

Groton Daily Independent

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Sunday, Oct. 8

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; dedicate chapel area and youth room; No Sunday school; Potluck brunch, 10:30 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship 9 a.m.; worship at Zion, 11 a.m.

United Methodist: NO Sunday school; Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.; Finance committee budget meeting, 11:30 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:45 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m., SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

Monday, Oct. 9

Senior Menu: Spanish rice with hamburger, green beans, mandarin oranges, vanilla pudding, whole wheat bread.

Native American Day - No School

JV Football at Britton-Hecla, 4 p.m.

JH Football hosts Ellendale/Edgeley-Kulm, 5 p.m.

Volleyball hosts Britton-Hecla (C at 5 p.m. followed by JV and varsity)

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

Pantry Open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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

United Methodist: PEO Meeting (outside group), 7 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent
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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Groton Area heads to State Championship Game!

Pictured in back, left to right, are Assistant Coach Kaylin Kucker, Kayla Lehr, Gretchen Dinger, Taryn Traphagen, Faith Traphagen, Jaedyn Penning, Brooklyn Hansen, Brenna Imrie, Kennedy Hansen, Emerlee Jones, Mia Crank and Assistant Coach Wyatt Locke; in front, left to right, are Head Coach Chris Kucker, Avery Crank, Carly Gilbert, Rylee Gilbert, Addison Hoffman, Laila Roberts, Jerica Locke, Elizabeth Flihs, Sydney Locke, McKenna Tietz and the Tiger Mascot Rowan Hanson. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Groton Area beats Sioux Falls Christian, 2-1

It was a high intense game between two teams who tied earlier in the season. This was a high stakes contest with the winner advancing to the State Championship Game in Class A Girls Soccer.

Sioux Falls Christian scored with 3:29 left in the first half and led at halftime, 1-0.

Brooklyn Hansen kicked to Laila Roberts who scored a long shot with 26:04 left in the game to tie it at one (Photo above). Then, with less than 50 seconds left in the game, Kennedy Hansen had a corner kick. Upon review of the video, the ball bounced off the shoulder of a Sioux Falls Christian player, it bounced high in the air and Laila Roberts jumped high into the air (left photo) and head butted the ball into the goal while falling on everyone in front of her. (Photos lifted from GDILIVE video)



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A huge crowd was on hand for the state semifinal girls soccer game in Groton on a beautiful Saturday afternoon. And as the announcer, Greg Milbrandt, said, "Thank the Big Guy for providing a beautiful day!" (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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/R&M Farms, Weismantel Agency



Some of the younger soccer players gathered around Amy Warrington as they sang the National Anthem. (Photo by Paul Kosel)


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State A Girls Soccer Championship Game is Set!

Class A - State



#1 - Tea Area High School

 1 Tea Area	6	FINAL
 8 Garretson	0	


#2 - West Central High School Ander...

 4 West Central	3	FINAL
 5 Dakota Valley	1	



#3 - Groton Area High School

 2 Groton Area	4	FINAL
 7 St. Thomas More	0	

#4 - Sioux Falls Christian School



 3 Sioux Falls Christian	3	FINAL
 6 Vermillion	1	

#5 - Tea Area High School

 1 Tea Area	2	FINAL
 4 West Central	1	



#6 - Groton Area High School

 2 Groton Area	2	FINAL
 3 Sioux Falls Christian	1	

#7 - Brandon Valley High School

 1 Tea Area	0-0	10/14 11:00 AM CT
 2 Groton Area	9-2-1	

STATE CHAMPION



GHS Marching Band Gets Gold Award at Gypsy Day Parade

Groton Area's Marching Band took part in the Gypsy Day Parade in Aberdeen on Saturday. It was a short march for the band as once they were past the judges, they had to leave the parade so the soccer players could get back to Groton to get ready for the State Semifinal game. The band earned a Gold award this year. (Photo courtesy Jess Paepke on Desiree Yeigh's Facebook Page)

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Northern State Runs Past Minot State on Gypsy Days

Aberdeen, S.D. – The Northern State University football team tallied a blowout victory over Minot State in the annual Gypsy Days game on Saturday, defeating the Beavers 46-9. The Wolves scored 13 points in the first, 12 in the second, and 21 in third.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 46, MiSU 9

Records: NSU 2-4 (2-4 NSIC), MiSU 0-6 (0-6 NSIC)

Attendance: 6793

HOW IT HAPPENED

Stanley Haskins Jr. put the Wolves on the board in their first drive of the contest with an 11-yard touchdown run at 6:22

Brett Brenton continued the Northern State attack with a 1-yard rushing score at 3:10 in the first

The Beavers answered with a 23-yard field goal in the second, coming within ten of the Wolves; the closest they would come for the remainder of the contest

Brenton added back-to-back scores for the Wolves in the second with a hatrnick of rushing touchdowns with a 30-yard run at 5:03 and 7-yard run with 24 seconds left

Northern led 25-3 at the half and kept the foot on the gas in the third

Dewaylon Ingram and Dakota Larson notched back-to-back receiving touchdowns within 19 seconds of each other; Ingram tallied a 21-yard touchdowns, while Larson recorded a 34-yard score from Jacob Van Landingham

Hank Kraft closed out the scoring for the Wolves with an 18-yard rushing touchdown, giving NSU a 46-3 lead

Minot State added their final touchdown early in the fourth and the two teams closed out the contest 46-9

Northern recorded a game leading 20 first downs, 217 yards rushing, 158 yards passing, and 375 yards of total offense

The Wolves defense held the Beavers to just 71 yards rushing and forced two fumbles

In his first collegiate start at quarterback, Van Landingham completed 11-of-12 passing attempts for 145 yards and two touchdowns

Brenton led the rushing attack with 84 total yards and three touchdowns, averaging 6.5 yards per carry

Larson and Ingram combined for 140 yards receiving with Larson averaging 14.2 yards per catch and Ingram averaging 17.3 yards per catch

Payton Hughes and Trey King led the defense with eight and seven tackles respectively, while King notched a team leading 5.0 tackles for a loss and 2 forced fumbles

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Jacob Van Landingham: 145 yards passing, 91.7 pass completion percentage, 2 touchdowns

Brett Brenton: 84 yards rushing, 3 touchdowns

Hank Kraft: 50 yards rushing, 1 touchdown

Stanley Haskins Jr.: 46 yards rushing, 1 touchdown

Dakota Larson: 71 yards receiving, 1 touchdown

Dewaylon Ingram: 69 yards receiving, 1 touchdown

Payton Hughes: 8 tackles, 1.0 tackles for a loss

Trey King: 7 tackles, 5.0 tackles for a loss, 2 forced fumbles

UP NEXT

Northern State travels to Southwest Minnesota State next Saturday, October 14. Kickoff time is set for 4 p.m. against the Mustangs.

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Wolves Volleyball Swept by Mavericks in Saturday Morning Action

Mankato, Minn. – The (RV) Northern State University volleyball team fell to Minnesota State on the road Saturday morning via sweep. The Mavericks were efficient offensively hitting .309 and recorded a game leading seven blocks.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 0, MSU 3

Records: NSU 13-4 (5-3 NSIC), MSU 9-7 (4-4 NSIC)

Attendance: 623

HOW IT HAPPENED

Northern dropped the match with set scores of 25-22, 25-22, and 25-17

The Wolves recorded 37 kills, 35 assists, 38 sigs, six aces, and two blocks in the loss

They hit .204, suffering 16 attack errors

Hanna Thompson led the team offensively and was the lone Wolf in double figures with 13 kills and a .417 attack percentage

Reese Johnson anchored the defense with a team leading ten digs, while Sara Moberg dropped three aces on the Mavericks serve receive

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Hanna Thompson: 13 kills, .417 attack%

Natalia Szybinska: 9 kills

Keri Walker: 28 assists, 7 digs, 2 aces

Reese Johnson: 10 digs, 2 assists

Sara Moberg: 5 digs, 4 aces, 2 assists

UP NEXT

The Wolves close out their road trip on Tuesday at MSU Moorhead. First serve is set for 6 p.m. from Nemzek Hall. Northern then returns home for a pair of matches on Friday and Saturday against UMary and Minot State. For full game promotions visit nsuwolves.com/promotions.

Elk Point Jefferson goes 4-0 to win Northwestern Tournament!

Northwestern went 3-1, losing only to tournament champion Elk Point Jefferson.

Northwestern's last match against Leola/Frederick was the volleyball program's 1,000th win! The team has only had two head coaches, Kathy Graves (338 wins) and Nora Groft (662 wins) in program history.

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

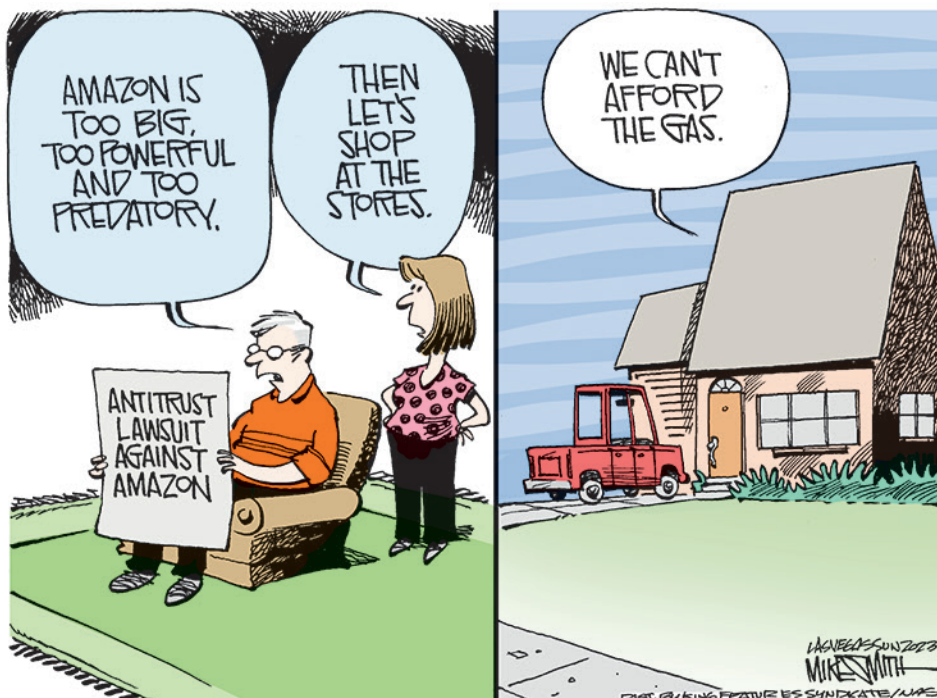


So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers...

The Lord gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers... the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.

— JOSHUA 21: 43-45 —

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

2. What phrase did Jesus use three times in resisting the temptations of Satan? *My father above, God is love, It is written, Thou must repent*

3. In II Peter 1, what were holy men moved by in regard to prophecy? *Kindred spirit, Holy Ghost, Sins, Love of God*

4. From Judges 6, which judge threshed wheat by the winepress? *Gideon, Joash, Neco, Hosea*

5. Who was Saul's daughter who married David? *Jephthah, Oholah, Rahab, Michal*

6. Shechem was the son of ...? *James, Hamor, Jacob, Onan*

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) It is written, 3) Holy Ghost, 4) Gideon, 5) Michal, 8) Hamor

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," now available in bookstores and online.

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WITH A SUPPORT BEAM LOST...

...THE HAWKPEOPLE'S CITY IN THE CLOUDS FACES CATASTROPHE!



FLASH GORDON

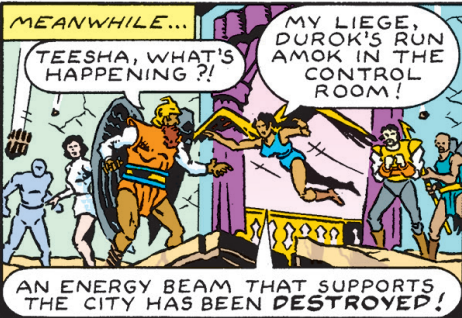
BY JIM KEEFE 10-8

JUST AS DUROK IS ABOUT TO CRUSH FLASH, THE FLOOR SHIFTS, THEN BUCKLES UNDERNEATH THEM!

THE CITY'S FOUNDATION HAS BECOME UNSTABLE!

WE'VE GOT A POWER SURGE IN REACTOR TWO! CLEAR THE AREA! IT'S GOING TO BLO...

BRA-KOW!



MEANWHILE...

TEESHA, WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

MY LIEGE, DUROK'S RUN AMOK IN THE CONTROL ROOM!

AN ENERGY BEAM THAT SUPPORTS THE CITY HAS BEEN DESTROYED!



VULTAN, I'M THORNE, DUROK'S SECOND-IN-COMMAND. IF HE HAS TO BE STOPPED, THEN IT'S MY JOB TO BRING HIM IN.

JOODA, RELEASE HIM. WE'RE GOING TO NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET!

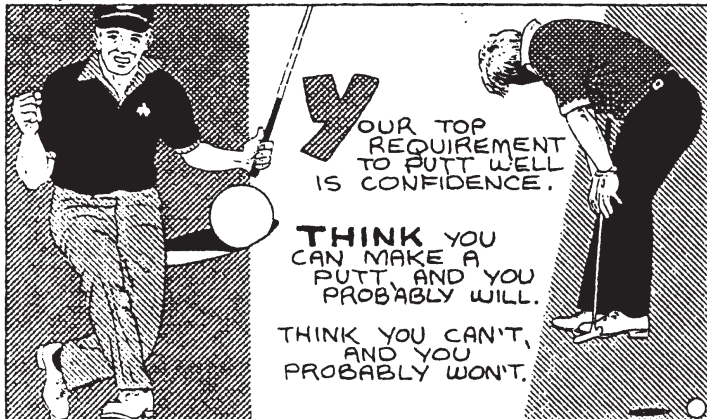


TEESHA, FIND ZARKOV. HE DESIGNED THE ATOM RAYS THAT SUPPORT THE CITY, AND UNLESS HE CAN FIND A WAY TO REPAIR THEM...

THE CITY'S DOOMED!

NEXT: FIGHT TO THE FINISH!

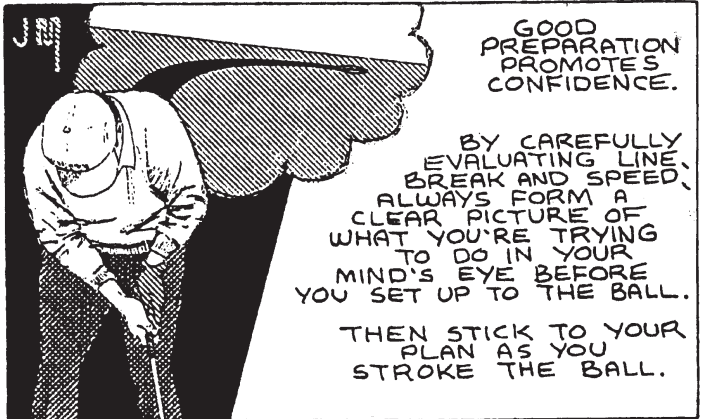
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



YOUR TOP REQUIREMENT TO PUTT WELL IS CONFIDENCE.

THINK YOU CAN MAKE A PUTT, AND YOU PROBABLY WILL.

THINK YOU CAN'T, AND YOU PROBABLY WON'T.



GOOD PREPARATION PROMOTES CONFIDENCE.

BY CAREFULLY EVALUATING LINE, BREAK AND SPEED, ALWAYS FORM A CLEAR PICTURE OF WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO IN YOUR MIND'S EYE BEFORE YOU SET UP TO THE BALL.

THEN STICK TO YOUR PLAN AS YOU STROKE THE BALL.

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Seizure-Like Reactions Pose the Question of Epilepsy

DEAR DR. ROACH: My husband experienced seizure-like episodes without tonic/clonic body movements in high altitude. These episodes occurred while he was traveling, being physically active in Colorado and skiing in France. Both episodes happened at least 12 hours after physical activity. Our general physician back home felt that these were not true seizures, instead a reaction to possibly being dehydrated in high altitudes.

A vast amount of testing resulted in nothing unusual going on with his cardiovascular system or his brain. But just recently, he had another episode two days after being active, hydrating at sea level and banging his head — with more body movement this time.

I have been researching online, and seizure-like reactions seem to occur due to electrolyte imbalances. It is very hard to get to a neurologist without an excessive wait time. Do you think anti-seizure medications are warranted? — S.S.

ANSWER: It's important to separate a seizure (which anyone can get if there is enough stress to the brain) from epilepsy, a condition where the person is susceptible to recurring seizures. For it to be considered epilepsy, a person generally needs at least two unprovoked seizures (with no unusual stress to the brain) at least 24 hours apart. Only epilepsy is treated with long-term anti-seizure medicines.

There is indeed a risk of developing seizures while at a high altitude. In addition,

can provoke a seizure. You mentioned electrolyte imbalance, but sodium (too much or too little) as well as too little amounts of magnesium and calcium are among the most common. Low blood sugar is a frequent cause.

Some recreational drugs cause seizures, but withdrawal from drugs, especially alcohol, is more common. Metabolic diseases of the kidney and thyroid are also common. Sleep deprivation, brain injury (especially stroke, but also trauma), brain tumors and brain infections are all common triggers that your husband probably received an evaluation for.

Had it only been the first seizure, my advice likely would have been the same as your physician's, although I probably would have suggested a consultation with an epileptologist (a neurologist with special expertise in seizures). Now that he has had a second — and unprovoked — seizure, my suspicion that he has epilepsy is much higher. (In hindsight, it's clear that the first reaction really was a seizure.)

Most people experiencing their first seizure while at a high altitude were eventually found to have epilepsy after further testing, including an electroencephalogram (EEG). The high altitude doesn't cause the seizure; it just increases the risk of a seizure in a person who has an underlying propensity for it. This may also occur with many medicines, especially those used for depression.

Your husband should see an epileptologist as soon as possible. I strongly feel that it's unwise for nonexperts to prescribe anti-seizure drugs, except as a treatment until a patient can be seen by an expert. I have seen that done many times, and it is done improperly, at least according to the expert a patient eventually sees. Your husband needs a timely and comprehensive reevaluation. Epileptologists recognize that new onset seizures in an adult require a more timely appointment.

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

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"The Fall of the House of Usher" (TV-MA) -- Mike Flanagan, one modern filmmaker who always keeps his finger on the pulse of the horror genre, has created a new miniseries based on the works of the great American poet Edgar Allan Poe. Robert Usher (Bruce Greenwood) is the CEO of the corrupt company Fortunato Pharmaceuticals and has managed to scrape past each enemy who threatens to shake his power. But when his children start falling dead one by one at the hands of a mysterious woman, Robert realizes his reckoning has finally come. Carla Gugino, who also starred in Flanagan's previous series "The Haunting of Hill House" and "The Haunting of Bly Manor," plays Verna in this eight-episode series, available to stream on Oct. 12. (Netflix)

"The Starling Girl" (R) -- Twenty-four-year-old Australian actress Eliza Scanlen has received critical acclaim since she starred as Amma in the HBO miniseries "Sharp Objects" alongside Academy Award nominee Amy Adams. Scanlen went on to play Beth in Greta Gerwig's "Little Women," and now she's adding the role of Jem Starling to her already stellar filmography. Raised in a fundamentalist Christian community in Kentucky, Jem struggles with desires, like her love of dance, that fail to coincide with her strict religious foundation. She begins to find solace with her youth pastor, Owen, but when the affair backfires on her, she is forced to leave the one home she's always known. Out now. (Paramount+)

"Goosebumps" (TV-PG) -- While the "Goosebumps" book series was previously adapted into two films (props to you if you even remember them), a series based on the books was put into development by Rob Letterman, who also directed the first "Goosebumps" film that released in 2015. This series focuses on a high school teacher who gets possessed by the spirit of a teenage student from years prior. He unleashes a curse on a group of five kids, attempting to get revenge through the sons and daughters of the students who previously wronged him. The first five episodes release on Oct. 13, while the following five release every Friday thereafter. (Disney+)

"Renfield" (R) -- This comedy-horror film inspired by Dracula's familiar Renfield in Bram Stoker's 1897 novel was an incredible flop in the box office, and I can't help but wonder if it was because someone had the idea to put Nicolas Cage in a pimp coat and acrylic nails and cast him as Dracula. Nicholas Hoult (brilliant in "The Menu") plays Dracula's humble servant, who receives immortality, speed, and super strength when he consumes bugs. Growing ever tired of having to find victims for Dracula to feast on, Renfield is desperate to reform his tragic life. So, when the duo makes a stop in New Orleans during their travels, Renfield attempts to find freedom from Dracula's perfectly manicured hands. Premieres Oct. 10. (Amazon Prime Video)



Justin Long stars in "Goosebumps."

Courtesy of Disney+

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1. What are the only words on the cover of the original Beatles white album?
2. What was the only No. 1 Crystals song?
3. Name the bestselling single of all time.
4. What was the Marrakesh Express?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Don't come knockin' around my door, Don't wanna see your shadow no more."

Answers

1. It said simply "The Beatles" in embossed letters. Later pressings had "The Beatles" printed. The first few million copies were individually numbered.
2. "He's a Rebel," in 1962. "Da Doo Ron Ron (When He Walked Me Home)" came in at No. 3 the following year.
3. "White Christmas," by Bing Crosby in 1942, per a recent (2020) Guinness World Records. The song has sold 50 million copies, far ahead of Elton John's 33 million copies for the double A-side "Something About the Way You Look Tonight"/"Candle in the Wind 1997."
4. As written in the Crosby, Stills and Nash song, it was the train from Casablanca to Marrakesh in Morocco. The real train is spelled Marrakech.
5. "American Woman," by the Guess Who in 1970. The song was written by Burton Cummings and Randy Bachman, but for this song, credits included other band members Garry Peterson and Jim Kale.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



"We can lend you your money at a very reasonable rate of interest."

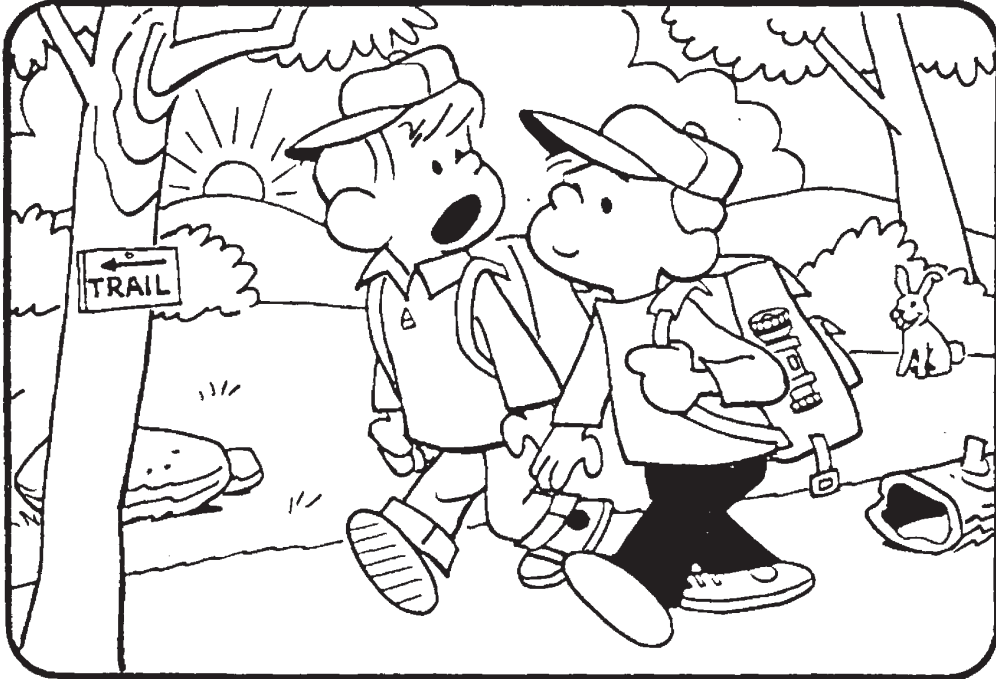
Just Like Cats & Dogs ^{by Dave T. Phipps}



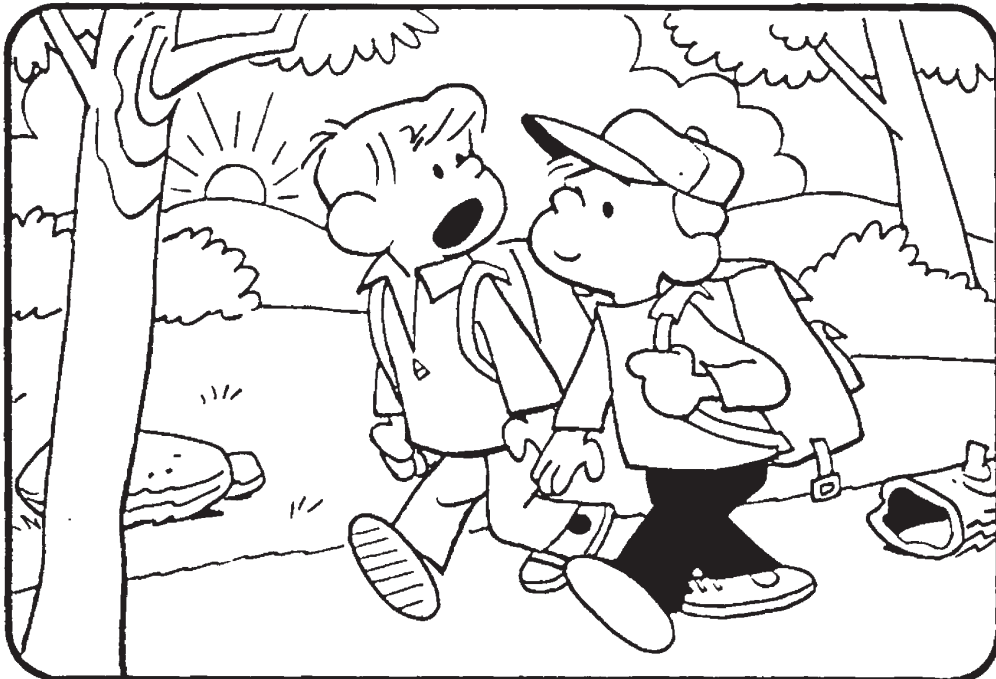
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Sign is missing. 2. Cap is missing. 3. Jacket is opened. 4. Cuffs are missing. 5. Flashlight is missing. 6. Rabbit is missing.

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* Fill your salt and pepper shakers a fourth of the way with uncooked white rice. Dry rice will allow the salt or pepper to flow more freely from the shaker. If your shaker is opaque, you can tell when it's time to add more salt or pepper when the shaker starts to rattle.

* Mark old toothbrushes with masking tape so you can tell the difference between cleaning brushes and those you use for your teeth. You can clean a toothbrush in the dishwasher. Put it with the silverware.

* Because fabric softeners can leave residue on the dryer's lint trap, clean yours out at least every other month. Just scrub with plain old soap and water.

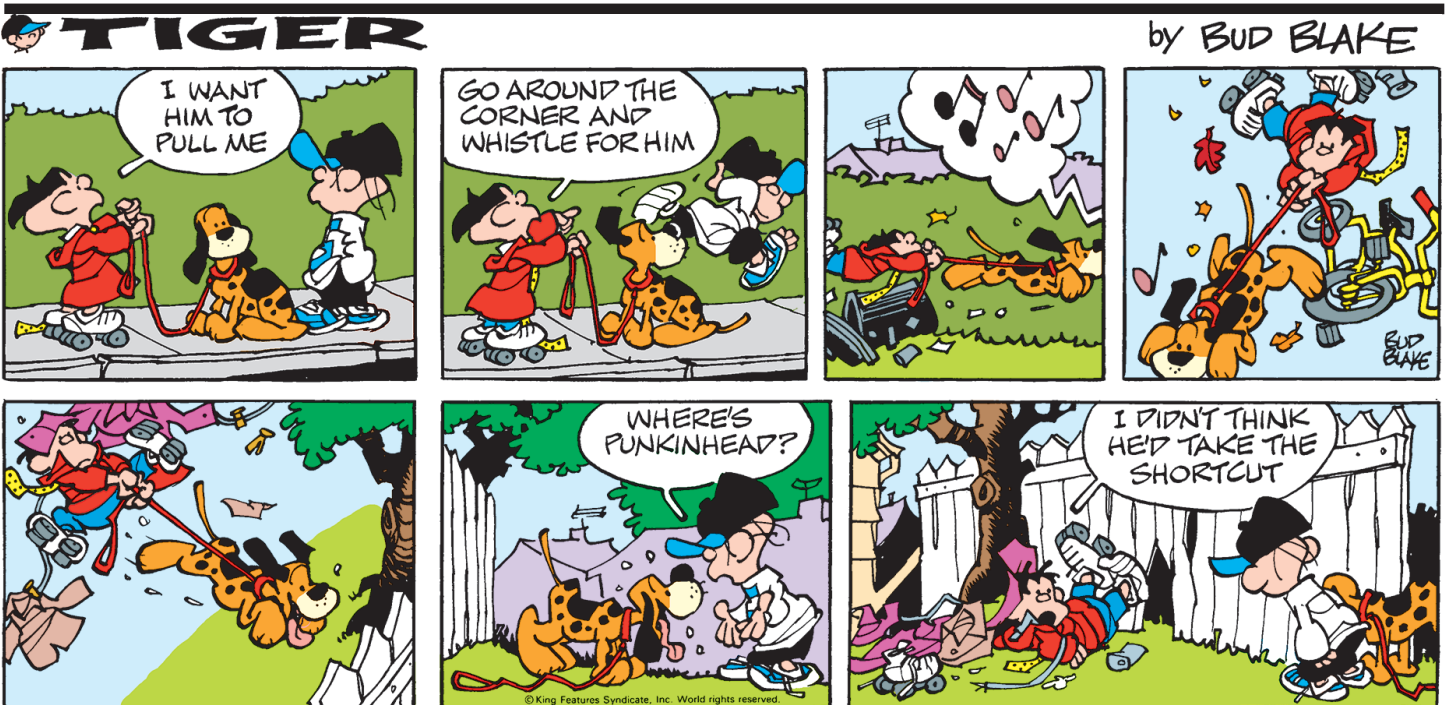
* "Add this to the list of wonderful cleaners for wood floors: tea. Just brew a couple of cups and use the tea as you would your regular wood floor cleaner. It's nice and shiny afterward." -- P.L. in Oregon

* Use a turkey baster to "squirt" pancake batter into your frying pan. Mix the batter as normal and unscrew the top of the baster to load. You can use it to make letters for fun kids' breakfasts. No drips!

* "If you have trouble opening the lid on glass jars, try using a pair of standard dishwashing gloves. They work to grip both the lid and the jar. They work especially well if your hands are the least bit moist." -- D.Y. in Pennsylvania

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

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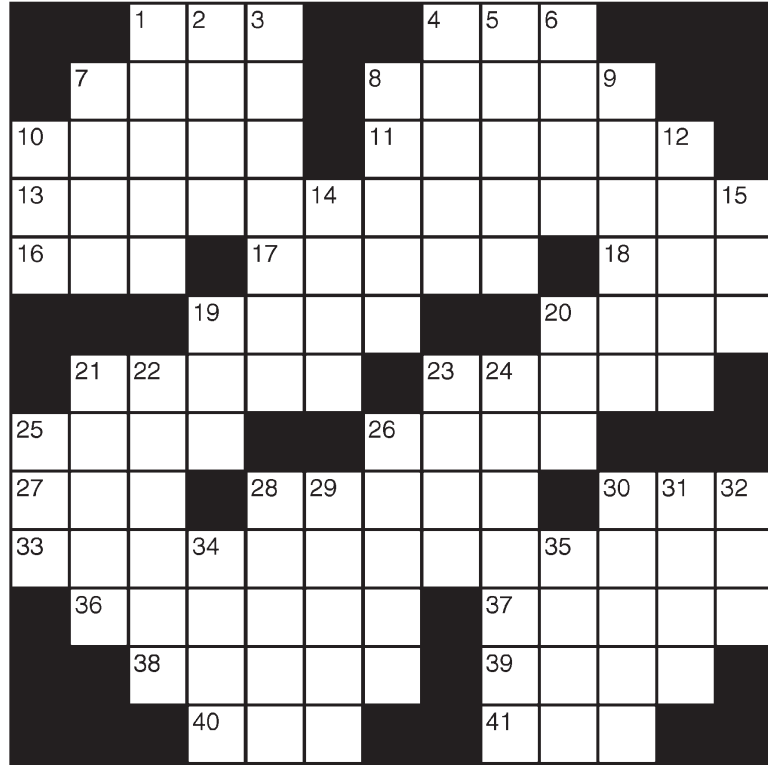
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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Big mouth
- 4 Scoundrel
- 7 Actress Rogers
- 8 Underneath
- 10 Choir member
- 11 Loves to pieces
- 13 Woven containers
- 16 Raw mineral
- 17 Levels
- 18 Cistern
- 19 Pet food brand
- 20 Feel sorry for
- 21 Answers an invitation
- 23 Sandbox toys
- 25 Dandies
- 26 Billions of years
- 27 Simile part
- 28 Egypt's Mubarak
- 30 Pallid
- 33 Company codes used at a stock exchange
- 36 Journalist Bly
- 37 Bakery smell
- 38 Japanese wrestlers
- 39 Minnelli of "Arthur"



- 40 AOL rival
- 41 Tofu source
- 10 Tango team
- 12 Sports figures
- 14 Eyeglass frames
- 15 Pigs' digs
- 19 Hosp. hook-ups
- 20 Math ratios
- 21 Cello bow application
- 22 Parking spots
- 23 Shetland, for one
- 24 Cracker shapes
- 25 Corpulent
- 26 Road curves
- 28 Big wheels at sea
- 29 Hunter in the sky
- 30 Lightheaded
- 31 Mater lead-in
- 32 Code-breaking gp.
- 34 Heidi of "Project Runway"
- 35 Vivacity, in music

DOWN

- 1 Chop finely
- 2 Out of control
- 3 Spy's device
- 4 Fragrant wood
- 5 At — for words
- 6 Dweeb
- 7 Israel's Golda
- 8 Innocents
- 9 Cotton pest

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THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS
POPEYE
BY RANDY MILHOLLAND

I KNOW SEA HAG CLAIMS TO BE THE LAST WITCH ON EARTH, BUT HER SISTER DOES MAGIC. IS SHE NOT A WITCH?

HER SISTER IS AN ENCHANTRESS. THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

ONE PRACTICES DARK ARTS, AND THE OTHER I'M NOT PAID TO CARE ABOUT.

QUESTEL

THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS
"BEHOLD, THE HALLO-QUEEN!"
PART 3

SEA HAG IS SET TO BRING WITCHES BACK TO EARTH IN HOPES OF INCREASING HER POWER, ALL WHILE POPEYE RACES TO STOP HER....

LIGHT THE LANTERN OF LEBLING. DRAW THE BLANK SWORD...

STOP THE RITUAL, SISTER! POPEYE'S ARRIVED TO STOP YOU.

WONDERFUL! I WAS WORRIED HE WOULDN'T SHOW UP!

HUH?!

JABBO! WE'VE GOT COMPANY! SHOW 'EM HOSPITALITY AND SERVE 'EM PUMPKIN PIE!

IZZAT JABBO? ARF! ARF! SEA HAG KNOWS I KIN BEAT HIM. WHY'S SHE KEEP HIM 'ROUND?

MOSTLY FOR HIS GREEN THUMB.

BARNEY GOOGLE AND
SNUFFY SMITH

CAN I GO BUY A COOKIE AN' WAIT FER YA OUTSIDE, AUNT LOWEEZY?

SHORE, JUGHAID-- ASK SILAS TO PUT IT ON OUR TAB!!

WHOA !! WHAT'S THIS \$5.00 COOKIE CHARGE, SILAS ?!

THANKEE, ELVINEY !! YOU MAKE TH' BESTEST COOKIES IN ALL 'A HOOTIN' HOLLER !!

AW !!

THANKEE, MIZ TUTTLE !! YOU MAKE TH' BESTEST COOKIES IN TH' WHOLE DANG COUNTY !!

OH, PSHAW, JUGHAID !!

YORE COOKIES ARE TH' BESTEST IN TH' WHOLE DARN STATE, GRANMAW !!

WELL, AIN'T YOU JEST TH' SWEETEST !!

AUNT LOWEEZY, YORE COOKIES ARE TH' BESTEST IN TH' WHOLE ENTIRE WORLD !!

THANKEE, JUGHAID !! OH, HERE--HAVE ANOTHER !!

AN' IF'N THEM WIMMIN GIT TO TALKIN', JUGHAID, YO'RE GONNA FIND OUT JEST HOW TH' COOKIE CRUMBLES !!

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HIDDEN UNDER HAY, VAL AND GAWAIN HAVE INFILTRATED THE CAMP OF LORD GRUNYARD'S KIDNAPPERS. THEY HAD NOT EXPECTED AN IMMEDIATE UNLOADING.

3940



THERE IS NO CHOICE BUT TO REVEAL THEMSELVES. "LET IT BE REMEMBERED," GROWLS GAWAIN, "I NEVER LIKED THIS PLAN."



THE KIDNAPPER WHO POSED AS LADY GRUNYARD IS NOT HAPPY EITHER. "FIE! THESE ARE THE TWO FOOLISH KNIGHTS WHO ALMOST BROUGHT OUR MISSION IN CAMELOT TO BLOODY DISASTER! WHY MUST THEY CONTINUE TO MEDDLE?"



THE KNIGHTS HAVE NO ANSWER. THEY ARE SURROUNDED BY A HOST OF BRIGANDS THEY KNOW TO BE DISCIPLINED WARRIORS. THERE IS LITTLE HOPE LEFT, BUT THEY WILL GO DOWN FIGHTING...

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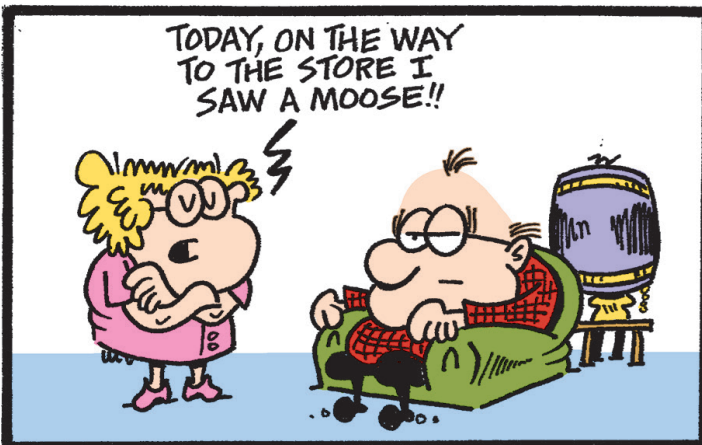
... BUT THEN VAL HEARS THE LADY - WHO IS OBVIOUSLY THE LEADER - BARK A SURPRISING COMMAND: "TAKE THESE BLASTED FOOLS AND MAKE SURE THEY ARE NOT BADLY HARMED!"

NEXT: Personal combat

YEATES
8/12/12

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



TODAY, ON THE WAY TO THE STORE I SAW A MOOSE!!



HOW DO YOU KNOW IT WAS ON ITS WAY TO THE STORE??

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PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Cellphone Safety

If you've had a cellphone for several years and are now quite comfortable using it, you might be tempted to add more functions and fun to it to make it handier and more valuable to you.

However, there needs to be a line drawn somewhere.

Beware the types of apps you install on your phone. (App is short for "application," and it's thought there are nearly 9 million different apps in the world.) The thing to ask yourself before you add any app is this: If technology experts who run large computer systems struggle to keep those systems safe from scammers around the world, how much success are the techs at your bank or grocery store likely to have with cellphones?

The more apps you have on your phone, the more at risk you are.

Clicking the wrong thing on an app, or even downloading it, can install malware on your phone. At the very least, it can send your number back to scammers. Armed with only your active phone number, they can do a reverse search for you on Whitepages and potentially find your home address and then your banking information and much more. They can lock you out of social media, barrage you with scam text messages and calls, have all your calls forwarded to another number or lock you out of your phone until you pay a ransom. They can send scam messages that appear to have come from you. If you access email on your phone, your area of risk widens substantially.

Some suggestions from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to keep your phone safe:

Lock it. Depending on the brand you have, used a passcode or a screen lock.

Keep the software updated.

Back up your data. Learn about backing up to the "cloud" or your computer.

And before you add any app to your phone, ask yourself if you trust it.

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1. Carlester Crumpler and his brother Alge both played tight end in the NFL. Who had more career touchdown receptions between the two?

2. What four-team, invitational women's association soccer tournament has been held annually in the U.S. since 2016?

3. What golfer won the 1958 PGA Championship and was also the captain of the U.S. Ryder Cup team in 1977?

4. The Soviet Union's Rudolf Plyukfelder won a gold medal at the 1964 Tokyo Summer Olympics competing in what sport?

5. Walt Jocketty served as general manager of what Major League Baseball team from 1994-2007?

6. Before entering the NBA Draft in 2008, Kevin Love played one season of basketball for what college team?

7. The NFL's Man of the Year Award for philanthropy and community service is named in honor of what Pro Football Hall of Famer?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. Alge, with 39 (Carlester had four).

2. The SheBelieves Cup.

3. Dow Finsterwald.

4. Weightlifting.

5. The St. Louis Cardinals.

6. The UCLA Bruins.

7. Walter Payton.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Cat and Dog Can Coexist

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I periodically dog-sit for a neighbor, keeping her small Beagle, Downy, at my house while she travels. The problem is my cat, Sparks. He is absolutely infuriated when I bring Downy home, even though Downy doesn't bark at him. Sparks will yowl and glare at the dog every time they're in the same room. And now, Sparks is peeing on the rug next to my bed the entire time that Downy visits. What can I do about this? -- Cheryl J., Reno, Nevada

DEAR CHERYL: Ouch! Cats are notoriously territorial, not just with dogs but with other cats, too. And Sparks does not seem to be settling in to the notion

that Downy is an OK guest to have.

It's clear that you'll have to keep the two of them separate when Downy is visiting. But by leaving a mess on your bedroom rug, Sparks is signaling that separation may not be enough. The situation is really stressing him out. He's drawing the line by marking your rug, a clear statement: This is my territory!

The quickest way to resolve the issue, of course, is to stop dog-sitting for your friend -- or dog-sit by periodically visiting her home throughout the day to spend time with Downy and make sure he has food and water.

But if that's not possible, and you intend to keep Downy at your house instead, you've got only a few options.

-- Keep a clear separation between Downy and the cat. Place their food bowls in separate rooms with the door closed between them.

-- Change out the rug in your bedroom for a new one, and spray it with cat pheromone (available at pet stores) to try to stop Sparks from peeing on it.

-- Consider giving Sparks an anti-anxiety medication (available from the veterinarian) to reduce his stress.

Best of luck. Be patient with both pets; they may never be comfortable around each other, but you may be able to keep them both from being too anxious.

Readers, how did you deal with a conflict between two pets? Tell us about it at ask@pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* Like verbal language, sign language has tongue twisters, known as "finger fumblers."

* In Japan, ramen noodles are a fuel source for more than just humans: The Amaterasu Railway's sightseeing train uses biodiesel made out of leftover ramen oil, which has the added benefits of curbing CO2 emissions and supporting local businesses.

* *Physarum polycephalum*, a type of slime mold, can solve complex mazes and other spatial problems even though it has neither a brain nor a nervous system.

* There are 293 ways to make change for a dollar.

* A bald eagle, upon catching a fish that may be too heavy for it to lift, will use a movement strikingly similar to the human breaststroke to maneuver its prey to the shore.

* The world's oldest known musical instrument, a flute made from a vulture's wing bone that was discovered in a German cave, dates back nearly 40,000 years.

* Minnie Mouse's first name isn't Minnie, but Minerva.

* Rapper Yung Gravy donated nearly 2,000 bras thrown at him during concerts to a women's charity.

* A candle's flame is blue in zero gravity.

* Janine Sugawara sued the makers of Cap'n Crunch cereal for falsely advertising its contents by not using real berries. Her complaint was quickly dismissed, however, when the judge pointed out that there's no such thing as Crunch Berry.

* And speaking of the good captain, his full name is Horatio Magellan Crunch, after explorer Ferdinand Magellan.

* You are more likely to have a weird or scary dream while sleeping on your stomach.

* During the 1980s, American Airlines found it could save an annual \$40,000 simply by removing a single olive from its first-class meals.

Thought for the Day: "You know you're in love when you can't fall asleep because reality is finally better than your dreams." -- Dr. Seuss

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The Garden Bug

Purple Honey



In North Carolina, there are areas where some local honeybees have been known to produce honey that has a purple or bluish hue. No one is sure what makes this happen exactly or how many conditions affect this process. Some researchers theorize that some hives collecting nectar from sourwood tree blossoms in summer are the reason; others say hydrangea flowers, titi plants, kudzu blossoms or elderberry flowers cause the unusual coloration. Beekeepers who find their hives producing this rare honey say it tastes fruity.

Sources: newsobserver.com, honeybeesuite.com

- Brenda Weaver



by Freddy Groves

It's All in the Fine Print

This is certainly a new one. A famous (and expensive) university and a professor were caught not paying the Department of Veterans Affairs what was owed for patents, to the tune of \$1.5 million.

The professor in question worked at the university in various research positions, including as the Chair of one department. His list of titles and positions is quite impressive, not to mention his long list of honors and awards. In other words, the guy is no slouch. He's clearly bright and is working in an important medical

field. At the same time he held a part-time position at the VA.

Both the professor and the university were under disclosure agreements, which meant that any discoveries or inventions the professor made at the university would be reported to the VA. While at the university, having created three inventions, the professor applied for three patents with the VA's part clearly noted.

What's key here is that part of the funding for the research came from VA grants. In other words, taxpayers paid for some of it.

Years later, the royalty payments started rolling in from those three patents. During one round of submitting paperwork for the patents, the detail about the VA having supported the research was omitted.

Notified about the lapse, the professor refiled and the VA pounced, wanting to claim an ownership interest in the inventions ... and the royalties.

The Department of Justice got involved with the end result that the university and the professor have to pay \$1.5 million under the False Claims Act for failure to share the patent royalties.

I was prepared to hate the guy, truly. I found dozens of professional videos online wherein he talked about the research, and I was prepared to label him a swindler, a low-life, a thief. Instead, I'm left pointing the finger of blame at the university itself. They should have had someone to watch over the details and to handle paperwork matters such as correctly filing patents so the professor could keep doing his work.

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Wishing Well®

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E	U	R	M	S	A	O	E	N	L	E	M	Y

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

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1. GEOGRAPHY: Which body of water lies between Alaska and Russia?
2. TELEVISION: What city is the setting for the dramatic series "The Wire"?
3. U.S. PRESIDENTS: What is President Joe Biden's Secret Service code name?
4. MOVIES: What is the name of the island in "Jurassic Park"?
5. MUSIC: What is the pop band that The Dude dislikes in "The Big Lebowski"?
6. SCIENCE: Which metal conducts electricity best?
7. HISTORY: What is believed to be the oldest system of writing?
8. ANATOMY: What is the longest muscle in the human body?
9. U.S. STATES: Which two states don't observe Daylight Savings Time?
10. ASTRONOMY: In which constellation can you find the Horsehead Nebula?

Answers

1. Bering Strait.
2. Baltimore, Maryland.
3. Celtic.
4. Isla Nublar.
5. The Eagles.
6. Silver.
7. Cuneiform.
8. Sartorius, which stretches from the pelvis to the knee.
9. Arizona and Hawaii.
10. Orion.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Welcoming Home South Dakota's Finest

Welcoming troops home has always been one of my favorite parts of this job. Seeing the joy that our soldiers feel when they are reunited with their families is truly greater than words could ever describe.

I recently had the privilege of welcoming home 50 South Dakota National Guard soldiers with the Alpha Battery 1st Battalion 147th Field Artillery. Their unit is based out of Watertown, South Dakota, and they were deployed to Eagle Pass, TX to defend our Southern border at the beginning of September.

These brave men and women were deployed to help with Operation Lone Star – an effort led by Texas Governor Greg Abbott to secure the border and stop the smuggling of drugs, weapons, and people into the United States of America. I have been to the border multiple times, and it is clear that President Biden's policies have created a warzone. That's why I was the first governor to send troops to the border back in 2021, and it's why I sent these soldiers this year.

There is no one that I trust more to protect our state and nation than the members of the South Dakota National Guard. Between visiting our men and women in uniform at the Southern border and welcoming them home to South Dakota, these soldiers showed me exactly why we can trust them so much. I'd like to share just a couple stories that show the strength and bravery of our troops.

SPC Thomas Frankenhoff was recognized for his actions on static observation points along the Rio Grande River in Eagle Pass, TX. He observed 81 illegal aliens breach the concertina wire and ran to aid Texas law enforcement in the apprehension of 81 illegal aliens. His motivation boosted unit morale, and his actions along the concertina wire directly aided in the apprehension of 13,800 illegal aliens.

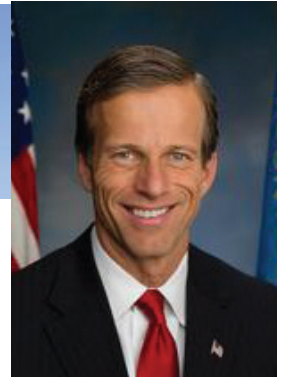
SPC Thomas Seppala volunteered to join this mission as a 68W combat medic. He served on a previous border mission with the 153rd South Dakota Army National Guard. SPC Seppala is fluent in Spanish, and he knew that his ability to communicate with illegal immigrants made him an important asset to the mission.

These are just two examples of our soldiers going above and beyond the call of duty. So many more members of the South Dakota National Guard went the extra mile to help contribute to this mission and do their part to keep the United States secure.

I was honored to welcome the members of the Alpha Battery 1st Battalion 147th Field Artillery home to South Dakota. Our soldiers and their families sacrifice so much to serve our great state and nation. I could never thank them enough for their service.

Though our soldiers are home, the fight is not over. The situation at our Southern border is still a crisis. I am continuing to work with Republican governors across the country to do all we can to help, but federal action is needed. Thankfully, President Biden is finally starting to resume work on the border security wall – but it is too little, too late. I hope the Biden Administration will open their eyes to the warzone they have created and take action to secure our nation and ensure the safety of every American citizen.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Biden's Energy Agenda: Unaffordable, Unreliable, and Unrealistic

Energy touches just about everything we do. More than just keeping the lights on, energy keeps America moving. It's critical to bringing food and other goods to market. It supports our health care system and provides educational opportunities for students. And it powers critical technologies that keep businesses, farms, and ranches operating. Reliable and affordable energy is essential to modern life.

The Biden administration's shortsighted energy agenda has put America's energy security in jeopardy. For more than two years, the Biden administration has enacted policies to restrict energy development in the United States and raise the cost of producing conventional energy, which have caused uncertainty among America's energy producers.

In September, the U.S. Department of the Interior took two significant actions that discourage producing conventional energy here in the United States. At the beginning of September, the department cancelled seven oil and gas leases in a small portion of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. These leases were required by law, they were supported by Alaskans, and the land has the potential to produce a significant amount of homegrown energy. Yet the Biden administration chose to follow its radical environmental agenda rather than safeguard our energy security. A few weeks later, the department announced it would hold the fewest offshore oil and gas leases sales ever – just three sales over five years. These decisions are just the latest instances of the president restricting conventional energy development on federal lands and waters for the sake of appeasing the far-left of his political base.

The president's anti-conventional energy policies have consequences. Utility bills for electricity and natural gas, as well as prices for gasoline and diesel, have risen significantly during the Biden administration. In February, one of the nation's largest grid operators warned that legacy power plants are being forced to retire faster than renewables can be brought on line. And just recently, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation identified "energy policy" as a risk to grid reliability. The president's energy policies are liable to drive prices up further, lead to greater instability on our electric grid, and increase reliance on foreign energy.

President Biden and Democrats in Congress promise to boost renewable energy by leveraging billions in Green New Deal-type subsidies. I've long been a supporter of renewable energy, and I am proud that South Dakota is both a top producer of ethanol and that our state generates most of its electricity from renewable resources. But the fact of the matter is that energy technology has not advanced to the point where we can rely solely or even mostly on renewable energy for the entire country. We're going to need conventional energy for some time, and it's better that we produce it in the United States than buy it from other countries, many of which do not share our interests or values.

The president has occasionally paid lip service to our continuing need for conventional energy, but his actions stand in stark contrast to his words. There's no substitute for energy security, and that starts with producing energy here at home. I'll continue to advocate for an all-of-the-above energy strategy that uses America's abundant domestic resources in an environmentally responsible way.

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



The Big Three

BIG Update

Ten years ago, Winter Storm Atlas came bearing down across western South Dakota. It brought record amounts of snow for the month of October, dumping 55 inches over Lead, South Dakota. Tens of thousands of livestock tragically perished in the storm, and many areas had power outages that lasted a week or longer.

Many of us have never experienced a storm like that in our lifetime, and hopefully never will again. The unprecedented nature of this storm brought people together to clear debris and restore damage over the following months. South Dakotans are tough and resilient. Neighbors helping neighbors, strangers helping strangers is the norm in South Dakota, even when times are tough.

The devastation endured by many is disheartening, but the strength of South Dakota remains.

BIG Idea

This week, I met with the South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organizations (SDAHO) to discuss the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) proposed rule to require nursing homes to have an onsite RN 24 hours, 7 days a week and mandate minimum hours for RNs and CNAs. This rule would force nursing homes across South Dakota to close because they can't fulfill the requirement. In fact, the rule would cause nursing homes across America to close because Alaska is the only state that currently meets CMS's baseline. If the outcome of this rule is thousands of nursing homes closing, that certainly isn't the best for America. Like SDAHO, I oppose this decision, and I've been working in Congress to ensure CMS's rule does not get finalized.

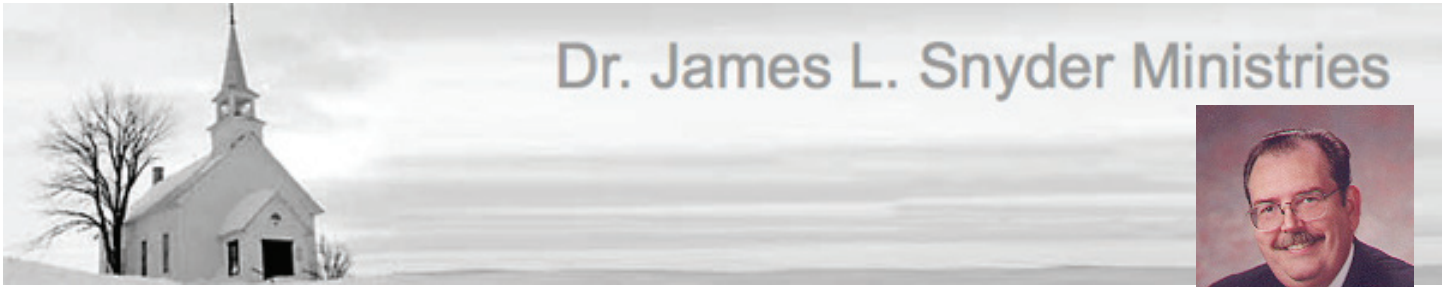
BIG News

Unfortunately, the House made history this week. On Tuesday, eight Republican members of Congress (only 4% of Republicans) voted with every single Democrat to remove the Speaker of the House from his post. It is a historic move with detrimental consequences to our country and to the slim House Republican majority. We were making progress on lowering spending and securing the border – these eight members brought that progress to a halt.

Without a Speaker of the House, no legislative business can be conducted on the House Floor. This situation is a giant waste of America's time. We are 40 days away from a government shutdown and haven't passed the necessary funding bills to pay our military, the aviation bill, or the Farm Bill. America deserves better. I came to Congress to solve problems, it's unfortunate that eight of my colleagues don't feel the same.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



Life Can Be a Series of Dreams

Lately, I've been having some fascinating dreams at night. Usually, I don't give much thought to dreams, but lately, I've been thinking more about them.

Last night, for example, I had this exciting dream, and everything seemed to be coming in my direction, and then I woke up before the end. Once I woke up, I did not know how the dream ended.

I tried thinking about the dream, but I could not remember any elements of that dream. While dreaming, everything was very clear, and I even noticed people I knew. Then, I woke up and couldn't remember anything.

I've been having these kinds of dreams lately. Maybe it's because I'm getting older, and my brain has nothing else to do. I wish I would not wake up until the dream was finished.

I asked The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage at breakfast if she knew about a certain building. I then described that building in as much detail as I possibly could.

She finally nodded at me and said, "That doesn't ring any bells with me."

I'm the only ding-a-ling here; if she didn't remember that building, it never existed.

It had to exist somewhere, and I needed help figuring out where in the world I saw that building.

Then I said, "Do you remember..." And I described a person that was in my dream. Again, none of her bells were ringing on that one either.

"Why are you asking me these questions?"

I explained to her that these things were in my dreams and I couldn't remember where I saw them last.

Thinking about this throughout the day, I realized that my life, in general, is pretty much like these fading dreams I've been having. None of these dreams made sense after I woke up. While I was dreaming of them, they made sense, but when I woke up, all sense disappeared.

Maybe life should be more like that. If I didn't wake up, I would know what was happening.

One time, at a conference, I drove through a little town and saw several familiar buildings. I had never been to this town before, so I couldn't figure it out. But it came to me.

These buildings were in my dreams the other night.

So, as I was driving, I began to think, am I dreaming, or am I driving?

I guess it doesn't make any difference one way or the other.

If I could remember my dreams, my life would change a little bit for the better. But I have these wonderful dreams and wake up before they're finished and then don't remember anything about them, which is rather sad.

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I tried an experiment the other night. I went to bed, had my prayer time, and then decided to invent a dream for the night. I've never done this before and was not sure how to do it. I tried to put together all kinds of little suggestions of my dream that would catch.

In a few minutes, I was sound asleep. The next thing I knew, it was morning, and I was awake. I lay there in my bed thinking, what happened to that dream? It was the first time in weeks that I did not have any kind of a dream. That made me a little frustrated.

For the next few nights, I tried the same experiment all to naught. Where in the world do these dreams come from?

That morning at the breakfast table, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me and smiled and said, "I had the most marvelous dream last night." Then she told me about her dream and how it ended. She remembered everything about it.

What disturbed me was that was the dream I was trying to create for myself last night. How in the world did she get my dream?

I'm beginning to think she can get inside my head whenever she wants, which is much more than I can do.

All day long, she was smiling, and once in a while, she would remember something of that dream and share it with me.

That evening, I decided to ask her about her dream. "How did you get such a wonderful dream in your head last night?"

Then she talked for quite a few minutes, explaining how all of that came together in her head.

"Why didn't you wake up before the dream ended?" I asked with anticipation.

"I make it a habit not to scare my dreams away like some people I know," she explained.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Well," she stuttered a little bit, looking at me, "I do not snore when I'm sleeping which is what scares dreams."

I got the implication that I snored at night, which scared my dreams away, which was a little difficult for me to understand. I see and hear my dreams but have never heard me snore. How does all of that work?

Life is not built on dreams. I was reminded of a Bible verse. "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5:6-8).

My faith in God is what guides my daily life, not my dreams.

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EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: My kitchen is overdue for an update. I'm wondering what's the latest, greatest and greenest today in countertop materials, flooring, paint and appliances?

— H. Barton, via email

Kitchens have traditionally had one of the worst environmental footprints in the home. However, technological advancements have brought more eco-friendly materials and tools for greener kitchens. Choose components wisely and you can do the planet a favor while you make the most lived-in room in the house better for everyone.



If it's time to remodel your kitchen, you'll have lots of earth-friendly choices to choose from for paint, counters, flooring and appliances. Credit: Pexels.

The first place to start thinking greener is paint. Conventional paint, especially oil-based varieties, contains lots of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These are off-gassing synthetic chemicals that not only can cause human health issues like headaches and nausea and have been linked to some cancers and also contribute to the build-up of ground-level ozone, a noxious pollutant in its own right. If you want to avoid VOCs in your new kitchen, paint it with water-based paints bearing either the Greenguard or Green Seal logos—these certifications ensure the paint in the can has little if any VOCs. Popular eco-friendly brands include AFM Safecoat, ECOS Paints, Bioshield and Behr Premium Plus.

Countertops are another kitchen area where we've come a long way with eco-friendly options. Teragren's "carbon-negative" counters are made of bamboo, which grows quickly and sequesters carbon dioxide in the process. Another great green choice for counters is Greenguard-certified Grenite, which uses recycled quartz, ceramics and acrylic to create countertops that are affordable and resistant to heat, stains and scratches. If you're looking for a colorful or more distinct option, take a look at Richlite, also certified by Greenguard as well as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). This innovative material is created by stacking recycled paper sheets, saturating them with phenolic resin, and applying heat and pressure.

Eco-conscious choices now also abound in flooring. Bamboo works as well on floors as countertops. Another increasingly popular green flooring option is cork. Contrary to hardwood, production of cork only requires the outer bark of a tree. Cork contains a natural waxy substance called suberin that prevents water and gasses from penetrating through. Accordingly, cork flooring offers excellent insulation, energy conservation, durability of up to 30 years, and natural hypoallergenic and insect-repellent properties. However, cork floors are often stained and coated, so look out for VOCs in the additives. Yet another great green choice for kitchen floors is Marmoleum, a naturally germicidal, waterproof and VOC-free form of linoleum composed of 97 percent natural material.

Upgrading to modern, energy-efficient appliances is another way to make your kitchen remodel pay dividends for the planet. Keep an eye out for appliances bearing the EnergySTAR certification, which ensures that the appliance you are eyeing meets or beats U.S. Department of Energy standards for energy efficiency. This will help lower your greenhouse gas emissions and also reduce your energy bill. Another earth-friendly upgrade would be to ditch the gas stove for an all-electric induction model; you'll not only lower your carbon footprint but also probably improve the indoor air quality inside your home.

.. EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.



COMMENTARY

A disturbing conclusion about rising maternal deaths: Most are preventable

by Tom Dean

Our society faces a number of health care challenges, but the one I find most troubling is maternal mortality — women dying as a result of child birth.

The actual numbers are quite small but the tragedy associated with them is immense. Furthermore, these deaths provide a window into the overall functioning, or rather the dysfunction, of our health care system. They are essentially the “canary in the coal mine.”

The deeply alarming fact is that at a time when we could reasonably expect that the situation would be improving it is actually getting worse. A century ago, the death rate associated with childbirth was roughly 900 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. With the advent of better infection control, safer anesthesia and a variety of other improvements in medical care, that rate had dropped to 9.8 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2000. Alarmingly, since then, the rate has steadily increased. It reached 21.5 in 2014 and went to 23.8 in 2020.

When compared with outcomes in other wealthy developed countries these data are even more alarming. Maternal death rates in the U.S. are twice as high as our next closest competitor (South Korea at 11.8) and three- to eightfold higher than countries like Canada (8.4), Sweden (7.0) and Australia (2.9).

A further sobering fact is that detailed analysis of these cases reveals the disturbing conclusion is that 80-90% of them are completely preventable.

How can this be? Major identified risk factors are maternal age, access to reliable care, and issues of race and poverty.

Maternal age is the most clear-cut. More women in the U.S. are having babies at later stages of life. As a person ages, other medical conditions such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, etc., become more common. Each of these can have a major impact on the risk of the pregnancy. The risk of maternal death for women ages 25-39 is 50% higher than for those under 25, and for those over 40 it is as much as sixfold higher. Certainly older women can have successful pregnancies. The risks, however, must be recognized and dealt with.

Barriers that limit access to care are both geographic and financial. In rural areas, travel distances are greater, making it more difficult for patients to get the regular prenatal care and especially emergency and delivery care. They also present challenges for providers. Because of small volumes, financial stresses and the difficulty in maintaining acceptable staff skill levels, many rural hospitals have stopped providing obstetric services. This means that if obstetric emergencies occur, the local facilities are less equipped to handle them, and access to the full range of obstetric care is delayed.

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Financial barriers to care are obvious and well known. Even for patients with insurance, co-pays and deductibles are sometimes enough to cause patients to delay prenatal appointments or to be hesitant to report new symptoms. All of these factors contribute to poorer outcomes.

Racial and ethnic factors impacting maternal mortality are complex and in many ways the most difficult to analyze. Maternal death rates among Black women are threefold higher than among white women. Some of this is due to increased levels of preexisting disease such as high blood pressure and diabetes, but studies clearly show that inherent racism is a significant factor. A recent study showed that complaints from Black women were taken less seriously by providers, potentially leading to delayed identification of serious conditions. Poverty and other "social determinants of health," including lack of literacy, clearly contribute to poor outcomes.

What can be done? This is definitely a multifaceted problem. However, the underlying message is that early identification of risk factors with careful follow-up management is the key to improving outcomes.

The countries that have much better outcomes than we do all have universal health care coverage, thereby eliminating financial barriers. In rural areas, the establishment of telehealth consultations and risk identification protocols hold promise for patients and providers. Mental health issues, especially postpartum depression, must be identified and taken seriously. Obviously we must continue to analyze and work to eliminate the destructive impacts of racism.

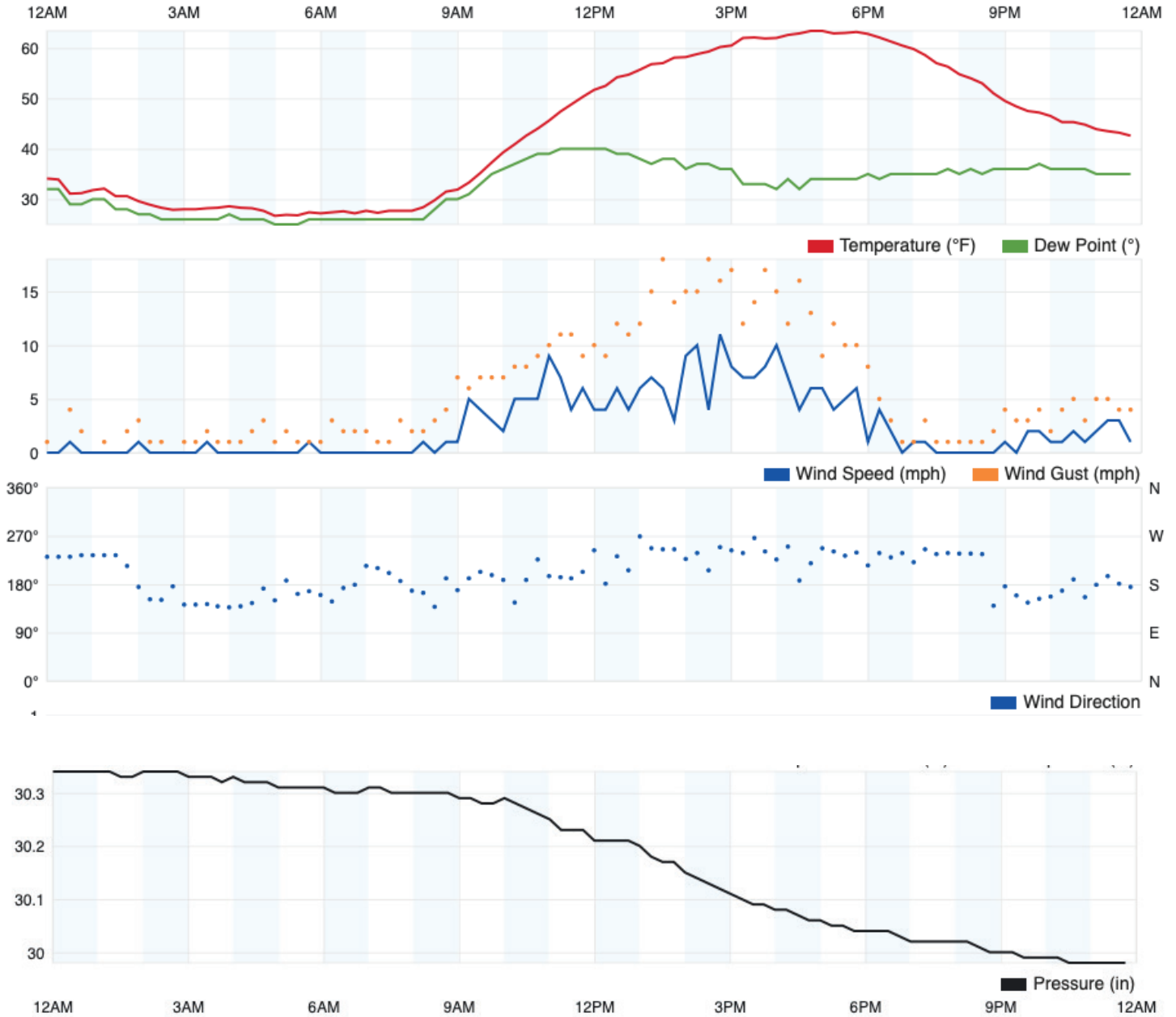
Again, the actual numbers are not large. but their importance is enormous. Having a baby should be a joyous and not a risky event.

Tom Dean is a retired family physician who grew up on a farm west of Wessington Springs. He graduated from Wessington Springs High School, Carleton College in Minnesota and medical school in Rochester, New York. He completed a family medicine residency at the University of Washington in Seattle. He returned to Wessington Springs to practice in 1978 along with his wife, Kathy, a certified nurse midwife. He retired after 43 years of practice and still lives in Wessington Springs.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Sun Oct 8	Mon Oct 9	Tue Oct 10	Wed Oct 11	Thu Oct 12	Fri Oct 13	Sat Oct 14
						
60°F 36°F	53°F 30°F	56°F 35°F	58°F 39°F	53°F 38°F	52°F 38°F	49°F 39°F
NNW 18 MPH	N 8 MPH	E 9 MPH	E 15 MPH	ENE 21 MPH 20%	N 16 MPH 30%	N 15 MPH



Today



Highs: 58 - 68°F
Lows: 32 - 38°F

Monday



Highs: 51 - 62°F
Lows: 30 - 36°F

October 8, 2023 3:36 AM



We are in for some pretty quiet fall weather the next few days. Highs in the 50s and 60s, dropping into the 30s overnight. Few to no clouds are expected so enjoy the sunshine!

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 64 °F at 4:57 PM

Low Temp: 27 °F at 5:00 AM

Wind: 19 mph at 2:48 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 11 hours, 20 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 87 in 1936

Record Low: 9 in 1895

Average High: 64

Average Low: 37

Average Precip in Oct.: 0.61

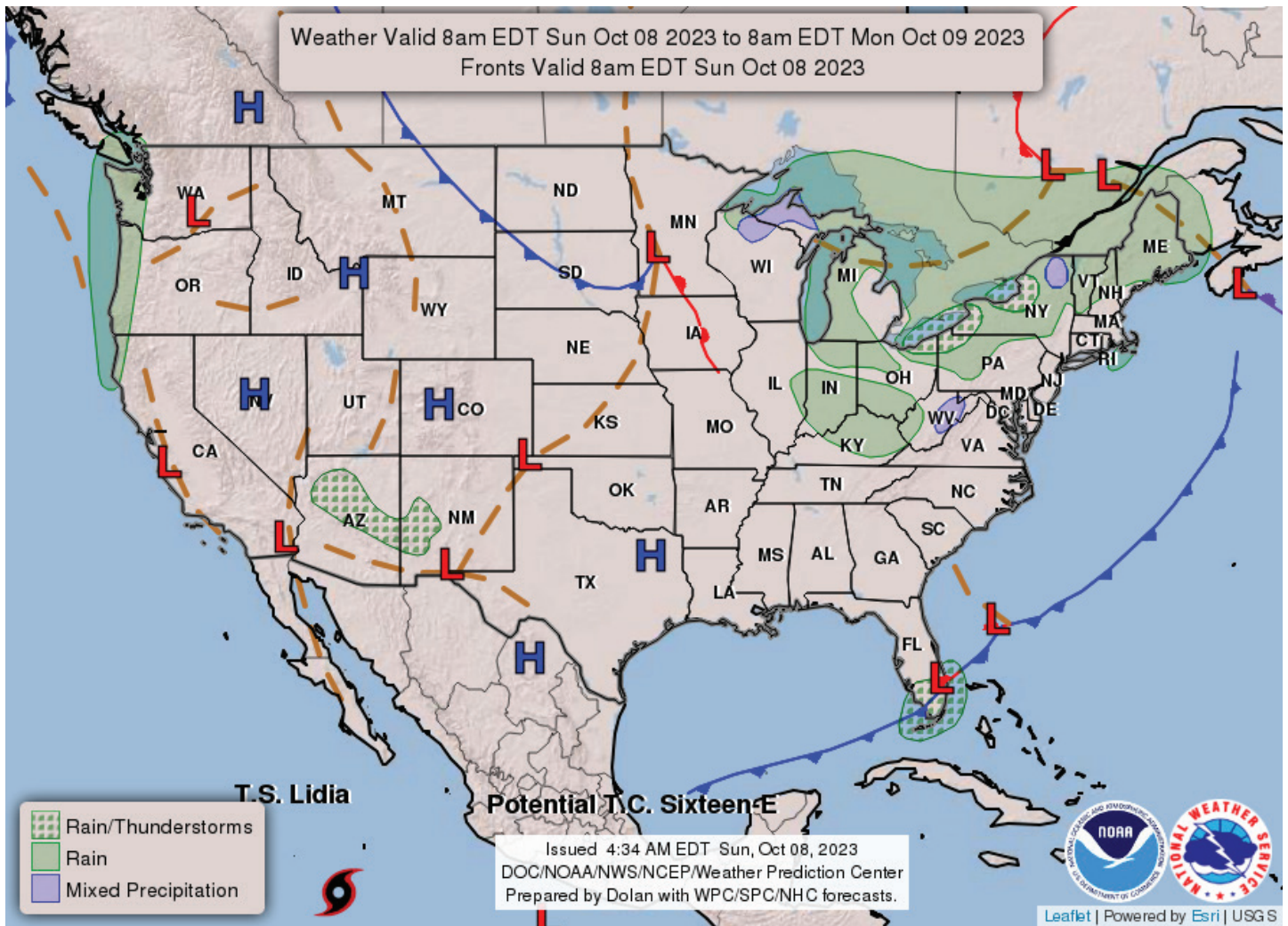
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.06

Average Precip to date: 18.94

Precip Year to Date: 21.83

Sunset Tonight: 7:01:45 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:39:22 AM



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Today in Weather History

October 8, 1982: October 8th and 9th, 1982, a record-breaking snowstorm (at that time) for so early in the Fall paralyzed the northern Black Hills with three to six feet of heavy, wet snow and 40 to 70 miles an hour. Some snowfall amounts included 41 inches at Galena, 36 inches at Lead, and 23 inches at Deadwood. Five to six feet of snow was typical in the higher elevations. The heavy wet snow caused numerous problems. The roof of a clothing store in Lead collapsed under the snow's weight, and several other businesses were damaged.

The roofs of at least three trailer homes also collapsed. The combination of high winds and heavy snow broke tree branches (causing extensive timber damage), power lines, and telephone poles. The damage was done to 40 miles of power lines, including 30 broken power poles. Some residents were without power for five days. The city of Deadwood was without electricity and water for at least three days

1871 - Prolonged drought and desiccating winds led to the great Chicago fire, the Peshtigo horror, and the Michigan fire holocaust. Fire destroyed more than seventeen thousand buildings killing more than 200 persons in the city of Chicago, while a fire consumed the town of Peshtigo WI killing more than 1100 persons. In Wisconsin, a million acres of land were burned, and in Michigan, 2.5 million acres were burned killing 200 persons. "Tornadoes of fire" generated by intense heat caused houses to explode in fire, and burned to death scores of persons seeking refuge in open fields. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1878: An estimated F3 tornado struck Monticello, Iowa, around 5:30 pm. The Catholic Church was demolished, along with several homes. The business portion of the town was comparatively uninjured. While no lives were lost, 11 people were injured. The German Church in Richland township was destroyed, along with other buildings in the surrounding county. A wind and hail storm occurred during the evening hours in Sigourney, Iowa, causing considerable damage. Fences and shade trees were blown down, and much glass was broken by hail, which fell in large stones.

1901 - A deluge at Galveston, TX, produced nearly twelve inches of rain in about a six hour period. The rains came precisely thirteen months after the day of the famous Galveston hurricane disaster. (David Ludlum)

1919: An intense tornado moved through the town of Hoisington, 11 miles north of Great Bend, Kansas. It damaged or destroyed 60 homes which resulted in \$200,000 in damages. Business papers and canceled checks were found at Lincoln, 55 miles to the northeast.

1946: A minimal Category 1 hurricane made landfall over Bradenton, Florida, before tracking north-northeast across Tampa Bay. The storm was the last hurricane to make direct landfall in the Tampa Bay area.

1982 - An unusually early snowstorm hit the northern Black Hills of Wyoming and South Dakota. The storm produced up to 54 inches of snow, and winds as high as 70 mph. The snowfall was very much dependent upon topography. Rapid City, 20 miles away, received just a trace of snow. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Unseasonably cold weather prevailed from the Upper Mississippi Valley to the southeastern U.S. Thirty cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Madison WI with a reading of 22 degrees. The low of 28 degrees at Evansville IN was the coolest of record for so early in the season. Hot weather continued in the southwestern U.S. Phoenix AZ reported a record high of 104 degrees and a record tying 116 days of 100 degree weather for the year. Tucson AZ established an all-time record with 72 days of 100 degree weather for the year. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Snow was reported across parts of northern New England. Two inches blanketed Mount Snow VT. Warm weather continued in the northwestern U.S. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Stampede Pass WA exceeded their previous record for October by seven degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Morning lows in the 20s were reported from the Northern Plains to the Upper Great Lakes. International Falls MN and Marquette MI reported record lows of 22 degrees. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed in central California as the Oakland Athletics won the American League pennant. San Luis Obispo CA reported a high of 99 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

WHO ARE YOU FOLLOWING?

It was the first time that Wayne and his Dad rode their bikes through the neighborhood. Wayne was excited as they rode down one street and then another, turned left, turned right, and finally arrived at home. Taking off his helmet, Wayne looked up at a smiling father and said, "Thanks, Dad, if it weren't for you, I wouldn't have known where to go and I'd be lost by now."

The Psalmist expressed the same idea and trust when he said to the Lord, "Who have I but you?"

But not all of us have that much faith in the Lord. John reports a story about Jesus and His disciples. They were having some problems with His teachings and Jesus said, "This is very hard to understand." As a result, we read that "many of His disciples turned away and deserted Him."

Have you ever wondered why those disciples turned away from Jesus? The Bible does not give any specific reason. No doubt, in my mind, they left Him then for the same reason people leave Him today: self-centered desires and an unwillingness to make Him the Lord of their life.

Many accept the Lord for what they think He will do for them - not what they can do for Him and with Him and through Him. Many have expectations that go in one direction only: From God to us and for us for anything we want, now and forever, Amen.

But this is not how God works. If we accept Him as Savior and follow Him as Lord, wherever He leads us, "All these things (that we need) will be added to us."

Prayer: Teach us, Lord, that You call us to Yourself for Your purpose, May we love You, honor You and bring glory to Your name. May You be first and foremost in our lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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

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2023 Community Events

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.06.23

12 24 46 57 66 22

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.07.23

5 22 31 35 47 10

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,600,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.07.23

10 18 21 29 40 17

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 50 Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.07.23

4 8 11 27 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.07.23

13 31 51 55 66 23

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.07.23

47 54 57 60 65 19

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$1,550,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the  Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Canton def. Wagner, 25-16, 25-12, 25-18
Douglas def. Sturgis Brown, 25-16, 25-8, 25-13
Hamlin def. Florence/Henry, 25-20, 25-15, 24-26, 25-20
Huron def. Rapid City Stevens, 25-17, 25-22, 25-21
Jones County def. New Underwood, 25-14, 25-20, 25-16
Mitchell def. Rapid City Central, 25-21, 25-20, 25-10
Battler Tournament=
Gray Pool=
Philip def. Ipswich, 25-11, 25-13
Philip def. Potter County, 25-20, 25-11
Potter County def. Ipswich, 25-19, 25-20
Wolsey-Wessington def. Ipswich, 25-13, 25-12
Wolsey-Wessington def. Potter County, 25-16, 25-11
Red Pool=
Faith def. Lyman, 25-20, 25-21
Faith def. McIntosh, 25-12, 25-19
Faulkton def. Faith, 25-18, 25-22
Faulkton def. Lyman, 25-14, 25-14
Faulkton def. McIntosh, 25-6, 25-10
Lyman def. McIntosh, 25-14, 25-13
Seventh Place=
Ipswich def. McIntosh, 25-21, 25-23
Fifth Place=
Lyman def. Potter County, 30-28, 25-19
Third Place=
Faith def. Philip, 25-17, 25-23
Championship=
Faulkton def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-21, 22-25, 25-21
Beach Tournament=
Bison def. Mott-Regent, N.D., 46-24, 25-14
Jimmy John's Tournament=
Watertown def. MACCRAY, Minn., 28-26, 25-18
Watertown def. Redwood Valley, Minn., 25-16, 25-13
Watertown def. Russell-Tyler-Ruthton, Minn., 27-25, 26-28, 15-13
Northwestern Tournament=
Dell Rapids def. Kimball/White Lake, 25-21, 25-20
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Northwestern, 25-17, 25-23
Northwestern def. Kimball/White Lake, 25-8, 25-21
Northwestern def. Leola-Frederick High School, 25-9, 25-16
Northwestern def. Pine Ridge, 25-8, 25-6
Platte-Geddes def. Leola-Frederick High School, 25-20, 25-12
Scheel's invite=
Sioux Falls Washington def. Grand Forks Red River, N.D., 25-10, 25-13

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Scheel's Invite=

Sioux Falls Washington def. Legacy, N.D., 25-13, 25-18

Stanley County Triangular=

Stanley County def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-9, 25-19, 25-17

Stanley County def. Todd County, 25-14, 25-9, 25-13

Western Christian Tournament=

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Sergeant Bluff-Luton, Iowa, 21-11, 21-15

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Unity Christian, Iowa, 21-18, 22-20

Sioux Falls Washington def. Jamestown, N.D., 25-15, 25-18

PREP FOOTBALL

Centerville 50, Colome 0

Hamlin 56, Great Plains Lutheran 6

Tiospa Zina Tribal def. Crazy Horse, forfeit

Wagner 40, Mobridge-Pollock 18

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

Gronowski, South Dakota St. beat Illinois St. 40-21, extend win streak to 19 games

NORMAL, Ill. (AP) — Mark Gronowski accounted for four touchdowns, Isaiah Davis had 198 yards rushing and two TDs and South Dakota State beat Illinois State 40-21 Saturday night to extend the Jackrabbits' program-record win streak to 19 games.

South Dakota State (5-0, 2-0 Missouri Valley), ranked No. 1 in the FCS coaches poll and the defending national champion, has not lost since dropping its 2022 season opener at Iowa, 7-3.

Gronowski led a nine-play, 88-yard opening drive that culminated when he hit Jadon Janke for a 30-yard touchdown and connected with Jaxon Janke for a 60-yard TD with 6:30 left in the first quarter. On the ensuing kickoff, Cullen McShane forced a fumble that was recovered by Caleb Francl at the Redbirds 25, and five plays later, Gronowski added a 13-yard scoring run to make it 20-0.

Sophomore wide receiver Daniel Sobkowicz, whose only other career pass attempt was intercepted, threw a 9-yard TD to quarterback Zack Annexstad on a reverse-pass early in the second quarter to get No. 22 Illinois State (3-1, 1-1) on the scoreboard. Davis answered with a 3-yard TD run that gave SDSU a 27-7 lead with 10:06 before intermission and the Redbirds got no closer.

Annexstad was 26-of-33 passing for 162 yards with a 7-yard TD to Sobkowicz, who finished with seven receptions for 70 yards.

Gronowski completed 11 of 17 passes for 170 yards. Jaxon Janke finished with five catches for 88 yards and Jadon added a 22-yard TD reception. Amar Johnson had 11 carries for 106 yards.

Theis powers South Dakota to 38-7 romp over Murray State

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Travis Theis rushed for 181 yards and two touchdowns to power South Dakota to a 38-7 victory over Murray State on Saturday.

Theis carried 27 times for South Dakota (4-1, 2-0 Missouri Valley Football Conference), scoring on a 25-yard second-quarter run to give the Coyotes a 21-7 lead at halftime. He added a 3-yard touchdown run with six minutes remaining in the game. Charles Pierre Jr. carried 13 times for 80 yards with an 8-yard scoring run in the second quarter and a 10-yarder to cap the scoring in the fourth.

Aidan Bouman had an 8-yard touchdown toss to JJ Galbreath with just under six minutes remaining in the first quarter to give the Coyotes the lead for good.

DJ Williams fired a 56-yard scoring strike to Q'Darryius Jennings to get Murray State (2-3, 1-1) on the

scoreboard with 10:02 left in the second quarter, but Travis Theis answered for the halftime lead. Bouman completed 17 of 23 passes for 195 yards for South Dakota. Williams totaled 157 yards on 12-of-22 passing with one interception for the Racers. The Coyotes piled up 458 yards of offense, while holding the Racers to 282.

Israel battles Hamas for a second day after mass incursion and trades fire with Lebanon's Hezbollah

By TIA GOLDENBERG and WAFAA SHURAFI Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israeli soldiers battled Hamas fighters in the streets of southern Israel on Sunday and launched retaliation strikes that leveled buildings in Gaza, while in northern Israel a brief exchange of strikes with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group raised fears of a broader conflict.

There was still some fighting underway more than 24 hours after an unprecedented surprise attack from Gaza, in which Hamas fighters, backed by a volley of thousands of rockets, broke through Israel's security barrier and rampaged through nearby communities. The fighters took captives back into the coastal Gaza enclave, including women, children and the elderly, who they will likely try to trade for thousands of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the country was at war and would exact a heavy price from its enemies. Hamas leaders said they were prepared for further escalation.

Israeli media, citing rescue service officials, said at least 300 people were killed, including 26 soldiers, while in Gaza officials said 313 people had died. An Israeli military official said hundreds of militants had been killed and dozens captured.

Civilians paid a staggering cost for the violence on both sides. Israeli TV news aired a stream of accounts from the relatives of captive or missing Israelis, who wailed and begged for assistance amid a fog of uncertainty surrounding the fate of their loved ones. In Gaza, residents fled homes near the border to escape Israeli strikes, fleeing deeper inside the territory after warnings in Arabic from the Israeli military.

In neighboring Egypt, a policeman shot dead two Israeli tourists and an Egyptian at a tourist site in Alexandria, the Interior Ministry said. Egypt made peace with Israel decades ago, but anti-Israel sentiment runs high in the country, especially during bouts of Israeli-Palestinian violence.

Previous conflicts between Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers brought widespread destruction in Gaza and days of rocket fire on Israeli towns. The situation is potentially more volatile now, with Israel's far-right government stung by the unprecedented security breach and Palestinians in despair over a never-ending occupation in the West Bank and suffocating blockade of Gaza.

The flare-up on Israel's northern border also threatened to draw into the battle Hezbollah, a fierce enemy of Israel's which is backed by Iran and estimated to have tens of thousands of rockets at its disposal. Hezbollah fired dozens of rockets and shells on Sunday at three Israeli positions in a disputed area along the border and Israel's military fired back using armed drones.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, an Israeli military official, told reporters the situation at the northern border was calm after the exchange. But he said fighting was still underway in the south and that there were still hostage situations there.

He said troops had moved into every community near the Gaza frontier, where they planned to evacuate all civilians and scour the area for any remaining militants. Hagari said the military had killed 400 militants since the start of the war and captured dozens more.

"We will go through every community until we kill every terrorist that is in Israeli territory," he said. In Gaza, "every terrorist located in a house, all the commanders in houses, will be hit by Israeli fire. That will continue escalating in the coming hours."

Hamas said that overnight it had continued to send forces and equipment into "a number of locations inside our occupied territories," referring to Israel.

The surprise attack Saturday was the deadliest on Israel in decades. In an assault of startling breadth, Hamas gunmen used explosives to break through the border fence enclosing Gaza, then crossed with

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motorcycles, pickup trucks, paragliders and speed boats on the coast. They rolled into as many as 22 locations outside the Gaza Strip early Saturday morning, including towns and other communities as far as 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the Gaza border, while Hamas launched thousands of rockets at Israeli cities.

"Israel is waking up this morning to a terrible morning," said Lt. Col. Richard Hecht, an Israeli military spokesman. "There are a lot of people killed... children, grandmothers, families, bodies."

Israeli media said at least 300 people were killed and 1,500 wounded in Saturday's attack. Hamas fighters took an unknown number of civilians and soldiers captive into Gaza, and a line of Israelis with missing relatives snaked outside a police station in central Israel to supply investigators with DNA samples and other means that could help identify their family members.

Israel struck 426 targets in Gaza, its military said, flattening residential buildings in giant explosions. That included a 14-story tower that held dozens of apartments as well as Hamas offices in central Gaza City. Israeli forces fired a warning just before.

Among the 313 killed in Gaza were 20 children, and close to 2,000 wounded, the Palestinian Health Ministry said. UNRWA, the United Nations agency for Palestinians, said more than 20,000 Palestinians left Gaza's border region to head further inside the territory and take refuge in U.N. schools.

In a televised address Saturday night, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the military will use all of its strength to destroy Hamas' capabilities. "All the places that Hamas hides in, operates from, we will turn them into ruins," he added.

"Get out of there now," he told Gaza residents, who have no way to leave the tiny, overcrowded Mediterranean territory. Gaza's 2.3 million people have endured a border blockade, enforced to varying degrees by Israel and Egypt, since Hamas militants seized control in 2007.

A major question now was whether Israel will launch a ground assault into Gaza, a move that in the past has brought intensified casualties. Netanyahu vowed that Hamas "will pay an unprecedented price." But, he warned, "This war will take time. It will be difficult."

Israel's military says it is bringing four divisions of troops as well as tanks to the Gaza border, joining 31 battalions already in the area.

Hamas said it had planned for a long fight. "We are prepared for all options, including all-out war," the deputy head of the Hamas political bureau, Saleh al-Arouri, told Al-Jazeera TV. "We are ready to do whatever is necessary for the dignity and freedom of our people."

The abduction of Israeli civilians and soldiers also raised a particularly thorny issue for Israel, which has a history of making heavily lopsided exchanges to bring captive Israelis home. Israel is holding thousands of Palestinians in its prisons. The military has confirmed that a "substantial" number of Israelis were abducted Saturday without giving an exact figure.

An Egyptian official said Israel has sought help from Cairo to ensure the safety of the hostages, and that Egypt's intelligence chief had contacted Hamas and the smaller but more radical Islamic Jihad group, which also took part in the incursion, to seek information. Egypt has often mediated between the two sides in the past.

The official said Palestinian leaders claimed that they don't yet have a "full picture" of hostages, but said those who were brought into Gaza were taken to "secure locations" across the territory.

"It's clear that they have a big number — several dozens," said the official, who asked not to be identified because he was not authorized to brief media.

Egypt also spoke with both sides about a potential cease-fire, but the official said Israel was not open to a truce "at this stage."

The shadowy leader of Hamas' military wing, Mohammed Deif, said the assault was in response to the 16-year blockade of Gaza, and a series of recent incidents that have brought Israeli-Palestinian tensions to a fever pitch.

Over the past year, Israel's far-right government has ramped up settlement construction in the occupied West Bank, Israeli settler violence has displaced hundreds of Palestinians there, and tensions have flared around the Al-Aqsa mosque, a flashpoint Jerusalem holy site.

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Deif, who does not appear in public, said in a recorded message that the attack was only the start of what he called "Operation Al-Aqsa Storm," and called on Palestinians from east Jerusalem to northern Israel to join the fight.

In Gaza, much of the population was thrown into darkness Saturday night as Israel cut off electricity. Netanyahu's office said in a statement that Israel would stop supplying electricity, fuel and goods to Gaza.

Before daybreak Sunday, militants fired more rockets from Gaza, hitting a hospital in the Israeli coastal town of Ashkelon. The military said patients had been evacuated before the strike.

School was canceled across Israel.

U.S. President Joe Biden said from the White House that he had spoken with Netanyahu to say the United States "stands with the people of Israel in the face of these terrorist assaults. Israel has the right to defend itself and its people, full stop."

The Hamas incursion on Simchat Torah, a Jewish holiday, revived painful memories of the 1973 Mideast war, in which Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, aiming to take back Israeli-occupied territories. The comparison sharpened criticism of Netanyahu and his far-right allies, who had campaigned as security hawks.

The attack comes at a time of historic division within Israel over Netanyahu's proposal to overhaul the judiciary. Mass protests over the plan have sent hundreds of thousands of Israeli demonstrators into the streets and prompted hundreds of military reservists to avoid volunteer duty — turmoil that has raised fears over the military's battlefield readiness.

Earthquakes kill over 2,000 in Afghanistan. People are freeing the dead and injured with their hands

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Powerful earthquakes killed at least 2,000 people in western Afghanistan, a Taliban government spokesman said Sunday. It's one of the deadliest earthquakes to strike the country in two decades.

The figures couldn't be independently verified.

The magnitude-6.3 earthquake was followed by strong aftershocks on Saturday, a spokesperson for the country's national disaster management authority said.

The United States Geological Survey said the quake's epicenter was about 40 kilometers (25 miles) northwest of Herat city. It was followed by three very strong aftershocks, measuring magnitude 6.3, 5.9 and 5.5, as well as lesser shocks.

On Sunday, people attempted to dig out the dead and injured with their hands in Herat, clambering over rocks and debris. Survivors and victims were trapped under buildings that had crumbled to the ground, their faces grey with dust.

One video, shared online, shows people freeing a baby girl from a collapsed building after being buried up to her neck in debris. A hand is seen cradling the baby's torso as rescuers ease the child out of the ground. Rescuers said it was the baby's mother. It is not clear if the mother survived.

Abdul Wahid Rayan, a spokesman at the Ministry of Information and Culture, said Sunday the death toll is higher than originally reported. Villages have been destroyed, and hundreds of civilians are buried under the debris, he said while calling for urgent help.

"Besides the 2,060 dead, 1,240 people are injured and 1,320 houses are completely destroyed," said Rayan. At least a dozen teams have been scrambled to help with rescue efforts, including from the military and nonprofit organizations like the Red Crescent.

The United Nations migration agency has deployed four ambulances with doctors and psychosocial support counselors to the regional hospital. At least three mobile health teams are on their way to the Zenda Jan district, which is one of the worst affected areas.

Doctors Without Borders set up five medical tents at Herat Regional Hospital to accommodate up to 80 patients. Authorities have treated more than 300 patients, according to the agency.

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Irfanullah Sharafzai, a spokesman for the Afghan Red Crescent Society, said seven teams are busy with rescue efforts while other teams are arriving from eight nearby provinces.

"A temporary camp has been set up for people who have lost their houses and need shelter for now," Sharafzai said. "Whatever is in our capacity we will do for our poor and needy people at this difficult time."

Neighboring Pakistan said it was deeply saddened by the earthquake. "We are in contact with the Afghan authorities to get a first-hand assessment of the urgent needs of those affected by the earthquake," said the Foreign Affairs Ministry. "Pakistan will extend all possible support to the recovery effort."

China's ambassador to Afghanistan Zhao Xing said his government and the country's charitable institutions were ready to provide all kinds of help. "We are in contact with Afghan government aid agencies to provide aid to the needy," he said on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Afghan cricket star Rashid Khan said he was donating all his Cricket World Cup fees to help Herat's earthquake survivors. "Soon, we will be launching a fundraising campaign to call upon those who can support the people in need," he told his 1.9 million followers on X.

Japan's ambassador to Afghanistan, Takashi Okada, expressed his condolences saying on the social media platform X, that he was "deeply grieved and saddened to learn the news of earthquake in Herat province."

In June 2022, a powerful earthquake struck a rugged, mountainous region of eastern Afghanistan, flattening stone and mud-brick homes. The quake killed at least 1,000 people and injured about 1,500.

Two German state elections expected to bring wins for conservative national opposition

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Two German states hold elections on Sunday at the halfway mark of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's unpopular national government, with polls showing the center-right opposition well ahead and Germany's interior minister facing an uphill struggle in a bid to become governor of her home region.

About 9.4 million people are eligible to vote for the new state legislature in Bavaria and around 4.3 million in neighboring Hesse, a region that includes Germany's financial capital, Frankfurt. Both states are led by the country's main opposition Union bloc, made up of the Christian Democratic Union and the Bavaria-only Christian Social Union.

The outcome could increase tensions in Scholz's three-party coalition, which has become notorious for infighting, and offer pointers to who might challenge Scholz in the 2025 national election.

Polls point to the CSU, which has led Bavaria since 1957, extending that run — albeit with lackluster support, by its historical standards, of less than 40%. In Hesse, they give the CDU a double-digit lead in a three-way contest for the governor's office among the conservative party, Scholz's center-left Social Democrats and the environmentalist Greens.

The far-right Alternative for Germany party, which has risen to second place in national polls behind the Union, won't be a factor in determining the new governments of Bavaria or Hesse, as other parties refuse to work with it. But they will be watching whether it improves significantly on double-digit showings five years ago.

The three national governing parties — the Social Democrats, the Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats — won't do well on Sunday because people "aren't confident in their being able to solve the problems in the country," prominent political scientist Karl-Rudolf Korte told the Welt am Sonntag newspaper.

"That has to do with the variety of crises, but also with the communication," he said. "The situation would be different if the (coalition) partners would explain better what they are doing and why, if they would act more closely together."

Voters have been turned off by repeated public squabbling, notably on a plan to replace fossil-fuel heating systems with greener alternatives. Polls suggest that the Free Democrats could struggle Sunday to win the 5% support needed to keep their place in the two state legislatures; previous election flops for the party have fueled tensions in the national government.

Scholz's government also faces intense pressure to reduce the number of migrants arriving, a major

issue in the run-up to the elections.

Scholz would have to find someone new to lead his government's response on that issue if Interior Minister Nancy Faeser becomes governor of Hesse, but she doesn't appear likely to end the CDU's 24-year hold on the job. Green challenger Tarek Al-Wazir, currently the deputy governor to conservative incumbent Boris Rhein, also faces an uphill struggle.

In Bavaria, governor Markus Soeder is calling for voters to back "continuity and stability."

He has bet on continuing his current coalition with the Free Voters, a conservative party that is strong locally but isn't represented in the national parliament. Soeder decided last month to keep that party's leader, Hubert Aiwanger, as his deputy governor despite a furor that started with allegations — denied by Aiwanger — that he was responsible for an antisemitic flyer when he was a high school student 35 years ago.

Soeder is widely considered a potential candidate to challenge Scholz in 2025, although he has denied such ambitions. A respectable result on Sunday would underscore his standing.

Death toll from strong earthquakes that shook western Afghanistan rises to over 2,000

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The death toll from strong earthquakes that shook western Afghanistan has risen to over 2,000, a Taliban government spokesman said Sunday. It's one of the deadliest earthquakes to strike the country in two decades.

A powerful magnitude-6.3 earthquake followed by strong aftershocks killed dozens of people in western Afghanistan on Saturday, the country's national disaster authority said.

But Abdul Wahid Rayan, spokesman at the Ministry of Information and Culture, said the death toll from the earthquake in Herat is higher than originally reported. About six villages have been destroyed, and hundreds of civilians have been buried under the debris, he said while calling for urgent help.

The United Nations late Saturday gave a preliminary figure of 320 dead, but later said the figure was still being verified. Local authorities gave an estimate of 100 people killed and 500 injured, according to the same update from the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The update said 465 houses had been reported destroyed and a further 135 were damaged.

"Partners and local authorities anticipate the number of casualties to increase as search and rescue efforts continue amid reports that some people may be trapped under collapsed buildings," the U.N. said.

Disaster authority spokesperson Mohammad Abdullah Jan said four villages in the Zenda Jan district in Herat province bore the brunt of the quake and aftershocks.

The United States Geological Survey said the quake's epicenter was about 40 kilometers (25 miles) northwest of Herat city. It was followed by three very strong aftershocks, measuring magnitude 6.3, 5.9 and 5.5, as well as lesser shocks.

At least five strong tremors struck the city around noon, Herat city resident Abdul Shakor Samadi said.

"All people are out of their homes," Samadi said. "Houses, offices and shops are all empty and there are fears of more earthquakes. My family and I were inside our home, I felt the quake." His family began shouting and ran outside, afraid to return indoors.

The World Health Organization in Afghanistan said it dispatched 12 ambulance cars to Zenda Jan to evacuate casualties to hospitals.

"As deaths & casualties from the earthquake continue to be reported, teams are in hospitals assisting treatment of wounded & assessing additional needs," the U.N. agency said on X, formerly known as Twitter. "WHO-supported ambulances are transporting those affected, most of them women and children."

Telephone connections went down in Herat, making it hard to get details from affected areas. Videos on social media showed hundreds of people in the streets outside their homes and offices in Herat city.

Herat province borders Iran. The quake also was felt in the nearby Afghan provinces of Farah and Badghis, according to local media reports.

Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Taliban-appointed deputy prime minister for economic affairs, expressed his

condolences to the dead and injured in Herat and Badghis.

The Taliban urged local organizations to reach earthquake-hit areas as soon as possible to help take the injured to hospital, provide shelter for the homeless, and deliver food to survivors. They said security agencies should use all their resources and facilities to rescue people trapped under debris.

"We ask our wealthy compatriots to give any possible cooperation and help to our afflicted brothers," the Taliban said on X.

Japan's ambassador to Afghanistan, Takashi Okada, expressed his condolences saying on the social media platform X, that he was "deeply grieved and saddened to learn the news of earthquake in Herat province."

In June 2022, a powerful earthquake struck a rugged, mountainous region of eastern Afghanistan, flattening stone and mud-brick homes. The quake killed at least 1,000 people and injured about 1,500.

Boomer Sooner: Gabriel tosses late TD pass as No. 12 Oklahoma beats No. 3 Texas in Red River rivalry

By STEPHEN HAWKINS AP Sports Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Dillon Gabriel knew he couldn't take a sack as the pocket collapsed around him in the closing seconds of his Red River rivalry debut, the kind of big game he went to Oklahoma to play.

Then he saw Nic Anderson in the back of the end zone.

"The rest is history," Gabriel said.

Gabriel appeared to do a jump step and connected with Anderson for a 3-yard touchdown with 15 seconds left as 12th-ranked Oklahoma won a battle of unbeatens 34-30 over No. 3 Texas on Saturday in their last matchup at the State Fair of Texas as Big 12 members before moving to the Southeastern Conference.

"Just proud of everyone coming together, controlling the chaos," Gabriel said. "It's something you dream of as a little kid."

With the SEC commissioner in attendance, but not the Big 12's, the Sooners (6-0, 3-0 Big 12) and Longhorns played a classic that must have made Greg Sankey thrilled with his new acquisitions.

Gabriel completed 23 of 38 passes for 285 yards and ran 14 times for 113 yards and a score. The left-handed quarterback from Hawaii, who wore a customary lei on the field after the game, had transferred from UCF before last season, but missed the Sooners' 49-0 loss to Texas last October because of a concussion the previous week.

"He's the calmest guy I've ever been around at the quarterback position," Sooners coach Brent Venables said. "He was fearless. I don't put any limits on what Dillon can do. He's playing as confident as anybody on our team right now."

The Longhorns (5-1, 2-1) had erased a 10-point deficit and taken a 30-27 lead on Bert Auburn's third field goal, a 45-yarder with 1:17 left. Oklahoma then went 75 yards in five plays, including Gabriel's passes of 11 and 28 yards to Drake Stoops, the senior receiver and son of the former Sooners coach.

"We didn't play our best football today. Our inability to corral the quarterback ... hurt us, especially in the second half," Texas coach Steve Sarkisian said. "The promising thing is we know we can play better than we did today. And we will."

They could play the Sooners again, if both make it to the Big 12 championship game on Dec. 2.

Quinn Ewers was responsible for all three Texas turnovers, with two interceptions and a fumble, but completed 31 of 37 passes for 346 yards. His final throw from near midfield was knocked down near the goal line as time expired.

"Just didn't start out how I wanted to. It's always tough whenever you throw interceptions on the first two drives," Ewers said. "I liked the way we bounced back."

Jonathon Brooks, held out the end zone on three consecutive plays after Texas got to the 1 on its previous drive, tied the game at 27-27 on a 29-yard TD run with 6:10 left. Brooks finished with 129 yards rushing, his fourth consecutive 100-yard game.

The Longhorns had gone for it on fourth down, but Xavier Worthy was hit immediately short of the goal line after a quick pass from Ewers. Oklahoma then drove 72 yards before Zach Schmit's 45-yard field goal

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attempt came up short.

For Sankey, it was his first trip to one of college football's most storied rivalries. Mayfield, with Tampa Bay in its open date of this NFL season, and actor and Texas superfan Matthew McConaughey were also present.

Ewers, who had four TD passes in last year's romp over the Sooners, threw his interceptions on the first two drives. But the game was tied 7-7 after a wild sequence that included those two picks and blocked punt recovered for a touchdown by Texas' Malik Muhammad.

MUCH BETTER MEMORY

Oklahoma linebacker Danny Stutsman told teammates that he remembered the feeling of walking out of the Cotton Bowl Stadium after last year's game. This is a much better memory.

"The older guys, we experienced that," said Stutsman, who had nine tackles. "Every single day, when you go to bed, you think about that. There's only so much you can do. Every single extra set you do in the weight room is for a game like this."

THE TAKEAWAY

Oklahoma: The way Gabriel performed reinforced what so many thought about last year's game, it would have been a much different outcome had he not missed it because of a concussion. Instead, that became the biggest shutout loss ever for the Sooners, who limped to a 6-7 season in Year 1 under Venables. It was Oklahoma's first losing season since 1998.

Venables has the Sooners back in College Football Playoff contention again.

Texas: There has been a growing sentiment that the Longhorns could be the No. 1 team, instead of two-time defending national champion Georgia. Well, that question has been answered for now, and they won't yet make it back to the top of the AP poll for the first time since 2008.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Texas will drop a few spots in the new AP Top 25, and Oklahoma will move up and likely ahead of the Longhorns when the new poll comes out Sunday. But both should be among the top 10 teams.

UP NEXT Oklahoma has an open date before hosting Big 12 newcomer UCF on Oct. 21.

Texas is off next weekend before going to Houston on Oct. 21. It will be the first meeting between the former Southwest Conference rivals since 2002.

Toddlers with developmental delays are missing out on help they need. It can hurt them long term

By CLAIRE SAVAGE Associated Press/Report for America

CHICAGO (AP) — Alexander watches Paw Patrol with fervor, bowls his baby brother over with hugs and does everything with gusto.

What the 3-year-old West Chicago toddler can't do yet is speak more than a few words. His balance is wobbly and he isn't able to let his preschool teachers know when he's hurt or scared.

When his mother, Hilda Garcia, had him tested, the youngster qualified for five therapies through a U.S. program dedicated to treating developmental delays in babies and toddlers — treatment designed to help Alexander develop the tools he needs to thrive.

The relief she felt in identifying what he needed was short-lived.

The federally mandated Early Intervention program is plagued by chronic staffing shortages nationwide, leaving thousands of desperate parents frustrated: They know their children need support, they're aware of proven therapies that could make a difference, but they have to wait for months to get the help they need.

After 14 months of phone calls, hours of research and pushing herself to the limit with work and child-care, Garcia finally landed an in-person early intervention appointment, but even then she couldn't get Alexander all the therapies he needed. She tears up as she recounts how overwhelming the fight to secure access has been.

"I didn't have any support," she said.

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'The earlier, the better'

Early Intervention was created in 1986 to address developmental delays in children like Alexander as soon as possible. About one in six children in the U.S. has at least one developmental disability or other developmental delay, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Since all U.S. states and territories accept federal funding for Early Intervention, they are obligated to provide services to kids who qualify under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

But providers are scarce in almost all states. Some children wait months or years for the care they need, and many age out of the program before they access any services at all.

The COVID-19 pandemic worsened chronic staffing shortages, in part because many providers didn't want to risk infection by entering families' homes, even when restrictions on in-person visits were lifted, according to Maureen Greer, the executive director of the Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association, which supports the Early Intervention system nationwide.

For similar reasons, families were also less likely to request in-person help during the pandemic. But now the number of children seeking services has rebounded, and states are struggling to find the staff to meet the needs of families with young children with disabilities, according to Katy Neas of the U.S. Department of Education.

Service delays in Illinois, where Alexander lives, nearly doubled in 2022, according to Chicago-based early childhood advocacy organization Start Early. Waitlists — technically not allowed since all eligible kids are entitled to Early Intervention — have increased dramatically and thousands of providers have left the field, according to the Illinois Department of Human Services.

When children turn 3, the responsibility for providing special education services shifts from Early Intervention to school districts. But those systems are understaffed and booked up, too, according to speech-language pathologist Sarah Ziembra, an Early Intervention provider in Peoria, Illinois.

Waiting means skipping precious months of development, while acting early saves money on special education and other services later in life.

"Research really supports that the earlier, the better. And so when we miss those opportunities to help them at those younger ages, sometimes we are limiting their potential into adulthood," said Ziembra.

Families with private insurance can opt to pay for therapy appointments outside the Early Intervention program, but those without the means can be left behind, according to Ziembra.

"In a way, Early Intervention is contributing to some social inequity," she explained.

Research supports her assessment. A report published this year by the National Institute for Early Education Research found that Asian, Hispanic and Black children are less likely to receive Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education services than white non-Hispanic children.

"For Black children, the disparities in access to services are especially large and cannot plausibly be explained by differences in need," the report says.

Income also plays a role, said lead researcher Allison Friedman-Krauss.

"Poorer states are serving a lower percentage of children, so really suggesting that there is a problem there," Friedman-Krauss said.

But there is no way to attract more providers without better wages, Ziembra explained. Early Intervention providers in Illinois are government contractors, meaning they get no health benefits or paid time off, and they can effectively double their salaries by working in other settings such as hospitals, schools or nursing homes.

"People are just done with it, and it has gotten worse even in the last two months," Ziembra said in late July. "I really feel like we're kind of seeing the implosion of the whole program."

As families lose access to the free or reduced-cost therapies, pressure builds on schools to pick up the slack, but they're short on special education teachers, too.

"In the long term, we're seeing kids fall farther and farther behind," said Ziembra, who has done this work for nearly 25 years.

Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed a budget in June giving Early Intervention providers a 10% raise. That helps, Ziembra said, but likely won't make up for the impact of inflation and may not be enough to slow

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the steady exodus of workers. She and another provider say wages were stagnant for years.

In July, the administration announced a retention program designed to reward tenured Early Intervention providers, interpreters and service coordinators with payments of up to \$1,300 to stay in the field.

"We remain committed to giving our service providers the support and resources they deserve for caring for our state's children," said Alex Gough, a spokesperson for the governor's office.

The impact therapy can have is palpable. Lindsey Faulkner, a mother of four living in Peoria, got in-person speech therapy sessions for her 2-year-old daughter, Aria, within a month of her referral. She raves about the difference she has seen in her child after a year of working with therapist Megan Sanders.

"She was an entirely different kid a year ago," Faulkner said.

Early on in their sessions, Aria zoomed around the room. Now, Aria can sit and engage with Sanders for most of the session. She looks Sanders in the eye more often, responds to her gentle guidance and is starting to use sign language.

"We've come a long way," Sanders said. "My goal throughout is just to make her more able to express herself."

When Aria was about a year old, Faulkner noticed that words the toddler had been using started to disappear. "She began screeching for everything that she wanted rather than asking us for help or gesturing."

Aria qualified for speech, developmental and occupational therapy, and was diagnosed with autism when Faulkner was finally able to secure an appointment with a developmental pediatrician, two and a half hours away in St. Louis. Although Aria started speech therapy promptly, she has been on the waitlist for developmental therapy for more than a year.

Faulkner was "floored" when she learned about the wait times.

"You need to get answers for your child," she said. "But here, now you have to sit and wait."

Early Intervention providers and service coordinators, who connect families with therapists, are woefully underpaid, according to Darcy Armbruster, a physical therapist who serves DuPage County near Chicago and has worked in the Early Intervention program for 11 years.

Armbruster said it would make more financial sense for her to quit Early Intervention, but she stays because she loves the relationships she builds with families. Still, she has a child of her own to care for, and a mortgage to pay. Passion and job fulfillment don't pay the bills.

"Every month I have to sit down and reevaluate where I am and if I can keep going and doing this," she said.

For parents, getting help can feel 'like another job'

Hilda Garcia's son, Alexander, qualified for five Early Intervention therapies in 2021 — physical, occupational, developmental, behavioral and speech. But the family waited more than a year before he received any of those services in-person.

While they waited, Garcia signed Alexander up for virtual therapy, which didn't start for more than six months. But virtual appointments weren't effective, especially for physical therapy.

Garcia tried to do the exercises with her toddler herself, but it never seemed to work. Finally, they were able to secure an in-person appointment through a private provider. They never made it off the Early Intervention waitlist.

The therapist could tell much more by interacting with her son in their home.

"His lips were not able to move the way they should so that speech can come out," Garcia said.

Garcia, meanwhile, was juggling childcare, work and the almost full-time advocacy needed to get Alexander what he needed. "It feels like another job," she said.

Garcia, who speaks English, is part of a primarily Spanish-speaking community in West Chicago, and she knows many parents can't advocate for their kids in a second language.

"I can't imagine somebody else going through what I went through without speaking English," she said.

Translators are available, but that adds another layer of complexity to an already onerous process. Communication cuts into hourlong therapy sessions, leaving less time for actual therapy, she explained.

Garcia worries about Alexander. She knows he's missing vital tools. She is concerned about his safety

because he struggles to communicate and has issues with balance.

Just this summer, she said, another child pushed him off a playground set. A report from the school described his injuries as a scratch, Garcia said, but he continued to cry out "Mama, mama" and point to his back.

She gave him Tylenol and asked about "pain" or "hurt," but he didn't understand. She called his pediatrician, who recommended a trip to the emergency room, where they took X-rays and tested Alexander's urine for blood.

When the results came back, they told her he'd had "a significant fall."

Garcia gently rocks Alexander's baby brother in her arms as she tells the story. There's a heaviness in her voice. If he had undergone speech and physical therapy sooner, would Alexander have been able to tell the other child to stop? Could he have kept his balance, preventing the fall?

"I wonder if we would have had the Early Intervention in-person session earlier, if things would have been better by now," Garcia said.

Tourism resuming in West Maui near Lahaina as hotels and timeshare properties welcome visitors

By AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — The area around the Maui town largely destroyed by wildfire two months ago was scheduled to welcome back travelers on Sunday as the mayor and Hawaii's governor pushed ahead to restart tourism to boost the economy despite opposition from some Lahaina residents.

Five hotels in West Maui were accepting reservations again, according to their websites and the Maui Hotel and Lodging Association. In addition, eight timeshare properties — in which visitors have an ownership stake in their room — were opening across the region early this month, including some a few miles from the devastation.

The reopening fell on the two-month anniversary of the wildfire that killed at least 98 people and destroyed more than 2,000 structures, many of them homes and apartments.

Many local residents have objected to resuming tourism in West Maui, which includes Lahaina town and a stretch of coastline to the north. Opponents said they don't want travelers asking them about their traumatic experiences while they are grieving the loss of their loved ones and processing the destruction of their homes.

More than 3,500 Lahaina-area residents signed a petition asking Hawaii Gov. Josh Green to delay the restart. Green said doing so would help Maui's tourism-driven economy get on a path to recovery.

It's not clear how many travelers were staying at hotels and timeshares. Laura Paulson, executive director of the Maui Hotel and Lodging Association, said her organization's surveys indicated the number will be "low." She predicted "a very slow ramp up to visitors coming back."

Maui County on Saturday released a video message from Mayor Richard Bissen acknowledging the difficulties of the situation.

"I know we are still grieving and it feels too soon. But the reality is there are those in our community who are ready to get back to work. Bills need to be paid, keiki have needs and our kupuna face continued medical care," Bissen said, using the Hawaiian words for children and elders.

Thousands of tourists staying in beachfront hotels north of the burn zone left Maui in the days after the fire. Some 11,000 hotel rooms in West Maui have since either sat empty or housed displaced Lahaina residents under a program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Red Cross.

Bissen said he was working hard to make sure no one affected by the fire has to leave their temporary housing to make room for visitors.

The county prepared another video highlighting places visitors could go outside West Maui, including the town of Paia on Maui's north shore and the scenic road to Hana on the island's east side.

The video message urged visitors to show respect by staying away from the burn zone, not taking and posting "inappropriate images" on social media, and following signs and instructions.

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Separately, the governor's Office of Wellness and Resilience prepared a flyer with tips on how visitors can be respectful, which it planned to distribute at hotels, rental car desks and other places visitors frequent.

Four of the five reopening hotels were in the northernmost section of West Maui, including the Ritz-Carlton at Kapalua. This area is 7 to 10 miles (11 to 16 kilometers) and a 15- to 20-minute drive north of the part of Lahaina that burned.

Green had indicated fewer hotels would open. He told the Hawaii News Now interview program "Spotlight Now" last week that "I believe only one or maybe two hotels will be fully opened on that date, on the 8th." Green's office said the numbers have fluctuated over time.

The Mauian is among the hotels welcoming travelers again. It posted a note on its website saying the return of visitors would help stabilize the economy and provide jobs and support "for those who lost so much in this disaster."

"However, we humbly ask that if you visit West Maui in coming months, please do so with sensitivity and respect for those who have suffered great losses," the note said. "Your kindness, understanding and aloha will be appreciated during this time."

Paulson, from the lodging association, said timeshares sometimes rent to non-owner travelers but were not doing so now in West Maui to be respectful, she said.

After years in opposition, Britain's Labour Party senses it's on the verge of regaining power

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Members of Britain's opposition Labour Party gather in Liverpool on Sunday for their annual conference with an unfamiliar feeling: optimism.

The party has been out of power for 13 years, and in the last national election in 2019, voters handed Labour its worst drubbing since 1935. But with an election due next year, polls put Labour as much as 20 points ahead of the governing Conservative Party, and Labour scored a morale-boosting special election victory in Scotland last week.

Power is within the party's grasp — as long as it doesn't mess things up.

"It was a big step in the right direction, an important one," Labour leader Keir Starmer said Friday after the special election result. "But we accept this humbly. This is a step on the journey."

Labour's landslide 1997 election victory under Tony Blair — the peak of its popularity — was a quarter-century ago, and the party has suffered four straight election defeats.

The Conservatives have been in power nationally since 2010, years that saw austerity following the world banking crisis, Britain's divisive decision to leave the European Union, a global pandemic and a European war that has triggered the worst cost-of-living crisis in decades.

Those upheavals left both Britain's main parties in turmoil — and both responded by picking populist leaders. Labour members elected the veteran left-wing lawmaker Jeremy Corbyn in 2015. The Conservatives, after years of division and wrangling over the country's EU exit, chose brash Brexit-booster Boris Johnson and won a thumping election victory over Corbyn in 2019.

Corbyn quit after that defeat, and amid criticism that he'd allowed antisemitism to fester in a party that sees itself as proudly antiracist.

Starmer won a party leadership contest in 2020, vowing to restore relations between the party and the Jewish community. He also has steered the social democratic party back toward the political middle-ground after the divisive tenure of Corbyn, a staunch socialist who advocated nationalization of key industries and infrastructure.

Starmer's actions angered some grassroots Labour members who want a bolder agenda, but it has revived the party's poll ratings. In a sign that corporate Britain is preparing for a change of government, Labour says companies have been queuing up to buy stands in the conference exhibition hall and to attend a business forum with Starmer and other senior party leaders.

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In a speech opening the gathering, Deputy Leader Angela Rayner plans to accuse the Conservatives of presiding over “national decline” and being too consumed with internal political chaos to sort out the country’s problems.

“With five prime ministers in seven years and constant chaos and instability, Britain’s future has been left to take a back seat,” she will say, according to extracts released by Labour.

The Conservatives, who held their own, rather muted conference in Manchester last week, have not given up hope. Conservative officials argue that voters are not sold on Starmer, a lawyer and former chief prosecutor with a cautious, managerial style. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has depicted himself as a force for change, with Starmer as the face of the status quo.

But Sunak’s party has a big gap to close. The Conservatives are losing support across the country, from affluent southern voters turned off by Brexit to working-class northern voters who switched from Labour in 2019.

Labour is also gaining ground in Scotland, where its former dominance had been obliterated in recent years by the pro-independence Scottish National Party. Labour won an emphatic victory over the SNP in a special election Thursday for the parliamentary seat of Rutherglen and Hamilton West, near Glasgow. Starmer hailed it as a “seismic result.”

“They said that we couldn’t change the Labour Party and we did it,” Starmer told local party workers. “They said that we couldn’t win in the south of England and the north of England, and we did it. They said ‘You’ll never beat the SNP in Scotland’ – and, Rutherglen, you did it.”

Rob Ford, professor of politics at the University of Manchester, said the polling figures are “stark” for the Conservatives. But he cautioned that voters remain “depressed and very skeptical” of all political parties.

“They are much more enthusiastic about the idea of turfing the Tories out than they are about putting Labour in,” Ford said. “Starmer’s own poll ratings remain pretty mediocre. People think he’s a bit weak, they think it’s unclear what he stands for, they’re not really sure what his vision is for government.

“What Labour really need to do with this conference is to convince people — to steal a line from Tony Blair’s 1997 campaign — that things can only get better.”

Hamas surprise attack out of Gaza stuns Israel and leaves hundreds dead in fighting, retaliation

By JOSEF FEDERMAN and ISSAM ADWAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Backed by a barrage of rockets, Hamas militants stormed from the blockaded Gaza Strip into nearby Israeli towns, killing dozens and abducting others in an unprecedented surprise attack during a major Jewish holiday Saturday. A stunned Israel launched airstrikes in Gaza, with its prime minister saying the country is now at war with Hamas and vowing to inflict an “unprecedented price.”

In an assault of startling breadth, Hamas gunmen rolled into as many as 22 locations outside the Gaza Strip, including towns and other communities as far as 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the Gaza border. In some places they gunned down civilians and soldiers as Israel’s military scrambled to muster a response.

Gunbattles continued well after nightfall, and militants held hostages in standoffs in two towns. Militants occupied a police station in a third town, where Israeli forces struggled until Sunday morning to finally reclaim the building.

Before daybreak Sunday, militants fired more rockets from Gaza, hitting a hospital in the Israeli coastal town of Ashkelon. The hospital sustained damage, said senior hospital official Tal Bergman. Video provided by Barzilai Medical Center showed a large hole punched into a wall and chunks of debris scattered on the ground of what appeared to an empty rooms and a hallway. There was no report of casualties.

Israeli media, citing rescue service officials, said at least 250 people were killed and 1,500 wounded in Saturday’s attack, making it the deadliest in Israel in decades. At least 232 people in the Gaza Strip were killed and 1,700 wounded in Israeli strikes, the Palestinian Health Ministry said. Hamas fighters took an unknown number of civilians and soldiers captive into Gaza.

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The conflict threatened to escalate with Israel's vows of retaliation. Previous conflicts between Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers brought widespread death and destruction in Gaza and days of rocket fire on Israeli towns. The situation is potentially more volatile now, with Israel's far-right government stung by the security breach and with Palestinians in despair over a never-ending occupation in the West Bank and suffocating blockade of Gaza.

In a televised address Saturday night, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who earlier declared Israel to be at war, said the military will use all of its strength to destroy Hamas' capabilities. But he warned, "This war will take time. It will be difficult."

"All the places that Hamas hides in, operates from, we will turn them into ruins," he added. "Get out of there now," he told Gaza residents, who have no way to leave the tiny, overcrowded Mediterranean territory of 2.3 million people.

Early Sunday, the Israeli military issued warnings in Arabic to residents of communities near the border with Israel to leave their homes and move to areas deeper inside the tiny enclave. In previous Israel-Hamas fighting on Gaza soil, the Gaza communities near the border were hit particularly hard, both by artillery fire and at times by ground incursions.

Gaza's residents have endured a border blockade, enforced to varying degrees by Israel and Egypt, since Hamas militants seized control in 2007. Civilians are trapped and particularly vulnerable during wars and bouts of fighting.

Israeli airstrikes in Gaza intensified after nightfall, flattening residential buildings in giant explosions, including a 14-story tower that held dozens of apartments as well as Hamas offices in central Gaza City. Israeli forces fired a warning just before.

Around 3 a.m., a loudspeaker atop a mosque in Gaza City blared a stark warning to residents of nearby apartment buildings: Evacuate immediately. Just minutes later, an Israeli airstrike reduced one nearby five-story building to ashes.

After one Israeli strike, a Hamas rocket barrage hit four cities, including Tel Aviv and a nearby suburb. Throughout the day, Hamas fired more than 3,500 rockets, the Israeli military said.

The strength, sophistication and timing of the Saturday morning attack shocked Israelis. Hamas fighters used explosives to break through the border fence enclosing Gaza, then crossed with motorcycles, pickup trucks, paragliders and speed boats on the coast.

In some towns, civilians' bodies lay where they had encountered advancing gunmen. At least nine people gunned down at a bus shelter in the town of Sderot were laid out on stretchers on the street, their bags still on the curb nearby. One woman, screaming, embraced the body of a family member sprawled under a sheet next to a toppled motorcycle.

In amateur video, hundreds of terrified young people who had been dancing at a rave fled for their lives after Hamas militants entered the area and began firing at them. Israeli media said dozens of people were killed.

Among the dead was Col. Jonathan Steinberg, a senior officer who commanded the Israeli military's Nahal Brigade, a prominent infantry unit.

The shadowy leader of Hamas' military wing, Mohammed Deif, said the assault was in response to the 16-year blockade of Gaza, Israeli raids inside West Bank cities over the past year, violence at Al Aqsa — the disputed Jerusalem holy site sacred to Jews as the Temple Mount — increasing attacks by settlers on Palestinians and the growth of settlements.

"Enough is enough," Deif, who does not appear in public, said in the recorded message. He said the attack was only the start of what he called "Operation Al-Aqsa Storm" and called on Palestinians from east Jerusalem to northern Israel to join the fight.

The Hamas incursion on Simchat Torah, a normally joyous day when Jews complete the annual cycle of reading the Torah scroll, revived painful memories of the 1973 Mideast war practically 50 years to the day, in which Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, aiming to take back Israeli-occupied territories.

Comparisons to one of the most traumatic moments in Israeli history sharpened criticism of Netanyahu

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and his far-right allies, who had campaigned on more aggressive action against threats from Gaza. Political commentators lambasted the government and military over its failure to anticipate what appeared to be a Hamas attack unseen in its level of planning and coordination.

Asked by reporters how Hamas had managed to catch the army off guard, Lt. Col. Richard Hecht, an Israeli army spokesman, replied, "That's a good question."

The abduction of Israeli civilians and soldiers also raised a particularly thorny issue for Israel, which has a history of making heavily lopsided exchanges to bring captive Israelis home. Israel is holding thousands of Palestinians in its prisons. Hecht confirmed that "substantial" number of Israelis were abducted Saturday.

Associated Press photos showed an elderly Israeli woman being brought into Gaza on a golf cart by Hamas gunmen and another woman squeezed between two fighters on a motorcycle. AP journalists saw four people taken from the kibbutz of Kfar Azza, including two women.

In Gaza, a black jeep pulled to a stop and, when the rear door opened, a young Israeli woman stumbled out, bleeding from the head and with her hands tied behind her back. A man waving a gun in the air grabbed her by the hair and pushed her into the vehicle's back seat. Israeli TV reported that workers from Thailand and the Philippines were also among the captives.

Netanyahu vowed that Hamas "will pay an unprecedented price." A major question now was whether Israel will launch a ground assault into Gaza, a move that in the past has brought intensified casualties.

Israel's military was bringing four divisions of troops as well as tanks to the Gaza border, joining 31 battalions already in the area, the spokesman Hagari said.

In Gaza, much of the population was thrown into darkness after nightfall as electrical supplies from Israel — which supplies almost all the territories' power — were cut off. Netanyahu's office said in a statement that Israel would stop supplying electricity, fuel and goods to Gaza.

Hamas said it had planned for a potentially long fight. "We are prepared for all options, including all-out war," the deputy head of the Hamas political bureau, Saleh al-Arouri, told Al-Jazeera TV. "We are ready to do whatever is necessary for the dignity and freedom of our people."

U.S. President Joe Biden said from the White House that he had spoken with Netanyahu to say the United States "stands with the people of Israel in the face of these terrorist assaults. Israel has the right to defend itself and its people, full stop."

Saudi Arabia, which has been in talks with the U.S. about normalizing relations with Israel, called on both sides to exercise restraint. The kingdom said it had repeatedly warned about the danger of "the situation exploding as a result of the continued occupation (and) the Palestinian people being deprived of their legitimate rights."

Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group congratulated Hamas, praising the attack as a response to "Israeli crimes." The group said its command in Lebanon was in contact with Hamas about the operation.

The attack comes at a time of historic division within Israel over Netanyahu's proposal to overhaul the judiciary. Mass protests over the plan have sent hundreds of thousands of Israeli demonstrators into the streets and prompted hundreds of military reservists to avoid volunteer duty — turmoil that has raised fears over the military's battlefield readiness.

It also comes at a time of mounting tensions between Israel and the Palestinians, with the peace process effectively dead for years. Over the past year, Israel's far-right government has ramped up settlement construction in the occupied West Bank, Israeli settler violence has displaced hundreds of Palestinians there and tensions have flared around a flashpoint Jerusalem holy site.

Palestinians demonstrated in towns and cities around the West Bank on Saturday night. Palestinian health officials said Israeli fire killed five there, but gave few details.

Trump asks Iowans to help him 'win big' in 2024 caucuses to set the tone for the general election

By THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa (AP) — Donald Trump on Saturday called for a show of strength in Iowa, arguing before big audiences that dominating in the Republican presidential caucuses in January would signal to voters around the country his strength in the November election next year.

"We have to win big," Trump told about 2,500 in a downtown Cedar Rapids hotel ballroom on his second of stops, part of a fall push to lock in supporters. "I think we're in great shape in the primary. But it sets a tone for the general election."

Trump's afternoon stops in Waterloo and Cedar Rapids were his third and fourth in a little more than two weeks, part of a stepped-up campaign schedule as the opening contest for the 2024 Republican nomination approaches. Late-summer polls of likely GOP caucus attendees showed Trump well ahead of his opponents.

Trump, who has drawn big audiences to eastern Iowa events in recent weeks, is expected to return again in mid-October, as Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis hopes to reignite attention with a stepped-up Iowa campaign and as former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley seeks to seize on new interest since the two GOP presidential debates with a built-out Iowa operation.

Trump drew 1,700 people in Waterloo for an event aimed at encouraging attendees to pledge to support him in the caucuses, which are scheduled for Jan. 15. Hundreds more people waited outside, a sign of his advantage in the state and nationally.

The former president blamed President Joe Biden for Hamas' surprise attack on Israel, alleging Biden had demonstrated weakness that emboldened U.S. adversaries. He also renewed his attacks on New York Attorney General Letitia James, whose office is pursuing a civil fraud case currently on trial. Trump called James "grossly incompetent" and "an evil person."

James has accused Trump of grossly inflating the value of his assets in making business deals and securing loans. A judge ruled last month that Trump had committed fraud and the ongoing trial is to determine potential penalties.

Campaign advisers have said they expect Trump to win the caucuses, which are precinct-level, party-run meetings where party members also register the first votes of the 2024 GOP campaign.

Other campaigns are trying to cut into his lead in Iowa.

DeSantis' team announced this past week that it was moving roughly 20 of his Florida-based national campaign staff to Iowa, emphasizing the effort to beat Trump there. DeSantis was scheduled to campaign in Iowa Saturday, while Haley, who is also the former ambassador to the United Nations, was scheduled to campaign in Iowa Sunday and Monday.

Retired childcare provider Frances Peters from Eldora, Iowa, said she was fully committed to Trump, "because he did what he said he'd do," using an oft-repeated line of his supporters. She pointed, as many evangelical conservatives in Iowa do, to Trump's selection of U.S. Supreme Court justices who helped overturn the 1973 precedent in *Roe v. Wade*, which had recognized a federal right to abortion for almost 50 years.

"He is also the one God has chosen this time," Peters said of Trump.

After Trump's loosely organized Iowa campaign produced a second-place finish in Iowa in 2016, his team says it is now running a more disciplined, data-driven campaign in the state. At his rallies, people are directed to a text number that tracks their interest in supporting the candidate, as well as representing him at the caucuses and volunteering for the campaign.

Trump had planned to host a Des Moines kickoff organizing event in May where advisers expected a crowd of roughly 5,000, but that appearance was scrubbed at the last minute due to the threat of severe weather.

After late summer stops at the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines and Iowa State-Iowa football game in Ames, Trump drew large crowds in rural eastern Iowa as well as Dubuque last month and Ottumwa last Sunday. Those were areas he won in the 2016 caucuses and carried as the GOP nominee in 2016 and 2020.

"My sense of it is that there is lots of time left," said strategist David Kochel, a senior Iowa and national adviser to previous Republican presidential candidates. "And Iowa is going to tell us something really meaningful and Trump shouldn't take it for granted."

Trump is scheduled to return to Iowa on Oct. 16.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom signs law requiring big businesses to disclose emissions

By SOPHIE AUSTIN Associated Press/Report for America

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Large businesses in California will have to disclose a wide range of planet-warming emissions under a new law Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Saturday — the most sweeping mandate of its kind in the nation.

The law requires more than 5,300 companies that operate in California and make more than \$1 billion in annual revenues to report both their direct and indirect emissions. That includes things like emissions from operating a building or store as well as those from activities like employee business travel and transporting their products.

The law, SB 253, will bring more transparency to the public about how big businesses contribute to climate change, and it could nudge them to evaluate how they can reduce their emissions, advocates say. They argue many businesses already disclose some of their emissions to the state.

But the California Chamber of Commerce, agricultural groups and oil giants that oppose the law say it will create new mandates for companies that don't have the experience or expertise to accurately report their indirect emissions. They also say it is too soon to implement the requirements at a time when the federal government is weighing emissions disclosure rules for public companies.

The measure could create "duplicative" work if the federal standards are adopted, the chamber and other groups wrote in an alert opposing the bill.

In a statement Saturday, Chamber of Commerce president Jennifer Barrera said the law will be burdensome to businesses.

"We look forward to working with the Governor's office on SB 253 clean-up legislation that will address some of the major concerns of our members, particularly the impact on small business," Barrera said. "The tools developed to meet the goals of SB 253 must be cost-effective and useful."

California has made major strides to set trends on climate policy in recent years. The state has set out to ban the sale of new gas-powered cars by 2035, expand renewable energy and limit rail pollution. By 2030, the state plans to lower its greenhouse gas emissions by 40% below what they were in 1990.

This was Democratic State Sen. Scott Wiener's third attempt to get the sweeping emissions disclosure rules passed in California. Last year, it passed in the Senate but came up short in the State Assembly. Wiener said the new emissions information will be useful for consumers, investors and lawmakers.

"These companies are doing business in California," Wiener said. "It's important for Californians to know ... what their carbon footprint is."

Major companies, including Apple and Patagonia, came out in support of the bill, saying they already disclose much of their emissions. Christiana Figueres, a key former United Nations official behind the 2015 Paris climate agreement, said in a letter that the bill would be a "crucial catalyst in mobilizing the private sector to solve climate change."

Seventeen states already have inventories requiring major emitters to disclose their direct emissions, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. But the new California mandates will be go beyond that to make companies report a wide range of direct and indirect emissions.

Public companies are typically accustomed to collecting, verifying and reporting information about their business to the government, said Amanda Urquiza, a corporate lawyer who advises companies on climate and other issues. But the California law will mean a major shift for private companies that don't yet "have the infrastructure" to report information that will include a wide-range of greenhouse gas emissions, she said.

The federal rules, proposed by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, would require major public companies to report their emissions and how climate change poses a financial risk to their business.

Under the California law, the state's Air Resources Board has to approve rules by 2025 to implement the legislation. By 2026, companies have to begin annually disclosing their direct emissions, as well as those used to power, heat and cool their facilities. By 2027, companies have to begin annually reporting other indirect emissions.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoes bill that would have decriminalized psychedelic mushrooms

By TRÂN NGUYỄN Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California Gov. Gavin Newsom has vetoed a bill aimed at decriminalizing the possession and personal use of several hallucinogens, including psychedelic mushrooms.

The legislation vetoed Saturday would have allowed those 21 and older to possess psilocybin, the hallucinogenic component in what's known as psychedelic mushrooms. It also would have covered dimethyltryptamine (DMT) and mescaline.

The bill would not have legalized the sale of the substances and would have barred any possession of the substances on school grounds. Instead, it would have ensured people are neither arrested nor prosecuted for possessing limited amounts of plant-based hallucinogens.

Newsom, a Democrat who championed legalizing cannabis in 2016, said in a statement Saturday that more needs to be done before California decriminalizes the hallucinogens.

"California should immediately begin work to set up regulated treatment guidelines - replete with dosing information, therapeutic guidelines, rules to prevent against exploitation during guided treatments, and medical clearance of no underlying psychoses," Newsom's statement said. "Unfortunately, this bill would decriminalize possession prior to these guidelines going into place, and I cannot sign it."

The legislation, which would have taken effect in 2025, would have required the California Health and Human Services Agency to study and to make recommendations to lawmakers on the therapeutic use of psychedelic substances.

Even if California made the bill a law, the drugs would still be illegal under federal law.

In recent years, psychedelics have emerged as an alternative approach to treating a variety of mental illnesses, including post-traumatic stress disorder. The Federal Drug Administration designated psilocybin as a "breakthrough therapy" for treatment-resistant depression in 2019 and recently published a draft guideline on using psychedelics in clinical trials.

Public opinion on psychedelics, which have been mostly associated with 1960s drug culture, has also shifted to support therapeutic use.

Supporters of the legislation include veterans, who have talked about the benefits of using psychedelics to treat trauma and other illnesses.

"Psilocybin gave me my life back," Joe McKay, a retired New York City firefighter who responded to the 9/11 attacks, said at an Assembly hearing in July. "No one should go to jail for using this medicine to try to heal."

But opponents said the drugs' benefits are still largely unknown, and the bill could lead to more crimes — though studies in recent years have shown decriminalization does not increase crime rates. Organizations representing parents also worried the legislation would have made it easier for children and young people to access the drugs.

The California Coalition for Psychedelic Safety and Education, which opposed the measure, said more safeguards are necessary before decriminalization occurs.

"We're grateful that Governor Newsom listened to some of the top medical experts, psychedelic researchers and psychiatrists in the country who all warned that legalization without guardrails was at best premature for both personal and therapeutic use," the coalition said in a statement Saturday. "Any move toward decriminalization will require appropriate public education campaigns, safety protocols and emer-

agency response procedures to help keep Californians safe.”

State Sen. Scott Wiener, who authored the bill, called the veto a missed opportunity for California to follow the science and lead the nation.

“This is a setback for the huge number of Californians — including combat veterans and first responders — who are safely using and benefiting from these non-addictive substances and who will now continue to be classified as criminals under California law,” Wiener said in a statement Saturday. “The evidence is beyond dispute that criminalizing access to these substances only serves to make people less safe and reduce access to help.”

He said he would introduce new legislation in the future. Wiener unsuccessfully attempted to pass a broader piece of legislation last year that would have also decriminalized the use and possession of LSD and MDMA, commonly known as ecstasy.

Lawmakers can override a governor’s veto with a two-thirds vote, but they have not tried in decades.

In 2020, Oregon voters approved decriminalizing small amounts of psychedelics, and separately were the first to approve the supervised use of psilocybin in a therapeutic setting. Two years later, Colorado voters also passed a ballot measure to decriminalize psychedelic mushrooms and to create state-regulated centers where participants can experience the drug under supervision.

In California, cities including Oakland, San Francisco, Santa Cruz and Berkeley have decriminalized natural psychedelics that come from plants and fungi.

Despite Newsom’s veto, California voters might have a chance to weigh in on the issue next year. Advocates are attempting to place two initiatives to expand psychedelic use on the November 2024 ballot. One would legalize the use and sale of mushrooms for people 21 and older, and the other would ask voters to approve borrowing \$5 billion to establish a state agency tasked with researching psychedelic therapies.

Days after deadly missile strike on Ukrainian cafe, grief and a search for answers

By HANNA ARHIROVA and JOANNA KOZLOWSKA undefined

HROZA, Ukraine (AP) — U.N. and local investigators searched for answers on Saturday at the site of a Russian missile strike on a small Ukrainian village that days earlier turned its sole cafe to rubble and killed nearly 52 people gathered for a dead soldier’s wake, according to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other top officials in Kyiv. Local residents that same day began laying their lost friends to rest.

Representatives from the United Nations Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) spent much of the day speaking with local residents and survivors in Hroza, in the northeastern Kharkiv region, according to a statement shared with the Associated Press.

“My initial conversations with local residents and survivors indicate that virtually all those killed were civilians and that the target itself, a busy village cafe and store, was also clearly civilian,” Danielle Bell, who led the team that visited Hroza on Saturday, was cited as saying in the U.N. statement.

“What happened here is yet another tragic reminder of the deadly impact Russia’s invasion has had on Ukraine’s civilians,” Bell added.

The village cafe was obliterated and whole families perished after the missile strike on Thursday cut short a wake for Andriy Kozyr, a soldier from Hroza who died last winter fighting Russia’s invading forces in eastern Ukraine.

According to Ukrainian news reports, he was initially laid to rest elsewhere in Ukraine, as his native village remained under Russian occupation. Kozyr’s family decided to rebury him in Hroza more than 15 months following his death, after DNA tests confirmed his identity, and the cafe reopened especially to let residents honor his memory.

His son Dmytro Kozyr, also a soldier, was among those who died in the attack alongside his wife Nina, who was just days short of her 21st birthday. As of Saturday, Ukrainian law enforcement and the regional prosecutor’s office put the number of victims at 52.

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Only six people in the cafe survived, and the town is trying to fathom why and how the wake was targeted. Dmytro Chubenko, spokesman for the regional prosecutor, said on Friday that investigators are looking into whether someone from the area transmitted the cafe's coordinates to the Russians — a betrayal to everyone now grieving in Hroza.

Among them are Kateryna Tarannyk and her brother Dmytro Androsovych, whose parents were killed at Kozyr's wake and buried on Saturday at a small cemetery on the village's outskirts. Relatives of Tetiana Androsovych, 60, and Mykola Androsovych, 63, gathered alongside Hroza residents under a grim grey sky, as rain kept falling into the fresh open graves nearby that had been dug for other victims.

Tarannyk and her brother stood embracing each other, gazing at their parents' closed caskets, throughout the Orthodox service.

"It feels like you're in a bad, incomprehensible dream, waiting to wake up. It's just unbearable," Tarannyk told the AP.

Tarannyk had come to the funeral from Slovakia, where she had fled with her child in the early days of the war. She set off immediately upon hearing the news of the missile strike. Just a week ago, her parents had visited her in Slovakia.

"They were so happy," she recalled. Together, they had made plans for Tarannyk's child to visit the grandparents in spring.

Before the couple was laid to rest, Tarannyk approached each casket in turn and silently said her good-byes, gently stroking the dark green velvet fabric covering the coffins.

The missile strike was "treacherous, cruel, and unjust," she said with anger in her voice.

Oleksii Androsovych, Mykola's brother, rushed to the village cafe immediately after the missile hit. He found his brother's body next to that of his wife, whose head was missing.

For Oleksii, it was likely the first of many funerals for his friends and neighbors that will be held in Hroza over the coming days and perhaps months, as not all victims' bodies have been identified yet.

Mykola and his wife were buried several rows on from Kozyr, the soldier whose wake they had attended. The tiny village cemetery has grown substantially in the last two days, as fresh graves keep appearing.

Ukrainian police have identified 48 out of the 52 civilians killed by the missile blast, according to the chief police investigator for Kharkiv province. In a Facebook post, Serhii Bolvinov said that investigation teams were "gathering up dead bodies, literally piece by piece."

Hroza, which had a population of about 500 before the war, was seized by Russia early in the war before being recaptured by Ukraine in September 2022 along with neighboring areas. It's only 30 kilometers (19 miles) west of Kupiansk, a key focus of the Russian military effort. Zelenskyy visited the area Tuesday to meet with troops and inspect equipment supplied by the West.

Ukrainian officials said the village was hit by a precision Iskander-style missile, which is said to have an accuracy of 5 to 7 meters (yards).

Elsewhere, a pro-Kremlin politician in Ukraine's Russian-occupied south died of his injuries Saturday after his car was blown up, local Moscow-installed authorities reported. A Telegram post by Vladimir Saldo, a Kremlin-appointed regional leader, identified the politician as Vladimir Malov, the secretary of a local branch of Russian President Vladimir Putin's political party, United Russia.

It was not immediately clear who was behind the deadly attack on Malov. But guerrilla forces loyal to Kyiv have for months operated behind enemy lines, killing pro-Moscow officials, blowing up bridges and helping the Ukrainian military by identifying key targets.

Civilians were killed and wounded by Russian shelling and missile strikes across Ukraine's south and east on Saturday, local Ukrainian officials reported. A 52-year-old man died after a Russian shell fell in his yard in the southern Kherson region, local Gov. Roman Mrochko said on Telegram.

Four people were injured by broken glass as Russian missiles struck the Black Sea port of Chornomorsk overnight, the regional prosecutor's office reported Saturday. The missiles hit holiday accommodation and grain storage facilities along the coast, with debris later setting nearby cars and garages on fire, the prosecutor's office said.

Braves add RHP Daysbel Hernández to NLDS roster, Phillies go with RHP Michael Lorenzen

By PAUL NEWBERRY AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — The Atlanta Braves made a couple of surprising roster moves for the NL Division Series, adding hard-throwing reliever Daysbel Hernández and top prospect AJ Smith-Shawver ahead of Game 1 Saturday against the Philadelphia Phillies.

The Braves revealed that Kyle Wright, a 21-game winner a year ago who was plagued by shoulder issues most of this season, was not available after sustaining a setback in his recovery.

Wright underwent an MRI on Friday and is likely to undergo surgery that would keep him out all of next season.

"Kyle is not right," manager Brian Snitker said. "He's going to have to have a procedure done in order to get him right."

The Braves also passed on 40-year-old reliever Jesse Chavez, who missed a good chunk of the season with a leg injury but posted a 1.56 ERA in 36 appearances.

Chavez's long layoff after getting hit in the left shin by Miguel Cabrera's comebacker during a June game at Detroit persuaded the Braves to pass on using him in the NLDS.

"Jesse has missed three months, and he wasn't throwing like he's capable of throwing pretty much," Snitker said.

Philadelphia made only one change from the 26-man roster it used for a two-game sweep of the Miami Marlins in the wild-card round. Right-hander Michael Lorenzen (9-9, 4.18 ERA) replaced infielder Weston Wilson to give the Phillies a 13th pitcher.

The addition of Hernández was the biggest shocker for the Braves. The 27-year-old Cuban reliever has made only four big league appearances, allowing three runs on six hits and three walks in 3 2/3 innings.

But he was highly effective on a rapid rise through the minor leagues this season, posting a cumulative 2.19 ERA in 23 appearances with High-A Rome, Double-A Mississippi and Triple-A Gwinnett. Most notably, he had 36 strikeouts in 24 2/3 innings.

Hernandez impressed the Braves with his performances in the team's intrasquad games during a first-round bye.

"Pretty much pitched his way on," Snitker said. "We threw him back to back, and it was as good as it was when we called him up early on and really liked him. But it was just pretty much the stuff that he showed."

Smith-Shawver is another fast climber, going from Class A to the big leagues in just his third professional season. The 20-year-old right-hander appeared in six games with five starts for the Braves, going 1-0 with a 4.97 ERA.

The Braves went with 12 pitchers and added infielder Vaughn Grissom as an extra position player.

The 22-year-old came into spring training as the front-runner to start at shortstop but wound up spending most of the season in Triple-A, where he batted .330 with eight homers and 61 RBIs.

The rosters for the Braves-Phillies series:

ATLANTA BRAVES

Pitchers (12): RH Bryce Elder, LH Max Fried, LH Brad Hand, RH Daysbel Hernández, RH Raisel Iglesias, RH Joe Jimenez, RH Pierce Johnson, LH A.J. Minter, RH AJ Smith-Shawver, RH Spencer Strider, RH Michael Tonkin, RH Kirby Yates.

Catchers (2): Travis d'Arnaud, Sean Murphy.

Infielders (6): Ozzie Albies, Orlando Arcia, Vaughn Grissom, Nicky Lopez, Matt Olson, Austin Riley.

Outfielders (6): Ronald Acuña Jr., Michael Harris II, Marcell Ozuna, Kevin Pillar, Eddie Rosario, Forrest Wall.

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES

Pitchers (13): LH José Alvarado, RH Seranthony Domínguez, RH Jeff Hoffman, RH Orion Kerkering, RH Craig Kimbrel, RH Michael Lorenzen, RH Aaron Nola, LH Cristopher Sánchez, LH Gregory Soto, LH Matt Strahm, LH Ranger Suárez, RH Taijuan Walker, RH Zack Wheeler.

Catchers (2): J.T. Realmuto, Garrett Stubbs.

Infielders (6): Alec Bohm, Bryce Harper, Edmundo Sosa, Bryson Stott, Trea Turner.
Weston Wilson.

Outfielders (6): Nick Castellanos, Jake Cave, Brandon Marsh, Cristian Pache, Johan Rojas, Kyle Schwarber.

Trump is inserting himself into the messy race to become the next House speaker. Will it matter?

By STEPHEN GROVES and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump is again testing the power of his endorsement.

With an early morning social media post on Friday, Trump inserted himself into the chaotic race to replace Kevin McCarthy as House speaker by backing Ohio Rep. Jim Jordan for the post. The move was the latest example of Trump attempting to flex his influence within a Republican Party he has already fundamentally reshaped in the eight years since his first White House bid.

"I think he does well. I hope he does well," Trump, the front-runner for the 2024 GOP nomination, said of Jordan in a Friday interview with Real America's Voice. "He's got competition, as you understand. And they're friendly with me, too. Very nice people and good people. We'll see what happens."

With Trump's firm grip on the GOP base, his endorsement can effectively clear the field in many congressional primaries. But the speaker's race is more complex, an intraparty fight that will play out in secret at points and in a tense environment with many Republicans furious about McCarthy's ouster. Jordan is facing at least one other candidate — House Majority Leader Steve Scalise — who is also on good terms with Trump. It's unclear whether anyone has enough votes to win the gavel and if Jordan were to lose, another Trump ally could emerge.

Taken together, the dynamics mean that Trump's backing of Jordan may do little to sway the results. And that may not ultimately matter much.

Regardless of who becomes the next speaker, Trump has undeniable sway over House Republicans. It was his supporters — led by Florida Rep. Matt Gaetz — who orchestrated McCarthy's ouster and who have driven much of the House GOP's agenda. They have been unable or unwilling to pull themselves from his grip and now find themselves heading toward another presidential election with him at the top of the ticket, even as many in the party worry about his electability in November and his potential impact on down-ballot races.

But other factors are at play in the complicated deliberations. Speaker's elections are contests that can turn on personal relationships and deals between lawmakers that fall outside ideological lines.

It also remains unclear how much political capital Trump intends to use whipping votes on Jordan's behalf. While Trump was poised to support Jordan, he was angry that Texas Rep. Troy Nehls broke the news before he was ready, according to two Republicans familiar with his thinking who spoke on condition of anonymity.

A Trump spokesman did not respond to requests for comment Friday.

Trump's 11th-hour interventions helped McCarthy win the speakership after 15 rounds of voting back in January, but the holdouts in that case were Trump allies. This time most hardline conservatives were already lining up behind Jordan.

Instead, Jordan has been courting Republican moderates, trying to convince them that they will be heard if he is elected, despite his reputation as a hard-liner. Trump's endorsement ties Jordan even closer to the former president, potentially making it more difficult for moderate members to support him.

For his part, Jordan said the endorsement would aid his bid for the gavel.

"He's the leader of our party, and I think he's going to be the next president," Jordan told reporters Friday at the Capitol.

Beyond the immediate dynamics on Capitol Hill, Trump's involvement in the speaker's race speaks to his outsized role in the party. More than three months before the first votes of the 2024 campaign, Republicans are increasingly open in referring to Trump as the party's leader. That's despite the fact that he faces four separate criminal indictments.

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And as he appears once again in a strong position to capture the GOP nomination, Trump's penchant for the spotlight is on display.

After creating a media firestorm Monday when he showed up at his civil fraud trial in New York, Trump quickly jumped on the speakership news that threatened to shift attention from his direction. After several of his closest allies raised the fanciful notion that Trump himself could potentially serve as speaker — perhaps on an interim basis — Trump stoked and flirted with the notion of swooping in to save the leaderless caucus from the chaos he has helped to stoke.

"A lot of people have been calling me about speaker. All I can say is we'll do whatever's best for the country and for the Republican Party," Trump told reporters at the courthouse Wednesday.

He later told Fox News Digital that he would be open to serving 30 to 90 days in the role.

Trump was soon planning a trip to Capitol Hill where he planned to address Republicans at a closed-door candidate forum — a trip first reported by The Messenger — that would have marked his first visit to the building since the violence of Jan. 6, when a mob of his supporters stormed the building trying to overturn the election he lost to President Joe Biden.

That trip is no longer expected, according to Nehls and others familiar with the plans.

Jordan has long been one of Trump's biggest champions on the Hill. He has led investigations into prosecutors who have charged the former president with criminal conduct and has been helping lead efforts to impeach Biden.

Ahead of Jan. 6, he helped Trump strategize about how Congress could help Trump overturn his loss to Biden. In return, Trump awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom — the nation's highest civilian honor — five days after the attack on the Capitol.

Scalise, a veteran member of leadership who is also vying for the speaker's gavel, has support from a significant portion of the Republican Conference, while other GOP lawmakers are either looking elsewhere or waiting to make their choices known.

Trump's involvement in the House GOP's upheaval comes just as Republican leaders have been trying to tamp down the drama and soothe tempers. On Friday, a planned Fox News debate between the candidates was called off. Republicans are also trying to avoid the spectacle of a protracted speaker's contest by finding a consensus candidate in closed-door meetings next week.

However, many are bracing for a dayslong contest. The last time they all gathered in the same room — shortly after McCarthy was removed as speaker — insults were hurled and some lawmakers even thought it could turn to blows.

The contest had been dominated by three lawmakers seen as loyal to Trump: Jordan, Scalise and Oklahoma Rep. Kevin Hern each voted against certifying the results of the 2020 presidential election. On Saturday, Hern decided not to seek the job, saying in a statement that House Republicans "must unify — and do it fast. It's clear to me that a three-man race ... will only draw this process out longer, creating further division, which would make it harder for any candidate" to win the required number of votes.

That allegiance to Trump by Jordan and Scalise could prove useful to Trump if he wins. Trump's agenda while in office was often thwarted by congressional leaders from his own party as he clashed with then-House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.

In the years since leaving the White House, Trump has broken from past precedent and endorsed hundreds of like-minded candidates, hoping to fill the House and Senate with lawmakers who share his America First outlook should he become president again.

Trump made clear his ultimate goal earlier this week when he wrote on his Truth Social site that he would "do whatever is necessary to help with the Speaker of the House selection process, short term, until the final selection of a GREAT REPUBLICAN SPEAKER is made - A Speaker who will help a new, but highly experienced President, ME, MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!"

A seventh man accused in killing of an Ecuador presidential candidate is slain inside prison

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — A seventh man accused in the August assassination of an Ecuadorian presidential candidate was killed inside a prison in Ecuador's capital, authorities said Saturday, a day after six others allegedly linked to the crime were slain in a different lockup.

The killing of the seven suspects happened a little more than a week before Ecuador holds a presidential runoff election and as officials struggle to explain how this was possible.

The prison system said in a press release that the man killed was being held at a prison in Quito, Ecuador's capital. It released no details of how it happened and identified him only "José M.," without giving his nationality.

Six Colombian men charged in the Aug. 9 assassination of Fernando Villavicencio were killed Friday inside a prison in Guayaquil.

President Guillermo Lasso called an emergency meeting of his security Cabinet, which decided to move the remaining six suspects in the assassination to a different prison, a government statement said. It didn't identify the prison to which they were sent for security reasons.

The government also fired the prisons system director and the police chief of investigations, the presidential communication office said in a press release.

The killings came as the Prosecutor's Office is expected to announce soon the conclusion of the investigation stage into the killing of Villavicencio, who was gunned down while leaving a political rally.

The 59-year-old politician had not been considered among the front-runners for the election's first round on Aug. 20, but his killing in broad daylight was a shocking reminder of the surge in crime gripping Ecuador. He had reported being threatened by affiliates of Mexico's Sinaloa drug cartel, one of the many international organized crime groups operating in Ecuador.

Ecuador is holding the runoff presidential election Oct. 15 pitting the two top finishers in the August vote — leftist Luisa González and former lawmaker Daniel Noboa, who is the son of a banana tycoon.

Lucinda Williams talks about writing and performing rock 'n' roll after her stroke

By MARIA SHERMAN AP Music Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A little too country for rock 'n' roll, and a little too rock 'n' roll for country, Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Lucinda Williams has always played by her own rules.

That's never changed — even after November 2020, when she suffered a stroke. Williams underwent grueling rehabilitation, eventually leading to her memoir, "Don't Tell Anybody the Secrets I Told You," and her album, "Stories from a Rock N Roll Heart." The latter, released earlier this summer, features contributions from Bruce Springsteen, his wife Patti Scialfa, Jesse Malin, Angel Olsen, Margo Price, Jeremy Ivey, Buddy Miller, and more.

"The recovery part is really hard because you get impatient," Williams told the Associated Press. "You want it to happen all at once."

On Saturday, Williams reaches another recovery milestone: her 2023 tour will kick off at the famed Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tennessee.

In a phone interview earlier this year, Williams spoke to the AP about her recovery, collaborating in new ways, and what's in store for the future.

This conversation has been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: You're hitting the road for "Stories from a Rock N Roll Heart," your first album since your stroke. Did the process of writing and recording change?

WILLIAMS: I wasn't able to write how I usually write, which is with my guitar, because I haven't been able to play. But I was able to make enough of a chord to make a note, and I'd figure out something in my head. And, you know, my friends jumped in and helped by playing the chords. It turned into a col-

laboration, a collaborative effort. So, in a way, it was a mixed blessing. We ended up with songs we might not have otherwise.

It ended up being kind of liberating to work with other people because I hadn't really done it before, to that extent.

AP: And, I imagine, the chemistry had to be right — like getting to work with some really impressive collaborators in Angel Olsen and Margo Price.

WILLIAMS: Margo, we've started to (become) really good friends. She's in the same neighborhood we're in Nashville. We were in the studio and I think (my husband) Tom (Overby) suggested seeing if she wanted to come in and sing some background stuff and she was excited about it. She's just so fun to work with because she's real enthusiastic, and, you know, she's fun to be with. And then, Angel Olsen was in town already. She didn't live here. She's living in Asheville. But she was in Nashville when we were recording, so she came in and added an amazingly beautiful, really small little part vocal to "Jukebox," which I think just makes the whole song.

AP: It seems like you were never going to throw in the towel and stop writing and performing.

WILLIAMS: People are just amazed. They can't believe I've been going out and playing shows and I'm in the studio. I mean, I'm still doing the same stuff. I can manage things well enough. I've got a lot of great help. I've got a great band, two fantastic guitar players ... they play, and I sing.

AP: Are you hoping to one day play guitar again?

WILLIAMS: Yeah. The physical therapist gave me hand exercises that I do. I kind of stretch my fingers out. I do about 50 of those a day with my left hand. And I do some with my right hand, too, just in case. It's mainly the left side of my body that was affected. But, you know, I just try to think positive. I keep thinking, 'Well, I didn't know if I was going to be able to walk across the room without falling down at one point.' But I was able to, you know, I overcame that.

AP: At this stage in your career, I have to ask: Do you still feel too country for rock 'n' roll, and too rock 'n' roll for country?

WILLIAMS: I think the world's caught up, with Americana, you know, that's exactly what that is. I wish they would bring back "folk rock."

AP: What's next for you?

WILLIAMS: Another album. We're already talking about that.

Drop boxes have become key to election conspiracy theories. Two Democrats just fueled those claims

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY and SUSAN HAIGH Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — A woman approaches a drop box in the dark with what appears to be handfuls of ballots. At a different drop box, someone else is seen making multiple trips to insert ballots. At yet another, the same car stops on at least three separate occasions, with different people stepping out and heading to the box.

It's not a trailer for the latest conspiracy movie about rigged elections. Instead, the video footage has become central to a real-world controversy over potential fraud involving ballot drop boxes, a favorite target of right-wing conspiracy theorists since former President Donald Trump's loss in the 2020 election.

The accusations of drop box fraud are not coming from those pushing fringe election claims or from skeptical Republicans who have long favored eliminating or severely restricting use of the boxes. They are being made by Democrats -- two candidates vying for mayor in Connecticut's largest city, in a heavily Democratic state that began allowing drop boxes to be used during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Republicans have seized on the spat, which is now headed to a legal showdown that could result in a new election, to say it validates their concerns that drop boxes are ripe for fraud.

State Rep. Doug Dubitsky, a Republican, evoked the widely debunked movie "2000 Mules" during a legislative debate over the controversy surrounding the Bridgeport mayor's race.

"How do we know that it's only Bridgeport?" said Dubitsky, who represents an area of the state that has

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grown more conservative in the Trump era. "This exact same thing could be happening in every single municipality in this state. We should get rid of these boxes completely."

On the surface, the controversy is a local matter: Two candidates are accusing each other of fraud in a municipal election. But its ripple effects travel far beyond the city of 148,000 and could have implications for the elections next year across the country.

Trump, the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, has been doubling down on his lies about his loss in the 2020 election as he faces criminal charges related to his attempts to overturn Democrat Joe Biden's win. Despite mounds of evidence showing the election was fair and accurate, a solid majority of Republicans still believe it was not.

Among the many conspiracy theories that have fueled that belief on the right are those surrounding ballot drop boxes.

News of the Bridgeport videos has spread through right-wing social media platforms and on far-right media, connecting the controversy to the 2020 stolen election claims. Users have promoted the investigation as evidence for the persistent, false narratives about widespread fraud connected to ballot drop boxes.

The videos and the fact that the claims are being pushed by two Democratic candidates threaten to further inflame criticism from the right that drop boxes are vehicles for election mischief. It's a perception that election officials have been fighting for three years.

"It risks making what is the exception the rule in some folks' mind," said David Levine, a former local election official in Idaho who is now a senior fellow with the German Marshall Fund's Alliance for Securing Democracy. "It's well established that drop boxes themselves are very safe and secure."

The videos have trickled out in the weeks since the Sept. 12 primary in the Bridgeport mayor's race between incumbent Joe Ganim and his challenger, John Gomes, the city's former chief administrative officer. Gomes, who lost by 251 votes out of 8,173 cast, filed an election challenge a week later after a video appeared to show a Ganim supporter putting several envelopes into a drop box outside a city hall annex in the early morning.

Ganim, who has denied involvement, is pointing to another batch of videos posted online that appear to show Gomes' supporters making multiple stops at other ballot drop boxes. Gomes has said he has spoken with those shown in the videos and been told they were dropping off ballots for relatives.

In Connecticut, voters using a drop box must return their completed ballot themselves or designate certain family members, police, local election officials or a caregiver to do it for them.

A judge will hear arguments in Gomes' legal challenge this coming Thursday, with testimony expected over several days. Gomes is asking the judge to declare him the winner or order a new primary election.

The state has launched its own investigation. Some Republican lawmakers, who had raised concerns about the security of drop boxes during the pandemic, said the Bridgeport videos prove they were correct.

"No one can tell me that there are not people across this country, and certainly in this state, certainly in the last couple of weeks, that are not questioning the integrity of our elections. And I'm talking about people in both political parties," said state Sen. Rob Sampson, the Senate's top Republican on the General Assembly's Government Elections and Administration Committee. "This is not isolated to President Trump saying the election was stolen in 2020."

Drop boxes are considered by many election officials to be safe and secure and have been used to varying degrees by states across the political spectrum with few problems. A survey by The Associated Press of state election officials across the United States found no cases of fraud, vandalism or theft related to drop boxes in the 2020 presidential election that could have affected the results.

In many cases, drop boxes are placed in locations where they can be monitored by election staff or security cameras. Local election offices typically have procedures to ensure the security of the ballots from the time they are retrieved until they arrive at the election office.

Yet the conspiracy theories and efforts to get rid of them persist. Since the 2020 election, five states have moved to ban ballot drop boxes while six have moved to limit their availability, according to data collected by the Voting Rights Lab, which tracks voting-related legislation in the states and advocates for

expanded voter access.

"It's not the ballot boxes that are the problem," said Cheri Quickmire, executive director of the voter advocacy group Common Cause in Connecticut. "In this particular case, it seems like the problem is the leadership of campaigns that permit that kind of activity, that has staff, that has campaign staff who ... would put ballots in big envelopes and stuff them into the ballot box."

Democrats, who control the Connecticut Legislature and all statewide offices, have so far been successful in pushing back against attempts to ban drop boxes while taking steps to address the controversy. They've also expressed shock over the videos but urged Republicans to wait for the investigations to play out.

"The one question for today, and that's going to come up, is do you take a wrecking ball approach and ban everything for everybody else?" House Speaker Matt Ritter, a Hartford Democrat, told reporters late last month. "Or do you try to use more of a scalpel approach in dealing with a situation that we all agree is serious?"

How \$6 billion in Ukraine aid collapsed in a government funding bill despite big support in Congress

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — The collapse of Ukraine aid in Congress was months in the making, and exactly what Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell had feared.

McConnell had warned that political support for Ukraine was in danger as a small but vocal contingent of fellow Republican lawmakers intensified their efforts against sending U.S. money overseas for the fight against Russia.

First in a series of high-profile speeches this summer then in direct overtures to the White House, the Republican leader who had visited Kyiv and put a priority on U.S. support for Ukraine tried to steer the hard-right flank of his party.

But in the end, neither McConnell nor the White House nor Democrats in Congress could muscle a scaled-back \$6 billion military and civilian aid package for Ukraine to passage in last week's deal to avoid a U.S. government shutdown.

Despite overwhelming bipartisan support in Washington for stopping Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion, the failure to approve Ukraine aid was a sizable setback for an administration seeking to lead a Western alliance to protect the young democracy as the fighting grinds on.

It also shows the perils ahead in Washington as a hardened band of Republican lawmakers who are just a minority in Congress — many allied with Donald Trump, the party's 2024 presidential front-runner — flex their power to overcome the will of the majority. The next steps are highly uncertain.

"It does worry me," President Joe Biden acknowledged last week. "But I know there are a majority of members in the House and Senate — both parties — who have said that they support funding Ukraine."

Biden said he is preparing to deliver a major speech on U.S. aid to Ukraine and has a plan in the works to ensure the flow of assistance after the upheaval on Capitol Hill, which was punctuated by the ouster of the Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

As Washington regroups, the sudden shift has unleashed political blame over the inability of the White House and Congress to work around the small but intensifying minority of lawmakers who are putting aid in jeopardy.

"Not another penny for Ukraine!" wrote Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Greene, a top Trump ally, arguing money should be spent on securing the U.S. border with Mexico instead.

McConnell, R-Ky., had been trying to build support Ukraine for months, ever since he met with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv in May.

The senator gave repeated floor speeches, talked with allies overseas and made the case his priority among colleagues on Capitol Hill, where Zelenskyy received a hero's welcome last year and visited with a follow-up appeal weeks before the funding showdown.

But after the White House announced Biden's \$24 billion request for Ukraine aid in August, McConnell

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knew it would not have the support needed to pass, according to a person familiar with the situation and granted anonymity to discuss it.

McConnell had met with a group of Republican defense hawks in the Senate before the end of September deadline to fund the government or risk a shutdown, which would typically be the time to also pass the White House's spending request for Ukraine.

But the GOP senators left McConnell with the understanding the support for Ukraine funding overall would be lacking.

A week before the deadline, McConnell told Biden's national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, on a Friday call that it "would be impossible" for Congress to pass the full \$24 billion request, said the person familiar with the situation.

Instead, McConnell encouraged the White House to look "strongly" at whether it could rely on sending Ukraine aid through existing ways for transferring or reprogramming money in the short term, the person said.

The White House, in a series of conversations with McConnell's team over the weekend, considered smaller amounts of funding and insisted that the Ukraine aid was vital.

McConnell agreed to do what he could. Days later the Senate advanced its package to keep government open for the short term, until Nov 17, with \$6 billion for Ukraine. It passed the Senate on an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote.

The problem was, however, that the Democratic leaders on Capitol Hill had never fully articulated Ukraine as a top priority as they fought off House Republican demands for steep budget cuts to keep the government open.

And McCarthy, R-Calif., was having his own problems in the Republican-led House.

Greene and other hard-liners in the House had essentially forced McCarthy to strip a much smaller amount of Ukraine security assistance funds, \$300 million, from an annual defense funding bill.

It was a stark example of how a growing flank of the party — some 100 Republicans — was wresting control from the majority who widely supported the bill.

It was a sign of the trouble to come.

Staring down a potentially devastating government shutdown, the embattled McCarthy then stripped the \$6 billion Ukraine aid from the federal funding package before the House vote to keep the U.S. government open.

As the House was preparing last Saturday to avert a shutdown, McConnell convened his Republican senators behind closed doors for a lunch meeting.

McConnell spoke of the need to retain the Ukraine aid in the final package, but it was clear the room was not with him.

South Dakota Sen. John Thune, the Republicans' second in command, had been in talks with McCarthy, including that morning, and understood from the speaker that the package could not pass with the Ukraine aid attached.

Thune told the Republican senators he thought they should move forward with the House version, without the Ukraine money, as the best way to avoid a shutdown, according to Republican familiar with the private meeting and granted anonymity to discuss it.

The third-ranking Republican senator, John Barrasso of Wyoming, swiftly agreed, according to another Republican granted anonymity to discuss the conversation.

Listening to his colleagues, McConnell then shifted course.

McConnell came out after lunch and said the Republicans would vote against advancing the Senate bill as they waited to see what their House colleague would do.

That afternoon, the House approved the package hours before the midnight deadline to keeping government open. The Ukraine aid was dropped.

Gone from the final bill was not only the \$6 billion in Ukraine assistance, but also pages of text outlining the ability to transfer funds to Ukraine.

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It was just what McConnell had been trying to avoid.

In the aftermath, the White House made it clear that McCarthy had made a commitment on Ukraine beyond what was in the package.

But when reporters asked McCarthy about it, the speaker said there's no "secret deal" with Biden on Ukraine.

What there was, McCarthy explained, was an assurance that the ability to transfer funds for Ukraine would remain intact. If there was any confusion about that, he said, "We'll fix it."

The next day, McCarthy was ousted from the office over long-simmering complaints about his leadership, leaving any fix for Ukraine funding uncertain.

Biden's speech about Ukraine aid is coming. The White House is waiting for the House to elect a new speaker. And it's working with Congress to ensure the transferability of funds and to provide new support for Ukraine.

Witnesses to FBI hunt for Civil War gold describe heavily loaded armored truck, signs of a night dig

By MICHAEL RUBINKAM Associated Press

PENFIELD, Pa. (AP) — In the heart of Pennsylvania elk country, Eric McCarthy and his client, Don Reichel, got up before sunrise to scour the forest floor for so-called "brown gold" — a rack of freshly shed antlers to add to Reichel's collection back home.

One hill over, a team of FBI agents was also hunting for gold. The metallic yellow kind.

The FBI's highly unusual search for buried Civil War-era treasure more than five years ago set in motion a dispute over what, if anything, the agency unearthed and an ongoing legal battle over key records. There's so much intrigue that even a federal judge felt compelled to note in a ruling last week: "The FBI may have found the gold — or maybe not."

Now, two witnesses have come forward to share with The Associated Press what they heard and saw in the woods that late-winter morning, raising questions about the FBI's timeline and adding plot twists to a saga that blends elements of legend, fact and science — and a heavy dose of government secrecy.

The FBI insists nothing came of the March 2018 excavation in Dents Run, a remote wooded valley about 110 miles (177 kilometers) northeast of Pittsburgh. But a treasure hunter who led FBI agents to the hillside where an 1863 gold shipment might have been buried is challenging the government's denials. How could the dig have come up empty, he asks, when the FBI's own scans showed the likelihood of a buried metal mass equaling hundreds of millions of dollars in gold?

McCarthy, a 45-year-old elk guide, had never met treasure hunter Dennis Parada. But he watched from afar as Parada took the FBI to court and told his story in the media. McCarthy recently decided to share his own story because he thought Parada, who spent years looking for the gold before approaching the FBI with his findings, has been treated unfairly.

"I just felt like I needed to say what I saw, you know?" McCarthy explained. "I have no ties to anybody here. It's just I felt like they were wronged."

In an interview at a remote hunting camp about 25 miles (40 km) from Dents Run, McCarthy recalls hearing the unexpected clang of heavy equipment as he worked his way up the mountain in near-darkness, a dusting of snow on the ground from a recent squall.

Later that day, while breaking for lunch, McCarthy and Reichel watched a trio of armored trucks rumble past. One of the vehicles rode low, as if it was carrying a full load.

"They took something out of Dents Run," McCarthy insists now. "Something heavy."

Reached by phone, Reichel, McCarthy's 73-year-old shed hunting client, corroborated his account of hearing early-morning clatter and seeing a loaded truck on March 14, 2018. Their recollections echo earlier statements from residents who told the AP of hearing a backhoe and jackhammer overnight and seeing a convoy of FBI vehicles, including armored trucks.

Parada, co-founder of the treasure-hunting outfit Finders Keepers, views the eyewitness accounts as

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important because they could bolster one of his main contentions — that the FBI conducted a secret overnight dig for the gold and spirited it away. The FBI's warrant to excavate the site limited work to 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day.

The agency strenuously denies it dug after hours, saying FBI police merely conducted nighttime ATV patrols to secure the site.

"No gold or other items of evidence were located or collected. The FBI continues to unequivocally reject any claims or speculation to the contrary," said spokesperson Carrie Adamowski.

Indeed, there's little historical evidence to substantiate apocryphal accounts that an Army detachment lost a gold shipment in the Pennsylvania wilderness, possibly after an ambush by Confederate sympathizers. But the legend has inspired generations of treasure hunters, Parada among them.

Scientific testing suggested he was on to something.

The FBI said in a 2018 court document that its own geophysical consultant identified an underground metallic mass weighing up to 9 tons, with the density of gold, at the site identified by Finders Keepers. A federal judge approved a search and seizure warrant, and the FBI set up camp in Dents Run, later describing it as a possible "cultural heritage site containing gold belonging to the United States government." Parada hoped to earn a finder's fee from the potential recovery.

On the second day of the FBI dig, McCarthy and Reichel awoke at 4 a.m. and were on a mountain that parallels the narrow Dents Run valley sometime between 5 and 5:30.

By then, the FBI's presence had become the talk of the backcountry, with speculation running rampant that agents were hunting for gold. The FBI had shooed McCarthy away from a different part of Dents Run a day earlier. But he was determined to help his client find an elk shed. Splitting up to increase their odds, McCarthy dropped Reichel off then parked more than a mile away.

He said he could hear the distant hum of a running engine as soon as he got out of his truck. The noise grew louder as he made his way up the hill and he heard metal on stone, or metal on metal — what sounded to him like heavy equipment meeting earth.

McCarthy said he got to the top of the ridge and started back down the other side. That's when he laid eyes on the FBI operation, on the opposite slope, about 400 yards (meters) away. He saw lights powered by a generator. A parked excavator. A smaller piece of equipment, perhaps a skid-steer or quad, moving up and down the hill. A brown-black gash in the earth surrounded by snow. People huddling under a makeshift canopy.

"It looked to me like they were wrapping up a dig," he said.

Reichel, who was farther away from the dig site, said he heard machinery when he crested the ridge.

"I can hear some machines, or something, clanging and banging and roaring and all that stuff," said Reichel, a retired manufacturing worker. He said he was too far away to be able to see anything.

An FBI timeline says the search team didn't arrive at the dig site until 8 a.m. that morning, and an excavator operator arrived even later. That's well after the time that McCarthy and Reichel say they detected signs of activity.

The pair reconvened for lunch several hours later. It was then, they said, that a convoy of unmarked black SUVs and armored trucks drove by them on Pennsylvania Route 555, heading out of Dents Run. McCarthy and Reichel said one of the three armored trucks seemed to be weighed down — more squat than the other two and lagging behind.

"Eric and I both made the comment that one must be loaded," Reichel said.

"It was loaded to the gills," said McCarthy, adding he's driven overloaded dump trucks and "I know what it looks like."

Not so, the FBI says. While "appropriate vehicles and equipment" were brought to Dents Run, armored trucks were not among them, according to Adamowski, the FBI spokesperson.

Warren Getler, a consultant who has worked closely with Finders Keepers, argued the eyewitness accounts add up to one thing — a clandestine night dig.

"And why would you do a night dig," he said, "unless you wanted to remove the gold under cover of darkness?"

Getler, co-author of "Rebel Gold," a book exploring the possibility of buried Civil War-era caches of gold

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and silver, joined Parada in Dents Run for the 2018 dig. But the FBI mostly kept them confined to their cars at the bottom of the hill, showing them an empty hole when the work was done.

The agency subsequently stonewalled Parada's Freedom of Information Act request for records on the dig, prompting him to file a lawsuit. In 2022, a judge forced the FBI to release a trove of photos and documents.

But the agency refuses to turn over its operational plan for the gold dig — which Parada and Getler believe might include information about an overnight excavation — and other records the government says are exempt from disclosure. U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta told the FBI on Sept. 27 it needed to come up with a better justification for keeping the disputed records under wraps.

While Parada pursues the FBI in court, he hasn't given up his search in the Dents Run area. He recently hired a New Jersey geophysical company that identified several underground anomalies near the site of the original FBI dig, one of which measures 25 feet (7.62 meters) by 8 feet (2.44 m).

Finders Keepers' own equipment detected metal objects in the same location, perhaps 15 feet down, presumably in a tunnel or cave, said Parada, playing a video that shows a detector emitting a high-pitched squeal as it is swept across the ground.

He's now seeking to partner with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, which owns the land, on a new excavation in Dents Run. Parada, his lawyer and top officials from the conservation agency plan to meet later this month.

"It's a part of our history that's hidden away," Parada said, "and I think it's time that should be told."

Today in History: October 8, The Great Chicago Fire breaks out

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Oct. 8, the 281st day of 2023. There are 84 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 8, 1871, the Great Chicago Fire erupted; fires also broke out in Peshtigo, Wisconsin, and in several communities in Michigan.

On this date:

In 1914, the World War I song "Keep the Home Fires Burning," by Ivor Novello and Lena Guilbert Ford, was first published in London under the title "Till the Boys Come Home."

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman told a press conference in Tiptonville, Tennessee, that the secret scientific knowledge behind the atomic bomb would be shared only with Britain and Canada.

In 1956, Don Larsen pitched the only perfect game in a World Series to date as the New York Yankees beat the Brooklyn Dodgers in Game 5, 2-0.

In 1982, all labor organizations in Poland, including Solidarity, were banned.

In 1985, the hijackers of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) killed American passenger Leon Klinghoffer, who was in a wheelchair, and threw his body overboard.

In 1997, scientists reported the Mars Pathfinder had yielded what could be the strongest evidence yet that Mars might once have been hospitable to life.

In 1998, the House triggered an open-ended impeachment inquiry against President Bill Clinton in a momentous 258-176 vote; 31 Democrats joined majority Republicans in opening the way for nationally televised impeachment hearings.

In 2002, a federal judge approved President George W. Bush's request to reopen West Coast ports, ending a 10-day labor lockout that was costing the U.S. economy an estimated \$1 billion to \$2 billion a day.

In 2005, a magnitude-7.6 earthquake flattened villages on the Pakistan-India border, killing an estimated 86,000 people.

In 2010, British aid worker Linda Norgrove, who'd been taken captive in Afghanistan, was killed during a U.S. special forces rescue attempt, apparently by a U.S. grenade.

In 2013, the White House said President Barack Obama would nominate Federal Reserve vice chair Janet

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Yellen to succeed Ben Bernanke as chairman of the nation's central bank.

In 2016, Donald Trump vowed to continue his campaign after many Republicans called on him to abandon his presidential bid in the wake of the release of a 2005 video in which he made lewd remarks about women and appeared to condone sexual assault.

In 2017, Harvey Weinstein was fired from The Weinstein Company amid allegations that he was responsible for decades of sexual misconduct against female actors and employees.

In 2020, authorities in Michigan said six men had been charged with conspiring to kidnap Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in reaction to what they viewed as her "uncontrolled power."

In 2022, an explosion caused the partial collapse of a bridge linking the Crimean Peninsula with Russia, damaging an important supply artery for the Kremlin's faltering war effort in southern Ukraine.

Today's Birthdays: Entertainment reporter Rona Barrett is 87. Actor Paul Hogan is 84. R&B singer Fred Cash (The Impressions) is 83. Civil rights activist Rev. Jesse Jackson is 82. Comedian Chevy Chase is 80. Author R.L. Stine is 80. Actor Dale Dye is 79. Country singer Susan Raye is 79. TV personality Sarah Purcell is 75. R&B singer Airrion Love (The Stylistics) is 74. Actor Sigourney Weaver is 74. R&B singer Robert "Kool" Bell (Kool & the Gang) is 73. Producer-director Edward Zwick is 71. Actor Michael Dudikoff is 69. Comedian Darrell Hammond is 68. Actor Stephanie Zimbalist is 67. Actor Kim Wayans is 62. Actor Ian Hart is 59. Gospel/R&B singer CeCe Winans is 59. Rock musician C.J. Ramone (The Ramones) is 58. Actor-producer Karyn Parsons is 57. Singer-producer Teddy Riley is 57. Actor Emily Procter is 55. Actor Dylan Neal is 54. Actor-screenwriter Matt Damon is 53. Actor-comedian Robert Kelly is 53. The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, is 53. Actor Martin Henderson is 49. Actor Kristanna Loken is 44. Rock-soul singer-musician Noelle Scaggs (Fitz and the Tantrums) is 44. Actor Nick Cannon is 43. Actor J.R. Ramirez is 43. Actor Max Crumm is 38. Singer-songwriter-producer Bruno Mars is 38. Actor Angus T. Jones is 30. Actor Molly Quinn is 30. Actor/singer Bella Thorne is 26.