

Groton Daily Independent

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Upcoming Events

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.

Youth Football vs. Faulkton at Dacotah Bank Stadium in Aberdeen, 6 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.

Tuesday, Oct. 10

Senior Menu: Ham and bean soup, egg salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, fruit.

School Breakfast: Waffles.

School Lunch: Chicken legs, mashed potatoes.

Northwestern Middle School Music Festival

School Board Meeting: 7 a.m.

Elementary Reading and Math Family Fun Night, 5:30 p.m.

Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Church Council, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.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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The Bulletin by Newsweek

World in Brief

Workers union has announced.

Rescue teams continued to search for people trapped under the rubble after a 6.3 magnitude earthquake hit Afghanistan near the western Herat province. More than 2,400 people have died.

Tropical Storm Lidia is forecast to strengthen into a hurricane on Monday and make landfall on the west coast of Mexico by Tuesday, with flooding and heavy rains expected.

The San Francisco 49ers defeated the Dallas Cowboys 42-10 on Week 5 of Sunday Night Football. The 49ers became the fifth team in NFL history to score 30 points in eight straight regular season games.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed a bill banning caste discrimination, calling the legislation "unnecessary" as state law already grants those protections.

Iran has claimed it received \$43 million in damages from the U.S. in connection to a legal case dealing with properties that were not transferred to Iran following the conclusion of the Algiers Declaration.

An "unprecedented" surge in rail traffic at the North Korea-Russia border suggests that Pyongyang is supplying arms to Moscow for its war in Ukraine, U.S. think tank Beyond Parallel said, citing satellite imagery of the Tumangang rail facility.

Simone Biles won her 22nd world championship gold medal Sunday, winning the balance beam on the final day of the competition in Antwerp, Belgium.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Russia's weakened military appears unable to deal with Ukraine's multi-theater offensive effort, according to a former commander of U.S. Army Europe, with Kyiv's varied attacks wreaking havoc in southern Ukraine, Crimea, and even within Russian borders.

What to Watch in the Day Ahead

Americans celebrate Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples' Day today. Federal and state offices, banks, and the bond markets will remain closed.

Democratic presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is expected to make a "major announcement" in Philadelphia, sparking speculation that he may run as an independent candidate.

TALKING POINTS

"I was in Israel when the horrific attacks carried out by Hamas started on Saturday. My team and I are now safe, but like many we are shaken, angered, and heartbroken by the hundreds killed, the thousands injured, those taken hostage, and all who are directly affected by these sickening terrorist attacks...There were children and elderly families, many Americans. There was a sense of fear and worry and a knowledge to many of us that there were horrific things going on around the country at that time. We, who believe in peace and freedom and human rights for Palestinians and Israelis for all of humankind, must reject those who use terror as their weapon," Sen. Cory Booker recounting the Hamas attack on Israel.

"We, and Russians, and journalists say that Zelensky is this and that, a beggar, acting disrespectfully and dishonestly. And I have to say that Zelensky is acting absolutely appropriately." Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, a key ally to Russian President Vladimir Putin, offering a surprising defense of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Israel retaliated to Hamas' assault with overnight strikes on hundreds of Hamas and Islamic Jihad targets in Gaza. More than 1,100 people have been killed as fighting rages on, according to the Associated Press. The U.S. promised its "full support" for Israel and is moving warships closer to Israel. Over 120,000 Gazans have been displaced, the U.N. said.

Union workers at Mack Trucks have voted against a tentative five-year contract agreement with the company and plan to strike at 7 a.m. EST on Monday, the United Auto

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Service Notice: Eugene Prunty

Mass of Christian Burial for Eugene Prunty, 94, of Andover will be 10:30 a.m., Saturday, October 14th at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church. Father Gregory Tschakert will officiate. Burial with military honors will follow in All Saints Catholic Church, Groton under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held at the church from 5-7 p.m. on Friday with a wake service at 7:00 p.m.

Gene passed away Sunday, October 8, 2023 at Sun Dial Manor, Bristol.

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Britton-Hecla
Braves

Varsity Sponsors: Bary Keith at Harr Motors, BK Custom Ts & More, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency and Locke Electric

Monday, Oct. 9, 2023
at Groton Area
5 pm: C:
JV: Fans of Jaedyn Penning



Groton Area
Tigers

GT

 BECOME A SPONSOR



Is anyone interested in being a sponsor of any of these volleyball matches to be livestreamed on GDILIVE.COM? They are \$25 per match. Text Paul at 605-397-7460 or email paperpaul@grotonsd.net.

C hosts Britton-Hecla
C hosts Deuel
C hosts Northwestern
C hosts Faulkton Area

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GROTON VET CLINIC
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October 2023 Calendar

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.

Youth Football vs. Faulkton at Dacotah Bank Stadium in Aberdeen, 6 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.

Tuesday, Oct. 10

Senior Menu: Ham and bean soup, egg salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, fruit.

School Breakfast: Waffles.

School Lunch: Chicken legs, mashed potatoes.

Northwestern Middle School Music Festival

School Board Meeting: 7 a.m.

Elementary Reading and Math Family Fun Night, 5:30 p.m.

Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Church Council, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 11

Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, sweet potatoes, vegetable capri blend, chocolate pudding with bananas, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Egg bake.

School Lunch: Chef Salad

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Bible Study, 2:45 p.m.; Confirmation, 4:35 p.m.

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

Thursday, Oct. 12

Senior Menu: Meatballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, carrots and broccoli, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Pop Tarts

School Lunch: Pasta with meat sauce.

Region 1 Cross Country at Webster, 1:30 p.m.

JH Football hosts Britton-Hecla, 5 p.m.

Volleyball hosts Deuel: (C/7th at 5 p.m., JV/8th at 6 p.m., Varsity to follow)

Friday, Oct. 13

Senior Menu: Tuna noodle hot dish with peas, mixed vegetables, Swedish apple pie square, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Egg wraps

School Lunch: Hamburger, fries.

Lake Region Marching Festival in Groton, 10 a.m.

Football hosts Mobridge-Pollock, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 14

State Soccer Championship Game at Brandon Valley, 11 a.m. (Groton Area vs. Tea Area)

Thrift Store open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Pumpkin Fest at City Park, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 15

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Freshmen meet with pastor, 1 p.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion (St. John's at 9 a.m., Zion at 11 a.m.), Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.;

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Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.;
Sunday school, 10:30 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Wor-
ship 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.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.;
Worship, 11 a.m.

Monday, Oct. 16

Senior Menu: Vegetable beef soup, chicken salad
sandwich, Mandarin oranges, tomato juice, whole
wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Apple pie in a cup.

School Lunch: French bread pizza, peas.

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

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

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

Volleyball at Langford (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.,
JV at 6:30 p.m. with varsity to follow)

Tuesday, Oct. 17

Senior Menu: Baked chicken breast, mashed po-
tatoes and gravy, California Blend, Lemon tart bar,
whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Monty cristo sandwich.

School Lunch: Oriental chicken, Asian rice.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Volleyball hosts Northwestern (C/7th at 5 p.m.,
JV/8th at 6 p.m., varsity to follow) VOLLEY FOR
CURE NIGHT!

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m. at City Hall

Wednesday, Oct. 18

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes/ham, peas, Man-
darin orange salad, whole wheat bread, Ambrosia.

School Breakfast: French toast.

School Lunch: Cheese stick with Marinara sauce.

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30
a.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation (service event),
6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult
Bible Study begins at 7 pm

Thursday, Oct. 19

Senior Menu: Swiss steak, mashed potatoes, cali-
flower, apricots, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Muffins.

School Lunch: Taco salad.

Emmanuel Lutheran: WELCA (final day to pack
LWR projects), potluck, 1:30 p.m.

First Round of Football Playoffs

Friday, Oct. 20

Senior Menu: Scalloped chicken, carrots/broccoli
medley, pineapple tidbits, Gingerbread with topping,
whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Bagel bites.

School Lunch: Mac and cheese, cooked carrots.

End of First Quarter

Volleyball at Redfield (C/7th at 5 p.m., JV/8th at 6
p.m. with varsity to follow)

Saturday, Oct. 21

Thrift Store open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS
Mass, 4:30 p.m.

State Cross Country Meet at Yankton Trail Park,
Sioux Falls

Robotics at Douglas High School

Sunday, Oct. 22

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Cof-
fee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.;
Sunday school singing in church, 10:30 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Wor-
ship 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.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship/Confirmation, 10:30
a.m.; No Sunday school; Choir, 7 p.m.

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First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.;
Worship, 11 a.m.

Monday, Oct. 23

Senior Menu: Beef stroganoff with noodles, mixed
vegetables, fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Pancake on a stick.

School Lunch: Chicken nuggets, sweet potato fries.

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

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

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community
Center with potluck at Noon.

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

5th Grade Band Introduction, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30
p.m.

Volleyball hosts Faulkton (JV at 6 p.m. with varsity
to follow)

Tuesday, Oct. 24

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed pota-
toes with gravy, oriental blend vegetables, baked
apples, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Scones.

School Lunch: Scalloped potatoes and ham.

Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

ASVAB Test, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 25

Senior Menu: Meatloaf, baked potato with sour
cream, broccoli normandy blend, Fruited Jell-O,
whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Cereal.

School Lunch: Tacos.

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 6 p.m.

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult
Bible Study begins at 7 pm

Thursday, Oct. 26

Senior Menu: Hot turkey combo, mashed potatoes
with gravy, 7-layer salad, peaches.

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.

School Lunch: Corndogs, mashed sweet potatoes.

Second Round of Football Playoffs

Friday, Oct. 27

Senior Menu: Potato soup, ham salad on croissant,

tomato spoon salad, frosted brownies, fruit.

School Breakfast: Biscuits.

School Lunch: Subs, chips.

Saturday, Oct. 28

Thrift Store open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS
Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Junior High Volleyball Tournament at Matchbox in
Aberdeen.

Sunday, Oct. 29

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Cof-
fee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.;
Sunday school, 10:30 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Wor-
ship 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.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion
(Milestones for JK and Kindergarten), 9 a.m.; Sunday
school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.;
Worship, 11 a.m.

Monday, Oct. 30

Senior Menu: Creamed chicken, buttermilk biscuit,
peas, pineapple/mandarin oranges, peanut butter
cookie, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: Chicken fries mashed with gravy.

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

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

FCCLA Blood Drive at High School

Tuesday, Oct. 31

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, broccoli,
fruit, orange sherbert, garlic toast.

School Breakfast: Waffles.

School Lunch: Werewolf burgers (hamburgers),
white trees (cooked cauliflower)

Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Downtown Trick or Treat, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

United Methodist Trunk or Treat, 5:30 p.m. to 6
p.m.

Region 1A Volleyball Tournament

NCRC Test for Seniors, 8:40 a.m. to Noon

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Weekly Vikings Recap - Vikings vs. Chiefs

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

In their first-ever matchup against Patrick Mahomes, the Minnesota Vikings fell just short of defeating the best quarterback in the NFL. The Vikings now move to 1-4 on the season and there will be a lot of questions as to whether the Vikings will move on from some of their key older players.

The first half was a solid one for the Vikings as they stayed toe-to-toe with the Chiefs. After a Josh Oliver fumble on the first play of the game, which led to an eventual Chiefs' touchdown, the Vikings were able to stay the course and put together three straight scoring drives. The only problem for the Vikings was that two of the three resulted in field goals instead of touchdowns. When playing a team like the Chiefs who can score whenever they want, the Vikings needed to score touchdowns on every drive they could. If the Vikings could have turned those field goals into touchdowns, they could have positioned well heading into halftime. Instead, the Vikings found themselves tied 13-13 at the half, with the Chiefs starting the second half with the ball.

Although the storyline coming into the game might have been Travis Kelce and his popstar girlfriend, the real story of the game was the Chiefs' consistent long offensive possessions. On the Chiefs' first six possessions, only one of them did not last nine plays or longer. That massive play total can demoralize and exhaust a defense like the Vikings that lacks the true star power to shut down Patrick Mahomes.

What also demoralized the Vikings was that they had multiple opportunities in the second half to end the Chiefs' offensive drives early. On the Chiefs' first drive of the second half, the Vikings quickly forced the Chiefs into a long third down. After sending pressure on the Mahomes, Mahomes was forced to throw a long lob to his receiver who was able to pull down the ball over Cam Bynum. Bynum, who jumped prematurely, had the opportunity to bat the ball down and cause a fourth down. Instead, he went for the interception, and the Vikings paid for it. The same thing would happen for the Vikings on the next drive when Travis Kelce, who was hobbling from an ankle injury in the first half, missed Josh Metellus on a key third down. If those two plays went the Vikings' way, the game would have been a lot different for the Vikings.

However, after scoring on an Alexander Mattison screenplay, the Vikings finally forced the Chiefs' offense into a punt. Down 27-20 with less than 10:00 remaining, the Vikings needed to go 80 yards down the field to the game. The only problem was that Justin Jefferson was out with a hamstring injury. Nonetheless, the Vikings drove down the field into Chiefs' territory thanks to Jordan Addison and KJ Osborn covering for Jefferson's absence. Sadly, the Vikings could not finish the drive as they failed to convert on a crucial fourth down after the referees made a questionable decision to pick up a penalty on the Chiefs for defensive pass interference. What made matters worse was that while the referees were discussing the call, a Chiefs player took off his helmet on the field, which should have resulted in an unsportsmanlike penalty on the Chiefs and pinned the Chiefs deep in their territory. Instead, the referees did nothing, and it was the Chiefs' ball with a chance to run out the clock thanks to the Vikings using up all their timeouts early into the second half.

The Vikings would eventually get one more shot at it after a Chiefs' punt. However, with only a 1:00 left and no timeouts, the Vikings fell short as Kirk Cousins was sacked while attempting to throw a game-ending hail mary.

Chiefs 27 - Vikings 20

Next week, the Vikings will travel to take on the Chicago Bears. The Bears, who won their first game of the season last Thursday, will come in with more rest and more momentum than the Vikings. If the Vikings lose, the season is officially over.

“Getting under your skin” with Varicose Veins

From the back of our hands to the back of our legs, pale blue blood vessels are visible just under the skin. Often-times these veins are flat and not painful. However when these vessels become abnormally swollen or dilated, they are called varicose veins. This swelling is caused by the valves inside the veins becoming weak and no longer sealing tightly. Varicose veins can become painful, quite large and stick out from the surface of the skin.

In order for blood to return from your feet back to the heart, the blood must be pumped up against gravity.

Check valves in the veins are what keep the blood from pooling back down the legs in between heart-beats. When the heart beats (called systole), the valves open and allow the blood move upward. When the heart is paused, filling for the next beat (called diastole), the valves close and keep blood from flowing back towards the feet. As we age these valves become weak and do not fully close, then the surrounding veins become swollen with extra blood causing varicose veins to occur.

Women are also more likely to develop varicose veins than men due to hormonal changes during pregnancy and menopause. Standing or sitting in one position for long periods of time can also increase the risk of developing varicose veins since leg muscle contractions also help move the blood up against gravity. Older age, obesity, and family history are all common risk factors.

Varicose veins do not just look unsightly; they can also cause pain in the legs. They often lead to an aching or heavy feeling in the legs. Varicose veins additionally lead to burning, throbbing, itching or muscle cramping in the legs. If that is not bad enough, complications related to varicose veins can include ulcers, bleeding, or blood clots.

Unfortunately there is not a way to repair these valves once they are damaged. However, there are some things you can do to help manage varicose veins. Wearing compression stockings can help decrease swelling in the legs. Frequent movement of the legs such as pumping your ankles a few times an hour, raising your legs above the level of the heart for 15 minutes a few times each day, increasing exercise, and losing weight can all help increase blood flow.

If these measures do not give the relief you need, then it is time to talk with your doctor and discuss seeing a specialist for more advanced treatment. There are several different treatments available and they can help you find the one that is right for you. While varicose veins may be below the surface, do not let them get to the point where they really “get under your skin.”

Jill Kruse, D.O. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices as a hospitalist in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook and Instagram featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show providing health information based on science, built on trust, on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



Jill Kruse, DO

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What's the connection, if any, between the onset of global warming and an increase in violent human behavior?

-- Robert C., Southampton, MA

It's not uncommon to hear talk about the dire consequences of global warming—rising-sea levels, extreme weather and ecological disruptions. But there's another dimension to this crisis that doesn't get much attention but is equally concerning: the link between global warming and increased violent behavior.

Indeed, a new study from University of Washington and Boston University researchers that surveyed data from 100 U.S. cities found that hotter-than-normal days—which we are getting more of every year thanks to global warming—coincide with higher incidences of gun violence. Several other previous studies underscore the connection between warmer temperatures and violence, with murder, rape and assault rates higher across the board during warmer-than-average stretches of days, months, seasons and years.

How does this add up? Researchers believe that prolonged exposure to climate change-related stressors can lead to anxiety, depression, and even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)—and that those experiencing these mental health issues may be more susceptible to engaging in violent behaviors as a coping mechanism or due to their altered mental state.

According to Iowa State University psychology researcher Craig Anderson, higher temperatures cause the brain to divert resources to other parts of the body in order to cool down. When this happens, parts of the brain are not running at full capacity, making it harder to process new information, manage emotions and control impulses. People who are hot are also more likely to perceive others as behaving aggressively, which increases the odds of hostile confrontations. "Heat stress primes people to act more aggressively," reports Anderson. "We can see this play out on a larger scale across geographic regions and over time."

While it's clear that hotter temperatures can rile people up more than usual, the ripple effect on society at large is more troubling. The predicted decline in crop yields and scarcity of drinking water in a fast-warming world could act like a multiplier effect on our tendency to get short-tempered when we heat up, and regional violent conflicts over essential resources—food and water—are the likely result.

Historians point to the 2011 civil war in Syria as an example of climate change catalyzing violent conflict. Prolonged warming-induced droughts there contributed to crop failures and displacement of rural communities which exacerbated existing social and political tensions creating an environment that erupted into full-scale civil war. These types of conflicts are likely to become more and more common as we continue to add more and more greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere.

One way to minimize warming-induced violence at the meta level is to reduce warming by reducing our carbon footprints. And we can also take other steps to ensure a more peaceful future regardless of our ability to rein in emissions. Building resilient communities and food systems can go a long way towards reducing violence in the face of climate-related stressors. And we should prioritize mental health services and support systems to assist individuals in coping with the psychological impacts of climate change.



Researchers are starting to find links between warming-induced rises in temperature and increased violent human behavior. Credit: Pixabay.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Auditors: New voter residency rules difficult to manage for local election officials

30-day law repealed as unconstitutional two decades ago

BY: JOHN HULT - OCTOBER 8, 2023 7:00 AM

The top election official in South Dakota's largest county says a law passed last winter that requires all voters to live in the state for 30 days has turned into a headache for her office.

Some full-time travelers or out-of-state residents without a home in Minnehaha County wind up on its voter rolls through automatic registration at driver's licensing stations, Auditor Leah Anderson told county commissioners last week. Voters list their addresses on their registration forms under penalty of perjury, but Anderson's concerned she won't have time to verify suspect addresses and voter eligibility in time to comply with the new law.

Anderson hopes to see lawmakers or Secretary of State Monae Johnson's office adjust the statute or provide clearer guidance on how to enforce it.

Twenty years ago, lawmakers passed a similar bill. The next year, on advice from then-Secretary of State Chris Nelson, legislators repealed it.

Like Johnson, Nelson was a backer of the idea of a 30-day residency requirement for South Dakota voter registration. But within months of the Nelson-backed 2003 version taking effect, he appeared before the legislature to tell them the law was unenforceable.

"After that bill was passed and everybody went home, we were contacted by some attorneys who told us that what that bill did was not lawful under federal law, and subsequent study of that issue by the Attorney General's Office discovered that not only was it a problem under federal law, but also the federal Constitution," Nelson said during a 2004 legislative hearing.

Nelson, now a public utilities commissioner, told South Dakota Searchlight this week that the state had been threatened with a lawsuit at the time, and that he and then-Attorney General Larry Long concluded the state couldn't win.

To justify a durational residency requirement, court precedent suggests there must be a compelling state interest.

"Larry and I looked at it back then, and we must have concluded that we didn't have a compelling state interest," Nelson said.

Residency rule had broad support

Anderson and Secretary of State Monae Johnson both campaigned on the issue now causing trouble at the Minnehaha County Auditor's Office.

A 2019 article from South Dakota News Watch noted that some companies that offer mailbox services expressly advertise them as an entry point to "residency" in a state without income taxes.

Johnson and Anderson both wanted to minimize the potential electoral impact of visitors or full-time travelers without local ties, and out-of-state residents who register to vote and get a driver's license in South Dakota to avoid income taxes. Lawmakers overwhelmingly backed the bill that created the 30-day residency requirement. During debate on the measure, they reviewed documentation showing similar rules in other states.

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The goal is to make sure voters who live or own property somewhere else register in that state and vote on election contests in those locations, Anderson said.

"I love it when people want to vote. But if they're voting on issues that affect our state, and they don't live here, and they don't pay taxes here, I feel like that's a problem," she said.

On the Senate floor during the legislative session, Sioux Falls Democrat Reynold Nesiba spoke in support of the 30-day requirement for that same reason.

"There are thousands of people registered to vote at DakotaPost in my district," Nesiba said, who pointed to laws in other states to argue that the rule wouldn't be wildly out-of-step with other states. "I don't want people who live in Arizona or live somewhere else to vote in our elections."

Backers of the law consistently said they didn't intend to block full-time travelers with South Dakota ties, though.

According to Anderson, her current difficulties begin at driver's licensing stations. Federal law requires such stations to register eligible drivers to vote unless they opt out.

Under state law, full-time travelers are only required to live in South Dakota for 24 hours to get or renew a driver's license – 29 fewer days than the law now requires people to live in the state before registering to vote.

The latest driver's license application forms in South Dakota now include language reflecting the 30-day residency requirement for voter registration, Anderson said, but "but I don't think people are paying attention to it."

Dozens of what Anderson sees as questionable new or renewing voter registrations now arrive for processing each week from the Department of Motor Vehicles, she said, and that's created a lot of work.

DakotaPost in Sioux Falls, for example, offers mailing addresses to customers, but it's not a physical address at which a person could conceivably live. There are already more than 4,600 voters in Minnehaha County who list it as their own.

Anderson doesn't plan to reach out to each of those voters to find out their residential address. No state law is retroactive unless lawmakers explicitly make it so, which means current registered voters won't be at risk of having their names purged from the voter rolls.

The story is different for new voter registrations that list that address or another post office box as both their mailing and physical address, Anderson said. For them, she's sending out letters asking for a residential address. By law, the voter gets 30 days to respond. Anderson said she plans to give another 30 days before logging their registrations as "incomplete or invalid."

Pennington County Auditor Cindy Mohler is taking similar steps with new registrations that lack residential addresses. Some addresses used by travelers can theoretically double as residences, such as America's Mailbox, which is located near an RV park in Box Elder at which people can stay.

New registrants who list that address needn't worry about their voter eligibility at this point, Mohler said. Those who sign up and list a mailbox don't get a pass.

"We have been sending out letters to those people questioning 'are you really living in a personal mailbox,'" basically," Mohler said. "We're not saying it like that, but we can't register you in a personal mailbox, because you can't live there."

A Walmart parking lot or street corner could count as a residential address, Mohler said, but the voter needs to offer some manner of location beyond a box.

As far as verifying whether any voter has actually spent 30 days at that address, "it's pretty hard for us to prove one way or the other."

The guidance from Johnson, according to emailed statements to South Dakota Searchlight, is for auditors to work with local state's attorneys to determine how best to manage eligibility questions.

There may be open legal questions on what might constitute a "physical address" or whether 30 days of residency means 30 days in a calendar year or 30 separate days scattered throughout the year. There's no mechanism for rulemaking laid out in the law that lets the secretary of state define those things, and "we are not able to provide legal interpretations because that is not the statutory role of this office," the statement read.

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State law "outlines that the county auditors are the ones who determine voter registrations for eligibility and completeness and the language may very well require a court's interpretation."

Constitutional questions

Anderson would like people who go to the driver's license station to pay closer attention to the instructions on the form, and to opt out of voter registration if they plainly don't or won't qualify.

Anderson said she spoke with one voter registered in her county who told her that they only live in South Dakota for a month each year.

"If a person does truly live in Minnesota, 11 months out of the year, they're very able to register to vote where they live," she said.

The ultimate goal of bringing up the issue before commissioners this week, she said, is for lawmakers and the secretary of state to adjust the law.

A 30-day residency requirement has been in place for years for local and school board elections. The new law adds the requirement to general and primary elections, which include federal contests.

"If the Legislature could pass something where these people could still have the right to vote, and they could only vote in federal races, that would be great," she said.

The issue of striking voters from the rolls over the duration of their residence is potentially consequential from a constitutional standpoint.

On Tuesday in North Carolina, a group called the North Carolina Alliance for Retired Americans challenged a 30-day residency requirement as an unconstitutional violation of the Voting Rights Act.

The 1972 U.S. Supreme Court case *Dunn vs. Blumstein* established that deadlines for registration before an election — in South Dakota, for instance, voters must register 15 days before an election — are acceptable to allow time to prepare for elections. But the justices struck down a Tennessee law requiring that voters live in the state for a year before becoming eligible to register.

The North Carolina lawsuit cites that case, as well as Section 202 of the federal Voting Rights Act, as reasons to strike down that state's 30-day residency requirement.

The Act says that for presidential elections, "the imposition and application of the durational residency requirement" longer than a state's registration deadline "does not bear a reasonable relationship to any compelling State interest in the conduct of presidential elections."

The lawsuit argues that North Carolina's 30-day rule "prevents voters who could otherwise lawfully register and cast ballots from doing so just because they moved into the state too recently."

"This requirement applies an arbitrary residency requirement to deny voters their right to participate in elections in their new domicile," the complaint says.

Libby Skarin, deputy executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of South Dakota, said in a statement that South Dakota election officials ought to be cautious and careful in applying laws that impose "arbitrary residency requirements" and might result in removing eligible voters from the rolls.

"Because nothing is more sacred to our democracy than the right to vote, our elected officials should be doing everything they can to encourage people to vote — not making it harder," Skarin said. "Elections are central to our democracy and to our government's legitimacy, and restricting who is eligible to cast a ballot limits the ability of all South Dakotans to participate in democracy."

Other states have similar rule

Eugene Mazo, an election law scholar and professor at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, said the *Dunn* case doesn't explicitly strike down durational residency requirements, but rather ties them to compelling state interests.

"The *Dunn* decision just said that you can't have a one-year durational residency requirement," Mazo said. "But that doesn't mean you can't have a 30-day durational residency requirement."

The key, he said, is for states to tie registration requirements to the administrative process of election preparation. That's why it's acceptable to set pre-election registration deadlines, he said.

"'List maintenance' is the word that we use," Mazo said. "States have voter lists, and they have to check that these people are actually in the state and that their address is a real address. It takes some time to

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do that.”

Pre-election registration deadlines are common for that reason, Mazo said, while durational restrictions are relatively rare. But they do exist. The South Dakota Legislative Research Council prepared a document prior to debate in Pierre on the 30-day measure that pointed to North Carolina, Illinois, Rhode Island, Alaska and Nevada as states that require 30 days of residency to vote. The same document pointed to Arkansas, Nebraska, Kansas and Idaho as states that define residence, as South Dakota does, to mean a physical location a person will return to.

The law in South Dakota has not been challenged on constitutional grounds. The threat of a challenge in 2003, however, was enough to convince lawmakers to overturn the previous version of the 30-day rule. Nelson, the former secretary of state, didn't tell lawmakers of the lawsuit threat when he advised them to repeal it in 2004, but he does remember being convinced that the state would lose in court if it attempted to enforce the law.

That 20-year memory came back during the 2023 session, he said.

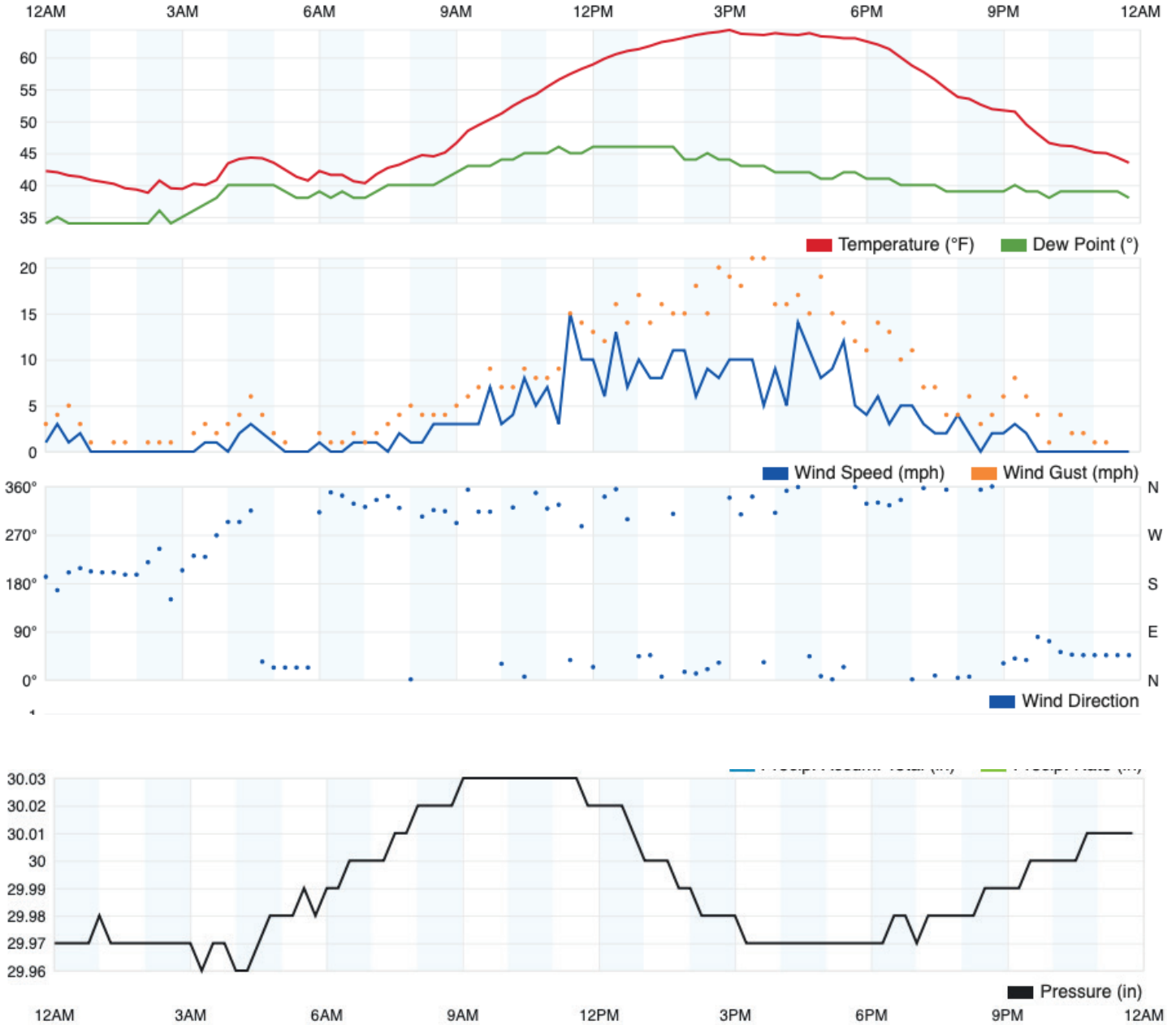
“I remember, when the Legislature was dealing with the bill moving it to 30 days, thinking, ‘I seem to remember that that doesn't work,’” Nelson said. “But they went ahead and did it anyway.”

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

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Oct 9	Oct 10	Oct 11	Oct 12	Oct 13	Oct 14	Oct 15
56°F	57°F	58°F	53°F	50°F	52°F	49°F
30°F	36°F	40°F	39°F	37°F	35°F	38°F
N	ESE	E	ENE	NNE	N	N
7 MPH	8 MPH	21 MPH	23 MPH	21 MPH	13 MPH	10 MPH
			30%	30%	20%	



Highs in the mid 50s to mid 60s today with relatively calm winds and sunny skies!

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 65 °F at 2:54 PM

Low Temp: 39 °F at 2:11 AM

Wind: 21 mph at 3:29 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 11 hours, 20 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 86 in 2020

Record Low: 14 in 1964

Average High: 63

Average Low: 37

Average Precip in Oct.: 0.68

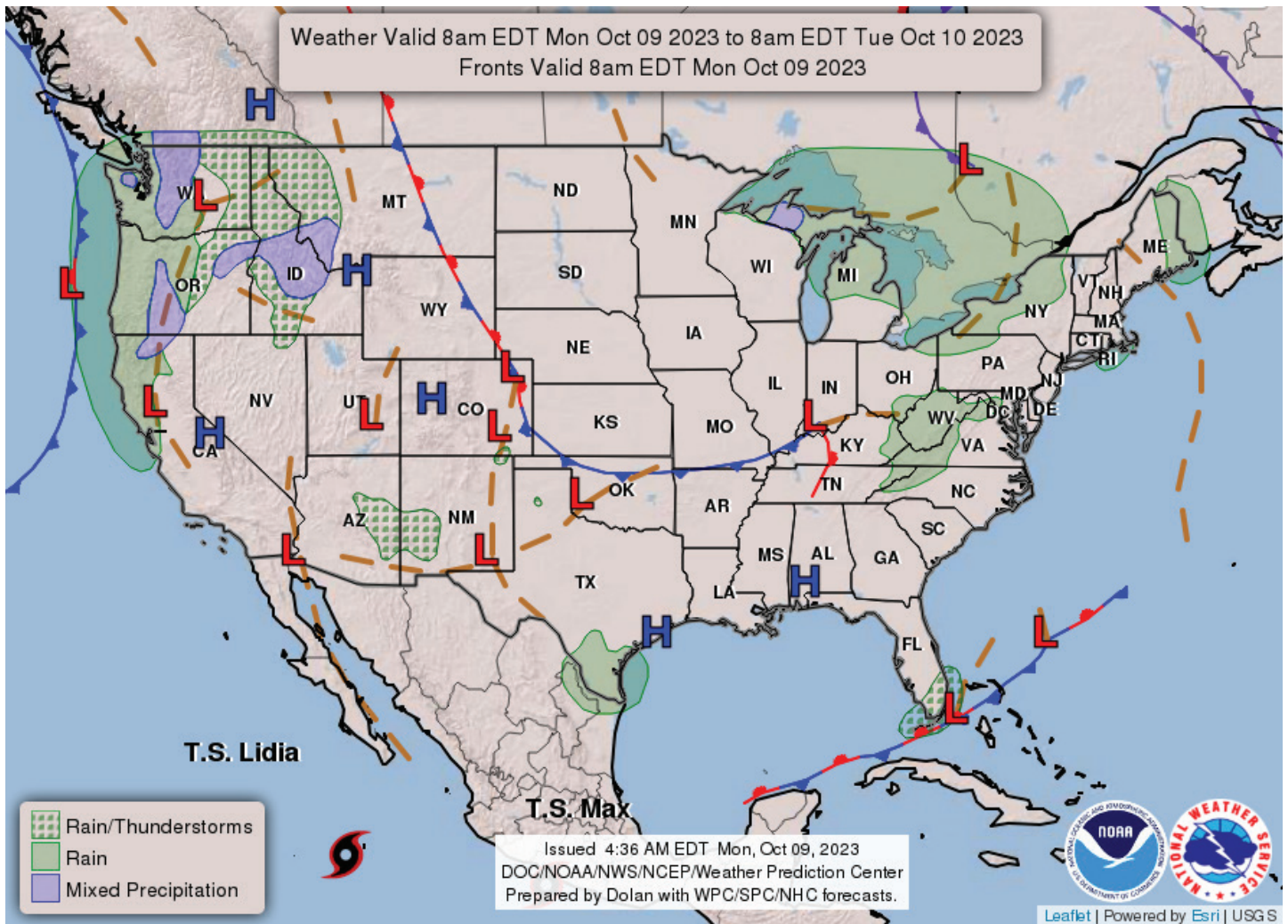
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.06

Average Precip to date: 19.01

Precip Year to Date: 21.83

Sunset Tonight: 6:59:55 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:40:40 AM



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Today in Weather History

October 9, 1964: Record cold occurred on this day in 1964 across parts of central and northeast South Dakota with temperatures falling into the mid-teens to around 20 degrees at many locations. Sisseton had a record low of 20 degrees; Watertown had a record low of 16 degrees, with Kennebec recording the lowest temperature of 13 degrees on this day in 1964. Although not a record low, Aberdeen fell to 14 degrees.

October 9, 1980: On this day in 1980, hot air streamed across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west-central Minnesota with highs mostly in the 80s. Record highs were established at Watertown with 86 degrees and both Wheaton and Sisseton with 87 degrees. One of the warmest temperatures across the area was 89 degrees at Kennebec.

1804: The famous Snow Hurricane moved ashore near Atlantic City on this day. After briefly passing through Connecticut and into Massachusetts, cold air was entrained in the circulation with heavy snow falling between New York to southern Canada. Berkshires Massachusetts and Concord New Hampshire record two feet of snow with this hurricane. This storm produced the first observation of snow from a hurricane, but not the last. Hurricane Ginny of 1963 brought up to 18 inches (400 mm) of snow to portions of Maine.

1903 - New York City was deluged with 11.17 inches of rain 24 hours to establish a state record. Severe flooding occurred in the Passaic Valley of New Jersey where more than fifteen inches of rain was reported. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1981 - The temperature at San Juan, Puerto Rico, soared to 98 degrees to establish an all-time record for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Eighteen cities in the southeastern U.S. and the Middle Atlantic Coast Region reported record low temperatures for the date. Asheville NC dipped to 29 degrees, and the record low of 47 degrees at Jacksonville FL marked their fourth of the month. A second surge of cold air brought light snow to the Northern Plains, particularly the Black Hills of South Dakota. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Ten cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Hartford CT with a reading of 28 degrees. Snow continued in northern New England through the morning hours. Mount Washington NH reported five inches of snow. Warm weather continued in the western U.S. Los Angeles CA reported a record high of 102 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Unseasonably cold weather continued in the Upper Midwest. Thirteen cities in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana reported record low temperatures for the date, including Marquette MI with a reading of 20 degrees. Unseasonably warm weather continued in the western U.S. as the San Francisco Giants won the National League pennant. San Jose CA reported a record high of 91 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

2001: An unusually strong fall outbreak of tornadoes spawned at least 23 twisters across parts of Nebraska and Oklahoma. Hardest hit was the town of Cordell, OK, but a 22 minute lead time led to an amazingly low casualty count: only nine injuries and no fatalities.

2013: The Puglia region of southern Italy saw tornadoes on this day.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

TIME OUT!

One morning in a small town in Switzerland the clock in the tower stopped. Children, unaware of what happened, naturally thought that they had more time to play and enjoy the lovely spring day. Secretaries on their way to work stopped to visit with their friends in the little shops that surrounded the square. Men reading their newspapers took some extra time to enjoy their stories. After about thirty minutes, the clock started again and the children, the secretaries, and the businessmen noticing that the hands were moving ran off to their appointments. All of the people were late because the clock they trusted pointed to the wrong time.

Each person has a "personal clock" ticking inside of them. It has a specific number of "ticks" that God has allocated to each of us that will determine how long we will live and when we will die. It is normal to think that our clock is pointing to a great number of days yet to come and that we have limitless "ticks" that we cannot see or count; we delay thinking that we all have an appointment to meet and face God, and give an accounting for the "ticks" He gives us.

God's Word reminds us that "None of us live for ourselves." God has given each of us the power to make plans and dream dreams and look forward to the future. But the most important thing we must do is to include God in our plans. Do not forget that "while we live, we live to please the Lord and when we die, we go to be with Him." So, step one: Accept Christ as Your Savior.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to be mindful of the "tricking" of our clock - to always be aware of the fact that we have no assurance of tomorrow. May we be sure of our salvation. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: For we don't live for ourselves or die for ourselves. If we live, it's to honor the Lord. And if we die, it's to honor the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Romans 14:7-8



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 1 Days 16 Hrs 59
DRAW: Mins 28 Secs

[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 16 Hrs 14 Mins 28
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.08.23

1 3 4 11 48 10

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 29 Mins 28
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.07.23

4 8 11 27 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 29
DRAW: Mins 28 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.07.23

13 31 51 55 66 23

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 58 Mins 29
DRAW: Secs

[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 16 Hrs 58 Mins 29
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Nobel economics prize goes to professor for advancing understanding of women's labor market outcomes

STOCKHOLM (AP) — The Nobel economics prize was awarded Monday to Claudia Goldin, a professor at Harvard University, for advancing understanding of women's labor market outcomes.

Goldin is only the third woman to win the prize, which was announced by Hans Ellegren, secretary-general of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, in Stockholm.

"Understanding women's role in the labour market is important for society. Thanks to Claudia Goldin's groundbreaking research, we now know much more about the underlying factors and which barriers may need to be addressed in the future," said Jakob Svensson, chair of the Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences.

It follows the awards in medicine, physics, chemistry, literature and peace that were announced last week.

The economics award was created in 1968 by Sweden's central bank and is formally known as the Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel.

Last year's winners were former Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke, Douglas W. Diamond and Philip Dybvig for their research into bank failures that helped shape America's aggressive response to the 2007-2008 financial crisis.

Only two of the 92 economics laureates honored have been women.

A week ago, Hungarian-American Katalin Karikó and American Drew Weissman won the Nobel Prize in medicine. The physics prize went Tuesday to French-Swedish physicist Anne L'Huillier, French scientist Pierre Agostini and Hungarian-born Ferenc Krausz.

U.S. scientists Moungi Bawendi, Louis Brus and Alexei Ekimov won the chemistry prize on Wednesday. They were followed by Norwegian writer Jon Fosse, who was awarded the prize for literature. And on Friday, jailed Iranian activist Narges Mohammadi won the peace prize.

The prizes are handed out at awards ceremonies in December in Oslo and Stockholm. They carry a cash award of 11 million Swedish kronor (about \$1 million). Winners also receive an 18-carat gold medal and diploma.

Israel intensifies Gaza strikes and scours south for Hamas fighters as death toll nears 1,200

By JOSEF FEDERMAN and ISSAM ADWAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's military scoured the country's south for Hamas fighters and guarded breaches in its border fence with tanks on Monday, as it pounded the Gaza Strip from the air and mustered for a campaign its prime minister said would destroy "the military and governing capabilities" of the militant group.

More than two days after Hamas launched its unprecedented incursion from Gaza, the military said the fighting had largely died down for now. The attack caught Israel's vaunted military and intelligence apparatus completely off guard, bringing heavy battles to its streets for the first time in decades.

Israel formally declared war on Sunday, portending greater fighting ahead, and a possible ground assault into Gaza — a move that in the past has brought intensified casualties. Palestinian militants continued firing barrages of rockets, setting off air raid sirens in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Civilians are already paying a high price. Around 700 people have been killed in Israel — a staggering toll by the scale of its recent conflicts. Nearly 500 have been killed in Gaza, a tiny, impoverished enclave of 2.3 million Palestinians bordering Israel and Egypt. Palestinian militant groups claimed to be holding over 130 captives from the Israeli side.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant meanwhile ordered a "complete siege" on Gaza, saying authorities would cut electricity and block the entry of food and fuel. Israel and Egypt have imposed various levels

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of blockade on Gaza since Hamas seized power from rival Palestinian forces in 2007.

The chief military spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, told reporters Israel has "control" of its border communities. He said there had been some isolated incidents early Monday, but that "at this stage, there is no fighting in the communities." He added that "there might still be terrorists in the region."

Israeli tanks and drones, meanwhile, guarded openings in the border fence to prevent more infiltrations, Hagari said, adding that 15 of 24 border communities have been evacuated, with the rest expected to be evacuated in over the next 24 hours.

Earlier, Hamas spokesman Abdel-Latif al-Qanoua told The Associated Press over the phone that the group's fighters continued to battle outside Gaza and had captured more Israelis as recently as Monday morning.

He said the group aims to free all Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, which in the past has agreed to painful, lopsided exchange deals in which it released large numbers of prisoners for individual captives or even the remains of soldiers.

Meanwhile, Israel hit more than 1,000 targets in Gaza, its military said, including airstrikes that leveled much of the town of Beit Hanoun in the enclave's northeast corner. Hagari said Hamas was using the town as a staging ground for attacks. There was no immediate word on casualties, and most of the community's population of tens of thousands likely fled beforehand.

Hagari said the army had called up around 300,000 reservists — a massive mobilization — and that Israel would aim to end Hamas' rule of Gaza.

"Our task is to make sure that Hamas will no longer have any military capabilities to threaten Israel," said spokesperson Jonathan Conricus in a video tweeted by Israel's military. "And in addition to that, we will make sure that Hamas is no longer able to govern the Gaza Strip."

Hamas is deeply rooted in Gaza and has ruled the territory since driving out forces loyal to the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority in 2007. Its rule has gone unchallenged through the 16-year Israeli and Egyptian blockade and four previous wars with Israel.

After breaking through Israeli barriers with explosives at daybreak Saturday, Hamas gunmen rampaged for hours, gunning down civilians and snatching people in towns, along highways and at a techno music festival attended by thousands in the desert. Palestinian militants have also launched around 4,400 rockets at Israel, according to the military.

The Israeli military estimated 1,000 Hamas fighters took part in Saturday's initial incursion. The high figure underscored the extent of planning by the militant group, which has said it launched the attack in response to mounting Palestinian suffering under Israel's occupation of the West Bank, its blockade of Gaza, its discriminatory policies in annexed east Jerusalem and tensions around a disputed Jerusalem holy site sacred to Muslims and Jews.

The Palestinians want a state of their own in all three territories, captured by Israel in the 1967 war, but the last serious peace talks broke down well over a decade ago, and Israel's far-right government is opposed to Palestinian statehood.

Hamas and the smaller Islamic Jihad group claim to have taken captive more than 130 people from inside Israel and brought them into Gaza. The captives are known to include soldiers and civilians, including women, children and older adults, mostly Israelis but also some people of other nationalities. The Israeli military has said only that the number of captives is "significant."

Mayyan Zin, a divorced mother of two, said she learned that her two daughters had been abducted when a relative sent her photos from a Telegram group showing them sitting on mattresses in captivity. She then found online videos of a chilling scene in her ex-husband's home: Gunmen who had broken in speak to him near the two weeping daughters, Dafna, 15, and Ella, 8. Another video showed the father being taken into Gaza.

"Just bring my daughters home and to their family. All the people," Zin said.

The Israeli military was evacuating at least five towns close to Gaza, while the U.N. said more than 123,000 Gazans had been displaced by the fighting.

In Gaza, residents feared further escalation.

As of late Sunday, Israeli airstrikes had destroyed 159 housing units across the territory and severely

damaged 1,210 others, the U.N. said. The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said a school sheltering more than 225 people took a direct hit. It did not say where the fire came from.

In the city of Rafah in southern Gaza, an Israeli airstrike early Monday killed 19 people, including women and children, said Talat Barhoum, a doctor at the local Al-Najjar Hospital. Barhoum said aircraft hit the home of the Abu Hilal family, and that one of those killed was Rafaat Abu Hilal, a leader of a local armed group. The strike caused damage to surrounding homes.

Over the weekend, another airstrike on a home in Rafah killed 19 members of the Abu Quta family, including women and children, survivors said.

Several Israeli media outlets, citing rescue service officials, said those killed on the Israeli side include at least 73 soldiers. The Gaza Health Ministry said 493 people, including 78 children and 41 women, were killed in the territory. Thousands have been wounded on both sides. An Israeli official said security forces have killed 400 militants and captured dozens more.

An Egyptian official said Israel sought help from Cairo to ensure the safety of the hostages. Egypt also spoke with both sides about a potential cease-fire, but Israel was not open to a truce "at this stage," according to the official, who insisted on not being identified because he was not authorized to brief media.

On Sunday, the U.S. dispatched an aircraft carrier strike group to the Eastern Mediterranean to be ready to assist Israel, and said it would send additional military aid.

In northern Israel, a brief exchange of strikes with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group fanned fears that the fighting could expand into a wider regional war. The Israeli military said the situation was calm after the exchange.

Elsewhere, six Palestinians were killed in clashes with Israeli soldiers Sunday around the West Bank.

Senior Taliban officials visit villages struck by earthquake that killed at least 2,000 people

By RAHIM FAIEZ Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — A senior Taliban delegation was visiting western Afghanistan's Herat province on Monday in the aftermath of the powerful earthquake that killed at least 2,000 people over the weekend and flattened entire villages, a statement said.

Saturday's magnitude 6.3 quake hit a densely populated area in Herat and was followed by strong aftershocks in what was one of the deadliest temblors to strike the country in two decades.

The Taliban-appointed deputy prime minister for economic affairs, Abdul Ghani Baradar, and his team will visit the quake-affected region on Monday to deliver "immediate relief assistance" and ensure "equitable and accurate distribution of aid," according to a statement from the capital, Kabul.

The quake also trapped hundreds and people have been digging with their bare hands and shovels to pull victims — both dead and alive — from under the rubble. Authorities said Monday they were still waiting for an update on the latest casualties from Herat.

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

A global response to the Afghanistan quake has been slow, with much of the world wary of dealing directly with the Taliban government and focused on the deadly escalation between Israel and the Palestinians in the aftermath of the surprise attack by Gaza militants on Saturday that has left more than 1,100 dead in fighting so far and thousands wounded on both sides.

Aid agencies and nongovernmental groups have appealed for the international community to come forward but only a handful of countries have publicly offered support, including neighboring China and Pakistan.

Aid group CARE USA — a member of CARE International umbrella — said in a statement that the quake struck at a time when Afghanistan was already facing a severe humanitarian crisis that was significantly under-funded while needs are increasing rapidly.

The fast-approaching winter, combined with this new disaster, is likely to exacerbate the existing chal-

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lenges and make it even more difficult for people to meet their basic needs, like adequate shelter, food, and medicine, it said.

"CARE is deeply saddened by the devastating earthquake that struck the western province of Herat," said Reshma Azmi, the group's deputy director for Afghanistan. "This comes less than seven months after another powerful earthquake hit the country, leaving thousands homeless and displaced."

Azimi was referring to the magnitude 6.5 earthquake in March that struck much of Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan. Also, an earthquake hit eastern Afghanistan in June 2022, striking a rugged, mountainous region, wiped out stone and mud-brick homes and killed at least 1,000 people.

"The situation is worse than we imagined with people in devastated villages still desperately trying to rescue survivors from under the rubble with their bare hands," said World Vision, a global charity.

Reinforcements from Kabul arrived on Sunday but the area of the quake has only one government-run hospital.

"Our colleagues and their families are processing this devastation in their hometowns, and yet we are responding with everything we have," said Thamindri de Silva, the head of the Afghanistan office of the charity. "People need urgent medical care, water, food, shelter and help to stay safe. Please stand with us as we respond."

Dozens of teams have scrambled to help with rescue efforts, including from the military and nonprofit groups. Irfanullah Sharafzai, a spokesman for the Afghan Red Crescent Society, said more than 20 teams were on the ground on Monday and have set up a temporary camp for the displaced.

In neighboring Pakistan, the government held a special session to review aid for Afghanistan, including relief teams, food items and medicines, as well as tents and blankets.

What went wrong? Questions emerge over Israel's intelligence prowess after Hamas attack

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — For Palestinians in Gaza, Israel's eyes are never very far away. Surveillance drones buzz constantly from the skies. The highly-secured border is awash with security cameras and soldiers on guard. Intelligence agencies work sources and cyber capabilities to draw out a bevy of information.

But Israel's eyes appeared to have been closed in the lead-up to an unprecedented onslaught by the militant Hamas group, which broke down Israeli border barriers and sent hundreds of militants into Israel to carry out a brazen attack that has killed hundreds and pushed the region toward conflict.

Israel's intelligence agencies have gained an aura of invincibility over the decades because of a string of achievements. Israel has foiled plots seeded in the West Bank, allegedly hunted down Hamas operatives in Dubai and has been accused of killing Iranian nuclear scientists in the heart of Iran. Even when their efforts have stumbled, agencies like the Mossad, Shin Bet and military intelligence have maintained their mystique.

But the weekend's assault, which caught Israel off guard on a major Jewish holiday, plunges that reputation into doubt and raises questions about the country's readiness in the face of a weaker but determined foe. Over 48 hours later, Hamas militants continued to battle Israeli forces inside Israeli territory, and dozens of Israelis were in Hamas captivity in Gaza.

"This is a major failure," said Yaakov Amidror, a former national security adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "This operation actually proves that the (intelligence) abilities in Gaza were no good."

Amidror declined to offer an explanation for the failure, saying lessons must be learned when the dust settles.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, the chief military spokesman, acknowledged the army owes the public an explanation. But he said now is not the time. "First, we fight, then we investigate," he said.

Some say it is too early to pin the blame solely on an intelligence fault. They point to a wave of low-level violence in the West Bank that shifted some military resources there and the political chaos roiling Israel over steps by Netanyahu's far-right government to overhaul the judiciary. The controversial plan has

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threatened the cohesion of the country's powerful military.

But the apparent lack of prior knowledge of Hamas' plot will likely be seen as a prime culprit in the chain of events that led to the deadliest attack against Israelis in decades.

Israel withdrew troops and settlers from the Gaza Strip in 2005, stripping it of a close handle on the happenings in the territory. But even after Hamas overran Gaza in 2007, Israel appeared to maintain its edge, using technological and human intelligence.

It claimed to know the precise locations of Hamas leadership and appeared to prove it through the assassinations of militant leaders in surgical strikes, sometimes while they slept in their bedrooms. Israel has known where to strike underground tunnels used by Hamas to ferry around fighters and arms, destroying miles (kilometers) of the concealed passageways.

Despite those abilities, Hamas was able to keep its plan under wraps. The ferocious attack, which likely took months of planning and meticulous training and involved coordination among multiple militant groups, appeared to have gone under Israel's intelligence radar.

Amir Avivi, a retired Israeli general, said that without a foothold inside Gaza, Israel's security services have come to rely increasingly on technological means to gain intelligence. He said militants in Gaza have found ways to evade that technological intelligence gathering, giving Israel an incomplete picture of their intentions.

"The other side learned to deal with our technological dominance and they stopped using technology that could expose it," said Avivi, who served as a conduit for intelligence materials under a former military chief of staff. Avivi is president and founder of Israel Defense and Security Forum, a hawkish group of former military commanders.

"They've gone back to the Stone Age," he said, explaining that militants weren't using phones or computers and were conducting their sensitive business in rooms specially guarded from technological espionage or going underground.

But Avivi said the failure extends beyond just intelligence gathering and Israel's security services failed to put together an accurate picture from the intelligence they were receiving, based on what he said was a misconception surrounding Hamas' intentions.

Israel's security establishment has in recent years increasingly seen Hamas as an actor interested in governing, seeking to develop Gaza's economy and improving the standard of living of Gaza's 2.3 million people. Avivi and others say the truth is that Hamas, which calls for Israel's destruction, still sees that aim as its priority.

Israel in recent years has allowed up to 18,000 Palestinian laborers from Gaza to work in Israel, where they can earn a salary about 10 times higher than in the impoverished coastal enclave. The security establishment saw that carrot as a way to maintain relative calm.

"In practice, hundreds if not thousands of Hamas men were preparing for a surprise attack for months, without that having leaked," wrote Amos Harel, a defense commentator, in the daily Haaretz. "The results are catastrophic."

Allies who share intelligence with Israel said security agencies were misreading reality.

An Egyptian intelligence official said Egypt, which often serves as a mediator between Israel and Hamas, had spoken repeatedly with the Israelis about "something big," without elaborating.

He said Israeli officials were focused on the West Bank and played down the threat from Gaza. Netanyahu's government is made up of supporters of Jewish West Bank settlers who have demanded a security crackdown in the face of a rising tide of violence there over the last 18 months.

"We have warned them an explosion of the situation is coming, and very soon, and it would be big. But they underestimated such warnings," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the content of sensitive intelligence discussions with the media.

Israel has also been preoccupied and torn apart by Netanyahu's judicial overhaul plan. Netanyahu had received repeated warnings by his defense chiefs, as well as several former leaders of the country's intelligence agencies, that the divisive plan was chipping away at the cohesion of the country's security services.

Martin Indyk, who served as a special envoy for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations during the Obama administration, said internal divisions over the legal changes was an aggravating factor that contributed to the Israelis being caught off guard.

"That roiled the IDF in a way that was, I think, we discovered was a huge distraction," he said.

Indian rescue copters are flying into region where flood washed out bridges and killed at least 52

By WASBIR HUSSAIN and ANUPAM NATH Associated Press

GANGTOK, India (AP) — Air force helicopters were able to land Monday to rescue people in India's Himalayan northeast after a 6-year-old hydroelectric dam cracked open last week in intense rain, flooding a valley with glacial lake water and washing away bridges and homes as thousands fled.

Police said rescuers have found 52 bodies so far, and the search was continuing while around a 100 people are still missing. As weather conditions improved in Sikkim state, helicopters arrived in the worst-hit Mangan district to help some 3,000 stranded tourists.

The design and placement of the Teesta 3 dam, the biggest hydroelectric dam in Sikkim state, were controversial from the time it was built. A 2019 report identified Lhonak Lake as "highly vulnerable" to flooding that could breach dams and cause extensive damage.

It wasn't clear what triggered the deadly flood that began early Wednesday, the latest to hit northeast India in a year of unusually heavy monsoon rains. Experts say possible contributors were the intense rain and a 6.2-magnitude earthquake that struck neighboring Nepal on Tuesday afternoon.

The flood began when the glacial lake overflowed, cracking open the Teesta 3 dam. The icy waters then cascaded through towns in the valley below, carrying some bodies kilometers (miles) downstream, where they were found in the neighboring state of West Bengal and in Bangladesh.

On Sunday evening, as the skies cleared and rains subsided, 89 tourists stranded by washed-out roads were airlifted out of northern Sikkim. Some 10 tourists, including five Thai nationals, were able to trek to safety with assistance from rescuers. Police said Monday they would continue to fly the helicopters if the weather permits.

The flood destroyed multiple bridges, hit pipelines and damaged hundreds of houses in northern Sikkim. Of 23 Indian soldiers reported missing earlier, officials say one was rescued and nine were confirmed to have died, while the search for the others continued.

There is no land access or mobile connectivity in the area, complicating rescue efforts and sharing of information. Thousands of people are sheltering in relief camps set up by the state.

Experts say the flooding disaster underscores a climate dilemma that pits local environmental activists who believe dams in the Himalayas are too dangerous against Indian authorities pursuing green energy agenda.

Despite risks to dams due to the increasing frequency of extreme weather, the Indian federal government aims to increase India's hydroelectric dam output by half, to 70,000 megawatts, by 2030.

Several towns, including Dikchu and Rangpo in the Teesta basin, were flooded.

Rangpo resident Muhammad Karim has been searching for his father, brother and sister-in-law for five days. "I am clueless. ... I have asked the police for help, but there's been no progress so far," he said.

Homes and buildings in the town were covered by mud as excavators dug through debris to recover bodies over the weekend.

Disasters caused by landslides and floods are common in India's Himalayan region during the June-September monsoon season. Scientists say they are becoming more frequent as global warming contributes to the melting of glaciers there.

Himalayan glaciers could lose 80% of their volume if global warming isn't controlled, according to a report from the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development.

Morocco welcomes the annual meeting of the IMF and World Bank a month after its deadly earthquake

By SAM METZ Associated Press

MARRAKECH, Morocco (AP) — Less than a two-hour drive from where families sleep in tents and earthquake rubble remain in piles, the world's most powerful financial institutions are gathering for a week of discussions on economic challenges during times of war, inequality and climate change.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank decided in 2018 to host their annual meeting in Marrakech, Morocco, bringing the affair to the African continent for the first time in 50 years.

Their original timeline was delayed by the pandemic, but the meeting beginning Monday arrives at an apropos time. After a devastating earthquake last month killed nearly 3,000 and wreaked \$11.7 billion in damages, both officials and civil society groups are eagerly anticipating discussions about how to promote economic resiliency in light of natural disaster.

"In no other area is the need for international cooperation as evident as in addressing the existential threat of climate change. The world has a responsibility to stand with vulnerable countries as they deal with shocks they have not caused," Kristalina Georgieva, the IMF's managing director said in a speech on Thursday.

Often lenders of last resort, the IMF and the World Bank use billions in loans and assistance to buoy struggling economies and encourage countries operating in deficit to implement reforms they say promote stability and growth.

Still, they've been criticized for excluding the neediest nations from their governance and decision-making process, demanding painful spending cuts.

"It's a time of multiple crises, particularly for Arab and African countries who've been hit by various exogenous shocks not of their making," said Iskander Erzini Vernoit, the director of the Morocco-based Imal Initiative for Climate & Development. "There's this massive financing gap on the order of trillions for developing countries and also the key question of how affordable the financing can be."

Those shocks include the pandemic and rising energy and food costs spurred by the war in Ukraine. Those challenges are particularly pronounced in Africa, where many countries spend more on debt than health care and education combined. Critics say the terms of many loans offered force governments from Egypt to Zambia to choose between paying debt or implementing unpopular spending cuts.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, the IMF approved a \$1.3 billion loan to "help strengthen its preparedness and resilience against natural disasters" in Morocco — a longtime borrower who has used loans and credit to weather economic downturns, including most recently when the pandemic hit tourism and exports particularly hard. The institution has pushed Morocco to balance its budget and continue raising interest rates.

In mountain villages far from the city's swanky hotels, midrise apartments and billboards advertising new construction, roads remain unpaved, water can be scarce and jobs hard to come by. The earthquake, residents say, exacerbated disparities plaguing rural areas and compounded struggles facing already-impooverished communities.

Signs of the country's rapid economic development will be on display in Marrakech, where streets have been swept and damaged landmarks.

But laid-off miner Brahim Ait Brahim — who lives in Anerni, a mountain village near the quake's epicenter — said he's still waiting for emergency financial and housing assistance one month after his house was destroyed in the earthquake.

"That's Marrakech. It's the capital for tourism," Ait Brahim said, describing it as the face of Morocco. "Here's it's hidden behind."

California governor vetoes bill to make free condoms available for high school students, citing cost

By ADAM BEAM Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California Gov. Gavin Newsom rejected a bill on Sunday that would have made free condoms available to all public high school students, arguing it was too expensive for a state with a budget deficit of more than \$30 billion.

California had about 1.9 million high school students enrolled in more than 4,000 schools last year, according to the California Department of Education.

"This bill would create an unfunded mandate to public schools that should be considered in the annual budget process," Newsom wrote in a message explaining why he vetoed the bill, known as Senate bill 541.

The bill is one of hundreds passed by California's Democratic-dominated state Legislature before lawmakers adjourned last month. Newsom has been signing and vetoing legislation since then, including rejecting bills on Saturday to ban caste-based discrimination, limit the price of insulin and decriminalize possession and use of some hallucinogens.

The bill would have required all public schools that have grades nine through 12 to make condoms available for free to all students. It would have required public schools with grades seven through 12 to allow condoms to be made available as part of educational or public health programs.

And it would have made it illegal for retailers to refuse to sell condoms to youth.

State Sen. Caroline Menjivar, a Democrat from Los Angeles and the author of the bill, had argued the bill would have helped "youth who decide to become sexually active to protect themselves and their partners from (sexually transmitted infections), while also removing barriers that potentially shame them and lead to unsafe sex."

Newsom said programs increasing access to condoms are "important to supporting improved adolescent sexual health." But he said this bill was one of several measures lawmakers passed this year that, when added together, would add \$19 billion in costs to the state budget.

"With our state facing continuing economic risk and revenue uncertainty, it is important to remain disciplined when considering bills with significant fiscal implications, such as this measure," Newsom said.

Also on Sunday, Newsom signed a law aimed at electrifying the state's fleet of school buses. Starting in 2035, the law will require any new bus purchased or contracted by school districts to be zero-emission.

California's public school districts that provide their own transportation own about 15,800 school buses, of which 10,800 are powered by diesel fuel, according to a 2022 report from the Legislative Analyst's Office.

The law is part of California's plan to phase out the use of fossil fuels. State regulations will ban the sale of new gas-powered cars in California by 2035.

UK Supreme Court weighs if it's lawful for Britain to send asylum-seekers to Rwanda

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British government's contentious policy to stem the flow of migrants faces one of its toughest challenges this week as the U.K. Supreme Court weighs whether it's lawful to send asylum-seekers to Rwanda.

The Conservative government is challenging a Court of Appeal ruling in June that said the policy intended to deter immigrants from risking their lives crossing the English Channel in small boats is unlawful because the East African country is not a safe place to send them.

Three days of arguments are scheduled to begin Monday with the government arguing its policy is safe and lawyers for migrants from Vietnam, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Sudan contending it's unlawful and inhumane.

The hearing comes as much of Europe and the U.S. struggle with how best to cope with migrants seeking refuge from war, violence, oppression and a warming planet that has brought devastating drought and floods.

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Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has vowed to “stop the boats” as a top priority to curb unauthorized immigration. More than 25,000 people are estimated to have arrived in the U.K. by boat as of Oct. 2, which is down nearly 25% from the 33,000 that had made the crossing at the same time last year.

The policy is intended to put a stop to the criminal gangs that ferry migrants across one of the world’s busiest shipping lanes by making Britain an unattractive destination because of the likelihood of being given a one-way ticket to Rwanda.

Consequences of the crossing have been deadly. In August, six migrants died and about 50 had to be rescued when their boat capsized after leaving the northern coast of France. In November 2021, 27 people died after their boat sank.

The government claims the policy is a fair way to deal with an influx of people who arrive on U.K. shores without authorization and that Rwanda is a safe “third country” — meaning it’s not where they are seeking asylum from.

The U.K. and Rwandan governments reached a deal more than a year ago that would send asylum-seekers to the East African country and allow them to stay there if granted asylum.

So far, not a single person has been sent there as the policy has been fought over in the courts.

Human rights groups have argued its inhumane to deport people more than 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometers) to a place they don’t want to live. They have also cited Rwanda’s poor human rights record, including allegations of torture and killings of government opponents.

A High Court judge initially upheld the policy, saying it didn’t breach Britain’s obligations under the U.N. Refugee Convention or other international agreements. But that ruling was reversed by a 2-1 decision in the Court of Appeal that found that while it was not unlawful to send asylum-seekers to a safe third country, Rwanda could not be deemed safe.

The government argues the Court of Appeal had no right to interfere with the lower court decision and got it wrong by concluding deportees would be endangered in Rwanda and could face the prospect of being sent back to their home country where they could face persecution. The U.K. also says that the court should have respected the government’s analysis that determined Rwanda is safe and that its government would abide by the terms of the agreement to protect migrants’ rights.

Attorneys for the migrants argue that there is a real risk their clients could be tortured, punished, or face inhumane and degrading treatment in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights and they cite Rwanda’s history of abusing refugees for dissent. The second flank of their argument is that the home secretary did not thoroughly investigate how Rwanda determines the status of refugees.

One of the claimants asserts that the U.K. must still abide by European Union asylum procedures despite its Brexit split from the EU that became final in 2020. EU policies only allow asylum-seekers to be sent to a safe third country if they have a connection to it.

Even if the courts allow the policy to proceed, it’s unclear how many people will be flown to Rwanda at a cost estimated to be 169,000 pounds (\$206,000) per person.

And there’s a chance it wouldn’t be in place for long. The leader of the opposition Labour Party, Keir Starmer, said Sunday that he would scrap the policy if elected prime minister.

Polls show Labour has an advantage in an election that must be called by the end of next year.

“I think it’s the wrong policy, it’s hugely expensive,” Starmer told the BBC.

The court is not expected to rule immediately after the hearing.

How third-party and independent candidates could threaten Democrats and Republicans in 2024

By STEVE PEOPLES AP National Political Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Robert F. Kennedy Jr., an anti-vaccine conspiracy theorist and scion of the storied Democratic dynasty, is expected to launch an independent or third-party presidential bid on Monday. Cornel West, a philosopher and Black social leader, made the same choice last week. And No Labels, a

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new political party, is intensifying candidate recruitment efforts.

While the politics are murky, the fresh frenzy of outsider candidates threatens to weaken both major parties as President Joe Biden and Republican Donald Trump tighten their grip on their party's presidential nominations.

There's little concern that the independent or third-party candidates would actually win the presidency, but they could siphon support from the ultimate Democratic and Republican nominees. A heightened sense of concern is spreading especially among Democratic officials, who see the outsiders as a dangerous wildcard that harkens back to 2016, when Green Party nominee Jill Stein may have enabled Trump's razor-thin victory by winning a small portion of the vote.

Those associated with the third party efforts make no apologies for their work.

"The American people have been hungry for options. So, get ready," Stein said in an interview. "What we're seeing is a voter rebellion. It's been a long time coming."

The rise of outsider candidates is an acute reminder of the intense volatility — and uncertainty — that hangs over the 2024 presidential election. Both of the major parties' most likely nominees — Biden and Trump — are extraordinarily unpopular. They're running as the nation grapples with dangerous political divisions, economic anxiety and a deep desire for a new generation of leadership in Washington.

Much more activity is expected soon.

Kennedy will outline his plans in Philadelphia on Monday. Stein said the Green Party will likely make an announcement about its presidential aspirations later this month. No Labels, meanwhile, plans to make a formal decision about its presidential nominee in the spring.

The efforts face steep hurdles beyond winning more than a small fraction of voters. Simply qualifying for the ballot in every state will be a gargantuan task for outsider candidates without the benefit of existing political networks.

Jim Messina, who managed President Barack Obama's 2012 reelection campaign and is now a prominent Biden ally, didn't downplay the possibility that the new candidates could weaken Biden's coalition.

"I am a campaign manager so I am wired to plan for everything and panic about nothing, and the threat of a third party needs to be planned for seriously," Messina said.

Noting that no independent or third-party candidate has ever won even a single electoral vote — never mind the 270 needed to claim the presidency — he said Biden and his team still need to be aggressive in warning voters about the threat that long-shot outsider candidates present.

"You need to tell people that a vote for a candidate without a path to 270 means they're lighting their ballot on fire," Messina said.

That may be easier said than done.

Gallup released new polling last week showing that 63% of U.S. adults currently agree with the statement that the Republican and Democratic parties do "such a poor job" of representing the American people that "a third major party is needed." It was among the highest figures since Gallup first asked the question in 2003.

Still, it's far from certain that dissatisfied voters would ultimately cast a ballot next fall for Kennedy, West or a centrist No Labels candidate. Historically, polls showing that people want a third party to exist have rarely translated into substantial support for actual third-party candidates.

On paper, Kennedy may be most likely to draw support from Trump's coalition given his embrace of anti-vaccine conspiracy theories and positive attention from far-right media.

Aware of the risk, Trump allies have begun circulating opposition research against Kennedy designed to damage his standing among would-be conservative supporters. In addition to highlighting his past support for Hillary Clinton's Senate and presidential campaigns, Trump allies in recent days have also circulated a pre-pandemic video clip of Kennedy declaring himself "fiercely pro-vaccine" in a message to Black religious leader Louis Farrakhan.

Kennedy campaign spokesperson Stefanie Spear said the clip has "obviously been removed from its context."

"Mr. Kennedy is and has always been against mandates for any and all medical interventions," she said.

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"Mr. Kennedy's position is that he is in favor of vaccines that have undergone unbiased scientific testing for safety and efficacy. Such testing has been impossible because of the corrupt influence of the pharmaceutical industry."

Trump senior adviser Chris LaCivita downplayed any internal concerns about Kennedy's impact on the race.

"The most intriguing thing about this is, you have an incumbent president of the United States, and all of the elements of the third-party run are coming out of his coalition, not ours," LaCivita told The Associated Press.

The Trump and Biden campaigns are quick to note that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for the political outsiders with no major funding sources or political infrastructure to get their name on the ballot in most states. No Labels is the big exception, having already secured a presidential ballot line in 11 states backed by an army of paid signature collectors.

In Arizona, alone, minor party candidates must collect more than 34,000 signatures to qualify for the general election ballot. Signatures must be collected in at least five different counties, and at least 10% of signatures must be from counties with populations of less than 500,000. An independent candidate must collect more than 43,000 signatures.

Michigan requires a minor party candidate to collect 44,619 signatures and independents to collect 12,000. And in Nevada, a minor party or independent candidate must collect 10,095 signatures to qualify for the ballot. At least 2,524 signatures must be collected in each of Nevada's four congressional districts.

But an outsider candidate does not need to qualify for the ballot in every state to have a profound political impact. Just ask Brendan McPhillips, the state director for Biden's Pennsylvania efforts in the last election.

Like many Democrats, he still blames Stein for helping Trump win the battleground state in 2016. While it's impossible to say for sure, Trump carried Pennsylvania that year by just 44,000 votes, while Stein, an outspoken progressive, won nearly 50,000 votes in the state.

"It's dangerous," McPhillips said of the independent and third-party candidates. "But I also think the Biden campaign is going to be smart about this. They're going to make sure everybody knows the consequences of throwing your vote away on some egomaniac's vanity project."

For now, Biden's team has allowed two Democratic-aligned groups, MoveOn and Third Way, to take the lead in public attacks against the outsiders. Leaders from the groups recently hosted private briefings with senior aides on Capitol Hill to raise the alarm about No Labels especially.

Third Way co-founder Matt Bennett said Kennedy is also a problem.

"Anything that divides the anti-Trump vote is dangerous," Bennett said. "Kennedy divides it on the fringes. And No Labels divides it from the center. ... It's seriously worrying."

Anxious Democratic officials comfort themselves by pointing to a trend in recent elections in which young people and suburban women have turned out in strong numbers for Democratic candidates. But looking to 2024, recent polls suggest that a Trump-Biden rematch would be competitive.

The 2024 outsiders likely won't make it any easier for Biden.

In fact, they're actively challenging his core message on democracy, which the president's team says is essentially on the ballot next fall as Trump and his supporters undermine the rule of law and integrity of the vote.

"We are out there proudly giving people a choice and fighting for real democracy, not the democracy where the Democratic Party says, 'Yeah, we're saving democracy from the Republican Party by squelching any chance of a primary, by shaming voters who want to vote for a third party or an independent,'" said West's campaign manager, Peter Daou. "No, the true fight for democracy is to finally give people choices."

And while West will rely on grassroots volunteers and small-dollar donations to secure his place on the November 2024 ballot, the No Labels movement is making almost exactly the same argument and is backed by tens of millions of dollars in anonymous donations.

In an interview, former Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman, the No Labels founding chairman, said the organization will begin a candidate recruitment and selection process in the next two to three weeks. The group would decide to move forward with a centrist candidate, he said, only if Biden and Trump appear

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likely to win their party's presidential nominations after the batch of primary contests known as Super Tuesday next March.

A final decision will be made by delegates at a convention scheduled for April in Dallas, but a process for choosing those delegates has not been announced.

"The parties have such a stranglehold on American politics and government for too long and it's really hurting our country," Lieberman said. "The public is crying out for a third choice, and maybe we need to listen to the public."

Some in Congress want to cut Ukraine aid and boost Taiwan's. But Taiwan sees its fate tied to Kyiv's

By DIDI TANG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — To Rep. Mike Collins, China is a bigger threat to the United States than Russia. So the Georgia Republican has voted against providing military aid to Ukraine as he advocates for doing more to arm Taiwan, the self-governed island that's at risk of military aggression from Beijing.

For Collins and other Republican lawmakers, Taiwan and Ukraine are effectively rivals for a limited pool of U.S. military assistance. But that's not necessarily how Taiwan and many of its supporters see it. They view Taiwan's fate as closely linked to that of Ukraine as it struggles to push back a Russian invasion.

They say China is watching closely to see if the United States has the political stamina to support an ally in a prolonged, costly war. The U.S. aid to Ukraine also has led to weapons manufacturers stepping up production — something that could benefit Taiwan in a clash with China.

"Ukraine's survival is Taiwan's survival. Ukraine's success is Taiwan's success," Taiwan's diplomat in the U.S., Hsiao Bi-Khim, said in May at the Sedona Forum hosted by the McCain Institute.

Still, Taiwan has been careful not to weigh in on the U.S. debate about continued funding for Ukraine, which has become a divisive political issue after initially having strong bipartisan support.

Asked about Congress removing Ukraine funding from a temporary spending measure that prevented a U.S. government shutdown on Oct. 1, Taiwan's diplomatic office responded with discretion.

"Taiwan is grateful to have strong bipartisan support from the U.S. We will continue to work with the U.S. to maintain the peace and stability of the Taiwan Strait," the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office said in a statement emailed to The Associated Press.

But Congress' refusal to include the aid raises "alarm bells" in Taiwan, said Bonnie Glaser, managing director of the Indo-Pacific program at the German Marshall Fund. She noted that the Taiwanese government "has argued that Ukraine's victory is existential for Taiwan."

"These worries exist even though most Republicans who seek to end U.S. support for Ukraine are still very pro-Taiwan and willing to do more to help defend Taiwan," she said.

Taiwan is the thorniest issue in the frayed U.S.-China relationship. Beijing claims sovereignty over the island, which lies roughly 100 miles (160 kilometers) off the mainland's southeastern coast, and vows to seize it, by force if necessary, to achieve national reunification. The United States wants a peaceful resolution and has a security pact with the island, supplying it with military hardware and technologies to prevent any forced takeover by Beijing.

China's military actions near the island have fueled concerns over armed attacks. President Joe Biden has said he would send troops to defend Taiwan in case of war, while Chinese President Xi Jinping has demanded the U.S. respect his country's "sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Collins traveled to Taiwan on his first overseas trip as a congressman. When he returned, he called for timely weapon deliveries to the island, especially since as much as \$19 billion worth of weapons sold to Taiwan have been delayed.

"These delays are primarily a result of a U.S. manufacturing backlog and a distracted Biden administration with weapons deliveries to Ukraine taking preference over Taiwan," Collin said. "We must get serious about offering support to our ally Taiwan because ultimately when it comes to countering China, our interests align."

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Bradley Bowman, senior director of the Center of Military and Political Power at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, disagrees with that logic.

"It's not a zero-sum game," he said. "Taiwan supports the U.S. aid to Ukraine. They understand that the deterrence message works."

And on a practical level, Bowman said, the aid for Ukraine is helping the U.S. expand its weapons production, which will both benefit Taiwan and enhance U.S. military readiness.

Rep. Michael McCaul, a Texas Republican who in April led a congressional delegation to Taiwan as chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said support for the island has not diminished on the Hill.

"Throughout the conversations about aid to Ukraine, I have not heard a single person take a swipe at Taiwan," McCaul said at a recent National Day celebration hosted by Taiwan's representative office in Washington.

Glaser said the Chinese leadership is unlikely to discount the U.S. support for Taiwan, even when U.S. support for Ukraine is waning, but it is likely to exploit any failure to fund Ukraine in a disinformation campaign to sow doubts among the Taiwanese people about the U.S. commitment to their defense.

In a social media post, Hu Xijin, a retired chief editor of the Communist Party-run Global Times newspaper and now a political commentator, said this month that most U.S. overseas military interventions have "rotted" if the U.S. fails to cinch a rapid victory.

Schools' pandemic spending boosted tech companies. Did it help US students?

By COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — As soon as the federal pandemic relief started arriving at America's schools, so did the relentless calls.

Tech companies by the dozens wanted a chance to prove their software was what schools needed. Best of all, they often added, it wouldn't take a dime from district budgets: Schools could use their new federal money.

They did, and at a tremendous scale.

An Associated Press analysis of public records found many of the largest school systems spent tens of millions of dollars in pandemic money on software and services from tech companies, including licenses for apps, games and tutoring websites.

Schools, however, have little or no evidence the programs helped students. Some of the new software was rarely used.

The full scope of spending is unknown because the aid came with few reporting requirements. Congress gave schools a record \$190 billion but didn't require them to publicly report individual purchases.

The AP asked the nation's 30 largest school districts for contracts funded by federal pandemic aid. About half provided records illuminating an array of software and technology, collectively called "edtech." Others didn't respond or demanded fees for producing the records totaling thousands of dollars.

Clark County schools in the Las Vegas area, for one, signed contracts worth at least \$70 million over two years with 12 education technology consultants and companies. They include Achieve3000 (for a suite of learning apps), Age of Learning (for math and reading acceleration), Paper (for virtual tutoring) and Renaissance Learning (for learning apps Freckle and MyON).

The pandemic sparked a boom for tech companies as schools went online. Revenue skyrocketed and investors poured billions into startups.

At the same time, new marketing technology made it easier for companies to get school officials' attention, said Chris Ryan, who left a career in edtech to help districts use technology effectively. Equipped with automated sales tools, marketers bombarded teachers and school leaders with calls, emails and targeted ads.

"It's probably predatory, but at the same time, schools were looking for solutions, so the doors were

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open," Ryan said.

At the school offices in rural Nekoosa, Wisconsin, the calls and emails made their way to business manager Lynn Knight.

"I understand that they have a job to do, but when money is available, it's like a vampire smelling blood," she said. "It's unbelievable how many calls we got."

The spending fed an industry in which research and evidence are scarce.

"That money went to a wide variety of products and services, but it was not distributed on the basis of merit or equity or evidence," said Bart Epstein, founder and former CEO of EdTech Evidence Exchange, a nonprofit that helps schools make the most of their technology. "It was distributed almost entirely on the strength of marketing, branding and relationships."

Many schools bought software to communicate with parents and teach students remotely. But some of the biggest contracts went to companies that promised to help kids catch up on learning.

Clark County schools spent more than \$7 million on Achieve3000 apps. Some were widely used, such as literacy app Smarty Ants for young students.

Others were not. Less than half of elementary school students used Freckle, a math app that cost the district \$2 million. When they did use it, sessions averaged less than five minutes.

The district declined an interview request.

Some Las Vegas parents say software shouldn't be a priority in a district with issues including aging buildings and more than 1,100 teacher vacancies.

"What's the point of having all this software in place when you don't even have a teacher to teach the class? It doesn't make sense," said Lorena Rojas, who has two teens in the district.

Education technology accounts for a relatively small piece of pandemic spending. Tech contracts released by Clark County amount to about 6% of its \$1.2 billion in federal relief money. But nearly all schools spent some money on technology.

As districts spend the last of their pandemic aid, there is no consensus on how well the investments paid off.

The company Edmentum says Clark County students who used one of its programs did better on standardized tests. But a study of a ThinkCERCA literacy program found it had no impact on scores.

A team of international researchers reported in September that edtech has generally failed to live up to its potential. With little regulation, companies have few incentives to prove their products work, according to the researchers at Harvard and universities in Norway and Germany.

The federal government has done little to intervene.

The Education Department urges schools to use technology with a proven track record and offers a rating system to assess a product's evidence. The lowest tier is a relatively easy target: Companies must "demonstrate a rationale" for the product, with plans to study its effectiveness. Yet studies find the vast majority of popular products fail to hit even that mark.

"There has never been anything close to a proper accounting of what has been spent on or how it was deployed," Epstein said. "You can call it mismanagement, you can call it a lack of oversight, you can call it a crisis. There was a lot of it."

Epstein has called for more federal regulation.

"Some companies sold hundreds of thousands, even millions of dollars in products that they could see were barely ever being used," the nonprofit CEO said.

In Louisville, Kentucky, education technology contracts totaled more than \$30 million. The Jefferson County district signed contracts with online tutoring companies Paper and FEV for a combined \$7.7 million. Millions more went to companies such as Edmentum and ThinkCERCA for software to supplement classroom teaching.

Jefferson County declined an interview request, saying most of the contracts were approved by officials who have left. Asked for records evaluating the use and effectiveness of the purchases, the district said it had none.

The district said it is using this year as “a fresh start.”

“We will be compiling baseline data and the new academic leadership team will be analyzing it to determine the impact these programs are having on student learning,” a district statement said.

In Maryland’s Prince George’s County, curriculum director Kia McDaniel spent hours sifting through pitches. Her team tried to focus on software backed by independent research, but for many products that doesn’t exist.

Often, she said, “we really did depend on the results that the sales team or the research team said that the product could deliver.”

Students made gains using some apps, but others didn’t catch on. The district paid \$1.4 million for learning support from IXL Learning, but few students used it. Another contract for online tutoring also failed to generate student interest.

The district plans to pull back contracts that didn’t work and expand those that did.

Even before the pandemic, there was evidence that schools struggled to manage technology. A 2019 study by education technology company Glimpse K 12 found, on average, schools let 67% of their educational software licenses go unused.

Ryan, the former edtech marketer, said that at the end of the day, no technology can guarantee results.

“It’s like the Wild West, figuring this out,” he said. “And if you take a huge step back, what really works is direct instruction with a kid.”

Israel declares war, bombards Gaza and battles to dislodge Hamas fighters after surprise attack

By TIA GOLDENBERG and WAFAA SHURAFU Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — The Israeli government formally declared war and gave the green light for “significant military steps” to retaliate against Hamas for its surprise attack, as the military labored into Monday to crush fighters still in southern towns and intensified its bombardment of the Gaza Strip. The toll passed 1,100 dead and thousands wounded on both sides.

More than 40 hours after Hamas launched its unprecedented incursion out of Gaza, Israeli forces were still battling with militants holed up in several locations. At least 700 people have reportedly been killed in Israel — a staggering toll on a scale the country has not experienced in decades — and more than 400 have been killed in Gaza.

Israel said it brought in special forces to try to wrest control of four Israeli sites from Hamas fighters, including two kibbutzim that militants entered earlier in their attacks. Footage released by Israeli police from one area showed forces kneeling in tall grass as they exchanged fire with Hamas militants across an open field.

The declaration of war portended greater fighting ahead, and a major question was whether Israel would launch a ground assault into Gaza, a move that in the past has brought intensified casualties.

Meanwhile, Hamas and the smaller Islamic Jihad group claimed to have taken captive more than 130 people from inside Israel and brought them into Gaza, saying they would be traded for the release of thousands of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. The announcement, though unconfirmed, was the first sign of the scope of abductions.

The captives are known to include soldiers and civilians, including women, children and older adults — mostly Israelis but also some people of other nationalities. The Israeli military said only that the number of captives is “significant.”

The Israeli military estimated 1,000 Hamas fighters took part in Saturday’s initial incursion. The high figure underscored the extent of planning by the militant group ruling Gaza, which has said it launched the attack in response to mounting Palestinian suffering under Israel’s occupation and blockade of Gaza.

The gunmen rampaged for hours, gunning down civilians and snatching people in towns, along highways and at a techno music festival attended by thousands in the desert. The rescue service Zaka said it removed about 260 bodies from the festival, and that number was expected to rise. It was not clear how

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many of those bodies were already included in Israel's overall toll.

In response, Israel hit more than 800 targets in Gaza so far, its military said, including airstrikes that leveled much of the town of Beit Hanoun in the enclave's northeast corner.

Israeli Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari told reporters Hamas was using the town as a staging ground for attacks. There was no immediate word on casualties, and most of the community's population of tens of thousands likely fled beforehand.

"We will continue to attack in this way, with this force, continuously, on all gathering (places) and routes" used by Hamas, Hagari said.

Civilians on both sides were already paying a high price. The Israeli military was evacuating at least five towns close to Gaza.

A line of people snaked outside a central Israel police station to supply DNA samples and other means that could help identify missing family members.

Mayyan Zin, a divorced mother of two, said she learned that her two daughters had been abducted when a relative sent her photos from a Telegram group showing them sitting on mattresses in captivity. She then found online videos of a chilling scene in her ex-husband's home in the town of Nahal Oz: Gunmen who had broken in speak to him, his leg bleeding, in the living room near the two terrified, weeping daughters, Dafna, 15, and Ella, 8. Another video showed the father being taken across the border into Gaza.

"Just bring my daughters home and to their family. All the people," Zin said.

In Gaza, a tiny enclave of 2.3 million people sealed off by an Israeli-Egyptian blockade for 16 years since the Hamas takeover, residents feared further escalation. Israeli strikes flattened some residential buildings.

Nasser Abu Quta said 19 members of his family including his wife were killed when an airstrike hit their home, where they were huddling on the ground floor in the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

There were no militants in his building, he insisted. "This is a safe house, with children and women," the 57-year-old Abu Quta said by telephone. The Israeli military did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the strike. Another strike in the same city early Monday killed 11, including women and children.

As of late Sunday, the retaliatory Israeli airstrikes had destroyed 159 housing units across Gaza and severely damaged 1,210 others, the U.N. said. It said the number of displaced Gazans had jumped by tens of thousands, to more than 123,000. The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said a school sheltering more than 225 people took a direct hit. It did not say where the fire came from.

Several Israeli media outlets, citing rescue service officials, said at least 700 people have been killed in Israel, including 44 soldiers. The Gaza Health Ministry said 413 people, including 78 children and 41 women, were killed in the territory. Some 2,000 people have been wounded on each side. An Israeli official said security forces have killed 400 militants and captured dozens more.

In northern Israel, a brief exchange of strikes with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group fanned fears that the fighting could expand into a wider regional war. Hezbollah fired rockets and shells Sunday at Israeli positions in a disputed area along the border, and Israel fired back using armed drones. The Israeli military said the situation was calm after the exchange.

The declaration of war on Hamas announced by Israel's Security Cabinet was largely symbolic, said Yohanan Plesner, the head of the Israel Democracy Institute, a think tank, but it "demonstrates that the government thinks we are entering a more lengthy, intense and significant period of war."

Israel has carried out major military campaigns over the past four decades in Lebanon and Gaza that it portrayed as wars, but without a formal declaration.

The Security Cabinet also approved "significant military steps." The steps were not defined, but the declaration appears to give the military and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a wide mandate.

In a statement, Netanyahu's office said the aim will be the destruction of Hamas' "military and governing capabilities" to an extent that prevents it from threatening Israelis "for many years."

Israelis were still reeling from the breadth, ferocity and surprise of the Hamas assault. The group's fighters broke through Israel's security fence surrounding the Gaza Strip early Saturday. Using motorcycles and pickup trucks, even paragliders and speedboats on the coast, they moved into nearby Israeli com-

munities — as many as 22 locations.

The high death toll and slow response to the onslaught pointed to a major intelligence failure and undermined the long-held perception that Israel has eyes and ears everywhere in the small, densely populated territory it has controlled for decades.

The presence of hostages in Gaza complicates Israel's response. Israel has a history of making heavily lopsided exchanges to bring captive Israelis home.

An Egyptian official said Israel sought help from Cairo to ensure the safety of the hostages. Egypt also spoke with both sides about a potential cease-fire, but Israel was not open to a truce "at this stage," according to the official, who asked not to be identified because he was not authorized to brief media.

Elsewhere, six Palestinians were killed in clashes with Israeli soldiers Sunday around the West Bank.

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.

Opinion polls show Australians likely to reject Indigenous Voice to Parliament at referendum

By ROD MCGUIRK Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Australians appear likely to reject the creation of an advocate for the Indigenous population in a referendum outcome that some see as a victory for racism.

Two opinion polls published in newspapers on Monday are the latest to show a majority of respondents oppose enshrining in Australia's constitution an Indigenous Voice to Parliament. Creating the Voice would aim to give Australia's most disadvantaged ethnic minority more say on government policies that effect their lives.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Monday would not concede defeat before voting on the referendum ends Saturday.

"We'll wait and see when they cast their vote. I'm not getting ahead of the Australian people," Albanese told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

"I know there's some arrogance has crept into the no-side campaign, but it's a campaign based upon fear," Albanese added.

Albanese has said the world will judge Australians on how they vote at their first referendum since 1999.

Indigenous Australians account for 3.8% of Australia's population. They have worse outcomes on average than other Australians in a range of measures including health, employment, education, incarceration and suicide rates. Statistically, Indigenous Australians die around eight years younger than the wider community.

The Yes campaign argues that a Voice, a representative body selected by Indigenous people, would lead to better outcomes.

Human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson has warned that the referendum's failure would be "interpreted by outsiders" as the "vote of an ignorant and racist populace."

"If Australians vote No, we will appear to outside observers as racist, in the sense of denying to an ethnic minority an opportunity for advancement to which they are entitled," Robertson, a London-based Australian, wrote in The Sydney Morning Herald newspaper last month.

Noel Pearson, an Indigenous leader and architect of the Voice, said Australians face a "moral choice" at the referendum as a well as a question of constitutional law.

"One choice will bring us pride and hope and belief in one another and the other will, I think, turn us backwards and bring shame to the country," Pearson said on Monday.

"No' would be a travesty for the country and we will possibly never live it down," Pearson added.

Some observers argue that the referendum was doomed because none has ever passed in Australian history without the bipartisan support of the major political parties.

The opposition conservative parties argue that the Voice would be risky because the courts could interpret its powers in unpredictable ways. They also argue that the Voice would divide Australians along racial lines.

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Sussan Ley, deputy leader of the conservative opposition Liberal Party, said either result would have a negative impact on Australia.

"It's a lose-lose, whatever the result is on Saturday," Ley told Sky News.

"It will be bad, divisive and unhappy for Australians the next day, so we do need to bring the country together," Ley added.

Marcia Langton, an Indigenous academic who helped draft the Voice proposal, has dismissed arguments against it as either stupid or racist.

"Every time the 'No' case raises one of their arguments, if you start pulling it apart you get down to base racism. I'm sorry to say it, but that's where it lands. Or just sheer stupidity," she told a public forum last month.

Opinion polls showed a majority of Australians supported the Voice when Albanese first proposed the referendum after his center-left Labor Party was elected last year.

A poll published in The Australian newspaper on Monday showed 58% of respondents opposed the Voice and only 34% supported it.

The poll was based on an online survey of 1,225 voters nationwide from Oct. 3 to 6. It has 3.1 percentage point margin of error.

A poll published in The Sydney Morning Herald on Monday found 56% of respondents rejected the Voice and only 29% supported it. The poll was based on an online survey of 4,728 voters nationwide from Sept. 22 until Oct. 4. It has a 1.4 percentage point margin of error.

A record number of Australians are enrolled to vote at the referendum.

Of Australia's population of 26 million, 17,676,347 were enrolled to vote, which is 97.7% of eligible Australians.

More than 2.2 million people had already cast their ballots in early voting by Monday, while a further 1.9 million intended to make postal votes.

Workers at Mack Trucks reject tentative contract deal and will go on strike early Monday

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Union workers at Mack Trucks have voted down a tentative five-year contract agreement reached with the company and plan to strike at 7 a.m. Monday, the United Auto Workers union says.

Union President Shawn Fain said in a letter to Mack parent company Volvo Trucks that 73% of workers voted against the deal in results counted on Sunday.

The UAW represents about 4,000 Mack workers in three states. Union leaders had reached a tentative agreement on the deal on Oct. 1.

The deal included a 19% pay raise over the life of the contract with 10% upon ratification. There also was a \$3,500 ratification bonus, no increase in weekly health care contributions, increased annual lump sum payments for retirees and a \$1,000 annual 401(k) lump sum to offset health care costs for employees who don't get health insurance after retirement.

Fain said in his letter to Volvo Trucks' head of labor relations that employees working early Monday will exit the factories after performing tasks needed to prevent damage to company equipment.

The workers are in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Florida.

Fain wrote that UAW members and workers across the country are seeking their fair share in wages and benefits. "The union remains committed to exploring all options for reaching an agreement, but we clearly are not there yet."

The company and union are still apart on work schedules, health and safety, pensions, health care, prescription drug coverage, overtime and other issues, he wrote.

The contract may have been sunk by high expectations Fain has set in bargaining with Detroit's three automakers. In those talks, the UAW has asked for 36% raises over four years, while Ford has offered 23% and the other two firms are at 20%.

Mack Trucks President Stephen Roy said in a statement Sunday night that the company is "surprised and disappointed" that the union chose to strike. The union, he wrote, called the tentative agreement a record for the heavy truck industry. "We trust that other stakeholders also appreciate that our market, business and competitive set are very different from those of the passenger car makers," the statement said.

Mack, he wrote, is part of the only heavy truck manufacturing group that assembles all of its vehicles and engines for North America in the U.S., competing against trucks built in lower-cost countries.

The company is committed to collective bargaining and is confident both sides will reach a deal that delivers competitive wages and benefits while safeguarding the company's future, the statement said.

The UAW went on strike at selected factories run by automakers General Motors, Ford and Jeep maker Stellantis on Sept. 15. It started with one assembly plant for each company, then spread to 38 GM and Stellantis parts warehouses. Two additional assembly plants at Ford and GM were added later.

On Friday, the union decided not to expand the strikes to any more plants for the time being after GM agreed to bring its electric vehicle battery factories into the UAW's national contract, assuring that they'll be unionized. The union also reported progress with all three automakers.

Tourism resumes 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 began welcoming back travelers on Sunday after 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.

Ilihia Gionson with the Hawaii Tourism Authority said Sunday that a huge influx of visitors was not expected based on conversations with hotels. Precise figures for how many travelers were returning to the area's hotels and timeshares were not immediately available, he said.

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 restarting would help Maui's tourism-driven economy get on a path to recovery.

Lisa 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, respectively.

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.

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.

Desperate people dig out dead and injured from Afghanistan earthquakes that killed at least 2,000

By RIAZAT BUTT Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Men dug through rubble with their bare hands and shovels in western Afghanistan Sunday in desperate attempts to pull victims from the wreckage left by powerful earthquakes that killed at least 2,000 people.

Entire villages were flattened, bodies were trapped under collapsed houses and locals waited for help without even shovels to dig people out.

Living and dead, victims were trapped under rubble, their faces grey with dust. A government spokesman said Sunday that hundreds were still trapped, more than 1,000 hurt and more than 1,300 homes destroyed.

"Most people were shocked ... some couldn't even talk. But there were others who couldn't stop crying and shouting," photographer Omid Haqjoo, who visited four villages Sunday, told The Associated Press by phone from Afghanistan's fourth largest city, Herat.

Saturday's magnitude 6.3 earthquake hit a densely populated area near Herat. It was followed by strong aftershocks.

A Taliban government spokesman on Sunday provided the toll that, if confirmed, would make it one of the deadliest earthquakes to strike the country in two decades.

An earthquake that hit eastern Afghanistan in June 2022, striking a rugged, mountainous region, wiped out stone and mud-brick homes and killed at least 1,000 people.

People in Herat freed a baby girl from a collapsed building after she was buried up to her neck in debris. A hand cradled the baby's torso as rescuers eased the child out of the ground. Rescuers said it was the baby's mother. It was not clear if the mother survived. The video was shared online and verified by The Associated Press.

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

With much of the world wary of dealing directly with the Taliban government and focused on the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, Afghanistan hasn't received an immediate global response. Almost 36

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hours after the first earthquake hit Herat province, there have been no planes of aid flying in, no specialists.

Aid agencies and nongovernmental groups have appealed for the international community to come forward but only a handful of countries have publicly offered support, neighboring China and Pakistan among them.

The International Rescue Committee warned that the lack of rescue equipment could push up the death toll in western Afghanistan because trapped survivors cannot be freed.

"There's not much disaster management capacity and what there is can't cover people on the ground," said Salma Ben Aissa, the committee's country director for Afghanistan. "The numbers (of dead) are increasing hour by hour."

People injured in the quake on Saturday can't get the treatment they need because of poor medical infrastructure so they are losing their lives. A lack of food, shelter and clean water are increasing the health risks among communities.

Ben Aissa's colleague, Jawed Niamati, said Herat city is empty. People are sleeping in the open air, on roadsides and in parks, because they fear more quakes. Temperatures drop to 10 degrees Celsius (50 degrees Fahrenheit) at night, he said.

The world rushed in aid after an earthquake rocked Syria and Turkey this year, killing tens of thousands of people.

Abdul Wahid Rayan, a spokesman at the Ministry of Information and Culture, said Sunday that hundreds of civilians were buried under the debris in Herat, and he called for urgent help.

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 deployed four ambulances with doctors and psychosocial support counselors to the regional hospital. At least three mobile health teams were on their way to the Zenda Jan district, which is one of the worst-hit 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. UNICEF dispatched thousands of supplies, including winter clothes, blankets and tarpaulins as temperatures dropped.

Irfanullah Sharafzai, a spokesman for the Afghan Red Crescent Society, said seven teams were busy with rescue efforts while others were arriving from eight nearby provinces. They set up a temporary camp for the displaced, Sharafzai said.

Some aid groups, like the World Food Program, were already on the scene with essential items.

Later Sunday, people from surrounding villages brought equipment to support rescue efforts.

The first quake was the strongest, causing the most damage and casualties, photographer Haqjoo said, quoting survivors.

Save the Children said the scale of the damage was horrific. "The numbers affected by this tragedy are truly disturbing – and those numbers will rise as people are still trapped in the rubble of their homes in Herat," said the aid group's country director for Afghanistan, Arshad Malik. "This is a crisis on top of a crisis. Even before this disaster, children were suffering from a devastating lack of food."

He called for an "urgent injection" of money from the international community.

Neighboring Pakistan said it was in contact with Afghan authorities to get an assessment of the urgent needs.

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 is 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 on the social media platform X, saying he was "deeply grieved and saddened to learn the news of earthquake in Herat province."

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.

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

"Rishi Sunak and his party have taken a sledgehammer to the foundations on which a good life can be built," she said. "And now the simple things in life are crumbling: a decent job, a secure, affordable home and a strong community."

The party has to walk a delicate line to convince voters it can ease the U.K.'s chronic housing crisis and repair its fraying public services, especially the creaking, overburdened state-funded National Health Service — but without imposing tax increases on the public.

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."

A workforce crisis is damaging families' access to therapies for babies with developmental delays

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.

'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

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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 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.”

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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.

German conservative opposition wins 2 state elections, with far-right making gains

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Germany's center-right opposition won two state elections on Sunday at the halfway mark of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's unpopular national government, projections showed, and a far-right party that has been riding high in national polls celebrated gains.

The votes followed a campaign marked by discontent with persistent squabbling in the national government and by pressure to reduce the number of migrants arriving in Germany. The national interior minister, who leads the federal response on migration, suffered a heavy defeat in a difficult bid to become governor of her home state.

About 9.4 million people were 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 were already led by the country's main opposition Union bloc, made up of the Christian Democratic Union and the Bavaria-only Christian Social Union.

Projections for ARD and ZDF public television based on exit polls and well-advanced counting showed the CSU, which has led Bavaria since 1957, extending that run with support of nearly 37% — little changed from five years ago and around 20 points ahead of its nearest rival. In Hesse, the CDU was seen winning about 34% of the vote, making gains and also far ahead of its rivals.

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 states' new governments, as other parties refused to work with it.

But it looked likely to finish second in Hesse and possibly also in Bavaria. Projections showed it taking about 18% of the vote in Hesse and 16% in Bavaria, improving significantly on lower double-digit showings when the two states last voted in 2018.

They showed disappointing results for the three national governing parties — Scholz's center-left Social Democrats, the environmentalist Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats. Hesse's conservative governor, Boris Rhein, was challenged by both his current Green deputy and by the Social Democrats' candidate, national Interior Minister Nancy Faeser.

But neither came anywhere near loosening the CDU's 24-year hold on the job. The projections showed them each with about 15%. Leading Social Democrats made clear that they still back Faeser as interior minister.

Scholz's governing coalition has turned off voters with repeated public squabbling, notably on a plan to replace fossil-fuel heating systems with greener alternatives.

The projections showed the Free Democrats falling short of the 5% support needed to stay in Bavaria's state legislature and uncertain of hitting that mark in Hesse. Previous election flops for the party have fueled tensions in the national government.

Lars Klingbeil, one of the Social Democrats' leaders, said voters sent "a signal to the three (governing) parties that there needs to be a different speed when it comes to solving the problems of the people in this country."

"This is about making Germany a strong economic nation again," Klingbeil said. "Many crises of recent years have contributed to the situation being what it is; that isn't the (coalition's) fault, but we must solve it ... and I expect a different speed and a different style than in recent months from the government."

"We do a lot of good things with each other and talk them down at times," said Omid Nouripour, the Greens' national co-leader. And he said that "above all, AfD's results are alarming and we must do everything to win back confidence."

AfD's chief whip in the German parliament, Bernd Baumann, said that "the wind is changing in Germany — it is switching from left to right." He charged that the mainstream conservative opposition, which has assailed the government on migration, is "twisting in the wind, and AfD is the wind."

In Munich, governor Markus Soeder declared that "Bavaria has voted for stability" in difficult times.

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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. Aiwanger's party was projected to take about 15% of the vote, gaining support.

Soeder has been widely considered a potential candidate to challenge Scholz in 2025, although he has denied such ambitions. Sunday's showing, though poor by his party's historical standards, is unlikely to end that speculation.

'The Exorcist: Believer' takes possession of box office with \$27.2 million opening

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "The Exorcist: Believer" drove out all foes at the box office, but its numbers didn't entirely make heads spin.

Facing competition from no major new releases, the latest resurrection of the demonic franchise brought in \$27.2 million in North America in its opening weekend for Universal Pictures and Blumhouse Productions, according to studio estimates Sunday.

That was more than the weekend take of the next three films combined. But while it nearly earned back its reported budget of \$30 million in just a few days, the take for "The Exorcist: Believer" was underwhelming after the two companies paid \$400 million in 2021 for the rights to a new trilogy.

Last week's top film, "Paw Patrol: The Mighty Movie," was a distant second, with \$11.8 million, and has earned \$38.9 million after two weekends for Paramount Pictures. Another horror sequel, "Saw X," was third for Lionsgate Films, with \$8.2 million, and has brought in \$32.6 million after two weekends.

Horror films made up four of the top 10, and they could see some sustained numbers as Halloween comes closer.

"It seems like the demand for the horror genre by audiences is never ending," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore. "The communal theater experience is tailor-made for it."

The new "Exorcist" was released just shy of the 50th anniversary of the original horror classic, and it comes just two months after the death of the original film's director, William Friedkin.

Directed by David Gordon Green, who has become a legacy sequel specialist after helming a trilogy of "Halloween" films, "The Exorcist: Believer" stars "Hamilton" actor Leslie Odom Jr., with Lidya Jewett as his 13-year-old daughter.

The film got poor reviews — managing a critics score of just 23% on Rotten Tomatoes. Jake Coyle of The Associated Press was more charitable than most in his review, giving it two stars out of four for its lead performances and sure-handed direction but saying it "never manages anything like the deep terror of the original."

The release of "The Exorcist" was moved up a week to avoid competing with the juggernaut of next weekend's concert film, "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour."

"I think they made a good call actually," Dergarabedian said. "All the oxygen is going to be sucked out of the room."

The storm of Swifties in cinemas could make for a \$100 million weekend and set several new precedents for concert movies.

"This is on an order of magnitude beyond anything we've seen," Dergarabedian said.

The weekend finally saw "Barbie" fall from the box office top 10 for the first time since its July 21 release, after well over \$600 million in domestic earnings and more than \$1.3 billion globally.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

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1. "The Exorcist: Believer," \$27.2 million.
2. "PAW Patrol: The Mighty Movie," \$11.8 million.
3. "Saw X," \$8.2 million.
4. "The Creator," \$6.1 million.
5. "The Blind," \$3.1 million.
6. "A Haunting In Venice," \$2.6 million.
7. "The Nun II," \$2.1 million.
8. "Dumb Money," \$1.8 million.
10. "Hocus Pocus" (1993 rerelease), \$1.5 million.

AP Top 25: Oklahoma jumps to No. 5, Miami slides after epic gaffe and hoops schools make history

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

Oklahoma moved up to No. 5 in The Associated Press college football poll Sunday, Miami's late-game gaffe nearly cost the 25th-ranked Hurricanes a spot in rankings and six basketball blue bloods made some history.

No. 1 Georgia, coming off its best game of the season, a rout of Kentucky, regained some of the first-place votes it lost in the AP Top 25 last week when it needed a late rally to stay unbeaten at Auburn.

The Bulldogs got 50 first-place votes after 35 last week. No. 2 Michigan received 11 first-place votes as the Wolverines roll along unbeaten and untested.

No. 3 Ohio State and No. 4 Florida State each moved up a spot and received a first-place vote.

Oklahoma jumped seven after beating Texas on Saturday to re-enter the top 10 for the first time since mid-September of last year, when it started tumbling toward a 6-7 season.

The Longhorns slipped six spots to No. 9.

No. 6 Penn State held its spot, as did No. 7 Washington and No. 8 Oregon a week before their Pac-12 showdown.

USC dropped a spot to No. 10 after escaping with a three-overtime victory against Arizona. The Trojans have fallen three straight weeks, despite remaining unbeaten.

Miami managed to hang on to a spot in the rankings, dropping eight places after losing for the first time this season.

The Hurricanes had Saturday's most painful loss, not to mention a candidate for one of the worst in program history.

In position to kneel out the clock with a lead against Georgia Tech, the Hurricanes instead called a running play, fumbled the ball away with 26 seconds left and then watched as the Yellow Jackets went 74 yards in four plays for the winning score with 2 seconds left on the clock.

HOOP DREAMS

The traditional basketball powerhouses continue to shine on the gridiron in 2022.

The top six schools by appearances in the AP men's college basketball poll are Kentucky, North Carolina, Duke, Kansas, UCLA and Louisville.

For the first time in the 87-year history of the AP football poll, all of those schools are ranked at the same time: North Carolina is No. 12, Louisville is 14th, Duke is No. 17, UCLA is 18th, Kansas is No. 23 and Kentucky No. 24.

Louisville jumped 11 spots to its highest ranking since 2017, after defeating Notre Dame to stay unbeaten.

The Irish slipped 11 spots to No. 21 after a second loss in three weeks to an undefeated team.

POLL POINTS

Georgia's 17-week streak of No. 1 appearances is now tied for the fourth-most of all time with Florida State, which went wire-to-wire as No. 1 in 1999.

The Bulldogs are well positioned to make a run at the second-longest streak before the season is out.

Next up on the list is an 18-week streak at No. 1 by USC from 1972-73, then comes Miami's 21 in a row

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from 2001-02.

The record is out of reach this year: USC was No. 1 in 33 straight polls from late in the 2003 season until the final poll of the 2005 season.

The Bulldogs don't seem to be in much danger of either losing or dropping from No. 1 with a victory over the next few weeks.

Georgia goes to Vanderbilt on Saturday, then has a week off before facing Florida on Oct. 28.

A scheduled run of hosting Missouri, at No. 13 Mississippi and at No. 19 Tennessee in November will be a bigger challenge for the Bulldogs.

OUT

Seven teams that entered Saturday unbeaten lost, and two of them dropped out of the AP Top 25.

Fresno State, which lost a key Mountain West game at Wyoming, fell out of the ranking after two weeks in.

Missouri lost to LSU and also slipped out after two weeks ranked.

IN

The two teams jumping into the rankings this week have been here earlier this season.

— UCLA vaulted to No. 18 after beating Washington State.

— No. 23 Kansas returned to the rankings after a week out by routing UCF.

CONFERENCE CALL

Pac-12 — 7 (Nos. 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19).

SEC — 6 (Nos. 1, 11, 13, 19, 22, 24).

ACC — 5 (Nos. 4, 12, 14, 17, 25).

Big Ten — 3 (Nos. 2, 3, 6).

Big 12 — 3 (Nos. 5, 9, 23).

Independent — 1 (No. 21).

RANKED vs. RANKED

No. 8 Oregon at No. 7 Washington. The 103rd meeting between the Ducks and Huskies will be the first top-10 matchup.

No. 10 USC at No. 21 Notre Dame. For the first time since 2005-06, the Trojans and Fighting Irish are playing with both teams ranked in consecutive seasons.

No. 25 Miami at No. 12 North Carolina. Only the second meeting in which both teams are ranked.

No. 18 UCLA at No. 15 Oregon State. For the first time since 2001, both teams are ranked, and it's the second straight home game for the Beavers hosting a ranked opponent.

From Coke floats to Cronuts, going viral can have a lasting effect on a small business

By MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Lexington Candy Shop in New York City has served burgers, fries and shakes to hungry patrons for decades. Last remodeled in 1948, the diner is the definition of old-fashioned.

But that hasn't stopped it from getting a wave of new fans.

In August 2022, this old school business met the new world when Nicolas Heller, a TikToker and Instagrammer with 1.2 million followers known as New York Nico, popped in for a traditional Coke float — Coke syrup, soda water and ice cream. Naturally, he took a video. It went viral, garnering 4.8 million likes.

"The next day (after the video was posted), the lines started forming at 8 in the morning," John Philis, the diner's third-generation co-owner, recalls with amazement. "And it was like, huh!"

When a smaller restaurant unexpectedly goes viral on TikTok or other social media, the sudden demand can be overwhelming. Owners have to adapt on the fly, revamping operations to quickly serve a crush of people. But savvy business owners who are able to adapt can parlay newfound fame into a lasting boost for their business.

Ali Elreda opened Fatima's Grill in Downey, California, in 2016, drawing in customers with an eclectic range of tacos, wraps and burgers.

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He sprinkled Flamin' Hot Cheetos in some of them, inspired by his daughter's love of hot chips. By 2020, Elreda had worked hard to develop his restaurant's social media presence, shooting videos with music. But after a TikToker dubbed @misohungry posted a video of Elreda's Flaming Hot Cheeto Fusion burger that August, things suddenly "just went crazy."

Lines to get into the restaurant ballooned to two to three hours – for months. At first, the store wasn't ready for the influx.

"We just couldn't adjust," he said. "We would stay late hours to prep for the next day and then the lines would continue and continue and continue and continue."

Opening two nearby restaurants helped relieve the pressure. Elreda now has 10 locations, including newly opened restaurants in Detroit and Brooklyn — an expansion started by one viral video.

"Social media can make you or break you," he said. "It catapulted us to starting to franchise and getting the name out there. It's been a blessing."

When Kevin Muccular opened Aunt Bill's soul food restaurant in Katy, Texas, just last year, crowds were sparse at first because Katy is a suburb about half an hour outside of bustling Houston. That all changed when a TikToker who goes by Mr. Chimetime posted a video in July lavishing praise on Aunt Bill's brisket hot dog, waffles and customer service.

The floodgates opened and didn't stop.

"People poured in from everywhere, every seat taken, the lines, down the street and around the corner, a three, four-hour wait, wait time in line in the middle of the Texas summer," Muccular said.

He rushed to prepare food and put his vendors on standby, but the demand was overwhelming. He bought all of the ingredients he could find at nearby Sam's Club and Walmart stores, and had friends check stores in their areas. The fire marshal was called twice about the crowd.

"We were ill prepared for exactly what happened over the next two weeks of our business," he said. "We were hiring staff on the spot. I cooked more than I ever have in my entire life."

Muccular hired a consultant to help figure out how to revamp his business to serve the crowds in an efficient manner. Among the changes: He shifted walk up to-go orders to an online system and created a reservation system for tables.

Two months later, the restaurant is still bustling. The restaurant now serves 800 to 1,000 people a day, up from 200 to 250. Longer term, Muccular has plans to open a food truck to serve people all over Texas.

"We refer to everything as pre-Chimetime and post-Chimetime," he said. "What Mr. Chimetime did for our small business changed the fabric of what we are for forever."

At the Lexington Candy Shop, Philis thought the craze of last August would die down after Labor Day, or during the holidays. But a year later, the crowds are still going strong.

On a recent weekday, Australian vacationer Max Ferfaglia, 32, stopped by the diner for a float. He said he had found the diner via social media.

"We were looking to try and find what are the 'must do's' in this beautiful city," he said. "And the diner was one that just was constantly being recommended as iconic via YouTube, TikTok. ... So we just had to come and try it out."

For Philis, the boost in business is a welcome relief after the diner suffered from a steep drop in customers during the pandemic. Before Nico's visit, he sold 10 Coke floats a day. Today it's 200 on weekdays and 500 a day on weekends. He hasn't raised his prices. A float is \$12.50 including tax. Plus, people who come in for a float may order a burger, fries or other menu item.

"Every day we're going home and we're tired," he said. "But it's a good tired."

One person who knows about going viral is Dominique Ansel. In 2013, before most people knew the term "going viral," the French pastry chef created the "Cronut," a cross between a croissant and a doughnut, at his newly opened New York bakery. The Cronut created a craze the old-fashioned way, through newspaper and TV news reports.

Ansel remembers the frantic early days, when the bakery had to hire security to control the line:

"It was chaos in the morning. People were lining up at 2 a.m. in the morning, hitting each other. Neighbors were calling the police," he remembered.

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Ten years later, Ansel has plenty of other bestselling pastries and store locations in Hong Kong and Las Vegas. But there's still a line outside the original Dominique Ansel bakery for the Cronut. These days the line is cheerful. The bakery even hands out umbrellas when it rains and roses on Valentine's Day.

"I think the most important thing is not to overreact in the beginning," he said. He was approached to do deals for mass producing the Cronut, but he declined.

"You don't want to kill the idea because you want to make money," Ansel said. "You want to build something real, and you want to invest into the longevity of the product."

Today in History: October 9, Barack Obama wins Nobel Peace Prize

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Oct. 9, the 282nd day of 2023. There are 83 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 9, 2009, President Barack Obama won the Nobel Peace Prize for what the Norwegian Nobel Committee called "his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples."

On this date:

In 1888, the public was first admitted to the Washington Monument.

In 1910, a coal dust explosion at the Starkville Mine in Colorado left 56 miners dead.

In 1936, the first generator at Boulder (later Hoover) Dam began transmitting electricity to Los Angeles.

In 1946, the Eugene O'Neill drama "The Iceman Cometh" opened at the Martin Beck Theater in New York.

In 1962, Uganda won autonomy from British rule.

In 1967, Marxist revolutionary guerrilla leader Che Guevara, 39, was summarily executed by the Bolivian army a day after his capture.

In 1975, Soviet scientist Andrei Sakharov (AHN'-dray SAHK'-ah-rawf) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1985, the hijackers of the Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) cruise liner surrendered two days after seizing the vessel in the Mediterranean and killing passenger Leon Klinghoffer.

In 2001, in the first daylight raids since the start of U.S.-led attacks on Afghanistan, jets bombed the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar.

In 2004, a tour bus from the Chicago area flipped in Arkansas, killing 15 people headed to a Mississippi casino.

In 2006, Google Inc. announced it was snapping up YouTube Inc. for \$1.65 billion in a stock deal.

In 2010, Chile's 33 trapped miners cheered and embraced each other as a drill punched into their underground chamber where they had been stuck for an agonizing 66 days.

In 2012, former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky was sentenced in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, to 30 to 60 years in prison following his conviction on 45 counts of sexual abuse of boys.

In 2018, Taylor Swift captured four honors at the American Music Awards to become the most decorated woman in the show's history.

In 2022, Nikki Finke, a veteran reporter who became one of Hollywood's top journalists as founder of the entertainment trade website Deadline.com, died at age 68.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., is 82. C-SPAN founder Brian Lamb is 82. R&B singer Nona Hendryx is 79. Singer Jackson Browne is 75. Nobel Peace laureate Jody Williams is 73. Actor Gary Frank is 73. Actor Richard Chaves is 72. Actor Robert Wuhl is 72. Actor-TV personality Sharon Osbourne is 71. Actor Tony Shalhoub is 70. Actor Scott Bakula is 69. Musician James Fearnley (The Pogues) is 69. Actor John O'Hurley is 69. Writer-producer-director-actor Linwood Boomer is 68. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Mike Singletary is 65. Actor Michael Paré is 65. Jazz musician Kenny Garrett is 63. Rock singer-musician Kurt Neumann (The BoDeans) is 62. Movie director Guillermo del Toro is 59. Former British Prime Minister David Cameron is 57. Singer P.J. Harvey is 54. Movie director Steve McQueen (Film: "12 Years a Slave") is 54. World Golf Hall of Famer Annika Sorenstam is 53. Actor Cocoa Brown is 51. Country singer Tommy Shane Steiner is 50. Actor Steve Burns is 50. Rock singer Sean Lennon is 48. Actor Randy

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Spelling is 45. Christian hip-hop artist Lecrae is 44. Actor Brandon Routh is 44. Actor Zachery Ty Bryan is 42. Actor Spencer Grammer is 40. Comedian Melissa Villasenor is 36. Actor Tyler James Williams is 31. Country singer Scotty McCreery (TV: "American Idol") is 30. Actor Jharrel Jerome is 26.