

Groton Daily Independent

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Saturday, Oct. 28

Thrift Store open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.
Junior High Volleyball Tournament at Matchbox in Aberdeen.

Sunday, Oct. 29

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:30 a.m.
Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., 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 with communion (Milestones for JK and Kindergarten), 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 7 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

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



Monday, Oct. 30

Senior Menu: Creamed chicken, buttermilk biscuit, peas, pineapple/mandarin oranges, peanut butter cookie, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.
School Lunch: Chicken fries mashed with gravy.
Pantry Open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.
FCCLA Blood Drive at High School

Tuesday, Oct. 31

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, broccoli, fruit, orange sherbert, garlic toast.
School Breakfast: Waffles.
School Lunch: Werewolf burgers (hamburgers), white trees (cooked cauliflower)
Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Downtown Trick or Treat, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
United Methodist Trunk or Treat, 5:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Region 1A Volleyball Tournament
NCRC Test for Seniors, 8:40 a.m. to Noon

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

World in Brief

Robert Card, the man suspected of fatally shooting 18 people at a bar and a bowling alley in Maine, has been found dead. Maine Public Safety Commissioner Michael Sauschuck said Card died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Israel has said it is "expanding ground operations" in the Gaza Strip tonight, amid reports of large explosions within the region. A military spokesperson has again called for all residents in the north of the Gaza Strip to move south.

Judge Arthur Engoron, who is presiding over the \$250 million civil trial against Donald Trump and his Trump Or-

ganization, has ordered the former president's daughter Ivanka Trump to testify in the case.

Democratic Representative George Santos has pleaded not guilty in federal court to 10 new charges alleging he stole donors' identities in order to use their credit cards.

Democratic Minnesota Congressman Dean Phillips has launched a campaign to challenge sitting President Joe Biden, and has filed to appear on the New Hampshire primary ballot.

Sam Bankman-Fried, the former CEO of collapsed cryptocurrency exchange FTX, has testified in his high-profile fraud trial, taking the stand in his own defense after pleading guilty to charges that could see him sent to prison for decades.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, Ukrainian forces destroyed three of Russia's prized S-400 Triumph air defense systems using U.S.-provided Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) in an attack that Moscow said it had thwarted, a Russian Telegram channel has reported.

RAISING THE ROOFING STANDARDS,
ALL OVER YOUR TOWN!

FREE HAIL STORM ESTIMATES!

605.759.0000

1205 6TH AVE SW SUITE 2, ABERDEEN, SD 57401



ALL OVER ROOFING



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

NSU Volleyball

Northern State Unable to Dampen No. 6 Southwest Minnesota State Attack

Marshall, Minn. – The Northern State University volleyball team faced off against No. 6 Southwest Minnesota State on the road Friday evening, ultimately falling 3-0. With the loss, the Wolves sit fifth in the NSIC Standings, one game behind St. Cloud State.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 0, SMSU 3

Records: NSU 16-6 (8-5 NSIC), SMSU 20-3 (11-2 NSIC)

Attendance: 1064

HOW IT HAPPENED

The Wolves fell with set scores of 25-15, 25-18, and 25-23; battling back in the third from a 20-15 deficit to take a 22-20 lead

The Mustangs however rallied with four kills and a service ace to secure the set and match victory

Northern recorded 39 kills, 38 assists, 49 digs, seven blocks, and one ace in the loss, hitting .183 as a team

Southwest Minnesota State was efficient, hitting .292 with a match high 45 kills and 53 digs

Abby Brooks and Natalia Szybinska led the team with ten kills apiece, while Abby Meister scrounged for 19 digs, averaging 6.33 per set

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Abby Brooks: 10 kills, .450 attack%, 3 blocks

Natalia Szybinska: 10 kills, 2 blocks

Keri Walker: 38 assists, 8 digs, 1 block

Abby Meister: 19 digs

UP NEXT

Northern State heads to Sioux Falls this afternoon for a match-up against host Augustana. First serve is set for 2 p.m. against the Vikings.

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!



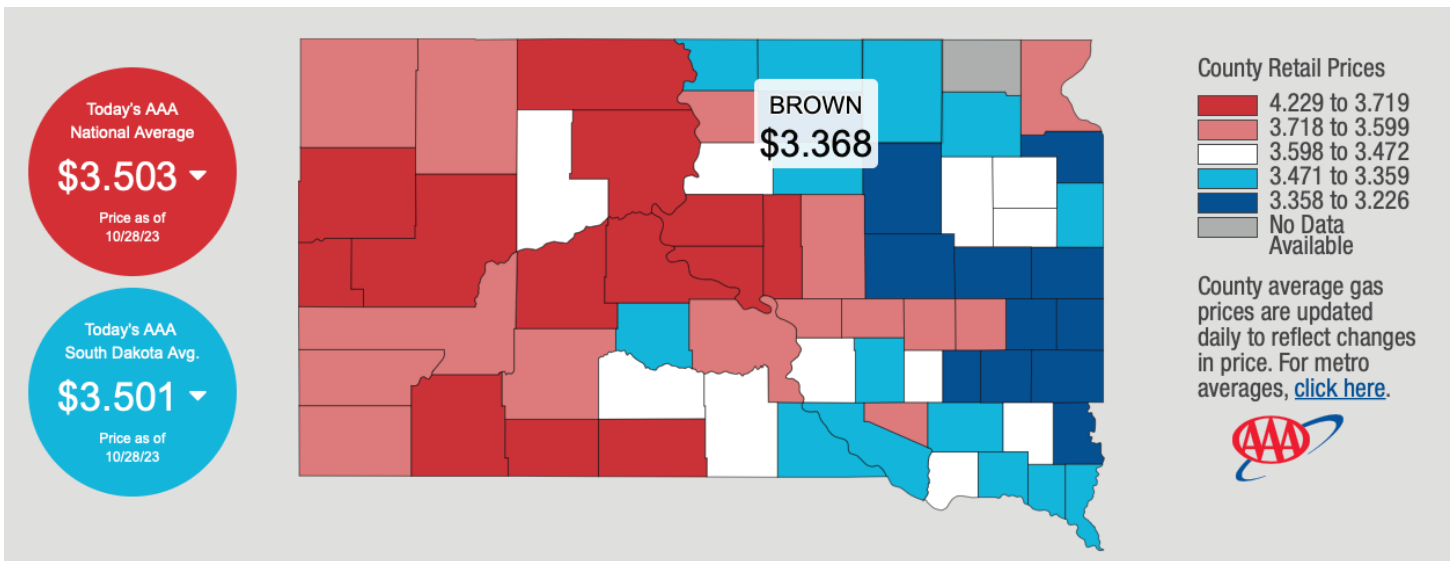
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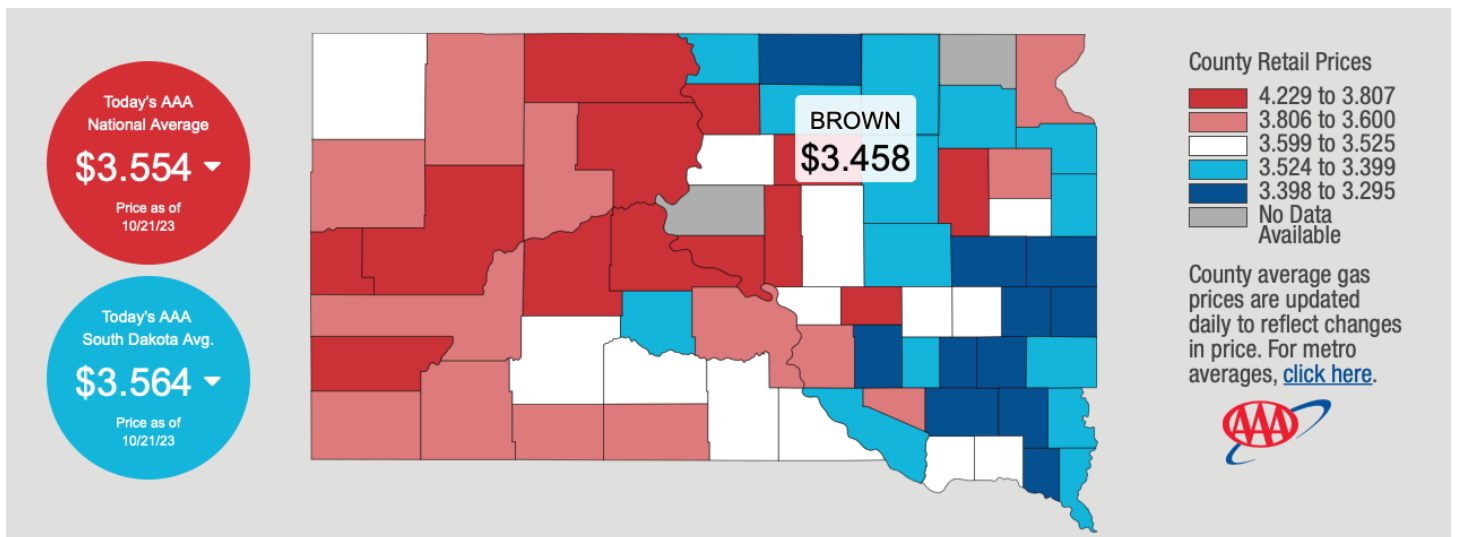
South Dakota Average Gas Prices

| | Regular | Mid-Grade | Premium | Diesel |
|----------------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Current Avg. | \$3.501 | \$3.664 | \$4.172 | \$4.628 |
| Yesterday Avg. | \$3.518 | \$3.698 | \$4.185 | \$4.663 |
| Week Ago Avg. | \$3.564 | \$3.743 | \$4.211 | \$4.527 |
| Month Ago Avg. | \$3.829 | \$3.992 | \$4.471 | \$4.404 |
| Year Ago Avg. | \$3.699 | \$3.857 | \$4.347 | \$5.236 |

This Week



Two Weeks Ago



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Drought Classification

None

D0 (Abnormally Dry)

D1 (Moderate Drought)

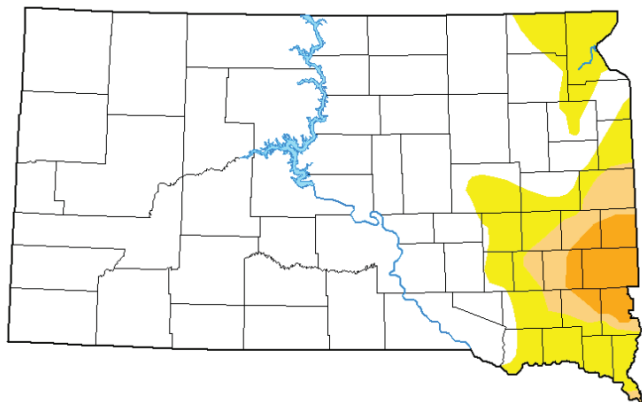
D2 (Severe Drought)

D3 (Extreme Drought)

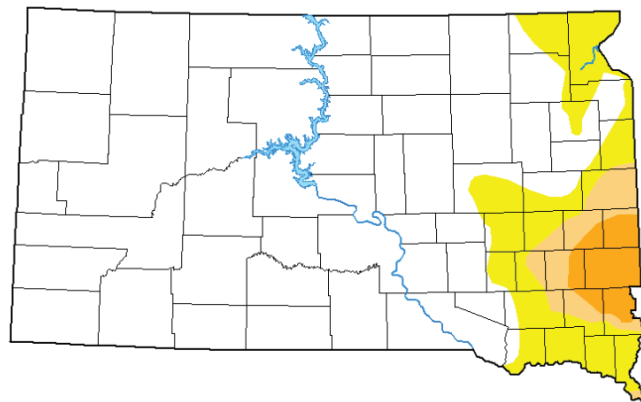
D4 (Exceptional Drought)

No Data

Drought Monitor



October 24



October 17

Precipitation fell over the northern and eastern parts of the region, with much of the rain falling outside of the drought areas. For this reason, much of the High Plains remained as status quo this week. Little to no precipitation fell over most of Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado and southern Wyoming. This coupled with above-normal temperatures (around 10-15°F above normal), along with deteriorating conditions shown in short-term SPI/SPEI, streamflow and soil moisture data, justified slight degradations across these states. Severe drought (D2) was expanded in northeast Kansas, while moderate drought (D1) was expanded in the southeast part of the state. D1 was also expanded in parts of southwest Wyoming, while abnormal dryness (D0) was expanded from southwest Nebraska into northeast Wyoming and D0 was introduced along the central border of Kansas and Wyoming.

Walworth County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash
Where: US Hwy 12, Mile Marker 217, 7 miles east of Shelby, SD
When: 5:28 p.m., Thursday, October 26, 2023

Driver 1: Male, 21, Minor injuries
Vehicle 1: 2016 Ford Taurus

Driver 2: Male, 73, Fatal injuries
Vehicle 2: 1995 Ford 150

Walworth County, S.D.- One person died Thursday evening in a two vehicle crash in Walworth County.

The names of the persons involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates a 2016 Ford Taurus was driving westbound on US Hwy 12 near mile marker 217. The Taurus started passing a Semi/Tractor pulling a tanker and did not see a 1995 Ford F150 driving eastbound. The Taurus and F150 collided, each on the front driver side fender, nearly head on.

The F150 came to a final rest on the road and the Taurus came to a final rest in the south ditch. US Hwy 12 was closed in this location for about 4.5 hours.

The 21-year-old male driver of the 2016 Ford Taurus sustained minor injuries. Seatbelt use is under investigation.

The 73-year-old male driver of the 1995 Ford 150 sustained fatal injuries and was pronounced deceased at the scene. He was wearing a seatbelt.

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

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

Names Released in Codington County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: 462nd Avenue, south of 162nd Street, 7 miles southwest of South Shore, SD

When: 9:21 a.m., Tuesday October 24, 2023

Driver No. 1: Kevin Zemlicka, 60, Waverly, SD, Fatal injuries

Vehicle No. 1: 2002 International 9200I

Driver No. 2: Logan Witt, 20, Lake Norden, SD, Not injured

Vehicle No. 2: 2017 Ram 3500

CODINGTON COUNTY, S.D.- A 60-year-old Waverly, SD man has been identified as the person who died Tuesday morning in a two vehicle crash seven miles southwest of South Shore, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates a 2002 International 9200I pulling a loaded grain trailer was driving northbound on 462nd Avenue, which is a gravel road, just south of 162nd Street. At the same time, a 2017 Ram 3500 pulling a loaded enclosed trailer, was driving southbound on 462nd Ave. just south of 162nd St.

The International and trailer were driving in the middle of the road. The Ram and trailer were driving on the west side of the road. The front driver's side of the International struck the driver's side of the Ram. The International came to a stop on the road. The trailer came loose from the Ram. The Ram went into the ditch and then back onto the road where it came to a stop.

The driver of the 2002 International 9200I, Kevin Zemlicka, age 60, of Waverly, SD, sustained fatal injuries. He was not wearing a seatbelt.

The driver of the 2017 Ram 3500, Logan Witt, age 20, of Lake Norden, SD, was not injured. He was wearing a seatbelt.

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

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

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Groton Wage Memorial Library

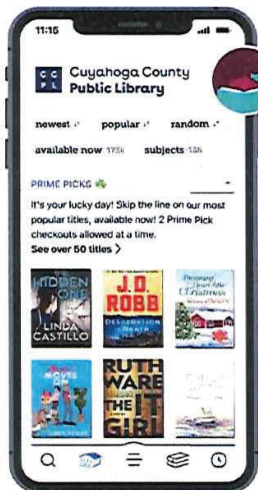


120 N Main St – Groton, SD – (605) 397-8422

Open Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

- Library Cards are FREE to ALL Groton Area Residents!
- Offer a variety of books, magazines, audiobooks and DVDs!
- Offer printing, copying, faxing and scanning services!
- Computer Lab, laptops and tablets available for public use!
- Now offering e-books and audiobooks with the FREE OverDrive/Libby App!

Discover new reads on Libby, the free app from your local library that allows you to borrow ebooks, audiobooks & more on your phone or tablet.



Why you'll love Libby:

- Quick and easy setup! Just follow the prompts to start reading
- A unified bookshelf for all your loans and holds
- Unlimited custom tags to categorize books however you'd like
- Push notifications so you never miss a thing, including available holds
- Easily find the next book in a series
- Preferences to only see the content you like
- More ways to listen on the go with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto

With the classic OverDrive app being discontinued soon, it's time to read on Libby. The award-winning Libby app by OverDrive offers a fresh, easy-to-use design with access to the same great titles from your library.



Visit overdrive.com/libby to get started with Libby today!



Summer Storytime EVERY Thursday in the Summer June-August!
'1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Program' is NOW available!

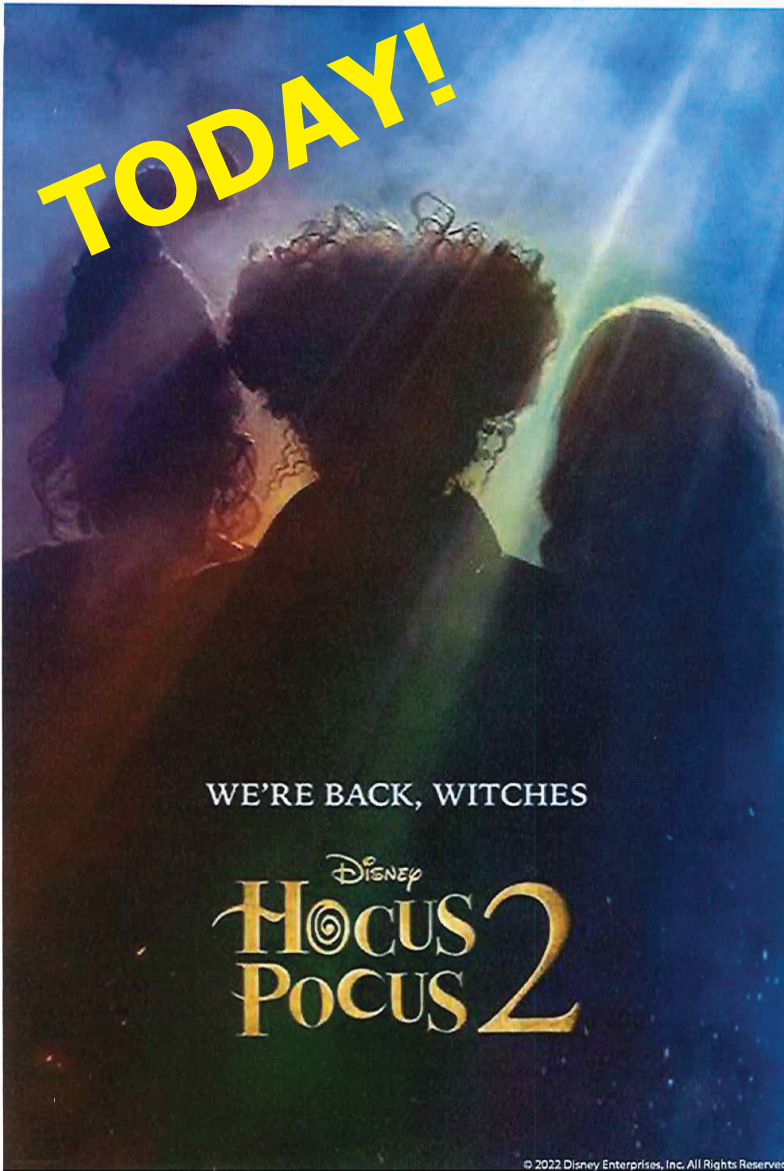
FREE UPCOMING EVENTS: *MUST PREREGISTER BY CALLING LIBRARY*

Saturday, October 28th 3pm-5pm: Halloween Movie Event: Featuring Hocus Pocus 2!

Saturday, December 9th 11am-1pm: Christmas Movie Event (TBA). Jungle Pizza will be served!

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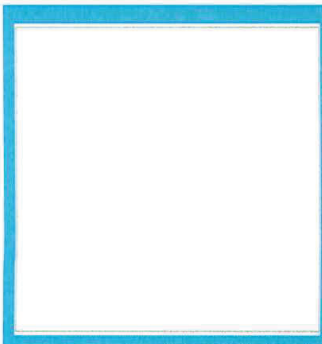
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Groton Wage Memorial
Library
120 N Main Street
Saturday, October 28th
3:00pm-5:00pm

FREE ADMISSION!
MUST preregister! Limited
seating available!
Questions/Register
(605) 397-8422

FREE SNACKS provided by
Dacotah Bank!



SWANK
MOVIE LICENSING USA



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Big prices drive interest in small homes, but lot-size rules stand in the way

BY: JOHN HULT - OCTOBER 27, 2023 4:30 PM

Rob Poeppel wants to build illegal houses.

Or at least they would be illegal if he hadn't gotten a waiver from the Rapid City Council.

The 165 houses the Rapid City developer and real estate agent hopes to build and sell aren't designed for drug dealers or meant to be used for otherwise unscrupulous activity, though.

The trouble is that they're too small.

In Rapid City – like any larger city in South Dakota – developers are required to adhere to minimum lot size rules. Those rules make it all but impossible to build the kinds of starter homes that typified neighborhoods built in the years immediately after World War II.

Many of those older homes are between 600 to 800 square feet in size – larger than trendy “tiny homes” but about a third smaller than the smallest modern “starter homes” on the market today.

Poeppel and his wife, Jami, have sold dozens of those smaller, older homes to first-time homebuyers in Rapid City, where a hot housing market and high interest rates have made new homes unattainable for many younger buyers.

All the interest in those older homes left the Poeppels with a question.

“Why can't we do this again?” Rob Poeppel said.

In early October, after months of planning and several showcases of a small model home built to prove the concept, the Poeppels got a tentative endorsement from the Rapid City Council to move forward and firm up their plans for a little-house neighborhood.

Poeppel still needs to finish and submit detailed neighborhood plans for review by the Planning Department before the work can proceed.

The homes, which would be fitted with solar panels, would sell for far less than the \$200,000-plus floor price for the most affordable newer homes on the market in Rapid.

“Our goal is to be \$150,000 to \$180,000 per lot, all included,” said Poeppel, who said he already has a waiting list of buyers. “If they would say ‘go’ today, we could build them for that.”

The city council's vote of confidence was a relief for the 52-year-old developer, who told South Dakota Searchlight he wants to spend his last years at work helping people escape high apartment rents and become homeowners.

It was also a surprise. In his experience, it's difficult to convince authorities to step away from zoning norms as entrenched as minimum lot sizes.

“It feels good. I'm actually shocked,” Poeppel said. “It never would have passed last year, or even at any time in the past 10 years.”

Zoning norms beget conventional wisdom

The general thinking behind zoning rules, according to Rapid City Planning Director Vicki Fisher, is about orderly and safe development.

Fisher is a supporter of the Poeppels' smaller home concept, she said, and of innovative approaches to housing in general. She toured a model home the couple had placed on the lot of a home destroyed by fire, and came away thinking it was small, but not unworkable.

“We like diversified housing within one neighborhood,” she said. “That truly forms that sense of com-

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munity that keeps Rapid City special.”

But Fisher’s office oversees a baseline requirement that all single-family home lots be 6,500 square feet or more, one of many zoning standards in place for decades.

In that capacity, Fisher said the general zoning rules that Poeppel saw as barriers to his project are based on legitimate community needs.

Minimum lot sizes in areas zoned for single-family homes are often meant to make sure communities don’t get too dense for comfort, Fisher said, or too dense for cities to manage.

Cities also need to manage future growth, she said. Water and sewer plans tend to stretch decades into the future and are based on the number of people likely to live in a city. The number of homes, and people, living in a city is an extension of minimum lot size requirements.

Smaller lots could mean more people, which means a need for larger water and sewer lines.

“They size all of those things based on a formula that’s currently in place,” Fisher said.

There’s also parking to consider. Lots need to be large enough to accommodate at least one vehicle parked on the street, which is something the city and Poeppel will need to work through as plans are finalized.

There are ways to work a greater variety in housing into existing zoning standards without upending the goals of planners, and Fisher said the city is open to considering them.

On the other side of the state, Sioux Falls planners require lots to be 5,000 square feet – smaller than Rapid City and most cities in the surrounding area.

Lot size requirements place restrictions on developers, according to Jason Bieber, a planner for the city of Sioux Falls. But Bieber sees consumer expectations and developer norms as additional factors in modern home sizes.

Since 2014, Sioux Falls zoning rules have included a designation called “residential cluster planned development,” which essentially allows developers to build out neighborhoods as they see fit.

Smaller lot sizes for smaller homes, homes intermingling with apartments or space for small businesses are all acceptable under that designation, Bieber said, provided the developer appears with a feasible plan that meets safety and environmental standards.

“You can do pretty much anything within reason,” he said.

The city is also ahead of the market. Thus far, just one developer has tried to use the flexibility to design a neighborhood.

“Everybody wants to see that two- or three-car garage out front,” Bieber said.

But those larger houses are so expensive in light of inflation and high interest rates, he said, that young people who’d have bought a home 10 years ago are leasing one of the hundreds of rental units built each year in Sioux Falls.

According to a recent issue of the Dakota Institute’s “Dakota Outlook,” the median home price in South Dakota is \$349,869. The median household income from 2017-2021 for South Dakota was \$63,920 a year, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

“Your first-time homebuyers are living in twin homes and apartments to save up money for that down payment,” Bieber said. “You can see all the apartments we’ve built, and they’re more than 90% occupied.”

Shift in thinking

Minimum lot sizes

Minimum lot size requirements in residential developments in South Dakota’s 10 largest cities, listed in square feet, with lower numbers for areas deemed high-density residential and higher numbers representing standard residential zones:

Sioux Falls: 5,000*

Rapid City: 6,000-6,500

Aberdeen: 3,000-9,000

Brookings: 4,500-15,000

Watertown: 5,000-9,000*

Mitchell: 6,000-10,000

Yankton: 6,000-10,000

Huron: 10,000

Pierre: 6,000-10,000

Box Elder: 7,000-5,000

Groton: 7,000

*Denotes cities with “planned unit development” zoning designations, which allow for smaller-than-average lots and mixed use in new developments.

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The “build bigger” mindset is common, according to Daniel Herriges of Strong Towns, an organization based in the Twin Cities that advocates for less rigidity in city planning and more incremental, flexible development.

Even as people like Poeppel sell smaller homes and line up customers for new ones, generations of city dwellers, city planners and financiers have grown accustomed to the notion that small won’t sell.

Even with encouragement from planning departments for innovative approaches, Herriges said, multi-million-dollar investments in neighborhoods with unproven potential don’t have built-in support from loan officers and investors.

“Nobody wants to be first,” said Herriges, who edits the Strong Towns newsletter and was a recent guest of an urban planning conference in Sioux Falls.

But Herriges also sees zoning as more impactful to development in the long-term than cultural expectations. Plenty of apartments in Minneapolis are now built without parking, he said, and people still rent them.

Other cities have helped spur changes to neighborhoods with zoning updates, he said. In 1999, Houston lowered its minimum lot sizes from 5,000 square feet to 1,400 in some areas.

“What’s happened in the 20 years since then is that there are several neighborhoods of inner Houston, two or three miles outside of downtown, that have really dramatically redeveloped with skinny townhouses,” Herriges said. “It’s become kind of a hallmark Houston development form.”

A significant share of the zoning rules modern cities and residents take for granted – minimum lot sizes or parking space requirements, for example – were put in place without a great deal of forethought, he said.

Herriges said he’s not familiar with the specifics of the rules for any South Dakota cities, but said “the majority of zoning text in America was copy-pasted from one city to another.”

“I am sure there are cases where there are legitimate infrastructure concerns about, for example, the capacity of the water and sewer pipes,” Herriges said. “I’m not going to say that it’s never a real issue. But I usually encounter it raised as a red herring by opponents of development in the community.”

Next steps

Poeppel still has work to do to plan out his development and hit the regulatory marks needed to build in Rapid City, but he’s hopeful about the prospects.

He’s looking forward to connecting first-time homebuyers to property and building a neighborhood on the eastern edge of Rapid City in the Rapid Valley area. The homes will include covenants to ensure they cannot be used as rental properties, he said.

He also sees the neighborhood as a potential aid to other buyers. About 400 people came to an open house for his spec home, Poeppel said, and about a third were empty nesters with bedrooms to spare who were interested in downsizing.

That’s one reason Fisher, the Rapid City planner, is wishing the Poeppels well. If real estate agents sell a small home to a couple who’s moving out of a bigger one, she said, “that opens up that five-bedroom house to the young family that wants to move in.”

“I’m excited to see this one come forward,” Fisher said. “We’re making some fairly large concessions, and we’re doing so on an experimental basis, but I think we can do it.”

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

Noem foreshadows 'back to normal' budget

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - OCTOBER 27, 2023 4:00 PM

Gov. Kristi Noem says state revenues are falling "back to normal."

Noem focused her weekly column Friday on fiscal matters. She's preparing to deliver her annual budget address to the Legislature on Dec. 5.

"It is important to realize that this year's budget will look more 'normal' than it has the last several years," Noem wrote.

There was so much extra money available last winter that legislators passed a temporary sales tax holiday, reducing the state rate from 4.5% to 4.2%.

"I'm hopeful the Legislature will make this tax cut permanent," Noem wrote. "Instead, there is already talk among legislators about repealing the sales tax holiday to free up money for more spending."

Much of the extra money in the state budget the past several years flowed from federal pandemic relief and stimulus funding for states, which has now faded. The period since the injection of that money in the economy has been marred by high inflation.

Or, as Noem put it in her column, "we have not been immune from the burdensome regulations and inflation inflicted by the federal government, and America's national economy continues to tank because of the extremist policies of the Biden Administration."

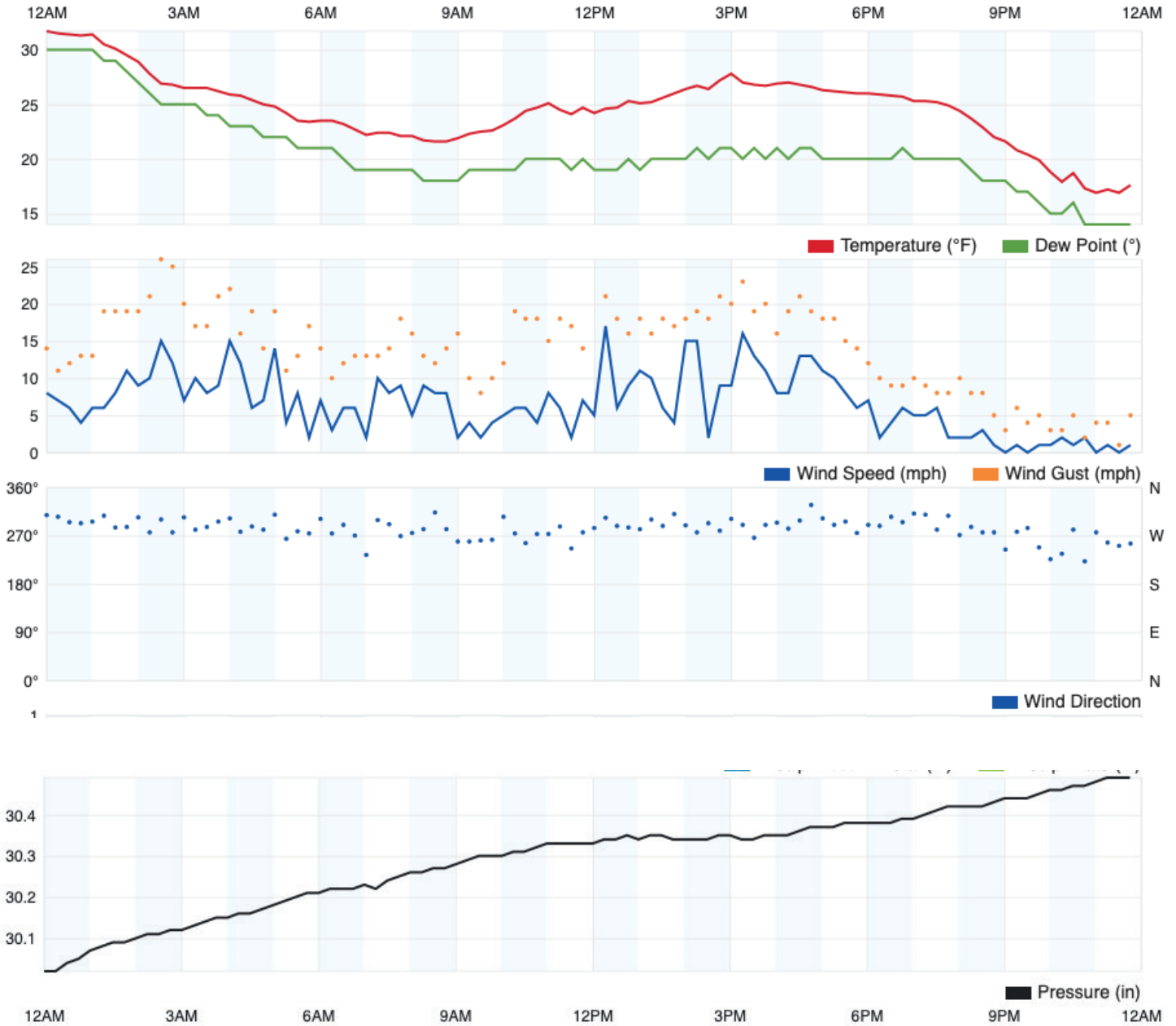
Noem indicated she won't entertain any tax-increase proposals during the legislative session that begins in January.

"We cannot raise taxes on South Dakota families," she wrote.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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| Sat Oct 28 | Sun Oct 29 | Mon Oct 30 | Tue Oct 31 | Wed Nov 1 | Thu Nov 2 | Fri Nov 3 |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | | | | | |
| 30°F 14°F | 31°F 15°F | 36°F 14°F | 30°F 15°F | 39°F 18°F | 38°F 24°F | 37°F 26°F |
| W 8 MPH | SSW 15 MPH | WSW 21 MPH | NW 19 MPH | S 15 MPH | WNW 10 MPH | ESE 12 MPH |



Cold Next Several Days

October 28, 2023

2:52 AM

Pockets of Snow Today (Dusting to 1/2" along and south of Highway 14)

| | Maximum Temperature Forecast | | | | | Wind Chill Forecast | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|---------------------|-----|------|-----|-----------|-----|------|-----|-----------|-----|------|-----|-----------|-----|------|-----|
| | 10/28 | 10/29 | 10/30 | 10/31 | 11/1 | 10/28 Sat | | | | 10/29 Sun | | | | 10/30 Mon | | | | 10/31 Tue | | | |
| | | | | | | 12am | 6am | 12pm | 6pm | 12am | 6am | 12pm | 6pm | 12am | 6am | 12pm | 6pm | 12am | 6am | 12pm | 6pm |
| Chamberlain | 31 | 37 | 44 | 34 | 46 | 6 | 7 | 16 | 21 | 9 | 4 | 17 | 19 | 7 | 5 | 19 | 18 | 2 | -1 | 13 | 17 |
| Clark | 27 | 30 | 35 | 29 | 39 | 7 | 4 | 13 | 19 | 7 | 4 | 15 | 17 | 7 | 6 | 16 | 16 | 4 | -2 | 11 | 15 |
| Eagle Butte | 29 | 32 | 40 | 33 | 44 | 12 | 12 | 22 | 21 | 15 | 12 | 19 | 20 | 11 | 7 | 19 | 25 | 11 | -1 | 12 | 17 |
| Ellendale | 30 | 30 | 33 | 28 | 37 | 15 | 16 | 22 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 20 | 23 | 14 | 9 | 26 | 32 | 12 | -1 | 17 | 22 |
| Eureka | 28 | 29 | 33 | 28 | 37 | 7 | 7 | 14 | 18 | 12 | 7 | 16 | 16 | 8 | 6 | 18 | 19 | 4 | -1 | 11 | 16 |
| Gettysburg | 29 | 32 | 39 | 32 | 42 | 0 | -2 | 8 | 16 | 3 | 1 | 13 | 16 | 6 | 5 | 21 | 17 | 1 | -2 | 10 | 18 |
| Huron | 30 | 36 | 41 | 33 | 44 | 5 | 4 | 14 | 18 | 5 | 3 | 14 | 15 | 5 | 2 | 14 | 13 | 1 | -3 | 10 | 12 |
| Kennebec | 30 | 36 | 44 | 34 | 48 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 14 | 3 | 0 | 10 | 13 | 5 | 2 | 13 | 10 | -2 | -6 | 8 | 13 |
| McIntosh | 25 | 27 | 31 | 28 | 36 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 18 | 4 | 3 | 13 | 16 | 6 | 7 | 18 | 18 | 0 | -2 | 11 | 17 |
| Milbank | 33 | 34 | 37 | 32 | 43 | 11 | 15 | 22 | 22 | 15 | 13 | 21 | 23 | 11 | 11 | 25 | 28 | 10 | 0 | 16 | 20 |
| Miller | 30 | 33 | 39 | 32 | 43 | 10 | 11 | 16 | 20 | 11 | 5 | 19 | 21 | 11 | 7 | 25 | 27 | 6 | 0 | 14 | 21 |
| Mobridge | 30 | 33 | 38 | 34 | 43 | -7 | -4 | 8 | 12 | -2 | -1 | 8 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 11 | 9 | -3 | -6 | 5 | 14 |
| Murdo | 29 | 35 | 44 | 35 | 49 | 15 | 13 | 21 | 22 | 15 | 10 | 22 | 20 | 11 | 8 | 20 | 23 | 7 | 2 | 13 | 15 |
| Pierre | 33 | 37 | 46 | 37 | 49 | 9 | 8 | 16 | 20 | 11 | 7 | 17 | 20 | 7 | 6 | 21 | 23 | 3 | -1 | 15 | 19 |
| Redfield | 31 | 33 | 39 | 32 | 43 | 5 | 4 | 14 | 20 | 9 | 7 | 16 | 19 | 9 | 9 | 20 | 18 | 4 | 2 | 14 | 19 |
| Sisseton | 31 | 32 | 35 | 29 | 40 | 8 | 8 | 13 | 20 | 10 | 4 | 16 | 18 | 9 | 5 | 25 | 27 | 4 | 0 | 14 | 21 |
| Watertown | 30 | 32 | 36 | 30 | 41 | 12 | 13 | 16 | 22 | 12 | 8 | 19 | 23 | 13 | 11 | 26 | 27 | 7 | 4 | 15 | 23 |
| Webster | 27 | 28 | 32 | 27 | 36 | 9 | 7 | 18 | 22 | 12 | 7 | 19 | 20 | 9 | 6 | 20 | 22 | 4 | 0 | 15 | 19 |
| Wheaton | 32 | 32 | 36 | 31 | 41 | 10 | 11 | 18 | 20 | 9 | 7 | 18 | 18 | 9 | 7 | 18 | 18 | 5 | 1 | 13 | 15 |
| | | | | | | 12 | 11 | 18 | 20 | 12 | 8 | 18 | 18 | 9 | 7 | 17 | 20 | 3 | 1 | 14 | 15 |
| | | | | | | 7 | 5 | 14 | 17 | 9 | 6 | 13 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 13 | 15 | 1 | -3 | 8 | 10 |
| | | | | | | 15 | 13 | 18 | 22 | 13 | 12 | 19 | 19 | 10 | 9 | 18 | 20 | 6 | 4 | 13 | 15 |



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

The early season cold snap will continue through the middle of next week with temperatures some 10 to 20 degrees below normal. Minimal chances for moisture outside of a few pockets of light snow today and isolated snow showers Monday.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 32 °F at 12:00 AM

Low Temp: 16 °F at 10:53 PM

Wind: 26 mph at 2:26 AM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 10 hours, 22 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 82 in 1937

Record Low: -6 in 1919

Average High: 52

Average Low: 28

Average Precip in Oct.: 1.99

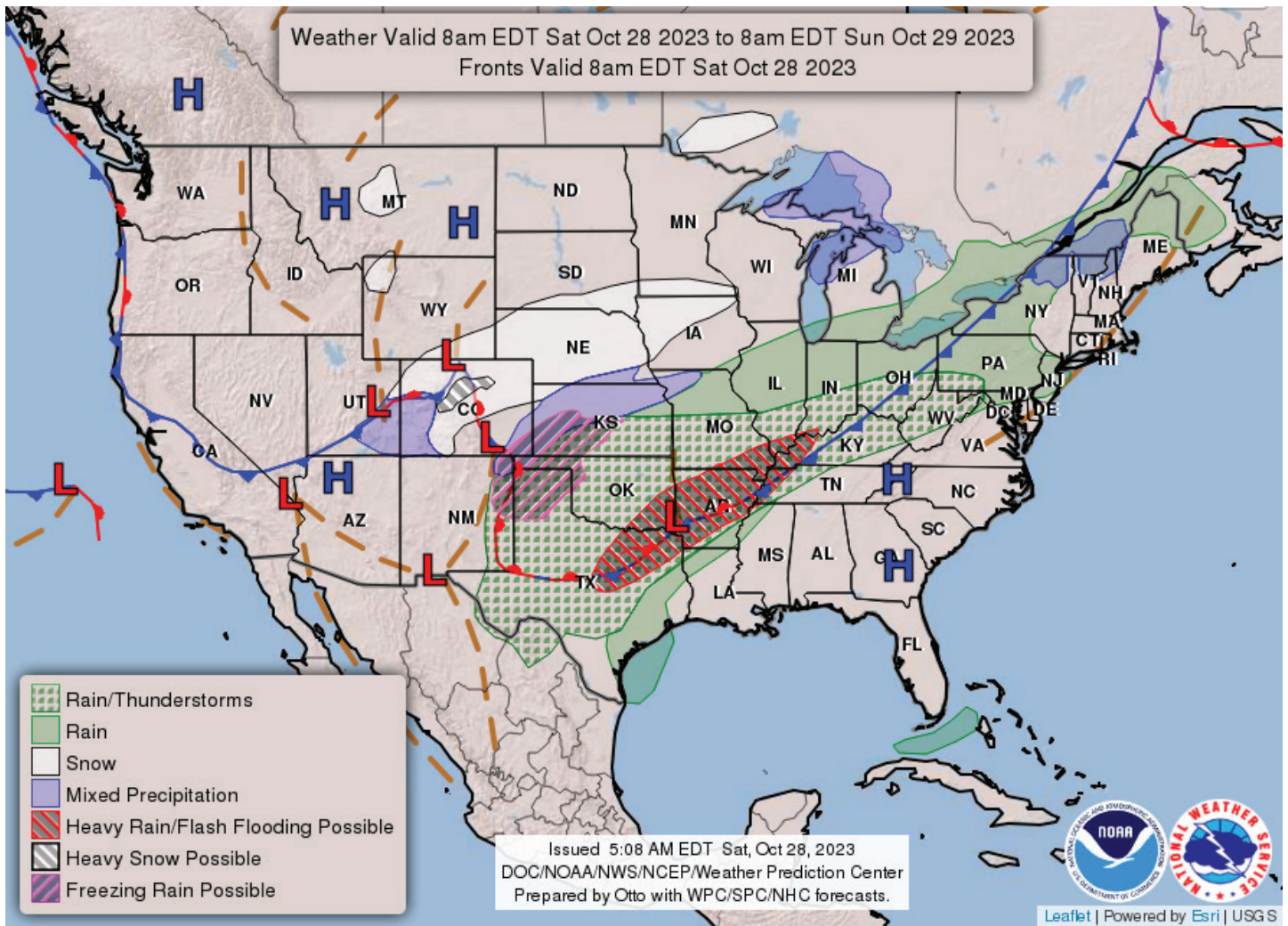
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.21

Average Precip to date: 20.32

Precip Year to Date: 22.98

Sunset Tonight: 6:27:36 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:06:08 AM



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Today in Weather History

October 28, 1989: The season's first snowfall brought much-needed moisture to the Black Hills and portions of western South Dakota as up to nearly a foot of snow fell in the higher elevations. The storms caused motorists some problems. A build-up of ice and slush in combination with blowing snow prompted the State Highway Patrol to close the portion of Interstate-90 from Rapid City to Wall. Numerous multiple vehicle accidents were reported.

October 28, 1993: Very strong northwest winds gusting to 50 to 60 mph raked South Dakota. A new home under construction southwest of DeSmet collapsed in the winds. Reported peak winds included 56 mph at Huron, 55 mph at Rapid City, and 52 mph at Sioux Falls.

1846: In the spring of 1846, a group of nearly 90 emigrants left Springfield, Illinois, and headed west to California. The Donner party arrived at the Great Salt Lake and still needed to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains late in the season. On this day, a heavy snowfall blocked the pass, thus trapping the emigrants. Only 45 of the original 89 emigrants reached California the following year.

1999: A Super Typhoon, known as Cyclone 05B reached the equivalent of the Category 5 hurricane on this day. This storm is the strongest tropical cyclone ever record in the North Indian Ocean. Cyclone 05B hit the Indian State of Odisha near the city of Bhubaneswar on October 29. An estimated 10,000 individuals would die from this cyclone, and 1.67 million people were left homeless.

1936 - The temperature at Layton, NJ, dipped to 9 above zero to establish a state record for the month of October. (The Weather Channel)

1971 - A severe early season blizzard raged across the Plateau Region and Rocky Mountain Region. Heavy snow blocked railroads and interstate highways, and record cold accompanied the storm. Lander WY received 27 inches of snow, and the temperature at Big Piney WY plunged to 15 degrees below zero. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Thunderstorms over the San Joaquin Valley of California produced three-quarters of an inch of rain in thirty minutes at Placerville, and caused numerous power outages due to lightning. Rain began to diminish in the northeastern U.S., but some flooding continued in Vermont, eastern New York and northern New Jersey. One inch rains in Vermont clogged culverts and sewers with fallen leaves, resulting in erosion of dirt roads. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Arctic cold invaded the north central U.S. Valentine, NE, dipped to 8 degrees, and Cutbank, MT, reported a morning low of one degree above zero. The temperature at Estes Park CO dipped to 15 degrees, but then soared thirty degrees in less than thirty minutes. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - A storm crossing the western U.S. produced 10 to 20 inches of snow across northern and central Wyoming, with 22 inches reported at Burgess Junction. Seven cities in the Lower Ohio Valley and the Upper Great Lakes Region reported record high temperatures for the date as readings again warmed into the 70s. Alpena MI reported a record high of 75 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

HE'S NEVER THERE

The family was enjoying a meal together after the morning worship service. Grandmother, always interested in her granddaughter, Sara, turned to her and asked, "What did you learn in church today?"

"Well," she said after thinking a moment, "I learned that the church is God's house. But you know, Grandma, I never see Him when I go."

That makes me wonder what Sara might have been looking for. Surely there were songs and the reading of Scripture, perhaps the people greeted one another and exchanged smiles and handshakes. There certainly must have been sermons about the church being "God's house" that she had listened to in the past. But Sara was not able to "see" God in what is called His home. Perhaps no one ever explained to her how one might recognize God.

Paul, in describing how Christians ought to "fellowship" said, "Try to understand what the Lord wants you to do." The problem is not that we do not understand what we are to do, for there are many examples in Scripture about how Christians are to behave. In all honesty, the problem has never been how but actually doing what we understand what God wants us to do.

The early church was known for the loving and protecting, sharing and caring way Christians honored and respected each other. This came from their reverence for Christ and their desire to live lives that pleased Him. Could it be that people looking for God in our churches cannot see Him "in His home" because we lack His compassion and care for one another?

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to reflect Your presence in our lives by the care and concern we have for one another. May everyone who knows us see Your love in all that we do. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Don't act thoughtlessly but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Ephesians 5:15-21



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
- 11/05/2023 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Fall Dinner, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- 11/11/2023 Groton American Legion Annual Turkey Party 6:30 pm.
- 11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
- 11/26/2023 Snow Queen Contest, 4 p.m.
- 12/02/2023 Live & Silent Auctions at Olive Grove Golf Course 4pm-close
- 12/09/2023 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9-11am

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.27.23

11 32 43 57 70 6

MegaPlier: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$159,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.25.23

3 8 27 41 46 3

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$3,270,000

NEXT 14 Hrs 23 Mins 33
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.27.23

8 13 15 29 48 9

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 14 Hrs 38 Mins 33
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.25.23

2 7 10 13 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$34,000

NEXT 14 Hrs 38 Mins 33
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.25.23

18 19 38 54 55 17

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 7 Mins 33
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.25.23

25 27 41 53 68 2

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$125,000,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 7 Mins 33
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the  Associated Press

Friday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL

SDHSAA Playoffs

Class 11AAA

State Quarterfinal

Sioux Falls Lincoln 56, Rapid City Stevens 21

Class 11AA

State Quarterfinal

Pierre T F Riggs High School 49, Spearfish 26

Tea Area 39, Sturgis Brown 13

All Nations A

State Semifinal

Todd County 44, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 12

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

Power to the people? Only half have the right to propose and pass laws

By DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

Voters in Maine will be deciding a question in November about whether independent automobile repair shops should have access to the same diagnostic technology as dealerships.

In Ohio, voters will be settling a pair of more personal questions — whether to create a constitutional right to abortion and legalize recreational marijuana.

They are the latest of nearly 2,700 issues decided by voters over the past 125 years after citizens petitioned to place proposed laws or constitutional amendments on a statewide ballot. But that outburst of direct democracy has been limited to just half the states.

When it comes to the power of the people, the nation stands divided.

About 165 million people live in 25 states with active citizen initiative or referendum provisions, which let residents bypass the legislature to amend the constitution, enact laws or repeal those passed by elected officials. About 167 million people live in 25 other states where such direct democracy is not currently an option.

"In states where it exists, it's pretty vibrant, and it's a well-accepted form of American democracy — voters like it," said John Matsusaka, executive director of the Initiative and Referendum Institute at the University of Southern California. "But it was a reform that didn't get quite as far as proponents were hoping."

PROGRESSIVE PUSH

After South Dakota voters approved an initiative and referendum process in 1898, other states quickly followed suit. By 1918, a total of 22 states had adopted some method for citizens to initiate laws and constitutional amendments or to force referendums on laws passed by the legislature.

The progressive political era was a driving force for the movement, and most states that embraced it were west of the Mississippi River. But their geography was not necessarily the impetus.

A study led by University of Florida political scientist Daniel Smith found that legislatures with close political divisions and weaker party organizations were more likely to try to appeal to voters by proposing to give people the power to make their own laws.

"The economic and political transformation that was going on then gave us this sort of free-wheeling initiative process," said Todd Donovan, a political science professor at Western Washington University. "Then that movement kind of ended around the 1920s."

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Since then, only a few states have adopted an initiative process — Alaska in the 1950s, Wyoming in the 1960s and Illinois and Florida in the early 1970s. Illinois initiatives can address only the structure and procedure of the legislature, and only one has ever passed.

Mississippi voters reinstated the initiative in 1992 — 70 years after its Supreme Court overturned the original version. But the state Supreme Court upended the initiative again in 2021 with a ruling that made it impossible to meet the petition signature requirements. Mississippi lawmakers this year debated whether to place a new initiative amendment on the ballot, but ultimately did not do so.

REPUBLICAN PUSHBACK

Republican-led legislatures in Arizona, Arkansas, Ohio and South Dakota all recently placed measures on the ballot seeking to make it harder to approve future initiatives by raising the vote threshold needed to pass them. Voters rejected most of those proposals, though an Arizona measure to require a 60% vote for future tax increases passed with less than 51% of the vote.

The recent measures led to a perception that Republicans are increasingly attacking direct democracy. But that's not entirely true, according to new research by Matsusaka.

The number of ballot measures seeking to restrict the initiative and referendum process dipped in 2016 and has since risen. Yet it's not much different than during the previous decades, Matsusaka concluded. Measures seeking to restrict direct democracy peaked from 1995 to 2004 but significantly outpaced those seeking to expand direct democracy throughout the entire period of 1960 through 2022.

Since 1960, Republican-led legislatures have placed on the ballot more than three times as many measures seeking to restrict the initiative and referendum process as Democratic-led legislatures, according to Matsusaka's research. Since the turn of this century in particular, legislatures with divided control or Democratic majorities generally pulled back from measures restricting direct democracy while Republican-led legislatures continued churning them out.

In many cases, Republican legislative efforts to restrict citizen initiatives arose as a backlash to specific initiatives they opposed, such as the abortion-rights measure appearing on Ohio's November ballot.

BIG BUCKS

Though South Dakota was the first to authorize the initiative process, Oregon voters were the first to use it in 1904 — approving a pair of initiatives that established primary elections to nominate candidates and authorized local votes on prohibiting alcohol sales.

Oregon citizens were early leaders in the initiative process, proposing 76 initiatives and passing 33 of them from 1904 to 1912.

California, which held its first initiative votes in 1912, has since surpassed Oregon as the most prolific proposition proposer, aided partly by a signature requirement that is slightly lower than the national average. Californians have considered 391 ballot initiatives — approving 137 of them — following campaigns that in recent years have cost tens of millions of dollars.

Last year, supporters and opponents of a pair of rival California sports betting initiatives raised more than \$460 million, doubling the previous record. Voters defeated both measures.

"The whole idea of returning government to the people is really challenged by the immense amount of money it takes, especially in California, to participate in direct democracy," said Michael Smith, a political science professor at Emporia State University in Kansas.

Initiative costs mount quickly because most campaigns must hire professional firms to help gather petition signatures and lawyers to fight against litigation that often seeks to strike measures from the ballot. Then there's the cost of advertising the measures to voters.

"No one can afford to get on the ballot without having a patron," Donovan said.

GROWING SUCCESS

From the initiative's origins through last year, petitioners in 24 states placed 2,683 proposed laws and constitutional amendments on the ballot, winning voter approval for 42% of them, according to data from the Initiative and Referendum Institute.

The success rate has been greater recently. From 2010 through 2019, voters approved 51% of citizen-initiated proposals. During the past three years, voters approved two-thirds of the 71 initiatives on the ballot.

It's not clear why voters are approving a greater percentage of initiatives. But Matsusaka has some theories. Perhaps petitioners are pursuing fewer long-shot ideas because of the cost. And perhaps those that make the ballot stand a better chance of passing because of populist dissatisfaction with elected officials, he said.

Though chances are slim that lawmakers in more states will embrace the initiative process, an expansion of it could be beneficial, he said.

"Our democracy right now, it's not a fine-tuned machine – there's a lot of frustration with it," Matsusaka said. The citizens' initiative "seems like a good way to get the people involved and let them feel like they have control of their government."

How a South Dakota priest inspired 125 years of direct democracy — and the fight to preserve it

By HOLLY MEYER Associated Press

Thanks to a rabble-rousing, socialist priest, it's a milestone year for direct democracy in the U.S. and not just because Ohio voters are circumventing their Republican-controlled legislature to decide for themselves if they have constitutional abortion rights.

The practice of citizen-originated ballot measures began 125 years ago when South Dakota became the first in the nation to enact a statewide initiative and referendum process. More states followed, and the movement giving voters lawmaking powers grew far bigger than the Rev. Robert W. Haire's spirited advocacy for it.

The pioneering Catholic priest is an obscure historical figure today. But some still invoke his name in their fight to preserve voters' ballot measure rights. Others carry on with the advocating, educating and ministering that Haire set into motion — whether they know it or not.

South Dakotans still cherish being able to vote on their state's laws and constitution — and that's Haire's legacy, said Cory Heidelberger, who has led ballot-question campaigns and legally challenged Republican efforts to weaken the process. Nearly 75% of South Dakotans called citizen ballot initiatives critical to the democratic process in a 2021 statewide poll, and almost 62% opposed making it harder.

"It represents for me the fundamental idea of the equal dignity of every human being," said Heidelberger, who blogs about South Dakota politics.

The people, he said, deserve lawmaking power too: "They're no better, but they're no worse than any one legislator sitting in Pierre making a decision."

South Dakota's initiative and referendum came about during an agrarian populist movement. The political conditions were brief but just right in 1897 for lawmakers to approve it; voters passed it the following year. In a memoir compiled by the state Socialist Party, Haire is credited with writing the amendment itself. (Constitutional amendments by initiative were enacted in 1972.)

Today, residents in about half of U.S. states can put issues like Medicaid expansion and marijuana use to a public vote. Recently it's Republican lawmakers who have tried to erode the process. Democrats and left-leaning groups locked out of power in Republican-led states are using ballot measures to force votes on popular issues.

In one of 2023's most-watched examples, early voting is underway in Ohio and expected to draw heavier-than-normal turnout. This summer, Ohioans knocked down a Republican-led plan to increase signature requirements and the raise the approval threshold for constitutional amendments, including the abortion one, from 50% to 60%.

"That's just a version of what we've seen from the very beginning, that legislators have always tried to cut it back," said John Matsusaka, director of the University of Southern California's Initiative and Referendum Institute.

The politics of using citizen ballot measures are situational. He pointed to Republicans in California and Democrats in Ohio.

"It's the guys who are out of power that can't get the time of day from the legislature that think, 'Well,

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maybe this is my only recourse?" Matsusaka said.

In "Citizen Lawmakers: The Ballot Initiative Revolution," David Schmidt describes the complex U.S. origins, naming Haire as one of the country's first two reformers to propose the idea.

This makes Haire, who was suspicious of politicians, the father of a critically important "escape valve," said Drey Samuelson, Democrat and former chief of staff for retired U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson of South Dakota.

"If you can't pass them through the legislature in states that don't have ballot initiatives, you're basically done," said Samuelson, who is helping lead a ballot-initiative campaign for open primaries in South Dakota. He criticized Republicans for trying to weaken the process — something he expects will continue.

Initially, Haire called for more radical change: Abolishing the state's representative legislature and letting the electorate make the laws instead. He argued for it in the Aug. 8, 1891, issue of *The Dakota Ruralist*: "There would be no humbugging in committees as now, no secret sculduggery, and passing bills at the last hour of the legislature."

It is hard to parse whether Haire's faith or political views motivated him, said Janine Giordano Drake, an Indiana University history professor. She said there were so many socialist clergy in the 1890s that Christian Socialist Fellowship formed with loose ties to the Socialist Party.

The Catholic Church opposed socialism, she said, but celebrated social democracy and universal voting rights.

Republican State Sen. Michael Rohl, whose district includes Brown County where Haire spent much of his ministry, told *The Associated Press* that ballot initiatives are a "necessary evil." They are susceptible to special interests and most voters focus on the overall issue instead of the proposed details, but they can be a check on lawmakers and party politics, he said.

Rohl, who thinks the benefits outweigh the risks, said he supports improvements but not restrictions. His main concern with the process is government attempts to claw back the right, which would make it out of reach for the average South Dakotan but not deep-pocketed special interests.

"You don't have to support most ballot measures to support the process," he said. "The ability to vote 'No' is just as important and powerful as the ability to vote 'Yes.'"

As for Haire's politics, Rohl didn't mince words: "It may have been originally created by the work of a socialist priest, but even a blind squirrel will find an acorn every now and then."

Haire's views have put him on the outs before. The well-educated, former Presbyterian from Michigan fought hard for what he believed to be right, including direct democracy, education, labor rights, women's suffrage, helping the poor and temperance.

"He loved a square-toed opponent as well as an adherent, seeing the man above the difference of honest thought," declared the *Aberdeen News* after his March 1916 death.

His prolific advocacy filled speeches and newsprint, but his staunch alcohol opposition led his bishop to remove him from the Aberdeen parish he founded.

Sister Kathleen Bierne also advocates for issues she believes are right, but took a different approach than Haire, who invited her Catholic community, the Presentation Sisters, to set up a school in Aberdeen in 1886. He later became chaplain for them and their hospital.

Christian missionaries built much of the country's education and healthcare infrastructure, said Drake, the historian.

"It was the people who ran those missions organization that were the most interested in advocating for the poor," Drake said. "Where did we get democracy in this country? It's often the people who work among the poor."

In 2016, Bierne became a lobbyist, a role that relied more on building relationships with state lawmakers than breaking them to effectively advocate for healthcare, education, housing, immigration and other issues in line with the Presentation Sisters' historic mission.

"Some of those have become much more divisive because of the lack of balance in our own legislature," she said. "We've had to walk a much more careful route. ... We would probably not get by with Father Haire's way of dealing with life right now."

Even still, he was revered for living out Jesus' teachings, she said, noting a remembrance of Haire from Socialist Party leader, Eugene Debs:

"He sought out the sorrowing and suffering, spent all his time in ministering to them and loved them with all his great heart."

Earlier this year, lawmakers considered adding more signature requirements for constitutional amendments by initiative. It didn't pass, but Republican sponsor Rep. Liz May argued in committee, "Shouldn't us changing our constitution be a little harder?"

Businessman Tom Heinz, an independent also with the open primaries campaign, testified against it in writing. Heinz, who has relatives buried in the same cemetery as Haire, wanted legislators to know the priest's name and how South Dakota led the way:

"There is a famous saying in our country: 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it!' Well, the initiative process in our state isn't broken."

Israel expands ground operation in Gaza and bombs Hamas tunnels after knocking out communications

By ISABEL DEBRE, JULIA FRANKEL and SAM MAGDY Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel on Saturday expanded its ground operation in Gaza with infantry and armored vehicles backed by massive strikes from the air and sea, including the bombing of Hamas tunnels — a key target in its campaign to crush the territory's ruling group after its bloody incursion in Israel three weeks ago.

The bombardment, described by Gaza residents as the most intense of the war, also knocked out most communications in Gaza. This largely cut off the besieged enclave's 2.3 million people from the world, while enabling the Israeli military to control the narrative in a new stage of fighting.

The military released grainy images Saturday showing tank columns moving slowly in open areas of Gaza, many apparently near the border, and said warplanes bombed dozens of Hamas tunnels and underground bunkers.

"The forces are still on the ground and are continuing the war," said the army spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, indicating that the next stage has begun in what is expected to evolve into an all-out ground offensive in northern Gaza.

Early in the war, Israel had already amassed hundreds of thousands of troops along the border. Until now, troops had conducted brief nightly ground incursions before returning to Israel.

The Palestinian death toll in Gaza on Saturday rose to just over 7,700 people since Oct. 7, with 377 deaths reported since late Friday, according to the territory's Health Ministry. A majority of those killed have been women and minors, the ministry said.

Ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qidra told reporters that the disruption of communications has "totally paralyzed" the health network.

Residents had no way of calling ambulances, and emergency teams were chasing the sounds of artillery barrages and airstrikes to search for people in need.

Some civilians were using their bare hands to pull injured people from the rubble and loading them into personal cars or donkey carts to rush them to the hospital. In a video posted by local media, Palestinians were sprinting down a ravaged street with a wounded man covered in the dust of a building's collapse while he winced, eyes clenched shut, on a stretcher. "Ambulance! Ambulance!" the men shouted as they shoved the stretcher into the back of a pick-up truck and shouted at the driver, "Go! Go!"

Other residents traveled by foot or car to check on their relatives and friends. "The bombs were everywhere, the building was shaking," said Hind al-Khudary, a journalist in central Gaza and one of a few people with cell phone service. "We can't reach anyone or contact anyone. I do not know where my family is."

Israel says its strikes target Hamas fighters and infrastructure and that the militants operate from among civilians, putting them in danger.

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Across Gaza, terrified civilians were huddling in homes and shelters with food and water supplies running out. Electricity was knocked out by Israel in the early stages of the war.

More than 1.4 million people have fled their homes, nearly half crowding into U.N. schools and shelters. Aid workers say the trickle of aid Israel has allowed to enter from Egypt the past week is a tiny fraction of what is needed. Gaza hospitals have been scrounging for fuel to run emergency generators that power incubators and other life-saving equipment.

The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, which runs an extensive network of shelters and schools for nearly half the displaced Gaza residents, has lost contact with most of its staff, spokeswoman Juliette Touma said Saturday. She said that coordinating aid efforts was now "extremely challenging."

The intensified air and ground campaign also raised new concerns about dozens of hostages dragged into Gaza on Oct. 7. On Saturday, hundreds of relatives of hostages gathered in a square in downtown Tel Aviv, demanding to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant.

Some in the group demanded that Israel push for the release of all hostages before proceeding with the campaign against Hamas. Protesters wore shirts emblazoned with the faces of their missing relatives under the word "kidnapped" and the words "Bring them back."

The families "feel like they're left behind and no one is really caring about them," said Miki Haimovitz, a former lawmaker and spokeswoman for the group. "No one is talking to them. No one is explaining what's going on."

Gallant later said he would meet with the families Sunday.

In Cairo, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi said his government was working to de-escalate the conflict through its talks with the warring parties to release prisoners and hostages. He didn't provide further details.

Hagari, the army spokesman, said the confirmed number of hostages was 229, after four were released in recent days through mediation by Qatar and Egypt. He dismissed media reports about a possible cease-fire deal in exchange for the release of hostages, saying Hamas was engaged in a "cynical exploitation" of the anxieties of relatives of hostages.

More than 1,400 people were slain in Israel during Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, according to the Israeli government. Among those killed were at least 311 soldiers, according to the military.

Palestinian militants have fired thousands of rockets into Israel over the past three weeks.

The overall number of deaths in Gaza and Israel far exceeds the combined toll of all four previous Israel-Hamas wars, estimated at around 4,000.

Gallant said Friday that Israel expects a long and difficult ground offensive into Gaza soon. It "will take a long time" to dismantle Hamas' vast network of tunnels, he said, adding that he expects a lengthy phase of lower-intensity fighting as Israel destroys "pockets of resistance."

His comments pointed to a potentially grueling and open-ended new phase of the war after three weeks of relentless bombardment. Israel has said it aims to crush Hamas' rule in Gaza and its ability to threaten Israel. But how Hamas' defeat will be measured and an invasion's endgame remain unclear. Israel says it does not intend to rule the tiny territory but not who it expects to govern — even as Gallant suggested a long-term insurgency could ensue.

In Washington, the Pentagon said U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke with Gallant on Friday and "underscored the importance of protecting civilians during the Israel Defense Forces' operations and focusing on the urgency of humanitarian aid delivery for civilians in Gaza." The Pentagon said Austin also brought up "the need for Hamas to release all of the hostages."

The conflict has threatened to ignite a wider war across the region. Arab nations — including U.S. allies and ones that have reached peace deals or normalized ties with Israel — have raised increasing alarm over a potential ground invasion, likely to bring even higher casualties amid urban fighting.

A spider web of Hamas tunnels in Gaza Strip raises risks for an Israeli ground offensive

By JON GAMBRELL and ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — As an Israeli ground offensive in the Gaza Strip looms in its most devastating war yet with Hamas, one of the greatest threats to both its troops and the 2.3 million Palestinians trapped inside the seaside enclave is buried deep underground.

An extensive labyrinth of tunnels built by the Hamas militant group stretches across the densely populated strip, hiding fighters, their rocket arsenal and over 200 hostages they now hold after an unprecedented Oct. 7 attack on Israel.

Clearing and collapsing those tunnels will be crucial if Israel seeks to dismantle Hamas. But fighting in densely populated urban areas and moving underground could strip the Israeli military of some of its technological advantages while giving an edge to Hamas both above and below ground.

"I usually say it's like walking down the street waiting to get punched in the face," said John Spencer, a retired U.S. Army major and the chair of Urban Warfare Studies at the Modern War Institute at West Point.

Urban defenders, he added, "had time to think about where they are going to be and there's millions of hidden locations they can be in. They get to choose the time of the engagement — you can't see them but they can see you."

Overnight on Saturday, the Israeli military said its warplanes struck 150 underground Hamas targets in northern Gaza, describing them as tunnels, combat spaces and other underground infrastructure. The strikes — what appeared to be Israel's most significant bombardment of tunnels yet — came as it ramped up its ground operations in Gaza.

WHAT THE PAST HAS SHOWN

Tunnel warfare has been a feature of history, from the Roman siege of the ancient Greek city of Ambracia to Ukrainian fighters holding off Russian forces in 24 kilometers (15 miles) of Soviet-era tunnels beneath Mariupol's Azovstal Iron and Steel Works for some 80 days in 2022.

The reason is simple: tunnel battles are considered some of the most difficult for armies to fight. A determined enemy in a tunnel or cave system can pick where the fight will start — and often determine how it will end — given the abundant opportunities for ambush.

That's especially true in the Gaza Strip, home to Hamas' tunnel system that Israel has named the "Metro."

When Israel and Egypt imposed a punishing blockade on Gaza after Hamas seized control of the territory in 2007, the militant group expanded construction of its tunnel network to smuggle in weapons and other contraband from Egypt. While Egypt later shut down most of those cross-border tunnels, Hamas is now believed to have a massive underground network stretching throughout Gaza, allowing it to transport weapons, supplies and fighters out of the sight of Israeli drones.

Yehiyeh Sinwar, Hamas' political leader, claimed in 2021 that the militant group had 500 kilometers (310 miles) of tunnels. The Gaza Strip itself is only some 360 square kilometers (140 square miles), roughly twice the size of Washington, D.C.

"They started saying that they destroyed 100 kilometers (62 miles) of Hamas tunnels. I am telling you that the tunnels we have in the Gaza Strip exceed 500 kilometers," Sinwar said following a bloody 11-day war with Israel. "Even if their narrative is true, they only destroyed 20% of the tunnels."

The Israeli military has known of the threat since at least 2001, when Hamas used a tunnel to detonate explosives under an Israeli border post. Since 2004, the Israeli military's Samur, or "Weasels," detachment has focused on locating and destroying tunnels, sometimes with remote-controlled robots. Those going inside carry oxygen, masks and other gear.

Israel has bombed from the air and used explosives on the ground to destroy tunnels in the past. But fully dislodging Hamas will require clearing those tunnels, where militants can pop up behind advancing Israeli troops.

During a 2014 war, Hamas militants killed at least 11 Israeli soldiers after infiltrating into Israel through tunnels. In another incident, an Israeli officer, Lt. Hadar Goldin, was dragged into a tunnel inside Gaza

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and killed. Hamas has been holding Goldin's remains since then.

Ariel Bernstein, a former Israeli soldier who fought in that war, described urban combat in northern Gaza as a mix of "ambushes, traps, hideouts, snipers."

He recalled the tunnels as having a disorienting, surreal effect, creating blind spots as Hamas fighters popped up out of nowhere to attack.

"It was like I was fighting ghosts," he said. "You don't see them."

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant on Friday said he expected a difficult ground offensive, warning it "will take a long time" to dismantle Hamas' vast network of tunnels. As part of the strategy, Israel has blocked all fuel shipments into Gaza since the war erupted. Gallant said that Hamas would confiscate fuel for generators that pump air into the tunnel network. "For air, they need oil. For oil, they need us," he said.

The Israeli military also said Friday it had carried out "very meaningful" airstrikes on underground targets.

Typically, modern militaries have relied on punishing airstrikes to collapse tunnels. Israeli strikes in Gaza so far in this war have killed over 7,300 people, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. But those strikes can inflict only limited damage on the subterranean network.

U.S. forces fighting the Vietnam War struggled to clear the 120-kilometer (75-mile) network known as the Củ Chi tunnels, in which American soldiers faced tight corners, booby traps and sometimes pitch-dark conditions in the outskirts of what was then Saigon, South Vietnam. Even relentless B-52 bombing never destroyed the tunnels. Nor did Russian strikes on the Ukrainian steel mill in 2022.

Underlining how tough tunnels can be to destroy, America used a massive explosive against an Islamic State group tunnel system in Afghanistan in 2017 called "the mother of all bombs," the largest non-nuclear weapon ever used in combat by the U.S. military.

AN ADDITIONAL LAYER OF COMPLEXITY

Yet in all those cases, advancing militaries did not face the challenge that Israel does now with Hamas' tunnel system. The militant group holds some 200 hostages that it captured in the Oct. 7 assault, which also killed more than 1,400 people.

Hamas' release on Monday of 85-year-old Yocheved Lifshitz confirmed suspicions that the militants had put hostages in the tunnels. Lifshitz described Hamas militants spiriting her into a tunnel system that she said "looked like a spider web."

Clearing the tunnels with hostages trapped inside likely will be a "slow, methodical process," with the Israelis relying on robots and other intelligence to map tunnels and their potential traps, according to the Soufan Center, a New York security think tank.

"Given the methodical planning involved in the attack, it seems likely that Hamas will have devoted significant time planning for the next phase, conducting extensive preparation of the battlefield in Gaza," the Soufan Center wrote in a briefing. "The use of hostages as human shields will add an additional layer of complexity to the fight."

The potential fighting facing Israeli soldiers also will be claustrophobic and terrifying. Many of the Israeli military's technological advantages will collapse, giving militants the edge, warned Daphné Richemond-Barak, a professor at Israel's Reichman University who wrote a book on underground warfare.

"When you enter a tunnel, it's very narrow, and it's dark and it's moist, and you very quickly lose a sense of space and time," Richemond-Barak told The Associated Press. "You have this fear of the unknown, who's coming around the corner? ... Is this going to be an ambush? Nobody can come and rescue you. You can barely communicate with the outside world, with your unit."

The battlefield could force the Israeli military into firefights in which hostages may be accidentally killed. Explosive traps also could detonate, burying alive both soldiers and the hostages, Richemond-Barak said. Even with those risks, she said the tunnels must be destroyed for Israel to achieve its military objectives.

"There's a job that needs to get done and it will be done now," she said.

Syphilis and other STDs are on the rise. States lost millions of dollars to fight and treat them

By KENYA HUNTER AP Health Writer

State and local health departments across the U.S found out in June they'd be losing the final two years of a \$1 billion investment to strengthen the ranks of people who track and try to prevent sexually transmitted diseases — especially the rapid increase of syphilis cases.

The fallout was quick: Nevada, which saw a 44 percentage-point jump in congenital syphilis from 2021 to 2022, was supposed to get more than \$10 million to bolster its STD program budget. Instead, the state's STD prevention budget went down by more than 75%, reducing its capacity to respond to syphilis, according to Dawn Cribb at the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health.

Several states told The Associated Press that the biggest impact from having the program canceled in the national debt ceiling deal is that they're struggling to expand their disease intervention specialist workforce. These people do contact tracing and outreach, and are a key piece of trying to stop the spread of syphilis, which reached a low point in the U.S. in 2000 but has increased almost every year since. In 2021, there were 176,713 cases — up 31% from the prior year.

"It was devastating, really, because we had worked so hard to shore up our workforce and also implement new activities," said Sam Burgess, the STD/HIV program director for the Louisiana Department of Health. His state was slated to receive more than \$14 million overall, but instead got \$8.6 million that must be spent by January 2026. "And we're still scrambling to try to figure out how we can plug some of those funding gaps."

While men who have sex with men are disproportionately impacted by syphilis, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and health officials across the country also point to the increase in pregnant women who are passing syphilis to their babies. It can cause serious health issues for infants, including blindness and bone damage, or lead to stillbirths. In 2021, there were 77.9 cases of congenital syphilis per 100,000 live births.

Disease intervention specialists often link infected mothers and their partners with care for syphilis, which has mild symptoms for adults, like fever and sores. Doing so in a timely manner can prevent congenital syphilis. The specialists also can help pregnant patients find prenatal care.

"When you have a mother who didn't know (she had syphilis), it can be very emotional trying to explain ... it could have been prevented if we could have caught it before," said Deneshun Graves, a public health investigator with the Houston Health Department.

Lupita Thornton, a public health investigator manager in the health department, said she is worried about being able to treat pregnant syphilis patients "before 30 days of delivery, for the baby's sake."

The Houston Health Department is in the midst of what it calls a "rapid community outreach response" because of syphilis cases increased by 128% among women from 2019 to 2022, and congenital syphilis cases went from 16 in 2019 to 151 in 2021.

Its STD/HIV bureau was set to receive a total of \$10.7 million from the federal grant, but will end up with about 75% of that.

The department has used the money to hire disease intervention specialists and epidemiologists — including Graves. But Thornton said she could use "double of everything," and had planned to bring down the caseload for her investigators by hiring even more people.

It would help Graves, who deals with more than 70 cases at a time.

"You got people that don't want to go in and get treatment. You have people that don't want to answer the phone, so you got to continue to call," Graves said.

Mississippi is also seeing an uptick in congenital syphilis cases, which a recently published study showed rose tenfold between 2016 and 2022. Health officials said a combination of funding shortages and poor access to prenatal care compounds their ability to stop the spread of syphilis.

The Mississippi State Department of Health was supposed to get more than \$9 million in federal grant

money over five years to expand its disease intervention workforce. Agency head Dr. Dan Edney said one of his top priorities now is finding money from other parts of the state's health budget.

He said the state has been "challenged because of limited state funding" and will need to "cannibalize resources from every program we can so that we can increase our diagnostic rates or treatment rates, and then close the loop with our investigations."

Arizona has the highest rate of congenital syphilis in the nation: 232.3 cases per 100,000 live births. The federal money helped the state Department of Health Services clear out a backlog of several thousands of non-syphilis STD investigations that had been stalled for years, said Rebecca Scranton, the deputy bureau chief of infectious disease and services.

"We were finally at the point where we were able to breathe again," Scranton said, "and start really kind of tackling it."

Scranton acknowledges syphilis will take awhile to fully address, and will look to preserve some of the unspent grant money for what lies ahead.

"You don't know what challenges are going to come. You know they're going to come, and you just keep getting creative because our job is really to get services to the folks," she said. "And that doesn't change just because you get a funding cut."

Live updates | Palestinian officials say death toll rises from expanded Israel military operation

By The Associated Press undefined

Israel launched an expanded ground operation on Saturday after knocking out communications and creating a near-blackout of information in the Gaza Strip with increased bombardment and artillery fire overnight.

Israel said infantry and armored vehicles were backed by "massive" strikes from the air and sea, including the bombing of Hamas tunnels, which are a key target in its campaign to crush the territory's ruling group.

Explosions from continuous airstrikes lit up the sky over Gaza City for hours after nightfall Friday as the Israeli military said it was expanding ground operations in the territory, signaling a move closer to an all-out invasion of Gaza after the bloody rampage by Hamas in southern Israel on Oct. 7.

The Palestinian telecom provider, Paltel, said the bombardment caused "complete disruption" of internet, cellular and landline services as the besieged enclave's 2.3 million people were largely cut off from contact with the outside world. Some satellite phones continued to function.

The Palestinian death toll passed 7,300. The Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza, which tracks the toll, released a detailed list including names and ID numbers on Thursday. In the occupied West Bank, more than 110 Palestinians have been killed in violence and Israeli raids since the war's start three weeks ago.

More than 1,400 people were slain in Israel during the Hamas incursion, including at least 310 soldiers, according to the Israeli government. At least 229 hostages were taken into Gaza, and four hostages were released earlier.

Currently:

1. AP photos: Scenes of sorrow and despair on both sides of Israel-Gaza border on week 3 of war
2. UN General Assembly calls for 'humanitarian truce' in Gaza leading to halt in Israel-Hamas fighting.
3. Israel-Hamas war upends years of conventional wisdom. Leaders give few details on what comes next
4. Data from the Gaza Health Ministry, questioned after the hospital explosion, has withstood past scrutiny.
5. About 30 children were taken hostage by Hamas militants. Their families wait in agony.
6. Find more of AP's coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war>.

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

HEALTH OFFICIALS SAY ISRAEL ATTACK HAS KILLED 377 AS AMBULANCES CHASE ARTILLERY NOISE BEIRUT — The Hamas-run health ministry in Gaza said 377 people have been killed since Israel expanded its large ground offensive on Friday evening.

Ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qedra told reporters Saturday that Israel has "totally paralyzed" the health

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network in Gaza by cutting off internet and cellular service.

"Israel has turned Gaza into pieces of fire," al-Qedra said, adding that the bombardment is the most intense since Oct. 7.

Al-Qedra said the 377 people killed in the past day raises the death total in the Gaza to 7,703 people, including 3,195 children and 1,863 women. He called on people in Gaza to donate blood, requested delivery of all blood types from the International committee of the Red Cross and urged the opening of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt to allow medical products and fuel to enter and evacuate seriously wounded people.

In Ramallah in the West Bank, the Palestinian health minister said the Gaza situation has grown dire since the bombing that cut off telecommunications to most people, including hospital teams.

"What is happening in Gaza is a genocide," Mai al-Kailah said at a press conference .

Thousands of people are trapped under the rubble of bombed-out buildings, al-Kailah said, adding that disease is spreading rapidly among the 1.4 million displaced people forced to crowd into shelters with unsanitary conditions due to a lack of water.

With communication networks largely severed, residents had no way of calling ambulances as Israel intensified its bombardment. Palestinian Red Crescent spokesperson Nebal Farsakh said emergency teams were chasing the sounds of artillery barrages and airstrikes to search for people in need.

Many Palestinians used bare hands to pull bodies from rubble and load them into personal cars or donkey carts to rush them to a hospital. In a video posted by local media, Palestinians sprinted down a ravaged street with a wounded man on a stretcher covered in the dust of a collapsed building while he winced, eyes clenched shut.

"Ambulance! Ambulance!" the men shouted as they shoved the stretcher into the back of a pickup truck and shouted at the driver, "Go! Go!"

LEADERS OF EGYPT AND TURKEY CALL FOR HUMANITARIAN AID AND END TO MILITARY ACTION

CAIRO — President Abdel Fattah el-Sisis of Egypt on Saturday urged for the delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza, saying the number of trucks allowed into the besieged territory is far below the needs of Gaza's population.

"The needs are massive," he said in televised comments, noting the importance of all aid being delivered.

The Egyptian government was working to de-escalate the conflict through talks with the warring parties, including discussions about releasing prisoners and hostages, he said without providing details.

Egypt's foreign ministry warned about "grave risks" of a wide-scale Israeli ground invasion, slamming Israel for not respecting the U.N. General Assembly's resolution on Friday calling for a "humanitarian truce."

An invasion would result in "unprecedented humanitarian and security repercussions" including a surge in casualties among civilians and eventual destabilization of the region, the ministry said in a statement.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called on Israel to emerge from what he described as its "state of insanity" and end military actions.

"The ever-increasing Israeli bombardments on Gaza, which intensified last night, have targeted women, children and innocent civilians, deepening the humanitarian crisis," Erdogan wrote in a message posted Saturday on X, formerly Twitter. "Israel must immediately emerge of this state of insanity and stop its attacks."

Erdogan is scheduled to attend a mass rally organized by his ruling party in Istanbul to show solidarity with Palestinians on Saturday, which he said would be used to "make this call louder and shout that we stand with the Palestinian people against the Israeli oppression."

HAMAS CALLS INCURSION A FAILURE, ISRAEL CLAIMS TO SHOOT DOWN MISSILE

CAIRO — Hamas has proclaimed Israel's overnight ground incursion to be a failure.

Hamas said in a statement Saturday that its military arm, Qassam Brigades, used anti-tank Kornet rockets and mortar shelling to repel the attack and claimed its fighters inflicted casualties among Israeli troops. The militant group did not provide evidence.

Qassam Brigades said late Friday its fighters were clashing with Israeli troops in the town of Beit Hanoun

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in northwestern Gaza and in Al-Bureij in central Gaza.

Al-Quds Brigades, the military wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement, said it fired a barrage of rockets Saturday morning on the Kissufim kibbutz, northwest of the Negev desert.

Israel's military announced it shot down a missile fired at an Israeli drone from Lebanon Saturday. It was not immediately clear if the missile was fired by Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said an Israeli drone fired three missiles on a Hezbollah stronghold in an area relatively far from the border Saturday. The agency said the drone struck the Safi Mountain in Lebanon's southern Apple province where Hezbollah has posts.

A Lebanese security official meanwhile, confirmed the report, but a Hezbollah official said they had no immediate comment about the strike when contacted by The Associated Press.

HOSTAGE FAMILIES TO MEET WITH ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTER

JERUSALEM — Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said he will meet families of hostages held in Gaza on Sunday.

The families warned Saturday they would begin protesting if Gallant and Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did not meet with them.

Hundreds of family members of hostages held in Gaza milled around a central square in downtown Tel Aviv Saturday opposite Israel's Defense Ministry wearing shirts saying, "Bring them back," and emblazoned with the faces of their relatives under the word "kidnapped."

The families said they want the meeting because of increased apprehension about their loved ones after Israel ramped up attacks on Gaza overnight Friday.

The military's claim it is targeting tunnel infrastructure has prompted fear among the families that military leaders are being cavalier with the lives of the hostages, who are believed to be held inside the tunnels.

"The families that are here are deeply concerned about their families and their loved ones," said Miki Haimovitz, a former lawmaker acting as a group spokesperson. "They feel like they're left behind and no one is really caring about them. No one is talking to them. No one is explaining what's going on."

ISRAEL ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF GROUND OPERATION INTO GAZA

Israel is expanding its ground operation in Gaza with infantry and armored vehicles backed by "massive" strikes from the air and sea, the Israeli military spokesman said Saturday.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said "the forces are still on the ground and are continuing the war."

Troops previously conducted brief nightly ground incursions before returning to Israel.

Earlier Saturday, the military released videos showing columns of armored vehicles moving slowly in open, sandy areas of Gaza, the first visual confirmation of ground troops. The military said warplanes bombed dozens of Hamas tunnels and underground bunkers.

Journalists inside Gaza who were able to communicate with the outside world said there was intense Israeli bombardment in northern Gaza overnight and early Saturday.

"The raids were very intense from artillery shelling and air raids. There is an explosion, gunfire and clashes are heard on the border," journalist Mohammed Abdel-Rahman told The Associated Press.

They heard sounds of clashes Saturday morning on the western borders of Beit Lahia in northern Gaza and "artillery shelling from time to time, intermittent and not continuous," Abdel-Rahman said.

Another journalist, Anas al-Sharif, reported shelling close to the Indonesian hospital in Beit Lahia and said rescuers have retrieved wounded people and many bodies from rubble across northern Gaza.

Israel's military also announced Saturday it had struck and killed a top Hamas naval operative, Ratib Abu Tzahiban, who it says orchestrated an attempted naval attack in Israel on Oct. 24. It was unclear if the military was referring to an episode when a group of Hamas divers were repelled after trying to infiltrate Israel on a beach north of Gaza.

WHO, WFP AND DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS LOSE CONTACT WITH TEAMS, AGENCIES SAY

CAIRO — The U.N. health agency and other aid groups said Saturday they remain unable to communicate with their teams in the besieged Gaza Strip during intense Israeli air and land bombardment.

Tedros Adhanom, head of the World Health Organization, said the blackout has made it "impossible for ambulances to reach the injured."

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"We are still out of touch with our staff and health facilities. I'm worried about their safety," he wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Cindy McCain, executive director of the World Food Program, said the organization was "extremely worried" about aid workers and civilians in Gaza following the blackout preventing communications its team.

"As conflict rages on, I am extremely worried for the safety of all humanitarian workers and civilians, she said on X. "We are at a tipping point. Humanity must prevail."

UNWRA, the U.N. agency for refugees, announced that as of Friday, 58 staff members had been killed by Israeli airstrikes in Gaza.

Juliette Touma, communications director, said in a text to the AP that the organization has very limited communications with its director currently in Rafah and is working to reestablish contact with its teams, including those in UNRWA shelters attempting to assist up to 600,000 displaced Palestinians.

Guillemette Thomas, Palestinian territories medical coordinator for Doctors Without Borders, said the aid group had not able to reach its team for more than 12 hours.

"The situation is very difficult," she told The Associated Press. "We can't communicate with our team. We don't know whether they are safe."

In the occupied West Bank, increased violence from Israeli settlers has prompted many Palestinians, particularly Bedouin communities, to flee. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Territories said Friday that settler violence in the West Bank has displaced more than 600 Palestinians, including 211 children.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said a settler shot dead a 40-year-old Palestinian man in the town of Sawiya in Nablus on Saturday.

LARGE DEMONSTRATION AT U.S. EMBASSY IN INDONESIA CALLS FOR END TO WAR

JAKARTA, Indonesia — More than 3,000 protesters marched to the heavily guarded U.S. Embassy in Indonesia's capital on Saturday to demand an end to the war and bombardment of the Gaza Strip.

Waving Indonesian and Palestinian flags, the protesters, many wearing white Islamic robes, filled a major thoroughfare in downtown Jakarta running outside the embassy. About 1,000 police were deployed around the compound, which is blocked off by concrete road barriers.

The protesters, organized by the Indonesian Ulema Council, known as MUI, chanted "God is Great" and "Freedom for Palestine" during the noisy but peaceful protest. Banners and placards proclaimed, "We stand with Gaza," and slammed the Israeli government while denouncing the staunch U.S. support of Israel.

"We are not willing to allow our brothers and sisters in Palestine to be tyrannized or genocided by Israel," MUI Secretary General of MUI Amirsyah Tambunan told the crowd. "We will continue to support and fight for Palestinian independence and sovereignty."

NYC PROTESTERS DEMAND GAZA CEASE-FIRE, MANY ARRESTED AFTER FILLING GRAND CENTRAL TRAIN STATION

NEW YORK — Hundreds of protesters in black T-shirts filled New York City's iconic Grand Central Terminal during the evening rush hour on Friday to demand a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war.

Many of the protesters were detained by police and taken out of the station, their hands zip tied behind their backs. The NYPD could not immediately say how many were taken into custody.

"Hundreds of Jews and friends are taking over Grand Central Station in a historic sit-in calling for a ceasefire," advocacy group Jewish Voice for Peace said on social media.

Inside the main concourse, protesters wearing shirts that read "cease-fire now" and "not in our name" chanted, with some holding banners in front of the list of departure times. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority asked commuters to use Penn Station as an alternative.

The scene echoed last week's sit-in where more than 300 people were arrested for illegally demonstrating on Capitol Hill in Washington.

EXPLOSIONS SHATTER THE NIGHT SKY OVER GAZA AS ISRAEL EXPANDS BOMBING

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — The dull orange glow of Israeli flares shone in the night sky over Gaza, slowly descending through the haze to illuminate targets for warplanes before eventually flickering out, plunging the scene back into darkness.

Multiple explosions from Israeli airstrikes tore into northern Gaza on Friday, quick flashes of bright orange silhouetted against the rooftops of Palestinian apartments and refugee camps. The sharp crunching sound of the bombs followed each time, seconds later, one after another.

Overhead, the buzz of Israeli military drones cut through, growing quieter and louder as the crafts circled the airspace.

For most Palestinians trapped in the Gaza Strip, their world has shrunk to these few sounds and colors.

Israel dramatically ramped up its bombardment Friday after knocking out internet and communication in Gaza, largely cutting off the tiny besieged enclave's 2.3 million people from contact with each other and the outside world.

When a man began shooting in Maine, some froze while others ran. Now they're left with questions

By HOLLY RAMER and MICHELLE R. SMITH Associated Press

LEWISTON, Maine (AP) — The first loud noise 10-year-old Toni Asselin heard sounded like the thwack of a ball being hit hard across a pool table. She thought the second might have been someone dropping a bowling ball.

"The third one, when I walked over to see if someone was hurt, I saw a person get shot and fall off their stool," Asselin said.

It was just before 7 p.m. Wednesday at Just-in-Time Recreation, a 34-lane bowling alley where the \$75 "Pizza, Pins and Pepsi" special included a large pizza, a pitcher of soda and two hours of bowling for six people.

One bowler had just removed his shoes when he thought he heard a balloon popping some 15 feet (4.5 meters) behind him. He turned toward the door, saw a man holding a gun, and took off running down one of the lanes.

"I slid basically into where the pins are and climbed up into the machine," he said.

The gunman, Robert Card, was found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot Friday, two nights after he destroyed an innocent night of bowling and socializing and turned it into tragedy. People gunned down bowling for strikes and spares, throwing beanbags, shooting pool, having beers with friends, working the night shift.

For Asselin and her mother, Tammy, the situation was especially gut-wrenching. A coach hustled the 10-year-old and several of her youth league teammates outside. An employee hid some of the children in a backroom office while other workers barricaded themselves in a freezer. She became separated from her mother, who initially stood frozen as others fled.

Turning to run, Tammy Asselin tripped over some bowling ball bags and took a hard fall before hiding behind a flipped over table and calling 911. Authorities said the first of multiple calls came in at 6:56 p.m. Four plainclothes officers who were at a nearby shooting range arrived a minute and a half after the first call, followed by uniformed officers less than three minutes later.

At one point, a young boy turned to Asselin. "Don't cry," he told her. "It will be OK."

Several more shots were followed by a strange silence.

"Is he hunting or is he dead?" Asselin thought. "Is it safe? Are the police here?"

"Does anyone see Toni?" she shouted before being hushed by others who worried the shooter was still there.

"I had thought maybe the last shot we heard, he had taken his life," she said.

Instead, the shooter headed 4 miles (6.44 kilometers) south to Schemengees Bar & Grille, where workers from other bars and restaurants could get 25% discounts every Wednesday night and employees were collecting Halloween-themed cocktail recipes for a cornhole tournament planned for later in the week.

The restaurant was hosting an event for members of the deaf community, and cornhole games were underway when a man entered and started shooting. In total, 18 people would be killed at the bowling

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alley and restaurant. Thirteen others were wounded.

Peyton Brewer-Ross, who enjoyed the game of cornhole so much that he brought out the angled boards and bags at family gatherings, had a spot next to the door and was likely one of the first at the bar to die, according to his brother.

"When he was shot, he was doing the thing he loved," Wellman Brewer said.

Bar manager Joe Walker picked up a butcher knife and tried to stop the gunman, Walker's father told multiple media outlets.

"And that's when he shot my son to death," Leroy Walker told WGME-TV.

Walker said his son was shot twice in the stomach.

"He died as a hero," he told NBC News.

Authorities received multiple calls from Schemengees at 7:08 p.m., and the first officers arrived five minutes later.

An hour later, they released a photo of the suspected shooter. By 9:30 p.m., they had received a call identifying him as Card, 40, of Bowdoin. Lewiston residents were urged to stay inside with their doors locked.

Fern Asselin and his wife were waiting outside the bowling alley Wednesday night for word about their daughter and granddaughter. Finally, after two hours he got a call from his granddaughter, Toni.

"And the words that came out were four words I'll never forget," he said. "It was: 'I'm not dead, Pepere.'"

Just before 10 p.m., police found Card's car at a boat launch in Lisbon, about 8 miles (13 kilometers) from Lewiston. Those who had been in the bowling alley were taken to the city's middle school to be reunited with their families.

"Now it's midnight and I'm just getting home," the bowler who hid in the bowling pin machinery told The Associated Press, identifying himself only as Brandon. "All my stuff's there, no shoes, just ready to go home. I'm tired."

At a late-night news conference, officials said more than 350 law enforcement personnel had joined the search for Card, a U.S. Army reservist they described as a "person of interest."

By morning, authorities were calling Card an armed and dangerous suspect who should not be approached. Authorities launched a multistate search on land and water, including patrols along the Kennebec River. Schools as far away as Kennebunk, more than 50 miles (80 kilometers) from Lewiston, closed out of caution, as did public buildings in Portland, the state's largest city.

Much of the search Thursday focused on property owned by Card's relatives in Bowdoin. Two law enforcement officials told The Associated Press that investigators found a note at a home associated with Card on Thursday addressed to his son. The officials described it as a suicide note, but said it didn't provide a specific motive for the shooting. On Friday night, authorities found Card's body at a recycling plant where he once worked.

Tammy Asselin, who later learned that her cousin Tricia was killed at the bowling alley, wondered Friday if the gunman was thinking of someone he hated as he opened fire. She said her daughter also has been asking questions.

"Why the bowling alley?" Asselin said. "Why us? Why good people? And that's what we don't know."

Jewish and Muslim chaplains navigate US campus tensions and help students roiled by Israel-Hamas war

By MARIAM FAM Associated Press

For many of the university chaplains and faith leaders caring for students angered and shaken by the Israel-Hamas war, the needs are acute, the days intense. The bloodshed has roiled campuses in the United States, at times sparking rival rallies and competing demands.

Kaiser Aslam, Muslim chaplain at the Center for Islamic Life at Rutgers University, has been helping students wrestling with complex questions and anxieties — from why there is suffering to whether public advocacy for Palestinians or criticism of Israel could jeopardize future career opportunities or spark other repercussions. Some, he said, are grieving family members killed during Israeli bombardment of the Gaza

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Strip.

Meanwhile, Rabbi Esther Reed, with Rutgers Hillel, recalled trying to comfort a student who was sobbing uncontrollably on learning a friend was killed in Israel in the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas militants that triggered the latest fighting. Another student, she said, asked if police could escort her from class to her dorm, afraid to walk alone.

"Muslim students are walking around scared, just like the Jewish students are walking around scared," Reed said.

In this charged and polarizing climate, chaplains and campus ministries are navigating tensions as they console and guide students gripped with anger, pain, confusion or fear stemming from the new violence, old grievances, and the emerging narratives of the war and the broader Israel-Palestinian conflict.

They've been helping organize vigils, leading prayers, providing community, lending an empathetic ear and sending messages of hope.

But it hasn't been easy.

Some say it's been a particularly complex and testing time because of the scope of lives lost and depth of suffering, the inflamed passions and the heated debates on some campuses — including over the positions of their own universities.

At Northwestern University, Tahera Ahmad, associate chaplain and director of interfaith engagement, helped organize a "prayers for Palestine" event where she and some students recited verses from the Quran, the Muslim holy book.

"It was an opportunity for students to just be in a space ... where they can breathe together and listen to very calming recitations," said Ahmad, a Muslim. "There is a deep call in the Quran, or our scripture, for standing up for justice."

Some students are trying to figure out what needs to be done now, she said.

"We may not have all the answers, but we are there ... for our students to process the grief that they're feeling, but also to think about what does this mean," she said. "While our role is very much one of pastoral care and ministry of presence, they are looking for us to also raise a moral consciousness because spirituality cannot be void of social justice."

Across campuses, some students have demanded explicit and strong condemnations of the attacks by Hamas militants, who stormed from the blockaded Gaza Strip into nearby Israeli towns, killing and abducting civilians and soldiers. Others have sought acknowledgement of Palestinian suffering plus condemnation of the killing of Palestinian civilians in Israeli airstrikes that have flattened buildings and homes in Gaza and forced many to evacuate.

As colleges issued statements on the war, many faced criticisms of, among other things, not going far enough or fast enough in condemning Hamas' attacks, or failing to denounce civilian deaths in Gaza.

Chaplains say some students have been feeling alienated, marginalized, hurt or intimidated by the rhetoric and positions of some administrators, faculty members or other students. Many students on different sides are increasingly concerned about hate and fearful of anti-Muslim and antisemitic vitriol or assaults.

Rabbi Daniel Levine with the Orange County Hillel in California views his work since the Hamas attacks and ensuing war as his most important yet.

"You have students that are in the most need of pastoral care and also the most need in terms of helping process their own identity and understanding geopolitics," he said. The psychological toll on students, he said, comes as many are still figuring out "who they are and how connected they are to Judaism and where does Israel play a role into all that."

He's been telling students at the University of California, Irvine, that he's available for conversations.

"If they need to cry, I'm there for them," he said. "If they want to discuss the background of the geopolitical Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is obviously a very complex and intense conversation, I'm here to do that."

More students than usual have been attending Shabbat dinners, though some have worried about the safety of going to events, he said. Levine and his wife hosted local Jewish alumni and graduate students to provide community and a space to grieve.

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"There's not enough time in the day to give all the students the support that they need," he said. "I wish I could clone myself."

He's been also offering hope.

"We're going to come out the other side," he said. "Don't give up on your education. Don't give up on being Jewish. Don't give up on humanity."

Back at Rutgers, where Aslam said the student body includes large Muslim and Jewish communities as well as international students, divisions have mirrored those on some other campuses.

Those who say "let's take a more balanced approach and acknowledge each other's pain" are feeling like the minority, he said.

He's been working with students with diverse needs.

"Some students are getting very significantly involved ... I want to be mindful for them to take care of themselves," he said. To those who are fearful or uncertain, he gives "consolation that your voice does matter and there are ways of maybe being involved and you can draw some strength in your faith."

While the war left some questioning the point of prayers, it's prompted many others to practice their religion more than ever, organizing vigils and prayers, he said.

"Faith allows us to get through our humanity with more beauty and eloquence," he said. "Using the theology to actually comfort them in those moments becomes a very important role."

Rabbi Reed said the Rutgers Hillel held a listening session during which counseling professionals talked to Jewish students about coping strategies and taking care of their mental health under stress.

"We have students with family members in Israel, friends in Israel," she said. "These are people we know; it's not abstract."

Hillel staff has also been tested.

"It's been exhausting," Reed said. "We have our own worries and fears and family members and perhaps losses and so there's the weight of caring for our students on top of our own concerns."

While it's been business as usual for many students, tensions have simmered among those affected by the war, mostly along political lines, she said, adding that "there are Jewish students who support the Palestinian cause; there are Muslims who care about Jewish lives lost."

Faith leaders of different religions at Rutgers discussed whether it would be fruitful to bring those of different views together for a processing session, Reed said.

Opinions varied.

Aslam said that he and some others believe dialogue can, and should, take place at such a sensitive moment. "We don't need to just protect our students," he said. "I want our students to grow in understanding that others are feeling pain, anger and insecurity."

Reed said that she's "always open to bringing people together in conversation, but it feels very raw right now." And if Israel carries out a ground operation in Gaza — which Israel said Saturday it's expanding— and the deaths further mount on both sides, she said, "it's going to be difficult for people to be able to listen to one another's stories in the middle of it."

García's HR in 11th, Seager's tying shot in 9th rally Rangers past Arizona 6-5 in Series opener

By STEPHEN HAWKINS AP Baseball Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Adolis García took a few steps while watching the ball before tossing his bat aside after another big swing this postseason. This one won an extended Game 1 of the World Series for the Texas Rangers.

Once his drive cleared the right-field wall in the bottom of the 11th, two innings after Corey Seager's tying two-run homer, García thrust his right arm high into the air as he started a trot around the bases that ended with him being mobbed at home plate — and a 6-5 victory over the Arizona Diamondbacks to start this surprise World Series of wild-card teams Friday night.

"He's on another planet," Rangers rookie Josh Jung said. "Every time he steps into the box it's like, grab

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your popcorn. ... I have no words. It's just like, wow."

Miguel Castro entered to face García with one out, and the Cuban slugger known as El Bombi drove a 3-1 sinker the other way into the second row of seats beyond a leaping Corbin Carroll. It was García's second RBI of the game, setting a record for most in one postseason with 22.

García has homered in five consecutive games, tied for the second-longest streak in postseason history, and he delivered the first walk-off homer in the World Series since Max Muncy connected leading off the 18th inning of Game 3 for the Los Angeles Dodgers in 2018 against Boston and Nathan Eovaldi — who started for the Rangers in this one.

"It was an exciting moment," García said. "I was just looking to the dugout, looking at all my (happy) teammates."

García, the AL Championship Series MVP, also had an RBI single in the first following rookie Evan Carter's run-scoring double. He finished with three hits and reached base five times.

He was hit on the left hand by a 92 mph fastball in the ninth but shook it off and promptly stole second base.

"I got lucky that it's nothing worse," García said.

In the first extra-inning game of this postseason, Texas became the first team to win a World Series game when trailing by multiple runs in the ninth since the 2015 Kansas City Royals in their clinching Game 5 against the New York Mets.

Game 2 is Saturday night in Texas, with Merrill Kelly scheduled to pitch for Arizona against Jordan Montgomery.

Seager tied it in the ninth when he drove closer Paul Sewald's fastball deep into the right-field stands with one out after the inning began with No. 9 hitter Leody Taveras drawing a walk.

"Everyone just started jumping for joy," García said. "We were able to exhale."

Normally pretty stoic, Seager had another emphatic show of emotion this postseason, immediately turning and yelling toward the dugout with the ball headed for the seats. He thrust both arms into the air when he rounded first base.

"He might have turned it up a notch, to be honest. He saved us there," Rangers manager Bruce Bochy said. "You can see it in him. He gets everybody fired up."

José Leclerc retired all six batters he faced for the win, and five Texas relievers combined for 6 1/3 scoreless innings.

The blown save for Sewald, first in seven chances this postseason, was the first glaring blip for a Diamondbacks bullpen that's been brilliant in October.

"It's frustrating. This is how the game goes sometimes. And we've got to find a way to be resilient and adaptable and come out with a clean mind and do our best," Arizona manager Torey Lovullo said. "I have every reason to believe we will. We've done it a lot this year."

Seager's tying shot was similar to the solo homer he hit in Game 7 of the ALCS at Houston four nights earlier, and the reaction was as well. That one put the Rangers ahead to stay in the series clincher, with the All-Star shortstop giving a massive hand slap to third base coach Tony Beasley and jumping in the dugout with his teammates.

"Very emotional times. He hit those balls so hard. If I did that, I'd be screaming, too," Texas second baseman Marcus Semien said.

"This is fun. This is playoffs. This is kind of what it's all about," Seager said. "It was a cool moment, for sure."

Game 1 of the World Series went to extra innings for the second year in a row — which had never happened. Unlike the regular season, there are no automatic runners placed at second base to start extra innings in the postseason.

Arizona had a 4-3 lead after Tommy Pham hit a tiebreaking homer leading off the fourth. An inning later, Ketel Marte's RBI double matched a record by stretching his postseason hitting streak to 17 games. Marte is the only player to get a hit in each of his first 17 postseason games.

Carroll hit a two-run triple for the Diamondbacks and dashed home on Marte's grounder in the third.

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Texas tied it in the bottom half when Zac Gallen walked Mitch Garver with the bases loaded.

Gallen made it through five innings with a gritty effort for Arizona after the NL All-Star starter trailed 2-0 only four batters into the game. He equaled his season high with four walks.

Ryan Thompson, Joe Mantiplay and Kevin Ginkel each pitched a scoreless inning before Sewald entered.

Two seasons after both teams lost more than 100 games, the Diamondbacks and Rangers are matched up in the third all-wild card World Series — and first since 2014.

These runnin' Diamondbacks had four stolen bases, and their 20 this postseason are the most by any team since the 2008 Tampa Bay Rays set the record with 24. Arizona even had quite a rarity in its three-run third inning, when it had a sacrifice bunt, a triple and a stolen base.

Eovaldi's eight strikeouts were the most by a Texas pitcher in a World Series game, but the big right-hander allowed five runs over 4 2/3 innings after giving up only five runs total while winning his first four starts this postseason.

Both teams got this far after having to win Games 6 and 7 of their respective League Championship Series on the road, which had never happened in both LCS matchups since those series expanded to a best-of-seven format in 1985.

"It's going to be a really good series," García said.

NOW AND THEN

Evan Longoria's single for Arizona in the third matched his hit total in the 2008 World Series, when as a rookie with the Rays he finished 1 for 20. He became the first position player in MLB history to appear in a World Series 15 years after first playing in the Fall Classic. He also became the fourth player with a World Series hit at both age 23 or younger AND 38 or older. The others: Eddie Murray, Pee Wee Reese and Willie Mays.

DO YOU ONE BETTER

García's walk-off homer came 12 years to the day after David Freese hit a game-ending shot in the 11th inning for the St. Louis Cardinals against Texas in Game 6 of the 2011 World Series. That was the game when Texas was twice within one strike of winning the title before Freese tied the game with a two-out triple in the ninth. Freese had 21 RBIs that postseason, the record García broke.

UP NEXT

Kelly, a 35-year-old right-hander, is 2-1 with a 2.65 ERA in three postseason starts.

Montgomery pitches for the Rangers on normal rest after the left-hander threw 2 1/3 innings Monday in relief to win Game 7 of the ALCS against Houston. The 30-year-old trade-deadline acquisition and pending free agent is 3-0 with a 2.16 ERA this postseason.

Iranian teen injured on Tehran Metro while not wearing a headscarf has died, state media says

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — An Iranian teenage girl injured weeks ago in a mysterious incident on Tehran's Metro while not wearing a headscarf has died, state media reported Saturday.

The death of Armita Geravand comes after her being in a coma for weeks in Tehran and after the one-year anniversary of the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini which sparked nationwide protests at the time.

Geravand's Oct. 1 injury and now her death threaten to reignite that popular anger, particularly as women in Tehran and elsewhere still defy Iran's mandatory headscarf, or hijab, law as a sign of their discontent with Iran's theocracy.

Iran's state-run IRNA news agency reported Geravand's death, without noting the wider unrest surrounding the headscarf law.

What happened in the few seconds after Armita Geravand entered the train on Oct. 1 remains in question. While a friend told Iranian state television that she hit her head on the station's platform, the soundless footage aired by the broadcaster from outside of the car is blocked by a bystander. Just seconds later, her limp body is carried off.

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Iranian state TV's report, however, did not include any footage from inside the train itself and offered no explanation on why it hadn't been released. Most train cars on the Tehran Metro have multiple CCTV cameras, which are viewable by security personnel.

Geravand's parents appeared in state media footage saying a blood pressure issue, a fall or perhaps both contributed to their daughter's injury.

Activists abroad have alleged Geravand may have been pushed or attacked for not wearing the hijab. They also demanded an independent investigation by the United Nations' fact-finding mission on Iran, citing the theocracy's use of pressure on victims' families and state TV's history of airing hundreds of coerced confessions.

The Associated Press has not been able to confirm the exact circumstances of what caused Geravand's injuries.

The Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, which reports on abuses in Iran's western Kurdish region and earlier published a photograph of Geravand in a coma, renewed its calls Saturday for an independent international investigation citing "the practice of the Islamic Republic in concealing the truth."

"During the last 28 days, the Islamic Republic of Iran tried to distort the narrative of the government murder of this teenage girl," the group alleged.

Geravand suffered her injury at the Meydan-E Shohada, or Martyrs' Square, Metro station in southern Tehran. Rumors about how she suffered the injury quickly circulated, something not mentioned by the IRNA report on her death Saturday.

"Unfortunately, the brain damage to the victim caused her to spend some time in a coma and she died a few minutes ago," the IRNA report read. "According to the official theory of Armita Geravand's doctors, after a sudden drop in blood pressure, she suffered a fall, a brain injury, followed by continuous convulsions, decreased cerebral oxygenation and a cerebral edema."

Geravand's injury also came as Iran has put its morality police — whom activists implicate in Amini's death — back on the street, and as lawmakers push to enforce even stricter penalties for those flouting the required head covering. Internationally, Geravand's injury sparked renewed criticism of Iran's treatment of women and of the mandatory hijab law.

Amini died in a hospital on Sept. 16, 2022, after she was detained by Iranian morality police on allegations of improperly wearing the hijab. Suspicions that she was beaten during her arrest led to mass protests that represented the largest challenge to Iran's theocratic government since the revolution.

Since those large-scale protests subsided, many women in Tehran could be seen without the hijab in defiance of the law.

Meanwhile, imprisoned Iranian activist Narges Mohammadi won the Nobel Peace Prize earlier this month in recognition of her tireless campaigning for women's rights and democracy, and against the death penalty. The Iranian government criticized her awarding of the prize as a political stunt, without acknowledging its own decadeslong campaign targeting Mohammadi for her work.

Iran remains squeezed by sanctions and faces ever-rising tensions with the West over its rapidly advancing nuclear program and its aid to regional militant groups, including a renewed focus on its relationship with Hamas following that group's unprecedented attack on and war with Israel.

For observant Muslim women, the head covering is a sign of piety before God and modesty in front of men outside their families. In Iran, the hijab — and the all-encompassing black chador worn by some — has long been a political symbol as well, particularly after becoming mandatory in the years following the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Iran and neighboring Taliban-ruled Afghanistan are the only countries where the hijab remains mandatory for women.

Live updates | Israel knocks out Gaza communications as protesters call for end to the war

By The Associated Press undefined

Israel knocked out communications and created a near-blackout of information by striking targets in the Gaza Strip with stepped-up bombardment and artillery fire overnight and into Saturday.

Explosions from continuous airstrikes lit up the sky over Gaza City for hours after nightfall Friday as the Israeli military said it was expanding ground operations in the territory, signaling a move closer to an all-out invasion of Gaza meant to crush the ruling Hamas militant group after its bloody rampage in southern Israel on Oct. 7.

The Palestinian telecom provider, Paltel, said the bombardment caused "complete disruption" of internet, cellular and landline services as the besieged enclave's 2.3 million people were largely cut off from contact with the outside world. Some satellite phones continued to function.

The Palestinian death toll passed 7,300. The Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza, which tracks the toll, released a detailed list including names and ID numbers on Thursday. In the occupied West Bank, more than 110 Palestinians have been killed in violence and Israeli raids since the war's start three weeks ago.

More than 1,400 people were slain in Israel during the Hamas incursion, including at least 310 soldiers, according to the Israeli government. At least 229 hostages were taken into Gaza, and four hostages were released earlier.

Currently:

1. AP photos: Scenes of sorrow and despair on both sides of Israel-Gaza border on week 3 of war
2. UN General Assembly calls for 'humanitarian truce' in Gaza leading to halt in Israel-Hamas fighting.
3. Israel-Hamas war upends years of conventional wisdom. Leaders give few details on what comes next
4. Data from the Gaza Health Ministry, questioned after the hospital explosion, has withstood past scrutiny.
5. About 30 children were taken hostage by Hamas militants. Their families wait in agony.
6. Find more of AP's coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war>.

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

LARGE DEMONSTRATION AT U.S. EMBASSY IN INDONESIA CALLS FOR END TO WAR

JAKARTA, Indonesia — More than 3,000 protesters marched to the heavily guarded U.S. Embassy in Indonesia's capital on Saturday to demand an end to the war and bombardment of the Gaza Strip.

Waving Indonesian and Palestinian flags, the protesters, many wearing white Islamic robes, filled a major thoroughfare in downtown Jakarta running outside the embassy. About 1,000 police were deployed around the compound, which is blocked off by concrete road barriers.

The protesters, organized by the Indonesian Ulema Council, known as MUI, chanted "God is Great" and "Freedom for Palestine" during the noisy but peaceful protest. Banners and placards proclaimed, "We stand with Gaza," and slammed the Israeli government while denouncing the staunch U.S. support of Israel.

"We are not willing to allow our brothers and sisters in Palestine to be tyrannized or genocided by Israel," MUI Secretary General of MUI Amirsyah Tambunan told the crowd. "We will continue to support and fight for Palestinian independence and sovereignty."

NYC PROTESTERS DEMAND GAZA CEASE-FIRE, MANY ARRESTED AFTER FILLING GRAND CENTRAL TRAIN STATION

NEW YORK — Hundreds of protesters in black T-shirts filled New York City's iconic Grand Central Terminal during the evening rush hour on Friday to demand a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war.

Many of the protesters were detained by police and taken out of the station, their hands zip tied behind their backs. The NYPD could not immediately say how many were taken into custody.

"Hundreds of Jews and friends are taking over Grand Central Station in a historic sit-in calling for a ceasefire," advocacy group Jewish Voice for Peace said on social media.

Inside the main concourse, protesters wearing shirts that read "cease-fire now" and "not in our name" chanted, with some holding banners in front of the list of departure times. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority asked commuters to use Penn Station as an alternative.

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The scene echoed last week's sit-in where more than 300 people were arrested for illegally demonstrating on Capitol Hill in Washington.

EXPLOSIONS SHATTER THE NIGHT SKY OVER GAZA AS ISRAEL EXPANDS BOMBING

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip – The dull orange glow of Israeli flares shone in the night sky over Gaza, slowly descending through the haze to illuminate targets for warplanes before eventually flickering out, plunging the scene back into darkness.

Multiple explosions from Israeli airstrikes tore into northern Gaza on Friday, quick flashes of bright orange silhouetted against the rooftops of Palestinian apartments and refugee camps. The sharp crunching sound of the bombs followed each time, seconds later, one after another.

Overhead, the buzz of Israeli military drones cut through, growing quieter and louder as the crafts circled the airspace.

For most Palestinians trapped in the Gaza Strip, their world has shrunk to these few sounds and colors.

Israel dramatically ramped up its bombardment Friday after knocking out internet and communication in Gaza, largely cutting off the tiny besieged enclave's 2.3 million people from contact with each other and the outside world.

U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY CALLS FOR 'HUMANITARIAN TRUCE' IN GAZA LEADING TO HALT IN ISRAEL-HAMAS FIGHTING

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. General Assembly approved a nonbinding resolution on Friday calling for a "humanitarian truce" in Gaza leading to a cessation of hostilities between Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers.

It was the first U.N. response to Hamas' surprise Oct. 7 attacks on Israel and Israel's ongoing military response and vow to obliterate Hamas.

The 193-member world body adopted the resolution by a vote of 120-14 with 45 abstentions after rejecting a Canadian amendment backed by the United States to unequivocally condemn the "terrorist attacks" by Hamas and demand the immediate release of hostages taken by the militant group.

GAZA'S LARGEST HOSPITAL STRUGGLES TO KEEP ITS NEONATAL UNITS RUNNING AS ISRAEL TIGHTENS SEIGE

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip – Premature babies wiggle and squirm, some with oxygen tubes under their noses, in rows of clear plastic incubators inside the neonatal unit of Gaza's largest hospital, which, like the rest of the besieged Palestinian territory, is running out of fuel, food, water and electricity.

Doctors in Gaza say conditions have reached catastrophic levels. They say a lack of basic supplies has left them struggling to maintain hygiene and sanitation, and hospital grounds are overcrowded with displaced civilians seeking refuge from Israeli airstrikes.

"We have noticed an increase in premature birth cases," said Dr. Nasser Bulbul, head of the NICU at al-Shifa Hospital.

"We had to perform a premature delivery of the fetus from the mother's womb while she's dying," he said. "Many of these infants are orphaned, and we don't know the fate of their relatives or have information about their identities."

Around 50,000 pregnant women are caught up in the conflict, with around 5,500 due to give birth within the next 30 days, according to the United Nations Population Fund.

If fuel supplies run out, neonatal intensive care units will be impacted and planned or emergency caesarean sections will be impossible, the U.N. agency said.

PRESS GROUP SAYS THE PAST 3 WEEKS HAVE BEEN DEADLIEST PERIOD FOR JOURNALISTS COVERING CONFLICT

NEW YORK — The Committee to Protect Journalists says the past three weeks have been the deadliest on record for journalists covering conflict since the organization started tracking in 1992.

The organization said in a statement Friday that at least 29 journalists have died covering the Israel-Hamas war since it ignited Oct. 7, including 24 Palestinians, four Israelis and 1 Lebanese. Additionally, 8 other journalists were reported injured and 9 were reported missing or detained.

CPJ also criticized the cutting of communications services in the Gaza Strip, warning that the blackout is

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also a "news blackout" that has compromised the public's ability to "know and understand what is happening in this conflict."

"This can lead to serious consequences with an independent, factual information vacuum that can be filled with deadly propaganda, dis- and misinformation," it said.

The organization stressed that journalists are civilians that must be respected and protected in accordance with international humanitarian law, adding that "deliberating targeting journalists or media infrastructure constitutes possible war crimes."

'WE'RE NOT DRAWING RED LINES FOR ISRAEL,' WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL SAYS

WASHINGTON — White House National Security spokesman John Kirby repeatedly refused to comment on Israel saying its ground forces were expanding activity in Gaza and also refused to comment on what a satisfactory long-term objective might be for the fighting.

"We're not drawing red lines for Israel," Kirby said Friday on a call with reporters. "We're going to continue to support them" but "since the very beginning we have, and will continue to have, conversations about the manner that they are doing this."

Kirby said the U.S. is still evaluating the impact of airstrikes against Iranian-backed militias and "we will not hesitate to take further actions in our own self-defense."

He also said 10 additional trucks filled with humanitarian aid had made it to Gaza, bringing the total to 84, but that the U.S. is aware that fuel there "is only anticipated to last a couple of days."

The White House previously said President Joe Biden was briefed Friday morning by his national security team on the latest developments in Israel and Gaza.

AID GROUPS SAY BLACKOUT IS IMPEDING STAFF COMMUNICATIONS AND OPERATIONS

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Aid groups say the communications blackout in the Gaza Strip has not only left them unable to contact their staff, but has also impeded their operations in the territory.

"It doesn't only mean that Gaza is isolated from the world but also it means people can't connect to each other. Our emergency line is down so people are literally not able to call an ambulance," said Nebal Farsakh, a spokesperson for the Palestinian Red Crescent. "We are extremely worried because we are completely cut off from our teams."

The International Committee of the Red Cross also said it's currently unable to reach its staff in Gaza.

"We are deeply worried for their safety and the safety of all civilians where hostilities are taking place," the organization said in a statement. "Without access to information in a communication blackout, people don't know where to go for safety."

ISRAELI ARMY SAYS GROUND FORCES WILL EXPAND THEIR ACTIVITY IN GAZA FRIDAY EVENING

JERUSALEM — The Israeli military on Friday said its ground forces were "expanding their activity" in the Gaza Strip, as the army moved closer to a full-on ground invasion of the besieged territory.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, the army's spokesman, said aerial attacks had been targeting Hamas tunnels and other targets.

"In addition to the attacks that we carried out in recent days, ground forces are expanding their activity this evening," he said. "The IDF is acting with great force ... to achieve the objectives of the war."

Israel has amassed hundreds of thousands of troops along the border with Gaza ahead of an expected ground offensive against the Hamas militant group.

Israel has been pounding Gaza with airstrikes since Hamas militants carried out a bloody cross-border incursion on Oct. 7.

POPE FRANCIS LEADS SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR COUNTRIES AND REGIONS AFFECTED BY WAR

VATICAN CITY — Amid signs of escalating tensions in the Middle East, Pope Francis led special prayers Friday evening in St. Peter's Basilica for a world "in a dark hour" and in "great danger" from what he described as the folly of war.

In his remarks, delivered in the form of a prayer to the Virgin Mary, Francis didn't mention by name the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which exploded into war after the Hamas attack against Israelis on Oct. 7.

Instead, he said he was praying for "especially those countries and regions at war."

"Intercede for our world, in such turmoil and great danger," the pope prayed, in apparent reference

to widespread anxiety that the Israeli-Hamas war could quickly develop into a wider, regional war in the Middle East.

PALESTINIAN TELECOM PROVIDER SAYS INTERNET SERVICE HAS BEEN CUT IN GAZA STRIP

RAMALLAH, West Bank — The Palestinian telecom provider Paltel says internet service in Gaza Strip has been cut off by Israeli bombardment. Services were cut Friday evening, following a heavy round of Israeli airstrikes that lit up the night sky over the darkened territory.

Rights groups and journalists also say they lost contact with colleagues in the enclave. The Associated Press's attempts to contact people in Gaza did not go through.

Acapulco residents are fending for themselves in absence of aid

By MARK STEVENSON and MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

ACAPULCO, Mexico (AP) — In a city without water, electricity or gasoline, where desperate people have been allowed, even encouraged, to take essential goods from damaged stores since Hurricane Otis smashed Acapulco, state police officer Raúl Gallardo stood guard over a mountain of excess.

Gallardo explained the distinction authorities have been making — in some cases — between what people can take and what would end up in his pile.

People can take "what you can consume — water, tuna, mayonnaise, that you can take," he said. What isn't allowed is big-ticket items — "appliances, for example," he said, swiveling to point at the refrigerators behind him. "What's not within the basket of basic foodstuffs, you can't take."

Despite government promises that aid was on the way in a big way, people did not wait.

Acapulco's desperate residents cleaned out the city's largest stores in three days. It was not isolated to any particular neighborhood or carried out under cover of darkness, but widespread and in full view of authorities, who have conceded they do not have the resources or in most cases the will to intervene.

It is in part the result of a government reaction delayed by the historically fast strengthening of a storm that no one forecast to go from tropical storm to catastrophic Category 5 hurricane in 12 hours. It is also a continuation of a government strategy that addresses problems — drug violence, natural disasters — with personnel, but not necessarily the tools to resolve the situation.

At least 27 people died in the storm, but hundreds of people were still searching Friday for loved ones.

Gallardo was evasive about whether the goods he and other police and National Guard troops were guarding in a parking lot at an intersection on a main boulevard had been seized or just abandoned because of their weight.

There were cases and cases of beer, a big purple recliner, a rolling desk chair, a pink loveseat, and bottles and bottles of scotch whisky.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador gently chided people to not overreach Friday.

"That those who always take advantage, those who always loot or look for personal advantage, don't let it happen and be sure that everyone will be helped," the president said.

Across Acapulco large stores were cleaned out. Shelves were not only bare, but in some cases the shelves themselves and the ladders that allowed employees to stock them were gone.

Throughout the city, people could be seen pushing shopping carts full of goods. Large items were strapped to the roofs of cars. One man on a motorcycle was pulling an improvised sled full of what appeared to be bedding as it fishtailed down a muddy street.

Gasoline has been unavailable, not because there isn't any, but because there is no electricity to operate the pumps. On Friday, a line of hundreds of people ran outside a supermarket in a seaside working class neighborhood where men had broken open a gas pump and were filling up people's empty plastic bottles.

Most families anxiously hunted for water, with some saying they were rationing their supplies. The municipal water system was out because its pumps had no power.

All the way down the city's main coastal boulevard, department and grocery stores were left gutted, first by the hurricane and then by residents.

"If I were the owner of those stores, I would never reopen them," Eduardo Ahedo said as he worked to

repair his small eco-hotel, Wayahnb'al, near the avenue.

Ahedo's cone-shaped adobe rooms appeared to have fared fairly well, but Otis blew out windows and the solar panels that had powered his business and turned his pool an uninviting green.

If government aid, in the form of loans, doesn't materialize soon, businesses like his may have to close. "We'll close completely, we'll disappear. That's the most likely thing" Ahedo said.

López Obrador said Friday that a government commission would meet with Acapulco's tourism sector. There would be an evaluation of which businesses had insurance.

"We're going to speak with insurers so they don't delay the paperwork, that they act fast," he said. "Those who don't have insurance, we're going to look for how they can get cheap credit."

The president was resolute, though he offered few details: "We have to get Acapulco on its feet as soon as possible. That is the plan in general: Help the people affected, and at the same time have tourism get back to normal in the beautiful port of Acapulco."

NYC protesters demand Israeli cease-fire, at least 200 detained after filling Grand Central station

NEW YORK (AP) — A sea of hundreds of protesters filled the main concourse of New York City's famed Grand Central Terminal during the evening rush hour Friday, chanting slogans and unfurling banners demanding a cease-fire as Israel intensified its bombardment of the Gaza Strip.

Wearing black T-shirts saying "Jews say cease-fire now" and "Not in our name," at least 200 of the demonstrators were detained by New York Police Department officers and led out of the train station, their hands zip-tied behind their backs. The NYPD said the protesters were taken briefly into custody, issued summonses and released, and that a more exact number of detentions would be available Saturday morning.

Some protesters hoisted banners as they scaled the stone ledges in front of leaderboards listing departure times. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority asked commuters to use Penn Station as an alternative. After the sit-in was broken up by police, the remaining protesters spilled into the streets outside.

"Hundreds of Jews and friends are taking over Grand Central Station in a historic sit-in calling for a ceasefire," advocacy group Jewish Voice for Peace said on social media.

The scene echoed last week's sit-in on Capitol Hill in Washington, where Jewish advocacy groups, including Jewish Voice for Peace and If Not Now, poured into a congressional office building. More than 300 people were arrested for illegally demonstrating.

Israel stepped up airstrikes across the Gaza Strip on Friday, knocking out internet and largely cutting off communication with the 2.3 million people inside the besieged Palestinian enclave. Gaza's Hamas-run Health Ministry says more than 7,300 people have been killed, more than 60% of them minors and women.

The Israeli military's announcement it was "expanding" ground operations in the territory signaled it was moving closer to an all-out invasion of Gaza, where it has vowed to crush the ruling Hamas militant group after its bloody incursion in southern Israel three weeks ago. More than 1,400 people were slain in Israel during the attack, according to the Israeli government, and at least 229 hostages were taken into Gaza.

The U.N. General Assembly approved a nonbinding resolution calling for a "humanitarian truce" in Gaza leading to a cessation of hostilities. It was the first U.N. response to Hamas' surprise Oct. 7 attacks and Israel's ongoing military response.

Maine mass killing suspect found dead, ending search that put entire state on edge

By DAVID SHARP, PATRICK WHITTLE, HOLLY RAMER and MICHELLE R. SMITH Associated Press
LEWISTON, Maine (AP) — The Army reservist who opened fire in a bowling alley and then at a bar in Lewiston, Maine, killing 18 people, was found dead Friday from a self-inflicted gunshot, ending an intensive two-day search that had the state on edge.

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Robert Card, a firearms instructor who grew up in the area, was found dead in nearby Lisbon Falls, Gov. Janet Mills said at a Friday night news conference.

"Like many people I'm breathing a sigh of relief tonight knowing that Robert Card is no longer a threat to anyone," Mills said.

April Stevens, a Lewiston resident who knew one of the victims, said she was relieved to learn that the "monster and coward" who inflicted so much pain was no longer a danger.

"I'm relieved but not happy," she said. "There was too much death. Too many people were hurt. Relieved, yes, happy, no."

Maine Department of Public Safety Commissioner Mike Sauschuck said Card was found at 7:45 p.m. near the Androscoggin River, about 8 miles (13 kilometers) southeast of where the second shooting occurred Wednesday evening. He declined to divulge the location but an official told The Associated Press the body was at a recycling center from which Card had been fired.

The official was not authorized to discuss details of the investigation publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Mills said she had called President Joe Biden to alert him that Card was dead.

"Tonight we're grateful that Lewiston and surrounding communities are safe after spending excruciating days hiding in their homes," Biden said in a statement. He added that "Americans should not have to live like this" and called on Congress to take action on gun violence.

The deadliest shootings in Maine history stunned a state of 1.3 million people that has relatively little violent crime and had only 29 killings in all of 2022. In Lewiston, the 37,000 residents and those in surrounding communities were told to stay in their homes as hundreds of police officers, sheriff's deputies, FBI agents and other law enforcement officials swarmed the area.

Card, 40, of Bowdoin, was a U.S. Army reservist. Leo Madden, who said he ran Maine Recycling Corp. for decades, told the AP that Card worked there for a couple of years and nothing about him stood out. Madden said he didn't remember when Card was employed or whether he was fired or quit.

Last summer, Card underwent a mental health evaluation after he began acting erratically during training, a U.S. official told the AP. A bulletin sent to police across the country shortly after the attack said Card had been committed to a mental health facility for two weeks after "hearing voices and threats to shoot up" a military base.

A U.S. official said Card was training with the Army Reserve's 3rd Battalion, 304th Infantry Regiment in West Point, New York, when commanders became concerned about him. State police took Card to the Keller Army Community Hospital at West Point for evaluation, according to the official, who was not authorized to publicly discuss the information and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

On Wednesday, Card attacked the bowling alley first, then went to the bar. Police were quickly sent to both locations but Card was able to escape. For the next two days authorities scoured the woods and hundreds of acres of Card's family-owned property, and sent dive teams with sonar to the bottom of the Androscoggin River.

Law enforcement officials had said they hadn't seen Card since his vehicle was left at a boat ramp Wednesday shortly after the shootings.

Hours before Card's body was found, the names and pictures of the 15 men, two women and 14-year-old boy who died in the shootings were released at a news conference.

The victims of the shootings include Bob Violette, 76, a retiree who was coaching a youth bowling league and was described as devoted, approachable and kind. Auburn City Councilor Leroy Walker told news outlets that his son, Joe, a manager at the bar and grill, died going after the shooter with a butcher knife. Peyton Brewer-Ross was a dedicated pipefitter at Bath Iron Works whose death leaves a gaping void in the lives of his partner, young daughter and friends, members of his union said.

The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf said the shootings killed at least four members of their community.

Prior to finding Card's body, divers searched the water near a boat launch in Lisbon, and a farming business in the same town. At points throughout the day Friday, police vehicles were seen speeding through

several towns, lights flashing and sirens blaring.

A gun was found in Card's car, which was discovered at a boat ramp, and federal agents were testing it to determine if it was used in the shooting, two law enforcement officials told the AP. The officials were not authorized to publicly discuss details of the investigation and spoke on condition of anonymity. Authorities have said publicly that the shooter used at least one rifle. They have not released any other details, including how the suspect obtained the firearm.

Authorities found a suicide note at a home associated with Card on Thursday that was addressed to his son, the law enforcement officials said. They said it didn't provide any specific motive for the shooting. Authorities also recovered Card's cellphone in the home, making a search more complicated because authorities routinely use phones to track suspects, the officials said.

The Cards have lived in Bowdoin for generations, neighbors said, and various members of the family own hundreds of acres in the area. The family owned the local sawmill and years ago donated the land for a local church.

Family members of Card told federal investigators that he had recently discussed hearing voices and became more focused on the bowling alley and bar, according to the law enforcement officials who spoke on condition of anonymity. When he was hospitalized in July in New York, Card had told military officials he had been hearing voices and said he wanted to harm other soldiers, the officials said.

Authorities had banned hunting in several communities, in a state where it is immensely popular. However, following confirmation of Card's death, a public safety alert was issued that announced: "The search is over for Mr. Card. The caution is over. Hunting may resume."

The Lewiston shootings were the 36th mass killing in the United States this year, according to a database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in partnership with Northeastern University.

Israel steps up air and ground attacks in Gaza and cuts off the territory's communications

By WAFAA SHURAFU, JOSEF FEDERMAN and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israel knocked out internet and communications in the Gaza Strip in stepped-up bombardment Friday night, largely cutting off its 2.3 million people from contact with each other and the outside world and creating a near-blackout of information, as the military said it was "expanding" ground operations in the territory.

The military's announcement signaled it was moving closer to an all-out invasion of Gaza, where it has vowed to crush the ruling Hamas militant group after its bloody incursion in southern Israel three weeks ago.

Explosions from continuous airstrikes lit up the sky over Gaza City for hours after nightfall. The Palestinian telecom provider, Paltel, said the bombardment caused "complete disruption" of internet, cellular and landline services. The cutoff meant that casualties from strikes and details of ground incursions could not immediately be known. Some satellite phones continued to function.

Already plunged into darkness after most electricity was cut off weeks ago, Palestinians were thrown into isolation, huddling in homes and shelters with food and water supplies running out.

Relatives outside Gaza panicked after their messaging chats with families inside suddenly went dead and calls stopped going through.

"I was so scared this was going to happen," said Wafaa Abdul Rahman, director of a feminist organization based in the West Bank city of Ramallah. She said she hadn't heard for hours from family in central Gaza.

"We've been seeing these horrible things and massacres when it's live on TV, so now what will happen when there's a total blackout?" she said, referring to scenes of families that have been crushed in homes by airstrikes over the past weeks.

Israeli military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said ground forces were "expanding their activity" Friday evening in Gaza and "acting with great force ... to achieve the objectives of the war." Israel says its strikes target Hamas fighters and infrastructure and that the militants operate from among civilians, putting them in danger.

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The Hamas media center reported heavy nighttime clashes with Israeli forces at several places, including what it said was an Israeli incursion east of the refugee camp of Bureij in the central Gaza Strip. Asked about the report, the Israeli military reiterated early Saturday that it had been carrying out targeted raids and expanding strikes with the aim of "preparing the ground for future stages of the operation."

Israel has amassed hundreds of thousands of troops along the border ahead of an expected ground offensive. Earlier Friday the military said ground forces conducted their second hours-long incursion inside Gaza in as many days, striking dozens of militant targets over the past 24 hours.

The Palestinian death toll in Gaza has soared past 7,300, more than 60% of them minors and women, according to the territory's Health Ministry. A blockade on Gaza has meant dwindling supplies, and the U.N. warned that its aid operation helping hundreds of thousands of people was "crumbling" amid near-depleted fuel.

More than 1,400 people were slain in Israel during Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, according to the Israeli government, and at least 229 hostages were taken into Gaza. Palestinian militants have fired thousands of rockets into Israel, including one that hit a residential building in Tel Aviv on Friday, wounding four people.

The Israeli military released the names of 310 soldiers killed during the initial Hamas attack and its aftermath. The vast majority were killed Oct. 7, according to the military. The slain soldiers are part of the overall death toll in Israel.

The overall number of deaths far exceeds the combined toll of all four previous Israel-Hamas wars, estimated at around 4,000.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said Israel expects a long and difficult ground offensive into Gaza soon. It "will take a long time" to dismantle Hamas' vast network of tunnels, he said, adding that he expects a lengthy phase of lower-intensity fighting as Israel destroys "pockets of resistance."

His comments pointed to a potentially grueling and open-ended new phase of the war after three weeks of relentless bombardment. Israel has said it aims to crush Hamas' rule in Gaza and its ability to threaten Israel. But how Hamas' defeat will be measured and an invasion's endgame remain unclear. Israel says it does not intend to rule the tiny territory but not who it expects to govern — even as Gallant suggested a long-term insurgency could ensue.

In Washington, the Pentagon said U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke with Gallant on Friday and "underscored the importance of protecting civilians during the Israel Defense Forces' operations and focusing on the urgency of humanitarian aid delivery for civilians in Gaza." The Pentagon said Austin also brought up "the need for Hamas to release all of the hostages."

The conflict has threatened to ignite a wider war across the region. Arab nations — including U.S. allies and ones that have reached peace deals or normalized ties with Israel — have raised increasing alarm over a potential ground invasion, likely to bring even higher casualties amid urban fighting.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi warned on X that the "outcome will be a humanitarian catastrophe of epic proportions for years to come."

With no electricity, no communications and no water, many of those trapped in Gaza had little choice but to wait in their homes or seek the relative safety of schools and hospitals as Israel expanded its bombing early Saturday.

Throughout the night, orange fireballs exploded on the horizon above the apartment buildings and refugee camps of Gaza City, briefly illuminating clouds of white smoke hanging in the air from previous strikes. Some bombs hit in tight groups, apparently slamming into the same location.

Lynn Hastings, U.N. humanitarian coordinator for the occupied territories, posted on X, formerly known as Twitter, that without phone lines and internet, hospitals and aid operations would be unable to operate. The Red Crescent said it could not contact medical teams and residents could no longer call ambulances, meaning rescuers would have to chase the sound of explosions to find the wounded. International aid groups said they were only able to reach a few staffers using satellite phones.

The Committee to Protect Journalists expressed alarm, saying the world "is losing a window into the reality" of the conflict. It warned that the information vacuum "can be filled with deadly propaganda, dis- and misinformation."

The loss of internet and phones deals a further blow to a medical and aid system that relief workers say was already on the verge of collapse under Israel's weekslong seal. More than 1.4 million people have fled their homes, nearly half crowding into U.N. schools and shelters. Aid workers say a trickle of aid Israel has allowed to enter from Egypt the past week is a tiny fraction of what is needed.

Gaza hospitals have been scrounging for fuel to run emergency generators that power incubators and other life-saving equipment.

Gallant said Israel believes that Hamas would confiscate any fuel that enters. He said Hamas uses generators to pump air into its hundreds of kilometers (miles) of tunnels, which originate in civilian areas. He showed reporters aerial footage of what he said was a tunnel shaft built right next to a hospital.

"For air, they need oil. For oil, they need us," he said.

Late Friday the army released photos showing what it said were Hamas installations in and around Gaza City's Shifa Hospital, Gaza's largest. Israel has made such claims before, but declined to say how the photos were obtained.

Little is known about Hamas' tunnels and other infrastructure. Claims by the military and Gallant couldn't be verified.

Speaking at Shifa Hospital, Hamas media chief Salama Maroof called Israel's claims "lies" and said they were "a precursor for striking this facility."

"I ring the alarm bell. There is imminent danger hovering above the medical facility," Maroof said. The hospital has been overwhelmed and around 40,000 displaced residents have crowded its grounds for shelter, the U.N. says.

Asked if Israel plans to target Shifa, Hagari said, "We will not be able to allow terror activity against Israel from hospitals."

Hundreds of thousands of people remain in northern Gaza.

In related developments:

— The U.N. General Assembly approved a nonbinding resolution calling for a "humanitarian truce" in Gaza leading to a cessation of hostilities. It was the first U.N. response to Hamas' surprise Oct. 7 attacks and Israel's ongoing military response and vow to obliterate the militant group.

— In New York City, hundreds of protesters calling for a cease-fire filled the famed Grand Central Terminal during rush hour Friday, wearing T-shirts saying "Jews say cease-fire now" and "Not in our name." Police said approximately 200 protesters were taken briefly into custody, issued summonses and released.

Maine's close-knit deaf community is grieving in the wake of shootings that killed 4 beloved members

By PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

FALMOUTH, Maine (AP) — Maine's close-knit community of deaf and hard of hearing people is grieving in the wake of the Lewiston shootings that killed beloved members, many of whom were ardent advocates.

The shootings, at a bowling alley and a bar in Lewiston, killed at least four people in the deaf community, the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf said Friday. The shootings killed 18 people in total and injured 13 others.

Joshua Seal, 36, was a sign language interpreter among those killed while he was playing in a cornhole tournament at Schemengees Bar with friends. In the past couple years, he became known as an interpreter during Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention's pandemic briefings.

His wife Elizabeth Seal said in a Facebook post that he was "a wonderful husband, my best friend, and my soulmate. He was also a wonderful boss, an incredible interpreter, a great friend, a loving son, brother, uncle, and grandson."

"It is with a heavy heart that I share with you all that Joshua Seal has passed away ... no, he was murdered, in the 10/25 shooting in Lewiston. It still feels surreal," she wrote.

Billy Brackett, 48; Steve Vozzella, 45; and Bryan MacFarlane, 41, were also stalwart members of Maine's community of deaf people who died in the shootings, the educational center said. The Maine Educational

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Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf are located on Mackworth Island in Falmouth, near Portland.

The school and center were closed on Friday due to the shooting, but the island became a gathering place for people to share stories and grieve, said Karen Hopkins, the executive director.

"We have had some people come today to this island to be present and think about the loss in our community," Hopkins said. "How is this affecting our community? It's horrific. It's unimaginable."

The man wanted in the mass shooting was found dead Friday, authorities said. Robert Card, who was wanted in connection with the shootings at Schemengees Bar and Grille and at Just-In-Time Recreation bowling alley in Lewiston, was found dead in Lisbon Falls, Maine, Gov. Janet Mills said.

The four slain members of the deaf community all have connections to the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf. Seal had four deaf children who were all connected to the institutions' educational programs, Hopkins said.

Brackett attended the school and had a daughter who was in early intervention, Hopkins said. MacFarlane also attended the school as a student and Vozzella's wife Megan was an alumnus of the school, Hopkins said.

"Our staff is struggling because they are our friends," Hopkins said.

UN General Assembly calls for 'humanitarian truce' in Gaza leading to halt in Israel-Hamas fighting

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. General Assembly approved a nonbinding resolution Friday calling for a "humanitarian truce" in Gaza leading to a cessation of hostilities between Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers, the first United Nations response to the war.

The 193-member world body adopted the resolution by a vote of 120-14 with 45 abstentions after rejecting a Canadian amendment backed by the United States. It would have unequivocally condemned the Oct. 7 "terrorist attacks" by Hamas and demanded the immediate release of hostages taken by Hamas, which is not mentioned in the Arab-drafted resolution.

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian U.N. ambassador, called the General Assembly "more courageous, more principled" than the divided U.N. Security Council, which failed in four attempts during the past two weeks to reach agreement on a resolution. Two were vetoed and two failed to get the minimum nine "yes" votes required for approval.

Israel's U.N. Ambassador Gilad Erdan called it "a day that will go down in infamy," saying after the vote: "Israel will not stop the operation until Hamas terror capabilities are destroyed and our hostages are returned. ... And the only way to destroy Hamas is root them out of their tunnels and subterranean city of terror."

Frustrated Arab nations went to the General Assembly, where there are no vetoes — just as Ukraine did after Russia's February 2022 invasion because of Moscow's Security Council veto power — to press for a U.N. response. And the United Arab Emirates Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, the Arab representative on the Security Council, expressed delight at the result.

"120 votes in this kind of geopolitical environment is a very, very high signal of the support for international law, for proportionate use of force, and it is a rejection of the status quo that is currently happening on the ground," she said.

The 14 countries that voted against the resolution include Israel and its closest ally, the United States, five Pacific island nations and four European countries — Austria, Croatia, Czechia and Hungary, all European Union members. Eight EU members voted in favor.

France's U.N. Ambassador Nicolas De Riviere said his country supported the resolution "because nothing could justify the suffering of civilians," and he urged collective efforts to establish a humanitarian truce.

Mansour said the European votes indicate they can be "very helpful" in pursuing a Security Council resolution "or in maximizing pressure in Israel to stop this war."

While the surprise Hamas attacks killed some 1,400 Israelis, more than 7,000 Palestinians have been

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killed in Israel's retaliatory airstrikes, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. The escalating death toll and destruction in Gaza heightened international support for "humanitarian truces" to get desperately needed food, water, medicine and fuel to the 2.3 million people in Gaza.

Unlike Security Council resolutions, General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding but the UAE's Nusseibeh told reporters "they carry incredible weight and moral authority."

She said the 10 elected Security Council members, who serve two-year terms, will take the "moral authority" from the General Assembly and try to break the gridlock on a council resolution.

-The votes came part way through a list of 113 speakers at an emergency special session of the General Assembly on Israeli actions in occupied Palestinian territories.

Jordan's U.N. Ambassador Mahmoud Hmoud, speaking on behalf of the U.N.'s 22-nation Arab group, called for action on the resolution because of the urgency of the escalating situation on the ground.

Before the vote, Hmoud urged defeat of the Canadian amendment, saying "Israel is responsible for the atrocities that are being committed now, and that will be committed in the ground invasion of Gaza."

Canada's U.N. Ambassador Robert Rae countered that the resolution appears to forget that the events of Oct. 7 happened. The amendment would condemn Hamas, "which is responsible for one of the worst terrorist attacks in history," he said.

Pakistan's U.N. Ambassador Munir Akram drew loud applause when he said the Arab-drafted resolution deliberately didn't condemn or mention Israel or name any other party. "If Canada was really equitable," Akram said, "it would agree either to name everybody — both sides who are guilty of having committed crimes — or it would not name either as we chose."

The vote on the Canadian amendment was 88-55 with 23 abstentions, but it failed to get a two-thirds majority of those voting for or against — abstentions didn't count. In the vote on the entire resolution that followed, Canada abstained.

The assembly's emergency special session, which began Wednesday, continued Friday morning with U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield echoing Israel's Erdan in calling the resolution "outrageous" for never mentioning Hamas and saying it is "detrimental" to the vision of a two-state solution.

She called it "a perilous moment for Israelis and Palestinians," stressing that there is no justification for Hamas "terror," that Palestinians are being used as human shields and that "the lives of innocent Palestinians must be protected."

Oman, speaking on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council, condemned Israel's "siege" of Gaza, starvation of its population and collective punishment of Palestinians. But it said the Palestinians won't be deterred from demanding their "legitimate inalienable rights, chief among them the right to self-determination and the right to establish an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital."

In addition to calling for "an immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities," the resolution adopted Friday demands that all parties immediately comply with their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law requiring protection of civilians and the schools, hospitals and other infrastructure critical for their survival.

The resolution demands that essential supplies be allowed into the Gaza Strip and humanitarian workers have sustained access. And it calls on Israel to rescind its order for Gazans to evacuate the north and move to the south and "firmly rejects any attempts at the forced transfer of the Palestinian civilian population."

The resolution also stresses the need "to urgently establish a mechanism to ensure the protection of the Palestinian civilian population."

And it "emphasizes the importance of preventing further destabilization and escalation of violence in the region" and calls on all parties to exercise "maximum restraint" and on all those with influence to press them "to work toward this objective."

Agreement reached for Biden-Xi talks, but details still being worked out, official tells AP

By DIDI TANG, MATTHEW LEE and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping have agreed to meet on the sidelines of next month's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco, according to a U.S. official familiar with the planning.

The two sides worked out an agreement in principle to hold a meeting during the summit as Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met Friday with Secretary of State Antony Blinken and White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan, according to the official, who was not authorized to comment and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The official added that the two sides have still not worked out details on the exact day of the meeting, venue and other logistics.

The White House said in a statement following Friday's meetings that the two sides were "working toward" a Biden-Xi face-to-face on the sidelines of APEC, a forum of 21 Pacific countries.

Earlier Friday, Biden met with Wang, holding an hourlong talk with the senior Chinese official in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The meeting, with Blinken and Sullivan present, was the latest in a series of high-level contacts between the two countries as they explore the possibility of stabilizing an increasingly tense relationship at a time of conflict in Ukraine and Israel.

The White House said Biden "emphasized that both the United States and China need to manage competition in the relationship responsibly and maintain open lines of communication," and he "underscored that the United States and China must work together to address global challenges."

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said Biden viewed his meeting with Wang as "a positive development, and a good opportunity to keep the conversation going."

Biden had been widely expected to talk with Wang, a reciprocal action after Xi met with Blinken in June. Beijing has yet to confirm if Xi will travel to San Francisco for the annual APEC summit, which runs from Nov. 11 to Nov. 17.

Wang is in the midst of a three-day visit to Washington, where he's been meeting with top U.S. officials. He sat down with Blinken on Friday morning for the second time during his trip.

On Thursday, after their initial meeting, the Chinese side said "the two sides had an in-depth exchange of views on China-U.S. relations and issues of common concern in a constructive atmosphere."

In its readout, the U.S. State Department said the two men addressed "areas of difference" and "areas of cooperation," while Blinken "reiterated that the United States will continue to stand up for our interests and values and those of our allies and partners."

Wang said before Thursday's meeting that China's goal was to "push the relationship as soon as possible back to the track of healthy, stable and sustainable development."

U.S. officials had said they would press Wang on the importance of China stepping up its role on the world stage if it wants to be considered a responsible major international player. The U.S. has been disappointed with China over its support for Russia in the war against Ukraine and its relative silence on the war between Israel and Hamas.

"China should use whatever ability it has as an influential power to urge calm" in the Middle East, said State Department spokesman Matthew Miller. "We know China has relationships with a number of countries in the region, and we would urge them to use those relationships, the lines of communication they have, to urge calm and stability."

U.S. officials believe the Chinese have considerable leverage with Iran, which is a major backer of Hamas.

Wang came to Washington at a time when tensions between the two countries remain high, including over U.S. export controls on advanced technology and China's more assertive actions in the East and South China seas.

On Thursday, the U.S. military released a video of a Chinese fighter jet flying within 10 feet (three meters)

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of an American B-52 bomber over the South China Sea, nearly causing an accident. Earlier this month, the Pentagon released footage of some of the more than 180 intercepts of U.S. warplanes by Chinese aircraft that occurred in the last two years, part of a trend U.S. military officials call concerning.

The U.S. also has renewed a warning that it would defend the Philippines in case of an armed attack under a security pact, after Chinese ships blocked and collided with two Philippine vessels off a contested shoal in the South China Sea.

Beijing has released its own video of close encounters in the region, including what it described as footage of the USS Ralph Johnson making a sharp turn and crossing in front of the bow of a Chinese navy ship. The U.S. destroyer also was captured sailing between two Chinese ships.

Senior Col. Wu Qian, the spokesman of the Chinese defense ministry, said the videos showed that "the U.S. is the real provocateur, risk taker and spoiler."

The Pentagon rejected China's characterization of the USS Ralph Johnson's movements, saying the video includes only "cropped segments of a 90-minute interaction." The ship "complied with international law" and "operated in a lawful, safe and resolute manner," the Pentagon said.

During his visit to Washington, Wang was also expected to discuss Taiwan, a self-governed island that Beijing considers to be part of Chinese territory. Beijing vows to seize it by force if necessary, but Washington, which has a security pact with Taiwan, opposes the use of force.

The Chinese president last came to the U.S. in 2017, when former President Donald Trump hosted him at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida. Biden, who took office in 2021, has yet to host Xi on U.S. soil. The two men last met in Bali, Indonesia, in November 2022, on the sidelines of the Group of 20 meeting of leading rich and developing nations.

The U.S.-China relationship began to sour in 2018 when the Trump administration slapped hefty tariffs on \$50 billion worth of Chinese goods. It deteriorated further over a range of issues, including rights abuses, the South China Sea, Taiwan, technology and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Biden-Xi meeting would bring much-needed stability to relations between the two countries, said Yun Sun, director of the China Program at the Washington-based think tank Stimson Center.

"The keyword here is 'stabilization' of bilateral ties — not really improvement, but stabilization," Sun said. "The world needs the U.S. and China to take on a rational path and stabilize their relationship, offering the region and the world more certainty."

A teen bowler, a shipbuilder and a sign language interpreter are among the Maine shooting victims

By HOLLY RAMER, LISA RATHKE and KATHY McCORMACK Associated Press

The 18 people killed in two mass shootings in Lewiston, Maine, included a 14-year-old bowler, a shipbuilder who loved playing the game of cornhole and a sign language interpreter.

According to Maine State Police, seven people died Wednesday night at Just-In-Time Recreation bowling alley. Six were male and one was female. Eight more people, all male, died at Schemengees Bar and Grille. Three others died after being taken to hospitals.

BILL AND AARON YOUNG

Bill Young, 44, of Winthrop, had taken his 14-year-old son, Aaron, to play in a youth bowling league at Just-in-Time Recreation. Both died.

"Bill was a man dedicated to his family," his cousin, Kim McConville, told The Associated Press via social media. "He was a master auto mechanic. Always trying to be a funny guy."

Aaron was an avid bowler who had received recognition from the youth league.

In a statement, the superintendent of Winthrop Public Schools confirmed that a high school freshman and his dad were among those killed. Jim Hodgkin's statement said an uncle of another high school student was also killed.

"This is tremendous tragedy for our area, our town, our students, and everyone. This is uncharted ter-

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ritory," Hodgkin said.

PEYTON BREWER-ROSS

Peyton Brewer-Ross was a dedicated pipefitter at Bath Iron Works who left behind a partner, young daughter and friends, members of his union said.

Brewer-Ross, of Bath, was doing something he loved — playing cornhole and enjoying friends — when he was shot to death, his brother said.

"He was a character. He didn't meet anyone he didn't like," Wellman Brewer said of his younger brother.

Brewer-Ross loved the game of cornhole so much that he brought out the angled boards and beanbags at family gatherings, his brother said.

He said his fun-loving brother, a shipbuilder at Bath Iron Works, was the life of the party.

"He has a Randy 'Macho Man' Savage Slim Jim jacket that he wore," Brewer said, noting the apparel choice that originated with a flamboyant professional wrestler. "Not too many people could pull that off."

Brewer-Ross and his fiancé, Rachael, had just celebrated the second birthday of their daughter, Elle, two weeks earlier.

"There's a hole in our family now where he used to be. And it's going to hurt for a while," Wellman Brewer said.

JOSHUA SEAL

Joshua Seal, a sign language interpreter, was shot and killed while playing in a cornhole tournament at Schemengees Bar with other members of the deaf community.

His wife, Elizabeth Seal, said in a Facebook post that he was "a wonderful husband, my best friend, and my soulmate. He was also a wonderful boss, an incredible interpreter, a great friend, a loving son, brother, uncle, and grandson."

"It is with a heavy heart that I share with you all that Joshua Seal has passed away... no, he was murdered, in the 10/25 shooting in Lewiston. It still feels surreal," she wrote.

ROBERT AND LUCEILLE VIOLETTE

Retiree Bob Violette, 76, and his wife Luceille, 73, died in the shootings. Bob devoted himself to his volunteer job coaching the youth bowling league that was practicing that night, said Patrick Poulin, whose teenage son has been a member for three years.

"He's taught so many people over the years how to bowl, and he wasn't getting paid," he said. "We've really been focused on trying to keep the sport alive, and Bob was really an integral part of that."

Poulin described him as unfailingly approachable and caring.

"Sometimes kids are having a hard time for whatever reason, discouraged or something," he said. "He was great at picking them up and getting them to move along from that issue and get things going in the right direction."

Two weeks ago, Poulin was at the bowling center with his son and offered him some tips. His son resisted, but eventually took the advice and bowled a great game.

"You gave him some good instructions, so when are you going to get out here and coach with me?" Violette asked him.

Poulin replied that he'd have to think about it. Asked Thursday if he'd consider it now, he said, "Someone's got to step back in."

MICHAEL DESLAURIERS

Michael Deslauriers' father told CBS News that his son was one of those killed at Just-In-Time Recreation. His father, who shares the same name, said his son and a friend both were killed as they charged at the shooter after making sure their wives and several children were safe.

JOE WALKER

Joe Walker was the bar manager at Schemengees Bar and Grille. His father, Auburn City Councilor Leroy Walker, told NBC News on Thursday that his son was shot twice in the stomach as he went after the shooter with a butcher knife.

"He died as a hero," he said.

Waiting for confirmation of his worst fears Wednesday night, Walker told the network he felt like his guts

and neck were being "squashed."

"And I don't know, telling you the truth, what kind of night this is going to be from now until tomorrow when I wake up to the true facts that my son is dead — and I know he's dead," he said. "I know it as well as I know I'm standing here telling you because he's not here and he's not at any other hospital and he's not running the streets or he would have called us, because he manages Schemengees, so I know he was there."

TRICIA ASSELIN

Tricia Asselin worked part time at the Just-in-Time Recreation bowling alley. She had Wednesday night off, but went bowling with her sister.

When she realized shots were being fired inside the bowling alley, Asselin, 53, went to call 911, but was shot and killed, relatives said.

Asselin "had a great passion for life," and was a loving mother, "the most caring person there was," her mother, Alicia Lachance, told NBC News.

Asselin's cousin, Tammy Asselin, was at the bowling alley with her own daughter, Toni, who played in a youth bowling league on Wednesdays. They knew Tricia worked there, but they hadn't seen her yet that night.

When she heard the gunfire, Tammy Asselin couldn't find her daughter and then tripped on some bowling bags and fell. Tammy and others tried to hide, getting a table to flip over and act as a wall near a corner booth. Her daughter had gotten to an exit and was safe, she found later.

"I never prayed so hard in my life as I did that night," she said.

She was later told that Tricia didn't make it. She remembered her cousin as "the most fun person. She was always happy-go-lucky," according to ABC News.

ARTHUR STROUT

Arthur Strout was playing pool with his father at the bar. His son wanted to stay and play a couple more games, but his father, Arthur Barnard, left shortly before the shooting.

"I said, 'OK,' and he said 'I love you,' because all my kids tell me that every time we see each other," Barnard told CBS News. "Ten minutes later, I get a phone call."

Strout, 42, and his wife, Kristy, had a blended family of five children.

"He's helped me raise my children since they were very, very little," Kristy Strout told CBS. "His daughter's only 13 and without a dad because of all of this. Because of one man's choices, my daughter has to grow up without a father."

Strout was a family-oriented person who loved playing pool and cooking Italian food, Bonnie Caron, the mother of his 23-year-old son, told the AP.

"He was murdered doing something he loved," Caron said. "He was just all about having fun."

FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried acknowledges in court that customers were hurt but denies fraud

By KEN SWEET and LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Sam Bankman-Fried, testifying at his fraud trial Friday, cast himself as a bumbling cryptocurrency visionary who knew nothing about the industry when he started FTX or about marketing when he became the face of his company and not enough about his businesses to see they were \$10 billion in the hole until shortly before they collapsed.

In Manhattan federal court, the onetime cryptocurrency golden boy denied defrauding anyone.

Bankman-Fried, 31, acknowledged some failures, saying he made mistakes, large and small, but he also contested testimony by four former top executives who blamed him for the collapse of his businesses last year when a rush of customers withdrew their money, exposing that billions of dollars were missing.

"We thought that we might be able to build the best product on the market" and move the crypto ecosystem forward, he said.

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"It turned out basically the opposite of that. A lot of people got hurt — customers, employees — and the company ended up in bankruptcy," Bankman-Fried said.

Asked by his lawyer, Mark Cohen, if he defrauded anyone or took customers' funds, Bankman-Fried answered, "No I did not."

Mostly unemotional on the witness stand, Bankman-Fried, who could face decades in prison if he is convicted of all charges, said: "I don't tend to show a lot of freakoutness."

As the day wore on, testimony focused on what happened as Bankman-Fried's businesses sank deeper in debt, even as he spent hundreds of millions of dollars on marketing that included a 2022 Super Bowl commercial featuring comedian Larry David, a partnership with quarterback Tom Brady and a firm that linked him to celebrities.

Bankman-Fried said he was "very surprised" when he learned in October 2022 that Alameda had an \$8 billion debt that he didn't know about, which meant the company's total debt was roughly \$10 billion.

Cohen said he expected to finish questioning his client on Monday. A prosecutor said cross-examination would last into Tuesday. The jury was unlikely to get the case until late next week at the earliest.

The California entrepreneur has pleaded not guilty to conspiracy charges accusing him of diverting billions of dollars from clients and investors to make risky investments, buy luxury housing, engage in a star-studded publicity campaign, and make large political and charitable donations.

His testimony became the centerpiece of a defense that has tried to convey that Bankman-Fried had no criminal intent in actions prosecutors say were directly to blame for the collapse last November of businesses Bankman-Fried began creating in 2017 and eventually ran from the Bahamas.

Bankman-Fried told the jury that when he started his first company, Alameda Research, he knew "basically nothing."

"I knew that a bitcoin was digital," he said.

He described himself as "somewhat introverted naturally," but explained that he accidentally became the face of FTX when several interviews "ended up going better than I thought they would."

He said he testified three times before Congress to persuade legislators to create cryptocurrency regulations that would allow products to be marketed directly to Americans.

As requests for interviews became overwhelming, "It was too late to find a new public face for the company. I was the public face," he said.

"I had absolutely no background in marketing. Absolutely no idea," he said.

His lawyer showed jurors a picture of Bankman-Fried with singer Katy Perry, actress Kate Hudson and others at the 2022 Super Bowl in Los Angeles while his client explained that he went to the game because he "thought maybe it would be interesting" and then ended up in the box with celebrities when they saw him and "invited" him in.

Most of Bankman-Fried's testimony focused on the explosive growth and collapse of FTX, a cryptocurrency exchange, and Alameda, but Cohen occasionally strayed into asking about his client's personal life and quirks, including his penchant for wearing casual clothing and letting his hair grow.

Bankman-Fried blamed himself for the breakdown of his on-off romantic relationship with Caroline Ellison, Alameda's chief executive, saying "I didn't have the time or the energy to put in what I think she wanted from a relationship."

"It's not something I've been great at, being able to sustain a romantic relationship for a long period," he said.

Still, he cast Ellison as a villain in his company's collapse, saying she failed to follow his instructions for over a year to create a hedge to protect Alameda.

He said he considered shutting down the company at one point because "there might not be the right management in place for Alameda to justify its risk going forward."

When the jury was shown a photograph of Bankman-Fried with a deck of cards, he explained that he used them to satisfy his urge to "compulsively fidget with things" — a habit from his college years that grew so severe that he said he'd wear out a deck in a week. He has since switched to fidget spinners.

Bankman-Fried, wearing a suit and tie in court and short hair, said he frequently wore shorts and T-shirts

because he found them comfortable. As for the scattered long hair he had until weeks ago, he said: "I was busy and lazy and didn't bother getting haircuts for long periods of time."

Before Bankman-Fried testified Friday, Judge Lewis A. Kaplan mostly shut down his lawyers' plans to show Bankman-Fried made many decisions about his businesses in consultation with lawyers, saying evidence of that would falsely imply that lawyers with full knowledge of all facts "blessed what the defendant is alleged to have done."

The defendant was extradited from the Bahamas to New York in December to face fraud charges.

Initially granted a \$250 million personal recognizance bond and allowed to live with his parents in Palo Alto, California, the bond was revoked in August and he was jailed when Kaplan concluded that he had tried to influence potential witnesses at his upcoming trial.

Prosecutors built their case against Bankman-Fried for three weeks, relying largely on his former top executives, an inner circle of individuals who shared a penthouse apartment in the Bahamas with Bankman-Fried.

The executives testified that Bankman-Fried directed them to spend billions of dollars taken from the accounts of FTX customers and funneled through Alameda Research, a hedge fund he started in 2017, two years before he created the FTX cryptocurrency exchange.

Families hunt for loved ones not heard from since Hurricane Otis pummeled Acapulco

By MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

ACAPULCO, Mexico (AP) — Desperate families made missing posters Friday and joined online groups to look for loved ones out of touch since Hurricane Otis devastated the Mexican Pacific coast city of Acapulco.

Officials said they were moving in supplies and evacuating people from the devastated metropolis of 1 million people.

As cellphone service returned to some parts of the city, many residents had help from friends and relatives living in other parts of Mexico and in the United States.

Residents joined together by neighborhood using online messaging platforms. On Thursday there were some 1,000 people in 40 chats, which grew in number through the day. Late Thursday, Guerrero state Gov. Evelyn Salgado followed their lead, urging people to send messages to government WhatsApp accounts about the missing.

Norma Manzano spent a day debating whether to make a digital missing poster, like so many people have done, for her two brothers, whom she had not heard from since shortly after Otis made landfall early Wednesday.

Manzano's brothers drove to Acapulco from Mexico City last weekend with three co-workers to build an installation for an international mining conference in a big hotel. The bachelors — 31-year-old Victor Manuel Manzano López and 38-year-old Alejandro Manzano López — are hard-working jokesters, their sister said.

They were staying in an Airbnb rental in Acapulco's Diamond Point district, a seaside area hit hard by the storm and flooding.

Entire walls of beachside high rises were ripped off. Hundreds of thousands of homes remained without electricity. People lacking even the most basic resources were emptying stores out of everything from food to toilet paper. Miguel Angel Fong, president of the Mexican Hotel Association, told The Associated Press that 80% of the city's hotels were damaged.

Alejandro called his sister around 2 a.m. Wednesday, about an hour after Otis made landfall. She didn't hear the call. She awoke at 3 a.m. and saw the missed call and a number of increasingly frantic messages.

"He sent me a lot of messages that it was really bad, that the windows were breaking, that they tried to put mattresses against the windows, and he told me, 'I'm sending you my location so that if something happens you know where we are,'" Manzano said.

That was the last message.

"I feel so powerless not being able to do anything," she said.

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So she started joining groups on WhatsApp and Facebook. She joined so many that she lost count and made a poster of her brothers and their co-workers. She scours lists shared by others of people inside shelters.

So far, nothing.

"It makes me feel not alone, thinking that I'm not the only one going through this, that we have a lot of families who are worried about ours," Manzano said from her home in Toluca, west of Mexico City.

Defense Secretary Luis Cresencio Sandoval announced Friday that the official number of 27 dead and four missing had not changed, but some in Mexico were skeptical of official tolls because the city remains largely cut off. Some local media have reported there were bodies in the city that had not yet been recovered.

"Nature, the creator, protected us, even from the fury of the hurricane, it appears, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said at his morning news briefing. "We still have to wait to have all of the information about the missing people."

"But it appears, even though the death of any person is unfortunate, there weren't very many," he said.

Acapulco is at the foot of steep mountains. Luxury homes and slums alike cover the hillsides with views of the glistening Pacific Ocean. Once drawing Hollywood stars for its nightlife, sport fishing and cliff diving shows, the port has in recent years fallen victim to competing organized crime groups that have sunk the city into violence, driving away many international tourists.

The Pacific storm strengthened with shocking swiftness before slamming into the coast early Wednesday, and the Mexican government deployed around 10,000 troops to deal with the aftermath. But equipment to move tons of mud and fallen trees from the streets was slow in arriving.

Acapulco's municipal water system was down and around half a million homes lost power. López Obrador said that restoring power was a top priority, but by Thursday evening there were still 250,000 homes and businesses with no electricity.

These numbers show the staggering toll of the Israel-Hamas war

By JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The latest Israel-Hamas war has quickly become the deadliest and most destructive of the five wars fought between the sides since Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip in 2007 from the Palestinian Authority.

The fighting erupted Oct. 7 when Hamas carried out a bloody attack in southern Israel. Since then, Israel has relentlessly pounded the Gaza Strip with airstrikes that have wrought unprecedented destruction, flattening entire neighborhoods.

Here's a look in numbers at the toll of the Israel-Hamas war as of Oct. 27, sourced from the Gaza Health Ministry and Israeli officials as well as international observers and aid groups:

1,400

Number of Israelis killed

7,326

Number of Palestinians killed

5,431

Number of Israeli's injured

18,967

Number of Palestinians injured

250,000

Number of Israelis displaced

1.4 million

Number of Palestinians displaced in Gaza

229

Soldiers and civilians being held hostage in Gaza

4

Hostages released

84

Aid trucks let into Gaza

27,781

Residential units destroyed in Gaza

Sources: Associated Press reports, Gaza Health Ministry, Israeli military, U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Palestinian Red Crescent

Donald Trump is set to testify Nov. 6 in civil fraud trial. Daughter Ivanka also will testify

By JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump is set to testify Nov. 6 at his New York civil fraud trial, following his three eldest children to the witness stand in a case that threatens to disrupt their family's real estate empire, state lawyers said Friday.

It was already expected that the former president and sons Donald Jr. and Eric would testify. The timing became clear Friday, after Judge Arthur Engoron ruled that daughter Ivanka Trump also must appear, rejecting her bid to avoid testifying.

The schedule sets up a blockbuster stretch in the trial of New York Attorney General Letitia James' lawsuit. She alleges that the former president, now the Republican front-runner for 2024, overstated his wealth for years on financial statements that were given to banks, insurers and others to help secure loans and deals.

Trump denies any wrongdoing and has called the trial a politically motivated sham. The case could strip Trump of some of his corporate holdings and marquee properties such as Trump Tower. James and Engoron are Democrats.

Donald Trump and the two sons are defendants in the lawsuit, but the state is initially calling them to the stand before the defense begins its case. The defense can then call them again.

In a surprise preview, Donald Trump ended up briefly testifying Wednesday to answer Engoron's questions about whether an out-of-court comment was aimed at his law clerk. The judge had earlier barred participants in the trial from talking publicly about court staffers.

Trump said his remark wasn't about the clerk; Engoron called that testimony "not credible" and fined Trump \$10,000, on top of a \$5,000 fine imposed days earlier over an online post about the clerk. Trump's lawyers paid both fines on his behalf but still might appeal them, according to a court filing Friday.

Donald Trump Jr. is now set to testify next Wednesday, brother Eric on Thursday and sister Ivanka on Nov. 3, though her lawyers may appeal to try to block her testimony.

An appeals court dismissed her as a defendant in the lawsuit in June, saying the claims against her were too old. Ivanka Trump announced in January 2017, ahead of her father's inauguration, that she was stepping away from her job as an executive vice president at the family company, the Trump Organization. She soon became an unpaid senior adviser in the Trump White House. After her father's term ended, she moved to Florida.

Her lawyer, Bennet Moskowitz, told the judge Friday that state lawyers "just don't have jurisdiction over her." One of Donald Trump's attorneys, Christopher Kise, maintained that state lawyers "just want another free-for-all on another of President Trump's children."

"The idea that somehow Ms. Trump is under the control of the Trump Organization or any of the defendants, her father -- anyone who has raised a daughter past the age of 13 knows that they're not under their control," Kise said.

However, the state's lawyers argued that Ivanka Trump was a key participant in some events discussed in the case and remains financially and professionally intertwined with the family business and its leaders.

Engoron sided with the state, citing documents showing that Ivanka Trump continued to have ties to some businesses in New York and still owns Manhattan apartments.

"Ms. Trump has clearly availed herself of the privilege of doing business in New York," Engoron said.

During her years at the Trump Organization, Ivanka Trump was involved in negotiating and securing financing for various properties, including a lease and loan for a Washington hotel and loans for Trump's Doral golf resort near Miami and a Trump-owned hotel and condo skyscraper in Chicago, according to court filings.

According to the New York attorney general's office, Ivanka Trump retained a financial interest in the Trump Organization's operations even after leaving for the White House, including through an interest in the now-sold Washington hotel.

In court papers that included emails and other documents, the state lawyers said the Trump Organization and its staff also have bought insurance for Ivanka Trump and her businesses, managed her household staff and credit card bills, rented her apartment and paid her legal fees.

In 2021 federal disclosures, she reported \$2.6 million in income from Trump entities, including revenue from a vehicle known as TTT Consulting LLC. A company bookkeeper testified that TTT was set up for her and her brothers to reap a share of fees from some licensing agreements.

Many Americans say their household expenses are outpacing earnings this year, AP-NORC poll shows

By CORA LEWIS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — About 2 in 3 Americans say their household expenses have risen over the last year, but only about 1 in 4 say their income has increased in the same period, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

As household expenses outpace earnings, many are expressing concern about their financial futures. What's more, for most Americans, household debt has either risen in the last year or has not gone away.

Steve Shapiro, 61, who works as an audio engineer in Pittsburgh, said he'd been spending about \$100 a week on groceries prior to this past year, but that he's now shelling out closer to \$200.

"My income has stayed the same," he said. "The economy is good on paper, but I'm not doing great."

About 8 in 10 Americans say their overall household debt is higher or about the same as it was a year ago. About half say they currently have credit card debt, 4 in 10 are dealing with auto loans, and about 1 in 4 have medical debt. Just 15% say their household savings have increased over the last year.

Tracy Gonzales, 36, who works as a sub-contractor in construction in San Antonio, Texas, has several thousand dollars of medical debt from an emergency room visit for what she thought was a bad headache but turned out to be a tooth infection.

"They'll treat you, but the bills are crazy," she said. Gonzales said she's tried to avoid seeking medical treatment because of the costs.

Relatively few Americans say they're very or extremely confident that they could pay an unexpected medical expense (26%) or have enough money for retirement (18%). Only about one-third are extremely or very confident their current financial situation will allow them to keep up with expenses, though an additional 42% say they're somewhat confident.

"I've been looking forward to retirement my entire life. Recently I realized it's just not going to happen," said Shapiro, of Pittsburgh, adding that his wife's \$30,000 or so of student debt is a financial factor for his household. The couple had hoped to sell their house and move this past year, but decided instead to hold on to their mortgage rate of 3.4%, rather than facing a higher rate. (The current average long-term mortgage rate reached 7.79% this month.)

About 3 in 10 Americans say they've foregone a major purchase because of higher interest rates in the last year. Nearly 1 in 4 U.S. adults have student debt, with the pandemic-era payment pause on federal loans ending this month, contributing to the crunch.

Will Clouse, 77, of Westlake, Ohio, said inflation is his biggest concern, as he lives on a fixed income in his retirement.

"A box of movie candy — Sno-Caps — that used to cost 99 cents is now a dollar fifty at the grocery

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store," he said. "That's a 50% increase in price. Somebody's taking advantage of somebody."

Yet even as Americans have expressed gloomy sentiments about the economy, many have continued spending, which drove a strong quarter of growth from July through September, when the economy expanded at an annual pace of 4.9%.

Even so, wages and salaries have largely trailed inflation since the pandemic, leaving most households worse off, though economists debate which measures are the best to use. In the past 12 months, however, average hourly pay has started to pull ahead of prices, rising 0.5% faster.

Americans are generally split on whether the Republicans (29%) or the Democrats (25%) are better suited to handle the issue of inflation in the U.S. Three in 10 say they trust neither party to address it.

Geri Putnam, 85, of Thomson, Georgia, said she's been following the ongoing auto workers strikes with sympathy for the workers' asks.

"I don't think it's out of line, what they're asking for, when you see what CEOs are making," she said. "I think things have gotten out of control. When you can walk into a store and see the next day, across the board, a dollar increase — that's a little strange. I understand supply and demand, the cost of shipping, et cetera. But it seems to me everyone's looking at their bottom lines."

Putnam also said she sees her six children struggling financially more than her generation did.

"They all have jobs and have never been without them," she said. "They're achievers, but I think at least two or three of them will never be able to buy a home."

A slight majority of all Americans polled (54%) describe their household's financial situation as good, which is about the same as it's been for the last year but down from 63% in March of 2022. Older Americans are much more confident in their current finances than younger Americans. Just 39% of 18- to 29-year-olds describe their household finances as good, compared to a majority (58%) of those who are 30 and older. People with higher levels of education or higher household incomes are more likely than Americans overall to evaluate their finances as solid.

About three-quarters of Americans describe the nation's economy as poor, which is in line with measurements from early last year.

Among those who are retired, 3 in 10 say they are highly confident that there's enough saved for their retirement, about 4 in 10 are somewhat confident, and 31% are not very confident or not confident at all.

Clouse, of Ohio, said the majority of his money had gone towards caring for his wife for the past several years, as she'd been ill. When she passed away this past year, his household lost her Social Security and pension contributions. He sees the political turmoil between Republicans and Democrats as harming the economy, but remains most frustrated by higher prices at the supermarket.

"Grocery products going up by 20, 30, 40%. There's no call for that, other than the grocery market people making more money," he said. "They're ripping off the consumer. I wish Mr. Biden would do something about that."

About 4 in 10 Americans (38%) approve of how Biden is handling the presidency, while 61% disapprove. His overall approval numbers have remained at a steady low for the last several years. Most Americans generally disapprove of how he's handling the federal budget (68% disapprove), the economy (67%), and student debt (58%).

A salty problem for people near the mouth of the Mississippi is a wakeup call for New Orleans

By KEVIN MCGILL and STEPHEN SMITH Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The heating element removed from Monique Plaisance's water heater in September was disintegrating, streaked with rust and covered in a dry crust. She blamed the corrosion on the water piped in from the area's longtime drinking water source: the Mississippi River.

It was a similar story not far away at the Black Velvet Oyster Bar and Grill.

"We're draining the hot water heater every few days to get most, or a good bit, of the salt out of that," owner Byron Marinovich said. "The ice machine has been off since the third week of April."

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Plaisance's home and Marinovich's restaurant are in the Buras community of rural Plaquemines Parish, roughly 60 miles (about 96 kilometers) southeast of New Orleans and 20 to 30 miles (32 to 48 kilometers) upriver from where the Mississippi flows into the Gulf of Mexico. As in New Orleans, drinking water in the parish is drawn from the river.

But this year, the gulf pushed back. A wedge of salt water slipped up along the river bottom, beginning in the spring.

By early October, water intakes at towns such as Boothville, Port Sulphur and Pointe a la Hache had been inundated.

Plaquemines officials list a variety of measures to provide drinkable water to residents in the southeastern part of the parish, which juts into the gulf. Trucks of bottled water for drinking and barges full of fresh water to dilute the salt water before it goes into intakes are among the solutions.

Advisories against drinking tap water were lifted Oct. 18.

Plaisance and Marinovich are among residents who think remedial efforts began too late. They blame parish officials for not taking action until the water began posing a threat to more populated areas including the city of Belle Chasse, which is at the parish's northernmost end and home to more than 10,000 people, roughly half the population of the mostly rural parish.

"We've been working on this since June the 19th," Parish President Keith Hinkley said in a telephone interview. "We have not drug our feet. We moved as fast as we could in getting these projects up and running. We made a decision to get a water station, water plant, back up and running that had been down for two years. We got it back up in a position to start producing water in somewhere between six to eight weeks."

Authorities cite multiple factors for the salt water intrusion. Most prominent this year has been a drought across the Midwest that has meant less water flowing into the Mississippi and the rivers feeding it.

At Vicksburg, Mississippi, north of New Orleans, the river flowed at a rate about 50% slower and at a stage height about 95% lower than normal during late September and early October between 2013 and 2022, according to analysis of data from the U.S. Geological Survey.

Parts of Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin — all part of the vast Mississippi River basin, which touches 31 states — are experiencing extreme drought conditions. Rainfall amounts are down in the watershed of the Ohio River, which contributes half of the Mississippi's flow reaching new Orleans.

Another factor is dredging, according to Stephen Murphy, an assistant professor at Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and the director of the university's Disaster Management Program. The lower Mississippi is frequently dredged by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to make way for huge cargo ships serving ports vital to the Louisiana and national economies.

The lower, slower river flow and a deep, wide river channel set the stage for gulf water to push inland.

Earlier in the fall, projections that the salt water would reach the New Orleans area by late October prompted residents to stock up on bottled water while public officials undertook emergency preparations as though there were a slowly approaching hurricane.

In Jefferson Parish, next to New Orleans, officials began laying out flexible piping resembling giant fire hoses in a plan to pipe water from farther up the Mississippi to dilute the salt water.

New Orleans officials also were working on a plan to build an emergency pipeline. The hope was that much of the projected cost, as high as \$250 million, would be covered by the federal government under a presidential emergency declaration issued in September.

Updated projections have negated the need for the measure. The more favorable river forecasts are a result of various factors, including the Corps' construction of what amounts to an underwater dam in Plaquemines to impede salt water progress. Recent rains in western Louisiana also have been a factor.

While the threat to the New Orleans area has been diminished, local leaders say it's a wake-up call. "If this is what we're going to be facing every couple of years, we certainly want to make an investment in how to solve this problem," Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng said.

This is the fifth year the Corps has built an underwater structure to slow the salt water flow. But this is

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the first time sill construction has been used in consecutive years. Before last year, others were built in 1988, 1999 and 2012.

Rising seas portend more problems. The sea level around New Orleans is rising at a rate of as much as 9 millimeters (0.35 inches) per year, or three feet (about 1 meter) each century, much higher than the global average and the highest rate measured in the United States, according to experts at NOAA's Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services.

"My worry is we continue to experience these low river flow rates and have a repeat occurrence year after year after year. And at some point I worry that that salt water wedge could creep further upriver and then we would be finding ourselves in the same predicament upriver as we are right now in the city," said Murphy, the assistant professor.

In the New Orleans area, permanent pipelines to draw water from upriver have been discussed. But Murphy doesn't think pipelines are the solution.

Large-scale reverse osmosis filtration systems may be the answer, Murphy said. He pointed to Tampa Bay, Florida, as an example of where desalinization is used for drinking water and said Gulf Coast communities should collaborate to find ways to safeguard water systems.

It also may be time to hold regional meetings to discuss the threat, Murphy said.

"Maybe we should all start partnering together, much like we do for hurricane conferences," he said. "Maybe we should be talking about climate change conferences."

As the 'Hollywood of the South,' Atlanta has boomed. Its actors and crew are now at a crossroads

By R.J. RICO Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A lighting technician is mowing lawns. A camera assistant is teaching guitar again. An actor has thought about shifting careers.

For more than a decade, work had been nonstop in Atlanta's booming film industry thanks to Georgia's extremely generous tax break. Dubbed the "Hollywood of the South," metro Atlanta became a ubiquitous backdrop for huge projects, including Marvel films and Netflix's "Stranger Things."

As soundstages sprouted up, the insatiable need for crews turned the city into a prime destination for both behind-the-scenes workers seeking to break into the entertainment industry and "journeymen" actors wanting a reprieve from the hustle of Los Angeles or New York. But work dried up last winter and has been at a near-standstill ever since the industry's writers went on strike in May and actors joined them in July.

Writers reached a deal late last month, but with the actors strike still ongoing, countless Atlanta-based performers, as well as members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, are grappling for financial survival and with whether they'll even return to the industry.

THE CREW

"I wake up every morning and I'm like, s---, I wish I could be on set right now," said Ed O'Hare, a 29-year-old set lighting technician who broke into the industry shortly after college by doing janitorial work at a local studio.

O'Hare said he rose through the ranks thanks to his eagerness to learn the crafts, eventually discovering a passion for lighting. Fellow technicians quickly took him under their wing and helped him get hired on productions, including the Benicio Del Toro-led thriller "Reptile," despite his lack of experience: "I've been told by multiple people that I couldn't have done that in L.A. or New York," he says.

Having now gone nearly five months without film work, O'Hare has been relying on a combination of savings, unemployment checks and odd jobs he's been doing for his grandmother's neighbors, including lawnmowing and pressure washing. It's been enough for him to scrape by, though he's also considering getting a bartender job like he had in college.

In the meantime, O'Hare has attended some classes hosted by IATSE, reuniting with industry colleagues as they brush up on technical skills and learn new ones, including soldering.

There's a recurring joke during the classes, O'Hare says. Whenever the instructor asks for questions,

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someone is always quick to respond with the key one: "Yeah, when are we going back to work?"

Like his union, which has held unity rallies, O'Hare said he supports the writers and actors for fighting for what they deserve. He hopes the actors will soon reach a deal, though a recent breakdown in negotiations had quelled some optimism. Even with a deal, O'Hare knows it could still be months before he's back on set.

Alex Buhlig, 34, moved from Atlanta to LA in 2015 as an aspiring camera assistant. But all the calls he got kept coming from Georgia.

Buhlig was back in Atlanta in less than a year, working primarily on commercial projects, independent movies and reality shows until 2017 when he joined IATSE — and was soon asked to work on the blockbuster "Godzilla: King of the Monsters."

"A month prior to working on 'Godzilla,' I had been doing indie films whose entire budget was \$10,000," Buhlig recalls, laughing. "It's a testament to how busy Atlanta was at the time."

In recent months, Buhlig, now a second camera assistant, has been relying on sporadic work commercial and music video work, but "if the strike continues through next year, that's unsustainable."

"I've got to figure something else out," said Buhlig, who has also been piecing together hours as a guitar teacher, a job he's held in the past while "trying to avoid doing the restaurant thing again."

Buhlig says he recently had to pull some money from his pension since his bank account was running low but considers himself "extremely fortunate" since he has health care coverage and doesn't have a family depending on him.

He knows others are in tougher positions.

"The strike will definitely push people out of the industry — it probably already has," Buhlig said. "Because if you had just gotten started or you weren't working recently, I couldn't imagine going through something like this."

THE ACTORS

Despite Atlanta's large role in the industry, the local chapter of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists has only about 3,700 members — less than 3% of total membership.

Yet Atlanta's actors praise the sense of community and the relatively low cost of living — though affordability has taken a big hit in recent years.

"I have found more community here in the city of Atlanta (over the past five years) than I had in LA in 40," actor Ethan Embry told cheering rallygoers this summer.

Embry, who started as a child actor before starring in the teen rom-com "Can't Hardly Wait" and Netflix's "Grace and Frankie," later told the AP: "It's not the same fight for survival that Los Angeles has. Everything in Los Angeles feels like a competition. Here, everything feels like you're in it together."

Bethany Anne Lind credits Atlanta's post-2008 filming boom with boosting her then-fledgling acting career, saying she likely got some small roles because studios didn't want to spend money to fly someone else out.

But now that she's more established, with a memorable supporting role in Netflix's "Ozark," Lind says it's been hard to land meatier parts. She feels Atlanta-based actors are frequently overlooked by casting agents who still focus on New York and Los Angeles talent pools.

Lind is a prominent speaker at local rallies, yet feels slightly envious of colleagues in Hollywood, who picket outside studios daily — Atlanta may have the second-most number of soundstages in the nation, yet picket lines are a rarity because studios are headquartered elsewhere.

"It's very strange to see my friends in LA and New York getting out there, like sweating their faces off every day and not being able to be a part of that," Lind, who signed an open letter this week urging SAG-AFTRA not to accept "a bad deal," says. "There would be something cathartic about being able to put my body into it that I think we do miss out on here."

Over the summer, as she focused her energy on her children and vegetable garden, Lind began to contemplate whether she should shift careers.

"For the first time in my almost 20-year career now, I'm really trying to think about what else I can do that I could have some enjoyment from, but also just be a little bit more steady and then hopefully have the flexibility to act also," she told the AP then.

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Yet by October, she was back onstage, having landed the lead role in a local production of the British play "Home, I'm Darling." She isn't discounting potentially going back to school for something else — but doesn't know what that alternative would be.

Once the actors get a deal, Embry is optimistic that business will once again boom in Georgia's capital — though this time people will be "treated more fairly."

"They've already made the investment in Atlanta," Embry said of the studios. "They realize that Georgia has things that are special to Georgia. There's a reason they all come here, and it's not just the tax break. We have the talent, we have the scenery, we have all of the different landscapes that filmmakers are looking for."

NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week

By The Associated Press undefined

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these are legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the facts:

A video circulating online doesn't show the arrest of a suspect in the Maine mass shooting

CLAIM: An aerial video of a man lying on his stomach in the middle of a road, being detained by authorities, shows police arresting Maine mass shooting suspect Robert Card.

THE FACTS: While the video, which began circulating Wednesday night after the shootings, shows someone being detained in Lewiston, Maine, it doesn't show Card. Officials said at a press conference the next morning that Card was still at large. Hundreds of heavily armed police and FBI agents searched for Card on Friday morning as residents in the area stayed close to home. Card, a U.S. Army reservist, is wanted in the fatal shootings of at least 18 people at a bowling alley and a bar in Lewiston, the worst mass killing in the state's history. The clip, which was filmed at night from a building overlooking a street, shows authorities instructing a man in the middle of the street to lay on the ground and not move. "MAINE SHOOTER HAS BEEN ARRESTED KNOWN AS ROBERT CARD," reads a post on X that shared the video. It had received approximately 3,600 likes and been shared about 2,200 times as of Friday. Local and state police have not responded to messages seeking additional comment on the misrepresented video. Comparisons with Google Maps images confirm the video was filmed across from the Lewiston Public Library, on Pine Street between Park Alley and Lisbon Street. A longer video that shows the same incident from a different angle also circulated online Wednesday night. It includes the screen name of a TikTok user who has previously posted content from the same location, although the video of this incident had been removed from their account Thursday. The longer video shows that after authorities detained the man in the street, the situation appeared to de-escalate. The man was helped up and moved to sit in one of the library's large, storefront windows, and most of the officers walked away.

— Associated Press writer Melissa Goldin in New York contributed this report.

A black flag over Iran's Imam Reza shrine isn't a war cry. It represents mourning for Gaza victims

CLAIM: A major mosque in Iran raised a black flag to call Muslims to war over Israel's attacks on Gaza.

THE FACTS: The Imam Reza shrine said the flag was raised as a symbol of mourning for the lives lost in Israel's strikes on Gaza, and experts on Islam and Iran confirmed the flag includes a passage from the Quran that is meant to comfort Muslims that their sacrifices will one day be rewarded. Social media users are sharing the false claim alongside images and videos of the black flag flying over the distinctive gold dome of the shrine — a major pilgrimage site for Shiite Muslims in Iran's northeast that includes a mosque, library and other institutions. Others claimed the black flag and its Farsi inscription was meant to herald the coming of the Mahdi, the final leader believed to appear at the end of times to lead Muslim people. But the black flag isn't a call for war, and neither the flag's text nor the shrine's statement about the banner references the coming of the Mahdi or the end of time. In fact, an announcement on the

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shrine's English-language Facebook page on Oct. 17 specifically describes it as a "mourning flag" that was raised in response to the deadly blast that rocked a hospital in Hamas-controlled Gaza that day. "In an unprecedented gesture and by the order of the custodian of Astan Quds Razavi, the black flag has been hoisted above the illuminated and pure Razavi dome, and drum beating will not be played tomorrow," the post said, including #sorrow #mourning #sadness #grief and other hashtags. Islamic and Iranian experts confirmed the flag includes a line from the Quran roughly translated as "help from Allah and an imminent victory" or "conquest from Allah and victory is near." That phrase isn't traditionally used to declare war, but meant to bring comfort and hope to those struggling or engaged in battle that their sacrifice is not in vain and that Allah will grant them victory eventually, they said. Hamid Dabashi, professor of Iranian Studies at Columbia University in New York, said the Quranic verse, in the context of the shrine's Facebook post, means "solidarity" with the Palestinian cause and not an outright declaration of war against Israel. "To me it says nothing more than the obvious: the ruling government in Iran supports Hamas and the Islamic Jihad," he wrote in an email. "Nothing more, nothing less." The Middle East Media Research Institute, a Washington-based think tank founded by Israeli analysts, agreed, noting that Islamic militants tend to use a different passage from the Quran when declaring war.

— Associated Press writer Philip Marcelo in New York contributed this report.

Video of Kim Jong Un doesn't reference the Israel-Hamas war. The clip is old and mistranslated
CLAIM: A video shows North Korean leader Kim Jong Un saying in a speech that he blames President Joe Biden for the latest Israel-Hamas war.

THE FACTS: The video is from 2020 and the version currently circulating online features incorrect English captions. The footage actually shows Kim celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Korean Workers' Party; he doesn't reference the conflict in the Middle East or Biden at any point. In the misleading video circulating online, the English captions claim Kim says: "Under the Biden administration, conflicts erupt yearly. This year a war begins between Israel and Palestine." "I'm afraid that if the Biden admin does not cease to exist in the next election, World War 3 may begin," the captions continue. "Who knows what next year's war will be. I support Donald Trump for President in 2024. Good Luck to Mr. Trump." The video was shared on Instagram and TikTok, where one post garnered more than 223,000 likes. However, the video is old and the captions are completely inaccurate. Clips and images from the same speech can be seen in news reports from October 2020 about an event celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Korean Workers Party. A transcript of the full speech translated to English by The National Committee on North Korea, a U.S.-based organization, does not mention anything about the Israel-Hamas war nor the 2024 U.S. presidential race. Multiple Korean speakers and an expert who reviewed the portion of the speech circulating online also confirmed Kim says nothing of the sort in the footage. Instead, Kim thanks his people and his military, saying: "The patriotic and heroic commitment shown by our People's Army soldiers on the unexpected frontlines of epidemic prevention and natural disaster recovery this year is something that evokes tears of gratitude from everyone." Ji-Young Lee, a professor of Korean Studies at American University who confirmed the captions are inaccurate, noted that the surprise attack on Israel by Hamas militants did create concerns in South Korea about a similar assault from the North.

— Associated Press writer Karena Phan in Los Angeles contributed this report.

Abortion restrictions in Russia spark outrage as the country takes a conservative turn

By DASHA LITVINOVA Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — Despite its last-minute scheduling, the meeting at a bookstore in Russia's westernmost city of Kaliningrad still drew about 60 people, with many outraged by a lawmaker's efforts to ban abortions in local private clinics.

The weeknight turnout surprised and heartened Dasha Yakovleva, one of the organizers, amid recent

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crackdowns on political activism under President Vladimir Putin.

"Right now, there is no room for political action in Russia. The only place left is our kitchens," Yakovleva, co-founder of the Feminist Community women's group, told The Associated Press. "And here, it was a public place, well-known in Kaliningrad, and everyone spoke out openly about how they see this measure, why they think it's unjustified, inappropriate."

Although abortion is still legal and widely available in Russia, recent attempts to restrict it have touched a nerve across the increasingly conservative country. Activists are urging supporters to make official complaints, circulating online petitions and even staging small protests.

A 'GRADUAL EROSION' OF ABORTION ACCESS

While only a proposal for now in Kaliningrad, private clinics elsewhere have begun to stop providing abortions. Nationwide, the Health Ministry has drawn up talking points for doctors to discourage women from terminating their pregnancies, and new regulations soon will make many emergency contraceptives virtually unavailable and drive up the cost of others.

"It's clear that there is a gradual erosion of abortion access and rights in Russia, and this is similar to what has taken place in the U.S.," said Michele Rivkin-Fish, an anthropologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Last year's U.S. Supreme Court decision rescinding a five-decade-old right to abortion has reshaped American abortion policy, shifting power to states. About half of U.S. states have adopted bans or major restrictions, although not all are being enforced due to legal challenges.

In the Soviet Union, abortion laws meant that some women had the procedure multiple times due to difficulties in obtaining contraceptives.

After the USSR's collapse, government and health experts promoted family planning and birth control, sending abortion rates falling. At the same time, laws allowed women to terminate a pregnancy up until 12 weeks without any conditions; and until 22 weeks for many "social reasons," like divorce, unemployment or income.

That changed under Putin, who has forged a powerful alliance with the Russian Orthodox Church, promoting "traditional values" and seeking to boost population growth. Health Minister Mikhail Murashko has condemned women for prioritizing education and career over childbearing.

WAITING PERIODS, CONSULTS, APPROVAL BY A PRIEST

Over the decades, the number of abortions in Russia fell from 4.1 million in 1990 to 517,000 in 2021.

Only in instances of rape is an abortion legally allowed between 12 and 22 weeks. Some regions hold "Days of Silence," when public clinics don't provide them. Women must wait 48 hours or even a week -- depending on what stage of pregnancy -- between their first appointment and the abortion, in case they reconsider. They also are offered psychological consultations designed to discourage abortions, according to state-issued guidelines reviewed by AP.

Health authorities have introduced an online "motivational questionnaire" outlining state support if women continue the pregnancy, according to a state clinic gynecologist who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

She said the waiting periods were psychologically hard for some of her patients. "During that week (of waiting), she might start getting nauseous and experience other symptoms of pregnancy," she added. "They don't understand the point."

State clinics in one region referred women to a priest before getting an abortion. Authorities maintained the consultation was voluntary, but some women told the media they had to get a priest to sign off to get an abortion.

RESTRICTING ABORTION PILLS

The anti-abortion push comes as Russian women appear to be in no rush to have more children amid the war in Ukraine and economic uncertainty. Sales of abortion pills in 2022 were up 60%, according to Nikolay Bespalov, development director of the RNC Pharma analytical company. They fell 35% this year, still higher than pre-2022 levels. Sales of contraceptive medications also have been rising in 2022-23, he said.

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A recent Health Ministry decree restricted circulation of abortion pills, used to terminate pregnancies in the first trimester. The decree puts mifepristone and misoprostol, used in the pills, on a registry of controlled substances requiring strict record-keeping and storage.

For hospitals and clinics, where the pills are usually dispensed, the move will add more paperwork but not much else, said Dr. Yekaterina Hivrich, head of gynecology at Lahta Clinic, a private clinic in St. Petersburg.

But it will affect the availability of emergency contraceptives, sometimes known as morning-after pills, which are taken within days of unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy. Three out of six brands available in Russia contain mifepristone in a lower dose, meaning they'll be severely restricted once the decree takes effect Sept. 1, 2024.

They will require a special prescription, and not all pharmacies will stock them, said Irina Fainman, an activist in the northern region of Karelia, adding that getting a prescription takes time that women might not have when they need the pills.

The Health Ministry did not respond to questions on whether it will exclude morning-after pills in the decree. Officials earlier promised it won't affect those pills, but some pharmacies already list those with mifepristone as available only under strict prescription conditions.

After the restrictions were announced, Fainman said she and other activists stocked up on the pills to distribute in case of shortages.

Sales of emergency contraceptives soared 71% through August 2023, over the same period last year, according to Besspalov. Those containing mifepristone account for about half the market. New measures likely will increase the cost of unrestricted medications and possibly lead to short-term shortages.

ABORTION BANS IN PRIVATE CLINICS

Senior lawmaker Pyotr Tolstoy said that by spring, lawmakers would strive to adopt a nationwide ban on abortion in private clinics, where about 20% took place in recent years, according to state statistics.

Conservative lawmakers failed to enact such a ban before, but the Health Ministry now says it is ready to consider it.

To Irina Volynets, an abortion opponent and children's rights ombudswoman in the Tatarstan region, "it gives hope that this procedure will be taken out of private clinics" eventually. She also wants increased state support for women with children as an incentive for boosting birthrates.

Regional authorities have tried to get private clinics to stop offering abortions, with varying success. Kaliningrad is mulling a region-wide ban. In Tatarstan, about a third of all private clinics no longer provide them, officials said. In the Chelyabinsk region in the Urals, three clinics agreed to halt them.

"It's important to understand that the pressure on women will be growing" even in the absence of a total ban, said Kaliningrad psychotherapist and activist Lina Zharin, who helped organize the recent bookstore meeting. An online petition against the ban in Kaliningrad has gathered nearly 27,000 signatures.

PRESSURED TO GIVE BIRTH

In seven other regions, the Health Ministry is using another pilot project: having gynecologists try to get women to reconsider having an abortion.

A document obtained by AP and cited by other media outlines language doctors are told to use, including saying pregnancy is "a beautiful and natural condition for every woman," while an abortion is "harmful to your health and a risk of developing complications."

Natalya Moskvitina, founder of Women For Life, which aids women who decide against abortion, said she helped develop the instructions and is introducing similar scripts for doctors in several regions.

Moskvitina made headlines in August after the region of Mordovia adopted a law she helped draft to ban "encouraging" abortions. At least one other region is considering a similar ban. Her program, which instructs doctors to congratulate women on being pregnant and gives baby-themed presents and information on support resources, has driven the abortion rate down 40% in Mordovia, she and local officials said.

For women with doubts about abortion, such conversations might indeed help them reach a decision but for others, they could be deeply uncomfortable.

Olga Mindolina was contemplating an abortion in 2020, traumatized by an earlier, difficult pregnancy.

But when a doctor in a state clinic in the western city of Voronezh asked her what she wanted to do, she said she didn't know — and was told, "In this case, you should give birth."

A clinic psychologist told her that women sometimes regret abortion, advising her to talk to her husband. A lawyer also told her about state benefits she could get if she gave birth. Mindolina decided to continue the pregnancy.

Anastasia, a Muscovite who sought an abortion in 2020, said it "wasn't very pleasant" when a doctor urged her to change her mind.

"I simply don't want any children," she told AP, asking that her last name not be used for fear of reprisals.

Dr. Lyubov Yeroveyeva, a gynecologist who spearheaded family planning projects in the 1990s, believes the key is preventing unwanted pregnancies with education about birth control and making contraceptives widely available.

Instead of talking a woman out of an abortion, authorities should "do everything so she doesn't have to seek one," she said.

Pope orders Vatican to reopen case of priest accused of adult abuse but allowed to keep ministering

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis has ordered the Vatican to reopen the case of a well-known priest-artist accused of sexually, psychologically and spiritually abusing adult women, and removed the statute of limitations that had previously prevented a church trial based on their claims.

The Vatican's announcement Friday marked a major turnaround for the Holy See and followed a growing outcry among abuse victims and their advocates over the handling of the case of the Rev. Marko Ivan Rupnik, a once-exalted Jesuit preacher whose mosaics grace churches and basilicas around the world.

The Rupnik scandal has been a headache for the Jesuits, the Vatican and Francis himself due to suspicions that he received favorable treatment from the Holy See, where a Jesuit is pope and other Jesuits head the sex crimes office that investigated Rupnik and declined to prosecute him because the claims against him were deemed too old.

A Vatican statement said Francis' abuse prevention commission had flagged "serious problems" in the way his case was handled initially, particularly in the "lack of outreach to victims." That terminology was significant in itself because church authorities previously refused to even consider the women with claims against Rupnik as "victims."

Francis asked the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, which handles abuse-related crimes according to church law, "to review the case and decided to lift the statute of limitations to allow a trial to take place," the statement said.

Rupnik, a Slovene priest, was declared excommunicated by the Vatican in May 2020 for one of the most serious crimes in the Catholic Church's legal code: using the confessional to absolve a woman with whom he had engaged in sexual activity. But the excommunication was lifted two weeks later, and he continued in his artistic and preaching activities, which include running an art and study center in Rome.

When nine more claims against him were presented to the Vatican a year later, dating from 30 years ago, the sex crimes office refused to waive the statute of limitations against him. The office, where a Jesuit priest is the prosecutor, also decided not to pursue other allegations against him such as false mysticism which historically aren't subject to time limits.

The Jesuit order kicked Rupnik out this summer after even more adult women came forward accusing him of sexual, psychological and spiritual abuses. After conducting their own investigation, the Jesuits said they found the women's claims to be "very highly credible." But they said the Vatican's canonical norms in force at the time of the alleged abuse precluded a canonical trial or harsher punishment.

In the end, the Jesuits expelled him not because of allegations of abuse, but because of his "stubborn refusal to observe the vow of obedience." The Jesuits had exhorted Rupnik to atone for his misconduct

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and enter into a process of reparation with his victims, but he refused.

On Friday, Rupnik's former Jesuit superior, the Rev. Johan Verschueren, welcomed the announcement that a church trial would finally take place, calling it a "major step" in the right direction.

"Finally justice can have a chance: for the alleged victims and testimonies — they can be heard and recognized in their dignity," and for Rupnik, who can defend himself, he said in an email. He said he hoped for a fair trial and just outcome, so that the "confusion in the church may soon come to an end."

Francis' Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, which had flagged the Rupnik case as problematic, also welcomed the announced trial as crucial "not only for the victims but for the whole church."

"There is no room in ministry for those who would violate so profoundly those entrusted to their care," the commission said in a statement, adding that it remained concerned overall about the church's disciplinary procedures and their "inadequacies."

In a Jan. 24 interview with The Associated Press, Francis denied he had any role in the handling of Rupnik's case, other than to intervene procedurally. However, he reaffirmed the decision not to waive the statute of limitations for the women's claims, saying he always lifts time limits for abuse of minor cases, but not those involving adults.

His decision to reverse course and allow the old claims to go forward in a trial suggested a realization that the scandal was now seriously undermining his credibility and jeopardizing any progress the church had made in combating abuse. Francis' conservative opponents, in particular, were increasingly using the Rupnik scandal to discredit the pope, much as they did during the 2018 scandal over ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, who was also accused of misconduct with adults but was long given a pass by the Vatican.

The Catholic Church has long responded to women who report priests for abusing their authority by blaming the women for seducing the churchmen, portraying them as mentally unstable or minimizing the event as a mere "mistake" or "boundary violation" by an otherwise holy priest. Those same claims were used by Rupnik's supporters to discredit his accusers.

Francis' recent gestures and statements had raised questions about whether he too sided with Rupnik.

For starters, Francis met with Rupnik's main supporter, who has lashed out at what she called the "lynching" he received in the press. Then, Francis' own Vicariate of Rome issued a statement seemingly casting doubt on the validity of the excommunication decree.

Those gestures prompted five of Rupnik's alleged victims to break their silence and pen a signed, open letter saying such attitudes from Rupnik's superiors had revictimized them and showed that church pledges of "zero tolerance" for abuse were just a "publicity stunt."

The outcry only grew this week when a diocese in Rupnik's native Slovenia announced it had welcomed him in after the Jesuits threw him out. The diocese of Koper said it had done so because it had received no documentation about any conviction against him, and that he was presumed innocent.

Today in History: October 28, Benito Mussolini takes power in Italy

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Oct. 28, the 301st day of 2023. There are 64 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 28, 1922, fascism came to Italy as Benito Mussolini took control of the government.

On this date:

In 1636, the General Court of Massachusetts passed a legislative act establishing Harvard College.

In 1726, the original edition of "Gulliver's Travels," a satirical novel by Jonathan Swift, was first published in London.

In 1858, Rowland Hussey Macy opened his first New York store at Sixth Avenue and 14th Street in Manhattan.

In 1886, the Statue of Liberty, a gift from the people of France, was dedicated in New York Harbor by President Grover Cleveland.

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In 1914, medical researcher Jonas Salk, who developed the first successful polio vaccine, was born in New York.

In 1919, Congress enacted the Volstead Act, which provided for enforcement of Prohibition, over President Woodrow Wilson's veto.

In 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt rededicated the Statue of Liberty on its 50th anniversary.

In 1962, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev informed the United States that he had ordered the dismantling of missile bases in Cuba; in return, the U.S. secretly agreed to remove nuclear missiles from U.S. installations in Turkey.

In 1991, what became known as "The Perfect Storm" began forming hundreds of miles east of Nova Scotia; lost at sea during the storm were the six crew members of the Andrea Gail, a swordfishing boat from Gloucester, Massachusetts.

In 2001, the families of people killed in the September 11 terrorist attack gathered in New York for a memorial service filled with prayer and song.

In 2012, the San Francisco Giants won their second World Series title in three years, beating the Detroit Tigers to complete a four-game sweep.

In 2013, Penn State said it would pay \$59.7 million to 26 young men over claims of child sexual abuse at the hands of former assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky.

In 2016, the FBI dropped what amounted to a political bomb on the Clinton campaign when it announced it was investigating whether emails on a device belonging to disgraced ex-congressman Anthony Weiner, the estranged husband of one of Clinton's closest aides, Huma Abedin, might contain classified information.

In 2018, The Boston Red Sox beat the Los Angeles Dodgers to win the World Series in five games.

In 2021, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said his company was rebranding itself as Meta, an effort to encompass its virtual-reality vision for the future, while keeping the same name for the social network itself.

In 2022, Tesla CEO Elon Musk took control of Twitter for \$44 billion after a protracted legal battle and months of uncertainty.

Today's Birthdays: Jazz singer Cleo Laine is 96. Actor Joan Plowright is 94. Actor Jane Alexander is 84. Actor Dennis Franz is 79. Actor Telma Hopkins is 75. Caitlyn Jenner is 74. Actor Annie Potts is 71. Songwriter/producer Desmond Child is 70. Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates is 68. The former president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zahd), is 67. Rock musician Stephen Morris (New Order) is 66. Rock singer-musician William Reid (The Jesus & Mary Chain) is 65. Actor Mark Derwin is 63. Actor Daphne Zuniga (ZOO'-nih-guh) is 61. Actor Lauren Holly is 60. Talk show host-comedian-actor Sheryl Underwood is 60. Actor Jami Gertz is 58. Actor Chris Bauer is 57. Actor-comedian Andy Richter is 57. Actor Julia Roberts is 56. Country singer-musician Caitlin Cary is 55. Actor Jeremy Davies is 54. Singer Ben Harper is 54. Country singer Brad Paisley is 51. Actor Joaquin Phoenix is 49. Actor Gwendoline Christie is 45. Singer Justin Guarini (TV: "American Idol") is 45. Pop singer Brett Dennen is 44. Actor Charlie Semine is 43. Actor Matt Smith is 41. Actor Finn Wittrock is 39. Actor Troian Bellisario is 38. Singer/rapper Frank Ocean is 36. Actor Lexi Ainsworth (TV: "General Hospital") is 31. Actor Nolan Gould is 25.