Jays finally got on the board when Kevin Kiermaier's two-out single drove in Bo Bichette in the sixth, but they left nine runners on base.

The Blue Jays carried their own October angst into this series, having not won a postseason game since the 2016 ALCS. They took two-game sweeps as wild cards in 2020 and 2022, and Bichette and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. — two franchise cornerstones and the celebrated sons of former major leaguers — have not yet won a postseason game.

GAUSMAN'S DAY

Gausman finished four innings with three hits and three walks, his second-shortest start of the season. The right-hander frequently asked for a new ball early in his outing and even had trouble at one point with the wireless PitchCom device that is used to prevent sign stealing.

He finished better than he started but was never able to escape the full-count fastball to Lewis in the first inning that he said he misplaced by 3½ feet.

"Good hitters are going to make you pay for that," Gausman said. "Obviously he's hitting in the '3' hole for a reason."

GLOVE WORK

López and his four relievers got plenty of defensive help. Michael A. Taylor made a diving catch of a sharp line drive to center by Alejandro Kirk in the second and a leaping grab at the wall to take an extra-base hit away from a fuming Matt Chapman in the sixth. Max Kepler crashed against the same padding to catch Guerrero's long fly ball in the fourth.

The most vital play of all was later in that inning, when Kiermaier's two-out roller eluded third baseman Jorge Polanco as Bichette rounded for home with two outs. Carlos Correa backed him up from shortstop and threw a strike to the plate to end the inning.

"Once I saw Bo look at the ball, I knew he had intentions," Correa said. "I could see in his eyes."

ROYCE ROLLS

Lewis became the third player in MLB history to hit home runs in each of his first two career postseason plate appearances, following Evan Longoria for the Rays in 2008 and Gary Gaetti for the Twins in 1987.

UP NEXT

Blue Jays: RHP José Berríos (11-12, 3.65 ERA) will start Game 2 against the team he pitched 5½ seasons for until a trade to Toronto on July 30, 2021. He made postseason starts for the Twins in 2019 and 2020. "I love pitching in this ballpark because the dugout is so close, so I look like I throw 100," Berríos said.

Twins: RHP Sonny Gray (8-8, 2.79 ERA) will take the mound Wednesday for the first postseason start for the 11-year veteran since 2017 in Game 4 of the ALDS for the Yankees.

Missing girl's rescue in upstate New York came as pivotal hours ticked by

By MAYSOON KHAN and CAROLYN THOMPSON Associated Press

MOREAU, N.Y. (AP) — An agonizing 34 hours had passed since 9-year-old Charlotte Sena disappeared from an upstate New York campground when police got the break they needed to bring the girl home safely.

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At 4:20 a.m. Monday, a vehicle pulled up to the family's home a short drive away from the campground, and the driver exited in the darkness to place a ransom note in the mailbox. Law enforcement had been guarding the little girl's home and watched the scene unfold.

The officers rushed to the mailbox, investigators quickly isolated fingerprints, and within hours were running them through a New York state database. The first try turned up nothing. Then came a second, connecting the print to the suspect and his white camper parked next to a doublewide trailer two miles away.

Some 20 officers from a state police special operations unit and FBI SWAT team descended on the camper, arresting suspect, 46-year-old Craig Ross Jr., and finding the girl in a cabinet.

"The hit came at 2:30 in the afternoon," Gov. Kathy Hochul said at a news conference.

The fingerprint belonged to Ross, who had been stopped for drunken driving in Saratoga in 1999, Hochul said.

Ross' vehicle was registered to an address just two miles from the Sena home in Greenfield. But it was his mother's property about 10 miles away in Ballston Spa, the site of a doublewide trailer with a white camper parked off to the side, that rescuers targeted.

Law enforcement officials, some with their guns drawn, moved in for the raid at 6:30 p.m. Monday. There was shouting and loud bangs and flashes of light.

"My first thought was, like, is this a drug bust? Because in my wildest, wildest dreams, it couldn't have been that," said Carol Brown, 61, a neighbor who lives down the street. "It is just unbelievable that this person lived on my street."

Then the girl emerged from the camper wrapped in a towel, escorted by police, one neighbor said. The raid came right about at the 48-hour mark of Charlotte's disappearance, a critical time in the search for any missing child.

"As each hour went on, hope faded because we all know the stories," Hochul said after the rescue. "The first 24 hours, there's hope. But when you hit 48 hours, hope starts to wane. When Charlotte disappeared in Moreau State Park, it was every parent's worst nightmare."

Ross resisted capture and suffered minor injuries, police said. Charlotte appeared physically unharmed.

"She knew she was being rescued. She knew that she was in safe hands," Hochul said.

The family was immediately notified and reunited at the hospital where Charlotte was taken.

"We are thrilled that she is home and we understand that the outcome is not what every family gets," the girl's family said in a statement Tuesday, WRGB in Albany reported.

Parents David and Trisha Sena had braced for another day combing Moreau Lake State Park in Ganessvoort for their middle daughter. Charlotte had pulled a gray bike helmet over her blonde hair and rode off on her bike Saturday afternoon, black Crocs on her feet and wearing an orange tie-dye Pokemon shirt. She was doing loops around a bike path with two friends around 6:15 p.m. when she vanished while taking one last lap on her own.

Ross was arraigned overnight in town court in Milton, New York, on a charge of first-degree kidnapping. He was being held without bail at the Saratoga County Correctional Facility.

Police said more charges are expected.

A message seeking comment was left with the Saratoga County Public Defender's Office, which represented Ross at his arraignment.

Investigators had not determined Tuesday whether the suspect and family were connected in any way.

Once Charlotte was safe, the family sent "a huge thank you to the FBI, the New York State police, all of the agencies that were mobilized, all of the families, friends, community, neighbors and hundreds of volunteers who supported us and worked tirelessly to bring Charlotte home."

It was an ending the governor, with each passing hour, had worried would not happen.

Lorenzen, Buxton, Hernández, Cueto out for Wild Card Series; Correa, Siri, Bush on rosters

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Michael Lorenzen, Byron Buxton, Johnny Cueto and Jonathan Hernández were among the players left off rosters for Wild Card Series that started Tuesday, while the Texas Rangers made the surprise inclusion of former top draft pick Matt Bush.

Minnesota included Carlos Correa and rookie Royce Lewis along with right-hander Chris Paddack, who made a pair relief appearances last week in his return from Tommy John surgery. Correa hasn't played since Sept. 18 because of plantar fasciitis in his left foot and Lewis has been sidelined since straining his left hamstring on Sept. 19.

Outfielder Jose Siri made Tampa Bay's roster after missing the season's final three weeks with a broken hand.

Milwaukee dropped first baseman Rowdy Tellez, who homered twice in the 2021 Division Series but slumped this season.

Lorenzen, a 31-year-old right-hander, no-hit Washington on Aug. 9. He then went 2-2 with a 7.96 ERA in his next five starts and was dropped from the Phillies' rotation. His last four appearances were out of the bullpen.

Wes Wilson, a 29-year-old infielder who made his debut in August and played in eight games, was included on the 26-man roster against the Miami Marlins as a right-handed bat off the bench.

Cueto was dropped by the Marlins after going 1-4 with a 6.02 ERA in only 52 1/3 innings. Miami included 23-year-old left-hander Ryan Weathers, acquired from San Diego on Aug. 1.

Rookie Andrew Stevenson was included over Jordan Luplow as a reserve outfielder for Minnesota. Buxton hasn't played since Aug. 1 and was limited to designated hitter duty this year because of knee trouble. Manager Rocco Baldelli praised Buxton's effort in his rehab but said he had "some minor setbacks along the way of trying to return."

Correa was in the Twins' lineup at shortstop and Lewis as the designated hitter against Toronto, with Jorge Polanco playing third base and Edouard Julien at second base. Baldelli said he wouldn't rule out using Lewis at third base in the series and that he's not concerned about his base-running capability.

"We're going to do whatever we can to keep Royce in the lineup hitting third for us," Baldelli said.

Paddack had Tommy John surgery on May 18 last year and while a candidate for the rotation next season, he's on the roster for bullpen depth in October. Starting pitcher Bailey Ober was left off, with Pablo López, Sonny Gray and likely Joe Ryan starting if there's a Game 3. Kenta Maeda has been recalibrated for relief work.

Toronto kept 14 position players and dropped catcher Danny Jansen, who broke his right middle finger on Sept. 1. Tyler Heineman is the backup to Alejandro Kirk. Rookie Cam Eden, who played in five games after a late-season callup for his major league debut, is the fourth outfielder and a pinch running option.

Hyun-Jin Ryu, who made his season debut on Aug. 1 after returning from Tommy John elbow surgery, was left off the roster with Kevin Gausman and José Berríos lined up for the first two games and either Chris Bassitt or Yusei Kikuchi available to start Game 3 if it's necessary.

Texas said Hernández has a right shoulder injury and included Bush, who hasn't pitched a big league game since June 30 for Milwaukee. The 37-year-old right-hander Bush is the only player on the Rangers' roster who was also part of the 2016 team that was swept by Tampa Bay. That was the rookie season for Bush, which came 12 years after he was drafted — the longest gap for an overall No. 1 to make his debut — and during the period when Bush had several alcohol-related incidents even before a near-fatal accident and time in prison.

Bush missed all of the 2019 and 2020 seasons with Texas after twice having surgery. He had surgery in 2018 to repair and reinforce the partially torn ulnar collateral ligament in hopes of avoiding Tommy John surgery.

When that didn't work, he did need Tommy John surgery in 2019. It was the second time the former No. 1 overall draft pick had that ligament replacement surgery. The first was in 2007, soon after being

converted from shortstop to pitcher by his hometown San Diego Padres.

Siri had been sidelined since his right hand was broken when hit by a pitch from Minnesota's Dylan Floro on Sept. 11. Siri hit .222 with 25 homers and 56 RBIs for the Rays.

Top prospect Junior Caminero, a 20-year-old infielder who was called up in late September, was included for the best-of-three series against Texas after hitting .235 with one homer and seven RBIs in seven games.

Outfielder Luke Raley was left off the roster. He has not played since Sept. 20 because of a cervical strain.

Tellez hit 35 homers for Milwaukee in 2022 but batted just .215 this season and has homered just once since May 22. His playing time started to dip after the Brewers acquired first baseman Carlos Santana and outfielder/designated hitter Mark Canha at the trade deadline.

Rookie outfielder Garrett Mitchell also was left off the roster against Arizona. The Brewers' starting center fielder to open the year, he played three games last week after returning from an April shoulder injury.

Outfielder/designated hitter Jesse Winker was included. He hasn't played a major league game since July 24 and hit just .199 with one homer in 197 plate appearances, though he had a .962 OPS in 23 games with Triple-A Nashville.

Utilityman Owen Miller and rookie outfielder Joey Wiemer, who both ended the regular season in the minors, are on the roster.

Arizona left off utilityman Jace Peterson but less than eight hours later added him to the roster about 10 minutes before the opener. He replaced Jake McCarthy, who has a right oblique strain.

McCarthy is ineligible to return until the NL Championship Series. He hit .243 with a .318 on-base percentage, two homers, 16 RBIs and 26 steals in 99 games.

US announces sweeping action against Chinese fentanyl supply chain producers

By FATIMA HUSSEIN and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration took aim Tuesday at the fentanyl trafficking threat, announcing a series of indictments and sanctions against Chinese companies and executives blamed for importing the chemicals used to make the deadly drug.

Officials described the actions, which include charges against eight Chinese companies accused of advertising, manufacturing and distributing precursor chemicals for synthetic opioids like fentanyl, as the latest effort in their fight against the deadliest overdose crisis in U.S. history. The moves come one day before senior administration officials are set to visit Mexico, whose cartels are part of the global trafficking network, for meetings expected to involve discussion of the drug threat.

"We know that this network includes the cartels' leaders, their drug traffickers, their money launderers, their clandestine lab operators, their security forces, their weapons suppliers, and their chemical suppliers," Attorney General Merrick Garland said at a news conference. "And we know that this global fentanyl supply chain, which ends with the deaths of Americans, often starts with chemical companies in China."

Besides charging eight companies, the Justice Department also indicted 12 executives for their alleged roles in drug trafficking. In a coordinated action, the Treasury Department announced sanctions against 28 people and companies — mostly in China but also in Canada — that will cut them off from the U.S. financial system and prohibit anyone in the U.S. from doing business with them. None of those charged has been arrested, but Garland said prosecutors intended to "bring every one of these defendants to justice."

"It's the latest step in the rapid scaling up of our work targeting the financial flows that power the global illicit drug trade," said Deputy Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo. He said Treasury is also seeking out the friends, family members, and affiliates of the people who benefit from drug sales.

"If you benefit from the proceeds of this illicit activity, we are going to come after your assets," he said.

Mexico and China are the primary sources for fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances trafficked directly into the U.S., according to the Drug Enforcement Administration, which is tasked with combating illicit drug trafficking. Nearly all the precursor chemicals that are needed to make fentanyl come from China. And the companies that make the precursors routinely use fake return addresses and mislabel the products in

order to avoid being caught by law enforcement.

One of the examples cited by the Justice Department involves a Chinese pharmaceutical technology company that advertised xylazine, a horse tranquilizer that is often mixed to fentanyl to ensure a more potent high, and shipped the chemicals to the U.S. and to Mexico. One of the purchasers in Mexico, officials said, was a drug trafficker associated with the Sinaloa Cartel.

This latest action follows a series of measures taken this year against members of the Sinaloa cartel, cash couriers and cartel fraud schemes.

Republicans have complained, however, that the administration isn't doing enough to stop fentanyl and the issue is likely to figure prominently in next year's presidential campaign.

In February, 21 Republican state attorneys general wrote a letter to President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken calling on them to designate Mexican drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations. Last year a group of Republican attorneys general asked the president to declare fentanyl a weapon of mass destruction. No such actions have been taken.

Fentanyl, a powerful opioid, is the deadliest drug in the U.S. today. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that drug overdose deaths have increased more than sevenfold from 2015 to 2021.

More than 100,000 deaths a year have been linked to drug overdoses since 2020 and about two-thirds of those are related to fentanyl. The death toll is more than 10 times as many drug deaths as in 1988, at the height of the crack epidemic.

The U.S. has taken a slew of actions to stem the tide of fentanyl coming into the country. Overall, the Biden administration has imposed over 200 sanctions related to the illegal drug trade.

State lawmakers nationwide are responding to the deadliest overdose crisis in U.S. history by pushing harsher penalties for possessing fentanyl.

In a speech at the Family Summit on Fentanyl last week, Garland said the Justice Department was sending out some \$345 million in federal funding over the next year, including money to support mentoring for at-risk young people and increase access to the overdose-reversal drug naloxone.

On Capitol Hill, a bipartisan group of legislators out of the Senate Banking and Armed Services committees has introduced legislation that would declare fentanyl trafficking a national emergency and prod Treasury to use its sanctions authority to quell the proliferation of the drug in the U.S.

It would also impose reporting requirements and enable the president to confiscate sanctioned property of fentanyl traffickers to use for law enforcement efforts.

New York judge issues limited gag order after Trump sends disparaging post about court clerk

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, BOBBY CAINA CALVAN and JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — Rebuking Donald Trump, a state court judge imposed a limited gag order Tuesday in the former president's civil business fraud trial and ordered him to delete a social media post that publicly maligned a key court staffer.

Judge Arthur Engoron told all participants in the case not to smear court personnel, warning of "serious sanctions" if they do.

"Personal attacks on members of my court staff are unacceptable, not appropriate, and I will not tolerate them," Engoron said after complaining — without naming names — about a defendant's "disparaging, untrue and personally identifying post about a member of my staff."

A few hours earlier, Trump had posted a photo of Engoron's principal law clerk, Allison Greenfield, posing with Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., at a public event. Trump, the Republican front-runner for president in 2024, has repeatedly cast the trial as a political attack by New York's Democratic attorney general, Letitia James.

Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform that it was "disgraceful" that Greenfield was working with the judge in the courtroom, adding to complaints he'd made outside court Monday.

The post apparently sparked a series of closed-door courtroom discussions, involving Trump and lawyers

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for both sides, during what's usually a lunch break. By the time the gag order was issued, Trump had deleted the post — as Engoron ordered, according to the judge.

As for Schumer, a spokesperson called the post "pathetic" and said the senator doesn't know Greenfield and is in photos with thousands of constituents.

Aside from that sideshow, James' attorney questioned an accountant Tuesday in an effort to build the state's case that Trump and others at his company had full control over the preparation of misleading and false financial statements at the heart of their case.

The state's lawsuit alleges that Trump and his business chronically lied about his wealth on financial statements given to banks, insurers and others.

Also Tuesday, Engoron set the record straight about a comment that the ex-president had touted as an important victory.

The judge had suggested on Monday that testimony about Trump's 2011 financial statement might be beyond a 2014 time limit for claims in this case. Trump's legal team has argued that the time limit cuts off most of the claims.

But Engoron ruled last week that all the claims were allowable under the statute of limitations, and he made clear Tuesday that the trial isn't "an opportunity to relitigate what I have already decided." He said that at the trial's early stage, he's inclined to give both sides considerable leeway to connect older evidence to claims in the lawsuit.

Trump denies any wrongdoing and again branded the case "a scam" on Tuesday.

He and lawyers have said his financial statements were legitimate representations of the worth of unique luxury properties, made even more valuable because of their association with him. The defense also emphasizes that the financial statements bore disclaimers saying that they weren't audited and that others "might reach different conclusions" about his financial position if they had more information.

Accountant Donald Bender continued testifying Tuesday about his years preparing those statements from figures that Trump's company supplied.

In some years, he said, the Trump Organization failed to provide all documents necessary for producing the statements, despite attesting in letters to the accounting firm that it had provided all financial records and hadn't "knowingly withheld" relevant data.

"They were not giving all of the documents that we needed," Bender testified, explaining that "there were certain appraisals out there for a number of years that we had never seen."

During cross-examination, Bender acknowledged he missed a change in information about the size of the former president's penthouse at Trump Tower.

Defense lawyer Jesus M. Suarez seized on that, telling Bender that Trump was sitting through the trial and his company and employees were "going through hell" because "you missed it."

Bender said he couldn't be faulted.

"We didn't screw it up. The Trump Organization made a mistake, and we didn't catch it," he said.

After the session ended with another closed-door discussion among Trump, James and their lawyers, Trump emerged saying that he'd be back for a third day Wednesday.

Trump plans to testify later in the trial, but he doesn't have to attend it now. While grumbling that he'd rather be on the campaign trail, he has used the waiting cameras in a courthouse hallway as a microphone for political messaging.

James scored an early victory when Engoron, a Democrat, ruled last week that Trump committed fraud by exaggerating the size of his Trump Tower apartment, claiming his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida was worth as much as \$739 million and putting similar oversized valuations on office towers, golf courses and other assets.

The non-jury trial concerns six remaining claims in the lawsuit and how much Trump might owe in penalties. James is seeking \$250 million and a ban on Trump doing business in New York. The judge has already ruled that some of Trump's companies should be dissolved as punishment.

Terry Francona steps away as Guardians manager, will assume future role with club after 11-year run

By TOM WITHERS AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — For one of the few times in his life, Terry Francona won't have to follow a strict daily schedule. He's got freedom and flexibility.

He'll no longer have to rush to Progressive Field early in the morning to review scouting reports. There's no required pregame media interviews anymore, and Francona doesn't have to get out to the field for batting practice.

Those hectic days are done.

"I'm going to be OK not having that," Francona said. "It's been 40-something years of that. I'm ready to rest a little bit and let somebody else be in charge."

No one, though, will replace him.

One of baseball's most beloved figures, Francona stepped away from the game — at least temporarily — on Tuesday, ending a 23-year managerial career that began in Philadelphia, peaked with two World Series titles in Boston and concluded with an 11-season stay in Cleveland.

Although his decision to leave the Guardians has been known for weeks, Francona and the Guardians didn't make it official until two days after their season ended with a third-place finish in the AL Central.

And while he won't return to Cleveland's dugout, the 64-year-old Francona will have a future unspecified role with the team.

He's not sure what or when. And that's just fine.

"I know I need to go home and get healthy and see what I miss about our game and then maybe after some time see the best way to maybe quench that appetite — whatever it is," he said. "I don't foresee managing again. If I was going to manage, I like doing it here. But I also don't want to just turn away from the game."

Francona, who only had two losing seasons with Cleveland, became the fourth major league manager to depart in five days following the firings of San Francisco's Gabe Kapler, the New York Mets' Buck Showalter and the Los Angeles Angels' Phil Nevin.

Slowed by serious medical issues in recent years, Francona intends to spend more time playing with his grandkids, getting healthy (shoulder replacement and double hernia surgery is scheduled for next week) and enjoying an extended offseason after a four-decade grind.

At some point, he'll consult with Chris Antonetti, the team's president of baseball operations, and general manager Mike Chernoff on how he can further assist an organization he's helped make one of MLB's strongest.

While he was saluted over the season's final weeks, Francona stayed clear of saying this was a retirement.

Maybe more of a pause than anything permanent.

"I never was real concerned about the word retire," he said. "I guess when you say retire, it's like, well, you're going home and not doing anything. Don't feel that way either. We'll figure something out that makes sense."

"Just need some time. I mean normally after a season I need some time anyway. This is a little different."

When Francona was hired in October 2012, Antonetti said he never imagined their partnership would extend beyond a decade. That rarely happens in major professional sports.

But Francona's uncanny ability to connect with people along with the club's willingness to support and grow with him, created a situation that may be impossible to duplicate.

The Guardians have had it good with Francona, and vice versa.

"I'm a way better person now for coming here," said Francona, the winningest manager in club history. "It's just been good, man. I came here for the right reasons. I'm leaving for the right reasons and in between it's been really good."

"That doesn't mean we haven't been challenged. We get challenged all the time. But doing it with people you respect and care about and care about you is really good."

The Guardians now search for his replacement, who will have a monumental challenge in filling Francona's shoes.

Antonetti said the team has already conducted several interviews after beginning with an initial list of over 45 internal and external candidates to succeed Francona, who won three AL Manager of the Year Awards in Cleveland.

Antonetti said Guardians first-base coach Sandy Alomar Jr. declined an opportunity to interview, but told the team he wants to stay in a similar position on the new manager's staff.

Cleveland bench coach DeMarlo Hale, who filled in for Francona when he had to step down during the 2021 season, is believed to be among the candidates.

"The most important thing is that we get to the right person, and if we can do that quickly, great," Antonetti said. "But if it takes us a month or longer, then that's the necessary timeframe. But the most important thing is getting the right person."

That was certainly the case with Francona.

With 1,950 career wins, he's 13th on the all-time list, sandwiched by Casey Stengel (1,905) and Leo Du-rocher (2,008), two other colorful managers who like Francona endeared themselves to fans and players.

Every manager ahead of Francona is a Hall of Famer except for Dusty Baker and Bruce Bochy, who remain active and likely will be enshrined one day.

Francona's rise as one of the game's best managers was somewhat unexpected.

Things didn't go particularly well for him in Philadelphia, where he had four straight losing seasons, got constantly booed in a demanding, sports-crazed city and had the tires on his car slashed on fan appreciation day.

He was an unlikely choice for Boston's job, but immediately claimed legendary status by winning the World Series in his first season.

The Red Sox overcame a 3-0 deficit in the AL Championship Series and swept St. Louis to end an 86-year championship drought and exorcise the "Curse of the Bambino," a perceived hex on the team after Babe Ruth was sold to the rival New York Yankees.

When his tenure in Boston ended in 2011 amid some controversy, Francona took a year off and worked in broadcasting before going to Cleveland, where his dad spent six seasons and he himself played 62 games in 1988.

He was an ideal fit, nearly perfect. And, who knows, if there's not a rain delay late in Game 7 of the 2016 World Series, it may have been even more special.

Francona's not exactly sure what's next.

Once he recovers from his surgeries, he'll go home to Tucson, Arizona, and cheer on his beloved Arizona Wildcats. Some golfing buddies are planning another trip to Ireland next summer, and Francona may finally join them.

Finally, he's got some time.

"It'll be nice to just be able to do something if I want to," he said.

Jury selection begins in trial of fallen cryptocurrency mogul Sam Bankman-Fried

By LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Jury selection began Tuesday in the fraud trial of FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried after a prosecutor revealed that no discussions about a potential plea agreement took place in the nearly 10 months since the cryptocurrency executive was arrested and brought to the United States.

Once a billionaire, the 31-year-old crypto mogul faces the possibility of a long prison term if convicted at a trial projected to last up to six weeks. In a makeover for trial, Bankman-Fried gave up his wild big-hair look for a scissored-down trim more common in the financial industry. Introduced to jurors, he briefly stood in his suit and tie and turned their way.

Nearly 50 prospective jurors were sent home and told to return Wednesday, when it was expected that a jury of 12 individuals and six alternates would be in place by late morning so opening statements could

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begin.

Prosecutors say Bankman-Fried defrauded people and financial institutions who had accounts worth billions of dollars at the cryptocurrency exchange by illegally diverting massive sums of their money for his personal use, including making risky trades at his cryptocurrency hedge fund, Alameda Research. He's also accused of using customer money to buy real estate and make big political contributions to try to influence government regulation of cryptocurrency.

U.S. Attorney Damian Williams, who is overseeing the prosecution, has called it one of the biggest frauds in the country's history.

Before the first prospective jurors were brought into a Manhattan courtroom, Assistant U.S. Attorney Nicolas Roos said that the government "early on" raised the question with lawyers for Bankman-Fried about whether negotiations aimed at resolving the case with a plea should take place.

"There were no discussions about a plea, and the government never made any plea offers," he said. Mark Cohen, a defense lawyer, agreed.

Judge Lewis A. Kaplan posed nearly 50 questions to the jury pool to ensure that jurors would be fair regardless of what they had heard about the case or whether their life history included experiences with crime, law enforcement, the financial world and cryptocurrency.

A few jurors said they could be fair even though they had lost money through investments in cryptocurrency.

But at least two had doubts. One man said he lost a lot with a cryptocurrency investment, and his twin brother lost so much that "it almost ruined him." A woman said it would be hard to forget during the trial about a friend who killed himself more than a dozen years ago after getting swept up in a Ponzi scheme.

In interviews and social media posts, Bankman-Fried has acknowledged making huge mistakes while running FTX but insisted he had no criminal intent.

He has blamed FTX's collapse last November on vindictive competitors, his own inattentiveness and fellow executives who he said failed to manage risk properly.

"I didn't steal funds, and I certainly didn't stash billions away," he said in a post earlier this year on the online platform Substack.

As recently as early last fall, Bankman-Fried portrayed himself as a stabilizing force in the cryptocurrency industry. He spent millions of dollars on celebrity advertisements during the 2022 Super Bowl that promoted FTX as the "safest and easiest way to buy and sell crypto" and "the most trusted way to buy and sell" digital assets.

Comedian Larry David, along with other celebrities such as football star Tom Brady and basketball star Stephen Curry, have been named in a lawsuit that argued their celebrity status made them culpable for promoting the firm's failed business model.

Bankman-Fried is charged with wire fraud and conspiracy. The trial is expected to end before Thanksgiving.

He agreed to be extradited to the United States after his arrest in the Bahamas last December. That was weeks after FTX collapsed in something equivalent to an old-fashioned bank run. Customers pulled deposits en masse amid reports questioning its financial arrangements.

While his plane to the U.S. was in the air, authorities announced that two of his top executives had secretly pleaded guilty to fraud charges and were prepared to testify against him. They were Bankman-Fried's former girlfriend Carolyn Ellison, who had been the chief executive of Alameda Research, and Gary Wang, who co-founded FTX.

Initially freed on a \$250 million personal recognizance bond, Bankman-Fried was confined to his parents' home in Palo Alto, California, until Kaplan ordered him jailed last month after concluding that he had tried to influence witnesses, including Ellison and an FTX general counsel.

His lawyers have appealed that decision and repeatedly said their client can't properly prepare for trial. But the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan rejected an appeal of the detention order, finding that relevant factors had been thoroughly considered and that defense arguments were unpersuasive.

On Tuesday, before jury selection began, the judge told Bankman-Fried that he will be given the chance

to testify during the trial, even if his lawyers advise against it.

"They can't make the decision for you. It's your call," the judge said.

A foreign armed force to fight gangs makes many in Haiti celebrate, while others worry

By EVENS SANON and DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Foreigners with guns are met with hostility in most countries in the world. But the departure of armed soldiers and police from Haiti in 2017 after nearly two decades on the streets helped criminals seize control of much of the country. Gangs have carried out so much robbery, rape and kidnapping that Haitians on Tuesday welcomed news that the United Nations Security Council had approved deployment of an international armed force to Haiti.

News of the vote — which authorized a one-year deployment of a Kenya-led force to help quell violent gangs — dominated conversations and radio and TV programs.

"It's like God heard Haiti's prayers, and he's sending help," said Wensley Johnson, 40.

Johnson had to flee his home this year after gangs pillaged the community where he lived, a community built by people who survived Haiti's 2010 devastating earthquake. Worried about the never-ending gang violence, Johnson sent his son and stepdaughter to live with his mother in the countryside, but the construction worker struggles to care for them.

Meanwhile, construction has been halted at several sites because gangs have seized control of those areas, and Johnson has been unable to find work.

"Stability would be key for everybody to get back to their normal activities," he said, adding that he's relieved that a foreign armed force will be deployed.

"Our forces don't have the manpower to fight the gangs with the guns that they have," he said.

Haiti's National Police has launched several operations against gangs, but the department doesn't have enough resources or staff, with only some 10,000 active officers for a country of more than 11 million people.

The Kenya-led mission would be the first time in almost 20 years that a force would be deployed to Haiti. A 2004 U.N. mission ended in 2017.

The upcoming mission would be led by Kenya, with Jamaica, the Bahamas and Antigua and Barbuda also pledging personnel. The non-U.N. mission would be reviewed after nine months and be funded by voluntary contributions, with the U.S. pledging up to \$200 million. Kenya's foreign minister has said the force could be deployed in early January.

"They should be here sooner than January," said Peter John, a 49-year-old carpenter who heard the news on a small black-and-white radio perched in his shop, where he makes beds, tables and cabinets.

He worries that gang violence will only keep escalating.

"One morning you hear about guys taking over an area, killing and raping kids, leaving everybody without a home, and that's scary," he said. "A force that's coming into the country would be able to fight back."

In the meantime, he said, Haitians will take care of gangs the only way they know how: though a violent uprising known as "bwa kale," which has killed an estimated 350 people since it began in April.

"The population will put an end to their lives. They have people suffering too much," he said of gangs.

More than 2,400 people have been reported killed from January through mid-August this year, with more than 950 kidnapped and another 902 wounded, according to U.N. statistics. Violence against women and children in particular has risen.

Among those kidnapped and tortured are friends of Jannette Boucher, a 37-year-old store owner who sells women's and children's clothing. She herself escaped a gang attack earlier this year while driving alone. Gangs shot at her car, breaking a window as she pressed the gas and fled.

"Oh, yeah, I'm excited," she said of the upcoming deployment. "It's time that Haiti gets some real support."

More than 200,000 Haitians have lost their homes to gangs who set fire to communities and rape and

kill residents in a bid to wrestle territory from rival gangs.

Previous foreign interventions in Haiti have left many wary and angry.

A U.N. stabilization mission launched in 2004 was marred by a sexual abuse scandal and the introduction of cholera, which killed nearly 10,000 people.

"They leave bad memories in Haiti," Jean-Pierre Elie, a 60-year-old private teacher, said of previous interventions.

He said he supports the upcoming force because "it's unbearable to live in Haiti," but worries the past might be repeated.

"The soldiers are sometimes out of control," he said. "It's like they don't have anyone to report to. They do whatever they want."

Johan Lefebvre Chevallier, Haiti director of the nonprofit organization Mercy Corps, said that he hopes the foreign armed force would respect human rights and restore some stability.

"The worst outcome would be for this new intervention to further increase violence and burden those facing the brunt of this security and humanitarian crisis," he said.

Critics of the new mission also have warned of past abuses by Kenya's police force, but supporters say the resolution authorizing the force contains strong language to prevent abuse, and calls for correct wastewater management.

The U.N. Security Council approved the resolution nearly a year after Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry and 18 top government officials requested the immediate deployment of a foreign armed force to fight gangs overwhelming the country.

India tells Canada to remove 41 of its 62 diplomats in the country, an official says

By ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — India has told Canada to remove 41 of its 62 diplomats in the country, an official familiar with the matter said Tuesday, ramping up a confrontation between the two countries over Canadian accusations that India may have been involved in the killing of a Sikh separatist leader in suburban Vancouver.

The official, who confirmed an earlier report from the Financial Times, spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly.

India's Ministry of External Affairs declined to comment, but ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi had previously called for a reduction in Canadian diplomats in India, saying they outnumbered India's staffing in Canada.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said last month that there were "credible allegations" of Indian involvement in the slaying of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a 45-year-old Sikh leader who was killed by masked gunmen in June in Surrey, outside Vancouver. For years, India has said Nijjar, a Canadian citizen born in India, has links to terrorism, an allegation Nijjar denied.

Arranging the killing of a Canadian citizen in Canada, home to nearly 2 million people of Indian descent, would be unprecedented.

On Tuesday, Trudeau didn't confirm the number of diplomats that have been told to leave but suggested Canada would not retaliate.

"Obviously, we are going through an extremely challenging time with India right now, but that's why it is so important for us to have diplomats on the ground working with the Indian government and there to support Canadians and Canadian families," Trudeau said. "We're taking this extremely seriously, but we're going to continue to engage responsibly and constructively with the Indian government."

Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly said she's in contact with the Indian government.

"We will continue to engage privately because we think that diplomatic conversations are best when they remain private," Joly said.

India has accused Canada for years of giving free rein to Sikh separatists, including Nijjar.

India has also canceled visas for Canadians. Canada has not retaliated for that. India previously expelled

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a senior Canadian diplomat after Canada expelled a senior Indian diplomat.

Trudeau has also previously appeared to try to calm the diplomatic clash, telling reporters that Canada is "not looking to provoke or escalate."

The allegation of India's involvement in the killing is based in part on the surveillance of Indian diplomats in Canada, including intelligence provided by a major ally, a separate Canadian official previously told The Associated Press.

The official said that the communications involved Indian officials and diplomats in Canada and that some of the intelligence was provided by a member of the "Five Eyes" intelligence-sharing alliance, which includes the United States, Britain, Australia and New Zealand, in addition to Canada. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

The latest expulsions by India have escalated tensions between the countries. Trudeau had frosty encounters with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during last month's Group of 20 meeting in New Delhi, and a few days later, Canada canceled a trade mission to India planned for the fall.

"This is a clear show of force on the part of the Modi government, who's not afraid to escalate this diplomatic crisis," said Daniel Béland, a political science professor at McGill University in Montreal. "It's a dramatic move that seriously weakens the capacity of Canada's diplomatic services in India."

Béland said it will hurt many Indian citizens, including foreign students and temporary workers in need of a Canadian visa.

"The U.S. needs to do more to solve this diplomatic crisis," he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met last week with India's foreign minister amid the simmering row between New Delhi and Ottawa. A U.S. official said the topic was raised.

U.S. officials have acknowledged that the fallout from the allegations could have a profound impact on relations with India, but have been careful not to cast blame in the killing of Nijjar.

"We are and continue to be deeply concerned by the allegations," U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Vedant Patel said to reporters when asked about the case and India expelling 41 Canadian diplomats.

"It is critical that Canada's investigation proceed and that the perpetrators be brought to justice. We have publicly and privately urged India to cooperate. We take these allegations very seriously."

Maitreyi Bhatt, a 27-year-old Indian citizen in Toronto whose partner is Canadian and needs a visa, canceled her wedding scheduled to take place in India in late October, when he was to meet her family for the first time. The lost deposits and nonrefundable flights have been a blow, Bhatt said, but are "nothing compared to the mental and emotional turmoil."

"The way the situation is accelerating, I don't see them coming to a solution to this anytime soon," she said. "It just feels super weird. I never thought I would be a part of this, but sadly I am."

Nijjar, a plumber, was also a leader in what remains of a once-strong movement to create an independent Sikh homeland, known as Khalistan. A bloody decadelong Sikh insurgency shook north India in the 1970s and 1980s, until it was crushed in a government crackdown in which thousands of people were killed, including prominent Sikh leaders.

The Khalistan movement has lost much of its political power but still has supporters in the Indian state of Punjab, as well as in the sizable overseas Sikh diaspora. While the active insurgency ended years ago, the Indian government has warned repeatedly that Sikh separatists were trying to make a comeback.

Nelson Wiseman, a political science professor at the University of Toronto, said India's actions are "consistent with international reports of declining press freedoms" in the country.

"Like the Chinese government, the Modi government thinks it is in a stronger position than in the past to flex its muscles on the international stage," Wiseman said.

Wiseman also said that if the number of Indian students declines dramatically, Canadian colleges could feel the loss of those high tuitions.

Order a bagel and schmear at Feltz Bagels, and you'll be fed an original piece of art

By JOHN CARUCCI Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — While not one of the major food groups, a bagel and a schmear made of felt might satisfy your appetite for art.

"Feltz Bagels," the latest installation from British artist Lucy Sparrow, uses approximately 30,000 pieces of felt to recreate the look and feel of the authentic Jewish bagel shops prominent in New York's Lower East Side neighborhood.

Sparrow says she wanted to depict how this breakfast food brought here by Eastern European immigrants in the late 19th century "morphed into New York society" and beyond, making the bagel the Swiss Army knife of breads. Cream cheese, butter, cold cuts, lox — anything that fits on the circular bread is fair game, Sparrow felt.

Taking over an abandoned storefront in the East Village, Sparrow's pop-up shop runs from Tuesday through the end of October, offering a step back in time and the ambience of a real New York bagel shop.

Adding a dose of reality, Sparrow works the counter, taking orders for the bagel of your dreams — or your regular order, if you're so inclined. The custom bagel sells for \$250, and pricing for other items starts at \$10.

"It's the bagel that you order in real life, but I sew it together for you," Sparrow said. "We have everything here from six different types of bagels, 44 different types of fillings. So, the possibilities are endless with what you can create in the art world out of felt food."

This isn't the first time Sparrow has converted classic New York installations into felt: She previously tackled a 1980s bodega in "8 Till Late," and a delicatessen with "Lucy's on 6th." Like the others, "Feltz Bagels" provides an immersive experience for the patron.

"You are absolutely forcing people to interact with the art that you're not usually supposed to do in the art galleries," Sparrow said. "I want them to curate their own sandwich with like as little input from me as possible and have that turning art into almost like their own portrait through the medium of felt food."

Every product recreation and deli item was cut and sewn by Sparrow, who says it took nine months of round-the-clock work.

"I used approximately 400 yards of felt," she said.

And while this isn't her biggest installation, Sparrow admits "Feltz Bagels" presented some challenges.

"It's definitely the most complicated in terms of all the different components and the interaction of having lots of different pieces ... that can be so personalized," she said.

Other elements of the installation that, well, felt real include an antique cash register, a traditional Greek diner coffee cup and the pickles in a jar atop the counter next to the rugelach. Then there's a full section of baked goods, and shelves all over the store laden with both Jewish delicacies and comfort foods. And, of course, the staple of any authentic New York bagel shop: the black and white cookie.

"The research for the show basically involved me going into many bagel shops," Sparrow said, "and (I) gather information from all the different places and in my head, turn it into something that's very technicolor."

Fuller picture emerges of the 13 federal executions at the end of Trump's presidency

By MICHAEL TARM AP Legal Affairs Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — A day before the federal government executed a Texas man for the killing of an Iowa couple when he was 18, celebrity lawyer Alan Dershowitz pleaded with then-President Donald Trump — a former client — to call the execution off.

During a Dec. 9, 2020, call to the White House, Dershowitz told Trump that Brandon Bernard, at 40, wasn't the man he was when Todd and Stacie Bagley were killed in 1999 and that he deserved to have his sentence commuted to life in prison.

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Trump sounded sincere when he said he wished he could spare Bernard's life, but he added apologetically that he'd already promised the victims' relatives that Bernard would be put to death, Dershowitz said about the 20-minute call.

"They're on their way. They're on their way," Trump kept saying, Dershowitz recalled. The relatives, Trump explained, were on the road to the prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, where federal executions are carried out and it was "too late to pull them back."

Bernard was executed the next day.

Secrecy was a hallmark of the 13 federal executions during the last six months of Trump's presidency. Although reporters were allowed to witness them, it was impossible to know at the time what was happening behind the scenes.

Fresh details have emerged since the executions, including from Dershowitz, who spoke recently to The Associated Press. The fuller picture reveals that officials cut corners and relied on a pliant Supreme Court to get the executions done, even when some — including Trump himself, in Bernard's case — agreed that there might be valid reasons not to proceed with them all.

Other newly available information includes an autopsy report obtained by the AP for Corey Johnson, convicted of seven drug-related killings. It concluded that during his execution, he suffered pulmonary edema, a painful condition akin to drowning. So much fluid rushed up his trachea that some exited his mouth.

More federal executions carried out under much the same conditions may not be far off.

President Joe Biden hasn't kept a promise he'd abolish the federal death penalty. Although his Justice Department announced a moratorium on federal executions in 2021, that can be lifted easily.

So, unless Biden clears death row, "history will repeat itself" if a pro-death penalty candidate, like Trump, wins in 2024, said Robert Dunham, a Temple Law School adjunct professor on capital punishment.

Trump's 2016 win didn't particularly worry federal death row inmates, prisoner Billie Allen, who was and remains in the unit, said by email. After all, there hadn't been a public clamor for federal executions to resume following a 17-year hiatus.

But guards began practicing executions in 2019, including by wheeling other guards role-playing as inmates out of cells in restraint chairs.

"It was a sign ... executions were about to take place," Allen said. "Many of us knew Trump was going to keep killing ... until he ran out of time."

Observers assumed it was Trump's initiative. But in his 2022 book, "One Damn Thing After Another," Trump's attorney general at the time of the executions, Bill Barr, suggested it was actually his.

Barr said he spoke to Trump just once about the plans. Regarding capital punishment, Trump asked, "Why do you support it?" Barr wrote that Trump seemed satisfied when he answered that for brutal killings, it was "the only punishment that fit the crime."

In 2019, Barr approved the use of pentobarbital in executions despite evidence it might cause pulmonary edema, making it possible for them to resume.

Starting in 2019, inmates froze when guards entered death row to tell one among them "the warden wants to speak with you," dreaded words signifying an inmate had been selected for execution, Allen and other inmates explained.

Guards wearing surgical masks stopped at cell No. 315 on Oct. 16, 2020. It was Bernard's cell.

"Their eyes were all I needed to see," Bernard explained in a statement posted for him on social media. "(Their) eyes held ... only pity and sadness."

To be selected, an inmate's guilt had to be certain and their victims had to have been uniquely vulnerable, Barr wrote.

It wasn't obvious Bernard met that criteria.

The kidnapping and robbery of the young couple who were on a Texas religious retreat was brutal. They were locked in their car's trunk for hours, begging for their lives, before accomplice Christopher Vialva shot them in the head.

Bernard's role was murkier. He allegedly set the car ablaze with the bodies inside. During the trial, prosecutors said smoke in Stacie's lungs indicated the fire had killed her. That evidence was disputed.

Lawyers for Bernard and Vialva, who were tried together, say prosecutors also mischaracterized the Black defendants to a nearly all-white jury as gang thugs.

By all accounts, Bernard transformed himself in prison and encouraged fellow inmates to follow his example. Introspective and polite, he didn't commit a single rules infraction during two decades in prison.

Each execution required up to 300 staff and contractors. Government lawyers cited those logistics in arguing against any delays.

Unfailingly, the conservative-tilted Supreme Court cleared all legal obstacles.

The pace of executions alarmed Lisa Montgomery, who was held in Texas prior to her Terre Haute execution. She had killed an expectant Missouri mother and cut the baby from her womb.

"If they do two a month, then I'm screwed," Montgomery said during an Aug. 27, 2020, phone conversation, call transcripts revealed.

Her lawyers momentarily considered taking her off her medications so she'd "go absolutely psychotic," proving mental fragility exacerbated by sexual abuse in childhood, said her lawyer, Kelley Henry.

"Ultimately, we weren't going to do that to her," Henry said.

When courts greenlit executions of her clients convicted on state charges, Henry at least followed the logic.

"With the Trump executions, I can't give you a view of the law that would explain why any of them happened," she said.

Mental health and other issues should have precluded many of the executions, said Robin Maher, director of the Death Penalty Information Center, which tracks state and federal executions.

"For anyone who believed that the death penalty only punishes the worst of the worst, these executions were a rude awakening," she said.

Without explaining why, the Supreme Court rejected Bernard's final request for a stay on his execution day.

In dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote that whether prosecutors exaggerated his gang status knowing he held the lowest rank deserved more scrutiny.

He never had the chance to prove those claims, she wrote. "Now he never will."

Within hours, executioners poked an IV line into each of Bernard's arms, including a backup in case the first one failed, in accordance with protocols.

Speaking with striking calm, Bernard turned toward the Bagley relatives in an adjacent witness room and said, "I'm sorry."

He watched a marshal pick up a death chamber phone, perhaps hoping Trump had commuted his sentence after all.

Bernard was pronounced dead at 9:27 p.m.

When word reached Dershowitz, he was devastated.

"I can tell you, I shed tears," he said. "This was a wasted life."

What haunts him is that he believes Trump might have intervened if he hadn't already made his promise to the Bagley relatives.

"This is a terrible thing to say," Dershowitz said, "but I believe if I had spoken to the president a month earlier, I might have been able to persuade him."

Donald Trump wants future Republican debates to be canceled after refusing to participate in them

By SARA BURNETT Associated Press

Donald Trump's campaign is calling on the Republican National Committee to cancel all remaining presidential primary debates, saying the RNC must instead "refocus its manpower" on defeating Joe Biden next year.

In a statement late Monday, top Trump advisers also repeated debunked falsehoods about election fraud, claiming without evidence that Democrats are working to steal the 2024 election. Trump has maintained

that the 2020 election was stolen, despite multiple legal cases, investigations and his own attorney general finding no fraud.

In their statement, senior campaign advisers Susie Wiles and Chris LaCivita say the November debate in Miami and all future debates should be canceled.

"Anything less, along with other reasons not to cancel, are an admission to the grassroots that their concerns about voter integrity are not taken seriously and national Republicans are more concerned about helping Joe Biden than ensuring a safe and secure election," they said.

The former president and front-runner for the GOP nomination has skipped the first two debates — as several of his rivals attacked him for not attending — and said he wouldn't participate in the future.

He is in court this week in New York for a civil fraud trial accusing him of inflating the value of his businesses, a case that he has argued is politically motivated.

The RNC did not respond to requests for comment Monday or Tuesday.

A spokesman for Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis rejected the Trump campaign statement about canceling debates, saying the country "needs a president who will fight for them anywhere, in any forum." DeSantis in the second debate accused Trump of not wanting to defend his record on the national debt.

"Donald Trump should defend his record to the American people and debate Ron DeSantis on their vision and specific plans to stop American decline and restore our country," said Bryan Griffin, the spokesman. "But Trump knows he can't defend his record, and he isn't the fighter he was in 2016."

RNC Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel declined to answer a question last week about Trump's call to end the debates during a call with reporters on the launch of the committee's "Bank Your Vote" initiative in New York. The program, which the GOP is implementing in states across the U.S., encourages Republicans to participate in early and mail-in voting — a practice that Democrats have embraced but some Republicans, including Trump, have criticized.

McDaniel also brushed off Trump's continued skepticism of early voting, even after he recorded a video to promote the "Bank Your Vote" initiative.

"I think we have to take those fights on, but also understand that once it gets to game day, the rules that are on the field are what we need to play by and President Trump is all in on that," she said.

Hunter Biden pleads not guilty to three federal gun charges filed after his plea deal collapsed

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST, CLAUDIA LAUER and RANDALL CHASE Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — Hunter Biden pleaded not guilty on Tuesday to three federal firearms charges filed after his earlier deal imploded, setting the case on a track toward a possible trial in 2024 while his father is campaigning for reelection.

President Joe Biden's son has been charged with lying about his drug use in October 2018 on a form to buy a gun that he kept for about 11 days. He could face up to 25 years in prison if convicted. When asked by Magistrate Judge Christopher Burke if he understood the charges against him, he said, "Yes, Your Honor."

His lawyer Abbe Lowell said in court he plans to file a motion to dismiss the charges, challenging their constitutionality.

"Mr. Biden pleads not guilty to the three counts that have been brought against him," Lowell said to the judge.

Hunter Biden has acknowledged struggling with an addiction to crack cocaine during that period in 2018, but his lawyers have said he didn't break the law. Cases like this, against drug users accused of having guns, are rare, and an appeals court has found the underlying statute violates the Second Amendment under new Supreme Court standards.

On Tuesday, the judge noted Hunter Biden had been repeatedly tested for drugs and is negative.

Hunter Biden's attorneys are suggesting that prosecutors bowed to pressure by Republicans, who have insisted the Democratic president's son got a sweetheart deal, and that the charges were the result of political pressure.

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"President Trump and his MAGA allies" have forced "the Justice Department to ignore the law and deviate from its policies in cases like this one," Lowell said in a statement after the brief hearing, referring to Donald Trump's Make America Great Again slogan.

Hunter Biden left the courthouse shortly after the hearing, getting into a black SUV and pulling away. The deadline for pretrial motions in the case is Nov 3. The pretrial release conditions include no alcohol or drugs; drug testing or substance abuse counseling if needed; and continuing or seeking employment.

Earlier this summer, Hunter Biden agreed to plead guilty to misdemeanor tax charges and would have also avoided prosecution on the gun charges had he stayed out of trouble for two years. It was the culmination of a yearslong investigation by federal prosecutors into the business dealings of the president's son, and the agreement would have dispensed with criminal proceedings and spared the Bidens weeks of headlines as the election loomed.

The deal broke down after the judge who was supposed to sign off on the agreement instead raised a series of questions about the deal.

Now, a special counsel has been appointed to handle the case, and there appears no easy end in sight. Hunter Biden was indicted on the three gun charges, and no new tax charges have yet been filed — but the special counsel has indicated those charges could come in Washington or in California, where Hunter Biden lives.

Defense attorneys have argued that he remains protected by an immunity provision that was part of the scuttled agreement, but prosecutors overseen by special counsel David Weiss disagree. Weiss also serves as U.S. attorney for Delaware and was originally appointed by Trump.

Lowell on Tuesday said he planned to file "a number of motions," including a push to dismiss the case based on an immunity agreement in the now-scuttled plea deal and the constitutionality of the law against drug users having guns.

Lowell also said the defense plans to ask for an evidentiary hearing.

In Congress, House Republicans are seeking to link Hunter Biden's dealings to his father's through an impeachment inquiry. Republicans have been investigating Hunter Biden for years, since his father was Barack Obama's vice president. While questions have arisen about the ethics surrounding the Biden family's international business, no evidence has emerged so far to prove that Joe Biden, in his current or previous office, abused his role or accepted bribes.

The legal wrangling is likely to spill into 2024, with Republicans eager to divert attention from the multiple criminal indictments faced by Trump, the GOP primary front-runner, whose trials could be unfolding at the same time.

After remaining silent for years, Hunter Biden has taken a more aggressive legal stance in recent weeks, filing a series of lawsuits over the dissemination of personal information purportedly from his laptop and his tax data by whistleblower IRS agents who testified before Congress as part of the GOP probe.

Hunter Biden, who lives in the Los Angeles area, had asked for Tuesday's hearing to be conducted remotely over video feed, but Burke sided with prosecutors, saying there would be no "special treatment."

Pandas could be gone from America's zoos by the end of next year

By ASHRAF KHALIL and DIDI TANG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Wearing an "I Love Pandas" T-shirt and clutching a panda-covered diary, Kelsey Lambert bubbled with excitement as she glimpsed the real thing. She and her mother, Alison, had made a special trip from San Antonio just to watch the National Zoo's furry rock stars casually munching bamboo and rolling around on the grass.

"It felt completely amazing," Kelsey, age 10, said Friday. "My mom has always promised she would take me one day. So we had to do it now that they're going away."

The National Zoo's three giant pandas — Mei Xiang, Tian Tian and their cub Xiao Qi Ji — are set to return to China in early December with no public signs that the 50-year-old exchange agreement struck by President Richard Nixon will continue.

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National Zoo officials have remained tight-lipped about the prospects of renewing or extending the agreement, and repeated attempts to gain comment on the state of the negotiations did not receive a response. However, the public stance of the zoo has been decidedly pessimistic — treating these remaining months as the end of an era. The zoo just finished a weeklong celebration called Panda Palooza: A Giant Farewell.

The potential end of the National Zoo's panda era comes amid what veteran China-watchers say is a larger trend. With diplomatic tensions running high between Beijing and a number of Western governments, China appears to be gradually pulling back its pandas from multiple Western zoos as their agreements expire.

Dennis Wilder, a senior fellow at Georgetown University's Initiative for U.S.-China Dialogue on Global Issues, called the trend "punitive panda diplomacy," noting that two other American zoos have lost their pandas in recent years, while zoos in Scotland and Australia are facing similar departures with no signs of their loan agreements being renewed.

Beijing currently lends out 65 pandas to 19 countries through "cooperative research programs" with a stated mission to better protect the vulnerable species. The pandas return to China when they reach old age and any cubs born are sent to China around age 3 or 4.

The San Diego zoo returned its pandas in 2019, and the last bear at the Memphis, Tennessee, zoo went home earlier this year. The departure of the National Zoo's bears would mean that the only giant pandas left in America are at the Atlanta Zoo — and that loan agreement expires late next year.

Wilder said the Chinese possibly could be "trying to send a signal."

He cited a litany of Chinese-American flashpoints: sanctions imposed by the U.S. government on prominent Chinese citizens and officials; restrictions on the import of Chinese semiconductors; accusations that Chinese-made fentanyl is flooding American cities; suspicion over Chinese ownership of the social media platform TikTok; and the uproar early this year over the Chinese balloon floating over America.

Beijing, Wilder said, is convinced that "NATO and the United States are lining up against China."

The panda-related tension has even spilled into the hallways of the U.S. Senate. Last week, Pennsylvania Democrat John Fetterman complained about China buying up American farmland and added, "I mean, they're taking back our pandas. You know, we should take back all their farmland."

That animosity has been at least partially shared by the public in China, where anti-American sentiments are on the rise. Those sentiments developed into a perfect panda storm earlier this year when Le Le, a male panda on loan to the zoo in Memphis, died suddenly in February at the age of 24. Pandas generally live 15 to 20 years in the wild, while those in human care often live to be around 30.

Le Le's unexpected death prompted an explosion on Chinese social media platforms like Weibo, with widespread allegations that the Memphis zoo had mistreated the bear and its female companion, Ya Ya. The campaign gained intensity when photos circulated on the Internet of Ya Ya looking dirty and gaunt (by panda standards) with patchy fur.

An online petition on Change.org demanded Ya Ya be returned immediately, alleging malnourishment and deprivation of proper medical care. Slogans such as "the panda's life matters" surfaced in China's social media along with emotional memes pleading with authorities to rescue the bear. One particular meme depicts a miserable-looking Ya Ya gazing at a plane flying overhead with the caption: "Mama, I have worked away from home for 20 years. Have I earned enough for a plane ticket to return home?"

The heat grew so intense that the Memphis Zoo released a statement responding to what it called "misinformation" about its pandas and stating that Ya Ya has "a chronic skin and fur condition" that "makes her hair look thin and patchy" and that Le Le died of natural causes.

Even an official Chinese scientific delegation that visited Memphis and announced that Le Le was not mistreated and died of a heart condition failed to quell the outrage. Ya Ya was returned to China on schedule in April when the loan agreement expired and received a celebrity's welcome at Shanghai's airport.

The Chinese government, which gifted the first pair of pandas — Hsing Hsing and Ling Ling — to the U.S., now leases the pandas out for a typical 10-year renewable term. The annual fee ranges from \$1 million to \$2 million per pair, plus mandatory costs to build and maintain facilities to house the animals. Any cub born to the pandas belongs to the Chinese government but can be leased for an additional fee until it reaches mating age.

Over the 50 years of American panda loan agreements, the arrangement has hit more than one rough patch. In 2010, Daniel Ashe, then head of the federal Fish and Wildlife Service, traveled to China to help resolve a technical bureaucratic issue that was threatening the renewal of the National Zoo's agreement. The problem was quickly resolved, and the agreement was extended.

"But the situation now is completely different," said Ashe, now CEO of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. "What we're seeing now is tensions between our governments at a much higher level, and they need to be addressed and resolved at that level."

Observers are holding out hope that exactly this sort of 11th-hour high-level intervention will come through. Wilder pointed to the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco in November as a potential forum for President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping to make headlines by breaking the deadlock. And Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. Xie Feng has sounded semi-optimistic in his public statements.

"I will do my utmost to do that, and here, in Aspen, there also will be (pandas)," Xie said during the Aspen Security Forum in July in Aspen, Colorado.

But for now, panda-philies of all ages are making pilgrimages to Washington for a last glimpse at the bears. At the zoo on Friday, amid the chatter of children, was an adult couple with a baby on the way — each wearing matching panda-ears headbands. Colleen Blue and John Nungesser came from outside Philadelphia to see the pandas; this was Blue's third time.

"I've been obsessed with them since I was little. I used to just bury people in panda facts," she said.

Nungesser nodded, adding, "On our first date, she went on and on about pandas."

Blue said she broke into tears and "had a temper tantrum" when she found out that Washington's pandas would be leaving. The couple is already making plans, after their baby is born, to take the infant to see the pandas in Atlanta next summer before they leave.

And Alison Lambert, Kelsey's mom, said she remains optimistic that both sides will work out an agreement simply because it's mutually beneficial. And if they don't, Kelsey is already developing Plan B.

"We could always fly to China," she said. "That works, too."

How are ancient Roman and Mayan buildings still standing? Scientists are unlocking their secrets

By MADDIE BURAKOFF AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In the quest to build better for the future, some are looking for answers in the long-ago past.

Ancient builders across the world created structures that are still standing today, thousands of years later — from Roman engineers who poured thick concrete sea barriers, to Maya masons who crafted plaster sculptures to their gods, to Chinese builders who raised walls against invaders.

Yet scores of more recent structures are already staring down their expiration dates: The concrete that makes up much of our modern world has a lifespan of around 50 to 100 years.

A growing number of scientists have been studying materials from long-ago eras — chipping off chunks of buildings, poring over historical texts, mixing up copycat recipes — hoping to uncover how they've held up for millennia.

This reverse engineering has turned up a surprising list of ingredients that were mixed into old buildings — materials such as tree bark, volcanic ash, rice, beer and even urine. These unexpected add-ins could be key to some pretty impressive properties, like the ability to get stronger over time and "heal" cracks when they form.

Figuring out how to copy those features could have real impacts today: While our modern concrete has the strength to hold up massive skyscrapers and heavy infrastructure, it can't compete with the endurance of these ancient materials.

And with the rising threats of climate change, there's a growing call to make construction more sustainable. A recent UN report estimates that the built environment is responsible for more than a third of global

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CO2 emissions — and cement production alone makes up more than 7% of those emissions.

“If you improve the properties of the material by using ... traditional recipes from Maya people or the ancient Chinese, you can produce material that can be used in modern construction in a much more sustainable way,” said Carlos Rodriguez-Navarro, a cultural heritage researcher at Spain’s University of Granada.

Is ancient Roman concrete better than today’s?

Many researchers have turned to the Romans for inspiration. Starting around 200 BCE, the architects of the Roman Empire were building impressive concrete structures that have stood the test of time — from the soaring dome of the Pantheon to the sturdy aqueducts that still carry water today.

Even in harbors, where seawater has been battering structures for ages, you’ll find concrete “basically the way it was when it was poured 2,000 years ago,” said John Oleson, an archaeologist at the University of Victoria in Canada.

Most modern concrete starts with Portland cement, a powder made by heating limestone and clay to super-high temperatures and grinding them up. That cement is mixed with water to create a chemically reactive paste. Then, chunks of material like rock and gravel are added, and the cement paste binds them into a concrete mass.

According to records from ancient architects like Vitruvius, the Roman process was similar. The ancient builders mixed materials like burnt limestone and volcanic sand with water and gravel, creating chemical reactions to bind everything together.

Now, scientists think they’ve found a key reason why some Roman concrete has held up structures for thousands of years: The ancient material has an unusual power to repair itself. Exactly how is not yet clear, but scientists are starting to find clues.

In a study published earlier this year, Admir Masic, a civil and environmental engineer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, proposed that this power comes from chunks of lime that are studded throughout the Roman material instead of being mixed in evenly. Researchers used to think these chunks were a sign that the Romans weren’t mixing up their materials well enough.

Instead, after analyzing concrete samples from Privernum — an ancient city outside of Rome — the scientists found that the chunks could fuel the material’s “self-healing” abilities. When cracks form, water is able to seep into the concrete, Masic explained. That water activates the leftover pockets of lime, sparking up new chemical reactions that can fill in the damaged sections.

Marie Jackson, a geologist at the University of Utah, has a different take. Her research has found that the key could be in the specific volcanic materials used by the Romans.

The builders would gather volcanic rocks left behind after eruptions to mix into their concrete. This naturally reactive material changes over time as it interacts with the elements, Jackson said, allowing it to seal cracks that develop.

The ability to keep adapting over time “is truly the genius of the material,” Jackson said. “The concrete was so well designed that it sustains itself.”

Using tree juice to make sculptures as strong as seashells

At Copan, a Maya site in Honduras, intricate lime sculptures and temples remain intact even after more than 1,000 years exposed to a hot, humid environment. And according to a study published earlier this year, the secret to these structures’ longevity might lie in the trees that sprout among them.

Researchers here had a living link to the structures’ creators: They met with local masons in Honduras who traced their lineage all the way back to the Mayan builders, explained Rodriguez-Navarro, who worked on the study.

The masons suggested using extracts from local chukum and jote trees in the lime mix. When researchers tested out the recipe — collecting bark, putting the chunks in water and adding the resulting tree “juice” into the material — they found the resulting plaster was especially durable against physical and chemical damage.

When scientists zoomed in, they saw that bits of organic material from the tree juice got incorporated into the plaster’s molecular structure. In this way, the Mayan plaster was able to mimic sturdy natural structures like seashells and sea urchin spines — and borrow some of their toughness, Rodriguez-Navarro said.

Studies have found all kinds of natural materials mixed into structures from long ago: fruit extracts, milk, cheese curd, beer, even dung and urine. The mortar that holds together some of China's most famous structures — including the Great Wall and the Forbidden City — includes traces of starch from sticky rice.

Luck or skill?

Some of these ancient builders might have just gotten lucky, said Cecilia Pesce, a materials scientist at the University of Sheffield in England. They'd toss just about anything into their mixes, as long as it was cheap and available — and the ones that didn't work out have long since collapsed.

"They would put all sorts of things in construction," Pesce said. "And now, we only have the buildings that survived. So it's like a natural selection process."

But some materials seem to show more intention — like in India, where builders crafted blends of local materials to produce different properties, said Thirumalini Selvaraj, a civil engineer and professor at India's Vellore Institute of Technology.

According to Selvaraj's research, in humid areas of India, builders used local herbs that help structures deal with moisture. Along the coast, they added jaggery, an unrefined sugar, which can help protect from salt damage. And in areas with higher earthquake risks, they used super-light "floating bricks" made with rice husks.

"They know the region, they know the soil condition, they know the climate," Selvaraj said. "So they engineer a material according to this."

Ancient Roman ... skyscrapers?

Today's builders can't just copy the ancient recipes. Even though Roman concrete lasted a long time, it couldn't hold up heavy loads: "You couldn't build a modern skyscraper with Roman concrete," Oleson said. "It would collapse when you got to the third story."

Instead, researchers are trying to take some of the ancient material's specialties and add them into modern mixes. Masic is part of a startup that is trying to build new projects using Roman-inspired, "self-healing" concrete. And Jackson is working with the Army Corps of Engineers to design concrete structures that can hold up well in seawater — like the ones in Roman ports — to help protect coastlines from sea level rise.

We don't need to make things last quite as long as the Romans did to have an impact, Masic said. If we add 50 or 100 years to concrete's lifespan, "we will require less demolition, less maintenance and less material in the long run."

Things to know about the Vatican's big meeting on the future of the Catholic Church

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Wednesday is opening a global gathering of bishops and laypeople to discuss the future of the Catholic Church, including some hot-button issues that have previously been considered off-limits for discussion.

For the first time, women and laypeople can vote on specific proposals alongside bishops, a radical change that is evidence of Francis' belief that the church is more about its flock than its shepherds.

Here is some background on the Oct. 4-29 Synod of Bishops, which will be followed by a second session this time next year. That session is expected to put forward specific proposals for Francis to consider in a future document.

WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA?

The working document for the meeting was compiled by a committee after an unprecedented two-year canvassing of rank-and-file Catholics around the globe.

The final product is meant to stimulate debate and poses agenda items in the form of questions. But some of the questions also make clear a certain consensus was reached during the consultation phase.

For example, the document calls for concrete steps to promote women to decision-making roles in the church, including as deacons, and for ordinary faithful to have more of a say in church governance.

It calls for a "radical inclusion" of LGBTQ+ Catholics and others who have been marginalized by the

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church, and for new accountability measures to check how bishops exercise their authority to prevent abuses.

"From all corners of the world, greater inclusion and support for LGBTQ+ people have emerged as a top pastoral issue for the Catholic Church," said New Ways Ministry, which advocates for LGBTQ+ Catholics.

WHAT'S THE CONTROVERSY?

Some conservatives have expressed doubts about the synod ever since Francis announced it three years ago. They have warned that bringing up for debate issues that have already been settled by the church risks schism.

They have penned articles, written books and hosted conferences. Just this week, five conservative cardinals from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas made their challenge to Pope Francis public.

In a letter posed as five questions, or "dubia," they asked him to affirm church teaching on matters of doctrine, homosexuality, female ordination and church authority because they said the synod was sowing confusion.

Francis responded to the cardinals in a letter released by the Vatican on Monday. He explained that changes in the world stimulate the church to better understand and explain its teachings, and that the synod is a way to discern the path forward.

"With much sincerity, I tell you it's not good to be afraid of these questions," Francis told them.

WHO'S COMING?

There are 365 voting members including the pope, 54 of whom are women. Their numbers are divided among delegates chosen by national bishops' conferences, members nominated by the pope himself and 10 priests and nuns chosen by religious orders.

In addition, there are around 100 experts and "facilitators" who have been brought in to help move the dialogue along as the meeting works through the agenda. But they won't vote on any final document.

Two late additions to the list are bishops from China, in an important signal of cooperation as the Vatican and Beijing try to improve ties particularly over the life of the Catholic Church in China.

Bishops Antonio Yao Shun from Jining in Inner Mongolia and Yang Yongqiang from Zhoucun of Shandong Province were nominated by Francis after the church in China put their names forward.

The archbishop of Hong Kong, Cardinal Stephen Chow, said their participation was particularly significant.

"It's a sign of goodwill and possibly that they realize the church in China and the government wants to say there should be closer, more episcopal contacts between China and the universal church," Chow told The Associated Press. "Their presence is really speaking to that."

A SECRET SYNOD?

The two-year preparatory phase of the synod was marked by a radical transparency in keeping with the goals of the process for participants to listen to each other and learn from one another. So it has come as something of a surprise that Francis has essentially imposed a media blackout on the synod itself.

While originally livestreams were planned, and several extra communications officers were hired, organizers have made clear this is a closed-door meeting and participants have been told to not speak to journalists.

Paolo Ruffini, in charge of communications for the meeting, denied the debate had been put under the pontifical secret, one of the highest forms of confidentiality in the church.

He insisted that it was a liturgical moment of prayer and discernment, pointing to a 1990 essay by a late cardinal extolling the benefits of "silence" in communication.

No daily briefings are planned as in previous synods, though five are scheduled over the course of the meeting. Francis has defended the new regime as favoring real dialogue.

Challenged on the lack of transparency, Francis has said he didn't want "political gossip" leaking out with news of participants duking it out over tough issues.

"This isn't a television show," he told reporters during an airborne news conference in August.

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Today in History: October 4

Soviets launch Sputnik, spark the Space Age

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 4, the 277th day of 2023. There are 88 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 4, 1957, the Space Age began as the Soviet Union launched Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite, into orbit.

On this date:

In 1777, Gen. George Washington's troops launched an assault on the British at Germantown, Pennsylvania, resulting in heavy American casualties.

In 1887, the International Herald Tribune had its beginnings as the Paris Herald, a European edition of the New York Herald.

In 1940, Germany's Adolf Hitler and Italy's Benito Mussolini conferred at Brenner Pass in the Alps.

In 1965, Pope Paul VI became the first pope to visit the Western Hemisphere as he addressed the U.N. General Assembly.

In 1970, rock singer Janis Joplin was found dead in her Hollywood hotel room at age 27.

In 1990, for the first time in nearly six decades, German lawmakers met in the Reichstag for the first meeting of the nation's reunified parliament.

In 1991, 26 nations, including the United States, signed the Madrid Protocol, which imposed a 50-year ban on oil exploration and mining in Antarctica.

In 2001, a Russian airliner flying from Israel to Siberia was accidentally downed by a Ukrainian anti-aircraft missile over the Black Sea, killing all 78 people aboard.

In 2002, "American Taliban" John Walker Lindh received a 20-year sentence after a sobbing plea for forgiveness before a federal judge in Alexandria, Virginia. (He was released from prison in May, 2019.) In a federal court in Boston, a laughing Richard Reid pleaded guilty to trying to blow up a trans-Atlantic flight with explosives in his shoes (the British citizen was later sentenced to life in prison).

In 2004, the SpaceShipOne rocket plane broke through Earth's atmosphere to the edge of space for the second time in five days, capturing the \$10 million Ansari X prize aimed at opening the final frontier to tourists.

In 2010, the Supreme Court began a new era with three women serving together for the first time as Elena Kagan took her place at the end of the bench.

In 2013, Vo Nguyen Giap, the military commander who'd led Vietnamese Communist forces against the French and then the Americans, died in Hanoi at age 102.

In 2017, President Donald Trump visited hospital bedsides and a police base in Las Vegas in the aftermath of the shooting rampage three nights earlier that left 58 people dead.

In 2020, infected and contagious, President Donald Trump briefly ventured out in an SUV from the hospital where he was being treated for COVID-19 to salute cheering supporters. Trump's medical team reported that his blood oxygen level had dropped suddenly twice in recent days and that they gave him a steroid typically only recommended for the very sick.

In 2022, Elon Musk abandoned his legal battle to back out of buying Twitter and offered to go through with his original \$44 billion bid for the social media platform.

Today's Birthdays: Country singer Leroy Van Dyke is 94. Actor Felicia Farr is 91. Author Roy Blount Jr. is 82. Actor Lori Saunders (TV: "Petticoat Junction") is 82. Chicago White Sox manager Tony La Russa is 79. Actor Clifton Davis is 78. The former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen, is 77. Former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel is 77. Actor Susan Sarandon is 77. Blues musician Duke Robillard is 75. Playwright Lee Blessing is 74. Actor Armand Assante is 74. Actor Alan Rosenberg is 73. Actor Christoph Waltz is 67. Actor Bill Fagerbakke is 66. Music producer Russell Simmons is 66. Actor-singer Wendy Makkena is 65. Musician Chris Lowe (The Pet Shop Boys) is 64. Country musician Gregg "Hobie" Hubbard

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(Sawyer Brown) is 63. Actor David W. Harper is 62. Singer Jon Secada is 62. TV personality John Melendez is 58. Actor-comedian Jerry Minor is 56. Actor Liev Schreiber is 56. Actor Abraham Benrubi is 54. Country singer-musician Heidi Newfield is 53. Singer-guitarist M. Ward (She & Him) is 50. Actor Alicia Silverstone is 47. Actor Dana Davis is 45. Rock musician Robbie Bennett (The War on Drugs) is 45. Actor Phillip Glasser is 45. Rock singer-musician Marc Roberge (O.A.R.) is 45. Actor Brandon Barash is 44. Actor Rachael Leigh Cook is 44. Actor Tim Peper is 43. Actor Jimmy Workman is 43. Actor Michael Charles Roman is 36. Actor Melissa Benoist is 35. NBA All-Star Derrick Rose is 35. Actor Dakota Johnson is 34. Figure skater Kimmie Meisner is 34. Actor Leigh-Anne Pinnock (Little Mix) is 32. Actor Ryan Scott Lee is 27.