

Groton Daily Independent

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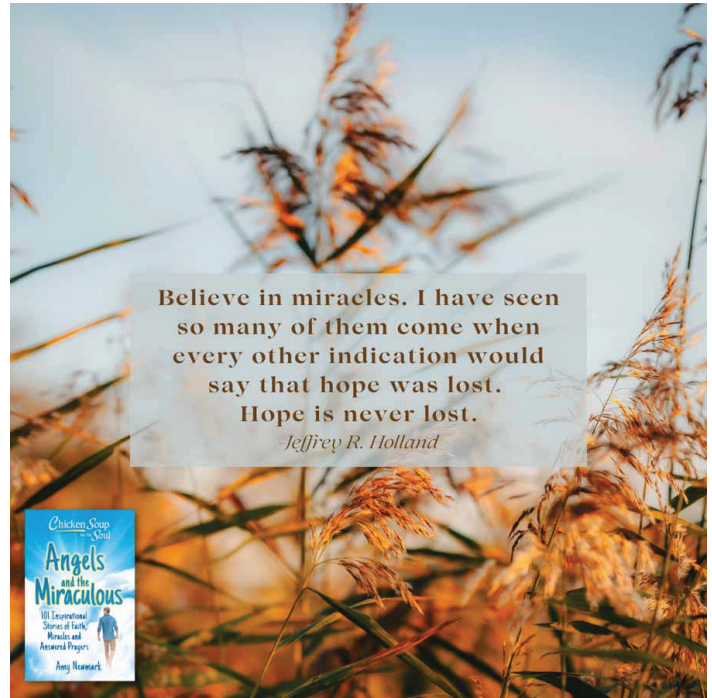
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Believe in miracles. I have seen
so many of them come when
every other indication would
say that hope was lost.
Hope is never lost.

Jeffrey R. Holland



Death Notice: Bruce Sippel

Bruce Sippel, 66, of Groton passed away October 21, 2023 while helping at a neighbor's farm. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Sunday, Oct. 22

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee 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., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.

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

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

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)

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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

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BOTH DAKOTAS TURN 134 ON NOVEMBER 2

By Tom Emery

Happy Birthday to both North Dakota and South Dakota. You look good for your age.

November 2 marks the 134th anniversary of statehood for both North Dakota and South Dakota, which were signed into the Union on that date in 1889. North Dakota is considered the 39th state, ahead of South Dakota at 40 – though no one knows for sure.

The impetus for statehood came from an omnibus bill passed by Congress on Feb. 22, 1889 – which, coincidentally, was Washington's Birthday. The bill allowed the division of the Dakota Territory into two states, and for the people of North Dakota and South Dakota to create constitutions and state governments. The act also extended the same privileges to Montana and Washington.

By then, both halves of the Dakota Territory far exceeded the population minimum for statehood, which was 60,000. Some 340,000 residents inhabited present-day South Dakota, with 150,000 in the North.

At 3:40 p.m. on Nov. 2, 1889, President Benjamin Harrison signed the Dakotas into statehood. A telegram from Secretary of State James Blaine announced the news, claiming that North and South Dakota "entered the Union at the same moment."

That was not entirely true. Harrison – possibly from playfulness but likely for political gain -- chose not to show favoritism toward either state. As a result, he shuffled the papers, covered up the names of each state, and signed them blindly.

Most sources assert that North Dakota is considered the 39th state, and not the 40th, simply on the alphabet – because "n" comes before "s."

It remains the only time in American history that two states were admitted to the Union on the same day.

News of the admission was greeted with wild celebration in both states. In Bismarck, the capital of North Dakota, a newspaper account reported "flags went up, cannons were fired, and everybody turned out to cheer and add to the tumult...bands paraded the streets and the crowds (were) singing 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' 'America,' and other national songs."

The admission of the Dakotas marked the beginning of a ten-day stretch in which four states joined the Union. Six days later, Montana gained admission, with Washington following on November 11. The run of four states in ten days has not been equaled before or since.

Tom Emery is a freelance writer and historical researcher from Carlinville, Ill. He may be reached at 217-710-8392 or ilcivilwar@yahoo.com.

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Walker Hits Career Milestone in Saturday's NSU Volleyball Win

Aberdeen, S.D. – After a Friday night gauntlet with the Wildcats, the Northern State University volleyball team swept Sioux Falls from Wachs Arena. NSU downed USF with set scores of 25-21, 25-18, and 25-20. Heading into the final three weeks of the regular season, the Wolves sit fifth in the NSIC standings.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 3, USF 0

Records: NSU 16-5 (8-4 NSIC), USF 9-12 (5-7 NSIC)

Attendance: 1358

HOW IT HAPPENED

Northern buzzed through Sioux Falls hitting a match high .258 with 42 kills, 41 assists, 54 digs, 11 blocks, and seven aces

The Cougars edged the Wolves by one to lead the contest in kills, however recorded eight more attack errors forced by the Northern defense

Hanna Thompson led the Wolves offense with 11 kills, while Natalia Szybinska and Morissen Samuels followed with nine a piece

Keri Walker led the defense with 11 digs and six blocks, with Eliza Bauers matching her block total

Walker dished out 38 assists, averaging 12.67 per set, bringing her career total over the 3000 mark with 3,026 total

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Hanna Thompson: 11 kills, .286 attack%, 2 digs

Morissen Samuels: 9 kills, .320 attack%, 5 digs

Keri Walker: 38 assists, 11 digs, 6 blocks, 3 aces

Eliza Bauers: 6 blocks, 5 kills, .385 attack%, 3 digs

Abby Meister: 9 digs, 2 aces

UP NEXT

The Wolves travel to Southwest Minnesota State and Augustana next Friday and Saturday. Serve times are set for 6 p.m. on Friday in Marshall and 2 p.m. on Saturday in Sioux Falls.

BRISTOL, SOUTH DAKOTA

HAUNTED WAREHOUSE

OCTOBER 27 & 28

BRISTOL MAIN STREET

7:00PM-11:00PM | \$15 ADMISSION | 6+ |

INCREDIBLE EDIBLES | SHARI'S JO TO GO |

ROB'S PORTA POTTIES

NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS

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Wolves Defense Scores 12 in Second Half Rally over the Wildcats

Aberdeen, S.D. – For the second straight week the Northern State University football team overcame a first half deficit en route to their fourth victory of the season. The Wolves scored 19 of their 28 points in the third quarter and held a potent Wayne State offense at bay.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 28, WSC 26

Records: NSU 4-4 (4-4 NSIC), WSC 5-3 (4-3 NSIC)

Attendance: 4549

HOW IT HAPPENED

It was all Wayne State in the opening half as the Wildcats tallied nine points in the first quarter and ten in the second

The Wolves rallied in the third, led off with the first interception by Jake Adams; the true freshman made the first start of his career and ran back the pick 15-yards to the goal line

After a quick 4-and-out by the Wildcats the Wolves had the ball and marched down the field for a 1-yard rushing score by Stanley Haskins Jr.

Northern wasn't finished in the quarter, tying the contest on a 9-yard rushing touchdown by Colton Hackel and made PAT by Jacob Van Landingham; yes you read that correct, the Wolves starting third string quarterback in NSU's win over Minot State added an extra point tonight

Luke Gunderson gave NSU the lead to open the fourth on a 45-yard pick-six, the second of his Northern State career; the pass from Wayne's Nick Bohn was broken up by fellow linebacker Jake Adams

Wayne State answered at 10:34 on the clock with a 4-yard passing score from Bohn to Cory Hollinger and took the lead with a made PAT

The Wolves started their fourth and final drive of the contest at 6:06 in the fourth, which culminated into a 21-yard game winning field goal by Drew Smook with three seconds remaining in regulation

Northern recorded a game leading 22 first downs, 235 yards passing, and 356 yards of total offense

The defense held WSC to 345 yards of offense, forcing four interceptions, including two pick-sixes

Colton Hackel completed over 60.0% of his attempts on the evening, throwing for 235 total yards with a 46-yard long

Despite neither adding points to the team total Brett Brenton and Dewaylon Ingram led their respective categories with 65 yards rushing and 164 yards receiving

Lynden Williams and Jake Adams led the defense with 11 tackles apiece, while Adams had a day adding a pick-six and pass break-up which resulted in a pick-six

Gunderson, Trey King, and Blake Whaley each grabbed a tackle for a loss in the win

Payton Hughes and Ar'Shon Willis tallied the final two interceptions for the Wolves; prior to the contest the Wildcats had given up just four interceptions on the year

Smook went 1-for-2 in field goal attempts and adding 270 yards on kickoffs, averaging 5.40 yards per boot

Ethan Barnett tallied three punts for 130 yards, averaging 43.3 yards per kick

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Colton Hackel: 15-of-24, 235 yds passing, 14 yds rushing, rushing TD

Dewaylon Ingram: 164 yds receiving, 18.2 yds per catch

Brett Brenton: 65 yds rushing, 42 return yds

Jake Adams: 11 tackles, 1 interception, 1 TD, 1 break-up

Luke Gunderson: 4 tackles, 1.0 tackle for a loss, 1 interception, 1 TD

UP NEXT

Northern State hits the road next Saturday for a mid-day match-up at Concordia-St. Paul. Kickoff is slated for 12 p.m. against the Golden Bears from Seafoam Stadium.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR

St Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church

Fall Dinner

NOVEMBER 5TH, 5PM TO 7PM

TOSSED SALAD, LASAGNA, GARLIC BREAD,
ICE CREAM SUNDAE BAR

.....
FREE WILL OFFERING
.....

BINGO, BINGO, BINGO!



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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

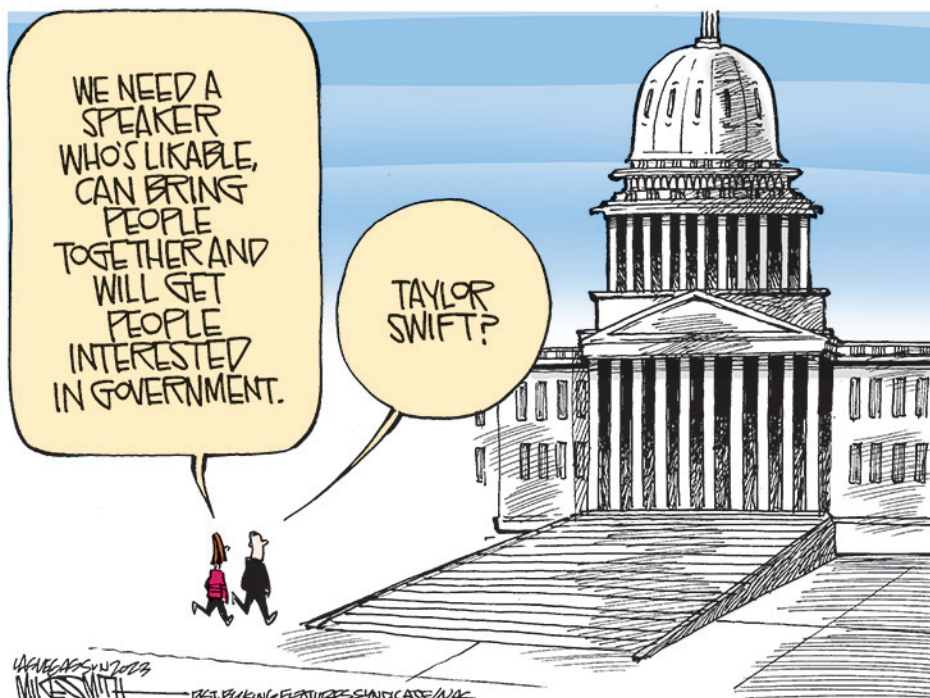
Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord...

DEUTERONOMY 18:10-12



Detail of "Witches Presenting Wax Dolls to the Devil" from *The History of Witches and Wizards* (1720)

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BIBBLE
TRIVIA
by Wilson Casey

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

2. What companion of Paul was commended for his holy scripture knowledge since childhood? *Timothy, Linus, Trophimus, Jude*

3. From 1 John 4:8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is _____." *Honor, Love, Everlasting, Comfort*

4. What king unwittingly signed a decree causing Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den? *Elah, Jabin, Darius, Agag*

5. Because Moses was standing on holy ground, what did God tell him to remove? *Cloak, Hat, Shoes, Armor*

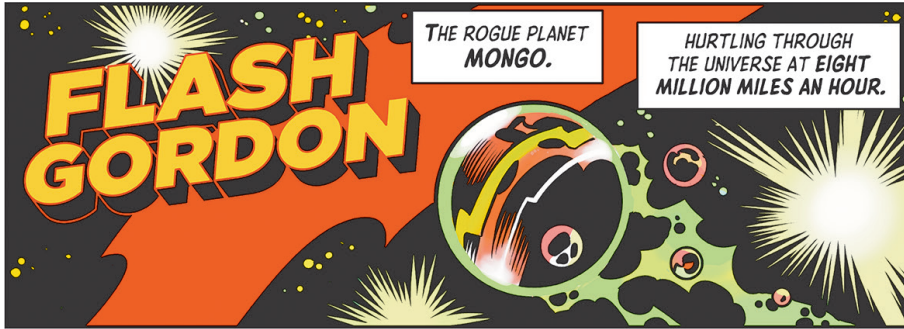
6. In Judges 16, who said, "Let me die with the Philistines"? *Samson, Micah, Delilah, Manoah*

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Timothy, 3) Love, 4) Darius, 5) Shoes, 6) Samson

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

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FLASH GORDON

THE ROGUE PLANET MONGO.

HURLING THROUGH THE UNIVERSE AT EIGHT MILLION MILES AN HOUR.



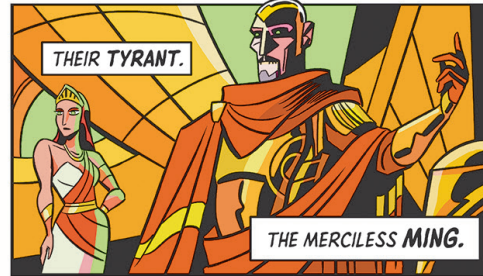
AN ALIEN WORLD OF ENDLESS DIVERSITY.

FROM THE JUNGLES OF ARBORIA TO THE ICY SLOPES OF FRIGIA... THE SEA OF MYSTERY, THE SKY LANDS, THE BLASTED WASTELAND OF THE FLAMES AND BEYOND.

THE WORLD OF MONGO IS SPLIT INTO KINGDOMS, EACH GOVERNED BY PROUD ROYAL STEWARDS...

...ALL BROKEN TO THE WILL OF THEIR EMPEROR.

IN TIME, MING SETS HIS DESIGNS OF CONQUEST ON THE EARTH.



THEIR TYRANT.

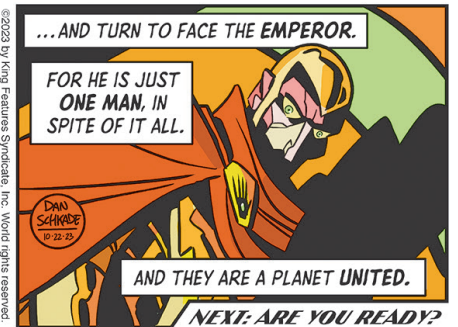
THE MERCILESS MING.

A LONE SPACECRAFT CRASH-LANDS ON MONGO -- THREE HUMANS ON A MISSION OF PEACE.

AN ATHLETE, A TRAVELER, AND A MAD, DESPERATE SCIENTIST.

BUT THEY MAKE ALLIES. THEY BRIDGE DIVIDES.

... AND TURN TO FACE THE EMPEROR.



ALONE AGAINST AN EMPIRE.

SLOWLY, WITH THEIR HELP, THE MONGOTHIC KINGDOMS STOP BICKERING WITH EACH OTHER...

FOR HE IS JUST ONE MAN, IN SPITE OF IT ALL.

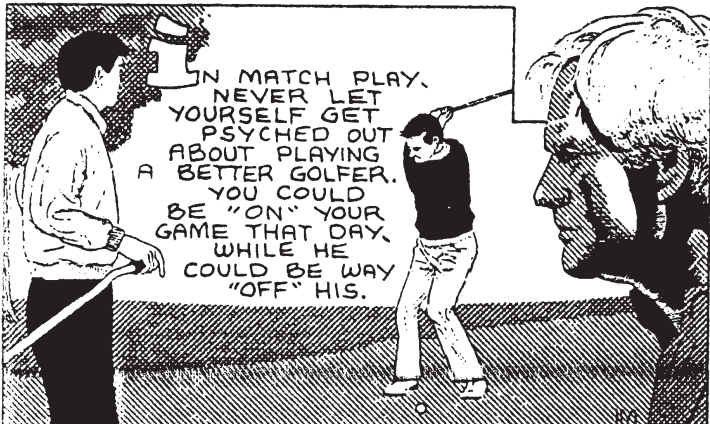
AND THEY ARE A PLANET UNITED.

NEXT: ARE YOU READY?

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DAN SCHAEDE 10-22-23

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



IN MATCH PLAY, NEVER LET YOURSELF GET PSYCHED OUT ABOUT PLAYING A BETTER GOLFER. YOU COULD BE "ON" YOUR GAME THAT DAY, WHILE HE COULD BE WAY "OFF" HIS.



ALWAYS PLAY YOUR OWN GAME AGAINST THE SCORECARD, REMEMBERING THAT PAR GOLF WILL USUALLY ADVANCE YOUR CAUSE IN MATCH PLAY.

ONLY GAMBLE WHEN YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY FORCED TO.

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Imbruvica Shouldn't Be Withheld Long Before or After Procedures

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am 75 and have had Waldenstrom macroglobulinemia for three years, which has been treated with ibrutinib (Imbruvica) and is now in remission. A side effect of Imbruvica is bleeding, and it requires the drug to be withheld before procedures.

I need a colonoscopy and a prostate biopsy now. Ideally, how long before and after the procedures should Imbruvica be withheld? If the procedures cannot be performed a day apart, how long is too long an interval between them? How often can Imbruvica be withheld?

Also, at my age, how long is the recovery period required for anesthesia when undergoing two separate procedures? — T.

ANSWER: Waldenstrom macroglobulinemia is a rare disease — a type of blood lymphoma and a cancer of the bone marrow. Ibrutinib is a new effective treatment for many people who have this condition and sustain remissions from the disease.

As you correctly say, bleeding can be a problem with this medicine, and it is generally held for three to seven days before and after surgery (depending on the type of procedure and the risk involved). Because a prostate biopsy is a low-risk procedure and a colonoscopy has almost no risk (unless a biopsy is required, then making it a low-risk procedure), most experts would only hold the medication for three days before and after the procedure.

There have been reports of the disease flaring up when withholding the drug,

answer of how long it should be withheld. If you can get the two procedures done within a few days of each other, that would seem reasonable to me, but it is your hematologist whose clinical judgment is required. It would be ideal to coordinate the two procedures.

In my opinion, even a day in between procedures is safe from the standpoint of anesthesia risk.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am 85 and in reasonably good health. I have been an athlete for most of my life. I developed neuropathy of my feet approximately seven years ago after my back surgery, but now I am to the point where I have difficulty walking. My doctor said I have persistent spinal stenosis with no cure.

My feet are now mostly numb, and the heel of my right foot is causing more problems when I walk. Is there any medical procedure to help? — W.T.

ANSWER: “Neuropathy” is a term used to describe a syndrome of nerve damage, which can stem from dozens of different causes. Sometimes no cause is found. In your case, the neuropathy may be due to pressure on the nerve roots from your spinal stenosis, which means that the bone canals the nerves go through once they leave the spinal cord are too small.

There are treatments, starting with surgery, to relieve pressure on the nerves, which provides some, but usually only temporary relief. Surgery is not appropriate for everyone, either because of their back anatomy or because they aren't good candidates for surgery due to other reasons.

Physical therapy can be helpful for some people. Medications are also helpful, but they can only relieve the pain, not the numbness. Medicines that are more specific for nerve pain, such as gabapentin or amitriptyline, are usually more effective than opiate-type medications in the long-term.

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

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Benicio Del Toro and Alicia Silverstone star in "Reptile." Courtesy of Netflix

"Reptile" (R) -- In this crime thriller starring Benicio del Toro and Justin Timberlake, a detective (del Toro) with a past of uncovering crooked cops is put on the murder case of a young real estate agent. Her body was found by her boyfriend (Timberlake) in their home, painting him as a prime suspect. But with one trail leading back to her ex-husband (Karl Glusman), and another leading to a mentally unstable man seeking revenge for a corrupt real estate deal, solving the case won't be an easy feat. Del Toro's acting prowess is what easily carries the film, along with a refreshing performance from "Clueless" star Alicia Silverstone. Out now. (Netflix)

"Five Nights at Freddy's" (PG-13) -- Based on the video game franchise of the same name, this horror film follows security guard Mike Schmidt (Josh Hutcherson) as he starts working the night shift at Freddy Fazbear's Pizza. Abby, Mike's little sister, is in his care and accompanies him to the abandoned family fun center, where she soon discovers a few animatronics that all seem to have a mind of their own. Although a local police officer (Elizabeth Lail) comes around to warn him of Freddy's sinister past, it's only a matter of time before Mike and Abby find out for themselves. You won't look at a Chuck E. Cheese the same after this. Premieres Oct. 27. (Peacock)

"Susie Searches" (NR) -- College-aged student Susie is the host of a true crime podcast that doesn't really get much traction. Determined to make her podcast succeed, she covertly takes advantage of an opportunity to get herself more clout when a student at her college, Jesse, suddenly disappears. After Jesse does eventually get found by Susie, she gets praised as a hero, and her social status instantly begins to climb. But when another student finds incriminating evidence of Jesse's kidnapper, Susie realizes that she might be way in over her head. Kiersey Clemons ("The Flash") plays the titular character in the film, with appearances by Alex Wolff, Jim Gaffigan and Alex Moffat. Premieres Oct. 27. (Hulu)

"Surrounded" (R) -- "Black Panther's" Letitia Wright plays Moses "Mo" Washington, a female Buffalo soldier disguised as a man on a treacherous ride west in search of a gold mine after serving in the Civil War. When the stagecoach that Mo is smuggled on gets ambushed by thieves, she narrowly escapes death. But after deputies of the sheriff arrive at the scene, Mo is forced to stand guard for one of the thieves -- legendary outlaw Tommy Walsh (Jamie Bell) -- until they return with the sheriff. Knowing that other bandits from Tommy's gang are riding in search of him, Mo must continue her endless plight of survival with all the odds against her. This Western film, out now, features Michael K. Williams in his final appearance before his tragic death. (Amazon Prime Video)

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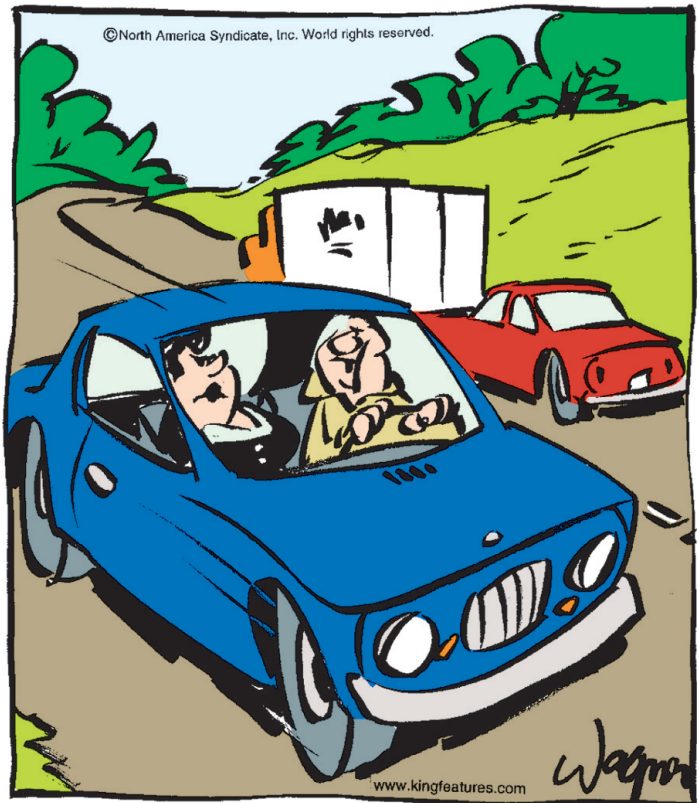
1. Which group stayed together from 1963 to 1997 without changes in members?
2. What did duo Simon & Garfunkel call themselves when they started in 1957?
3. Why is Aug. 5, 1957, significant in the history of music?
4. Name the last song Elvis Presley released.
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Debonair lullabies in melodies revealed, In deep despair on lonely nights, He knows just how you feel."

Answers

1. The Four Tops. Today only one of the original members remains: Abdul "Duke" Fakir. The group, with different members, still performs, with Fakir.
2. Tom & Jerry, specifically Tom Graph and Simon Jerry Landis. They then billed themselves as Kane & Garr before performing under their real names starting in 1964.
3. That's the day "American Bandstand" went national. After being a regional show in Philadelphia since 1952, "Bandstand" went national on ABC with Dick Clark as host.
4. "Way Down," in 1977.
5. "When Smokey Sings," by ABC in 1987. The song was a tribute to Smokey Robinson. The song did well around the world and topped the U.S. dance club songs chart. Even Robinson is said to have liked it.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



"You even have to have the last word when you're not speaking to me!"

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



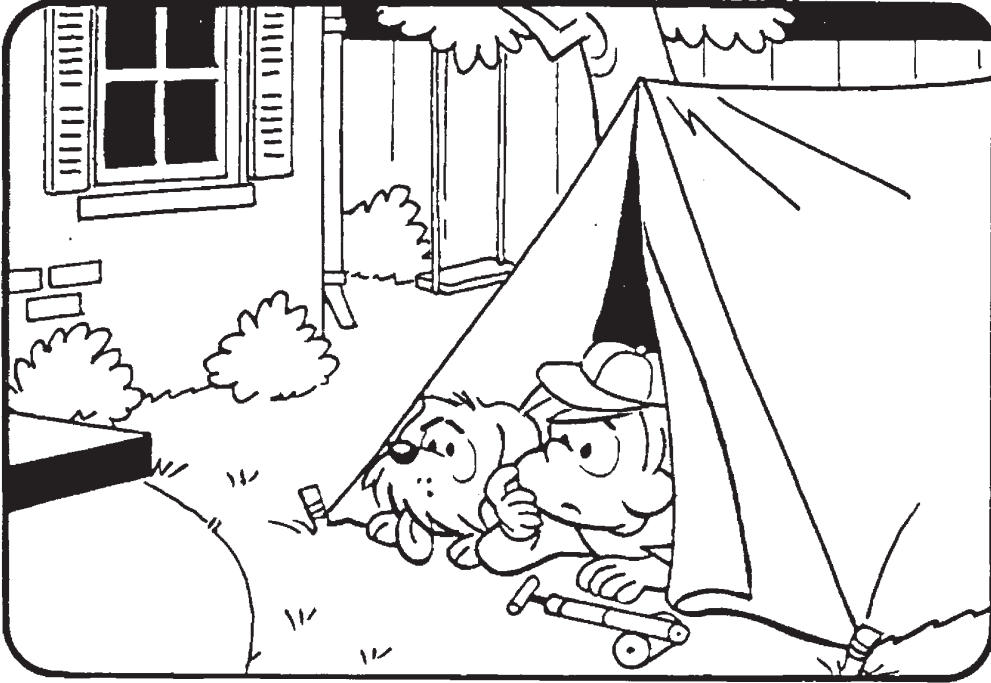
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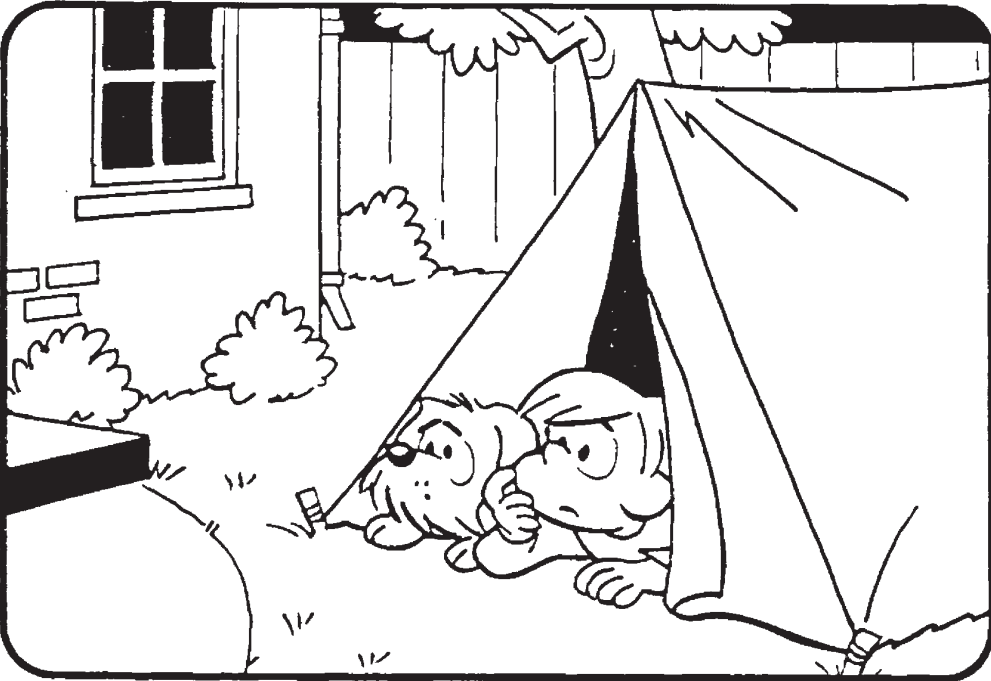
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Shutters are missing. 2. Swing is missing. 3. Dog's tongue is hidden. 4. Cap is missing. 5. Bug sprayer is missing. 6. Flap is smaller.

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* It's (past) time to weatherize your home. Temperatures are dropping, and if you haven't done it yet, don't sweat it. We have a few ideas for you. Here are mine: Layer up and keep a sweater on when lounging about the house. Extra clothes don't cost anything to wear, and they don't dry out the air, either! -- JoAnn

* Heavy drapes can be a great investment to draft-proof your windows. Best are insulation-lined, but you can double hang some good quality curtains to get a similar effect.

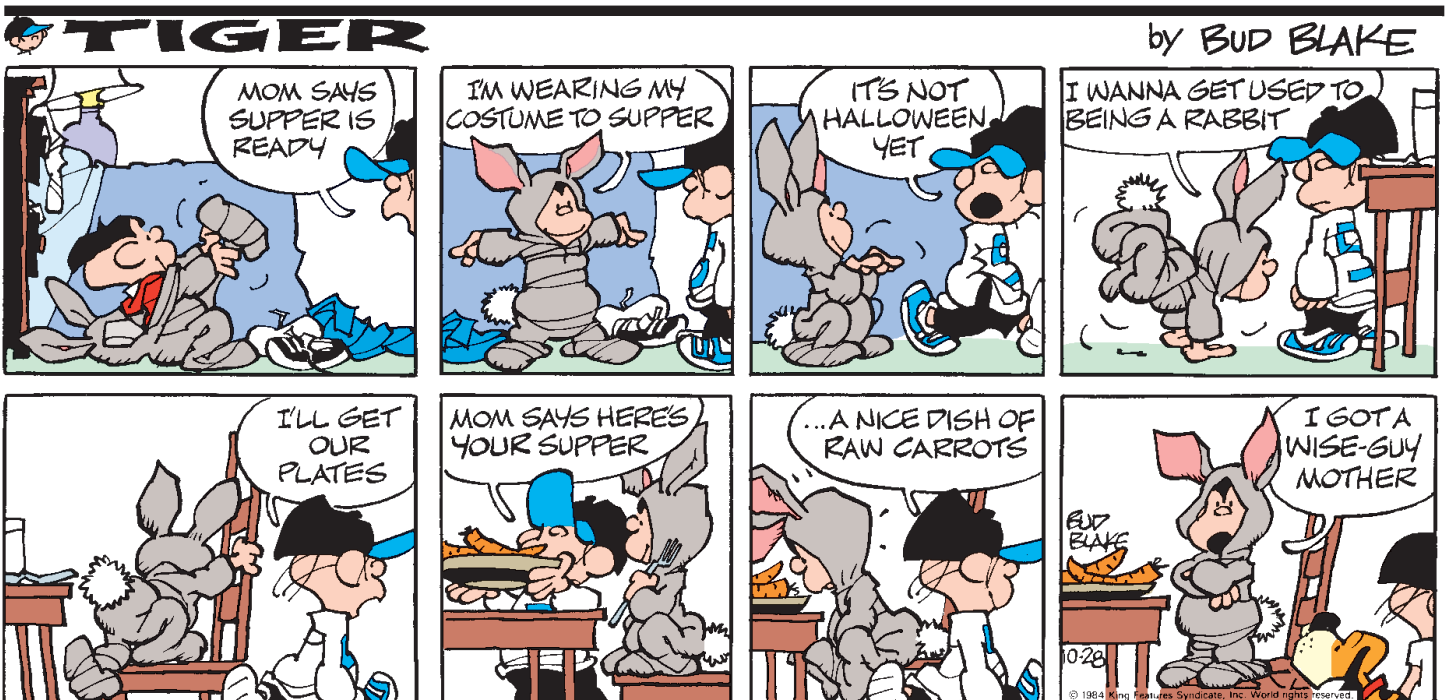
* One of the best investments I made was a water heater cover for my unit. It's in the garage, and it gets very cold in there. The blanket was easy to install, and it keeps my water heater from having to work to keep all that water heated. It wasn't very expensive. -- R.A. in Washington

* Don't overlook your outlets when weatherproofing. They are really just a hole that is covered by a plastic plate. The hardware store sells fireproof insulated inserts that work very well to keep electrical boxes from stealing your house heat. -- M.M. in Indiana

* Draft dodgers, or door snakes, are easy to make and provide reasonable protection against drafts. To make one for yourself, you'll need a pair of thick tights, fabric scraps cut into inch-wide strips and a big bag of rice. Cut the tights off into two long leg portions. Stuff them with fabric scraps and then add rice to give weight and fill in the holes. When the long "socks" are full, tie them off. Lay them out along the threshold, pushing them tight against the door, where they will block the draft!

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

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Lass
- 4 Choose
- 8 Beanies
- 12 Historic time
- 13 Actor's quest
- 14 Theater award
- 15 Contingency funds
- 17 Goddess of victory
- 18 Orange veggies
- 19 Pursuing
- 20 Cellist Casals
- 22 Innocent one
- 24 New York canal
- 25 Misfortune
- 29 Balloon filler
- 30 Pal

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
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			35						36			
37	38	39					40					
41					42	43					44	45
46					47					48		
49					50					51		

- 31 Big D.C. lobby
- 32 Melancholy melodies
- 34 Alike (Fr.)
- 35 Aftermath
- 36 Condition
- 37 Of the Arctic
- 40 Chinese dynasty
- 41 Egg
- 42 Believed
- 46 Ganges wrap
- 47 Skip
- 48 Apprehend
- 49 BPOE members
- 50 Lectern locale
- 51 Sticky stuff
- 7 Lock opener
- 8 Have a huddle
- 9 Slightly
- 10 Toll road
- 11 Crystal gazer
- 16 Like ganders
- 19 "Dear —"
- 20 Stew veggies
- 21 Operatic solo
- 22 Police ID
- 23 Tosses in
- 25 Nonsense
- 26 Attractive
- 27 "I smell —!"
- 28 Hardy cabbage
- 30 Sow's mate
- 33 Hindu teachers
- 34 Sicilian volcano
- 36 Prepares flour
- 37 Sit for a photo
- 38 Ellipse
- 39 Hide in the bushes
- 40 1502, in Old Rome
- 42 Brick carrier
- 43 "I — Rock"
- 44 Eastern "way"
- 45 "Game of Thrones" ailer

DOWN

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— King Crossword —

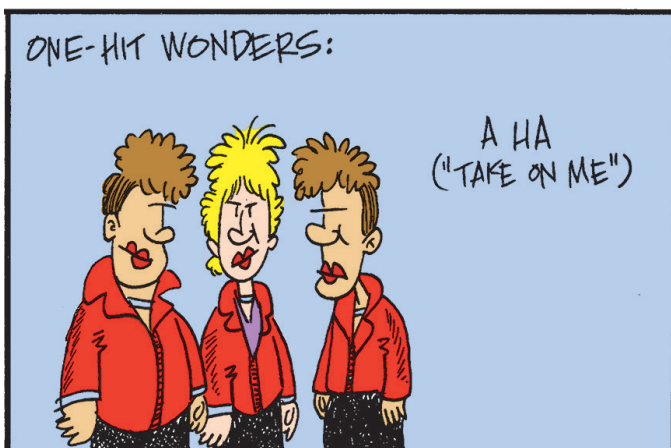
Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

G	A	L		P	I	C	K		C	A	P	S
E	R	A		R	O	L	E		O	B	I	E
M	A	D	M	O	N	E	Y		N	I	K	E
		Y	A	M	S			A	F	T	E	R
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Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

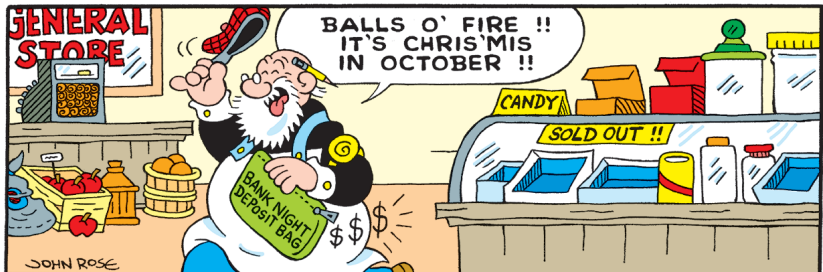
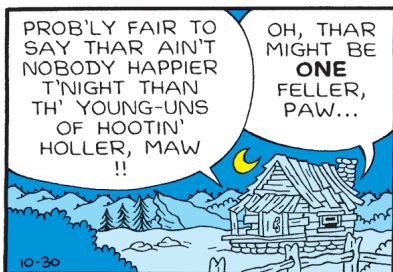
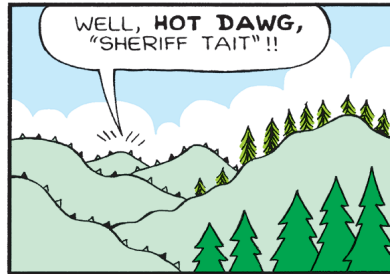
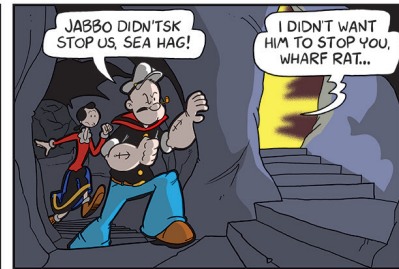
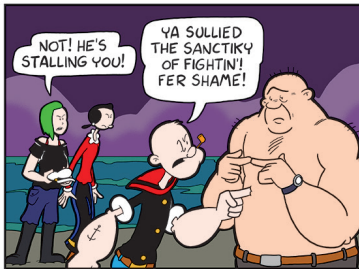
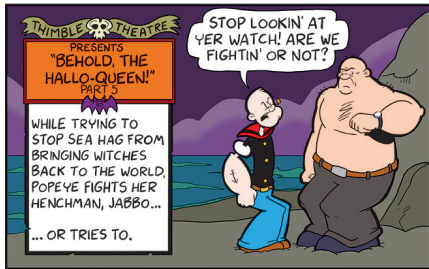
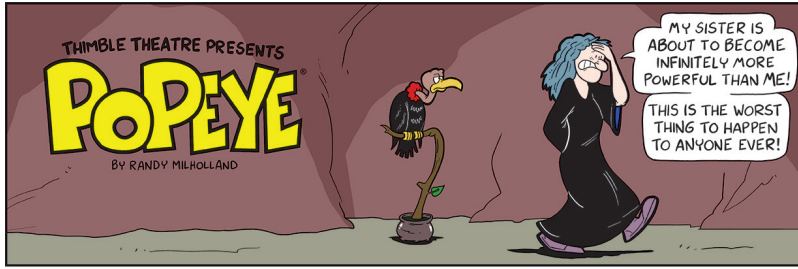


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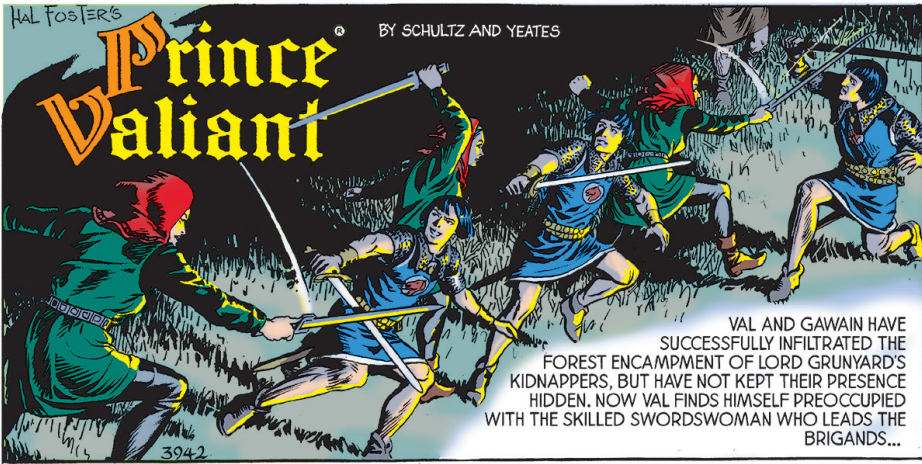
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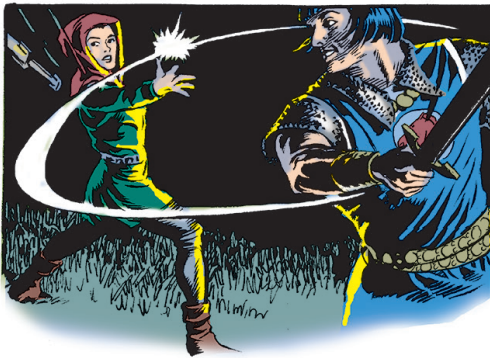


VAL AND GAWAIN HAVE SUCCESSFULLY INFILTRATED THE FOREST ENCAAMPMENT OF LORD GRUNYARD'S KIDNAPPERS, BUT HAVE NOT KEPT THEIR PRESENCE HIDDEN. NOW VAL FINDS HIMSELF PREOCCUPIED WITH THE SKILLED SWORDSWOMAN WHO LEADS THE BRIGANDS...



... AND SO MUCH SO THAT HE CAN NO LONGER KEEP TRACK OF THE LIKewise EMBATTLED GAWAIN. THIS IS NOT GOOD. VAL WOULD RATHER NOT USE BASE STRENGTH TO IMPOSE UPON THE LADY...

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... BUT THE TIME FOR COURTEOUS COMPROMISE IS PAST. WITH A PRACTICED MANEUVER, SHE IS DISARMED...

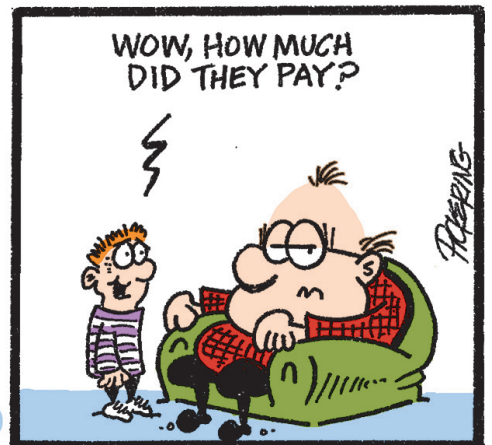
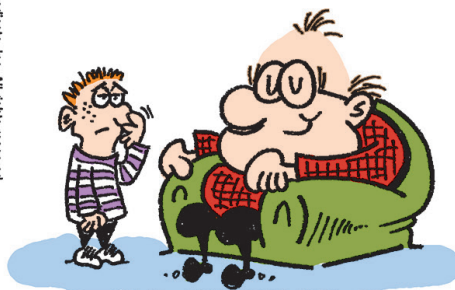


The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Social Security Increase for 2024

The 3.2% Social Security increase for 2024 is higher than it has averaged over the past two decades, but it certainly is nowhere near the 8.7% increase we received for 2023.

This 2024 increase will mean \$58 more per month for those receiving the average benefit in 2023. Out of that \$58, we'll pay an additional \$10 for Medicare Part B.

How do they get these increase numbers every year? They get these numbers by comparing this year's third quarter to that of the previous year and do a cost of living adjustment (COLA) based on that. They also use the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) to calculate what they call a "basket of goods and services."

Therein lies our problem. While that index is no doubt useful for those who have to set financial policy for the country, the CPI-W index they use to calculate our Social Security benefit isn't geared to seniors. Instead, that index is geared toward blue collar (hourly) wage earners for 200 items and is broken down into eight groups: medical care, housing, food and beverage, transportation, housing, apparel, education and communication, and other goods and services.

You can see immediately why that doesn't work for seniors. We have vastly different medical costs, approximately double. Our housing costs are not the same. Transportation isn't the same, and neither are apparel, education or any of the others.

Another price index, however, the Consumer Price Index for Americans 62 years of age and older (R-CPI-E), considers the differences between the two groups ... but they still don't use the "E" index to calculate our Social Security.

Why is that, we wonder? I bet our representatives and senators in Congress would know the answer if we call them.

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1. What Baseball Hall of Famer was known as "The Fordham Flash" for his speed on the basepaths?

2. What member of the Chicago Bulls was selected No. 1 overall by the Toronto Raptors in the 1995 NBA Expansion Draft?

3. Bramall Lane is the home stadium of what English Premier League football team?

4. Japanese pitcher Kazuhisa Ishii made his Major League Baseball debut with what team in 2002?

5. "The Battle for the Rag" was the name of a college football rivalry game between what two teams?

6. Tighthead prop, openside-flanker and fly-half are player positions in what sport?

7. What annual ultramarathon race in Greece commemorates the 153-mile run of messenger Pheidipides before the Battle of Marathon in 490 B.C.?



by Ryan A. Berenz

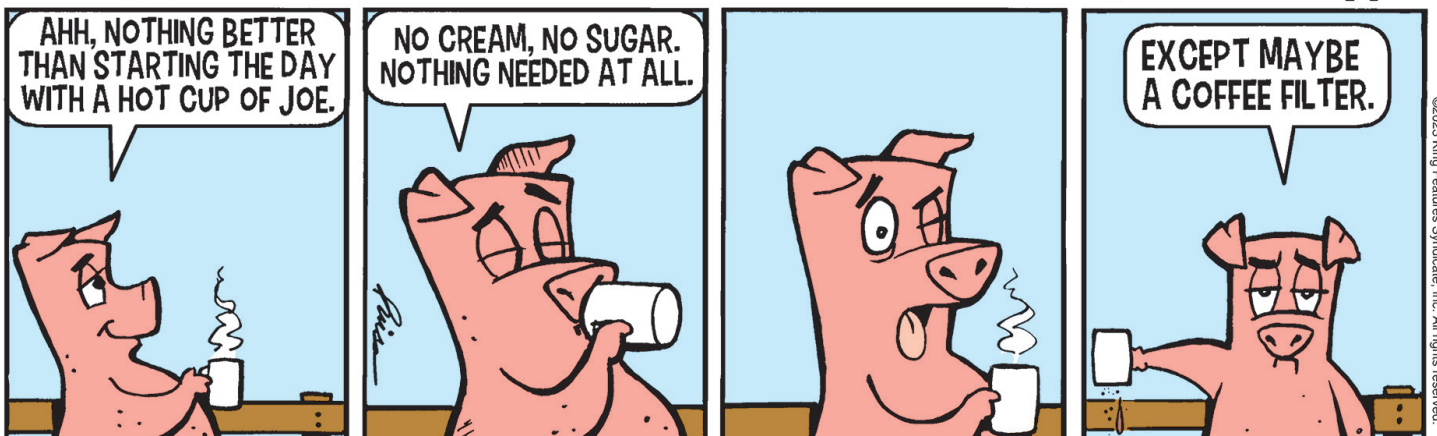
Answers

1. Frankie Frisch.
2. B.J. Armstrong.
3. Sheffield United F.C.
4. The Los Angeles Dodgers.
5. The LSU Tigers and Tulane Green Wave.
6. Rugby union.
7. The Spartathlon.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Will Bells Help Stop Cats From Attacking Wildlife?

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I'm writing about your recent article on the pack of outdoor cats that had started hunting in the person's yard. This person was looking for ways to keep birds and other small creatures safe from these cats. You should have added a suggestion that the neighbors bell their cats so that chipmunks, birds and other creatures have a chance to escape. -- Elizabeth L., via email

DEAR ELIZABETH: That's a good point, and thanks for suggesting it! One issue that the person had was that only a few of the cats roaming together actually

had collars, making them wonder if some were housecats and others were strays or feral cats. They also weren't sure which neighbors the cats with collars might belong to.

If they knew which neighbors had those cats, they could certainly speak with the neighbors about at least putting a bell on their collars to warn wildlife of their approach. But sometimes, neighbors in rural areas of the U.S. aren't very approachable. You may know what I mean.

So, an indirect approach is sometimes the best or only way to address the problem in an area with no animal control department. Join the local community's Facebook page and post about the problem that outdoor cats are causing for wildlife in the area. Find opportunities to speak to others about it at church, school board meetings and public forums.

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

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* In a survey of hundreds of Oreo cookie eaters, Kraft Foods came to the conclusion that biters were easygoing and self-confident; dunkers displayed a more energetic and adventurous side; and twisters leaned toward the sensitive and trendy.

* The average person spends 38 days brushing their teeth during their lifetime.

* Not only does the moon have its own time zones, but an astronomer designed a watch relying on "lunations," the amount of time it takes for the moon to revolve and rotate around the earth.

* There are more than 10 holidays that support chocolate. Naturally, we fully support that.

* The "Trembling Giant" in Utah's Fishlake National Forest includes over 47,000 quaking aspen trees that share the same root system. Some scientists have estimated its age at nearly a million years old.

* An hour of drumming will burn between 400-600 calories. That's more than hiking or weightlifting.

* The oldest known prosthetic wear, a toe made primarily of wood and bound with leather thread, possibly dating to 950 B.C., was discovered on the mummified body of an Egyptian noblewoman in Cairo in 2000.

* Male Hercules beetles possess an elongated horn that can surpass their body length.

* Stanford University's English department offers a course titled "The Last Great American Songwriter: Storytelling with Taylor Swift Through the Eras," in which students analyze Swift's albums and draw connections between her lyrics and classic literature.

* Only four words in the English language end in "dous."

* Cambodian bamboo trains are made of an electric generator and a makeshift bamboo platform for seating and run at speeds of up to 40 km per hour. While unmaintained tracks do indeed make for some bumpy rides, at least the fares are low.

Thought for the Day: "Doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will." -- Suzy Kassem

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Monotropa uniflora lacks chlorophyll pigments and appears white. It grows in the decaying debris of dark, dense-growth forests across the Northern hemisphere. Each stem bears a single delicate flower that hangs downward, which protects its pollen from the rain and lets insect pollinators access it. The clear fluid from its stems has been used to treat eye problems, skin problems, seizures and pain by Native Americans and traditional medicine practitioners. - Brenda Weaver

Sources: medium.com, wildadironacks.org



by Freddy Groves

A Pledge for Improved Health Care

The Department of Veterans Affairs has hooked up with 13 civilian health care systems with the goal of improving veteran health care, whether those veterans are getting their care in or out of the VA.

The Veteran Interoperability Pledge has been made by those health care systems with agreements to exchange information and collaborate with the VA in several ways: Identify veterans when they go for

civilian care, connect veterans with resources (especially ones that reduce the veteran's expenses) and coordinate care. The information will be shared both ways.

Specifically, the VA will:

- Let the civilian health care systems into the VA system to determine a veteran's status.
- Automate the process of determining eligibility and referrals.
- Let the health systems have access to health resources at the state and federal levels
- Let the health systems have access to clinical and admin data to assess and coordinate care

I scarcely know where to begin ...

If a veteran is seeking civilian care, why? Is it because the local VA just isn't close enough, or is it because he feels he'll get better care at a civilian provider?

Will the veteran have a say in whether his personal information is shared with the VA after seeing a civilian provider?

A recent VA news release states that the VA will "safeguard the privacy and security" of veteran information.

Is anyone concerned about hacking? This year one health care group (of the 13 systems that have made the pledge) had a data breach of 1,600 patients. Two years ago another had a data breach that affected over a million people. Two months ago another health care system suffered a breach that affected thousands. Two months ago one had a breach that affected tens of thousands in approximately 40 states. And on and on ...

The VA's news release added a tiny note, that they will strive to "provide proof-of-concept" in early 2024. Which means this is a trial to see if it works.

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Wishing Well®

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

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1. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a male duck called?
2. LITERATURE: Who wrote the novel "Pride and Prejudice"?
3. ASTRONOMY: In which constellation are the gas and dust clouds called the Pillars of Creation located?
4. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president died at his retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia?
5. MOVIES: Which 1999 movie features a character named Neo?
6. MEDICAL: Which part of the human body is affected by Bright's Disease?
7. TELEVISION: In which state is the sitcom "Newhart" set?
8. GEOGRAPHY: What is the tallest mountain in Africa?
9. HISTORY: Which politician made the phrase "Iron Curtain" famous in a speech about eastern Europe?
10. U.S. STATES: What is the capital of South Dakota?

Answers

1. A drake.
2. Jane Austen.
3. Serpens.
4. Franklin Roosevelt.
5. "The Matrix."
6. The kidneys.
7. Vermont.
8. Mount Kilimanjaro.
9. Winston Churchill.
10. Pierre.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Birds of a Feather

South Dakota always seems to come alive in autumn. The air is crisp and cool, the leaves on the trees change to create a colorful masterpiece, and our farmers are preparing to harvest their crops. But there is one particular part of fall in South Dakota that has always put our state on the map. It's an iconic South Dakota tradition that we're known for worldwide: pheasant hunting.

We are celebrating the beginning of pheasant hunting season. You know, I think South Dakota is the only state that actively celebrates shooting its state bird! And it's something we do with pride.

Our pheasant hunting roots run deep in South Dakota – and rightfully so. We have the best pheasant hunting in the world! People come from all over for a chance to participate in my favorite outdoor sport.

For me, pheasant hunting season always reminds me of my family. Before I was old enough to get my own hunting license, I used to follow my grandmother, Dorris, when she was out bird hunting. My dad preferred big game hunting. And from a young age, my siblings and I went with him. Our family trips were often hunting trips. Those trips were where I learned some of the best life lessons that I still use on a daily basis. Hunting taught me how to be a problem solver.

Hunting was always something that my family did together. Now, as a mother and a grandmother, I've continued the family tradition with my own kids and grandkids. I wanted to make sure that my kids learned the same lessons that I valued learning from my dad so much.

Now, I have two little grandkids. It warms my heart to know that future generations in my family will have the same kind of experiences that I did with my grandmother and my dad.

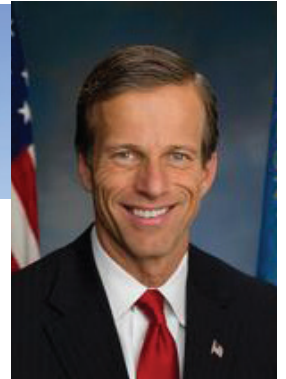
Hunting and guns aren't political in South Dakota – they're a way of life. And every year during pheasant season, we welcome people to join our South Dakota family for a little while. Folks get together to hunt, but they also get to experience all that our state has to offer. Our small-town communities treat visitors like one of our own. In South Dakota, we still believe in traditional, down-home, American values. And I hope that our visitors feel that whenever they come here.

In South Dakota, we really are like birds of a feather. And every fall, we flock together to spend time with our friends and families, enjoy the best pheasant hunting in the world, and enjoy the great outdoors.

There is something so special about the rugged Wild West during this time of year. Whether you live in South Dakota or come to visit us, I hope you will take advantage of all that this season has to offer.

Happy pheasant season – I look forward to seeing you all in the field!

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



South Dakota's Pheasant Hunting Tradition

A crisp, cool morning. The sight of blaze orange all around. Shouts of "rooster!" followed by the crack of a shotgun. It can only mean one thing: It's pheasant season in South Dakota.

Ring-necked pheasants were introduced in South Dakota over 100 years ago. Not long after they were introduced, our state's hunting tradition began, and as South Dakota's pheasant population grew, so did the number of hunters who flocked to the prairies each year. Today the pheasant opener is all but an official holiday, and it's a key part of our state's heritage, our communities' character, and many South Dakota families' traditions.

Like a lot of South Dakotans, I can't remember a time when I didn't look forward to the start of pheasant season. My dad, Harold, taught my brothers and me how to bag a rooster when we were growing up. Dad was never one to miss a hunting season, even into his late 90s. I shared pheasant hunting with my daughters and, later, their husbands, and I'm looking forward to my grandchildren joining us in the field when they're old enough.

For me, spending time in South Dakota's great outdoors with family and friends is a large part of why I look forward to pheasant season each year. Of course, like most sportsmen, I also look forward to the challenge of the hunt itself. While the goal is to limit out, pheasant season's benefits also go beyond just satisfied hunters, of which there are plenty. Last year, 127,000 hunters bagged 1.15 million pheasants. A majority of hunters come from outside of South Dakota, drawn in by our state's reputation as the Pheasant Capital of the World. The activity around the annual hunt contributes hundreds of millions of dollars to our state's economy, too, as hunters from near and far support local businesses.

South Dakota's famed pheasant hunting is thanks, in no small part, to land conservation efforts that support quality habitat for ringnecks. The pheasant population each fall depends on the spring nesting season and the ability of pheasants to hide their nests and protect their young. The Conservation Reserve Program, which supports farmers who take environmentally sensitive land out of production, plays an important role in establishing and maintaining pheasant habitat. The program has become the cornerstone of federal conservation programs and is a major reason for South Dakota's renowned pheasant population. In the Senate, I'm continuing to work to support and strengthen this program in the next farm bill for South Dakota's farmers and ranchers and to ensure future pheasant seasons are as good as seasons past.

There's so much to look forward to when the third Saturday in October rolls around each year. Family and friends coming together in the great outdoors. The next generation of hunters sharing in the challenge of hunting. And at the end of the day, enjoying a big meal, which hopefully includes some fresh pheasant. I wish all the hunters across South Dakota a safe and successful hunting season.

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



The Big Three – Groundhog Day, Again

BIG Update

For more than two weeks, the U.S. House has not had a Speaker of the House, and without a leader, the House is at a standstill. It's an unfortunate situation, but I am holding onto hope that we will make it out the other side – quickly. America has been in seasons of chaos like this and much worse before, and we remain the greatest nation in history. There are 247 years that testify to America standing as a beacon of hope and freedom. Sometimes it is messy, but the beauty of America is unity, despite our differences.

BIG Idea

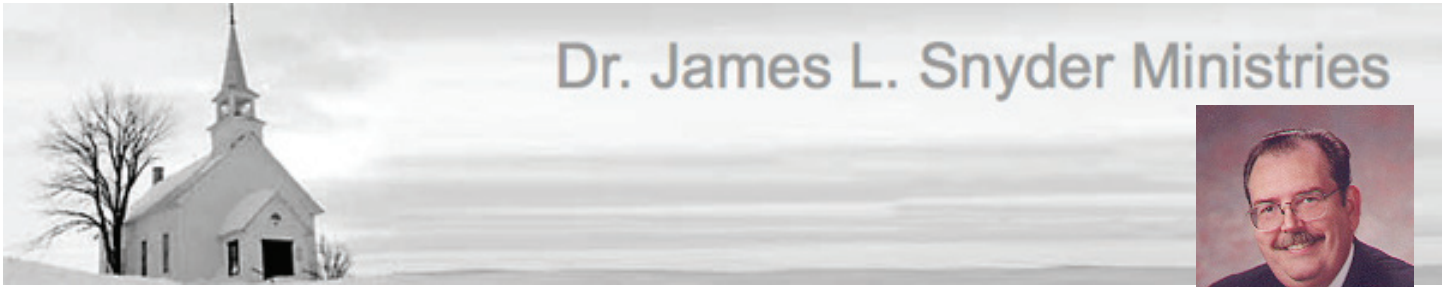
The Subcommittee on Highways and Transit met this week to discuss solutions for the Highway Trust Fund as electric vehicles become more popular. People who drive gas-powered cars contribute to the Highway Trust Fund through the gas tax, but electric vehicle owners don't contribute to this fund that maintains our roads. One suggested solution is a 'pay at the pump' approach at EV-charging stations, but that wouldn't cover the majority of EV charges which are done at home. Another possible approach is tracking vehicle miles traveled, but the infrastructure can be expensive and has personal privacy concerns. I asked Jeff Davis from Eno Center of Transportation about how to address this unique dilemma. You can watch my remarks here or click the image below.

BIG News

The conflict in Israel and Gaza continues to capture headlines worldwide. America must continue to stand with our ally Israel. Hamas' stated goal is to wipe out the Jewish people and the nation of Israel – we must take them at their word. The Biden Administration's decision to return \$6 billion to Iran (the largest state sponsor of terrorism) in a hostage deal should never be transferred to Iran. I am supporting a bill, the No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act, to permanently sanction and block these funds from ever reaching the Iranian regime.

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I Then Thought of Chocolate

Everybody has their own comfort food. I have a long list of comfort food, and Apple Fritter is at the top. Nothing comforts me quite like a fresh Apple Fritter.



The other day I needed some comfort food. After all, life can be rather stressful, and you either deal with the stress or let it deal with you.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage planned to spend the day thrift store shopping with one of our daughters. Thus, I had a whole day to deal with my stress.

The first thing I did was go where I usually get my Apple Fritter. I was quite excited on my way there, knowing I would have all day to enjoy my favorite comfort food. Even thinking about it caused me to lose a lot of my stress.

Then the unthinkable happened. I got to the place to purchase my Apple Fritter and was shocked to find they had no Apple Fritters in stock. They were out and did not know when any would be available.

If I had stress at the beginning of the day, it was nothing compared to the stress I was now experiencing. How can any store run out of the most important food item in the world?

Staring at the cashier, I said, "Could you check your inventory to see if maybe there's one you missed?"

She did, and much to my chagrin, there was none to be found. I staggered outside, as stressed as I've ever been in my life. What in the world am I going to do without an Apple Fritter? Especially at a time when I can sneak one behind the back of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

As I drove home, I didn't know what to do. I spent the whole day trying to figure this out, and if my luck is as it usually is, I will discover a solution three minutes before The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage walks in the door.

As I walked into the house thinking about this, I got a fresh cup of coffee, went to my easy chair, and tried to think through this problem.

No comfort food qualifies for my stress situation at this time. I did not want to sit with my stress all day. It's usually bad company. I had to come up with a solution. My wife is the one who always comes up with solutions, but I'm sure she would not volunteer any solution on this subject.

Sitting in my chair sipping coffee, trying to figure out what to do, I then thought of chocolate. Next to an Apple Fritter, a piece of chocolate is on my list of comfort foods. We are not allowed to have chocolate in our house because, according to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, chocolate gives her headaches.

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I must say I'm a little bit jealous. I thought I was the only one giving her headaches, and now she's cheating on me with chocolate headaches. They give her headaches instead of me? How dare they?

I knew we had none in the house, so I had to go out somewhere and get some delicious chocolate before she got home.

It didn't take long to get to the store, where I knew they had some nice chocolate candy. I went in, bought some, and headed for my vehicle to go home. I was so happy that my stress was almost gone before I took a bite of that chocolate.

I got home, got another fresh cup of coffee, sat in my easy chair and slowly opened this delicious chocolate candy bar. I looked at it very deliciously and reverently bowed to take my first bite.

I barely started to chew when all of the stress in my life ran for cover. I slowly chewed and chewed and chewed, and before I knew it, that chocolate bar disappeared. But so did my stress. Isn't it wonderful when you can deal with a problem so quickly?

Later that day, I heard The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage pull into the driveway. Soon, she was at the door and walked in. As usual, she came over to kiss me, and I welcomed her back home.

Then she stopped, turned around, and looked at me with one of her looks. That kind of look told me I was in some trouble. I could not figure out the trouble, but there it was.

"Oh my," she groaned as she stared at me. "I'm starting to get a headache. You did not have any chocolate candy today, did you?"

"What makes you say that?" I said as nicely as possible.

"When I kissed you I tasted chocolate. Did you have a chocolate bar while I was gone?"

All the stress I got rid of with my chocolate bar is now back because of that chocolate bar. For the life of me, I certainly cannot sort this out.

I then thought of one of my favorite scriptures. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

Comfort food is temporary, but "the peace of God" endures forever. When I give my stress to God, He is dependable and will watch over my heart and mind

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: With colder weather on the way, what are some cheap and easy ways to winterize my house that will save energy?

—Millie D., Sarasota, FL

If your home is cold and drafty in the winter, you owe it to yourself and your family to do something about it. And by making a few small upgrades—some of which you can do yourself — you'll also save energy and money.

The first line of defense against the cold coming in is to check for drafts around windows, doors and any other openings. When you find drafts, seal them with weather-stripping or caulk. Place door sweeps or draft stoppers at the bottom of exterior doors to prevent cold air from seeping in. If you have single-pane windows, consider using window film or adding insulating window panels. Even heavy curtains can help.

Another important element of keeping your home warm and cozy in winter is insulation. The North American Insulation Manufacturers Association (NAIMA) estimates that some 90 percent of U.S. homes are under-insulated, wasting energy and money and decreasing our comfort.

"If all U.S. homes were fitted with insulation based on the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)," says Boston University environmental health researcher Jonathan Levy, "residential electricity use nationwide would drop by about five percent and natural gas use by more than 10 percent,"

It's hard to know how much insulation coats your house—and where it is in your walls and roof—if you didn't build it. But certain telltale signs may mean you need more. If you feel drafts even through windows and doors that are well sealed, the cold air may be coming through the walls in spots where there is little or no insulation. Another sign of too little or inadequate insulation is when different rooms in the house are colder than others. Getting an inspection from a local reputable insulation installer is a great way to get started taking care of this common and easily fixed problem. While you're at it, get a look at your roof to make sure you aren't missing any roof tiles, which can also let cold air in and heated air out. If you can't climb up there yourself easily, get a roofing contractor to give you a free inspection, and make sure they take pictures to back up their reporting to you.

Another way to boost the heat and efficiency of your heating system, whether you have an oil or gas burning furnace, electric baseboard or anything in between, is to get it serviced by a HVAC professional who can fine tune it and alert you to any problems in the system.

There are lots of other ways to warm things up in your home this winter without breaking the bank. If you have ceiling fans, switch them to the reverse (clockwise) direction to help circulate warm air that rises to the ceiling. If you don't already have one, get a programmable thermostat and use it to lower the temperature when you're not at home or overnight when you're asleep..



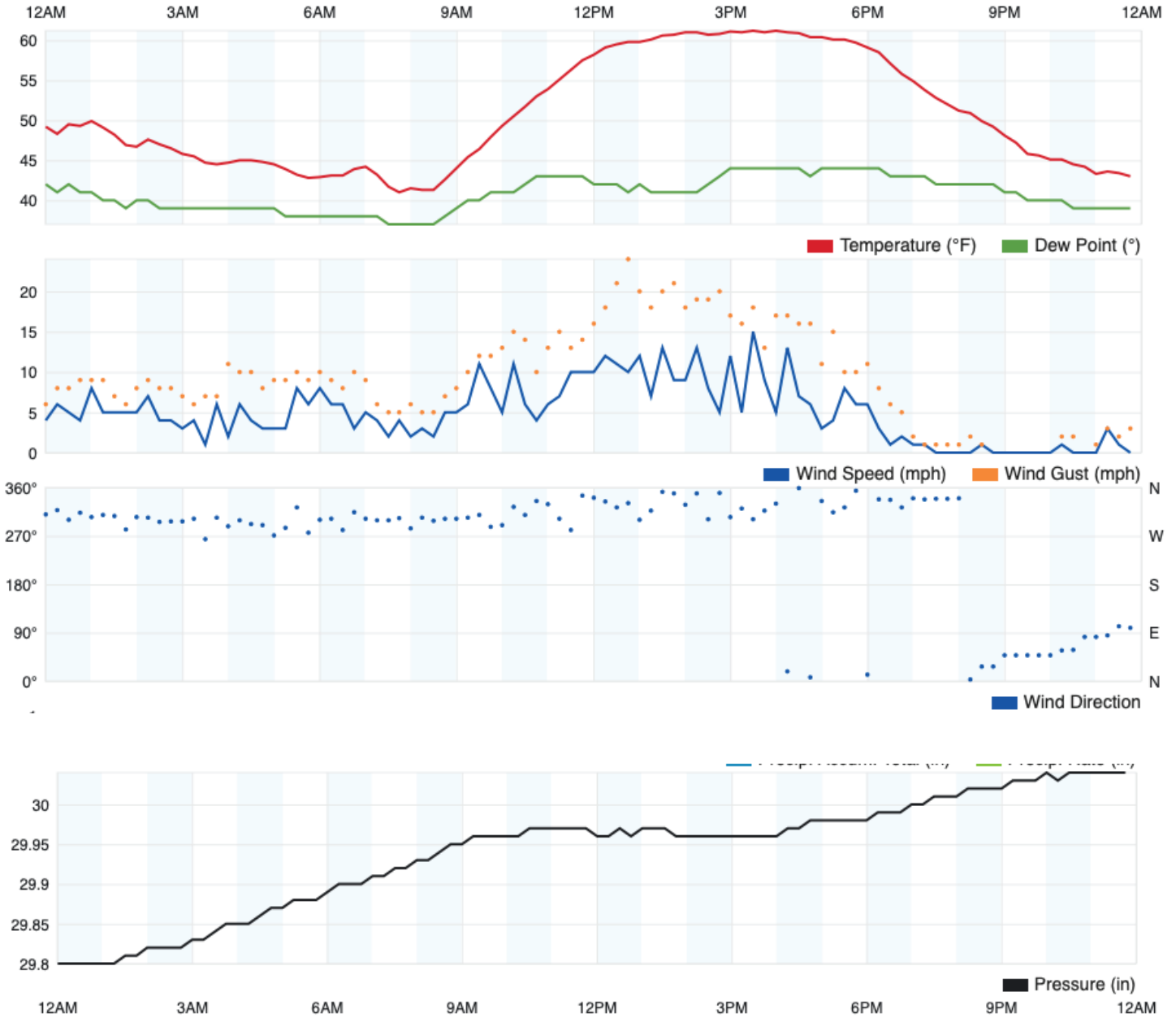
Fixing drafty windows and doors should be priority number one for homeowners interested in saving energy and money this winter. Credit: Kat

Kynes, FlickrCC.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Sun Oct 22	Mon Oct 23	Tue Oct 24	Wed Oct 25	Thu Oct 26	Fri Oct 27	Sat Oct 28
63°F	66°F	56°F	45°F	45°F	43°F	35°F
44°F	44°F	35°F	29°F	28°F	23°F	21°F
SSE	S	NNE	N	NNE	W	NNW
21 MPH	12 MPH	13 MPH	13 MPH	15 MPH	16 MPH	11 MPH
				30%	20%	



Mild and Windy Today

October 22, 2023
3:13 AM

Elevated Fire Weather West River

Maximum Wind Gust Forecast

10/22

Sun

	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	Maximum
Aberdeen	16	21	25	28	29	30	31	31	31	30	28	26	25	25	24	23	31
Britton	14	17	21	23	25	26	28	28	28	26	25	24	23	23	23	23	28
Brookings	7	9	14	17	18	18	18	20	21	22	22	21	20	18	18	18	22
Chamberlain	16	18	23	28	30	30	30	30	29	25	23	24	25	26	26	26	30
Clark	16	20	22	23	24	25	26	26	26	25	25	25	26	26	26	26	26
Eagle Butte	26	29	31	32	33	32	30	28	24	22	20	17	16	15	14	13	33
Ellendale	14	18	23	25	28	29	30	31	30	26	24	22	21	20	20	20	31
Eureka	21	25	29	31	33	35	35	35	32	29	26	23	22	21	21	20	35
Gettysburg	24	28	31	33	35	36	36	35	32	30	28	26	25	25	24	24	36
Huron	15	18	22	24	25	26	26	26	26	24	22	23	24	24	23	23	26
Kennebec	21	25	29	31	32	33	35	35	33	32	30	28	26	25	24	23	35
McIntosh	29	31	33	33	32	30	29	26	24	22	18	16	15	14	13	13	33
Milbank	7	9	12	14	16	18	20	20	20	18	16	15	14	14	13	13	20
Miller	20	22	25	28	29	30	30	29	28	26	26	25	25	25	25	25	30
Mobridge	23	26	30	32	32	31	30	28	25	24	22	21	20	18	17	17	32
Murdo	26	29	31	33	36	37	36	33	31	29	26	24	23	23	22	21	37
Pierre	18	22	25	28	29	30	30	29	28	26	26	25	24	22	22	20	30
Redfield	18	22	25	28	28	29	30	30	29	28	26	26	25	25	25	25	30
Sisseton	9	12	14	16	18	21	22	23	23	22	21	20	18	17	17	17	23
Watertown	10	14	17	20	21	22	23	24	24	23	23	22	22	23	23	23	24
Webster	15	18	21	23	25	26	28	28	28	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	28
Wheaton	7	9	12	14	16	18	20	21	21	20	20	18	18	20	20	20	21

*Table values in mph

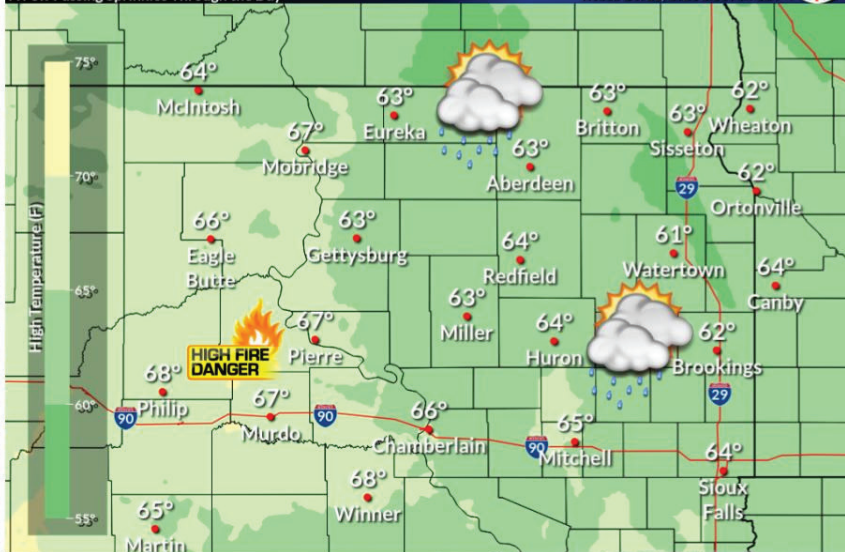
High Temperatures on Sunday

A Few Passing Sprinkles Through the Day

Weather Forecast Office

Aberdeen, SD

Issued Oct 22, 2023 2:53 AM CDT



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Southerly winds will kick in today helping to keep the mild temperatures in place across central and northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota. A few areas could see some passing sprinkles from time to time through the day, but not expecting anything measurable. South to southeast winds will be 15-25 mph with higher gusts at times, especially by late morning through the afternoon. The stronger wind gusts in areas west of the Missouri River will lead to moderate to high fire danger.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 61 °F at 4:04 PM

Low Temp: 41 °F at 7:44 AM

Wind: 24 mph at 12:45 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 10 hours, 40 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 82 in 1992

Record Low: 8 in 1895

Average High: 56

Average Low: 31

Average Precip in Oct.: 1.64

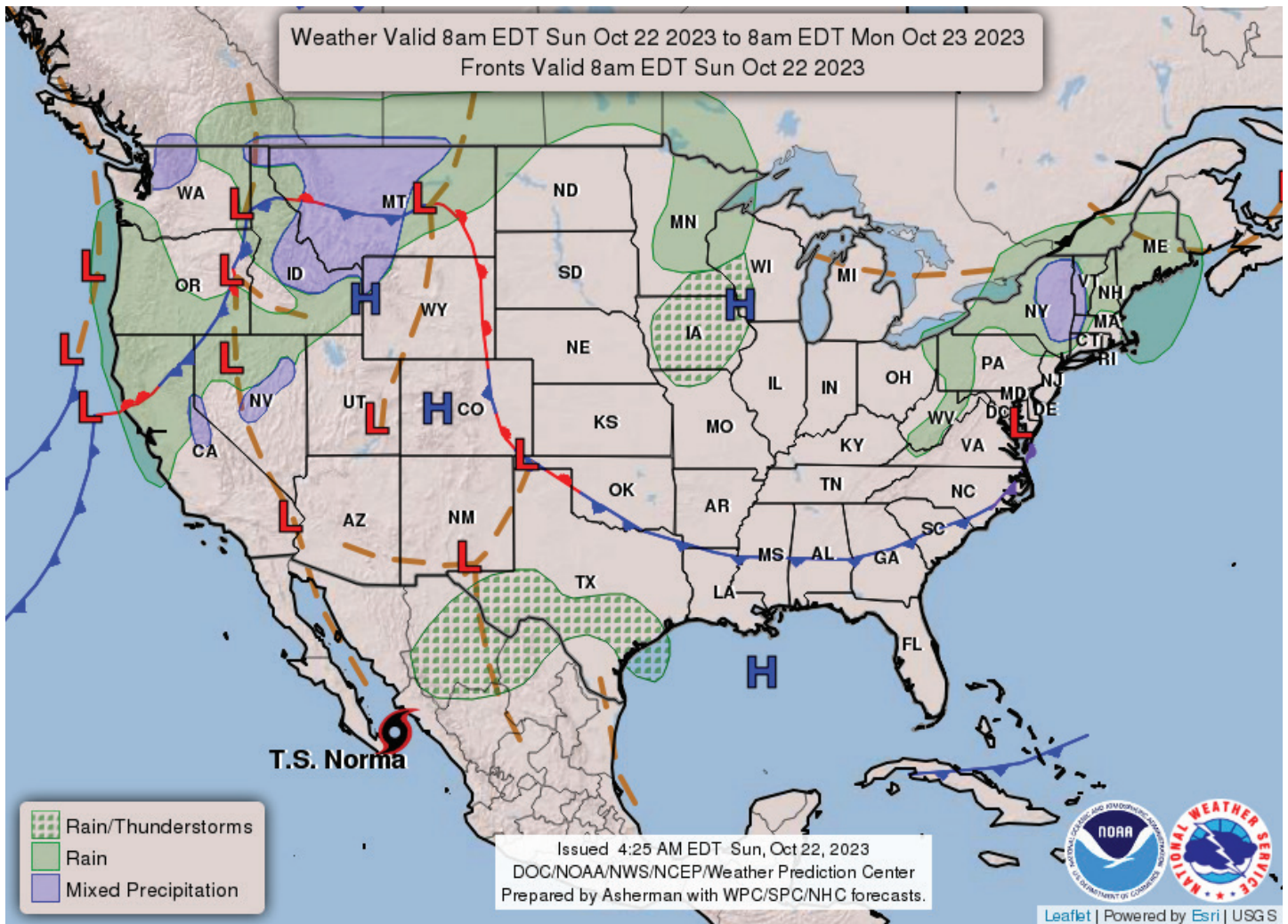
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.89

Average Precip to date: 19.97

Precip Year to Date: 22.66

Sunset Tonight: 6:37:09 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:57:54 AM



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Today in Weather History

October 22, 1992: Record heat occurred on this date. Temperatures rose into the upper 70s to the mid-80s across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. The record highs were 79 degrees at Mobridge and Timber Lake, 80 degrees at Sisseton, 82 degrees at Aberdeen, 83 degrees at Wheaton, and 85 degrees at Pierre. Although not a record high, Kennebec rose to 87 degrees on this date in 1992.

1884: A drought which began in August, extended through September and continued until the last week October brought hardship to Northern, Central, and Eastern Alabama. The 22nd was the first day of general showers, and gentle rains fell from the 26th to the 29th.

1965 - The temperature soared to 104 degrees at San Diego, CA. Southern California was in the midst of a late October heat wave that year. Los Angeles had ten consecutive days with afternoon highs reaching 100 degrees. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1985 - A guest on the top floor of a hotel in Seattle, WA, was seriously injured while talking on the phone when lightning struck. Several persons are killed each year when the electrical charge from a lightning bolt travels via telephone wiring. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Yakutat, AK, surpassed their previous all-time yearly precipitation total of 190 inches. Monthly records were set in June with 17 inches, in September with 70 inches, and in October with more than 40 inches. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987) Twenty-two cities in the eastern U.S., most of them in the southeast states, reported record low temperatures for the date. Morning lows of 30 degrees at Athens GA, 28 degrees at Birmingham AL, and 23 degrees at Pinson AL, were the coldest of record for so early in the season. (The National Weather Summary) Showers produced heavy rain in southern California, with amounts ranging up to five inches at Blue Jay. Flash flooding resulted in two deaths, ten injuries, and more than a million dollars damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A "nor'easter" swept across the coast of New England. Winds gusted to 75 mph, and large waves and high tides caused extensive shoreline flooding. A heavy wet snow blanketed much of eastern New York State, with a foot of snow reported in Lewis County. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - A storm system moving out of the Gulf of Alaska brought rain to the Northern and Central Pacific Coast Region, with snow in some of the mountains of Oregon, and wind gusts to 60 mph along the Oregon coast. Six cities in Florida reported record low temperatures for the date, including Tallahassee with a reading of 34 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1997: Game 4 of the World Series between the Cleveland Indians and the Florida Marlins was the coldest game in World Series history. The official game-time temperature was 38 degrees at Jacobs Field in Cleveland. Wind chills as low as 18 degrees was reported during the game.

1998: Tropical Depression Thirteen formed on October 22 over the southwestern the Caribbean Sea. By the 24th, this tropical depression became Hurricane Mitch. This hurricane would rapidly intensify over the next two days, reaching Category 5 strength on the 26th. Hurricane Mitch would end up being the second deadliest hurricane in the history of the Atlantic Ocean.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

GIVE UP OR GO ON?

Little Margie was having a difficult time learning to skate. It seemed as though the skates her father gave her far exceeded the strength and coordination of her legs and muscles. A neighbor watched her fall down and get up, then fall down and get up again. He was amazed at her tenacity and determination. Finally, he said to her, "Why don't you give up?"

"Because," she said with tears in her eyes, "my father didn't give me these skates to give up with but to go on with."

How like our Heavenly Father. He does not "give" gifts to us to cause us to fall, but to help us "go" with Him and grow into the likeness of His Son, our Savior.

We speak often about Paul's "affliction" - not ever knowing what it was or the problems it may have caused him personally. But we do know that he said, "So I am glad to boast about my weaknesses: for when I am weak, then I can become strong."

The great lesson for us to learn from Paul is that if and when we are willing to admit our weakness, God will fill us with His power and strength. There is always the temptation for us to try to "do it on our own." It is a natural thing to do. But that is not how God created us. God created us with needs and deficiencies so we would need to depend on Him for everything.

Prayer: Father, give us a willingness to recognize our need for You, and that in You, with You, and through You, we can overcome any weakness that may defeat us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10



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
- 11/11/2023 Groton American Legion Annual Turkey Party 6:30 pm.
- 11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
- 12/02/2023 Tour of Homes, Live & Silent Auctions at Olive Grove Golf Course 4pm-close
- 12/09/2023 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9-11am

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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.20.23

7 29 36 49 61 22

MegaPlier: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$114,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.21.23

11 23 30 36 51 6

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,940,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.21.23

2 6 24 27 38 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 13 Mins 0 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.21.23

9 15 22 23 29

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$31,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.21.23

7 18 27 33 61 5

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.21.23

6 15 24 67 68 11

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$85,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the  Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Hill City def. Alliance, Neb., 25-16, 26-24, 23-25, 27-25

Little Wound def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-14, 25-19, 25-18

Pierre T F Riggs High School def. Aberdeen Central, 12-25, 25-27, 25-18, 25-15, 15-12

Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-17, 25-5, 25-16

East-West Invitational=

Brandon Valley def. Spearfish, 25-12, 25-22

Brandon Valley def. Sturgis Brown, 25-7, 25-10

Brookings def. Sturgis Brown, 25-20, 25-16

Harrisburg def. Spearfish, 25-17, 25-21

Harrisburg def. Sturgis Brown, 25-12, 25-8

Spearfish def. Brookings, 25-18, 25-22

East-West Tournament=

Watertown def. Douglas, 16-25, 25-22, 25-16

Watertown def. Rapid City Central, 25-14, 25-19

Watertown def. Rapid City Stevens, 25-18, 25-15

Yankton def. Douglas, 19-25, 25-9, 25-21

Yankton def. Rapid City Central, 25-13, 25-20

Yankton def. Rapid City Stevens, 25-14, 25-8

SESD Conference Tourney=

Bon Homme def. Chamberlain, 25-11, 25-9

Bon Homme def. Winner, 25-22, 25-20

Burke def. Bon Homme, 25-15, 25-19

Burke def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 25-18, 24-26, 25-22

Burke def. Parkston, 25-9, 25-22

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Bon Homme, 26-24, 23-25, 25-14

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Chamberlain, 25-8, 25-7

Parkston def. Gregory, 25-12, 25-15

Parkston def. Winner, 25-17, 25-19

Wagner def. Gregory, 25-17, 25-11

Wagner def. Parkston, 25-20, 25-25, 30-28

Wagner def. Winner, 25-17, 25-14

Winner def. Gregory, 25-11, 25-10

Winner Invitational=

Wagner def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 20-25, 25-23, 25-15

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

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South Dakota State pushes winning streak to 21 games with 17-10 victory over Southern Illinois

CARBONDALE, Ill. (AP) — Isaiah Davis ran for a touchdown, Mark Gronowski threw for another, and South Dakota State extended its winning streak to 21 games with a 17-10 victory over Southern Illinois on Saturday.

The Jackrabbits, ranked No. 1 in the FCS coaches poll, ground out the win thanks in large part to a defense that did not allow a point until the fourth quarter.

Davis's 3-yard run in the second quarter, combined with Gronowski's 49-yard touchdown pass to Griffin Wilde in the third quarter, gave SDSU a 14-0 lead.

The Jackrabbits (7-0, 4-0 Missouri Valley Football Conference) appeared ready to extend their lead in the fourth quarter, but Gronowski threw an interception in the end zone that led to an 80-yard touchdown drive for Southern Illinois. Nic Baker threw 24 yards to D'Ante' Cox for the score.

Hunter Dustman added a 44-yard field goal for a 17-7 Jackrabbits lead. The Salukis (5-2, 2-2) answered with a 39-yard field goal by Thomas Burks with 32 seconds remaining. The ensuing onside kick rolled out of bounds and the Jackrabbits ran out the clock to preserve their winning streak. After Harvard's loss to Princeton earlier in the day, South Dakota State is the lone remaining undefeated team in the FCS.

Gronowski completed 15 of 21 passes for 161 yards with a touchdown and an interception. Davis had 91 rushing yards and SDSU totaled 147 yards on the ground.

Baker was 20-of-24 passing for 225 yards, also with a touchdown and an interception.

Each team had 308 yards of total offense.

___ Get alerts on the latest AP Top 25 poll throughout the season. Sign up here ___ AP college football: <https://apnews.com/hub/ap-top-25-college-football-poll> and <https://apnews.com/hub/college-football>

Pierre's 81-yard touchdown run helped South Dakota beat Indiana State 17-3

TERRE HAUTE, Ind. (AP) — Charles Pierre Jr. rushed for 107 yards on just four carries, Travis Theis added 106 yards rushing and South Dakota beat winless Indiana State 17-3 on Saturday.

Pierre raced up the middle for an 81-yard touchdown run — South Dakota's longest play of the season — with 12:04 remaining. Theis sealed it by breaking several tackles on a 24-yard run with 59 seconds left.

Both of South Dakota's touchdown drives in the second half were from 90-plus yards. Nate Thomas' 5-yard run capped a 98-yard drive.

Aidan Bouman was 11 of 17 for 180 yards passing for South Dakota (6-1, 4-0 Missouri Valley Conference). JJ Galbreath's only catch of the day went for 59 yards to set up the game's first touchdown.

Cade Chambers and Elijah Owens combined for 15-of-27 passing for 152 yards with no interceptions for Indiana State (0-6, 0-4).

Polls open for Argentina election that could see right-wing populist win the presidency

By DANIEL POLITI and DAVID BILLER Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Argentines were going to the polls Sunday, as frustrated voters weigh handing the presidency to an anti-establishment, right-wing populist who has shaken up the political system and pledges to drastically overhaul the state.

Javier Milei, a self-described anarcho-capitalist who admires former U.S. President Donald Trump, sent shockwaves through the nation after receiving the most votes in the August primaries. The economist and first-year lawmaker has said he will slash public spending, halve the number of government ministries, eliminate the central bank and replace the local currency with the U.S. dollar.

He first made a name for himself with angry tirades blasting what he calls the "political caste" on televi-

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sion, and has gained support from Argentines struggling to make ends meet amid annual inflation of 140% and a rapidly depreciating currency. His platform also calls for reshaping Argentine culture, and he casts himself as a crusader against the sinister forces of socialism at home and abroad.

"Argentina is in for a wild ride," Benjamin Gedan, director of the Latin America program at the Washington-based Wilson Center, said. "The most likely scenario is rather worrisome, a polarized society, divided congress, combative and inexperienced leader and an economy hurtling toward an abyss."

Polls opened at 8 a.m. (1100 GMT) and would close 10 hours later. Voting is conducted with paper ballots, making the count unpredictable, but initial results were expected around four hours after polls close.

Pre-election polls, which have been notoriously unreliable, gave Milei a slight lead that would be insufficient to avoid a runoff in November. In order to win outright, a candidate has to receive 45% of the vote, or 40% and a 10-point difference with the runner-up.

Whatever the results, Milei has already inserted himself and his libertarian party into a political structure dominated by a center-left and a center-right coalition for almost two decades.

Former Security Minister Patricia Bullrich of the main opposition coalition battled Milei for right-wing support and argued her team had the necessary connections and experience negotiating legislation to bring about the change the country needed.

Economy Minister Sergio Massa, a leading figure in the center-left administration in power since 2019 and in second place in most polls, sought to rally support despite the fact inflation has soared on his watch. He blamed recent troubles on a historic drought that decimated exports and said he prevented things from getting worse.

"The worst is over," Massa often said at his rallies.

On the streets of Argentina, citizens are skeptical of that, and they are bracing for impact. Those with any disposable income are snapping up goods in anticipation of a possible currency devaluation. The day after the primaries, the government devalued the peso by nearly 20%.

Argentines were also buying dollars and removing hard currency deposits from banks as the peso accelerated its already steady depreciation.

Alfredo Adrián Fernández, a 36-year-old who works in his family's bakery on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, is fed up.

"We're tired of one day waking up and beef is 3,000 pesos and in a few hours, it's 4,000 pesos. The Argentine people are exhausted by their salaries getting devoured by inflation," he said.

Massa and Bullrich focused much of their firepower in the campaign's final days on warning voters against electing Milei, painting him as a dangerous upstart. Massa in particular said that Milei's plans could have devastating effects on social welfare programs, education and health care.

The health, education and social development ministries are among those Milei wants to extinguish.

Milei characterized his two main opponents as part of the entrenched and corrupt establishment that brought South America's second-largest economy to its knees. That message resonated among many Argentines who watched their economic prospects wither under successive administrations in which both Massa and Bullrich served.

Milei also railed against what he called the "socialist agenda." He opposes sex education, feminist policies and abortion, which is legal in Argentina. He called the notion of social justice "an aberration" and disputed that humans have had a role in causing climate change.

"What madness are we living in? The madness of stupid political correctness where, basically, if you don't recite the 'cool socialism,' if you aren't 'woke,' then you're violent, you're a danger to democracy," he said in a television interview last month.

As a rising star in the global culture wars, Milei received support from several like-minded leaders, including Brazil's former far-right president, Jair Bolsonaro. Bolsonaro's lawmaker son, Eduardo, planned to follow the election from Milei's campaign headquarters as were several leaders of Spain's far-right Vox party.

"We're a global phenomenon," Milei said in his closing rally Wednesday, weeks after former Fox News host Tucker Carlson admiringly interviewed him.

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The election comes at a time when several Latin American countries have seen elections marked by anti-incumbent sentiment and political outsiders amid general discontent over the economy and crime. Daniel Noboa, an inexperienced politician who is the heir to a banana fortune, won the presidency in Ecuador earlier this month.

Like Trump and Bolsonaro, Milei already was casting doubt on the electoral system. He said fraud cost him as many as five points in the primaries, although he never filed any complaints in court. Political analysts warned that Milei could be setting the stage to question the results of Sunday's election.

6 dead in Russian rocket strike as Ukraine reports record bomb attack numbers

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A missile strike on a mail depot in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv killed six people, Ukrainian officials said Sunday.

A further 16 people were injured in the blast late Saturday, which is believed to have been caused by a Russian S-300 rocket, Kharkiv governor Oleh Syniehubov said on social media.

All of the victims were employees of private Ukrainian postal and courier service Nova Poshta.

In a statement, the company said that the air raid siren had sounded just moments before the attack, leaving those inside the depot with no time to reach shelter. It announced that Sunday would be a day of mourning for the firm.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy described the strike as an attack on an "ordinary civilian object."

"We need to respond to Russian terror every day with results on the front line. And, even more so, we need to strengthen global unity in order to fight against this terror," he wrote on social media. "Russia will not be able to achieve anything through terror and murder. The end result for all terrorists is the same: the need to face responsibility for what they have done."

Elsewhere in the Kharkiv region, three people were injured in Russian shelling on the city of Kupiansk, Syniehubov said.

The Ukrainian-held front-line city has been at the heart of fierce fighting as both Moscow and Kyiv push for battlefield breakthroughs amid the looming onset of wintry conditions.

Officials in southern Ukraine said Sunday that the Russian military had used a record number of aerial bombs over the country's Kherson region in the past 24 hours.

Natalia Humeniuk, a spokesperson for the Ukrainian military's Operational Command South, said that 36 missiles had been recorded over the area, with some villages being hit by several strikes.

In a report released Saturday, the Institute for the Study of War said that Russian forces could be diversifying the mix of missiles, guided bombs, and drones used in strikes on Ukraine. The Washington-based think tank speculated that the change could be part of an attempt to find gaps in Ukraine's air defenses ahead of further strikes over the winter.

Israel strikes Gaza, Syria and West Bank as war against Hamas threatens to ignite other fronts

By NAJIB JOBAIN, SAMY MAGDY and JOSEPH KRAUSS Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli warplanes struck targets across Gaza overnight and into Sunday, as well as two airports in Syria and a mosque in the occupied West Bank allegedly used by militants, as the two-week-old war with Hamas threatened to spiral into a broader conflict.

Israel has traded fire with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group on a near-daily basis since the war began, and tensions are soaring in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where Israeli forces have battled militants in refugee camps and carried out two airstrikes in recent days.

For days, Israel has seemed to be on the verge of launching a ground offensive in Gaza as part of its response to Hamas' deadly Oct. 7 rampage. Tanks and tens of thousands of troops have massed at the border, and Israeli leaders have spoken of an undefined next stage in operations.

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Israel repeated its calls for people to leave northern Gaza, including by dropping leaflets from the air. It says an estimated 700,000 have already fled, but hundreds of thousands remain. That would raise the risk of mass civilian casualties in any ground offensive.

Israeli military officials say Hamas' infrastructure and underground tunnel system are concentrated in Gaza City, in the north, and that the next stage of the offensive will include unprecedented force there. Israel says it wants to crush Hamas, but officials have also spoken of carving out a possible buffer zone to keep Palestinians from approaching the border.

On Saturday, 20 trucks of aid were allowed to enter Gaza from Egypt through the Rafah crossing, the first time anything has gone into the territory since Israel imposed a complete siege two weeks ago.

Aid workers said it was far too little to address the spiraling humanitarian crisis in Gaza, where half the territory's 2.3 million people have fled their homes. The U.N. humanitarian agency, known as OCHA, said the convoy carried about 4% of an average day's imports before the war and "a fraction of what is needed after 13 days of complete siege."

The Israeli military said the humanitarian situation was "under control," as OCHA called for 100 trucks a day to enter.

Hospitals packed with patients and displaced people are running low on medical supplies and fuel for generators, forcing doctors to perform surgeries with sewing needles, using vinegar as disinfectant, and without anesthesia.

The World Health Organization says at least 130 premature babies are at "grave risk" because of a shortage of generator fuel. It said seven hospitals in northern Gaza have been forced to shut down due to damage from strikes, lack of power and supplies, or Israeli evacuation orders.

Shortages in critical supplies, including ventilators, are forcing doctors to ration treatment, said Dr. Mohammed Qandeel, who works in Khan Younis' Nasser Hospital. Dozens of patients continue to arrive and are treated in crowded, darkened corridors, as hospitals preserve electricity for intensive care units.

"It's heartbreaking," Qandeel told The Associated Press. "Everyday, if we receive 10 severely injured patients we have to manage with maybe three or five ICU beds available."

Palestinians sheltering in U.N.-run schools and tent camps are running low on food and drinking dirty water. A power blackout has crippled water and sanitation systems. OCHA said cases of chicken pox, scabies and diarrhea are on the rise because of the lack of clean water.

Heavy airstrikes were reported across Gaza, including in the southern part of the coastal strip, where Israel has told civilians to seek refuge. At the Al-Aqsa hospital in Deir al-Balah, south of the evacuation line, several bodies wrapped in white shrouds were lined up outside on the ground.

Khalil al-Degran, a hospital official, said more than 90 bodies had been brought in since early Sunday, as the sound of nearby bombing echoed behind him. He said 180 wounded people had arrived, mostly children, women and the elderly who had been displaced from other areas.

Israel's military has said it is striking Hamas members and installations, but does not target civilians. Palestinian militants have fired over 7,000 rockets at Israel, according to the military, and Hamas says it targeted Tel Aviv early Sunday.

The military says it plans to step up airstrikes ahead of the "next stages of the war," without elaborating.

More than 1,400 people in Israel have been killed in the war — mostly civilians slain during the initial Hamas attack. At least 212 people were captured and dragged back to Gaza, including men, women, children and older adults. Two Americans were released on Friday in what Hamas said was a humanitarian gesture.

More than 4,300 people have been killed in Gaza, according to the Hamas-run Health Ministry. That includes the disputed toll from a hospital explosion.

Syrian state media meanwhile reported that Israeli airstrikes have targeted the international airports in the capital, Damascus, and the northern city of Aleppo. It said the strikes killed one person and damaged the runways, putting them out of service.

Israel has carried out several strikes in Syria, including on the airports, since the war began. Israel rarely acknowledges individual strikes, but says it acts to prevent Hezbollah and other militant groups from bring-

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ing in arms from their patron, Iran, which also supports Hamas.

In Lebanon, Hezbollah said six of its fighters were killed Saturday, and the group's deputy leader, Sheikh Naim Kassem, warned that Israel would pay a high price if it starts a ground offensive in the Gaza Strip. Israel struck Hezbollah targets early Sunday in response to rocket fire, the military said.

Israel also announced evacuation plans for another 14 communities near the border with Lebanon. Kiryat Shmona, with a population of more than 20,000 people, was told to evacuate last week.

In the Israeli-occupied West Bank, dozens of Palestinians have been killed in clashes with Israeli troops, arrest raids and attacks by Jewish settlers. Israeli forces have closed crossings into the territory and checkpoints between cities, measures they say are aimed at preventing attacks. Israel says it has arrested more than 700 Palestinians since Oct. 7, including 480 suspected Hamas members.

The internationally recognized Palestinian Authority administers parts of the West Bank and cooperates with Israel on security, but it is deeply unpopular and has been the target of violent Palestinian protests.

Israeli forces killed at least five people early Sunday in the West Bank, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. Two were killed in an airstrike on a mosque in the town of Jenin, which has seen heavy gunbattles between Palestinian militants and Israeli troops over the past year.

The Israeli military said the mosque compound belonged to Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants who had carried out several attacks in recent months and were planning another one.

Sunday's fatalities brought the death toll in the West Bank to 90 Palestinians since the war broke out on Oct. 7, according to the Health Ministry. Most appear have been killed during fighting with Israeli forces or violent protests.

Thirteen Palestinians, including five minors, and a member of Israel's paramilitary Border Police were killed last week in a battle in a refugee camp in the West Bank town of Tulkarem, in which Israel also launched an airstrike.

Pacific and Atlantic hurricanes Norma and Tammy make landfall on Saturday in Mexico and Barbuda

By IGNACIO MARTÍNEZ and FERNANDO LLANO Associated Press

CABO SAN LUCAS, Mexico (AP) — Hurricane Norma came ashore near the Pacific resort of Los Cabos at the southern tip of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula on Saturday afternoon. Hours later, Hurricane Tammy made landfall on the Caribbean island of Barbuda.

The storms were each Category 1 hurricanes when they hit.

There was a threat of heavy rainfall and flash flooding as Norma moved into mainland Mexico early Sunday, the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami reported at 3 a.m. ET.

Norma was centered about 145 miles (235 kilometers) west of Culiacan, Mexico, and about 105 miles (165 kilometers) south-southwest of Los Mochis, Mexico, moving north-northeast at 7 mph (11 kph) with maximum sustained winds of 60 mph (95 kmh). The Mexican government extended a tropical storm warning along the coast northward to Huatabampito, the center said.

Tammy came ashore Saturday night with 85 mph (140 kph) winds. In an update at 5 a.m. ET Sunday, the hurricane center said the storm was centered about 70 miles (115 kilometers) north-northwest of Barbuda and about 55 miles (90 kilometers) east-northeast of Anguilla.

Tammy was moving north-northwest around 10 mph (17 kmh) and hurricane warnings remained in effect for the islands of Barbuda, Anguilla, St. Martin and St. Barthelmy, while a tropical storm warning was discontinued for Saba and St. Eustatius.

Norma, once a Category 4 hurricane, moved ashore with winds of 80 mph (130 kph) near el Pozo de Cota, west-northwest of Cabo San Lucas. The system later weakened to a tropical storm with 70 mph (110 kph) winds as it crossed the Baja California Peninsula, the center said.

Businesses in Cabo San Lucas had nailed plywood over their windows, and government personnel hung banners warning people not to try to cross gullies and stream beds after Norma regained strength and again became a major storm Friday.

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President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said via X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, that there had been no reported loss of life from the storm by Saturday night.

In Cabo San Lucas, curious tourists began to pick their way along debris-strewn beaches after the storm passed.

Authorities urged people to stay at home Saturday night. There were still families in shelters in Cabo San Lucas and San Jose del Cabo, though officials did not say how many. Around 200 people were in shelters in La Paz.

Its languid pace raised the possibility of severe flooding. Norma was expected to dump six to 12 inches of rain, with a maximum of 18 inches in places across southern Baja California and much of Sinaloa state.

John Cangialosi, a senior specialist at the National Hurricane Center, said the area is vulnerable to rain because it is a dry region generally.

"Six to 12 inches of rain is what is generally forecast, but there could be pockets of up to 18 inches of rain and we do think that will be the most significant impact that could result in flash and urban flooding and mudslides," he said.

Baja California Sur Gov. Victor Castro said on X that "because it's moving slowly, greater damages are anticipated."

But little damage was initially reported. Some trees and power poles were down, but there were no reports of injuries.

Police in San Jose del Cabo rescued two people from their truck when a surging stream swept it away early Saturday. Some informal settlements, away from the hotels that serve tourists, were isolated by rising water. Some neighborhoods lost electricity and internet service.

The federal government posted 500 marines to the resort area to help with storm preparations.

By late morning, the area's streets were littered with palm fronds and other debris, and essentially deserted except for occasional military patrols. Strong winds whipped traffic signs, trees and power lines.

Hotels in Los Cabos, which are largely frequented by foreign tourists, remained about three-quarters full and visitors made no major moves to leave en masse, officials said. The local hotel association estimated about 30,000 tourists were in Cabo San Lucas and San Jose del Cabo on Friday.

Airports were closed but San Jose del Cabo airport director Francisco Villaseñor said he expected flights to resume by midday Sunday.

Tammy hit two weeks after Tropical Storm Phillippe swept by Antigua and Barbuda dumping 6 to 8 inches (15 to 20 centimeters) of rain and plunging both islands into darkness. The slow-moving system was forecast to bring up to 12 inches (30.4 centimeters) over a twin island nation, where the devastation of Hurricane Irma in 2017 and Phillippe's recent wind damage and flooding were still fresh memories.

"This means therefore, that the earth is still somewhat saturated and with additional rainfall, the potential for flooding is elevated," Prime Minister Gaston Browne said in a nationwide broadcast Friday. He urged residents to take all necessary steps to secure life and property.

Government offices, banks and most non-retail businesses closed early on Friday to allow staff to prepare. Residents rushed to stock up on necessities, causing gridlock throughout St John's and near popular shopping centers and supermarkets.

Local disaster management officials announced plans to open about 40 shelters in communities throughout the country.

Philippines says a coast guard ship and supply boat were rammed by Chinese vessels at disputed shoal

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A Chinese coast guard ship and an accompanying vessel rammed a Philippine coast guard ship and a military-run supply boat Sunday off a contested shoal, Philippine officials said, in an encounter that heightened fears of an armed conflict in the disputed South China Sea.

A top Philippine security official told The Associated Press there were no injuries among the Filipino crew

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members and an assessment of the damage to both vessels was underway.

The official said that the two incidents near Second Thomas Shoal, where China has repeatedly tried to isolate a Philippine marine outpost, could have been worse if the vessels were not able to maneuver rapidly away from the Chinese ships. The official spoke on condition of anonymity due to a lack of authority to publicly discuss the matter.

China's sweeping territorial claims in the South China Sea, including over islands closer to Philippine shore, have raised tensions and brought in the United States, a longtime treaty ally of the Philippines.

The U.S. ambassador to Manila, MaryKay Carlson, wrote on X, formerly Twitter, that "the United States condemns the PRC's latest disruption of a legal Philippine resupply mission to Ayungin shoal, putting the lives of Filipino service members at risk."

She used the initials for China's formal name, the People's Republic of China, and the name the Philippines uses for Second Thomas Shoal. She added that Washington was standing with its allies to help protect Philippine sovereignty and to support a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

The Chinese coast guard said the Philippine vessels "trespassed" into what it said were Chinese waters "without authorization" despite repeated radio warnings, prompting its ships to stop them. It blamed the Philippine vessels for causing the collisions.

"The Philippine side's behavior seriously violates the international rules on avoiding collisions at sea and threatens the navigation safety of our vessels," the Chinese coast guard said in a statement posted on its website.

A Philippine government task force dealing with the South China Sea said the collisions occurred as two Philippine supply boats escorted by two Philippine coast guard ships were heading to deliver food and other supplies to the military outpost that has been under a Chinese blockade.

The actions of the Chinese ships were "in utter blatant disregard of the United Nations Charter, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea" and international regulations that aim to prevent sea collisions, it said.

Near-collisions have happened frequently as Philippine vessels deliver supplies to Filipino marines and sailors stationed on the disputed shoal. But this was the first time Philippine officials have reported their vessels being hit by China's ships.

In the past, Chinese officials have played down claims that the Chinese vessels enforcing Beijing's territorial claims were in fact paramilitary ships disguised as fishing boats.

Despite the Chinese efforts, one of the two boats managed to maneuver and deliver supplies to the small contingent stationed on board a marooned warship, the BRP Sierra Madre, the task force said.

The South China Sea is one of the world's busiest trade routes. The disputes involve China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei, and are regarded as a flashpoint in a delicate fault line in U.S.-China rivalry in the region.

In early August, a Chinese coast guard ship used a water cannon against one of two Philippine supply boats to prevent it from approaching Second Thomas Shoal. It outraged President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and prompted the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila to summon the Chinese ambassador to convey a strongly worded protest.

Washington reacted by renewing a warning that it is obligated to defend the Philippines as a treaty ally.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry accused Washington of "threatening China" by raising the possibility of activating the U.S.-Philippine mutual defense treaty. Beijing has repeatedly warned the U.S. not to meddle in regional territorial disputes.

The European Union ambassador to Manila, Luc Veron, said the incidents, "their repetition and intensification, are dangerous and very disturbing." The EU, he added, joins the Philippines "in its call for the full observance of international law in the South China Sea."

A 2016 arbitration ruling set up under the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea invalidated Beijing's claims on historical grounds to virtually the entire South China Sea. China refused to participate in the arbitration sought by the Philippines, rejected the decision and continues to defy it.

Palestinian death toll in West Bank surges as Israel pursues militants following Hamas rampage

By AMY TEIBEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Deadly violence has been surging in the West Bank as the Israeli military pursues Palestinian militants in the aftermath of the Hamas attack from Gaza, with at least 90 Palestinians killed in the Israeli-occupied territory in the past two weeks, mainly in clashes with Israeli troops.

The violence threatens to open another front in the 2-week-old war, and puts pressure on the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority, which administers parts of the West Bank and is deeply unpopular among Palestinians, in large part because it cooperates with Israel on security matters.

The tally includes five Palestinians killed in separate incidents on Sunday, including two who died in an airstrike on a mosque in the volatile Jenin refugee camp that Israel said was being used by militants. Israel carried out an airstrike during a battle in another West Bank refugee camp last week, in which 13 Palestinians, including five minors, and a member of Israel's paramilitary Border Police were killed.

Israel rarely uses air power in the occupied West Bank, even as it has bombarded Hamas-ruled Gaza since the militant group stormed across the border on Oct. 7.

More than 1,400 people have been killed in Israel since the war began, mostly civilians killed in the initial Hamas assault. The Hamas-run Health Ministry in Gaza says over 4,300 Palestinians have been killed.

The Palestinian Health Ministry in the West Bank says 90 Palestinians have been killed there since Oct. 7, a dramatic jump from 197, according to an Associated Press count, from the start of the year until the Hamas attack. In addition to the raids, Palestinians have been killed in violent anti-Israel protests and in some instances in attacks by Jewish settlers.

Israel clamped down on the territory immediately after the Hamas assault, closing crossings and checkpoints between Palestinian towns. Israel says its forces have detained over 700 suspects in the West Bank, including 480 members of Hamas, since the start of hostilities.

Israel's resumption of aerial attacks — which in a July operation in Jenin reached a level of intensity not seen since the Palestinian uprising against Israel two decades ago — suggests a shift in military tactics.

The military described the Al-Ansar Mosque in Jenin as a militant compound belonging to Hamas and Islamic Jihad, a smaller and more radical Palestinian militant group. It said the militants had carried out several attacks in recent months and were planning another imminent assault.

The intensified violence follows more than a year of escalating raids and arrests in the West Bank and deadly Palestinian attacks on Israelis.

Israel captured the West Bank, along with Gaza and east Jerusalem, in the 1967 war. The Palestinians want all three territories for a future state. Over 500,000 Israelis live in settlements across the West Bank that most of the international community considers illegal, while the territory's more than 2.5 million Palestinians live under Israeli military rule.

The Palestinians view the settlements as the greatest obstacle to resolving the conflict with Israel. The last serious and substantive peace talks broke down over a decade ago.

Settler violence against Palestinians has also intensified since the Hamas attack. At least five Palestinians have been killed by settlers, according to Palestinian authorities, and rights groups say settlers have torched cars and attacked several small Bedouin communities, forcing them to evacuate to other areas.

The West Bank Protection Consortium, a coalition of non-governmental organizations and donor countries, including the European Union, says at least 470 Palestinians have been forcibly displaced in the West Bank due to settler violence since Oct. 7. That's in addition to over 1,100 displaced since 2022.

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Live updates | Israel says it's stepping up attacks on the Gaza Strip

By The Associated Press

Israeli warplanes have struck targets across Gaza as well as two airports in Syria and a mosque in the occupied West Bank allegedly used by militants, even as aid deliveries have begun moving into the besieged Gaza Strip.

Israel's military spokesman said the country is stepping up its attacks, and there are growing expectations of a ground offensive.

The war, in its 16th day Sunday, is the deadliest of five Gaza wars for both sides. The Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry said Saturday that the death toll has reached 4,385, while 13,561 people have been wounded.

More than 1,400 people in Israel have been killed, mostly in the initial attack on Oct. 7 when Hamas militants stormed into Israel. In addition, 203 people were believed captured by Hamas during the incursion and taken into Gaza, the Israeli military has said.

Currently:

1. The father of freed American teenage hostage Natalie Raanan says she's doing well after her release by Hamas.

2. Tens of thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators are marching in London, Barcelona, Los Angeles and other cities.

3. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is ordering further defenses for U.S. troops as tensions in the Middle East continue to grow.

4. In a Gaza City hospital, an orthopedic surgeon makes do with whatever he can find — clothes for bandages, vinegar for antiseptic, sewing needles for surgical ones.

Here's what's happening in the latest Israel-Hamas war:

UN HUMANITARIAN CHIEF UNSURE WHEN MORE AID WILL ENTER GAZA

CAIRO — The United Nations humanitarian chief says it's unclear whether more aid will enter Gaza on Sunday.

"We had hoped for more today," Martin Griffiths told Sky News. "I'm not sure we're going to get it. We're deep in negotiation at the moment with the Israelis, the Egyptians, with a huge amount of help, by the way, from the United States.

Griffiths said the trucks that entered on Saturday were "a very good start but it's nowhere near enough."

He said the main sticking point was the inspection regime for the trucks coming in.

He said it should be "efficient, quick, hopefully random, hopefully light."

"If they don't go today, we certainly expect, assume and plan for trucks to move in tomorrow," Griffiths said.

AID ORGANIZATIONS WARN OF RISK TO PREMATURE BABIES FROM FUEL SHORTAGE

CAIRO — At least 130 premature babies are at "grave risk" because of lack of fuel at Gaza hospitals, the U.N. health agency said Sunday.

The babies are being cared for at six neonatal units, according to Medical Aid for Palestinians, an aid group working in Gaza. Doctors have warned that the babies are in imminent danger if fuel does not reach hospitals soon.

In a statement to The Associated Press, the World Health Organization called for "immediate and sustained" access of fuel into Gaza to keep health facilities operating.

Melanie Ward, chief executive of Medical Aid for Palestinians, urged world leaders to press Israel to allow the delivery of fuel to Gaza.

"The world cannot simply look on as these babies are killed by the siege on Gaza. ... A failure to act is to sentence these babies to death," she said.

Hospitals in Gaza have been struggling with the large number of wounded from the ongoing war between Israel and Palestinian militants which was triggered by an unprecedented Hamas attack on Israel on Oct. 7.

Dr. Ghassan Abu Sitta, a plastic and reconstructive surgeon working with Doctors without Borders in Shifa hospital, said the hospital's generators "are cutting out more regularly now than before."

He said hospitals in the territory are facing severe shortages of medical supplies, including bandages,

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medication and other supplies.

"You can imagine the amount 14,000 severely wounded patients would consume," he told the AP.

'HEARTBREAKING' LIFE-OR-DEATH DECISIONS FOR GAZA'S DOCTORS

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip — Hospitals across the Gaza Strip are scrounging for fuel stocks to keep the lights on in critical wards and continue to save the lives of the relentless stream of wounded patients.

Serious shortages in other supplies, including ventilators, are forcing medical teams to prioritize the lives of those who can be saved for certain over severe cases that require complex care, said Dr. Mohammed Qandeel, who works in the Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis.

"It's heartbreaking," he told The Associated Press. "Every day, if we receive 10 severely injured patients, we have to manage with maybe three or five ICU beds available. We have to choose who must face death, or manage them in regular wards or do some limited care because we think as a medical team, between two patients in a life-threatening situation, we have to give the ventilator to the patient who has a higher chance of improving in 24 hours."

Many departments in the hospital are plunged in darkness as medical staff allow electricity only in critical departments where patients risk death without it. On Friday the hospital was on its last stock of fuel, but managed to get another tank from UNRWA's existing stock on Saturday, said Qandeel. "This amount should last for three to five days," he said.

The World Health Organization says Gaza's Health Ministry is reporting that its daily use of medical consumables during the war is equivalent to its monthly consumption before the war. The report said "an imminent public health catastrophe looms" in the setting of mass displacement, overcrowding of shelters and damage to the water and sanitation infrastructure.

BODIES OF 3 NEPALI STUDENTS REPATRIATED

KATHMANDU — Nepal has repatriated the bodies of three of 10 Nepali students who were killed during the Hamas attack in Israel two weeks ago.

Nepal's Foreign Minister Narayan Prakash Saud and Israeli Ambassador Hanan Goder received the bodies at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport. The bodies will be flown to the students' home district of Kailai.

Another body of a Nepali student is expected to be flown to Kathmandu later Sunday. One Nepalese student is missing and believed to be held captive by Hamas, officials said.

Israeli authorities have so far handed over four bodies to the Nepalese Embassy in Tel Aviv. They are in the process of identifying the remaining six bodies, a statement from the embassy said. More than 200 Nepalese nationals returned home from Israel on Oct. 13. As many as 265 Nepali students were in Israel attending a program launched by the Israeli government.

INDIA SENDS MEDICAL AID AND RELIEF SUPPLIES TO PALESTINIANS

NEW DELHI — India on Sunday sent nearly 6.5 tonnes (7.1 tons) of medical aid and 32 tonnes (35 tons) of disaster relief supplies to Palestinians.

An Indian air force plane carrying the materials left New Delhi for Egypt's El-Arish airport, said Arindam Bagchi, an External Affairs Ministry spokesman. The aid includes essential life-saving medicines, surgical items, tents, sleeping bags, tarps and water purification tablets among other items, he said.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed condolences and sympathy for those killed and wounded as a result of the attacks in Israel and said that Indian people stand in solidarity with Israel. India has reiterated its position in favor of direct negotiations for establishing a two-state solution.

SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTS ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES HIT AIRPORTS IN DAMASCUS AND ALEPPO

Syrian state media reported that Israeli airstrikes early Sunday targeted the international airports of the Syrian capital Damascus and the northern city of Aleppo, killing one person. The runways were damaged and put out of service.

The attack is the second this month on the Damascus International airport and the third on Aleppo's airport as tensions increase in the Middle East over the Israel-Hamas war.

Syrian state media quoted an unnamed military official as saying the airports were struck by the Israeli

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military from the Mediterranean to the west and from Syria's Israeli-occupied Golan Heights in the south. It said one employee was killed and another wounded in Damascus in addition to material damage.

The Israeli military had no immediate comment.

Since the war between Israel and Hamas started on Oct. 7, Israel has carried out several strikes in Syria including one on the Damascus airport and two on Aleppo's airport putting them out of service.

Flights were directed in the past to an international airport in the coastal province of Latakia.

Israel has targeted airports and sea ports in the government-held parts of Syria in an apparent attempt to prevent arms shipments from Iran to militant groups backed by Tehran, including Lebanon's Hezbollah.

Thousands of Iran-backed fighters from around the region joined Syria's 12-year conflict helping tip the balance in favor of President Bashar Assad's forces.

Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes on targets inside government-controlled parts of Syria in recent years, including attacks on the Damascus and Aleppo airports, but rarely acknowledges or discusses the operations.

PALESTINIAN HEALTH MINISTRY SAYS ISRAELI FORCES KILLED FOUR EARLY SUNDAY IN WEST BANK

The Palestinian Health Ministry in the occupied West Bank said at least four people were killed by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank early Sunday.

The ministry said two were killed in the Jenin refugee camp, which includes the Al-Ansar mosque where Israel's military said it launched an airstrike. The two fatalities have yet to be identified. It also said Israeli forces shot and killed two men in northern cities of the West Bank: a 19-year-old in Tubas and a 26-year-old in Nablus.

Sunday's fatalities brought the death toll in the West Bank to 89 Palestinians since the latest Israel-Hamas war broke out on Oct. 7, according to the Health Ministry.

U.S. DEFENSE SECRETARY ORDERS MORE DEFENSE SYSTEMS IN MIDDLE EAST

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced late Saturday he was sending additional air defense systems to the Middle East as well as putting more troops on prepare-to-deploy orders.

Austin said the U.S. would be delivering a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, battery along with additional Patriot missile defense system batteries "to locations throughout the region to increase force protection for U.S. troops." Bases in Iraq and Syria have been repeatedly targeted by drones in the days since hundreds were killed in a hospital blast in Gaza, and the destroyer USS Carney intercepted land attack cruise missiles in the Red Sea shot from Yemen on Thursday.

Austin said he had also placed additional forces on prepare-to-deploy orders, "part of prudent contingency planning" as the U.S. and others brace for the potential of a wider regional conflict and as Israel prepares to launch a ground assault into Gaza. He said he gave the orders after detailed discussions with President Joe Biden on the recent escalations by Iran and its proxy forces across the region.

ISRAEL STRIKES UNDERGROUND COMPOUND AT WEST BANK MOSQUE, MILITARY SAYS

Israeli Defense Forces said a military aircraft launched a strike early Sunday on the Al-Ansar mosque at the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank.

The IDF said via X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, that Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants had been using an "underground terror route" beneath the mosque. One Palestinian was killed in the shelling, Palestinian Red Crescent said.

Tensions have risen in the West Bank, where dozens of Palestinians have been killed in clashes with Israeli troops, arrest raids and attacks by Jewish settlers.

ITALIAN PREMIER GOES TO ISRAEL

ROME — Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni has made a trip to Israel to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, her office said.

The meeting Saturday came after Meloni participated in a summit in Cairo focused on ways to de-escalate the raging Israel-Hamas war.

Meloni's office said that in her meeting she reiterated "the right of Israel to defend itself under international law and to live in peace" while also underlining "the importance of guaranteeing humanitarian access to Gaza and a prospect of peace for the region."

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Her office said she brought "a message of solidarity and Italy's closeness" following Hamas' unprecedented attack on Oct. 7.

PRESIDENT BIDEN SPEAKS WITH 2 FREED HOSTAGES

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden has spoken on the phone with two freed Americans who had been held hostage by Hamas in Gaza.

Judith Raanan and her 17-year-old daughter, Natalie, were released Friday. It was the first such hostage release from among the roughly 200 people the militant group abducted from Israel during its Oct. 7 rampage.

Video of Biden speaking with them by phone was posted Saturday on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter. He told the mother and daughter that he was glad they had been released.

"We're going to get them all out, God willing," he said.

Natalie thanked Biden for his "services" to Israel. Judith said they are in good health.

Hamas said it released the mother and daughter for humanitarian reasons in an agreement with the Qatari government.

Family members have said Judith and Natalie had been on a trip from their home in the Chicago suburb of Evanston to Israel to celebrate Judith's mother's birthday and the Jewish holidays.

This item has been corrected to reflect that the video was posted Saturday, not that Biden spoke to them on Saturday.

ISRAEL SAYS IT WILL INCREASE ATTACKS ON GAZA

Israel plans to step up its attacks on the Gaza Strip starting Saturday as preparation for the next stage of its war on Hamas, Israel's military spokesman says.

Asked about a possible ground invasion into Gaza, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari told reporters Saturday night that the military was trying to create optimal conditions beforehand.

"We will deepen our attacks to minimize the dangers to our forces in the next stages of the war. We are going to increase the attacks, from today," Hagari said.

He repeated his call for residents of Gaza City to head south for their safety.

Police dog's attack on Black trucker in Ohio echoes history

By PATRICK ORSAGOS Associated Press

CIRCLEVILLE, Ohio (AP) — As Jadarius Rose drove his 18-wheeler through rural Ohio, a simple missing mudflap caught the highway patrol's eye. The trip ended with a police dog's powerful jaws clamping down on Rose even as he tried to surrender.

As he stood with his hands up beside the highway on July 4, at least six law enforcement officers surrounded him at a distance, one calling forcefully to the K-9 handler: "Do not release the dog," highway patrol video shows.

Nevertheless, a Belgian Malinois is seen on the video either breaking free or being set loose. At first, the animal seems confused, racing past Rose toward officers at the far end of the truck, then turning back and running for Rose, then 23.

By then the trucker is on his knees, hands still high, as an officer shouts, "Get the dog off of him!"

That day, Rose joined a long list of Black Americans attacked by police dogs, a history well documented by journalists, academics and filmmakers. Investigations into such cases have been launched regularly in recent years. For some, the scenes harken back to the Civil Rights Movement, when authorities often turned dogs and firehoses on peaceful Black protesters marching for equality.

The Associated Press captured one such attack in a photograph from Birmingham, Alabama, taken in the spring of 1963. It shows two police officers setting a pair of K-9s on 15-year-old Walter Gadsden. One of the dogs lunges straight for the teenager's belly as the other strains against his leash, panting.

Over the past five years, controversial police K-9 attacks have made headlines across the U.S.

Records reviewed by the AP in 2018 showed the Ohio State Highway Patrol used drug dogs in 28% of

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its stops involving Black motorists from 2013 through 2017, although the Black population accounts for only about 11.5% of people old enough to have a driver's permit or license in the state.

The Salt Lake City police department suspended its dog apprehension program in 2020 after a Black man was bitten and an audit found 27 dog bite cases during the previous two years.

The FBI opened an investigation into the police department in Woodson Terrace, Missouri, in 2021 after cellphone video showed three officers allowing a dog to repeatedly bite a Black man. And in 2020, a Black man in Lafayette, Indiana, was placed in a medically induced coma after police dogs mauled him as he was arrested in a battery case.

A TROUBLED HISTORY

Circleville, located about 25 miles (40 km) south of Columbus, Ohio, resembles many rural towns across the country. The city's downtown is filled with restaurants, law offices and a bakery. Flags honoring fallen servicemen and women hang from lampposts lining Main Street.

While the picture may be idyllic to some of the town's 14,000 residents, the Rev. Derrick Holmes, longtime leader of the Second Baptist Church, said Black and white residents describe their lives very differently.

"Everyone doesn't have the same experience, even though they're all in the same town," Holmes said. "And I think those divisions exist around the realities of bigotry, the realities of racism."

At church services the day after the video of Rose's arrest aired, Holmes said the congregation was appalled, but not entirely surprised.

"People were horrified by it," he said. "Angered by it. Frustrated by it. And also there was a feeling of, 'Well, here we go again.'"

This isn't the first time Circleville police have grappled with uncomfortable questions about how they train and use police dogs. Nearly 20 years ago, a founder of the K-9 unit sued the department after he was fired for insubordination. Officer David Haynes had publicly opposed cutting training hours for dogs and their handlers to 172 hours annually from 500 hours, according to court documents.

Haynes warned in a 2003 memo that "words like 'deliberate indifference,' 'negligence' and 'failure to train' will someday be brought up."

Today, Circleville's K-9s train 16 hours per month, or 192 hours a year, according to the department. Police Chief Shawn Baer did not respond to numerous messages seeking comment.

Employing dogs to dominate a population can be traced back at least to European settlers colonizing the Americas, when the animals were used against Indigenous people. They were introduced in Southern U.S. states to capture — and sometimes kill — enslaved Black people who escaped, said Madalyn Wasilczuk, a University of South Carolina professor and author of a law journal article titled, "The Racialized Violence of Police Canine Force."

Wasilczuk found data on K-9 police attacks sparse, but said the animals are often used in nonviolent situations and their presence can lead to serious injury.

"When you talk about an apprehension, police talk about bite and hold, and that sounds very antiseptic," Wasilczuk said. "But when you look at a video of what happens, you see a dog doing what it does with a chew toy, which is it grabs on, it tries to hold on, its head whips back and forth and its teeth are sunk into that body part as deeply as they can."

THE AFTERMATH

In Rose's case, law enforcement originally sought to pull him over because of his truck's missing mudflap, according to a highway patrol report. Circleville Police were there to assist.

What happened next can be pieced together from law enforcement video and the incident report.

Rose initially didn't stop as police pursued him. When he did, he saw officers with their guns drawn and took off again. At some point, he called 911 and told a dispatcher he feared the officers were "trying to kill" him. After pulling over a second time, he delayed getting out of the truck and did not immediately get on the ground as instructed.

He initially was charged with a felony for failing to comply with officers, but prosecutors dropped the case. Online court documents show Rose was charged Sept. 26 with a misdemeanor version of the of-

fense and there is an active warrant for his arrest.

Neither Rose nor his attorney responded to repeated messages seeking comment.

It's not clear why a K-9 unit was at the scene that day. Michael Gould, a former New York City police officer and founding member of the NYPD's K-9 unit, said officers appeared to have control once they surrounded Rose with their guns drawn. And then there's the image of Rose with his hands up.

"He was compliant and not a threat to anyone," Gould said.

Rose required hospital care for the bites he suffered. Whether he sustained lasting injury is unclear.

The dog's police handler, Officer Ryan Speakman, was fired, but the Ohio Patrolman's Benevolent Association filed a grievance on his behalf arguing the officer was fired without just cause.

Circleville City Councilwoman Caryn Koch-Esterline said police have yet to account for what happened.

"I'm just waiting for all the information to come out," she said in a brief interview with the AP three months after Rose's arrest.

For those working to improve race relations in Ohio, the roadside attack was a reminder of all that is still left to do.

"If it were a white man and a dog was unleashed on that individual, what would that community be saying? I bet they would be up in arms," said Nana Jones, president of the Columbus Chapter of the NAACP.

Egypt's border crossing opens to let a trickle of desperately needed aid into besieged Gaza

By NAJIB JOBAIN, SAMY MAGDY and JOSEPH KRAUSS Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The border crossing between Egypt and Gaza opened Saturday to let a trickle of desperately needed aid into the besieged Palestinian territory for the first time since Israel sealed it off and began pounding it with airstrikes following Hamas' bloody rampage two weeks ago.

Just 20 trucks were allowed in, an amount aid workers said was insufficient to address the unprecedented humanitarian crisis. More than 200 trucks carrying 3,000 tons of aid have been waiting nearby for days.

Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinians, half of whom have fled their homes, are rationing food and drinking dirty water. Hospitals say they are running low on medical supplies and fuel for emergency generators amid a territory-wide power blackout. Five hospitals have stopped functioning because of fuel shortages and bombing damage, the Hamas-run Health Ministry said.

Doctors reported using sewing needles to stitch wounds, and using vinegar as a disinfectant until the shops ran out. With anesthesia running low, the screams of patients could be heard during surgery.

Doctors Without Borders said Gaza's health care system is "facing collapse."

Meantime, Gaza's Hamas-run Interior Ministry reported heavy Israeli airstrikes across the territory overnight into Sunday, including southern areas where Israel had told Palestinians to seek refuge. The ministry said that among the sites hit were homes and a cafe in the evacuation zone where dozens of displaced residents had sought shelter.

Israel's military has said it is striking Hamas members and installations, but does not target civilians.

In a statement posted early Sunday on X, the site formerly known as Twitter, the Israeli military said it had launched a strike on the Al-Ansar mosque at the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank.

There are growing expectations of a ground offensive that Israel says would be aimed at rooting out Hamas. Israel said Friday that it doesn't plan to take long-term control over the small but densely populated Palestinian territory.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened his Cabinet late Saturday to discuss the expected invasion, Israeli media reported.

Israel's military spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said the country planned to step up its airstrikes starting Saturday as preparation for the next stage of the war.

"We will deepen our attacks to minimize the dangers to our forces in the next stages of the war. We are going to increase the attacks, from today," Hagari said, repeating his call for Gaza City residents to head south for their safety.

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Israel has vowed to crush Hamas but has given few details about what it envisions for Gaza if it succeeds. Yifat Shasha-Biton, a Cabinet minister, said there was broad consensus in the government that there will have to be a "buffer zone" in Gaza to keep Palestinians away from the border.

"We need to create a distance between the border and our communities," she told Channel 13 TV, adding that no decisions had been made on its size or other specifics.

Tensions have risen in the West Bank, where dozens of Palestinians have been killed in clashes with Israeli troops, arrest raids and attacks by Jewish settlers. Israeli forces have held the West Bank under a tight grip, closing crossings into the territory and checkpoints between cities, measures they say are aimed at preventing attacks.

The opening of Rafah came after more than a week of high-level diplomacy, including visits to the region by U.S. President Joe Biden and U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Israel had insisted nothing would enter Gaza until Hamas released all the captives from its Oct. 7 attack on towns in southern Israel.

Late Friday, Hamas freed its first captives — an American woman and her teenage daughter. It was not immediately clear if there was a connection between the release and the aid deliveries. Israel says Hamas is still holding at least 210 hostages, though their conditions — and if they are even alive — remains unknown.

On Saturday morning, an Associated Press reporter saw the 20 trucks heading north from Rafah to Deir al-Balah, a quiet farming town where many evacuees from the north have sought shelter. Hundreds of foreign passport holders at Rafah hoping to escape the conflict were not allowed to leave.

American citizen Dina al-Khatib said she and her family were desperate to get out. "It's not like previous wars," she said. "There is no electricity, no water, no internet, nothing."

The trucks carried 44,000 bottles of drinking water — enough for 22,000 people for a single day, according to UNICEF. "This first, limited water will save lives, but the needs are immediate and immense," said UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell.

The World Health Organization said four of the trucks were carrying medical supplies, including trauma medicine and portable trauma bags for first responders.

"We need many, many, many more trucks and a continual flow of aid," said the head of the U.N.'s World Food Program, Cindy McCain.

Gaza's Hamas-run government called for a secure corridor operating around the clock.

Hagari, the Israeli military spokesman, said "the humanitarian situation in Gaza is under control." He said the aid would be delivered only to southern Gaza, where the army has ordered people to relocate, adding that no fuel would enter.

Biden said the United States "remains committed to ensuring that civilians in Gaza will continue to have access to food, water, medical care, and other assistance, without diversion by Hamas."

The U.S. government would work to keep Rafah open and let U.S. citizens leave Gaza, he said in a statement.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said late Saturday he was sending additional air defense systems to the Middle East and putting more troops on "prepare to deploy" orders.

Guterres emphasized international concern over civilians in Gaza, telling a summit in Cairo that Hamas' "reprehensible assault" on Israel "can never justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people."

Two Egyptian officials and a European diplomat said extensive negotiations with Israel and the U.N. to allow fuel deliveries for hospitals had yielded little progress. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to release information on the sensitive deliberations.

One Egyptian official said they were discussing the release of dual-national hostages in return for fuel, but that Israel was insisting on the release of all hostages.

The release of Judith Raanan and her 17-year-old daughter, Natalie, on Friday brought some hope to the families of others believed held hostage.

Rachel Goldberg, whose son is thought to have been badly wounded before he was taken hostage, said she was "very relieved" by the news but urged quick work to save others, including her son.

"I think he could be dying," she said. "So we don't have time."

Hamas said it was working with Egypt, Qatar and other mediators "to close the case" of hostages if

security circumstances permit.

Israel has also traded fire along its northern border with Lebanon's Hezbollah militants, raising concerns about a second front opening up. The Israeli military said Saturday it struck Hezbollah targets in Lebanon in response to recent rocket launches and attacks with anti-tank missiles.

"Hezbollah has decided to participate in the fighting, and we are exacting a heavy price for this," Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said during a visit to the border.

Hezbollah said six of its fighters were killed Saturday, and the group's deputy leader, Sheikh Naim Kassem, warned that Israel would pay a high price if it starts a ground offensive in the Gaza Strip.

Israel ordered its citizens to leave Egypt and Jordan — which made peace with it decades ago — and to avoid travel to a number of Arab and Muslim countries, including the United Arab Emirates, Morocco and Bahrain, which forged diplomalarge demonstrationstic ties with Israel in 2020. Protests against Israel's actions in Gaza have erupted across the region, and large demonstrations were held Saturday in several European and U.S. cities.

An Israeli ground assault would likely lead to a dramatic escalation in casualties on both sides in urban fighting. More than 1,400 people in Israel have been killed in the war — mostly civilians slain during the Hamas attack.

More than 4,300 people have been killed in Gaza, according to the Hamas-run Health Ministry. That includes the disputed toll from a hospital explosion.

At the summit Saturday, Egypt President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi called for ensuring aid to Gaza, negotiating a cease-fire and resuming Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, which broke down more than a decade ago. He also said the conflict would never be resolved "at the expense of Egypt," referring to fears Israel may try to push Gaza's population into the Sinai Peninsula.

King Abdullah II of Jordan said Israel's attacks on Gaza were "a war crime" and slammed the international community's response.

"Anywhere else, attacking civilian infrastructure and deliberately starving an entire population of food, water, electricity, and basic necessities would be condemned," he said.

Over a million people have been displaced in Gaza. Many heeded Israel's orders to evacuate from north to south within the sealed-off coastal enclave. But Israel has continued to bomb areas in southern Gaza .

A senior Israeli military official said the air force will not hit the area where aid is being distributed unless rockets, which militants are relentlessly launching at Israel, are fired from there. "It's a safe zone," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to reveal military information.

Venezuelan opposition holds presidential primary in exercise of democracy, but it could prove futile

By REGINA GARCIA CANO Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuelans get a chance Sunday to pick who they think can end the decade-long crisis-ridden presidency of Nicolás Maduro.

They will cast ballots in a primary election independently organized by the country's opposition despite government repression and other obstacles.

The contest is in itself an exercise in democracy because it required the deeply fractured opposition to work together to give the South American country its first presidential primary since 2012. But it could prove an exercise in futility if Maduro's government wishes.

While the administration agreed in principle at midweek to let the opposition choose its candidate for the 2024 presidential election, it also has already barred the primary's frontrunner, Maria Corina Machado, from running for office and has in the past bent the law and breached agreements as it sees fit.

Machado, a former lawmaker who supports free-market policies, is a longtime critic of the governing United Socialist Party of Venezuela. She had maintained a somewhat low profile for years, yet she has dominated the primary race by connecting with the same voters she consistently urged to boycott previous elections.

At one Machado rally, Ismael Martínez, an agriculture worker in the northern city of Valencia, said he

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previously voted for Maduro as well as the late president Hugo Chávez, but became disenchanted by corruption among some politicians in the current administration.

"I think she is the best candidate," Martinez said. "She has figured out how to evidence the government's flaws."

In addition to Machado, nine other candidates remain in the race. The winner is expected to face Maduro at the ballot box in the second half of 2024. Maduro is looking to extend his presidency until 2030, which would surpass the time that Chávez, his mentor, governed.

Maduro's allies have ridiculed and dismissed the primary all year long. Still, both the government and its foes have used the contest as a bargaining chip to extract concessions from each other as part of a negotiation process meant to end the country's complex social, economic and political crisis.

Maduro and an opposition faction backed by the U.S. government agreed during the week to work together on basic conditions for the 2024 presidential election. That prompted the government to release six political prisoners and the Biden administration to lift key economic sanctions.

As part of the agreement, Maduro's administration and the opposition are supposed to "recognize and respect the right of each political actor to select" a presidential candidate freely.

But in June the government issued an administrative decision banning Machado from running for office, alleging fraud and tax violations and accusing her of seeking the economic sanctions the U.S. imposed on Venezuela last decade.

If Machado wins the primary, the focus will shift to Maduro to see if the government reverses the ban on her seeking office. The U.S., holding up the threat of renewed sanctions, has given Venezuela until the end of November to establish a process for reinstating all candidates expeditiously.

A U.N.-backed panel investigating human rights abuses in Venezuela said last month that Maduro's government has intensified efforts to curtail democratic freedoms ahead of the 2024 election. That includes subjecting some politicians, human rights defenders and other opponents to detention, surveillance, threats, defamatory campaigns and arbitrary criminal proceedings.

Organizers of the primary have not given an estimate for participation Sunday. Any registered voters in the country can participate, as well as some living abroad.

The primary's first ballot already was cast in Sydney, Australia. But logistical issues are expected to affect turnout within Venezuela.

Venezuelans typically vote on electronic machines set up at public schools. But the independent commission organizing the primary opted to use paper ballots and to set up voting centers at homes, churches, private schools and other facilities. The locations of many voting centers were still being shifted as of Saturday night.

Ukrainians prepare firewood and candles to brace for a winter of Russian strikes on the energy grid

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

MOSHCHUN, Ukraine (AP) — In the humble backyard of a destroyed house, a 13-year-old chops firewood to get ready for winter. His mother, Tetiana Yarema, has been preparing for months as she remembers last winter's Russian strikes on the energy infrastructure that plunged Ukraine into darkness.

"Those were dark days. I didn't want anything. I just wanted to pack my things and go abroad," said Yarema, 48, who says she ended up staying because of her son's insistence.

For the Yarema family, like millions of other Ukrainians touched by Russia's war on Ukraine, winter is an especially challenging time.

The mother and son live in trailers that were set up in their backyard after fighting in the early days of the war destroyed their house in Moshchun, a village about 25 kilometers (15 miles) northwest of Kyiv.

"I have a feeling that when the cold sets in, they'll start bombing again," the woman said, echoing the sentiments of many Ukrainians.

This time, however, they say they are better prepared.

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Sales of generators exploded toward the end of summer. Some, who can afford it, have invested in solar panels. Others, like Yarema, have been purchasing candles, batteries, flashlights, and portable lanterns and stocking up on compact gas canisters, making the most of discounted prices.

"It's a bit challenging ... but I already know what to do," she said.

Last winter was declared the most challenging in the history of Ukraine's energy system, with over 1,200 missiles and drones fired by Russians at power plants, according to Ukrainian state-owned grid operator, Ukrenergo.

The strikes impacted almost a half of Ukraine's energy capacity. People were forced to endure hours without electricity and water during the coldest months in what Ukrainian officials described as "energy terror."

Millions of people across Ukraine had to learn to work, live, and cover their basic needs without relying on electricity.

After a lull of six months, Ukraine's energy system sustained its first attack of the season on Sept. 21, resulting in damage to facilities in the central and western regions, Ukrenergo said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has committed to substantially enhancing air defense systems, which already have demonstrated greater effectiveness than the previous year.

"Everyone must play their part in defensive efforts to ensure that Russian aggression does not halt Ukraine this winter. Just as on the battlefield, in all areas, we must be resilient and strong," Zelenskyy said in a recent address to the nation.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal recently announced that the United States has allocated \$522 million for energy equipment and the protection of Ukraine's infrastructure.

"We stand on the threshold of a difficult winter. Thanks to the assistance of our allies, we successfully weathered the last, which was the most challenging winter season in our history," Shmyhal said.

Major retailer Epicenter said sales of generators increased 80% in August compared to the same time last year, and sales of portable charging stations increased by 25 times.

Yurii Musienko, 45, another resident of Moshchun, also plans to rely heavily on firewood, and has a wood-burning stove in his compact wooden trailer that has been provided to him for two years, and which sits next to his ruined home.

"I've already adapted," he said with a smile. The gates of his home still bear the holes from exploded ammunition that serve as a reminder of when Russian forces tried to seize the Ukrainian capital.

"May no one ever have to endure such conditions," said his mother, Valentyna Kiriian, who lives in a separate plastic trailer installed in the same courtyard.

She's dressed in a hat and a coat, with multiple layers of clothing to stay warm. She notes that the cold has already set in, forcing her to sleep fully clothed, much like the previous winter.

During the power outages last winter, the mother and son relied on canned food. Occasionally, Valentyna would visit her neighbor, whose house remained intact and had a gas stove for boiling water.

"It's difficult for me to talk about. It pains my soul, and my heart weeps," she said.

Private Ukrainian energy producer DTEK has spent the last seven months restoring its damaged infrastructure and fortifying the protection of its equipment for the approaching winter.

The company invested about 20 billion Ukrainian hryvnias (\$550 million) to prepare for the upcoming season, and it lost billions of hryvnias because of last year's disruptions caused by Russian attacks, according to CEO Maxim Timchenko.

"We learned our lessons," Timchenko said.

Andrii Horchynskyi, 49, who lives in the village of Maliutianka about 25 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Kyiv, has invested over \$30,000 in recent years to ensure his house is self-sufficient, and ramped up those efforts since Russia's invasion.

Last year, he spent \$12,000 to install solar panels to help power his spacious house, where other members of his extended family came to stay for the winter — eight of them surviving comfortably.

"We had a whole ant heap here," Horchynskyi recalled.

He is convinced the Russians will try to damage Ukraine's infrastructure for gas, which he thinks will

become expensive or even unavailable. So, he has installed a boiler that burns pine pellets. He also stores one and half cubic meters of water in his backyard.

"They will bombard even more this winter than the last," Horchynskyi said.

Hurricane Norma makes landfall near Mexico's Los Cabos and Tammy hits tiny Barbuda in the Caribbean

By IGNACIO MARTÍNEZ and FERNANDO LLANO Associated Press

CABO SAN LUCAS, Mexico (AP) — Hurricane Norma came ashore near the resorts of Los Cabos at the southern tip of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula on Saturday afternoon, and hours later Hurricane Tammy made landfall on the Caribbean island of Barbuda.

Both storms were Category 1 hurricanes when they hit.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Norma, once a Category 4 hurricane, moved ashore with winds of 80 mph (130 kph) near el Pozo de Cota, west-northwest of Cabo San Lucas.

Norma later weakened to a tropical storm with 70 mph (110 kph) winds as it crossed the Baja California Peninsula and by late Saturday it was nearing the Sea of Cortez, also known as the Gulf of California.

Businesses in Cabo San Lucas had nailed plywood over their windows, and government personnel hung banners warning people not to try to cross gullies and stream beds after Norma regained strength and again became a major storm Friday.

Norma was centered about 45 miles (70 kilometers) north-northeast of Cabo San Lucas late Saturday, the National Hurricane Center said. It was moving north-northeast at 6 mph (9 kph), but was expected to take a harder turn toward the east Sunday.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said via the platform X that there had so been no reported loss of life from the storm. "Hurricane Norma already passed Los Cabos and there are only torrential rains in La Paz, but without loss of life."

In Cabo San Lucas, curious tourists began to pick their way along debris-strewn beaches after the storm passed.

The effects of the storm were still being felt after night fell, and authorities urged people to stay at home. There were still families in shelters in Cabo San Lucas and San Jose del Cabo, though officials did not say how many. Around 200 people were in shelters in La Paz.

Its languid pace raised the possibility of severe flooding. Norma was expected to dump six to 12 inches of rain, with a maximum of 18 inches in places across southern Baja California and much of Sinaloa state.

John Cangialosi, a senior specialist at the National Hurricane Center, said the area is vulnerable to rain because it is a dry region generally.

"Six to 12 inches of rain is what is generally forecast, but there could be pockets of up to 18 inches of rain and we do think that will be the most significant impact that could result in flash and urban flooding and mudslides," he said.

Baja California Sur Gov. Victor Castro said via the platform X that "because it's moving slowly, greater damages are anticipated."

But little damage was initially reported. Some trees and power poles were down, but there were no reports of injuries.

Police in San Jose del Cabo rescued two people from their truck when a surging stream swept it away early Saturday. Some informal settlements, away from the hotels that serve tourists, were isolated by rising water. Some neighborhoods lost electricity and internet service.

The federal government posted 500 marines to the resort to help with storm preparations.

By late morning, the area's streets were littered with palm fronds and other debris, and essentially deserted except for occasional military patrols. Strong winds whipped traffic signs, trees and power lines.

Hotels in Los Cabos, which are largely frequented by foreign tourists, remained about three-quarters full and visitors made no major moves to leave en masse, officials said. The local hotel association estimated

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about 30,000 tourists were in Cabo San Lucas and San Jose del Cabo on Friday.

Airports were closed. San Jose del Cabo airport director Francisco Villaseñor said he expected flights to resume by midday Sunday.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Tammy came ashore Saturday night with 85 mph (140 kph) winds. The hurricane was moving north-northwest at 10 mph (17 kph) and by late Saturday was centered 15 miles (25 kilometers) north-northwest of Barbuda.

Hurricane warnings remained in effect for the islands of Barbuda, Anguilla, St. Martin and St. Barthelmy. The warning was lifted for Antigua.

The hurricane center said that "heavy rainfall and flooding (are) likely over much of the Lesser Antilles."

Tammy hit two weeks after Tropical Storm Phillippe swept by Antigua and Barbuda dumping six to eight inches of rain and plunging both islands into darkness. The slow-moving system was forecast to bring up to 12 inches over a twin island nation, where the devastation of Hurricane Irma in 2017 and Philippe's recent wind damage and flooding were still fresh memories.

"This means therefore, that the earth is still somewhat saturated and with additional rainfall, the potential for flooding is elevated," Prime Minister Gaston Browne said in a nationwide broadcast Friday. He urged residents to take all necessary steps to secure life and property.

Government offices, banks and most non-retail businesses closed early on Friday to allow staff to prepare. Residents' rushed to stock up on necessities, causing gridlock throughout St John's and near popular shopping centers and supermarkets.

Local disaster management officials announced plans to open about 40 shelters in communities throughout the country.

Venezuelans become largest nationality for illegal border crossings as September numbers surge

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Venezuelans became the largest nationality arrested for illegally crossing the U.S. border, replacing Mexicans for the first time on record, according to figures released Saturday that show September was the second-highest month for arrests of all nationalities.

Venezuelans were arrested 54,833 times by the Border Patrol after entering from Mexico in September, more than double from 22,090 arrests in August and well above the previous monthly high of 33,749 arrests in September 2022.

Arrests of all nationalities entering from Mexico totaled 218,763 in September, up 21% from 181,084 in August and approaching an all-time high of 222,018 in December 2022, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Arrests for the government's budget year that ended Sept. 30 topped 2 million for the second year in a row, down 7% from an all-time high of more than 2.2 million arrests in the same period a year earlier.

Venezuela plunged into a political, economic and humanitarian crisis over the last decade, pushing more than 7 million people to leave. They initially settled in nearby countries in Latin America but began coming to the United States in the last three years, settling in New York, Chicago and other major cities.

The Biden administration recently announced temporary legal status for nearly 500,000 Venezuelans who were already in the United States on July 31, while vowing to deport those who come illegally after that date and fail to get asylum. It recently began deportation flights to Venezuela as part of a diplomatic thaw with the government of Nicolás Maduro, a longtime adversary.

The U.S. "surged resources and personnel" to the border in September, said Troy Miller, acting commissioner of Customs and Border Protection.

"We are continually engaging with domestic and foreign partners to address historic hemispheric migration, including large migrant groups traveling on freight trains, and to enforce consequences including by preparing for direct repatriations to Venezuela," Miller said.

For decades, Mexicans accounted for the vast majority of illegal crossings but flows shifted over the last

decade to Central Americans and, more recently, to people from South America, Africa and Asia.

Mexicans were arrested 39,733 times crossing the border in September, well behind Venezuelans. Guatemalans, Hondurans and Colombians rounded out the top five.

Republicans seized on the latest numbers as its leading presidential candidates have tried to frame the border as a major issue in next year's elections.

"This fiscal year may have ended, but the historic crisis at our Southwest border sparked by (Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro) Mayorkas' policies rages on," said Rep. Mark Green of Tennessee, chair of the House Homeland Security Committee.

The Biden administration proposed about \$14 billion for the border in a \$106 billion spending package announced Friday and has insisted that any long-term solution requires help from Congress.

The administration has adopted a carrot-and-stick approach of new legal pathways to seek asylum with restrictions on those who don't adhere to them.

About 43,000 migrants entered the country at land crossings with Mexico in September using a mobile app called CBP One, bringing the total to nearly 278,000 since the online appointment system began in January. Also, more than 265,000 people from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela entered through September at airports after applying online with financial sponsors.

Including those legal pathways, the number of crossings hit a new all-time monthly high of 269,735 in September and a new budget-year high of nearly 2.5 million.

Tens of thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters march in London as Israel-Hamas war roils the world

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Tens of thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators marched through a rainy London on Saturday to demand Israel stop its bombardment of Gaza, and similar calls were heard in cities around the world as the Israel-Hamas war entered its third week.

On the day a trickle of aid entered Gaza, where more than 1 million people have left their homes because of the conflict, protesters gathered in at Marble Arch near London's Hyde Park before marching to the government district, Whitehall.

Police estimated the crowd that wound its way through the city for three hours at "up to 100,000."

Waving Palestinian flags and chanting "Stop bombing Gaza," participants called for an end to Israel's blockade and airstrikes launched in the wake of a brutal incursion into southern Israel by the Hamas militant group that controls Gaza.

Authorities in Gaza say more than 4,300 people have been killed in the territory since the latest war began. More than 1,400 people have been killed in Israel, mostly civilians slain during Hamas' deadly incursion on Oct. 7.

Israel continued to bombard targets in Gaza on Saturday ahead of an expected ground offensive. A small measure of relief came when 20 trucks carrying humanitarian aid were allowed to enter Gaza across the southern Rafah border crossing with Egypt.

The war has raised tensions around the world, with both Jewish and Muslim communities feeling under threat. The British Transport Police force said it was investigating after footage was posted online that appears to show a London Underground driver leading passengers in a chant of "Free, free Palestine" over the subway intercom.

British authorities urged demonstrators to be mindful of the pain and anxiety felt by the Jewish community. London's Metropolitan Police force says it has seen a 13-fold upsurge in reports of antisemitic offenses in October compared to last year. Reports of anti-Muslim crimes have more than doubled.

Police said there had been "pockets of disorder and some instances of hate speech" during protests over the war, but "the majority of the protest activity has been lawful and has taken place without incident."

Hundreds of pro-Palestinian protesters also gathered in Belfast and in Northern Ireland's second city, Londonderry, where speakers included lawmaker Colum Eastwood of the Irish nationalist Social Democratic

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and Labour Party.

"The murder of children is wrong," he told the crowd, calling for an immediate cease-fire in the conflict. "I don't know how that is so difficult for some of our world leaders to actually utter. It doesn't matter whether they are Israeli children or Palestinian children."

Across the border in the Republic of Ireland, thousands marched through the capital, Dublin, calling for an end to Israel's bombardment.

In France, pro-Palestinians demonstrators gathered in several cities including Rennes, Montpellier, Dijon and Lyon, where thousands of people could be seen chanting "we all are Palestinians" in the central square.

In Marseille, the country's second-largest city, some people took to the streets, waving Palestinian flags and shouting "Free Gaza," despite the protest being banned by local police.

A pro-Palestinian gathering scheduled for Sunday in Paris has been allowed by police.

German police said almost 7,000 people took part in a peaceful pro-Palestinian demonstration in Düsseldorf on Saturday. The demonstrators carried Palestinian flags or banners calling for an end to "violence and aggression in Gaza."

Police in Berlin banned a pro-Palestinian demonstration that was scheduled for Sunday in the center of the city, German news agency dpa reported. Police in the German capital have stopped several similar events in recent weeks, citing the potential of violence and antisemitic hate speech. Some pro-Palestinian demonstrators have taken to the streets anyway, resulting in clashes with police.

Authorities allowed a pro-Israel demonstration scheduled for Sunday that was expected to draw together thousands of people in central Berlin.

Elsewhere, several hundred people marched through Rome on Saturday, some holding signs saying "Palestine, Rome is with you," and "No peace until we get freedom."

"Israel carries out war crimes there, crimes against humanity there, and the international community has never acted," said Maya Issa, president of the Movement of Palestinian Students in Italy, which organized the demonstration.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators waving Palestinian flags flooded the streets of downtown Barcelona to demand an end to the Israeli airstrikes.

In Muslim-majority Kosovo, several hundred people walked from mosques to Pristina's Zahir Pajaziti square after lunchtime prayers to express support for Palestinians.

In Australia, thousands marched through central Sydney on Saturday, shouting "Shame, shame Israel" and "Palestine will never die."

The war sparked protests across the Arab world and beyond on Friday, including in the occupied West Bank, where Palestinians burned tires and threw stones at Israeli military checkpoints. Israeli security forces responded firing tear gas and live rounds.

Crowds gathered in Israel's northern neighbor Lebanon; in Iraq at the country's border crossing with Jordan; in Jordan itself; in cities and towns across Egypt; in Turkey's capital Ankara and its most populous city of Istanbul; and in Indonesia, Malaysia, Morocco and South Africa.

In New York, hundreds of protesters from Muslim, Jewish and other groups marched to U.S. Sen. Kristen Gillibrand's Manhattan office, many shouting "cease fire now." Police later arrested dozens of protesters who blocked Third Avenue outside Gillibrand's office by sitting in the road.

Thousands of demonstrators also marched through the streets of downtown Los Angeles demanding an immediate cease-fire.

Pro-Israel demonstrations and vigils have also been held around the world, many focused on securing the return of hostages captured by Hamas.

Rome's Jewish community on Friday remembered the more than 200 people believed held by Hamas by setting a long Shabbat table for them outside the capital's main synagogue and empty chairs for each of the hostages.

On the back of each chair was a flyer featuring the name, age and photo of each missing person. On the table were candles, wine and loaves of challah, the braided bread typically eaten during the Friday night meal.

A Detroit synagogue president was fatally stabbed outside her home. Police don't have a motive

DETROIT (AP) — A Detroit synagogue president was found stabbed to death outside her home Saturday, police said. The motive wasn't known.

Emergency medical personnel declared the woman, identified in a statement from Mayor Mike Duggan as Samantha Woll, dead at the scene, Cpl. Dan Donakowski said.

"While at the scene, police officers observed a trail of blood leading officers to the victim's residence, which is where the crime is believed to have occurred," Donakowski said.

Woll, 40, had led the Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue since 2022 and was a former aide to Democratic Rep. Elissa Slotkin and campaign staffer for Attorney General Dana Nessel, the Detroit Free Press reported.

Police have not identified a possible motive and are investigating, the Free Press reported.

Police found Woll around 6:30 a.m. after someone called to alert them of a person lying on the ground unresponsive, the Free Press reported.

Detroit Police Chief James E. White said the killing has left many unanswered questions, and he asked the public to be patient as investigators examine all available evidence.

"Over the course of the last several hours, the DPD has mobilized many of its resources and has been leveraging every law enforcement and community resource it has to help further the investigation," White said in a statement released Saturday night. "An update on the investigation will be forthcoming tomorrow."

In a statement, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Woll's death was heartbreaking.

"She was a source of light, a beacon in her community who worked hard to make Michigan a better place," the governor said.

Michigan State Police were assigned to support the Detroit Police Department in the investigation, Whitmer said.

Nessel issued a statement on X, formerly Twitter, saying she was "shocked, saddened and horrified."

"Sam was as kind a person as I've ever known," Nessel said. "She was driven by her sincere love of her community, state and country. Sam truly used her faith and activism to create a better place for everyone."

Slotkin also commented on X, saying she was "heartbroken at this news."

Duggan issued a statement saying he was "devastated" to learn of Woll's death.

"Sam's loss has left a huge hole in the Detroit community," the mayor said. "This entire city joins with her family and friends in mourning her tragic death."

The father of American teenage hostage freed by Hamas says she is 'doing very good'

By CLAIRE SAVAGE, MELISSA PEREZ WINDER and LISA BAUMANN Associated Press

EVANSTON, Ill. (AP) — The father of freed American teen hostage Natalie Raanan said Friday she's doing well following two weeks in captivity after she and her mother were abducted in Israel by Hamas and held in Gaza.

Uri Raanan of Illinois told The Associated Press that he spoke to his daughter Friday by telephone. "She's doing good. She's doing very good," said Uri Raanan, who lives in the Chicago suburbs. "I'm in tears, and I feel very, very good."

The 71-year-old said he saw on the news earlier Friday that an American mother and daughter would be released by Hamas, and he spent the day hoping that meant his daughter and her mother, Judith Raanan.

Knowing Natalie may be able to celebrate her 18th birthday next week at home with family and friends feels "wonderful. The best news," her father said.

Ben Raanan, Natalie's brother, said before her abduction he and his sister had spoken of getting matching tattoos to mark her birthday. Instead, he got a tattoo this week in her honor, incorporating their names along with their brother's name.

The family's text message chain sharing updates on Friday moved from tentative hope to outright cel-

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celebration, tempered by an awareness that other families still are living in fear for their loved ones, Ben Raanan told The Associated Press at his home in Denver.

"When I see her again, I think there aren't going to be words to express what's going on," he said. "It's just going to be like this intense hug that is bigger than words and bigger than what we could actually communicate verbally."

Uri Raanan said he believes Natalie and Judith to be in transit to Tel Aviv to reunite with relatives, and that both will be back in the U.S. early next week.

An Israeli army spokesperson said the two Americans were out of the Gaza Strip and with the Israeli military. Hamas said Friday it released them for humanitarian reasons in an agreement with the Qatari government.

They were the first hostages to be released since Hamas militants, according to Israel, abducted roughly 200 people during their Oct. 7 rampage.

President Joe Biden was among the many celebrating the news that the Raanans had been freed.

"I am overjoyed that they will soon be reunited with their family, who has been wracked with fear," Biden said in Washington. The president spoke Friday with Judith and Natalie and "relayed that they will have the full support of the U.S. government as they recover from this terrible ordeal," the White House said.

In the telephone conversation, Biden told the women that he was "glad you're out."

"We're going to get them all out, God willing," he said of the remaining hostages in a video showing excerpts of the conversation that was posted by the White House Saturday on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter.

"I just wanted to say thank you for your services to Israel," Natalie told the president. Judith told him they were in good health.

Uri Raanan said late Friday in a short news conference that he spoke with his daughter for only a few emotional minutes and that they didn't talk about what she and her mother experienced in the past two weeks. He said Judith has a minor injury he described as a "little scratch" on her hand.

"They look good and sound good," he said, adding that when he sees his daughter he plans to hug her and kiss her. "It's going to be the best day of my life."

He also said he didn't know why they were chosen for release.

The International Committee of the Red Cross, which transported the freed Americans from Gaza to Israel, said their release offered "a sliver of hope" for those still being held.

Judith, 59, and Natalie, who both have dual Israeli-American citizenship, had been on a trip from their home in the Chicago suburb of Evanston to Israel to celebrate Judith's mother's birthday and the Jewish holidays, family members said.

Natalie was born in the U.S., moved to Israel with Judith until she was around 10 and then returned, her father said.

Natalie "always spoke of her home very dearly," 19-year-old stepsister Frida Alonso said, referring to Israel. "She missed it very, very dearly. Every day she missed her grandma, she missed her home. Just the feeling of being there. So I bet this hurts a lot for her."

Mother and daughter were in Nahal Oz, near the Gaza border, on Oct. 7 when Hamas militants stormed into southern Israeli towns, killing hundreds of people and abducting others.

Their family had heard nothing from them since the attack and were later told by U.S. and Israeli officials that they were being held in Gaza, Natalie's brother has said.

"The news that Judith and Natalie have been released from the hands of Hamas is overwhelming. It brings us a tremendous amount of gratitude to the Almighty, to God, for this incredible miracle," Meir Hecht, Judith's rabbi, said at a news conference outside his home in Evanston on Friday afternoon.

"At the same time we hold our pain very deep," said Hecht, who called for the other hostages to be released as soon as possible. "We need to continue besieging whoever we can and however we can, and praying for their release."

Judith came regularly to Meir's congregation and felt like "part of our family," the rabbi said.

Qatar said it would continue its dialogue with Israel and Hamas in hopes of winning the release of all hostages "with the ultimate aim of de-escalating the current crisis and restoring peace."

Israeli military spokesperson Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said Israel was continuing to work to return hostages and find the missing, and its goals had not changed. "We are continuing the war against Hamas and ready for the next stage of the war," he said.

The release comes amid growing expectations of a ground offensive that Israel says is aimed at rooting out Hamas militants who rule Gaza.

Hezbollah official says his group already 'is in the heart' of Israel-Hamas war

By BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — A top official with Hezbollah vowed that Israel will pay a high price whenever it starts a ground offensive in the Gaza Strip and said Saturday that his militant group based in Lebanon already is "in the heart of the battle."

The comments by Hezbollah's deputy leader, Sheikh Naim Kasseem, came as Israel shelled and made drone strikes in southern Lebanon and Hezbollah fired rockets and missiles toward Israel. Hezbollah said six of its fighters were killed Saturday, the highest daily toll since the violence began two weeks ago.

For Hezbollah, heating up the Lebanon-Israel border has a clear purpose, Kasseem said: "We are trying to weaken the Israeli enemy and let them know that we are ready." Hamas officials have said that if Israel starts a ground offensive in Gaza, Hezbollah will join the fighting.

Exchanges of fire along the Lebanon-Israel border have picked up in the two weeks since the attack by the Palestinian militant group Hamas that killed over 1,400 civilians and soldiers in southern Israel. Retaliatory Israeli airstrikes on Gaza have killed more than 4,000 Palestinians.

There are concerns that Iran-backed Hezbollah, which has a weapons arsenal consisting of tens of thousands of rockets and missiles as well as different types of drones, might try to open a new front in the Israel-Hamas war with a large-scale attack on northern Israel.

Kasseem said his group, which is allied with Hamas, already was affecting the course of the conflict by heating up the Lebanon-Israel border and keeping three Israeli army divisions tied up in the north instead of preparing to fight in Gaza.

"Do you believe that if you try to crush the Palestinian resistance, other resistance fighters in the region will not act?" Kasseem said in a speech Saturday during the funeral of a Hezbollah fighter. "We are in the heart of the battle today. We are making achievements through this battle."

On Friday, the Israeli military announced the evacuation of a border city where three residents were wounded in the crossfire a day earlier.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported that an Israeli drone fired a missile on a valley in the Sejoud area, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) north of the Israeli border. Hezbollah did not immediately confirm the attack, but if true it would mark a major escalation as it is deep inside Lebanon and far from the border.

An Associated Press journalist in south Lebanon reported hearing loud explosions Saturday along the border, close to the Mediterranean coast.

Hezbollah said its fighters attacked several Israeli positions and also targeted an Israeli infantry force, "scoring direct hits."

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported Israeli shelling of several villages and said a car took a direct hit in the village of Houla. On Saturday evening, shelling intensified around an Israeli army post across from the Lebanese village of Yaroun.

Hezbollah said six of its fighters were killed Saturday, raising the total of Lebanese militants killed to 19 since Oct. 7.

Israeli army spokesman Avichay Adraee said a group of gunmen fired a shell into Israel and an Israeli drone was launched back toward them. A drone also was dispatched after another group of gunmen fired

toward the Israeli town of Margaliot, Adraee said.

"Direct hits were scored in both strikes," Adraee posted on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Hezbollah's Kassem spoke about foreign dignitaries who visited Lebanon over the past two weeks asking Lebanese officials to convince the group not to take part in the latest Hamas-Israel battle. He said Hezbollah's response to Lebanese officials was, "We are part of the battle."

"We tell those who are contacting us, 'Stop the (Israeli) aggression so that its (conflict) repercussions and possibility of expansion stops,'" Kassem said, referring to the officials who recently visited Beirut, including the foreign ministers of France and Germany.

Speaking about an expected Israeli ground invasion of Gaza, Kassem, said: "Our information are that the preparedness in Gaza by Hamas and resistance fighters will make (the) Israeli ground invasion their graveyard."

Little light, no beds, not enough anesthesia: A view from the 'nightmare' of Gaza's hospitals

By ISABEL DEBRE and WAFAA SHURAFSA Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The only thing worse than the screams of a patient undergoing surgery without enough anesthesia are the terror-stricken faces of those awaiting their turn, a 51-year-old orthopedic surgeon says.

When the Israeli bombing intensifies and the wounded swamp the Gaza City hospitals where Dr. Nidal Abed works, he treats patients wherever he can — on the floor, in the corridors, in rooms crammed with 10 patients instead of two. Without enough medical supplies, Abed makes do with whatever he can find — clothes for bandages, vinegar for antiseptic, sewing needles for surgical ones.

Hospitals in the Gaza Strip are nearing collapse under the Israeli blockade that cut power and deliveries of food and other necessities to the territory. They lack clean water. They are running out of basic items for easing pain and preventing infections. Fuel for their generators is dwindling.

Israel began its bombing campaign after Hamas militants surged across the border on Oct. 7 and killed over 1,400 people, mostly civilians, and abducted more than 200 others. Israel's offensive has devastated neighborhoods, shuttered five hospitals, killed thousands and wounded more people than its remaining health facilities can handle.

"We have a shortage of everything, and we are dealing with very complex surgeries," Abed, who works with Doctors Without Borders, told The Associated Press from Al Quds Hospital. The medical center is still treating hundreds of patients in defiance of an evacuation order the Israeli military gave Friday. Some 10,000 Palestinians displaced by the bombing have also taken refuge in the hospital compound.

"These people are all terrified, and so am I," the surgeon said. "But there is no way we'll evacuate."

The first food, water and medicine trickled into Gaza from Egypt on Saturday after being stalled on the border for days. Four trucks in the 20-truck aid convoy were carrying drugs and medical supplies, the World Health Organization said. Aid workers and doctors warned it was not nearly enough to address Gaza's spiraling humanitarian crisis.

"It's a nightmare. If more aid doesn't come in, I fear we'll get to the point where going to a hospital will do more harm than good," Mehdat Abbas, an official in the Hamas-run Health Ministry, said.

Across the territory's hospitals, ingenuity is being put to the test. Abed used household vinegar from the corner store as disinfectant until the stores ran out, he said. Too many doctors had the same idea. Now, he cleans wounds with a mixture of saline and the polluted water that trickles from taps because Israel cut off the water.

A shortage of surgical supplies forced some staff to use sewing needles to stitch wounds, which Abed said can damage tissue. A shortage of bandages forced medics to wrap clothes around large burns, which he said can cause infections. A shortage of orthopedic implants forced Abed to use screws that don't fit his patients' bones. There are not enough antibiotics, so he gives single pills rather than multiple courses to patients suffering terrible bacterial infections.

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"We are doing what we can to stabilize the patients, to control the situation," he said. "People are dying because of this."

When Israel cut fuel to the territory's sole power plant two weeks ago, Gaza's rumbling generators kicked in to keep life-support equipment running in hospitals.

Authorities are desperately scrounging up diesel to keep them going. United Nations agencies are distributing their remaining stocks. Motorists are emptying their gas tanks.

In some hospitals, the lights have already switched off. At Nasser Hospital in the southern city of Khan Younis this week, nurses and surgical assistants held their iPhones over the operating table, guiding the surgeons with the flashlights as they snipped.

At Shifa Hospital, Gaza's biggest, where Abed also worked this week, the intensive care unit runs on generators but most other wards are without power. Air conditioning is a bygone luxury. Abed catches beads of sweat dripping from his patients' foreheads as he operates.

People wounded in the airstrikes are overwhelming the facilities. Hospitals don't have enough beds for them.

"Even a normal hospital with equipment would not be able to deal with what we're facing," Abed said. "It would collapse."

Shifa Hospital — with a maximum capacity of 700 people — is treating 5,000 people, general director Mohammed Abu Selmia says. Lines of patients, some in critical condition, snake out of operating rooms. The wounded lie on floors or on gurneys sometimes stained with the blood of previous patients. Doctors operate in crowded corridors filled with moans.

The scenes — infants arriving alone to intensive care because no one else in their family survived, patients awake and grimacing in pain during surgeries — have traumatized Abed into numbness.

But what still pains him is having to choose which patients to prioritize.

"You have to decide," he said. "Because you know that many will not make it."

Russian forces make renewed push to take eastern Ukraine towns with drones, missiles and mortars

By NEBI QENA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — At least three civilians were killed and others wounded in Ukraine on Friday and Saturday, as Russian forces continued to shell areas across the country and pushed forward near an embattled eastern city, local Ukrainian officials reported Saturday.

A man died as Russian forces shelled the Ukrainian-held town of Nikopol from their stronghold at Ukraine's largest nuclear plant, according to Ukrainian local Gov. Serhii Lysak. Lysak said that emergency services in Nikopol were working to assess the damage.

Russian troops took over the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant early in the war, sparking intermittent fears of a radiation incident as shelling persisted near the site, often targeting Ukrainian-controlled settlements across the Dnieper River.

In Kryvyi Rih, the central Ukraine hometown of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, a 60-year-old man died on Friday evening when a Russian missile slammed into an industrial facility, according to Telegram posts by Mayor Oleksandr Vilkul. The man's wife was hospitalized with serious shrapnel wounds, Vilkul said.

The mayor reported that Russian missiles and drones hit the same place again overnight, causing unspecified damage and sparking a fire that was put out by morning. Vilkul did not elaborate on the site's nature or whether it was linked to Ukraine's war effort. He said nobody was hurt in the second strike.

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov later told reporters that Russian forces destroyed the Ukrainian military's fuel and ammunition depots near Kryvyi Rih's local airport.

There was no immediate response from Ukrainian officials to Konashenkov's claim.

In southern Ukraine's front-line Kherson region, one civilian was killed and another wounded during "mass shelling" attacks by Russian troops, Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin said Saturday. The Russians used mortars, artillery, tanks, drones, and multiple-rocket launchers to target the region, striking some residential areas,

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Prokudin wrote in a Telegram post.

Russian shelling over the past day also wounded one civilian in the front-line city of Avdiivka, in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, acting local Gov. Ihor Moroz reported on Saturday. Avdiivka has been fiercely contested by Russian and Ukrainian forces in recent weeks as Kyiv's forces try to hold off a renewed Russian assault.

Moroz said that exploding drones, missiles, mortars and artillery shells fired by Russian troops also struck other parts of the region.

Russian troops on Friday launched a fresh offensive north of Avdiivka that has secured minor gains, according to an analysis by the Institute for the Study of War. The Washington-based think tank cited geolocated footage from pro-Kremlin "military bloggers" on the ground to support its assessment.

Moscow's renewed push near Avdiivka reflects the Russian military command's commitment to offensive operations in the area "despite heavy materiel and personnel losses," the institute said.

The Ukrainian General Staff on Friday claimed that Ukrainian forces had damaged and destroyed almost 50 Russian tanks and over 100 armored vehicles in the fighting near Avdiivka during the previous day. The claim that could not be independently verified.

Oleksandr Shputun, a spokesman for the Ukrainian army unit fighting near Avdiivka, said in televised remarks Saturdays that Russian military activity in the area had "decreased slightly," possibly due to heavy losses. However, Shputun acknowledged that Russian units continued to advance.

In the northeastern Kharkiv region, a 39-year-old civilian man was hospitalized with wounds as Russian shelling hit two village homes near the embattled town of Kupiansk, Gov. Oleh Syniehubov reported on Saturday. Russian forces have for weeks been pressing an offensive to retake territory near Kupiansk and the nearby town of Lyman.

The governor of Russia's southern Belgorod region, which borders Ukraine, said Saturday that Ukrainian forces shelled two of the province's districts with mortars and grenade launchers the previous day. According to Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov, no civilians were hurt.

Elsewhere, a top Ukrainian presidential adviser reported that four Ukrainian children who were released from Russian captivity on Monday have been reunited with their families.

According to the Telegram post by Andriy Yermak, a 17-year-old girl and three boys ages 9, 6 and 3, were captured by occupying Russian forces in southern and eastern Ukraine. Yermak said one of the boys was transferred to an orphanage in southern Russia, while another was forcibly taken to Russian-annexed Crimea.

Deportations of Ukrainian children have been a concern since Russia's Feb. 24, 2022, invasion of Ukraine. The International Criminal Court increased pressure on Moscow when it issued arrest warrants in March for President Vladimir Putin and Russia's children's rights commissioner, Maria Lvova-Belova, accusing them of abducting children from Ukraine.

State media in Kremlin-allied Belarus have also published reports on children arriving in the country from Ukraine's occupied territories, ostensibly to join "health recuperation programs."

Company bosses and workers grapple with the fallout of speaking up about the Israel-Hamas war

By ALEXANDRA OLSON, ANNE D'INNOCENZIO and HALELUYA HADERO AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Starbucks accused a union representing thousands of its baristas of damaging the brand and endangering co-workers with a pro-Palestinian tweet. The CEO of a prominent tech conference resigned amid backlash for his public statements suggesting that Israel was committing war crimes. Company bosses vowed never to hire members of a university's student groups that condemned Israel.

Meanwhile, Islamic rights advocates say much of the corporate response has minimized the suffering in Gaza, where thousands have died in Israeli airstrikes, and created an atmosphere of fear for workers who want to express support for Palestinians. Jewish groups have criticized tepid responses or slow reactions to the Oct. 7 Hamas rampage that killed 1,400 people in Israel and triggered the latest war.

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The fallout from the Israel-Hamas war has spilled into workplaces everywhere, as top leaders of prominent companies weigh in with their views while workers complain their voices are not being heard. People from all ranks have been called out for speaking too forcefully — or not forcefully enough — making it nearly impossible to come up with a unifying message when passions run deep on all sides.

Many U.S. corporations have strong ties with Israel, particularly among tech and financial firms that have operations and employees in the country.

Executives at J.P Morgan Chase & Co., Goldman Sachs, Google and Meta were among dozens who swiftly condemned the Hamas attacks and expressed solidarity with the Israeli people in public statements, social media posts or even corporate earning calls. Many pledged millions of dollars in humanitarian aid and detailed efforts to safeguard employees in Israel.

Some chief executives poured out their personal anguish.

In a LinkedIn post and a letter to employees, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said he has been constantly on the phones with friends and relatives in Israel and expressed his horror at hearing of “civilians of all ages targeted and killed in cold blood, hostages taken and tortured.” He implored employees to check on each other and said Pfizer launched a humanitarian relief campaign.

“It is not enough to condemn these actions — we ourselves must take action,” Bourla wrote.

Backlash against opposing views has been swift, including responses to a tweet from Web Summit CEO Paddy Cosgrave suggesting Israel was committing war crimes.

“I’ll never attend/sponsor/speak at any of your events again,” former Facebook executive David Marcus stated on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Faced with a growing boycott to next month’s Web Summit, a prominent European gathering of thousands of tech leaders, Cosgrave resigned Saturday, saying that his “personal comments have become a distraction from the event, and our team, our sponsors, our startups and the people who attend.”

His resignation came a few days after he released a long message denouncing the Hamas attacks and apologizing for the timing of his initial tweet while defending his overall views on the conflict. But companies continued withdrawing from the conference, including Google, Meta, German tech conglomerate Siemens, and U.S. chipmaker Intel.

Jonathan Neman, CEO of restaurant chain Sweetgreen, was among several company leaders who vowed never to hire Harvard students who belonged to groups that cosigned a statement blaming Israel for the violence.

The international law firm Winston & Strawn rescinded a job offer to a New York University student who wrote a message in the Student Bar Association bulletin saying Israel was entirely to blame for the bloodshed.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, an Islamic civil rights group, denounced the backlash against the students and statements from U.S. corporate leaders that “lack any meaningful display of sympathy toward Palestinian civilians.”

Those reactions combined, the organization said, are leaving “Palestinians and those in support of Palestinian human rights isolated at their place of work and fearful of possible consequences” for discussing how the conflict has affected them.

Isra Abuhasna, a data scientist in the Chicago area, was among several professionals who expressed similar thoughts on social media, saying in a LinkedIn post that she was “risking her entire career” by expressing her views on the conflict.

Abuhasna, a Palestinian American who has worked for a real estate firm and other companies but recently took a break to stay home with her two young children, said she fears her posts will make it difficult to find a new position. But she said her parents raised her to be proud and vocal about the Palestinian cause.

“It’s my identity,” Abuhasna said. “What good am I in my job if I compromise my own morals and ethics?”

One of the biggest disputes erupted at Starbucks after Starbucks Workers United, a union representing 9,000 workers at more than 360 U.S. stores, tweeted “Solidarity with Palestine” two days after the Hamas attack. The tweet was taken down within 40 minutes, but the company said it led to more than 1,000 complaints, acts of vandalism and angry confrontations in its stores.

Starbucks filed a lawsuit to stop Starbucks Workers United from using its name and a similar logo. Workers United, the parent union of Starbucks Workers United, responded with its own lawsuit saying Starbucks defamed the union by implying it supports terrorism. It wants to continue using the company name.

Starbucks Workers United tweeted a longer message on Friday denouncing Israel's "occupation" and "threats of genocide Palestinians face" while also condemning antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Angela Berg, founder of workplace consultancy firm Perelaks, said companies with strong opinions about the war should express them, but "the critical thing is that they acknowledge the existence of the experience of the other side." Those trying to stay on the sidelines, Berg said, need to explain their reasons to employees.

As the humanitarian catastrophe deepened in Gaza, more company leaders addressed the situation, including Accenture CEO Julie Sweet, who said the company was splitting a \$3 million donation between the Israel's Magen David Adom emergency services and the Palestinian Red Crescent.

But companies that have kept a low profile have gotten pushback.

Allison Grinberg-Funes, who is Jewish, wrote in a LinkedIn post that she was disappointed by the failure of her colleagues to reach out immediately after the Hamas attacks.

While they eventually reached out, Grinberg-Funes said in an interview with The Associated Press that she remains disappointed her employer, Liberty Mutual, didn't publicly condemn the attacks.

The Boston-based content designer for the insurance company said the silence is part of a wider "lack of support" for the Jewish community that she and her friends have observed in the workplace.

"We want to know that our lives matter as much as the other employees that have been shown support," said Grinberg-Funes, 33, who has family and friends in Israel.

Liberty Mutual did not respond to a request for comment.

CEO of a prominent tech conference resigns amid backlash for public statements over Israel-Hamas war

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Paddy Cosgrave, the chief executive officer of a prominent European tech conference called Web Summit, resigned from his role on Saturday amid backlash for his public statements that suggested Israel was committing war crimes.

A spokesperson for Web Summit, which organizes one of the world's largest tech conferences every year, said in an e-mailed statement sent to The Associated Press that it will appoint a new CEO, and the conference will go ahead next month in Lisbon as planned.

Cosgrave, the Irish entrepreneur who is also founder of Web Summit, said in a statement Saturday that his personal comments "have become a distraction from the event, and our team, our sponsors, our startups and the people who attend."

"I sincerely apologise again for any hurt I have caused," he said.

Cosgrave's resignation is a prominent example of the fallout from the Israel-Hamas war that has spilled into workplaces everywhere, as top leaders of prominent companies weigh in with their views while workers complain their voices are not being heard.

Islamic rights advocates say much of the corporate response has minimized the suffering in Gaza, where thousands have died in Israeli airstrikes, and created an atmosphere of fear for workers who want to express support for Palestinians. Jewish groups have criticized tepid responses or slow reactions to the Oct. 7 Hamas rampage that killed 1,400 people in Israel and triggered the latest war.

Web Summit faced a growing number of industry giants — including Intel, Meta and Google — pulling out of the conference even after Cosgrave released a long message denouncing the Hamas attacks and apologizing for the timing of his initial tweet while defending his overall views on the conflict.

Cosgrave posted on his X account, formerly known as Twitter, on Oct. 13 that he was "shocked at the rhetoric and actions of so many Western leaders & governments, with the exception in particular of Ireland's government, who for once are doing the right thing."

"War crimes are war crimes even when committed by allies, and should be called out for what they

are," he added.

Two days later, he updated his tweet calling "what Hamas did is outrageous and disgusting" but adding, "Israel has a right to defend itself, but it does not, as I have already stated, have a right to break international law."

In a later apology that was posted Oct. 17 on the Web Summit blog and shared on his X account, he said, "What is needed at this time is compassion, and I did not convey that," he said. "My aim is and always has been to strive for peace."

He went on to say that "I also believe that, in defending itself, Israel should adhere to international law and the Geneva Conventions – i.e. not commit war crimes. This belief applies equally to any state in any war. No country should breach these laws, even if atrocities were committed against it."

His last post on X read: "Bye for now. Need some time off this platform."

AP visual analysis: Rocket from Gaza appeared to go astray, likely caused deadly hospital explosion

By MICHAEL BIESECKER Associated Press

Shortly before 7 p.m. Tuesday, a volley of rockets lit up the darkened sky over Gaza. Videos analyzed by The Associated Press show one veering off course, breaking up in the air before crashing to the ground.

Seconds later, the videos show a large explosion in the same area – the site of Gaza's al-Ahli Arab Hospital.

Who is to blame for the fiery explosion has set off intense debate and finger pointing between the Israeli government and Palestinian militants, further escalating tensions in their two week-long war.

The AP analyzed more than a dozen videos from the moments before, during and after the hospital explosion, as well as satellite imagery and photos. AP's analysis shows that the rocket that broke up in the air was fired from within Palestinian territory, and that the hospital explosion was most likely caused when part of that rocket crashed to the ground.

A lack of forensic evidence and the difficulty of gathering that material on the ground in the middle of a war means there is no definitive proof the break-up of the rocket and the explosion at the hospital are linked. However, AP's assessment is supported by a range of experts with specialties in open-source intelligence, geolocation and rocketry.

"In the absence of additional evidence, the most likely scenario would be that it was a rocket launched from Gaza that failed mid-flight and that it mistakenly hit the hospital," said Henry Schlottman, a former U.S. Army intelligence analyst and open-source intelligence expert.

WHAT AP FOUND

The AP reached its conclusion by reviewing more than a dozen videos from news broadcasts, security cameras and social media posts, and matching the locations to satellite imagery and photos from before the explosion.

A key video in the analysis came shortly before 7 p.m. local time, when the Arabic-language news channel Al Jazeera was airing live coverage of the Gaza City skyline. As a correspondent speaks, the camera pans to zoom in on a volley of rockets being fired from the ground nearby.

One of the rockets appears to veer from the others, away from the distant lights of Israel and back toward a darkened Gaza City, where electricity has largely been cut. The camera follows the light from the rocket's tail as it arches in the sky upwards and toward the left. Suddenly, the rocket seems to fragment, and a piece appears to break off and fall. Another fragment shoots sharply up and to the right, blazing before it explodes in a fireworks-like flash, leaving a brief trail of sparks.

A small explosion is then seen on the ground in the distance, followed two seconds later by a much larger blast closer to the camera. The corner of the scroll at the bottom of the live broadcast reads 6:59 p.m. Gaza time.

Using maps and satellite imagery, the AP was able to match the view of the explosion from Al Jazeera's live camera feed to an upper floor of the building that houses Al Jazeera's Gaza bureau, which is less than

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a mile (1.5 kilometers) from the al-Ahli Arab Hospital. Using other buildings visible in the frame, the AP was able to confirm that the larger explosion seen at 6:59 p.m. was in the precise direction of the hospital.

A second video, taken from a camera inside Israel at the exact time as the Al Jazeera footage and obtained by the AP, shows a barrage of at least 17 rockets being launched from inside Gaza before a large explosion lights up the horizon on the Palestinian side of the border. The camera is on a building in Netiv Ha'asara, an Israeli community footsteps from the border wall, and faces southwest, confirming that the rocket launches and explosion were in the direction of Gaza City.

A third video by Israeli news station Channel 12 — taken from a camera on the upper floor of its building in Netivot, a town about 10 miles (16 kilometers) southeast of the hospital in Gaza City — also captured the barrage of rockets fired at 6:59 p.m.

Seen together, the three videos show multiple rockets were launched from inside Gaza before one appears to have come apart in midair about three seconds before the explosion at the al-Ahli Arab Hospital.

At 7 p.m., one minute after the explosion, Hamas' military wing al-Qassam Brigades said in a post to its Telegram channel that it "fired at occupied Ashdod with a barrage of rockets." Ashdod is an Israeli coastal city about 30 miles (50 kilometers) north of Gaza.

Minutes later, Islamic Jihad, a militant group that works with Hamas, also posted on Telegram that it had launched a rocket strike on Tel Aviv in response "to massacre against civilians." Over the next hour, there were five more posts from the militant groups announcing rocket attacks against Israel.

Israel's military has repeatedly said it did not strike the hospital and blamed an errant rocket fired from within Gaza by the Islamic Jihad. Israel's assessment, backed by U.S. intelligence and President Joe Biden, also cited the lack of both a large crater and extensive structural damage that would be consistent with a bomb dropped by Israeli aircraft.

Hamas calls Israel's narrative "fabricated" and accuses it of punishing the hospital for ignoring a warning to evacuate two days earlier, though it has not released any evidence to support its claims.

Hamas spokesperson Ghazi Hamad told the AP the group would welcome a United Nations investigation into the cause of the blast.

"Look at the stupid position that was taken by the President of the United States of America who said, 'I agree with Israel's version' without any investigation," Hamad said. "Unfortunately, the Western world is full of hypocrisy."

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

AP ran its visual analysis by a half-dozen experts who all agreed the most likely scenario was a rocket from within Gaza that veered off and came apart seconds before the explosion.

Andrea Richardson, an expert in analyzing open-source intelligence who is a consultant with the Human Rights Center at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, said specific landmarks visible in the videos show where the rockets were launched.

"From the video evidence that I have seen, it's very clear that the rockets came from within Gaza," said Richardson, a human rights lawyer and experienced war crimes investigator who has worked in the Middle East. She added that the timing of the rocket launches, the explosion and the first reports that the hospital had been hit also seemed to confirm the sequence of events.

While still potentially lethal, the explosive warheads carried by the homemade rockets used by militants in Gaza can be relatively small when compared with the munitions used by large militaries like those of the U.S. and Russia. With Gaza's borders and ports blockaded for the past decade, militants often build rockets and launch tubes inside Gaza using whatever parts and materials they can scavenge, including underground water pipes.

Justin Crump, a former British Army officer and intelligence consultant, said the failure rate of such homemade rockets is high.

"You can see obviously it fails in flight, it spins out and disintegrates, and the impacts on the ground follow that," said Crump, CEO of Sibylline, a London-based strategic advisory firm. "The most likely explanation is this was a tragic accident."

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Such a scenario unfolded last year, when Islamic Jihad-fired rockets malfunctioned and killed at least a dozen Gaza residents. The AP reported at the time that live TV footage showed the militant rockets falling short in densely packed residential neighborhoods.

THREE-SECOND GAP

Some of the questions about who is to blame focus on the three-second gap between the rocket's explosive breakup in the sky and the explosion on the ground at the al-Ahli Arab Hospital, and whether those two events are linked, especially because the videos analyzed by AP don't appear to show a trace of light that follows the rocket to the ground.

Outside experts said it's not possible to rule out with absolute certainty that the rocket launches occurring near the hospital and the timing of the explosion seconds later are just a coincidence. However, they also noted there is no evidence to support that scenario.

Richardson said the timestamps on videos showing the rocket launches from within Gaza, the midair malfunction and the large explosion striking the hospital below within seconds of each other provided a logical chain of events.

"An incredibly small timeframe," she said.

Intelligence analyst Schlottman said the most likely scenario remains that it was a militant rocket that somehow had some kind of malfunction mid-flight and then landed on the hospital.

"We have video of when the explosion happened and the only rocket visible in that video was the one that kind of had that diverging trajectory," he said. "We cannot possibly exclude other scenarios. ... Just what we have right now points to that."

EVIDENCE ON THE GROUND

About 10 minutes after the multiple rocket launches from Gaza were captured on video Tuesday night, posts began to appear on social media. The AP verified a video taken from a balcony near the hospital that shows the moment of impact, with the loud whizzing sound followed by a huge fireball and the clap of a massive explosion. AP could find no visual evidence to support speculation that the blast was triggered by a car bomb or other such device.

"Oh God! Oh God!" a man's voice exclaims in Arabic. "The hospital!" says a second male voice.

Other videos and photos reviewed by AP appear to show the explosion in the hospital's central parking lot and courtyard, where civilians had taken refuge after orders to evacuate the city. Some footage shows burning cars and more than a dozen dead bodies, including those of children.

AP photos taken the morning after Tuesday's explosion showed no evidence of a large crater at the impact site that would be consistent with a bomb like those dropped by Israeli aircraft in other recent strikes. The hospital buildings surrounding the outdoor area at the center of the explosion were still standing and did not appear to suffer significant structural damage.

A small crater photographed in the hospital's parking lot appeared to be about a meter across, suggesting a device with a much smaller explosive payload than a bomb. While Israel's extensive arsenal includes smaller missiles that can be fired from helicopters and drones, there has been no public evidence of such missile strikes in the area around the al-Ahli Arab Hospital on Tuesday night.

David Shank, a retired U.S. Army colonel and expert on military rockets and missiles, said the large fireball captured on video at the hospital could potentially be explained by the fact the malfunctioning militant rocket impacted prematurely and was still full of propellant. That highly volatile fuel then ignited when it hit the ground, setting off a large explosion but leaving a relatively small crater.

After Hamas' Oct. 7 surprise attack on southern Israel that killed 1,400, with another 200 people taken hostage, Israel's military said it dropped more than 6,000 bombs on Gaza in the first week of the war alone, and Gaza officials say that campaign has so far resulted in more than 4,100 deaths.

Hamas spokesman Hamad said that Israeli officials had threatened al-Ahli Arab hospital and other medical facilities, and ordered their evacuation before the deadly blast. He argued that the missiles belonging to Hamas and the Islamic Jihad would not have been capable of inflicting such damage.

Al-Ahli Arab Hospital's operators posted on its website that the facility's cancer center was struck by Israel three days before the deadly blast, leaving a hole in an exterior wall and an unexploded artillery

shell next to an ultrasound machine.

IRON DOME THEORY

Speculation has circulated on social media in the days since the explosion that the breakup of the rocket and the explosion on the ground was caused by Israel's Iron Dome defense system, which is designed to shoot such rockets out of the sky.

Israel has said it does not use its Iron Dome system within Gaza, but to intercept and destroy rockets coming into Israeli airspace.

Experts also noted multiple videos from around the time of the hospital explosion showed no visible evidence of Iron Dome missiles being fired from Israel into the airspace over Gaza.

John Erath, the senior policy director at the Center for Arms Control and an expert on missile defense, said that while it might be technically possible for Iron Dome to intercept a missile over Gaza, it would be unlikely in this case because the projectile was very early in its flight path – still on the way up – and the system is designed to only intercept projectiles it determines are on a flight path to a populated part of Israel.

"I'm not saying that it's impossible," Erath said. "But based on my understanding of how the system works, it is unlikely."

Added missile expert Shank: "They don't engage a target unless it's going to impact a critical asset such as a population area, maybe a power grid, maybe a military base."

"It's technically designed to take the best shot that gives it the highest probability of kill," he said. "And for Iron Dome ... that is not over Gaza."

At Cairo summit, even Arab leaders at peace with Israel expressed growing anger over the Gaza war

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt and Jordan harshly criticized Israel over its actions in Gaza at a summit on Saturday, a sign that the two Western allies that made peace with Israel decades ago are losing patience with its two-week-old war against Hamas.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi, who hosted the summit, again rejected any talk of driving Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinians into the Sinai Peninsula and warned against the "liquidation of the Palestinian cause." Jordan's King Abdullah II called Israel's siege and bombardment of Gaza "a war crime."

The speeches reflected growing anger in the region, even among those with close ties to Israel who have often worked as mediators, as the war sparked by a massive Hamas attack enters a third week with casualties mounting and no end in sight.

Egypt is especially concerned about a massive influx of Palestinians crossing into its territory, something that it fears would, among other things, severely undermine hopes for a Palestinian state. Vague remarks by some Israeli politicians and military officials suggesting people leave Gaza have alarmed Israel's neighbors, as have Israeli orders for Palestinian civilians to evacuate to the south, toward Egypt.

In his opening remarks, el-Sissi said Egypt vehemently rejected "the forced displacement of the Palestinians and their transfer to Egyptian lands in Sinai."

"I want to state it clearly and unequivocally to the world that the liquidation of the Palestinian cause without a just solution is beyond the realm of possibility, and in any case, it will never happen at the expense of Egypt, absolutely not," he said.

Jordan's king delivered the same message, expressing his "unequivocal rejection" of any displacement of Palestinians. Jordan already hosts the largest number of displaced Palestinians from previous Mideast wars.

"This is a war crime according to international law, and a red line for all of us," he told the summit.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who leads the Palestinian Authority, a government exercising semi-autonomous control in the occupied West Bank, called for Israel to stop "its barbaric aggression" in Gaza. He also warned against attempts to push Palestinians out of the coastal territory.

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"We will not leave, we will not leave, we will not leave, and we will remain in our land," he told the summit. Israel says it is determined to destroy Gaza's Hamas rulers but has said little about its endgame.

On Friday, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant laid out a three-stage plan in which airstrikes and "maneuvering" — a presumed reference to a ground attack — would aim to root out Hamas before a period of lower intensity mop-up operations. Then, a new "security regime" would be created in Gaza along with "the removal of Israel's responsibility for life in the Gaza Strip," Gallant said.

He did not say who would run Gaza after Hamas.

Meanwhile, Israel has ordered more than half of the 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza to evacuate from north to south within the territory it has completely sealed off, effectively pushing hundreds of thousands of Palestinians toward the Egyptian border.

Amos Gilad, a former Israeli defense official, said Israel's ambiguity on the matter is endangering crucial ties with Egypt. "I think a peace treaty with Egypt is highly important, highly crucial for the national security of Israel and Egypt and the whole structure of peace in the world," he said.

Gilad said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu needs to speak directly with the leaders of Egypt and Jordan, and say publicly that Palestinians will not be entering their countries.

Two senior Egyptian officials said relations with Israel have reached a boiling point.

They said Egypt has conveyed its frustration over Israeli comments about displacement to the United States, which brokered Camp David Accords in the 1970s. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media.

Egypt worries that a mass exodus would risk bringing militants into Sinai, from where they might launch attacks on Israel, endangering the peace treaty.

Arab countries also fear a repeat of the mass exodus of Palestinians from what is now Israel before and during the 1948 war surrounding its creation, when some 700,000 fled or were driven out, an event Palestinians refer to as the Nakba, or catastrophe. Those refugees and their descendants, who now number nearly 6 million, were never allowed to return.

At Saturday's gathering, the anger extended beyond the fears of mass displacement.

Both leaders condemned Israel's air campaign in Gaza, which has killed more than 4,300 Palestinians, including many civilians, according to health authorities in Gaza. Israel says it is only striking Hamas targets and is abiding by international law.

The war was sparked by a wide-ranging Hamas incursion into southern Israel on Oct. 7 in which over 1,400 people were killed, the vast majority of them civilians.

Abdullah, who is among the closest Western allies in the region, accused Israel of "collective punishment of a besieged and helpless people."

"It is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law. It is a war crime," he said.

He went on to accuse the international community of ignoring Palestinian suffering, saying it had sent a "loud and clear message" to the Arab world that "Palestinian lives matter less than Israeli ones."

Venezuela's opposition is holding primary to pick challenger for Maduro in 2024 presidential rival

By REGINA GARCIA CANO Associated Press

VALENCIA, Venezuela (AP) — Josselyz Essa and a friend, two 9-year-olds with a budding interest in politics as Venezuela starts toward its next presidential election, bubbled with eagerness waiting for the campaign rally to start. Then a thunderous noise spread over the crowd in the streets of the northern city of Valencia.

The girls stretched up on their tiptoes and joined in the uproar, screaming as loud as they could: "María Corina! María Corina!" — that is María Corina Machado, the opposition politician they want to be president.

Machado, a pro-free market former lawmaker, is the frontrunner in a primary election Sunday organized by the opposition to pick a challenger to President Nicolás Maduro. It is the first of its kind since 2012 in the troubled South American country.

But even if Machado wins, it remains unclear if she would be allowed to run in 2024. While Maduro's gov-

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ernment agreed in principle this week to allow the opposition to choose its candidate, it also has already barred Machado from running for office and has in the past bent the law and breached agreements as it sees fit.

All the candidates in the primary have promised to topple Maduro. That was once enough to get the support of opponents to the self-described socialist administration. These days, people want a lot more from opposition candidates.

Some want jobs, others want better public health care. Some want lower food prices, others want access to business credits.

Josselyz just wants a better school.

"Almost everything is missing. The walls are in disrepair. The cafeteria is missing, and the food is bad," said Josselyz, who was born a bit after Venezuela began its decade-old crisis.

The political, social and economic crisis that has come to define the once prosperous country has evolved over the years. The latest phase has been particularly challenging after a brief economic stability that overlapped the end of 2021 and beginning of 2022.

People's time is consumed by economic gymnastics. They may afford food today, but not tomorrow. They may get a government stipend today, but not tomorrow. They may fill up a tank with subsidized gasoline today, but not tomorrow.

Maduro's allies have ridiculed and dismissed the primary all year long. Still, both the government and its foes have used the contest as a bargaining chip to extract concessions from each other as part of a negotiation process meant to end the crisis.

Maduro and an opposition faction backed by the U.S. government agreed Wednesday to work together on basic conditions for the 2024 presidential election. That prompted the government to release six political prisoners and the Biden administration to lift key economic sanctions.

Still, a U.N.-backed panel investigating human rights abuses in Venezuela said last month that Maduro's government has intensified efforts to curtail democratic freedoms ahead of the 2024 election. That includes subjecting some politicians, human rights defenders and other opponents to detention, surveillance, threats, defamatory campaigns and arbitrary criminal proceedings.

Machado has been leading the primary race for months even though the government in June issued an administrative decision banning her from running for office, alleging fraud and tax violations and accusing her of seeking the economic sanctions the U.S. imposed on Venezuela. Two candidates who dropped out earlier this month had registered despite already being subject to bans.

Under Wednesday's agreement, the government and opposition are supposed to "recognize and respect the right of each political actor to select" a presidential candidate freely. They also agreed to "promote the authorization" of all candidates to participate as long as they comply with the law.

Aware Maduro has breached agreements before, the Biden administration has given Venezuela's government until the end of November to establish a timeline and process to quickly reinstate all candidates. If Maduro does not meet the deadline, the U.S. government will reverse some of the sanctions relief.

"We have been very clear that we must allow the participation of all candidates in the process," Brian Nichols, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs, told reporters Thursday.

Organizers of the primary have not given an estimate for participation Sunday. But logistics are bound to affect turnout.

Venezuelans typically vote on electronic machines set up at public schools. But the independent commission organizing the primary opted to use paper ballots and will set up voting centers at homes, churches, private schools and other facilities.

A poll earlier this month by the Venezuela-based research firm Delphos indicated more than half of people identified as highly likely or likely to participate did not know where to vote.

Machado told The Associated Press that will be the primary's "biggest challenge."

"I have no doubt that we, Venezuelans, want a profound change. That is why people tell me, 'Your next election is with Maduro,'" she said, suggesting people are focused on the 2024 election and not Sunday's.

"What we have to concentrate on ... is to let people know that the primary is going on, that it will be on

the 22nd, and that they should find out where they have to vote," she said.

With the enthusiasm of a child, and one with an unusual interest in politics, Josselyz insisted that she and her grandmother go to Machado's rally in Valencia earlier this month. She and her friend found a discarded homemade sign that read "Until the end with the iron lady" and held it up for some time.

Standing nearby was Ismael Martínez, who said he had voted for Maduro as well as his mentor, the late President Hugo Chávez. He said that Chávez's self-described socialist movement was "not bad," but that it "failed" due to some corrupt politicians whose "ego, personal interests" betrayed the country.

Now, he is backing Machado.

"We hope that she has a new economic vision for her country," said Martínez, 43, an agriculture worker. "We are the ones driving this change. In Venezuela, we are no longer the same as we were 20 years ago. We know how to recognize where the flaws are."

5 dead and 5 injured -- names on a scrap of paper show impact of Gaza war on a US family

By TRISHA AHMED Associated Press/Report for America

BLAINE, Minn. (AP) — In blue ink on a scrap of white paper that sits on his desk, Jihad Adwan scribbles the names and ages of his wife's relatives.

Next to five names, he writes "killed" or simply, "K." Beside another five, he marks "injured" or "I."

With every news report, social media post and conversation with a relative, he's keeping track — from his suburban Minneapolis home — of the toll the Israel-Hamas war is taking on his family, and his wife's family, in Gaza.

"What is preoccupying my brain, my everything, is just the fear of what's going to happen next," he said in an interview.

The family's plight reflects the far reach of the war for Palestinian and Israeli families around the world.

For Adwan, even the blast at a hospital in Gaza had a personal connection. It was the place where he trained to become a nurse before moving to the U.S. and becoming a nursing professor at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Adwan and his wife, Fatma Abumousa, found out Sunday that five of her relatives were killed, and another five were injured, after a bomb hit her family's multigenerational home in Khan Younis, a southern city and decades-old refugee camp in Gaza.

Abumousa said she first saw on the instant messaging app Telegram — in channels that Gaza journalists have been posting to — that her hometown was hit, then that it was her neighborhood. Finally, she saw her family's address.

"She woke me up. She was very upset and distraught. Very scared and crying," said Adwan, 54, while helping Abumousa, 41, translate from Arabic to English.

Abumousa confirmed with surviving family in Gaza that three of her nephews — ages 6, 7 and 18 — were killed and have been buried, along with her sister-in-law, 42, and cousin, 40.

"Little by little, through the morning, we learned all the details," Adwan said.

Hmaid, the 18-year-old nephew, was a "brilliant student" who loved calligraphy and building computers, Adwan said. The family had hoped he could study engineering in Germany.

Yusuf and Abdelrahman, the 6- and 7-year-olds, loved going to school and spending time with family. Hiba, their mother and Abumousa's sister-in-law, was an architect and novelist.

And Hani, Abumousa's cousin, had just moved from northern Gaza to the southern city to avoid danger after Israel ordered about 1 million people in northern Gaza to evacuate.

"Unfortunately, that didn't help him," Adwan said.

Among the five injured were Abumousa's other nieces and nephews, and the sister of her sister-in-law. Some have injuries to their backs, legs and shoulders from shrapnel, Adwan said. Another is in a coma.

Abumousa said through tears that she wants to stop losing people. She had planned to visit her parents in Gaza this month so they could meet her nearly 2-year-old son, Yaman. But now, she said, everything

has changed.

Adwan said he wishes media reports would humanize Palestinians as much as they humanize Israelis. "The Israeli side is being covered excessively. Their stories are told, their names are mentioned, their hobbies are listed," Adwan said. "We are not just numbers," he said of Palestinians.

Above all else, Adwan said he wants others to know this: "The Palestinian people want, demand and deserve freedom and equal human rights, like everyone in the world. Period."

Praying for the best and preparing for the worst, he tucks away the family's list.

On Friday afternoon, five days after learning of the bombing that killed Abumousa's relatives, Adwan said in a message to The Associated Press that 18 people — including nephews, nieces and neighbors — are thought to have been injured from the same bombing. "We learn more every day," he said.

He hasn't added their names to the list yet.

Inside the meeting of Republican electors who sought to thwart Biden's election win in Georgia

By JEFF AMY Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — It was a bad place to keep a secret.

When Republicans gathered on Dec. 14, 2020, claiming to be legitimate electors casting the state's 16 electoral votes for Donald Trump, they met at the Georgia Capitol in a room just upstairs from the building's public entrance. A Trump campaign official asked for the electors' "complete discretion," telling them to say only that they were meeting with two state senators who were there.

"Your duties are imperative to ensure the end result — a win in Georgia for President Trump — but will be hampered unless we have complete secrecy and discretion," Robert Sinners wrote in an email uncovered by investigators.

But reporters for The Associated Press and other news organizations noticed the Republicans entering the building and were eventually admitted into the room, where they photographed and recorded video of the proceeding. In the chaotic weeks after the 2020 election, the gathering's significance wasn't immediately clear. But it has emerged as a critical element to the prosecution of Trump and 18 others who were indicted by a Georgia grand jury in August for efforts to overturn Democrat Joe Biden's narrow win in the state.

The meeting was cited as a central element in court proceedings Friday as part of a last-minute deal with attorney Kenneth Chesebro, who pleaded guilty to one felony charge of conspiracy to commit filing false documents.

Chesebro, who prosecutors have said helped originate the plan for Republican electors to meet in states where Biden was certified as the winner, is now one of three people who have pleaded guilty in the case. Attorney Sidney Powell pleaded guilty Thursday to six misdemeanors accusing her of intentionally interfering with the performance of election duties as part of a broader conspiracy prosecutors say violated Georgia's anti-racketeering law.

While Democrats met in the ornate state Senate chamber to cast electoral votes for Biden, the Republicans sat around three worn and nicked wooden conference tables to consider options for keeping Trump in the White House. In the words of the case laid out by prosecutors, these were "fake" or "false" or "fraudulent" electors. At least eight Georgia Republican electors present that day have agreed to testify in exchange for immunity from state charges.

The meeting was led by David Shafer, then chairman of the Georgia Republican Party. Lending it the air of an official proceeding, a court reporter was present, something Shafer denied during questioning by Fulton County prosecutors in April 2022. That denial contributed to a charge of false statements and writings against Shafer.

More improvised elements of the meeting became clear as the group considered its officers. Shawn Still, who is now a state senator, wasn't initially elected as secretary, for instance. But halfway through the meeting, Shafer noted that Still's name was printed as the secretary on documents.

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"I would like to avoid reprinting the documents," Shafer said, asking the electors to replace another Republican with Still.

One of only three people the grand jury indicted for participating in the vote, Still may have been dragged into legal jeopardy when he was elected secretary. The third indicted elector, Cathy Latham, was also charged for helping outsiders access state voting equipment in south Georgia's Coffee County.

As the meeting unfolded, the Republicans sought to replace four electors who were previously lined up to support Trump. One had registered to vote in Alabama and was no longer eligible. State Sen. Burt Jones, later elected lieutenant governor with Trump's backing, took his spot.

Three other electors didn't show up, including John Isakson Jr., son of late Republican U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson. Isakson told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution in 2022 that he stayed away because the meeting seemed like "political gamesmanship."

Prosecutors allege Shafer and Still committed yet more felonies by creating a document claiming to fill those vacancies. State law says that action needed Gov. Brian Kemp's consent. The Republican governor had days earlier certified Biden as Georgia's winner for a second time after a recount.

Sinners, the Trump official, printed new elector certificates on a noisy portable printer. The racket of the machine gave the meeting a mundane, bureaucratic feel in an unadorned space usually set aside for state lawmakers to host constituents.

One by one, the 16 Republicans were called. Each rose and walked to the table, signing certificates pronouncing Trump and then-Vice President Mike Pence as the preferred choice of Georgia voters. That's the moment, grand jurors allege, when they committed the felonies for which they've been charged: impersonating a public officer, first degree forgery and making false statements in writing.

"They were fake electors; they were impersonating electors. They were no electors," Fulton County prosecutor Anna Cross told a federal judge in September, adding there was no evidence that Shafer, Still, Latham or other Republicans believed Trump had actually won.

Their defenders call them "alternate" or "contingent" electors, saying they were just trying to keep Trump's legal options open as a lawsuit challenged Georgia's election results. Some Republicans argue Trump never got a fair shake in Georgia because that lawsuit was never tried, despite a state law calling for election challenges to be heard within 20 days. A Georgia Republican Party website raising money to defend electors calls them "patriots who served."

"If we did not hold this meeting, then our election contest would effectively be abandoned," Shafer said during the December meeting, talking to attorney Ray Smith, who was there advising the electors and was also indicted. "And so the only way for us to have any judge consider the merits of our complaint, the thousands of people who we allege voted unlawfully, is for us to have this meeting."

Shafer defended his actions then and now by citing an episode that played out in Hawaii in 1960. Democrats met that year after Republican Richard Nixon was certified as the state's winner and sent three electoral votes to the U.S. Senate backing John F. Kennedy.

Todd Zywicki, a law professor at George Mason University in Virginia, signed a July 11 declaration concluding actions by Shafer and other Georgia Republican electors were "lawful, reasonable, proper and necessary" considering the election contest and the Hawaii precedent.

Lawyers for the indicted electors argue it was up to Congress to determine which slates should be counted. But Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis' office, in a court filing, disputed Shafer's claim that the actions of Georgia Republicans in 2020 bore any similarity to those of Hawaii Democrats in 1960. Her staff cites a major distinction — Democrats eventually won a recount in Hawaii that a court affirmed and the governor certified, sending official documents to the Senate.

"The factual situations are so readily distinguishable as to make the comparison meaningless," Willis' team wrote, arguing against Shafer's attempt to remove his case to federal court. Willis' office wrote that the Republican meeting "was used to further a clumsy but relentless pressure campaign on the vice president and state legislatures, and as a means to publicly undermine the legitimate results of the presidential election."

Sinners, the Trump campaign staffer who helped arrange the meeting, now rejects its purpose. He de-

nies the notion that Trump won Georgia and now works for Brad Raffensperger, the Republican secretary of state who came to national attention for rebuffing pressure from the then-president to "find" enough votes to ensure his win. Sinners cooperated with the U.S. House committee that investigated the violent insurrection on Jan. 6, 2021. He hasn't said whether he's cooperating with Willis.

In an interview, he made his regrets clear about what unfolded in the Georgia Capitol during one of the most turbulent periods in American politics.

"This was an ill-advised attempt by the former president's campaign to create a false reality — a victory," Sinners said.

Violence forced them to flee. Now faith sustains these migrants on their journey to the US

By MARÍA TERESA HERNÁNDEZ Associated Press

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP) — Night after night for six weeks, Erika Hernández knelt outside her home in central Mexico and prayed: "Please, God, don't let my son turn into a criminal."

"I prayed a lot. I fasted. My faith was huge," said the 46-year-old woman, fearing her son would be forcibly recruited by a criminal organization.

It didn't take long for God to listen, Hernández said. By early June, after being kidnapped by members of the Familia Michoacana drug cartel near Mexico City, her son escaped and the family fled north hoping to cross in the United States.

For many migrants like Hernández, their faith has been essential for coping with their challenging circumstances.

Hernández and 10 of her relatives spent three months hopping on buses, taxis and walking until they reached the Movimiento Juventud shelter in Tijuana, in northern Mexico, where they are awaiting an opportunity to find a safer home in America.

Before her son's kidnapping, the idea of migrating to the United States had never crossed Hernández's mind. Her family owned cattle and several tracts of farmland. They had a good life.

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said in early October that about 10,000 migrants per day were heading to the U.S. border. Waves of people riding atop railway cars forced Mexico's largest railroad to suspend dozens of freight trains.

While many places in Mexico provide shelter for Venezuelans, Haitians and Central Americans, some shelters in Tijuana have seen an influx of Mexicans fleeing violence, extortion and threats by organized crime.

José Guadalupe Torres reached out to God as soon as he left his home in the central state of Guanajuato. His motives mirrored Hernandez's: His family was threatened by a drug cartel. "We parted ways to be safe," the 62-year-old said. "But God has always been with us."

Now he prays for an appointment that will allow him to enter the United States.

Early this year, the Biden administration launched an online appointment system as a recommended way for migrants to request asylum, though thousands cross the border illegally every day.

"This is the precise time to preach the word of God," said pastor Albert Rivera, an evangelical who currently provides a roof and spiritual guidance for nearly 400 migrants in Agape, a nearby shelter.

According to Rivera, many migrants saw their children being murdered, suffered through the kidnapping of a family member, or lost everything to pay criminal extortion demands.

"We have received women married to hitmen whose enemies have shot their homes and said: 'I'll kill you and your children,'" the pastor said.

His guidance provides comfort for some who feel hopeless while waiting for a better life.

Mariana Flores fled Guerrero, a Pacific Coast state, with her husband and 3-year-old son after organized criminals kidnapped her husband temporarily. She brought her faith with her, but said being at Agape has renewed it.

"God did a miracle for us," the 25-year-old said. "So even if we feel sad from time to time, attending services helps us forget and we can keep trying to move on."

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Miguel Rayo, 47, traveled from the same Mexican state with just a few possessions, but keeps a Bible on his phone. "I read it when I'm cold, when I'm in need. We want to be renewed and remain close to God," Rayo said.

Agape welcomes migrants of any faith or ideology, but everyone is encouraged to attend services on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Migrants also pray in small groups several days per week in their dormitories.

A few miles away, Casa del Migrante provides spiritual comfort in addition to a temporary home, daily meals, legal advice and mentorships that help migrants find jobs and schools for their kids. The shelter was established by the Catholic Scalabrinian Missionaries in 1987.

Every Wednesday afternoon, during one of the Masses celebrated by the Rev. Pat Murphy, an American priest, migrants are invited to participate by sharing their thoughts, petitions and concerns.

"It's a lovely Mass, a time to gather and share," said Alma Ramírez, who started working as a volunteer a year ago and recently became a full-time worker at Casa Migrante.

The shelter used to receive only deported men from the U.S. but since 2019, when the surge of migrants increased, entire families and members from the LGBTQ+ community have been welcomed as well.

"We currently have internally displaced people, Mexicans who left states in the South because they faced violence mainly from drug trafficking," Ramírez said.

Across the shelter's entrance, a portrait depicting the Virgin Mary greets the newcomers.

"There are migrants who approach the door and once we tell them, 'You can enter,' they reply: I knew, since the moment I saw the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, that all would be fine," Ramírez said.

Both at Casa del Migrante and Agape, some migrants ask Murphy and Rivera to baptize them. Others request their company to pray for blessings. Many fear for the family members they left behind. Others hope for a good ending on their journey to the United States.

"Open the doors for me, Lord, so that I can cross," Rivera suggests they say in prayer.

"Imagine the experience of faith," Rivera said. "Arriving at a place feeling broken, but then you pray to God, fill out your application, you get an appointment and that's how you arrive in the United States."

"That's something they'll never forget."

Americans' faith in institutions has been sliding for years. The chaos in Congress isn't helping

By GARY FIELDS and LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For many Americans, the Republican dysfunction that has ground business in the U.S. House to a halt as two wars rage abroad and a budget crisis looms at home is feeding into a longer-term pessimism about the country's core institutions.

The lack of faith extends beyond Congress, with recent polling conducted both before and after the leadership meltdown finding a mistrust in everything from the courts to organized religion. The GOP internal bickering that for nearly three weeks has left open the speaker's position — second in line to the presidency — is widely seen as the latest indication of deep problems with the nation's bedrock institutions.

"They're holding up the people's business because they're so dysfunctional," said Christopher Lauff, 57, of Fargo, North Dakota.

Part of that business, he said, is approving money for Ukraine to continue its fight against Russia's invasion, something he says ultimately helps the U.S. — a point President Joe Biden stressed Thursday during an Oval Office address.

"We're usually the knight in shining armor, but we can't be that now," said Lauff, a Democrat.

The disdain for Congress is just one area where Americans say they are losing faith. Various polls say the negative feelings include a loss of confidence or interest in institutions such as organized religion, policing, the Supreme Court, even banking.

"Trust in institutions has deteriorated substantially," said Kay Schlozman, professor of political science at Boston College. Schlozman said she believes in government and the things it provides, such as national

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defense and access to health care, but "I also can very much understand why the American people can be cynical about government."

The turmoil in the House and the federal case against Democratic Sen. Robert Menendez of New Jersey, who is facing charges for bribery, show that both major parties are contributing to the dour outlook.

The House has been without a permanent leader since early October after a small cadre of right-wing Republicans pushed out a member of their own party, then-Speaker Kevin McCarthy. Subsequent attempts to replace him have failed.

"That is an example of exactly the kind of thing that I would say can't foster trust of government among the American people — the multiple votes, the fractiousness within parties, of people being personally ambitious and not being willing to compromise" Schlozman said.

About half of adults (53%) say they have "hardly any confidence at all" in the people running Congress, according to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research that was conducted in October. That's in line with 49% who said that in March. Just 3% have a great deal of confidence in Congress, virtually unchanged from March.

About 4 in 10 adults (39%) have hardly any confidence in the executive branch of the federal government, compared with 44% in March. Most Republicans (56%) have low levels of confidence in the executive branch — which is overseen by a member of the opposing party, Democrat Joe Biden — compared with just 20% of Democrats.

About a third of adults (36%) say they have hardly any confidence in the conservative-majority Supreme Court, a figure that has remained steady in recent months. The polling reinforces that Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say their confidence in the Supreme Court is low. Black Americans are more likely than Americans overall, as well as more likely than white or Hispanic adults, to have hardly any confidence in the nation's highest court.

One-third of U.S. adults (33%) continue to have low levels of confidence in the Justice Department, with Republicans having less confidence than Democrats. This comes as former President Donald Trump rails against the department after being charged with mishandling classified documents and attempts to overturn the 2020 election results.

Rick Cartelli, 63, a health care worker in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, who identifies as an independent, said he is happy with his local and state government but the current environment, especially the chaos on Capitol Hill, has wiped out what little confidence he had in that institution.

"What is happening now is not good for the country at all," he said.

Cartelli also said he has little confidence in the executive branch, citing what he says are "mental lapses" by Biden that "are only probably going to become more and more pronounced."

Multiple AP-NORC polls from earlier this year find that the dearth of confidence is pervasive, spreading to organized religion, the government's intelligence gathering and diplomatic agencies, as well as financial institutions. Slightly fewer than half (45%) in a study from AP-NORC and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights said they have little or no confidence that the news media is reporting news fully, accurately and fairly.

Views on the military were best, with just 17% saying they have hardly any confidence in it.

Kathleen Kersey, a 32-year-old health care worker in Brunswick, Georgia, who is a Republican, said she has little confidence in any of the federal entities, including Congress, but has more for the institutions closer to home. She also is a fan of Gov. Brian Kemp, a Republican, who she said is a moral man.

"There's only so much one person can do, and just with all the evil, it's hard to have confidence in anything really, even the churches because everything works together as one," she said.

Confidence in the country's foundational institutions has ebbed and flowed historically, though there's been a long-term downward trend since at least the 1970s. Trust in government waned in the era of Watergate and the Pentagon Papers before making a slight recovery during Ronald Reagan's presidency in the 1980s — despite Reagan's famous declaration that the nine most terrifying words in the English language were: "I'm from the government, and I'm here to help."

David Bateman, an associate professor of government at Cornell University, said the tea party movement during former President Barack Obama's term was the beginning of a steadier decline in confidence,

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as noted in polling from Gallup. But Bateman believes the most acute problem in recent years has been Trump's lies about the 2020 election, despite dozens of courts rejecting his claims and multiple audits and reviews in the swing states where he disputed his loss.

"The biggest threat to trust in institutions was the Trump campaign's refusal to concede the election and insistence that they had won," along with a large segment of the Republicans in Congress going along with the claim in the certification process, Bateman said.

"That validated the idea that the whole institutional system is rigged, which it isn't," he said.

He said an example of the fallout is the Republican attack on the Justice Department, including the FBI. The "weaponization" of the FBI has been a battle cry for Republicans who maintain it has targeted conservatives and who are incensed at the various investigations of Trump. Candidates vying against Trump for the Republican presidential nomination have said they would fire FBI Director Chris Wray.

Distrust of the FBI had long been the purview of Democrats, especially those aware of civil rights-era monitoring.

"If you told me in 2000 that Republicans are going to be saying you can't trust the FBI, I would have been shocked," Bateman said. "Going after the FBI has been a real ratcheting up of distrust."

Today in History: October 22, JFK reveals Soviet-built missile bases in Cuba

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Oct. 22, the 295th day of 2023. There are 70 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 22, 1962, in a nationally broadcast address, President John F. Kennedy revealed the presence of Soviet-built missile bases under construction in Cuba and announced a quarantine of all offensive military equipment being shipped to the Communist island nation.

On this date:

In 1836, Sam Houston was inaugurated as the first constitutionally elected president of the Republic of Texas.

In 1926, Ernest Hemingway's first novel, "The Sun Also Rises," was published by Scribner's of New York.

In 1928, Republican presidential nominee Herbert Hoover spoke of the "American system of rugged individualism" in a speech at New York's Madison Square Garden.

In 1934, bank robber Charles "Pretty Boy" Floyd was shot to death by federal agents and local police at a farm near East Liverpool, Ohio.

In 1968, Apollo 7 returned safely from Earth orbit, splashing down in the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1979, the U.S. government allowed the deposed Shah of Iran to travel to New York for medical treatment — a decision that precipitated the Iran hostage crisis.

In 1981, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization was decertified by the federal government for its strike the previous August.

In 1995, the largest gathering of world leaders in history marked the 50th anniversary of the United Nations.

In 2001, a second Washington, D.C., postal worker, Joseph P. Curseen, died of inhalation anthrax.

In 2014, a gunman shot and killed a soldier standing guard at a war memorial in Ottawa, then stormed the Canadian Parliament before he was shot and killed by the usually ceremonial sergeant-at-arms.

In 2016, the Chicago Cubs won their first pennant since 1945, beating the Los Angeles Dodgers in Game 6 of the National League Championship Series. (The Cubs would go on to beat Cleveland in the World Series in seven games.)

In 2018, President Donald Trump declared that the U.S. would start cutting aid to three Central American countries he accused of failing to stop thousands of migrants heading for the U.S. border.

In 2020, in the closing debate of the presidential campaign, President Donald Trump and Democratic

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challenger Joe Biden clashed over how to tame the raging coronavirus; Trump declared that the virus would “go away,” while Biden countered that the nation was heading toward a “dark winter.”

In 2022, it was revealed that the two musical sisters of pop star Carly Simon – singer Joanna and composer Lucy – had died of cancer within a day of each other.

Today's Birthdays: Black Panthers co-founder Bobby Seale is 87. Actor Christopher Lloyd is 85. Actor Derek Jacobi is 85. Actor Tony Roberts is 84. Movie director Jan (yahn) de Bont is 80. Actor Catherine Deneuve is 80. Rock musician Eddie Brigati is 78. Former Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour is 76. Actor Jeff Goldblum is 71. Rock musician Greg Hawkes is 71. Movie director Bill Condon is 68. Actor Luis Guzman is 67. Actor-writer-producer Todd Graff is 64. Rock musician Cris Kirkwood is 63. Actor-comedian Bob Odenkirk is 61. Olympic gold medal figure skater Brian Boitano is 60. Christian singer TobyMac is 59. Singer-songwriter John Wesley Harding (Wesley Stace) is 58. Actor Valeria Golino is 57. Comedian Carlos Mencia is 56. Country singer Shelby Lynne is 55. Reggae rapper Shaggy is 55. Movie director Spike Jonze is 54. Rapper Tracey Lee is 53. Actor Saffron Burrows is 51. Actor Carmen Ejogo is 50. Former MLB player Ichiro Suzuki is 50. Actor Jesse Tyler Ferguson is 48. Actor Michael Fishman is 42. Talk show host Michael Essany is 41. MLB infielder Robinson Canó is 41. Rock musician Rickard Goransson (Carolina Liar) is 40. Rock musician Zac Hanson is 38. Actor Corey Hawkins is 35. Actor Jonathan Lipnicki is 33. Actor Sofia Vassilieva is 31. Actor Elias Harger is 16.