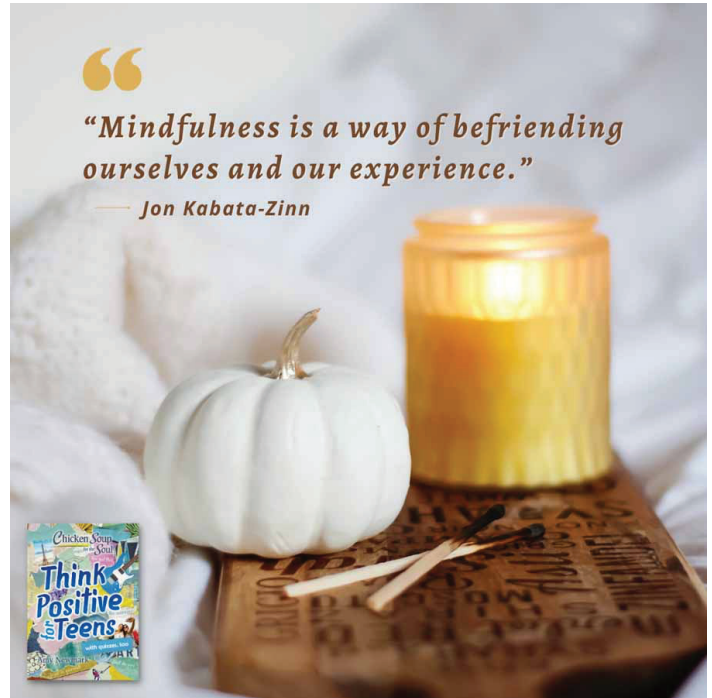


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Tuesday, Oct. 31

- 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 at Groton
- 6 p.m.: Groton Area vs. Waubay-Summit
- 7:30 p.m.: Redfield vs. Sisseton
- NCRC Test for Seniors, 8:40 a.m. to Noon

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

OPEN: **Recycling Trailer in Groton**
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.
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The Bulletin

by Newsweek

World in Brief

The U.S. dismissed Russian claims that Ukraine and its Western allies organized anti-Israel riots at its Dagestan airport, with National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby describing the claims as a "classic Russian rhetoric."

The FDA warns customers not to use more than 20 types of over-the-counter eye drops, which could potentially lead to infections and blindness.

Four-time All-Star Frank Howard, who played for the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Washington Senators, died at age 87.

Argentina captain Lionel Messi won a record-extending eighth Ballon d'Or, the annual soccer award for the world's best player. Barcelona and Spain star Aitana Bonmatí won the Ballon d'Or Féminin.

New Zealand tour company Whakaari Management Limited has been found guilty of breaching workplace safety laws after 22 people died in a 2019 volcanic eruption during a guided tour. A judge criticized "astonishing failures" in the firm's safety audits.

In the ongoing war in Ukraine, investigators in a Kremlin-administered region of eastern Ukraine have detained two Russian soldiers on suspicion of killing a family of nine, including two children, in their sleep. In a statement, officials said the deaths appeared to be related to a personal conflict.

The United Auto Workers' six-week strike against the Big Three automakers is set to end after the union brokered a deal with General Motors on Monday.

A Kansas judge blocked a state law that required abortion providers to disclose information about medication-induced abortion and forced patients to wait for 24 hours to end pregnancies.

Santa Ana winds across much of Los Angeles and Ventura counties fueled wildfire conditions in southern California, prompting warnings, preemptive power shutdowns, and forcing about 4,000 people from their homes.



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Good Luck Groton Area Tigers in Post Season Action!



Back row: Jaedyn Penning, Chesney Weber, Faith Traphagen, Emma Kutter, Rylee Dunker, Sydney Leicht and Anna Fjeldheim.

Front row: Kella Tracy, Sydney Locke, Talli Wright, Laila Roberts, Carly Guthmiller, Jerica Locke and Elizabeth Fliehs.

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Spanier Harvesting & Trucking
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Groton Wage Memorial Library

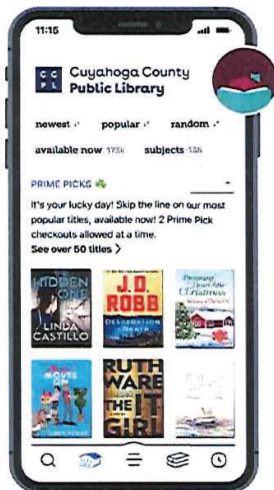


120 N Main St – Groton, SD – (605) 397-8422

Open Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

- Library Cards are FREE to ALL Groton Area Residents!
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- 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!

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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!

We the People

The South Dakota Humanities Council is making available a weekly column -- "We the People" -- that focuses on the U.S. Constitution. It is written by David Adler, who is president of The Alturas Institute, a non-profit organization created to promote the Constitution, gender equality, and civic education.



By David Adler

Charles Evans Hughes: Appointed Twice to the Supreme Court

Charles Evans Hughes, one of the great names in America's judicial history, remains the only person twice appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. His remarkable resume—lawyer, governor, Secretary of State, presidential candidate, Associate Justice, Chief Justice, judge on the Permanent Court of International Justice—reflected a record of contributions to American government and law rivaled by few in our nation's history.

In 1910, President William Howard Taft nominated Hughes to the Supreme Court. In a letter to Hughes, Taft indicated that he would elevate him to Chief Justice, if that position became available. The vacancy occurred just two months later, when Melvin Fuller died, but Taft did not name Hughes to the post. Taft said that he had given "prayerful consideration" to the choice but was persuaded that Hughes was young and could wait for the chief justiceship.

Although some, for reasons of ideological differences, opposed his appointment to the Court, Hughes boasted accomplishments and credentials that plumbed the depths of his life. Hughes's parents glimpsed his towering intellect at an early age. He began reading when he was three years old. Empowered by a photographic memory, Hughes recited from the classics by the age of nine. His precociousness precluded proper placement in schools and so his devoted parents educated him at home.

Hughes's parents instilled in him the lesson to "be thorough in all you undertake." And so he was. He excelled at Colgate, which he entered when he was 14, then transferred to Brown University and then finished first in his class at Columbia Law School. He earned the highest possible score on the New York State Bar Examination.

Hughes's career was marked by thoroughness. As a partner in the distinguished New York firm of Carter and Cravath, Hughes mastered German and the intricacies of the sugar beet industry in one case so that he could cross-examine German engineers about the breakdowns in the operation of a sugar beet factory designed in Germany. His prodigious memory became legendary. While sitting on the Supreme Court, his law clerks said that he "read a paragraph at a glance, a treatise in the evening, a roomful of papers in a week."

Hughes's skills brought a flood of opportunities. In 1905, he accepted appointment as counsel to a New York legislative committee investigating the gas and electric utilities. His calm, but relentless style, coupled with a great capacity to quickly digest huge amounts of information, facilitated his discovery of substantial overcharges by the companies. Soon after, he accepted appointment to investigate the insurance companies, which earned plaudits from state leaders and newspapers and earned national attention. He was asked to be a candidate in the New York mayor's race but declined. When the Republican Party asked him to run for the governorship in 1906, he accepted and won.

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Governor Hughes was praised for his independence. In step with the Progressive Era, he launched various investigations into corrupt activities and organizations, including racetrack gambling, advocated for a system of direct primaries and established a pioneering Public Service Commission. Hughes was the talk of the state, and the nation, and was being courted to run for the presidency. But he resigned the governorship in 1910 to accept Taft's nomination for the Supreme Court.

Justice Hughes's first stint on the Court, from 1910-1916, reflected his penchant for deep research, efficiency and problem-solving. His opinions spoke to the expansive powers of the federal and state governments to promote the general welfare and protect civil rights and liberties. Although he enjoyed his work on the Court, he was drawn to the possibility of the serving the nation as president. Accordingly, he resigned his seat on the Court to run against incumbent President Woodrow Wilson in the 1916 election.

Hughes accepted a draft from both the Republican and Progressive parties, but he was unable to convince the electorate to abandon Wilson, who had enjoyed domestic success and could campaign on the theme that he had kept America out of the war. Hughes lost, but the race was close. A shift of some 2,000 votes in California would have elected Hughes.

Hughes had no reason to expect another appointment to the Supreme Court, of course, although he certainly enjoyed lofty status as a national political figure and leader of the Bar. He was, moreover, a widely admired and respected jurist. He could not have known, at that juncture, that all the work he was about to undertake—in New York, across America, and throughout the world—would represent a powerful addition to an already impressive resume, which would put him line for the Chief Justiceship. We turn next week to Hughes's remarkable achievements from 1916-1930 which, on the eve of the opportunity to become Chief Justice made him, in the words of President Herbert Hoover, "the obvious appointment."

Groton Area Veteran's Day Celebration and Breakfast

The Groton Area School District will host its annual Veterans Day Celebration and Breakfast on Friday, November 10, 2023. The Veterans breakfast will be held at the Groton Area Elementary School from 7:30 AM to 8:30 AM. If you're a veteran or current member of the armed forces, we'd love to see you and serve you a free breakfast. Our students truly love bringing their veterans in and having a breakfast with them during this special event. At 2:00 PM, we will hold our annual Veterans Day Program at the Groton Area High School Arena which will include the posting of the colors, musical selections, presentations, and the playing of TAPS. The community is encouraged to join us for this event. Part of our Veterans Day tradition is the community veterans slideshow. If a member of your family has served or is currently serving, we'd be happy to include them in our slideshow. If you'd like to be included or have your relative included, please email a photo or two and some basic information such as branch of service, years of service, any active duty, etc to Joe.Schwan@k12.sd.us. You may also send actual photos to school with your children. We will scan them and return them promptly. We look forward to celebrating the selfless service of these fine men and women with you all on November 10.



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NOVEMBER 5TH, 5PM TO 7PM

TOSSED SALAD, LASAGNA, GARLIC BREAD,
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BINGO, BINGO, BINGO!

Names Released in Walworth County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: US Hwy 12, Mile Marker 217, 7 miles east of Selby, SD

When: 5:28 p.m., Thursday, October 26, 2023

Driver 1: Ty Fuehrer, 21, Herreid, SD, Minor injuries

Vehicle 1: 2016 Ford Taurus

Driver 2: Gordon Huber, 73, Hoven, SD, Fatal injuries

Vehicle 2: 1995 Ford 150

Walworth County, S.D.- A Hoven, SD man has been identified as the person who died Thursday evening in a two vehicle crash in Walworth County.

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 driver of the 2016 Ford Taurus, Ty Fuehrer, age 21, of Herreid, SD sustained minor injuries. Seatbelt use is under investigation.

The driver of the 1995 Ford 150, Gordon Huber, age 73, of Hoven, SD 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.

Groton Post No. 39 American Legion

Annual Turkey Party

Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023

Starting at 6:30 p.m.

Groton Legion Post Home, 10 N. Main.

Turkey, Ham and Bacon
to be given away

FREE ADMISSION

**DOOR
PRIZE!**

Lunch served
by Auxiliary





South Dakota beef industry sees potential in small, local meat plants

Bart Pfankuch

South Dakota News Watch

WALL, S.D. – The small, somewhat worn meat processing plant in rural Wall seems an unlikely place for the birth of a new trend in South Dakota agriculture. But it could fundamentally change the economic landscape for the state's \$1 billion annual beef cattle industry.

The 2,400 square-foot Wall Meat Processing plant is the current home base of an aggressive, innovative new ownership team that has plans to revolutionize how South Dakota ranchers get their animals processed and expand opportunities for local consumers to buy meat raised almost in their own backyards.

On a recent day, a half-dozen or so workers were on task in the cramped but clean meat plant that sits less than a mile from Wall Drug. It's the last structure standing before the city of 700 fades into a nearly endless prairie to the north.

Built nearly 60 years ago, the boxy white plant takes in local cattle as well as a few hogs, sheep and buffalo and processes them from live animals to carcasses to final cuts of meat packaged in plastic, ready for consumer purchase. With a capacity of only 15 head of cattle per week, the plant hardly makes a dent in processing the roughly 1.5 million beef cows raised in South Dakota in 2022, the overwhelming majority of which are trucked out of state for processing.

But the two co-owners of the plant, who bought it in 2017 after the former owners shuttered the business for several months, are using what they have learned in Wall to develop a business expansion plan that agricultural leaders said could form the model for future development of a new generation of in-state regional meat processing plants.

The local packing plants, they said, will allow more livestock grown in South Dakota to be processed, sold and consumed entirely within the boundaries of the Rushmore State. Local processing will create jobs and tax revenues, save ranchers money on trucking and packaging and create a fully South Dakota farm-to-table process that is increasingly popular among consumers.

Local beef, local stores, local consumers

The Wall owners and a third partner recently launched a new entity, I-90 Meats, which plans to build a \$21 million, 30,000 square-foot meat processing plant in New Underwood, a town of 600 people located south of Interstate 90 midway between Wall and Rapid City.



The cramped but efficient front counter at the Wall Meat Processing plant in Wall, S.D., is evidence of a growing movement to expand capacity and capabilities of small meat processors in South Dakota. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch/South Dakota News Watch)

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Workers cut and handle beef from a cow supplied by a local rancher at the Wall Meat Processing plant in Wall, S.D., in October 2023. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch)

The high-tech plant would have capacity to process 15 cattle a day, or about 4,000 a year, and would include a retail market, agri-tourism learning center and culinary demonstration area.

The plant, with a proposed groundbreaking in early 2024 and projected opening in 2025, could employ as many as 50 people with wages up to \$36 an hour, according to I-90 Meats co-owner Ken Charfauros. The plant will process beef, pork, lamb and bison produced by local ranchers. It would sell those products at the plant store as well as a retail location in Rapid City and at other groceries across the West River region.

"South Dakota is fourth or fifth in cattle production in the nation, but we sell our cattle out of state and then buy it back, so it's kind of backwards," said Charfauros, who co-owns Wall Meat Processing with Janet Neihaus. The third partner in the new I-90 Meats venture is Thomas Fitch.

"To keep the regional protein production and the revenue right here, it helps our community. And not just

the ranchers and the processors but also the consumers," he said.

Change should help farmers, state coffers and consumers

The move toward greater in-state processing will mark a major shift from the existing method most South Dakota livestock producers use to get their animals processed.

Under the current system, most animals, cattle in particular, are raised in the state but then trucked out of state for finishing, slaughtering, processing and packaging at one of the four major meat packing companies in the U.S.: Cargill, JBS, National Meat Packing and Tyson.

None has a plant in South Dakota.

By sending animals to those plants, producers pay much more to have their animals transported and processed, and the state loses out on the resulting jobs and tax revenues generated by the plants. Meanwhile, consumers then pay more for products that are returned to the state for sale and for which they have no idea whether the meat they are eating was raised in South Dakota, California or even Mexico or Brazil.

U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds, R-South Dakota, said further expansion of processing capabilities of agricultural products in South Dakota would be a win for both producers and consumers.

"We want to make sure our meat is high quality. ... And when you've got quality local producers and processing is done locally, you're going to get a higher price for it (the products)," Rounds said in an interview with News Watch.

Latest of several other efforts

Since the 1990s, he said, the state has seen a variety of efforts to expand processing, from the opening of the Hutterite-owned poultry plant in Aberdeen to development of soybean biofuel plants to improvements and expansions at the Smithfield Foods pork plant in Sioux Falls.

But Rounds said long-range infrastructure and telecommunication challenges as well as difficulty in finding capital and labor to fuel development of processing plants have limited the growth of large meat processing plants in South Dakota.

He has worked in Congress to end "the stranglehold" the four major processors have on the American beef market, in which they process about 85% of the beef raised in the U.S.

As livestock processing evolves, and consumers seek a greater connection to how and where their food is raised, Rounds said he sees the growth of smaller processing plants around the state as a likely path forward for the agricultural industry.

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"Our smaller towns still struggle, and at the same time, this is the place that feeds the rest of the world," Rounds said. "If our premises are correct, that people want to buy American beef because of its quality, then I think these smaller processors are going to continue to grow and I think they're going to become the wave of the future."

Rounds said government can play a role in encouraging growth in processing capacity by providing one-time, startup financial incentives while adding more flexibility in labeling and marketing rules to create opportunities for growth in smaller, regionally based processing operations in South Dakota.

I-90 Meats, for example, received a \$3.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to get its operation started and has a USDA guaranteed loan package of \$21 million, Charfauros said. Another proposed new regional plant in Faulkton received a \$2.2 million USDA grant this year.

Rounds said South Dakota farmers and ranchers who produce high-quality foods will get higher prices for their products if they are raised, grown and processed locally. Consumers will benefit by having greater access to the quality foods that are produced in their own communities or nearby, particularly beef products that are almost exclusively processed in other states.

"We want to continue to provide alternatives other than the four major processors who process not just American beef but a lot of foreign beef as well," Rounds said. "Anything we can do to make sure that Americans who want to buy high quality American beef are able to do so, the better off we're going to be."

Food processing on the rise in South Dakota

The ongoing evolution of the meat packing industry in South Dakota is part of a larger statewide trend in which more agricultural products that are grown or raised in the state are being processed here, despite a pair of what many in the ag industry saw as notable setbacks.

Last year, a \$500 million Wholstone Farms pork plant in Sioux Falls and a \$1 billion Western Legacy Development beef processing plant in Rapid City both fizzled.

And yet, the increase in processing facilities statewide continues, a trend that typically opens the door to stronger markets and opportunities for new growth or expansion among producers who must fill the need created by larger processing capacity.

Nowhere is that more apparent than in the South Dakota soybean and corn industries, in which producers are seeing new local markets materialize for their products.

Ground was broken in September for a \$500 million soybean processing plant near Mitchell that as early as 2025 will produce soybean meal for animal feed and soybean oil used in biofuels. Meanwhile, the company Gevo plans a \$1 billion plant near Lake Preston that as soon as 2025 will process corn into biofuel for use in jets.

News Watch has also reported recently on the dramatic expansion of the cheesemaking industry in South Dakota, where new or expanded plants in Milbank (Valley Queen Cheese), Lake Norden (Agropur cheese) and in Brookings (Bel Brands) have facilitated an increase in milk production in the state.

According to the USDA, South Dakota dairy farmers produced 4.2 billion pounds of milk in 2022, up from 3.1 billion pounds in 2020 and 2 billion pounds in 2013. The milk produced in South Dakota in 2022 was valued at \$1.1 billion, according to USDA.



U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds, at right, met with Wall Meat Processing co-owners Janet Niehaus and Ken Charfauros during a recent visit to the plant. Rounds supports expansion of regional meat packing plants in the state. (Photo: Courtesy Sen. Mike Rounds)

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Beef carcasses hang in a cooler at Wall Meat Processing in Wall, S.D. The small plant can keep up to 15 carcasses in this cooler that stays between 34-40 degrees for the 11 to 14 days they are held. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch/South

Dakota News Watch)

One ongoing proposal would build an \$86 million, 12,500-head dairy operation on 250 acres of land now owned by the brothers of Gov. Kristi Noem. While the proposed dairy near Hazel faces some local opposition, backers including Noem's brother, Rock Arnold, said the project would create new revenue and higher prices for farmers who raise grain and generate a new source of fertilizer for surrounding farms.

The beef cattle industry in South Dakota has fluctuated but has remained fairly stable over the past several years. According to USDA, the state produced 1.6 million head in 2015, 1.8 million in 2019 and 1.5 million this year.

The number of permitted large cattle feedlots, known as concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOS, has fallen in South Dakota over the past four years, according to the state Department of Agricultural and Natural Resources. In 2019, about 564,000 cattle were held on 166 permitted CAFOS, and in 2023, about 532,000 cattle were held at 149 CAFOS.

The federal and state governments are trying to aid in the expansion of meat processing plants across the country.

In 2021, the Noem administration offered about \$5 million in COVID-era federal funding in grants to meat processing

facilities across the state, much of it to existing small meat plants and butcher shops that expanded, though a few new facilities did receive funding.

Congress that same year allocated about \$1 billion in American Rescue Act funding through the "Butcher Block Act" to expand meat processing capacity across the country, though South Dakota processors received only about \$32 million of that funding.

Greater innovation needed in South Dakota

Scott VanderWal, president of the South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation, said the state has historically been slow to expand its processing capacity in a number of agricultural fields.

Shipping products out of state for processing drives up costs for producers and eventually consumers. It also has led South Dakota to miss out on potential employment and tax revenue opportunities that come with greater processing plant capacity and development.

"More local processing has been something we've needed for a long long time because for whatever reason, we've been happy in South Dakota just to produce things — corn, soybean, cattle and hogs — and ship them out of state for processing," Vanderwal said. "It all comes down to producing and processing the food in our own country and doing it ourselves versus exporting that work and then importing the products back."

Vanderwal said South Dakota farmers are starting to take steps to use technologies such as robotic milking, inventive financing packages and precision agricultural using computers and satellites to expand processing capacity in the state.

"We haven't been innovative enough in South Dakota to find ways to process our products, and instead we've been content to carry our products further down the line," he said. "As long as we stay innovative, with new ideas and ways of trying new things, we'll have a lot of opportunities and the future of agriculture will be bright because we have to continue to feed our people across the country and across the world."

A return to ranching's past

Doris Lauing, executive director of the South Dakota Stockgrower's Association, said the move to expand processing capacity in South Dakota is in some ways a return to the past, when South Dakota producers worked on a smaller scale and were able to have their livestock processed and sold in their local com-

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munities.

"This is how the Stockgrower's Association started in 1893," she said. "So, if you can give us an end product right here, hallelujah 100%, because you're going to benefit the entire agricultural community."

Laing said there is a great need for more meat processing facilities in South Dakota to reduce costs for producers and allow more revenue for ranchers and retailers to remain local.

"This is something that rural America needs because we have to be able to bring our product somewhere other than shipping it down to the big packers" Laing said at an Oct. 21 public meeting on the proposed I-90 Meats plant in New Underwood. "Let someone buy it here and keep that money local."

Laing said she attended the October meeting to show strong support for completion of the New Underwood plant. She said consumers will benefit by knowing that the meat they buy in a store was raised and processed by their neighbors and not by someone unknown who is hundreds or even thousands of miles away.

"When you walk into a market, you'll know where your steak comes from when you buy it," said Laing, who is also a rancher in Sturgis. "You can say it's produced in South Dakota, and it's not produced in Brazil, it's not produced in China, it's from right here."

Charfauros also noted that developing more regional capacity for livestock processing in South Dakota and across the U.S. will strengthen the nation's ability to protect the security of its food production system in a crisis and not be subject to the whims of the international food production system.

During the height of the COVID-19 epidemic, for example, major beef plants closed due to illness outbreaks, which interrupted the supply chain and processing capabilities, resulting in financial hardship for South Dakota cattle producers.



Chris Charfauros, manager of Wall Meat Processing, explains the process livestock go through from arrival to final cuts during a recent tour of the plant. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch/South Dakota News Watch)

"There needs to be more plants built," Charforous said. "When those plants closed, what did it do to food security in the nation? It went crazy."

Vanderwal added that development of regional processing facilities will strengthen the U.S. food production system overall, which will protect the American food supply from outside competition and potentially unsafe processing methods elsewhere.

"I've been saying for years that we don't want our food system to become vulnerable to the same gyrations as our energy system is now," Vanderwal said. "We have a lot better food safety rules and more control over how things are done."

A nearly 5-year process to plant opening

Innovation, along with a major investment of time and money, are the keys to making new meat processing

A portrait of U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds, a man with short brown hair, smiling. He is wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a dark tie. The background is a textured, light brown color.

— “ —

We want to make sure our meat is high quality. ... And when you've got quality local producers and processing is done locally, you're going to get a higher price for it.

” —

U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds,
R-South Dakota

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Doris Lauing (left), executive director of the South Dakota Stockgrowers Association, spoke in favor of a proposed new meat plant in New Underwood, S.D., during an October public meeting on the plant. The plant would benefit ranchers and consumers, Lauing said. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch/South Dakota News Watch)

ventures successful, Ken Charfauros said. The process of designing, planning and gaining approval for the New Underwood meat plant has taken more than three years already and will extend to five years before becoming operational.

Once up and running, the owners have big plans to do more than just process meat. They have agreements to expand butcher and animal science training opportunities with South Dakota State University and Western Dakota Technical College. They are selling their meat processed in Wall in a large retail store they opened in Rapid City and even in Big D gas stations in the Black Hills region.

Word of their expansion has gotten out and recently caught the ear of Laura Moser, who with her husband hopes to open a bed-and-breakfast inn at New Underwood next year.

Moser recently toured the Wall Meat Processing plant and had many questions about the processing methods and final products produced. Her hope is to serve her guests foods, including meats, that are raised and process locally as a way to differentiate her inn and support a growing farm-to-table movement.

"If you can go right from producer to plate, that's huge," Moser said. "We're trying to keep it all local for our guests."

Before the I-90 Meats partners even break ground in New Underwood, their big plans have raised interest among at least one other South Dakota ranch family that hopes to build a smaller, yet similarly focused plant in northeastern South Dakota.

Investing in family, and in the beef industry

Troy Hadrick is part of a five-generation family legacy of farming and ranching in South Dakota. He and his family want to expand their business and provide another regional meat processing option for ranchers in northeastern South Dakota.

The family's plan is to build a \$13.5 million meat plant, called North Prairie Butchery, that could process 25 head of cattle per day near their hometown of Faulkton, a city of about 830 people in Faulk County located an hour southwest of Aberdeen.

Hadrick has qualified for a \$2.2 million grant from the USDA to get the project started, though the money only comes in the form of a reimbursement for investments already made into the plant, he said. He is trying to arrange financing for the project but has had little luck with lenders in South Dakota, which he called "disappointing."

Hadrick and his wife, a native of Sturgis, have three children, a son studying agriculture at South Dakota State University and two daughters still in high school. They hope to break ground on the meat plant in 2024 and have it open for business in 2025.

Hadrick said the plan to build a processing plant in Faulkton arose from a desire to strengthen the family business but also due to three difficult years in a row in trying to get their cattle processed out of state, first due to a 2019 fire at a Kansas processing plant, then due to COVID-19 plant shutdowns in 2020 and finally from complications in how packers were buying cattle.

"We own the cattle from conception to harvest, and then we lose all control, so you cross your fingers

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that it will work out in the end," he said. "It's one of the things that came out of COVID, when we found out we have some holes in the system, and when you have a lot of your eggs in one basket, and something happens to that basket, we see some pretty big ripples form that are hard to overcome."

Two years ago, the Hadricks made a deal to provide beef to the Vanguard Hospitality group of restaurants in Sioux Falls, which includes Morrie's Steakhouse, Minerva's, Grill 26 and Paramount Cocktails and Food. After a successful trial period, the family now sells about 60 to 70 carcasses of beef weighing about 800 pounds each to the restaurant group in a year, Hadrick said.

When the first shipment of beef was made to Vanguard, Hadrick took his two daughters out of school and brought them on the trip to Sioux Falls to drop off the beef himself.

"We pulled up to the back door of the restaurant and unloaded the beef, and it was like a light bulb came on for our girls, that this is why we do all the work we do at home," he recalled. "They finally saw the end product, and it was



Laura Moser speaks with Wall Meat Processing manager Chris Charfauros about the plant's processes and products. Moser is seeking a local provider of meats for a bed-and-breakfast she and her husband hope to open in western South Dakota. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch/South Dakota News Watch)



Troy Hadrick, second from left, poses for a portrait with his wife and three children, who are all part of a multi-generational farm and ranch legacy in South Dakota. The family -- Olivia, Troy, Stacy, Teigen and Reese -- is working as a team to build a meat processing plant near their home in Faulkton, S.D. (Photo: Courtesy Troy Hadrick)

pretty exciting and meant so much to them."

Lack of processing holding ranchers back

The overall lack of meat processing capacity, especially federally inspected processing plants in South Dakota, puts a hardship on his business and those of other ranchers, Hadrick said.

According to the USDA, South Dakota has 38 state-inspected butcher shops, though most are very small and cannot begin to serve the needs of large beef producers. The state trails several neighboring states in the number of federally inspected meat plants, which provide producers with greater options on regard to selling their meats in other states.

A USDA database shows that South Dakota has 33 federally inspected livestock processing plants, though only nine handle beef and pork and five are considered "very small" by USDA standards. Meanwhile, Minnesota has 172 federally inspected processing plants, Iowa has 151 and Nebraska has 109.

At this time, Hadrick must drive three or four head of cattle at a time either 200 miles or 250 miles round trip to USDA-inspected processing plants to get them processed on a custom basis,

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which allows him to make sure the cattle he provides the butcher are the source of the meat he receives back and sends to the restaurants.

"We don't have much capacity in South Dakota to process cattle on a custom basis," he said. "We're capped because we've got X amount of capacity in the state and it's just not very much."

Like the owners of I-90 Meats, whom Hadrick has spoken with several times as he plans his construction project, he hopes to expand opportunities for ranchers like himself to showcase the high-quality animals they raise and give consumers an option to buy meat that has a known origin and a closer connection to the connection to the communities where they live.

Hadrick likens the idea to what California wine producers have done for decades in promoting the specific region where their grapes were grown and then labeling products so consumers know more about what they getting, where it came from and who produced it.

"I think there's an opportunity to do that with our beef," he said. "We know we've got a good product, so why don't we highlight that?"

— This article was produced by South Dakota News Watch, a non-profit journalism organization located online at sdnewswatch.org.



Bart Pfankuch, Rapid City, S.D., is the content director for South Dakota News Watch. A Wisconsin native, he is a former editor of the Rapid City Journal and also worked at newspapers in Florida. Bart has spent more than 30 years as a reporter, editor and writing coach. Contact Bart at bart.pfankuch@sdnewswatch.org.

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That's Life by Tony Bender: Our heroes are getting older

I was listening to my headphones, watering flowers at Sunset Memorial Gardens—I was a groundskeeper at the cemetery—when the news was announced that August day in 1977. Elvis was dead. What? How was that even possible? Elvis had to be immortal, didn't he?

Sure, we'd lost some iconic voices. Buddy Holly and Jim Croce died in plane crashes. There were the usual misadventures involving drug overdoses, but now Boomers find themselves in an unexpected dynamic. Our spritely rock stars are aging. We're losing them to time which is a bit of a wake-up call.

Tina Turner is gone. Christine McVie, Ronnie Spector, Gordon Lightfoot, Jimmy Buffett, Michael Nesmith... and it's just the passage of time. Tina Turner was 83. I remember my grandparents at 83!

Then there are the Rolling Stones. Founded in 1962, they're not done, yet. Mick Jagger and Keith Richards have looked wrinkled and freeze dried for decades, so they've finally grown into their skin at 80. Not only that, they've got a new album out called Hackney Diamonds, and the reviews are pretty good.

Rolling Stone wrote, "If they were going to drag themselves (and us) through the process again, and after such a long gap, they also must have known they'd have to make it worth everyone's while. Shockingly, they have. A collection of bangers (old-school division) that nobody in their right mind had a right to expect in 2023, Hackney Diamonds isn't just another new Stones album, but a vibrant and cohesive record — the first Stones album in ages you'll want to crank more than once before filing away."

If it's a swan song, it sounds like it's a pretty good one. Is 80 the new 60? The way Mick Jagger still struts and dances, it may be the new 20.

I missed a chance to see the Stones' Steel Wheels tour in 1989 because my program director was mad at me. I'm sure was whispered about as possibly their last tour in consideration of their advanced age. They'd have been 46 which feels positively pubescent to me these days.

I've been fortunate enough to see some of my favorite musicians while they were still performing well. Well, with Bob Dylan, it was hard to figure what he was doing. He'd rearranged his songs so dramatically, you might be halfway through the song before you figured out what it was. The answer, my friend, wasn't blowing through the speakers.

The best moment of the night was when he dropped his harmonica and he and guitarist G.E. Smith cracked up. It seemed to wake Dylan up. He was engaged after that. It wasn't a great concert from the mercurial Dylan, but it was a bucket list thing, and there were enough moments to make it memorable.

My son Dylan is named after Bob Dylan and Dylan Thomas so it frustrates him when people spell it "Dillon." His concert journey began in fourth grade when I took him to see Alice Cooper. I remember how he was draped over a guardrail, enthralled by the theater and humor. It's the kind of parenting decision that leads to visits from Child Protective Services. But Alice Cooper performs more with a wink than any kind of menace.

Other favorites I've been fortunate to see in fighting trim include AC/DC, B.B. King, Tony Bennett, Warren Zevon, Stevie Wonder, and Elton John. My first album was Goodbye Yellow Brick Road and favorite song was Funeral for a Friend, which is what he opened with. I saw Elvis Costello at Red Rocks under a full moon.

Inexplicably, the best sounding concert I've ever heard was Hall & Oates, Thanksgiving, 1986 in cavernous McNichols Arena in Denver. Weirdly, when Daryl Hall tours nowadays, fans complain that he refuses to do sound checks. I guess I got lucky.

It's hard to catch them all. I suppose the biggest hole in my bucket list is Frank Sinatra. It's funny that growing up, listening to KISS and Cooper, I couldn't have imagined developing a love for Sinatra, but when I worked for KHOW in Denver, he was a mainstay. This column—That's Life—is named after one of his greatest songs.

I've been a puppet, a pauper, a pirate, a poet
A pawn and a king
I've been up and down and over and out
And I know one thing

Each time I find myself
Flat on my face
I pick myself up and get
Back in the race

Governor Noem and Colleagues Urge NCAA to Change Policies, Protect Fairness in Women's Sports

PIERRE, S.D. – Today, Governor Kristi Noem led eight of her fellow Republican governors in urging the NCAA to rewrite its Transgender Student Athlete Policy. Governor Noem and her colleagues communicated this in a letter to the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports. The full letter can be found [here](#).

The NCAA's Transgender Student Athlete Policy reads: "Transgender student-athlete participation for each sport [is] to be determined by the policy for the national governing body of that sport." The letter urges the NCAA to change this policy to protect fairness in women's sports.

"The NCAA has the chance to guarantee an environment where female college athletes can thrive without the concern of inequities... But this policy allows the NCAA to avoid responsibility for ensuring the fairness of collegiate sports – therefore it must be changed," wrote Governor Noem and her colleagues.

Governor Noem has been a leader in the country for fairness in girls' and women's sports. Last year, she signed the toughest bill in the nation to protect girls' sports. She followed that action by leading a letter co-signed by 15 Republican governors urging the Biden Administration not to reinterpret Title IX. She also hosted a roundtable on protecting girls' sports with Riley Gaines earlier this year.

"As governors of our states, it is our responsibility to care for our constituents, and we are doing all we can to protect the fairness of athletics in our states," continued Governor Noem and the other governors. "Now, it is time for the NCAA to do the same and make the best decision for all of your athletes. We strongly encourage you to rewrite your Transgender Student Athlete Policy to protect, preserve, and encourage fairness in women's athletics."

Governor Noem was joined by the following Republican governors in sending this letter:

Arkansas Governor Sarah Sanders, Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves, Missouri Governor Mike Parson, Montana Governor Greg Gianforte, Nevada Governor Joe Lombardo, Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt, Texas Governor Greg Abbott, and Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon.

The Life of Collette Baker

Collette Baker, 55, of San Francisco, CA and formerly of Groton passed away October 25, 2023 at Saint Francis Memorial Hospital in San Francisco.



Collette Sue Baker was born March 9, 1968 at Jamestown, North Dakota. She attended school in Groton, South Dakota graduating with the class of 1985. She had an adventurous spirit and if she had an idea, she found ways to make it happen, like graduating from high school in three years instead of four. She went to the principal at the end of her sophomore year and told him that she wanted to graduate after her junior, even though mom and dad said NO! He made it happen and she graduated in 1985 instead of with the class of 1986. She was ready to travel and left for a nanny job out east in Rhode Island. After having that job for a couple of years, she decided that it was time to go to college. She went off to College of Saint Mary's in Omaha, Nebraska graduating with an Associate Degree in Applied Science in 1993. This degree led her to live her out her dreams of a life of traveling. She loved working in the emergency room as an RN. She joined a travel agency and worked in Phoenix metro area for several

years, then took her travels to Alaska where she worked in Anchorage and Kenai in the emergency department. After several years there, she took a job in San Francisco Bay area. She loved the area and took a permanent job at the Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center for the past 15 years. She had a gift of visiting with everyone she met, no one was a stranger. Even in death she wanted to make a difference in as many lives as she could. She was a donor for tissues, bones, eyes, connective tissue, and skin.

Collette is survived by her husband Ray Novak of San Francisco, mother Karen Wolter, brother Keith (Mayme) Baker and sister Coralea Wolter, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews. Her faithful four-legged furry companion (Gizmo) will be lost without her. She was preceded in death by her dad Dale Wolter and brother Kervin Wolter. Private inurnment will be held in the spring at Groton Union Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel. A memorial nursing scholarship will be established.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

State monitoring timber transport project to keep unwanted bugs out of Black Hills

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - OCTOBER 30, 2023 5:27 PM

A South Dakota forest expert is leading an effort to ensure invasive tree bugs are not hitching rides on trains from other parts of the country to the Black Hills.

The trains are transporting logs from forests in other states to Black Hills sawmills in need of timber. It's a pilot project operated by the National Wild Turkey Federation for the U.S. Forest Service.

The effort is welcomed by the owner of the Black Hills sawmills, a company called Neiman, which has suffered from declining timber availability. But there are concerns that come with shipping logs from one ecosystem to another, said John Ball, a professor and forestry specialist at South Dakota State University in Brookings. The state Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources has contracted him and a team at SDSU to conduct the timber monitoring with up to \$105,828 in federal funding.

"When you're going to bring in logs from one area of the country with different pests, it's wise to monitor and see if you're bringing in any insects that are common there, but not our area," Ball said.

There are three insects of concern: the western pine beetle, the California fivespined ips and the California flatheaded borer.

"Those three insects can be a killer of ponderosa pine," Ball said.

Ball's team is setting traps for the bugs at sawmills in Spearfish and Hulett, Wyoming, and a sorting yard in Upton, Wyoming.

South Dakotans already have experience with mountain pine beetles, a bug that's native to the Black Hills. The beetles burrow into the bark of pine trees, lay eggs and introduce a fungus that disrupts nutrient flow. An epidemic of mountain pine beetles killed millions of Black Hills trees from the 1990s through the early 2000s.

The transport project, announced in March, captures and transports excess wildfire-damaged timber from locations including the Klamath National Forest in California and Oregon.

After a wildfire, some burned trees are removed to prevent them from falling on people and to reduce fuel for another fire. Burned trees may also be removed to help regenerate the forest floor by reducing competition for resources like sunlight, water and nutrients.

Depending on their condition, salvaged logs may be usable as lumber, pulpwood for paper or biomass for fuel.

The pilot project, funded with \$50 million from the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure



The California fivespined ips. (Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service)

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Law, seeks to foster healthy forests while providing logs to sawmills short of timber. The Forest Service has said conclusions drawn from the project will guide decisions about expanding the program.

Ball said the bug surveillance aspect of the project is a collaboration with the sawmills, rail companies, the Forest Service and Wyoming's forest health team.

He said mills in the Pacific Northwest strip the bark from the timber, which helps to mitigate potential problems since bark bugs have a tough time surviving when the log has no bark.

Ball said the insect trapping, which started receiving funding in April, has found nothing alarming so far.

Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

Congressman preaches civility to hundreds of high school students

BY: SETH TUPPER - OCTOBER 30, 2023 5:15 PM

Members of the other political party aren't evil, journalists aren't the enemy, and watching a lot of cable TV news isn't a good idea.

That's a sampling of comments Monday from U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-South Dakota, who hosted his inaugural Level Up Youth Conference at Western Dakota Technical College in Rapid City. Hundreds of students attended from local and area high schools.

Johnson is fresh off a bruising several weeks in Washington, D.C., where the House of Representatives ousted its speaker, cycled through several nominees and finally elected a new speaker. Johnson said he's frustrated by the state of politics and wants students to help change it.

"I don't know that a conference like this is going to change everything overnight, and I suspect it's not," he said. "But I think because politics is a spectator sport, I think this is an opportunity for us to try to make sure that South Dakota and our country are better governed."

The recipe for change, according to Johnson, is getting to know people with different views, listening to them, and working with them to solve problems instead of engaging in the politics of "fear and anger."

"Politics needs to be about addition and multiplication," Johnson said. "Politics is not about division and subtraction."

To help convince the students, Johnson played a prerecorded message from "Captain America" actor Chris Evans. He's the co-founder of A Starting Point, which publishes free online videos showcasing and encouraging bipartisan civic engagement.

Johnson appears in some of the videos and said he's "become friends" with Evans. In the prerecorded message, Evans said "the ability to engage in civil, thoughtful and inclusive discussion is the foundation of a healthy democracy."

"Dusty understands this better than most," Evans added.

Students heard additional, in-person messages about the importance of civil discourse and engagement



U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-South Dakota, conducts his inaugural Level Up Youth Conference on Oct. 30, 2023, at Western Dakota Technical College in Rapid City. (Seth Tupper/South Dakota Searchlight)

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from a former Rapid City councilman and two local media professionals. Johnson shared information about military service academies and congressional internships.

During later comments to reporters, Johnson lamented a 2021 analysis from Tufts University that said South Dakota's 32% percent voter turnout among 18- to 29-year-olds during the 2020 general election was the lowest in the country.

"What I hear more often from young people than anything else is that they are worn out by how those of us in Washington, D.C., do our business," Johnson said. "They don't understand why there has to be so much meanness — why there has to be so much bickering."

Lochlan Willis, a student from Hill City, doesn't have a lot of faith that the country will heed Johnson's call for civility. But Willis thinks some of the students at the conference might take the message to heart.

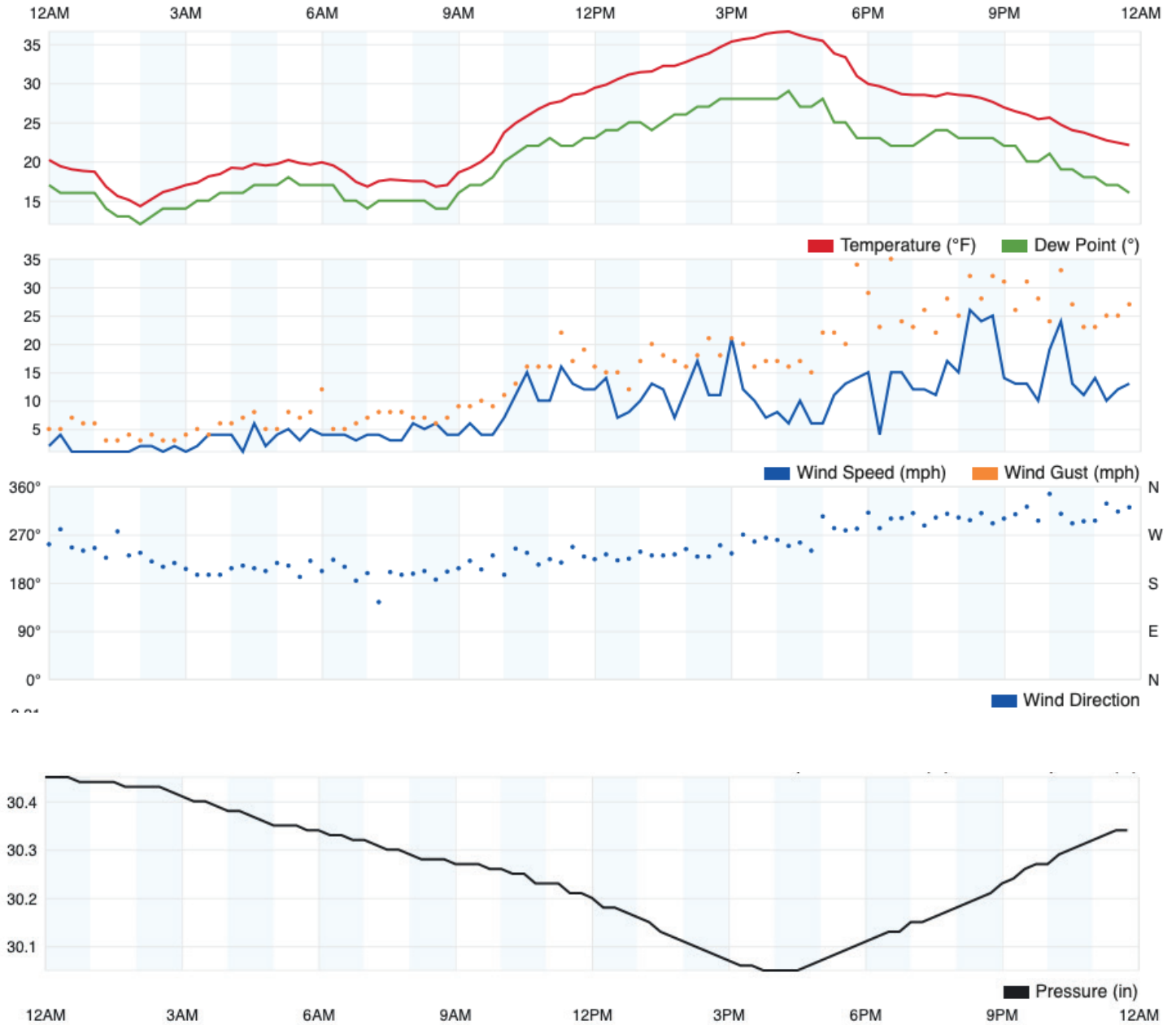
"I hope they do," Willis said. "I know I did."

Seth is editor-in-chief of South Dakota Searchlight. He was previously a supervising senior producer for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and a newspaper journalist in Rapid City and Mitchell.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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| Tue Oct 31 | Wed Nov 1 | Thu Nov 2 | Fri Nov 3 | Sat Nov 4 | Sun Nov 5 | Mon Nov 6 |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|----------------------|
| | | | | | | |
| 28°F 18°F | 37°F 19°F | 39°F 25°F | 44°F 28°F | 43°F 27°F | 43°F 29°F | 37°F 28°F |
| NW 11 MPH | S 13 MPH | SW 9 MPH | E 10 MPH | NW 11 MPH | NNE 11 MPH | NNE 12 MPH 30% |



SPOOKY COLD CONTINUES...

| <u>1PM</u> | <u>4PM</u> | <u>7PM</u> | <u>10PM</u> |
|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | | | |
| 20s | NEAR 30° | 20s | NEAR 20° |

sunset ~ 625 pm east of the Missouri River



NWS Aberdeen, SD
weather.gov/abr

Temperatures will remain 15 to 20 degrees below normal for this time of year. Temperatures will be hovering in the 20s much of the afternoon and evening hours, with increasing cloud cover this evening. Looking ahead, temperatures will top out closer to 40 degrees Wednesday, and in the low to mid 40s for most locations Thursday. Expect mainly dry weather through the rest of the week.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 37 °F at 4:06 PM

Low Temp: 14 °F at 1:58 AM

Wind: 35 mph at 6:27 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 10 hours, 14 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 78 in 1933

Record Low: 8 in 2006

Average High: 51

Average Low: 26

Average Precip in Oct.: 2.14

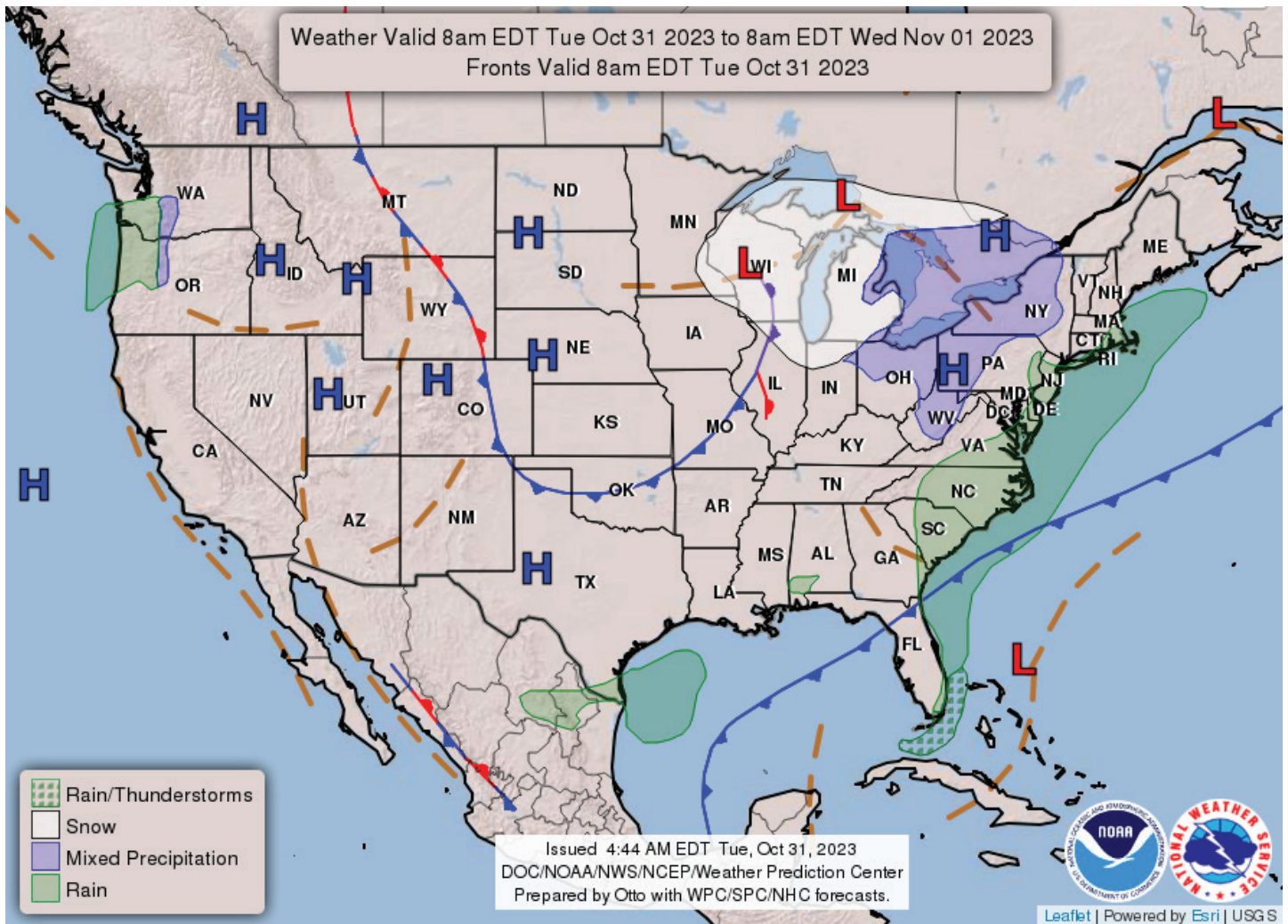
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.21

Average Precip to date: 20.47

Precip Year to Date: 22.98

Sunset Tonight: 6:23:06 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:10:17 AM



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Today in Weather History

October 31, 1979 A narrow band of heavy wet snow developed around midnight from Winner to Leola and produced from three to six inches of snow before ending in the afternoon of 31st. The wet snow stuck to power poles and combined with 30 to 50 mph winds broke up to 600 poles. Estimated damage was around \$400,000 dollars. The counties affected were Tripp, Lyman, Buffalo, Hyde, Hand, Faulk, and Edmunds Counties.

October 31, 1991: A blizzard swept through southeastern South Dakota, dropping over 16 inches of snow in places. The snow combined with winds gusting to 60 mph at times, thus producing blizzard conditions. Interstates 29 and 90, as well as most other roads east and south of Sioux Falls were closed due to blowing and drifting snow. There were hundreds of traffic accidents in the Sioux Falls area alone. The hospital emergency rooms were swamped with victims of automobile accidents and injuries sustained while shoveling heavy snow. Two men died from heart problems while shoveling the snow.

1846 - Eighty-seven pioneers were trapped by early snows in the Sierra Nevada Mountains that piled five feet deep, with 30 to 40 foot drifts. Just 47 persons survived the "Donner Pass Tragedy". (The Weather Channel)

1876: The Great Backerganj, also known as the Bengal cyclone of 1876 struck Bangladesh, then part of the province of Bengal in British India on this day. A maximum wind speed of 137 mph along with a storm surge of 10 to 45 feet inundated the coastal region. This storm likely caused 200,000 casualties along with displacing thousands of other individuals.

1950 - Unseasonably warm weather prevailed in the central U.S. for Halloween. The temperature soared to 83 degrees at Minneapolis MN, their warmest reading of record for so late in the season. (The Weather Channel)

1965 - Fort Lauderdale, FL, was deluged with 13.81 inches of rain, which brought their rainfall total for the month of October to an all-time record of 42.43 inches. (30th-31st) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Halloween was a wet one in the southwestern U.S. Heavy rain in southern California resulted in numerous mudslides. Weather-related auto accidents resulted in three deaths and twenty-five injuries. Mount Wilson CA received 3.14 inches of rain in 24 hours. Yakima WA reported measurable rainfall for the first time since the 18th of July. The 103 day long dry spell was their longest of record. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty-two cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. The low of 19 degrees at Cleveland OH was a record for October, and morning lows of 21 degrees at Allentown PA and Bridgeport CT tied October records. Nine cities in the southwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Phoenix AZ with a reading of 96 degrees. Showers made Halloween a soggy one in the southeastern U.S. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Halloween night was a soggy one in New England. Showers in the northeastern U.S. produced more than an inch and a half of rain in six hours at some locations. An invasion of cold arctic air brought an abrupt end to a week of "Indian Summer" type weather in the Great Lakes Region, and brought snow and subzero wind chill readings to the Northern Plains. In Colorado, Alamosa was the cold spot in the nation with a record low of two degrees above zero, and a Halloween night storm brought 3 to 6 inches of snow to the Front Range, and 5 to 10 inches to the nearby foothills. Icy streets around Denver the next morning made for a rather spooky commute. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1991: A severe winter storm, dubbed the Great Halloween Mega Storm, struck the upper Midwest. Minnesota bore the brunt of this storm. Blizzard conditions occurred with winds gusting frequently to 40 and 50 mph. By the time it was all over on November 2nd, Duluth recorded 37 inches, Minneapolis 28 inches, International Falls 18 inches and 11.2 inches in 24-hours at Sioux Falls, SD, their earliest heavy snowfall of 6 inches or more and snowiest October on record. For Duluth and Minneapolis, the snow amounts set new all-time records for the greatest amount of snow in a single storm. The storm gave these two cities nearly half of their average seasonal snowfall.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

THE GREATEST OF THESE

Abraham Lincoln was known for his kindness to everyone. He was often criticized by his associates for being gracious and thoughtful, considerate, and caring.

On one occasion he was asked, "With all of the power you have, why don't you destroy your enemies?" "Am I not destroying my enemies," he asked, "when I make them my friends?"

Perhaps there is no more misunderstood or misused word in our world today than the word "love." Nearly everyone has their own meaning for it. For some, it has a "sexual" meaning. For others, it has an "I like to be with you" meaning. And, some see love as demonstrating an unselfish concern for the wellbeing of others – helping them when they are unable to help themselves or provide the necessities they need to survive.

Paul speaks of a love that is supremely concerned with the best interests and welfare of others. It is a love that makes the needs and concerns of others my very own. It is as though I am saying, "I don't walk away from the needs of others; I take them with me so I can do something about them. If they have a need, it is my need. If they hurt, I hurt. If they are in pain, it is my pain as well. If they have no food, I will share my food with them."

As Christians, we must move beyond the feeling, sentimental and emotional types of love to a love that forces us to do what Jesus would do or have us to do for others.

Prayer: Lord, we see in Your life and death the real meaning of love. Strengthen us to live as you lived and to love as You loved so others will see You in our lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. 1 Corinthians 13



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 16 Hrs 46 Mins 57
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.30.23

11 28 43 49 50 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$3,470,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 1
DRAW: Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.30.23

3 6 12 14 17 18

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 16 Mins 57
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.28.23

2 10 12 21 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$37,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 16
DRAW: Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.30.23

1 4 8 11 66 10

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 45
DRAW: Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.30.23

19 22 34 66 69 5

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$152,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 45
DRAW: Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the  Associated Press

Monday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Harrisburg def. Watertown, 27-25, 23-25, 25-13, 16-25, 15-6

Rapid City Central def. Sturgis Brown, 25-21, 23-25, 25-23, 20-25, 15-11

Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 25-20, 25-17, 25-17

SDHSAA Playoffs=

Class A=

Region 2=

Play-in=

Clark-Willow Lake def. Deuel, 25-22, 27-25, 22-25, 25-20

Region 5=

Play-in=

Hanson def. Chamberlain, 25-12, 25-16, 25-15

Region 7=

Quarterfinals=

Bennett County def. Little Wound, 25-16, 25-22, 25-19

Lakota Tech def. Red Cloud, 18-25, 25-21, 26-24, 24-26, 15-8

Pine Ridge def. St. Francis Indian, 22-25, 25-12, 25-8, 25-16

Winner def. Todd County, 25-9, 25-15, 25-16

Region 8=

Quarterfinals=

Belle Fourche def. St. Thomas More, 21-25, 25-14, 28-26, 25-19

Custer def. Hot Springs, 25-14, 25-19, 25-17

Hill City def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-8, 25-10, 25-9

Class B=

Region 1=

Play-in=

Wilmot def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-21, 25-11, 25-9

Region 4=

Play-in=

Irene-Wakonda def. Freeman Academy-Marion, 30-28, 25-16, 25-21

Region 5=

Play-in=

Colome def. Marty Indian, 23-25, 25-15, 25-17, 28-26

Region 6=

Play-in=

Sunshine Bible Academy def. Lower Brule, 25-15, 25-13, 25-23

Quarterfinals=

Herreid/Selby Area def. Ipswich, 25-14, 25-16, 25-11

Sully Buttes def. Potter County, 25-17, 25-20, 26-24

Region 8=

Play-in=

Bison def. Tiospaye Topa, 25-20, 25-14, 25-9

Wakpala def. Takini, 25-18, 25-14, 25-14

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

Israeli forces battle Hamas around Gaza City, as military says 800,000 have fled south

By WAFAA SHURAFU and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli troops battled Hamas militants and attacked underground compounds on Tuesday with a focus on northern Gaza, from which an estimated 800,000 Palestinians have fled south despite continued Israeli bombardment across the besieged enclave.

Buoyed by the first successful rescue of a captive held by Hamas, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected calls for a cease-fire and again vowed to crush Hamas' ability to govern Gaza or threaten Israel following its bloody Oct. 7 rampage, which ignited the war.

More than half the territory's 2.3 million Palestinians have fled their homes, with hundreds of thousands sheltering in packed U.N.-run schools-turned-shelters or in hospitals alongside thousands of wounded patients. Israeli strikes have hit closer to several northern hospitals in recent days, alarming medics.

The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA, says nearly 672,000 Palestinians are sheltering in its schools and other facilities — four times their capacity. Thousands of people broke into its aid warehouses over the weekend to take food, as supplies of basic goods have dwindled because of the Israeli siege.

There has been no central electricity in Gaza for weeks, and Israel has barred the entry of fuel needed to power emergency generators for hospitals and homes.

UNRWA head Philippe Lazzarini accused Israel of "collective punishment" of the Palestinians, and of forcing their displacement from northern Gaza to the south, where they are still not safe.

The agency, which hundreds of thousands of people in Gaza rely on for basic services even in normal times, says 64 of its staff have been killed since the start of the war, including a man killed alongside his wife and eight children in a strike late Monday.

"This is the highest number ever of U.N. aid workers killed in any conflict around the world in such a short time," spokesperson Juliette Touma told The Associated Press. "UNRWA will never be the same without these colleagues."

The war has also threatened to ignite even heavier fighting on other fronts. Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group have traded fire on a daily basis along the border, and Israel and the U.S. have struck targets in Syria linked to Iran, which supports Hamas, Hezbollah and other armed groups in the region.

The military said it shot down a drone outside Israeli airspace on Tuesday near the Red Sea city of Eilat, without providing further details. Earlier this month, a U.S. Navy destroyer in the Red Sea intercepted three cruise missiles and several drones launched toward Israel by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen.

In the occupied West Bank, where Israeli-Palestinian violence has also surged, the army demolished the family home of Saleh al-Arouri, a senior Hamas official exiled over a decade ago. Ali Kaseeb, head of the local council in the village of Aroura, said the home had been vacant for 15 years.

Jonathan Conricus, an Israeli military spokesman, said ground operations in Gaza are focused on the north, including Gaza City, which he said was the "center of gravity of Hamas."

"But we also continue to strike in other parts of Gaza. We are hunting their commanders, we are attacking their infrastructure, and whenever there is an important target that is related to Hamas, we strike it," he said.

The military said it struck some 300 militant targets over the past day, including compounds inside tunnels, and that troops had engaged in several battles with Palestinian militants armed with antitank missiles and machine guns.

Hamas released its own video showing what it said was a battle in northern Gaza on Sunday. A fighter wearing a GoPro-style camera emerged from a tunnel with a rocket-propelled grenade launcher and ran across sand dunes and shrubs with other militants amid the clatter of gunfire.

It was not possible to independently confirm the reports.

Larger ground operations have been launched both north and east of Gaza City, which before the war was home to over 650,000 people.

Video footage released by the military showed soldiers walking across an open area as heavy gunfire echoes in the background and setting up a position in the ruins of a heavily damaged building.

Conricus said some 800,000 people have heeded the Israeli military's orders to flee from the northern part of the strip to the south. But tens of thousands of people remain in and around Gaza City, and casualties are expected to mount on both sides as the battle moves into dense, residential neighborhoods.

The window to flee south may be closing, as Israeli forces reached Gaza's main north-south highway this week. Video circulating Monday showed a tank opening fire on a car that had approached a sand berm but was turning around. Gaza's Health Ministry said three people were killed.

Zaki Abdel-Hay, a Palestinian man living a few minutes' walk from the road south of Gaza City, said people are afraid to use it. "People are very scared. The Israeli tanks are still close," he said over the phone, adding that "constant artillery fire" could be heard near the road.

In a news conference late Monday, Netanyahu rejected calls for a cease-fire to facilitate the release of captives or end the war, which he has said will be long and difficult. "Calls for a cease-fire are calls for Israel to surrender to Hamas," he told a news conference. "That will not happen."

Netanyahu, who faces mounting anger over Israel's failure to prevent the worst surprise attack on the country in a half century, also said he had no plans to resign.

The death toll among Palestinians passed 8,300, mostly women and children, the Gaza Health Ministry said Monday. The figure is without precedent in decades of Israeli-Palestinian violence.

Over 1,400 people have died on the Israeli side, mainly civilians killed during Hamas' initial attack, also an unprecedented figure. Palestinian militants have continued firing rockets into Israel.

The military said Monday that special forces rescued one of the estimated 240 captives seized by Palestinian militants during the wide-ranging assault. It said Pvt. Ori Megidish, 19, was "doing well" and had been reunited with her family.

Hamas has released four hostages, and has said it would let the others go in return for thousands of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, which has dismissed the offer. Hamas released a short video Monday showing three other female captives.

Gaza's humanitarian crisis, meanwhile, continues to worsen.

The World Health Organization said two hospitals have been damaged and an ambulance destroyed in Gaza over the last two days. It said all 13 hospitals operating in the north have received Israeli evacuation orders in recent days. Medics have refused such orders, saying it would be a death sentence for patients on life support.

Israel says it targets Hamas fighters and infrastructure and that the militants operate among civilians, putting them in danger.

Israel has allowed more than 150 trucks loaded with food and medicine to enter Gaza from Egypt over the past several days, but aid workers say it's not enough to meet rapidly growing needs.

Israel says it has reopened two main water lines in Gaza, but the U.N. office for humanitarian affairs said one of them had stopped working after operating for two weeks and that the other one was in need of repairs.

Live updates | Israeli ground forces attack Hamas targets in north as warplanes strike across Gaza

By The Associated Press undefined

Israeli ground forces are attacking Hamas militants and infrastructure in northern Gaza as warplanes strike across the sealed-off territory. Buoyed by the first successful rescue of a captive held by Hamas, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected calls for a cease-fire and again vowed to crush the militant group's ability to govern Gaza or threaten Israel.

More than half of Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinians have fled their homes, with hundreds of thousands sheltering in packed U.N.-run schools-turned-shelters or in hospitals alongside thousands of wounded patients.

The Palestinian death toll in the Israel-Hamas war has reached 8,306, according to the Hamas-run Health

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Ministry in Gaza. In the occupied West Bank, more than 122 Palestinians have been killed in violence and Israeli raids.

More than 1,400 people in Israel have been killed, most of them civilians slain in the initial Hamas rampage that started the fighting Oct. 7. In addition, 240 hostages were taken from Israel into Gaza by the militant group. One of the captives, a female Israeli soldier, was rescued in a special forces operation.

Currently:

1. A UN envoy says the Israel-Hamas war is spilling into Syria, adding to instability there
2. UN agency in Gaza says urgent cease-fire is a matter of life and death for Palestinians
3. An Israeli ministry proposes transferring Gaza civilians to Egypt's Sinai
4. This war might hit Israel's economy harder than past wars with Hamas
5. Biden's Cabinet secretaries will push Congress to send aid to Israel and Ukraine
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:

UN HUMANITARIAN CHIEF SAYS HE FELT HELPLESS WHILE TALKING TO TRAPPED PALESTINIANS

CAIRO -- The United Nations humanitarian chief said he felt helpless as he spoke by phone Tuesday with Palestinian families trapped in the war between Israel and Hamas militants in Gaza.

"We don't want to die," Martin Griffiths quoted families telling him, adding that, "What they've endured since October 7 is beyond devastating,"

"And when an 8-year-old tells you that she doesn't want to die, it's hard not to feel helpless," he wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

On Monday, the head of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees told a U.N. emergency meeting that "an immediate humanitarian cease-fire has become a matter of life and death for millions" in Gaza.

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL HEAD DERIDES AMBASSADOR FOR WEARING YELLOW STAR OF DAVID

JERUSALEM -- The chairman of Israel's Holocaust memorial, Yad Vashem, derided Israel's ambassador to the United Nations for putting on a yellow Star of David patch during his address to the Security Council on Monday, saying it "belittles both the victims of the Holocaust and the State of Israel."

"The yellow patch symbolizes the helplessness of the Jewish people when it was at the mercy of others," Dayan posted on X, formerly called Twitter. "Today we have an independent state and a strong army. We are masters of our fate. Today we put on our lapels the blue and white flag (of Israel), not a yellow patch."

Nazis forced Jews to wear yellow six-pointed Star of David patches during the Holocaust.

Ambassador Gilad Erdan donned the patch during a council meeting on the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, where more than 8,300 people have been killed, according to the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry, hundreds of thousands have been displaced, and food and basic supplies have dwindled sharply since Israel went to war against the Palestinian territory's Hamas rulers.

Erdan told the Security Council that he would wear the patch, inscribed with the words "Never Again," until the council condemns Hamas's bloody Oct. 7 incursion into southern Israel, which touched off the war. More than 1,400 people were killed and about 240 taken hostage during the attack.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION URGES IMMEDIATE AID FOR ISRAEL AND UKRAINE

WASHINGTON — U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken will make the case Tuesday that the United States should immediately send aid to Israel and Ukraine, testifying at a Senate hearing as the administration's massive \$105 billion emergency aid request for conflicts in those countries and others has already hit roadblocks in the divided Congress.

President Joe Biden's Cabinet secretaries will be advocating for the foreign aid to a mostly friendly audience in the Senate, where majority Democrats and many Republicans support tying aid for the two countries together. But it faces much deeper problems in the Republican-led House, where new Speaker Mike Johnson has proposed cutting out the Ukraine aid and focusing on Israel alone, and cutting money for the Internal Revenue Service to pay for it.

The drastically narrowed House proposal, which would cost more than \$14 billion, faced immediate resistance among Senate Democrats -- and put pressure on Senate Republicans who support the Ukraine

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aid but are conscious of growing concerns about it within their party. The differing approaches signal problems ahead for the aid as both countries engage in long-simmering, defining conflicts that Biden and many U.S. lawmakers say could have fundamental ramifications for the rest of the world.

CANADA SAYS HUMANITARIAN ACCORD URGENTLY NEEDED

TORONTO — Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly said Monday that a humanitarian agreement is urgently needed to help people in the Gaza Strip.

Speaking to the Economic Club of Canada, Joly called for a temporary pause in hostilities in the Israel-Hamas war to allow more aid to get into Gaza.

"The humanitarian situation facing the Palestinian people, facing Palestinian women and children, is dire," she said.

Joly reiterated Canada's unequivocal condemnation of Hamas for its attacks on Israelis and said Israel has a right to defend itself against terrorism "in accordance with international law." She also criticized attacks by extremist Israelis on Palestinians in the West Bank.

UNWRA HEAD SAYS CIVIL ORDER BREAKDOWN ENDANGERS AGENCY'S OPERATIONS

UNITED NATIONS — The head of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees is warning that "an immediate humanitarian cease-fire has become a matter of life and death for millions," stressing that "the present and future of Palestinians and Israelis depend on it."

Philippe Lazzarini warned during an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council on Monday that a further breakdown of civil order, following the recent break-ins at the agency's warehouses by panicked Palestinians searching for food and other aid, will make it extremely difficult for the largest U.N. agency in Gaza to continue operating.

He said in a virtual briefing that he is worried about a spillover of the conflict and urged all 193 U.N. member nations "to change the trajectory of this crisis."

The commissioner-general of the agency known as UNRWA, also said 64 of its staff have been killed in just over three weeks — the latest only two hours prior when UNRWA's head of security in mid-Gaza was killed with his wife and eight children.

Lazzarini said most Palestinians in Gaza "feel trapped in a war they have nothing to do with" and "they feel the world is equating all of them to Hamas." He stressed that the Oct. 7 Hamas atrocities in Israel don't absolve Israel from its obligations under international humanitarian law, starting with the protection of civilians.

ISRAEL BACKTRACKS ON REFUSING TO GRANT ENTRY VISAS TO UN OFFICIALS

GENEVA — Israeli officials are going back on their promised refusal to grant entry visas to U.N. officials.

Martin Griffiths, the head of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, tweeted Monday that he was in Israel — less than a week after Israel's U.N. ambassador said it had "refused" to grant Griffiths a visa.

Israeli officials had expressed outrage over comments last Wednesday by U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres that the deadly Oct. 7 attack by Hamas militants "did not happen in a vacuum."

Gilad Erdan, Israel's U.N. ambassador, accused Guterres on Israel's Army Radio of justifying a slaughter, called for his resignation and said Israel would "refuse to grant visas to U.N. representatives."

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Guterres stood by his remarks.

On Monday, Israel's ambassador in Geneva, Meirav Eilon Shahar, said, "We haven't said categorically that we're not giving visas. We are ... We understand their need to be there."

Eilon Shahar confirmed that Griffiths was in Israel, as well as other officials, including Han Kluge, the regional head of the World Health Organization.

But she continued to voice Israel's frustration that U.N. institution chiefs didn't speak out more forcefully against Hamas militants for "butchering civilians and women in such a vicious way."

"The United Nations has let down the people of Israel," Eilon Shahar added. "When I say the United Nations, I'm talking about the multilateral organizations have let down the people of Israel."

Last operating US prison ship, a grim vestige of mass incarceration, set to close in NYC

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Kenneth Williams spent his whole life in Brooklyn, but it wasn't until a night in 2018 when he crossed a narrow footbridge in shackles, that he learned about New York City's last floating jail. He remembers the murky East River water below him, the stench of mold, and a sinking feeling that soon turned literal.

"Every once in a while you could feel the boat dropping into the muck," Williams, 62, said. "It was a stark reminder that this place wasn't meant for human confinement."

Docked in the shallows off an industrial edge of the South Bronx, the Vernon C. Bain Correctional Center is a five-story jail barge that stretches the length of two football fields, resembling a container ship stacked with cargo.

It arrived in 1992 as a temporary measure to ease overcrowding on Rikers Island, the city's main jail complex for detainees awaiting trial. Three decades later, the 800-bed lockup — the last operating prison ship in the United States — is finally closing down.

The ship will be fully vacated by the end of this week, officials said, as part of a broader plan to replace the city's long-troubled correctional system with a network of smaller jails. For now, most of the roughly 500 people incarcerated on the ship will be transferred to Rikers Island, according to the Department of Correction, though the jails there are eventually supposed to close down, too.

Detainees and advocates have long regarded the boat as a grim vestige of mass incarceration, an enduring symbol of the city's failures to reform dangerous jails that exist on the periphery of New York, largely out of sight of most residents and tourists.

In recent years, the unusual nautical jail has drawn attention primarily for its failures: Last September, a 44-year-old man, Gregory Acevedo, jumped from the top of the ship to his death; The year before that, Stephan Khadu, 24, died after contracting a form of treatable meningitis while in custody.

Darren Mack, co-director of the advocacy group Freedom Agenda, described the boat as a "modern day slave ship" used by the department to warehouse detainees, mostly Black and Latino men, with minimal oversight. While noting the closure was long overdue, he added, "shifting people to the same hellish conditions on Rikers is not the answer."

The last of an armada of floating jails used by New York City in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Vernon C. Bain sits across the river from Rikers Island, between a wastewater treatment plant and a wholesale fish market.

Detainees are afforded a daily hour of recreation on a caged upper deck, where they were recently seen playing basketball on a sunny morning. Otherwise, their only natural light beams through the ship's tiny portholes.

Those who've spent time on board say the boat rocks in the river's current. Its fading blue and white exterior — a far cry from the freshly-painted surfaces visible in the 1993 film "Carlito's Way" — is known to leak in the rain, occasionally short-circuiting the electrical system.

Inside, rust cracks of the walls and detainees say they are packed into dormitories that grow suffocatingly hot in the summer, with cots that sit just a few inches from each other. "If you faced the person in the bed next to you, your knees would touch," said Williams, who was incarcerated there for a few months and has since been released. "If they snored, you could smell their breath."

The use of maritime jails in the United States has long been controversial, dating back to the earliest days of the Revolutionary War, when thousands of Americans died aboard British ships parked in the New York Harbor.

Since then, the concept has been put to use sparingly — during the gold rush in California, most notably — often drawing allegations of cruelty and neglect, according to a recent study.

In the 1960s, a proposal by New York's correction commissioner to house inmates on repurposed ships was sunk by other local officials, who said the boats would give visitors the wrong image of the city. That

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sentiment began to change in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as drug arrests during the crack epidemic brought the population of Rikers Island to historic highs.

By the time the Vernon C. Bain boat arrived in the South Bronx, the city had already deployed four other floating jails — including two converted city ferries and a former trooper ship with the dissonant nickname, the “Love Boat” — as low-cost, temporary facilities.

Mayor Edward Koch, an early champion of the idea, assured reporters that seasick inmates would be given Dramamine and dismissed questions about the boats’ viability by calling it “better accommodations” than Rikers Island.

Decades later, Stephan Khadu may have reached a similar conclusion as he awaited trial at Rikers Island for a gang conspiracy case. With the city’s main jail complex gripped by both the coronavirus pandemic and rising violence in May 2020, Khadu volunteered to transfer to the Vernon C. Bain, where he waited nearly two years for a trial that never came.

By the following summer, family members said, Khadu talked about the boat’s stifling heat, and the presence of mold and rodents that chewed through his food containers. He suffered a seizure in July 2021. Two months later, he had a second seizure. He died on the way to the hospital, a few days short of his 24th birthday.

The cause of death was later revealed to be a complication of lymphocytic meningitis, a rodent-borne viral disease that, if properly treated, is not typically fatal.

His mom, Lezandre Khadu, blames the boat’s “disgusting conditions.”

“How can they expect me to believe they care about these people when they treat them like cargo?” she said. “No human should have to live in this place.”

The New York State Attorney General investigated Stephan Khadu’s death, but said they could not confirm allegations of improper care. He had been awaiting trial for nearly 2 years

When the boat empties out, it won’t be the first time. It also closed in the mid-1990s, as the population of Rikers Island began to fall. But unlike the other shuttered floating jails, the Vernon C. Bain reopened — initially as a juvenile justice center under Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and later transitioning into a standard adult jail.

A spokesperson for the Department of Correction, Latima Johnson, declined to say what the city plans to do with the boat going forward. It will remain, for now, within the custody of the Department of Correction.

“The reason for this move is to centralize operations on the island to more efficiently manage people in custody and deploy staff and resources,” Johnson said in an email.

Once the move is complete, Lezandre Khadu is planning a trip to see the boat where her son spent the final year of his life. She intends to celebrate its long-delayed closure.

“I’m walking over that bridge with a bucket of mimosas and I’m going to have the biggest party ever,” she said. “I want to see for myself that there will never be another soul on that boat.”

Southern California wildfire prompts evacuation order for thousands as Santa Ana winds fuel flames

AGUANGA, Calif. (AP) — A wildfire fueled by gusty Santa Ana winds ripped through rural land southeast of Los Angeles on Monday, forcing about 4,000 people from their homes, fire authorities said.

The so-called Highland Fire erupted at about 12:45 p.m. in dry, brushy hills near the unincorporated Riverside County hamlet of Aguanga.

As of late Monday night, it had spread over about 2 square miles (5 square kilometers) of land, fire spokesman Jeff LaRusso said.

About 1,300 homes and 4,000 residents were under evacuation orders, he said.

The fire had destroyed three buildings and damaged six others but it wasn’t clear whether any were homes. The region is sparsely populated but there are horse ranches and a large mobile home site, LaRusso said.

No injuries were reported.

Winds of 20 to 25 miles per hour (32 to 40 kph) with some higher gusts drove the flames and embers

through grass and brush that were dried out by recent winds and low humidity so that it was "almost like kindling" for the blaze, LaRusso said.

The winds were expected to ease somewhat overnight and fire crews would attempt to box in the blaze, LaRusso said.

But, he added: "Wind trumps everything. Hopefully the forecast holds."

A large air tanker, bulldozers and other resources were called in to fight the fire, one of the few large and active blazes to have erupted so far in California's year-round fire season, LaRusso said.

Southern California was seeing its first significant Santa Ana wind condition. The strong, hot, dry, dust-bearing winds typically descend to the Pacific Coast from inland desert regions during the fall. They have fueled some of the largest and most damaging fires in recent California history.

The National Weather Service said Riverside County could see winds of 15 to 25 mph (24 to 40 kph) through Tuesday with gusts as high as 40 miles per hour (64 kph). The weather service issued a red flag warning of extreme fire danger through Tuesday afternoon for parts of Los Angeles and Riverside counties.

UN agency in Gaza says urgent cease-fire is a matter of life and death for millions of Palestinians

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The head of the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees told a U.N. emergency meeting Monday "an immediate humanitarian cease-fire has become a matter of life and death for millions," accusing Israel of "collective punishment" of Palestinians and the forced displacement of civilians.

Philippe Lazzarini warned that a further breakdown of civil order after the agency's warehouses were broken into by Palestinians searching for food and other aid "will make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the largest U.N. agency in Gaza to continue operating."

Briefings to the Security Council by Lazzarini, the head of the U.N. children's agency UNICEF and a senior U.N. humanitarian official painted a dire picture of the humanitarian situation in Gaza 23 days after Hamas' surprise Oct. 7 attacks in Israel, and its ongoing retaliatory military action aimed at "obliterating" the militant group, which controls Gaza.

According to the latest figures from Gaza's Ministry of Health, more than 8,300 people have been killed — 66% of them women and children — and tens of thousands injured, the U.N. humanitarian office said.

UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell that toll includes over 3,400 children killed and more than 6,300 injured. "This means that more than 420 children are being killed or injured in Gaza each day — a number which should shake each of us to our core," she said.

Lazzarini said: "This surpasses the number of children killed annually across the world's conflict zones since 2019." And he stressed, "This cannot be 'collateral damage.'"

Many speakers at the council meeting denounced Hamas' Oct. 7 surprise attacks on Israel that killed over 1,400 people, and urged the release of some 230 hostages taken to Gaza by the militants. But virtually every speaker also stressed that Israel is obligated under international humanitarian law to protect civilians and their essentials for life including hospitals, schools and other infrastructure — and Israel was criticized for cutting off food, water, fuel and medicine to Gaza and cutting communications for several days.

Lazzarini said "the handful of convoys" allowed into Gaza through the Rafah crossing from Egypt in recent days "is nothing compared to the needs of over 2 million people trapped in Gaza."

"The system in place to allow aid into Gaza is geared to fail," he said, "unless there is political will to make the flow of supplies meaningful, matching the unprecedented humanitarian needs."

The commissioner-general of the U.N. agency known as UNRWA said there is no safe place anywhere in Gaza, warning that basic services are crumbling, medicine, food, water and fuel are running out, and the streets "have started overflowing with sewage, which will cause a massive health hazard very soon."

UNICEF oversees water and sanitation issues for the U.N., and Russell warned that "the lack of clean water and safe sanitation is on the verge of becoming a catastrophe."

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U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield urged the divided Security Council — which has rejected four resolutions that would have responded to the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks and the ongoing war — to come together, saying “the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is growing more dire by the day.”

Stressing that all innocent civilians must be protected, she said the council must call “for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, address the immense humanitarian needs of Palestinian civilians in Gaza, affirm Israel’s right to defend itself from terrorism, and remind all actors that international humanitarian law must be respected.” She reiterated President Joe Biden’s calls for humanitarian pauses to get hostages out and allow aid in, and for safe passage for civilians.

“That means Hamas must not use Palestinians as human shields — an act of unthinkable cruelty and a violation of the law of war,” the U.S. ambassador said, “and that means Israel must take all possible precautions to avoid harm to civilians.”

In a sign of increasing U.S. concern at the escalating Palestinian death toll, Thomas-Greenfield told the council Biden reiterated to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday “that while Israel has the right and responsibility to defend its citizens from terrorism, it must do so in a manner consistent with international humanitarian law.”

“The fact that Hamas operates within and under the cover of civilians areas creates an added burden for Israel, but it does not lessen its responsibility to distinguish between terrorists and innocent civilians,” she stressed.

Following the rejection of the four resolutions in the 15-member Security Council — one vetoed by the U.S., one vetoed by Russia and China, and two for failing to get the minimum nine “yes” votes — Arab nations went to the U.N. General Assembly last Friday where there are no vetoes.

The 193-member world body adopted a resolution calling for humanitarian truces leading to a cessation of hostilities by a vote of 120-14 with 45 abstentions. Now, the 10 elected members in the 15-member Security Council are trying again to negotiate a resolution that won’t be rejected. While council resolutions are legally binding, assembly resolutions are not though they are an important barometer of world opinion.

Israel’s U.N. Ambassador Gilad Erdan was sharply critical of the council’s failure to condemn Hamas’ attacks and asked members: “Why are the humanitarian needs of Gazans, the sole issue, the sole issue you are focused on?”

Recalling his grandfather who survived Nazi death camps but whose his wife and seven children perished in the Auschwitz gas chamber, Erdan told the council he will wear a yellow star — just as Hitler made his grandfather and other Jews wear during World War II — “until you condemn the atrocities of Hamas and demand the immediate release of our hostages.”

The ambassador then put a large six-pointed yellow star of David saying “Never Again” on his suit jacket, as did other Israeli diplomats sitting behind him, and said: “We walk with the yellow star as a symbol of pride, a reminder that we swore to fight back to defend ourselves. Never again is now.”

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian U.N. ambassador, also urged the Security Council to follow the General Assembly, end its paralysis, and demand “an end to this bloodshed, which constitutes an affront to humanity, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, and a clear and imminent danger for regional and international peace and security.”

“Save those who still can be saved and bury in a dignified manner those who have perished,” Mansour said.

Maui police release 16 minutes of body camera footage from day of Lahaina wildfire

By AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Maui police held a news conference on Monday to show 16 minutes of body camera footage taken the day a wildfire tore through Lahaina town in August, including video of officers rescuing 15 people from a coffee shop and taking a severely burned man to a hospital.

Chief John Pelletier said his department faced a deadline to release 20 hours of body camera footage in response to an open records request and wanted to provide some context for what people would see before the video came out.

Earlier this month, Maui County provided the AP with 911 call recordings in response to an open records request.

The 16 minutes of video released at the news conference in Wailuku showed officers evacuating a Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf shop at a supermarket on Front Street, a neighborhood that largely burned in the blaze. Officers ushered out 15 people from the coffee shop as smoke swirled in the sky around them, loaded the group into police SUVs and took them to the Lahaina Civic Center.

In another clip, an officer finds a badly burned man at a shopping center and put him in the back seat of his patrol car. "I'll just take you straight to the hospital. That sound good?" the officer can be heard asking the man, who responds: "Yeah."

One video shows an officer tying a tow strap to a metal gate blocking a dirt road escape route while residents use a saw to cut the gate open so a line of cars can get past. Multiple shots show officers going door-to-door telling residents to evacuate.

The fast-moving wildfire on Aug. 8 killed at least 99 people and burned more than 2,000 structures. Those who made it out recounted running into barricades and roads that were blocked due to the flames and downed utility poles.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation. It may have been sparked by downed power lines that ignited dry, invasive grasses. An AP investigation found the answer may lie in an overgrown gully beneath Hawaiian Electric Co. power lines and something that harbored smoldering embers from an initial fire that burned in the morning and then rekindled in high winds that afternoon.

Powerful winds related to a hurricane passing south of Hawaii spread embers from house to house and prevented firefighters from sending up helicopters to fight the blaze from the air.

Maine mass shooter's family reached out to sheriff 5 months before rampage, sheriff's office says

By DAVID SHARP, ROBERT F. BUKATY, JAKE BLEIBERG and BERNARD CONDON Associated Press LEWISTON, Maine (AP) — Five months before the deadliest mass shooting in Maine's history, the gunman's family alerted the local sheriff that they were becoming concerned about his deteriorating mental health while he had access to firearms, authorities said Monday.

After the alert, the Sagadahoc County Sheriff's Office reached out to officials of Robert Card's Army Reserve unit, which assured deputies that they would speak to Card and make sure he got medical attention, Sheriff Joel Merry said.

The family's concern about Card's mental health dated back to early this year before the sheriff's office was contacted in May, marking the earliest in a string of interactions that police had with the 40-year-old firearms instructor before he marched a Lewiston bowling alley and a bar last Wednesday, killing 18 people and wounding 13 others.

After an intensive two-day search that put residents on edge, he was found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot.

Card underwent a mental health evaluation last summer after accusing soldiers of calling him a pedophile, shoving one and locking himself in his room during training in New York, officials said. A bulletin sent to police shortly after last week's 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.

Documents released from the sheriff on Monday gave the most detailed timeline yet of other warning signs and failed efforts to stop the gunman months before he killed.

On Sept. 15, a sheriff's deputy was sent to visit Card's home for a wellness check at the request of the reserve unit after a soldier said he was afraid Card was "going to snap and commit a mass shooting" because he was hearing voices again. The deputy went to Card's trailer but could not find him — nor the next

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day on a return visit. The sheriff's department then sent out a statewide alert for help locating Card with a warning that he was known to be "armed and dangerous" and that officers should use extreme caution.

By this time, Card's reserve unit had grown sufficiently concerned that it had decided to take away his military-issued firearms, the sheriff's office was told. Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Ruth Castro confirmed that account, adding that Card was also declared "non-deployable" and that multiple attempts were made to contact him.

According to the deputy's report after visiting Card's home, he reached out to the reserves' unit commander who assured him the Army was trying to get treatment for Card. The commander also said he thought "it best to let Card have time to himself for a bit."

The deputy then reached out to Card's brother. The brother said he had put Card's firearms in a gun safe in the family farm and would work with their father to move the guns somewhere else and make sure Card couldn't get other firearms.

Authorities recovered a multitude of weapons while searching for Card after the shooting and believe he had legally purchased them, including a Ruger SFAR rifle found in his car, officials said Monday. A Smith & Wesson M&P15 rifle and Smith & Wesson M&P .40-caliber handgun were with his body.

Authorities have not said whether they believe Card planned the Oct. 25 rampage in advance. Nearly three months ago, he tried and failed to acquire a device used to quiet gunshots, a gun shop owner in Auburn said.

Rick LaChapelle, owner of Coastal Defense Firearms, said Card purchased a suppressor, also called a silencer, online and arranged to pick it up at his shop.

Card already had submitted information to the federal government to purchase it, and federal authorities had approved the sale to that point, he said.

When Card filled out the form at LaChapelle's gun shop to pick up the silencer Aug. 5, he answered "yes" to the question: "Have you ever been adjudicated as a mental defective OR have you ever been committed to a mental institution?"

"As soon as he answered that 'yes' we know automatically that this is disqualifying, he's not getting a silencer today," LaChapelle said.

Silencers are more heavily regulated under federal law than most firearms. Federal law requires buyers to apply with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and be approved. The dealer must do a background check ,too

He said Card was polite when notified of the denial, mentioned something about the military and said he would "come right back" after consulting his lawyer.

Investigators are facing increasing public scrutiny and still searching for a motive for the massacre but have increasingly focused on Card's mental health history.

On Monday, Gov. Janet Mills, a Democrat, held a news conference to provide an update on the response to the shooting. The conference turned contentious quickly when Mills declined to provide information about what the investigation has turned up so far.

Mills said state lawmakers would revisit Maine gun control laws. Proposals for tighter laws have stalled or failed in recent legislative sessions.

"I'm not going to stand here today and tell you I'm proposing X, Y and Z," she said. "I'm here to listen, work with others and get people around the table as promptly as possible."

Card's body was found late Friday in a trailer at a recycling center in Lisbon Falls, but it was unclear when he died.

Residents of Lewiston returned to work Monday, the morning after coming together to mourn those lost in the shootings. More than 1,000 people attended Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul for a vigil in Lewiston.

The deadliest shooting in Maine's history stunned a state of 1.3 million people that has relatively little violent crime and only 29 killings in all of 2022.

The Lewiston shootings were the 36th mass killing in the U.S. this year, according to a database maintained by the AP and USA Today in partnership with Northeastern University. The database includes every

mass killing since 2006 from all weapons in which four or more people, excluding the offender, were killed within a 24-hour time frame.

Cutting-edge AI raises fears about risks to humanity. Are tech and political leaders doing enough?

By KELVIN CHAN AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — Chatbots like ChatGPT wowed the world with their ability to write speeches, plan vacations or hold a conversation as good as or arguably even better than humans do, thanks to cutting-edge artificial intelligence systems. Now, frontier AI has become the latest buzzword as concerns grow that the emerging technology has capabilities that could endanger humanity.

Everyone from the British government to top researchers and even major AI companies themselves are raising the alarm about frontier AI's as-yet-unknown dangers and calling for safeguards to protect people from its existential threats.

The debate comes to a head Wednesday, when British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak hosts a two-day summit focused on frontier AI. It's reportedly expected to draw a group of about 100 officials from 28 countries, including U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and executives from key U.S. artificial intelligence companies including OpenAI, Google's Deepmind and Anthropic.

The venue is Bletchley Park, a former top secret base for World War II codebreakers led by Alan Turing. The historic estate is seen as the birthplace of modern computing because it is where Turing's team famously cracked Nazi Germany's Enigma code using the world's first digital programmable computer.

In a speech last week, Sunak said only governments — not AI companies — can keep people safe from the technology's risks. However, he also noted that the U.K.'s approach "is not to rush to regulate," even as he outlined a host of scary-sounding threats, such as the use of AI to more easily make chemical or biological weapons.

"We need to take this seriously, and we need to start focusing on trying to get ahead of the problem," said Jeff Clune, an associate computer science professor at the University of British Columbia focusing on AI and machine learning.

Clune was among a group of influential researchers who authored a paper last week calling for governments to do more to manage risks from AI. It's the latest in a series of dire warnings from tech moguls like Elon Musk and OpenAI CEO Sam Altman about the rapidly evolving technology and the disparate ways the industry, political leaders and researchers see the path forward when it comes to reining in the risks and regulation.

It's far from certain that AI will wipe out mankind, Clune said, "but it has sufficient risk and chance of occurring. And we need to mobilize society's attention to try to solve it now rather than wait for the worst-case scenario to happen."

One of Sunak's big goals is to find agreement on a communique about the nature of AI risks. He's also unveiling plans for an AI Safety Institute that will evaluate and test new types of the technology and proposing creation of a global expert panel, inspired by the U.N. climate change panel, to understand AI and draw up a "State of AI Science" report.

The summit reflects the British government's eagerness to host international gatherings to show it has not become isolated and can still lead on the world stage after its departure from the European Union three years ago.

The U.K. also wants to stake its claim in a hot-button policy issue where both the U.S. and the 27-nation EU are making moves.

Brussels is putting the final touches on what's poised to be the world's first comprehensive AI regulations, while U.S. President Joe Biden signed a sweeping executive order Monday to guide the development of AI, building on voluntary commitments made by tech companies.

China, which along with the U.S. is one of the two world AI powers, has been invited to the summit,

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though Sunak couldn't say with "100% certainty" that representatives from Beijing will attend.

The paper signed by Clune and more than 20 other experts, including two dubbed the "godfathers" of AI — Geoffrey Hinton and Yoshua Bengio — called for governments and AI companies to take concrete action, such as by spending a third of their research and development resources on ensuring safe and ethical use of advanced autonomous AI.

Frontier AI is shorthand for the latest and most powerful systems that go right up to the edge of AI's capabilities. They're based on foundation models, which are algorithms trained on a broad range of information scraped from the internet to provide a general, but not infallible, base of knowledge.

That makes frontier AI systems "dangerous because they're not perfectly knowledgeable," Clune said. "People assume and think that they're tremendously knowledgeable, and that can get you in trouble."

The meeting, though, has faced criticism that it's too preoccupied with far-off dangers.

"The focus of the summit is actually a bit too narrow," said Francine Bennett, interim director of the Ada Lovelace Institute, a policy research group in London focusing on AI.

"We risk just forgetting about the broader set of risk and safety" and the algorithms that are already part of everyday life, she said at a Chatham House panel last week.

Deb Raji, a University of California, Berkeley, researcher who has studied algorithmic bias, pointed to problems with systems already deployed in the U.K., such as police facial recognition systems that had a much higher false detection rate for Black people and an algorithm that botched a high school exam.

The summit is a "missed opportunity" and marginalizes communities and workers that are most affected by AI, more than 100 civil society groups and experts said in an open letter to Sunak.

Skeptics say the U.K. government has set its summit goals too low, given that regulating AI will not be on the agenda, focusing instead on establishing "guardrails."

Sunak's call to not rush into regulation is reminiscent of "the messaging we hear from a lot of the corporate representatives in the U.S.," Raji said. "And so I'm not surprised that it's also making its way into what they might be saying to U.K. officials."

Tech companies shouldn't be involved in drafting regulations because they tend to "underestimate or downplay" the urgency and full range of harms, Raji said. They also aren't so open to supporting proposed laws "that might be necessary but might effectively endanger their bottom line," she said.

DeepMind and OpenAI didn't respond to requests for comment. Anthropic said co-founders Dario Amodei and Jack Clark would be attending.

Microsoft said in a blog post that it looked forward "to the U.K.'s next steps in convening the summit, advancing its efforts on AI safety testing, and supporting greater international collaboration on AI governance."

The government insists it will have the right mix of attendees from government, academia, civil society and business.

The Institute for Public Policy Research, a center-left U.K. think tank, said it would be a "historic mistake" if the tech industry was left to regulate itself without government supervision.

"Regulators and the public are largely in the dark about how AI is being deployed across the economy," said Carsten Jung, the group's senior economist. "But self-regulation didn't work for social media companies, it didn't work for the finance sector, and it won't work for AI."

Seager stars with 2-run HR, stellar defense to lead Rangers over D-backs 3-1 in World Series Game 3

By DAVID BRANDT AP Baseball Writer

PHOENIX (AP) — Corey Seager smashed a homer that rocketed off his bat at a speed few other mortals can match. Then he made a sliding stop and started a double play in the eighth inning that might have saved the game.

The star shortstop is once again playing at a different level in October.

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That's good for the Texas Rangers, who may need more of those individual heroics after a costly victory put them ahead in this World Series.

Seager clubbed a two-run homer and turned in a terrific defensive play, Max Scherzer combined with four relievers for a gem on the mound and Texas beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 3-1 on Monday night to take a 2-1 lead in the Fall Classic.

"This is what you play for. This is where you want to be at this moment," said Seager, the NLCS and World Series MVP for the Los Angeles Dodgers in 2020. "Fortunately for me, having experience with this, it's always driven me. I've been fortunate enough to be part of some good teams and experience these things."

Texas overcame injuries to Scherzer and slugger Adolis García in improving to 9-0 on the road this postseason, this time in front of more than 48,000 fans at Chase Field.

The 29-year-old Seager — in the second year of a \$325 million contract — once again showed he was worth every penny on the game's biggest stage.

He smoked a two-run homer into the right-field seats as part of a three-run third after Diamondbacks rookie starter Brandon Pfaadt left a first-pitch changeup high in the zone. The ball left Seager's bat at 114.5 mph, which made it the hardest-hit World Series homer in the Statcast era, dating back to 2015.

García cut down Christian Walker at the plate with a stellar throw from right field in the second, stifling some early Arizona momentum. García exited in the eighth with tightness on his left side after appearing to get hurt on a swing. He went to a hospital for an MRI to determine the severity of the injury.

Scherzer threw three scoreless innings before leaving with back tightness. Jon Gray, Josh Sborz, Aroldis Chapman and José Leclerc combined to keep Arizona's offense quiet most of the evening.

Scherzer said he was having back spasms and would know more about his availability for a potential Game 7 over the next 48 hours.

"It's tough. We're a deep group. We'll see what happens with both of those guys," Texas second baseman Marcus Semien said about the injuries. "Adolis has been the heart and soul of our team. Hopefully it's nothing too bad. But we're a deep group. We have some guys that haven't been playing that are pretty good players, too."

Gray replaced Scherzer and fired three shutout innings of one-hit ball for the win. Leclerc struck out two in a perfect ninth for his fourth save this postseason.

"Just staying ready ... and just waiting on that call. I knew it was going to happen eventually," said Gray, a veteran starter who recently returned from injury. "To be able to come in now and do a really good job, it feels amazing."

Game 4 in the best-of-seven Series is Tuesday at Chase Field.

The D-backs rallied in the eighth when pinch-hitter Emmanuel Rivera led off with a double against Chapman. Geraldo Perdomo followed with an RBI single, making it 3-1. But then Chapman worked out of the jam — striking out Corbin Carroll before Seager started a clutch double play, sliding on his knees to field a hot smash from Ketel Marte before flipping to Semien, who relayed to first.

"Just trying to make the play," Seager said. "I think Marcus did a better job than me with the turn and the transfer. Props to him, props to Chapman for making a good pitch and we got out of the inning."

After García threw out Walker, the Rangers grabbed the lead in the third. Nathaniel Lowe hit a leadoff double and scored on a two-out single by Semien, his first RBI in 10 games. Seager then launched his no-doubt homer deep into the right-field seats to make it 3-0.

Texas is 9-0 this postseason when scoring first, and the Rangers are the first team in major league history to win their first nine road games in one postseason.

It was Seager's fifth homer this postseason. The four-time All-Star also was one of the heroes in Game 1 of this Fall Classic, belting a tying homer in the ninth that helped rally the Rangers to a 6-5 victory in 11 innings on García's home run.

The 25-year-old Pfaadt had been a revelation in the postseason with a 2.70 ERA through four October starts, despite a 5.72 ERA during the regular season. He wasn't quite as good on Monday — giving up

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three runs on four hits and two walks over 5 1/3 innings, striking out four.

The teams combined for no errors over the first two games of the series and the Rangers produced more defensive highlights that helped them take control of Game 3.

Walker led off the second with a double and Tommy Pham followed with a single, but Walker was thrown out at home. Diamondbacks third-base coach Tony Perezchica put up a stop sign, but Walker either didn't see it or didn't care, never hesitating as he rounded third.

García — a Gold Glove finalist who has one of the best arms in the big leagues — threw a 94.6 mph rocket to the plate to cut down Walker.

"I feel like that was a huge momentum swing," Arizona manager Torey Lovullo said. "That was a big moment. We got flat there for a couple innings."

Two batters later, Alek Thomas hit a grounder that deflected off Scherzer's right elbow toward the third-base line. Josh Jung was there to barehand the ball and fling a strong throw across the diamond to beat the speedy Thomas.

Scherzer gave up two hits and two walks while striking out one.

GREAT GLOVES

This is the first World Series in which neither team has made an error through the first three games.

YOUNG AND CLEAN(UP)

Texas rookie Evan Carter became the fourth-youngest player to hit cleanup in a World Series game at 21 years, 62 days. The outfielder batted third in the first two games, but manager Bruce Bochy said he flipped Carter and García in the lineup on Monday to break up the left-handed bats.

The three youngest players to hit cleanup in the World Series were Miguel Cabrera (2003), Ty Cobb (1907) and Juan Soto (2019), who were all 20.

BEEN A WHILE

This was the first World Series game played at Chase Field since Nov. 4, 2001, when the Diamondbacks beat the Yankees 3-2 in Game 7 after Luis Gonzalez's walk-off hit against Mariano Rivera clinched the series.

The D-backs lost Monday for the first time in the World Series at Chase Field. They were 4-0 at home during the 2001 Series, which is the only other time they've been to the sport's biggest showcase.

BIG SWING

There have been 62 previous instances when the World Series was tied 1-1 after Game 2. The Game 3 winner went on to win 41 times.

UP NEXT

The Diamondbacks will piece together Game 4 on the mound with multiple relievers, starting with lefty Joe Mantiply. Lovullo showed his Southern California roots by mentioning a former Los Angeles Dodgers ace when asked about his team's pitching plans.

"Don Drysdale is not going to fall out of the sky," Lovullo said. "It's definitely going to be somebody in our bullpen that's going to start the day tomorrow."

Drysdale teamed with fellow Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax in the pitching rotation to help the Dodgers win the World Series in 1959, 1963 and 1965.

The Rangers will counter with lefty Andrew Heaney. Bochy said before Monday's game that Gray was an option, but he threw 30 pitches Monday.

Does Jan. 6 constitutionally block Trump from 2024 ballot?

Lawyers to make case on day 2 of hearing

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — The videos playing in a Colorado courtroom were both chilling and, by now, familiar — a violent mob, with some wearing tactical gear, smashing through the U.S. Capitol, attacking police officers and chanting "Hang Mike Pence!"

Now, lawyers on day two of the weeklong hearing are arguing whether the infamous events of Jan. 6, 2021 constituted an insurrection under a rarely used clause of the U.S. Constitution that they are trying

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to use to disqualify former President Donald Trump from the 2024 ballot. The hearing in Colorado is one of two this week — with the second before the Minnesota Supreme Court on Thursday — that could end up before the U.S. Supreme Court, which has never before ruled on the Civil War-era provision in the 14th Amendment.

Tuesday's witnesses are expected to include an expert in right-wing violence and an expert on Section Three of the 14th Amendment, which has only been used a handful of times since it was adopted in 1868. The testimony will get to the heart of the thorny legal issues the case raises — what constitutes an "insurrection" and how can the extreme political penalty of being barred from office be applied?

The plaintiff's lawyers contend the provision is straightforward and that Trump is clearly disqualified from the presidency, just as if he were under the Constitution's minimum age for the office of 35.

Trump's lawyers argue that there remains a host of questions — did the authors even mean for the provision to apply to the presidency, which is not mentioned in the amendment although "presidential and vice presidential electors" are, along with senators and members of the House of Representatives? Did it target those who simply exercised free speech to support unpopular causes or only those who took up arms?

Scott Gessler, Trump's lead Colorado attorney and a former Republican secretary of state there, dismissed the lawsuit as "anti-democratic" and noted that one other presidential candidate — socialist labor organizer Eugene Debs — even ran for the office from prison without people trying to use Section Three to disqualify him.

"If they don't like President Trump, they need to get involved in an election," Gessler said after the first day. "But what they're trying to do is short-circuit an election."

On Monday, the Colorado testimony began with details about the Jan. 6 assault that was intended to stop Congress from certifying President Joe Biden's election win.

Lawyers representing six Republican and unaffiliated Colorado voters argued that Trump's violent rhetoric preceding the attack makes him culpable, and barred from the presidency again under that clause prohibiting anyone who swore an oath to the constitution and then "engaged in insurrection" against it from holding office.

"We are here because Trump claims, after all that, that he has the right to be president again," attorney Eric Olson said. "But our Constitution, the shared charter of our nation, says he cannot do so."

Trump's legal team and presidential campaign assailed the lawsuit as little more than an attempt by Democrats to derail his attempt to reclaim his old job. Trump is so far dominating the Republican presidential primary, and the lawsuits to block him were organized by two separate liberal groups.

Seeking to underscore that point, Trump's campaign said before the hearing that it had filed a motion for District Court Judge Sarah B. Wallace to recuse herself because she had made a \$100 donation in October 2022 to the Colorado Turnout Project, a group whose website says it was formed to "prevent violent insurrections" such as the Jan. 6 attack. Wallace declined to do so.

She was appointed to the bench in August of that year by Gov. Jared Polis, a Democrat. Wallace said she didn't recall the donation until the motion was filed and has no preconceptions about the legal issues in the case.

"I will not allow this legal proceeding to turn into a circus," she said.

A UN envoy says the Israel-Hamas war is spilling into Syria, adding to growing instability there

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The Israel-Hamas war is spilling into Syria, fueled by growing instability, violence and a lack of progress toward a political solution to its 12-year conflict, the United Nations special envoy for the country said Monday.

Geir Pedersen told the Security Council that, on top of violence from the Syrian conflict, the Syrian people now face "a terrifying prospect of a potential wider escalation" following Hamas' Oct. 7 attacks on Israel and the ongoing retaliatory military action.

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"Spillover into Syria is not just a risk; it has already begun," the U.N. envoy for Syria said.

Pedersen pointed to airstrikes attributed to Israel hitting Syria's airports in Aleppo and Damascus several times, and retaliation by the United States against what it said were multiple attacks on its forces "by groups that it claims are backed by Iran, including on Syrian territory."

With the region "at its most dangerous and tense," he said, "fuel is being added to a tinderbox that was already beginning to ignite" in Syria, which was seeing a surge in violence even before Oct. 7.

Pedersen said the number of Syrians killed, injured and displaced is at its highest since 2020, citing a significant intensification of attacks in government-controlled areas, including an unclaimed attack on a graduation ceremony at a military academy in Homs, which the government attributes to terrorist organizations.

He also reported government rocket attacks throughout October on Hayat Tahrir al Sham — the insurgent group that rules much of rebel-held northwest Syria — as well as a major escalation of Turkish strikes in the northeast following an attack on Turkish government facilities in Ankara. The Turkish strikes have killed dozens, damaged health facilities, schools and camps, and displaced more than 120,000 civilians, he said.

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield accused "terrorist groups," some backed by Syria and Iran, of threatening to expand the Gaza conflict "by using Syrian territory to plot and launch attacks against Israel." She also accused Syria of allowing Iran and terrorist groups to use its international airports for military purposes.

"We call on the regime to curb the activities of Iran-backed militias in Syria, stop the flow of foreign arms and fighters through its territory, and cease escalatory actions in the Golan Heights," she said.

"The United States has warned all actors not to take advantage of the situation in Gaza to widen or deepen the conflict," Thomas-Greenfield said. "And we've made clear that we will respond to attacks on our own personnel and facilities in Syria or against U.S. interests, and where appropriate exercise our right to self-defense forcefully, proportionately and in a manner that minimizes civilian harm."

Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia of Russia, Syria's closest ally, accused Israeli forces of striking sites in Syria, including civilian airports, and called U.S. attacks in the country "illegitimate actions" and "a gross violation of Syria's sovereignty." He also claimed U.S. economic interests and involvement "in contraband with Syrian grain and oil" have prevailed over political interests.

Nebenzia said there is a sharp increase in tensions around the Israel-Hamas conflict and attacks like the ones by the U.S. might provoke spillover to the entire region. "This must not be deemed acceptable," he said.

Iran's U.N. Ambassador Amir Iravani refuted all U.S. claims, saying his country is in Syria at Damascus' request to fight terrorism. He accused Washington of attempting "to shift the blame from the culprit to the victim."

Iravani told the council the United States' "unwavering support" for Israel "has rendered it part of the problem." He said the U.S. and some Western countries were attempting to give Israel an unjust right to self-defense while ignoring the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, and equating the Palestinian resistance with terrorism.

"Iran's primary objective is to avoid any escalation in the region," the ambassador stressed, which is why it has endorsed international calls for an immediate cease-fire and humanitarian aid for people in Gaza.

However, Iravani said Iran will respond to any threat, attack or aggression endangering its security.

Israel pushes deeper into Gaza and frees Hamas captive; Netanyahu rejects calls for cease-fire

By NAJIB JOBAIN, SAMY MAGDY and LEE KEATH Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli ground forces pushed deeper into Gaza on Monday, advancing in tanks and other armored vehicles on the territory's main city and freeing a soldier held captive by Hamas militants. The Israeli prime minister rejected calls for a cease-fire as airstrikes landed near hospitals where thousands of Palestinians are sheltering beside the wounded.

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The military said a soldier captured during Hamas' brutal Oct. 7 incursion was rescued in Gaza — the first rescue since the weeklong war began. Military officials provided few details but said in a statement that Pvt. Ori Megidish, 19, was "doing well" and had met with her family.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed her home, saying the "achievement" by Israel's security forces "illustrates our commitment to free all the hostages."

He also rejected calls for a cease-fire to facilitate the release of captives or end the war, which he has said will be long and difficult. "Calls for a cease-fire are calls for Israel to surrender to Hamas," he told a news conference. "That will not happen."

Netanyahu, who faces mounting anger over Israel's failure to prevent the worst surprise attack on the country in a half century, also said he had no plans to resign.

Hamas and other militant groups are believed to be holding some 240 captives, including men, women and children. Netanyahu has faced increasing pressure to secure their release even as Israel acts to crush Hamas and end its 16-year rule over the territory.

Hamas, which has released four hostages, has said it would let the others go in return for thousands of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, including many implicated in deadly attacks on Israelis. Israel has dismissed the offer, and Netanyahu said the ground invasion "creates the possibility" of getting the hostages out, adding that Hamas will "only do it under pressure."

Hamas released a short video Monday purporting to show three other female captives. One delivers a brief statement — likely under duress — criticizing Israel's response to the hostage crisis.

It was not clear when the Hamas video was made. The Associated Press usually refrains from reporting details of hostage videos because they show individuals speaking under duress and are often used for propaganda purposes.

Amos Aloni, whose daughter Danielle appeared in the video, told reporters that he and his wife were shocked to see her on TV but felt "relief from her being alive and seeing her."

The U.S. is providing weapons shipments on an almost daily basis to Israel, Pentagon deputy press secretary Sabrina Singh told reporters.

Despite the rising number of civilian casualties, "we are not putting any limits on how Israel uses weapons," Singh said. "That is really up to the Israeli Defense Force."

The Israeli military has been vague about its operations inside Gaza, including the location and number of troops. Israel has declared a new "phase" in the war but stopped short of declaring an all-out ground invasion.

Larger ground operations have been launched both north and east of Gaza City. Israel says many of Hamas' forces and much of its militant infrastructure, including hundreds of kilometers (miles) of tunnels, are in Gaza City, which before the war was home to over 650,000 people, a population comparable to that of Washington, D.C.

Though Israel ordered Palestinians to leave the north, where Gaza City is located, and move south, hundreds of thousands remain, in part because Israel has also bombarded targets in so-called safe zones. Around 117,000 displaced people hoping for safety are staying in hospitals in northern Gaza, alongside thousands of patients and staff, according to U.N. figures.

The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA, says nearly 672,000 Palestinians are sheltering in its schools and other facilities, which have reached four times their capacity.

UNRWA head Philippe Lazzarini accused Israel of "collective punishment" of the Palestinians, and of forcing their displacement from northern Gaza to the south, where they are still not safe.

The death toll among Palestinians passed 8,300, mostly women and children, the Gaza Health Ministry said Monday. The figure is without precedent in decades of Israeli-Palestinian violence. More than 1.4 million people in Gaza have fled their homes.

Over 1,400 people have died on the Israeli side, mainly civilians killed during Hamas' initial attack, also an unprecedented figure.

Lazzarini said 64 of the agency's staff were killed in the past three weeks, the latest just hours before he addressed an emergency U.N. Security Council meeting, when an agency security official was killed

with his wife and eight children.

Most Palestinians in Gaza "feel trapped in a war they have nothing to do with," he said.

Video circulating on social media showed an Israeli tank and bulldozer in central Gaza blocking the territory's main north-south highway.

The video, taken by a local journalist, shows a car approaching an earth barrier across the road. The car stops and turns around. As it heads away, a tank appears to open fire, and an explosion engulfs the car. The journalist, in another car, races away in terror, screaming, "Go back! Go back!" at approaching vehicles.

The Gaza Health Ministry later said three people were killed in the car that was hit.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, an Israeli military spokesman, declined to comment on where Israeli forces are deployed, but said additional forces had entered Gaza and operations would continue to "expand and intensify."

The military said troops have killed dozens of militants who attacked from inside buildings and tunnels. It said that in the last few days, it had struck more than 600 militant targets, including weapons depots and anti-tank missile launching positions. Palestinian militants have continued firing rockets into Israel, including toward its commercial hub, Tel Aviv.

Hamas said its fighters clashed with Israeli troops who entered from the northwest. It was not possible to independently confirm battlefield claims made by either side.

Meanwhile, crowded hospitals in northern Gaza came under growing threat.

Gaza's Health Ministry shared video footage that appeared to show an explosion and a column of smoke near the Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Hospital for cancer patients. The hospital director, Dr. Sobhi Skaik, said it had sustained damage in a strike that endangered patients.

All 10 hospitals operating in northern Gaza have received evacuation orders, the U.N.'s office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs said. Staff have refused to leave, saying evacuation would mean death for patients on ventilators.

Strikes hit within 50 meters (yards) of Al Quds Hospital after it received two calls from Israeli authorities on Sunday ordering it to evacuate, the Palestinian Red Crescent rescue service said. Some windows were blown out, and rooms were covered in debris. It said 14,000 people are sheltering there.

Israel says it targets Hamas fighters and infrastructure and that the militants operate among civilians, putting them in danger.

Beyond the fighting, conditions for civilians in Gaza are continually deteriorating.

With no central power for weeks and little fuel, hospitals are struggling to keep emergency generators running to operate incubators and other life-saving equipment. UNRWA has been trying to keep water pumps and bakeries running.

On Sunday, the largest convoy of humanitarian aid yet — 33 trucks — entered the territory from Egypt, and another 26 entered Monday. Relief workers say the amount is still far less than what is needed for the population of 2.3 million people.

The fighting has raised concerns that the violence could spread across the region. Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah have engaged in daily skirmishes along Israel's northern border.

In the occupied West Bank, Israel carried out airstrikes Monday against militants clashing with its forces in the Jenin refugee camp. Hamas said four of its fighters were killed there. As of Sunday, Israeli forces and settlers have killed 123 Palestinians, including 33 minors, in the West Bank, half of them during search-and-arrest operations, the U.N. said.

Deaf family grieves father of 4 and beloved community leader who was killed in Maine shootings

By DAVID SHARP Associated Press

LISBON FALLS, Maine (AP) — Most survivors of the mass shootings that killed 18 people at a Maine bowling alley and a bar attempted to flee when they heard gunfire.

But Josh Seal, who is deaf, couldn't hear the gunfire — though some deaf survivors said they felt star-

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ting jolts, his wife said.

Seal, an American Sign Language interpreter who translated Maine's daily COVID-19 briefings during the pandemic, was mortally wounded along with three other deaf people in Lewiston, delivering a blow to the state's tight-knit deaf community.

The 36-year-old father of four deaf children was director of interpreting services for Pine Tree Society, an organization that helps people with disabilities, and he started a camp for deaf kids and teenagers. But most of all, he was a doting, energetic, outgoing father who loved his kids dearly, his wife said.

"I want the world to remember him and his passion, his love, his patience, his kindness, his motivation, his zeal for life, his ability to get things done and his humor," Elizabeth "Liz" Seal, who is also deaf, told The Associated Press through an interpreter.

Liz Seal is one of dozens of family members left to pick up the pieces after an Army reservist opened fire with a rifle at Just-in-Time Recreation, a bowling alley, and at Schemengees Bar & Grill, which was hosting a cornhole tournament.

The gunman died by apparent suicide, and his body was found Friday. Five months before the shootings, his parents had alerted police to concerns about his mental health; after he began acting erratically at a training facility last summer, he had undergone a mental health evaluation.

At the Seal household in Lisbon Falls, just outside Lewiston and several blocks from the Androscoggin River, Josh Seal's tradition was to wake up his daughter by communicating, "Good morning, sunshine," before getting the rest of the kids up and ready for school.

The father of four children — Jayson, 12; Sephine, 9; Jarrod, 6; and Jaxton, 3 — kept the family on the go, Liz Seal said. It was rare that the family didn't have something planned for weekends, like camping and snowmobiling. Josh Seal also found time for his own passions, including playing disc golf.

"There was never a dull, quiet moment," she said.

Some home improvement projects were neglected at the expense of family adventures, but "I'm actually really happy because I have so many amazing memories of all the things we did together," she said.

Josh Seal had just become a certified interpreter when he was called upon shortly after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic to translate daily news briefings that were televised and streamed online.

"At first he was pretty nervous about that," Liz Seal said. "And then he said, 'You know what, I gotta roll up my sleeves and do this.'"

He had to learn the spelling of complicated medical terms. There was a sense of mutual respect between him and Dr. Nirav Shah, the former director of the Maine Center for Disease Control. He also signed for Democratic Gov. Janet Mills.

His employer, Pine Tree Society, issued a statement saying Seal created a lasting legacy with his Pine Tree Camp Dirigo Experience for deaf youth. "He made communication and understanding possible in countless situations as an interpreter, mentor and tireless advocate," the organization said.

"Josh always had ideas. He was a big planner, dreamer, thinker. He was always plotting out the next thing," said his wife, who is president of Maine Hands & Voices. Whenever he thought of a project, she would cheer him on and tell him to "make it happen," she said. "And he would."

After the shootings, Liz Seal spent the evening trying to get answers, knowing her husband and friends were at the cornhole tournament. A friend told her about gunfire and later, survivors who are deaf said they could feel the blasts, alerting to them that something was amiss. One of them pretended to be dead on the floor, and could sense every gunshot being discharged.

Of the nine deaf people present, four were killed and four were injured, she said. Only one survived with no injury.

It wasn't until noon, hours after the killings, that her brother was briefed and shared the news. Her two oldest kids saw the expression on her face and knew immediately what had happened.

"We just let it all out at that point," she said. "We held each other hard."

The end of the search for the gunman allowed the healing process to start, she said. Several thousand people attended vigils over the weekend, and this week kids are returning to schools after the stay-at-

home orders were lifted.

Liz Seal, however, was preparing herself to receive her husband's body from the medical examiner.

"I'm hoping that some of these things will give me closure but it's just still feeling like I'm waiting to wake up from a bad dream and he's gonna be there," she said. "I feel like when I see his body that will feel more like it's real. And I can have that closure to move ahead and move on."

On Monday, Josh Seal's sister gave birth to a daughter. They named her Olivia Joshua Skye.

"My sister-in-law told me when she held that baby, she just felt Josh with her and it soothed her in her heart because he was there in spirit," Liz Seal said. "And I held the baby and I felt it too."

Two hours of terror and now years of devastation for Acapulco's poor in Hurricane Otis aftermath

By MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

ACAPULCO, Mexico (AP) — Estela Sandoval Díaz was huddled in her tiny concrete bathroom, sure these were the final moments of her life, when Hurricane Otis ripped off her tin roof.

With it went clothing, savings, furniture, photos and 33 years of the life Sandoval built piece-by-piece on the forgotten fringes of Acapulco, Mexico.

Sandoval was among hundreds of thousands of people whose lives were torn apart when the fastest intensifying hurricane on record in the Eastern Pacific shredded the coastal city of 1 million, leaving at least 45 dead. The Category 5 hurricane damaged nearly all of Acapulco's homes, left bodies bobbing along the coastline and much of the city foraging for food.

While authorities were hard at work restoring order in Acapulco's tourist center — cutting through trees in front of high-rise hotels and restoring power — the city's poorest, like Sandoval, said they felt abandoned. She and hundreds of thousands others lived two hours of terror last week, and now face years of work to repair their already precarious lives.

"The government doesn't even know we exist," Sandoval said. "They've only ever taken care of the resort areas, the pretty places of Acapulco. They've always forgotten us."

It's a sentiment that has long simmered in the city but has grown as many accuse the government of leaving them to fend for themselves after Otis hit.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has deployed more than 10,000 troops to deal with the hurricane's aftermath along with 1,000 government workers to determine needs. He said 10,000 "packages" of appliances and other necessities — refrigerators, stoves, mattresses — had been collected and were ready to distribute to families in need.

"Everyone will be supported, count on us," he pledged last week.

But few of the dozens of people The Associated Press spoke to said they'd received aid from the government, nor were they expecting much.

Sandoval and her family have spent decades living a stone's throw away from the beachside high-rises and luxury stores lining Acapulco's chicest district, the Diamond Zone.

Living in a two-room concrete house with no potable water and unpaved roads, that glamor never reached their doorstep. Referred to by locals as the "sunken neighborhood," Viverista is always hit hardest by natural disasters.

Three years ago, Sandoval beamed with pride when, after 25 years of saving, she put a foot of concrete on the floor and a new metal roof on her house so it wouldn't flood every time it rained. But that seemed a lifetime away Friday as Sandoval and her children picked through their soggy belongings.

"I was so happy because finally I had a sturdy roof, and my house was finally beautiful. But now — this is the first time I've been able to cry — I don't know what we're going to do," the 59-year-old said. "I don't think I'll live another 20 years to fix it."

Their home was surrounded by ankle-deep putrid water. Sandoval, her husband and two neighbors were sleeping under a sheet of metal propped against the house. She picked through scraps in her bedroom,

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taking note of what was ruined and planning how to ration water and gas for cooking.

Mexico's government has tallied at least 220,000 homes damaged and says 47 people remain missing. Most residents expect the death toll to rise, based on the slow government response and overall devastation, with one city business leader estimating it will exceed 100.

Military, public security and forensics officials told the AP they were not permitted to provide details on the death toll or the search for bodies. Meanwhile, thousands of panicked family members desperately hunted for missing loved ones.

On Saturday, López Obrador blasted critics of his hurricane response, saying journalists and the political opposition had exaggerated casualties. He said Mexico's security minister would provide an update on the human toll "without lying."

"They don't care about people's pain, they want to hurt us. What they want is for there to be a lot of death so they can blame us," López Obrador said.

Otis intensified within hours from a tropical storm into the strongest hurricane to hit the Eastern Pacific coast, taking many by surprise. Many experts attributed the unanticipated burst of force to the effects of climate change, with warming seas acting as fuel for storms like Otis.

"We're seeing so many more cases of these just astonishing rapid intensification events," said climate scientist Jim Kossin. "This is exactly the kind of thing we would expect to find as the climate warms."

The aftermath of the storm has once again underscored the disproportionate effect the climate crisis is having on poor communities and countries.

Sandoval and her husband slept until the 165-mph (266-kph) winds and crash of trees falling woke them at midnight. They sprinted out of the house to a set of square-meter (yard) concrete bathrooms, clinging to the plastic doors the hurricane threatened to tear off.

When she emerged around 2 a.m., peering through a steady drizzle, Sandoval saw her furniture soaked and her fridge, stove and other possessions destroyed. She said she could "smell the sadness in the air."

With sparse food, water and gasoline, and no cellphone service, Sandoval and her family could do little more than scavenge for supplies in bare supermarkets. Avid supporters of López Obrador, they crossed their fingers he would follow through on his promise. They spent days waiting, but the only signs of government presence were navy helicopters circling overhead.

"When you're completely enveloped by something like this — so fragile, so violent — you ask yourself, when are they going to come?" she said.

Many others faced the same question.

Following the storm, the city descended into a state of lawlessness. Trees and rubble blocked the main road for a day, and no cellphone signal left its 1 million people effectively cut off from the world.

Without options, Sandoval and many others took basic goods like food and toilet paper from ransacked stores and funneled gasoline out of tubes from broken-down gas stations. Those with chronic illnesses scrambled to find medicine they needed to survive.

Residents foraging for food in warehouses Saturday said they waited hours in the beating sun for food and water from a government aid truck only to find there wasn't enough for them.

Children stood on roadsides waving empty water bottles and families screamed, "Help us! We're desperate!" at cars with shattered windshields and military trucks passing by.

Residents like Natividad Reynoso, whose business selling plants to hotels was wiped out by the storm, worried it would mean the long-term destruction of Acapulco's main economic engine.

"We're an Acapulco that lives off tourism," the 41-year-old said.

By the weekend, cellphone signal was being restored, aid was being distributed and the military cleared trees and rubble from the city center, a stark contrast with poor areas where chaos still reigned.

Fisherman Eleazar García Ramírez, 52, was still wrapping his mind around the devastation as he tinkered inside a boat with a cracked mast on the beach surrounded by the remains of boats and broken trees.

He has spent recent days diving into the ocean to pull out bloated bodies bobbing next to sunken boats,

he said.

He weathered the storm on a fishing boat his boss asked him to watch over, fearing that to refuse would cost him his job.

"This is what we survive off of, and there's not a lot of work in Acapulco," he said.

The majority of the dead he and others found were fishermen fearful of losing their livelihoods or yacht captains told by owners to stay with the boats, he said. Authorities said most of the bodies found in recent days had drowned.

García Ramirez and other fishermen pulled the boats onto the city's Manzanilla Beach when Otis was still a Category 2 storm. A friend was watching over a boat 20 meters (yards) up the beach.

The boat García Ramirez was in was pulled into the waves, when he heard screams of "help me!" as he clung to the boat's metal poles.

When he finally peered out into the dark night he saw his friend's boat floating alone at sea. His friend never appeared.

"It's sad because there are many people that didn't need to be on these boats, but their bosses decided that we're worth nothing," he said. "They're not interested in the well-being of their workers, all they care about is their own economic well-being."

Biden's Cabinet secretaries will push a divided Congress to send aid to Israel and Ukraine

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken will make the case Tuesday that the United States should immediately send aid to Israel and Ukraine, testifying at a Senate hearing as the administration's massive \$105 billion emergency aid request for conflicts in those countries and others has already hit roadblocks in the divided Congress.

President Joe Biden's Cabinet secretaries will be advocating for the foreign aid to a mostly friendly audience in the Senate, where majority Democrats and many Republicans support tying aid for the two countries together. But it faces much deeper problems in the Republican-led House, where new Speaker Mike Johnson has proposed cutting out the Ukraine aid and focusing on Israel alone, and cutting money for the Internal Revenue Service to pay for it.

The drastically narrowed House proposal, which would cost more than \$14 billion, faced immediate resistance among Senate Democrats -- and put pressure on Senate Republicans who support the Ukraine aid but are conscious of growing concerns about it within their party. The differing approaches signal problems ahead for the aid as both countries engage in long-simmering, defining conflicts that Biden and many U.S. lawmakers say could have fundamental ramifications for the rest of the world.

"Right now, America faces an unavoidable moment of truth: democracy and freedom are under attack around the globe in ways we have not seen since the end of the Cold War," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., shortly after House Republicans made their proposal public on Monday. He said Republicans should resist "the false allures of isolationism" as Russian President Vladimir Putin has worked to re-assert Russia as a global power and as Hamas has sought the total annihilation of Israel.

In prepared remarks for Tuesday's hearing, Senate Appropriations Chairwoman Patty Murray, D-Wash., will say that she and the panel's top Republican, Maine Sen. Susan Collins, are writing a bill that would include aid for both countries, as Biden has requested. The White House request also includes money for Taiwan as it faces threats from China and added dollars to manage the influx of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border.

"Make no mistake, we need to address all of these priorities as part of one package — because the reality is these issues are all connected, and they are all urgent," Murray will say.

Despite growing questions about the Ukraine aid within the Republican conference, Senate GOP Leader Mitch McConnell has forcefully advocated tying the aid for Ukraine and Israel together. He hosted Oksana Markarova, the Ukrainian ambassador to the United States, at an event in Kentucky on Monday and told

the audience, "this is a moment for swift and decisive action."

Markarova said at the event that "this is the time to double down" and that failing to aid Ukraine's war would embolden Putin and endanger the world.

"If we will not fight for democracy, then who will fight for democracy?" Markarova asked.

As they returned to Washington on Monday night, Senate Republicans who support the Ukraine aid were uncertain of the path forward. Further complicating the package, several of them have been negotiating a package of border security measures that would go beyond Biden's request, an attempt to help control the influx of migrants, include more money for the United States in the spending bill and perhaps convince more Republicans to vote for it.

Sen. John Thune of South Dakota, the No. 2 Senate Republican, said it could complicate Democrats' efforts to pass the two together if there were a bipartisan vote for the Israel aid alone in the House.

Thune reiterated his support for tying aid for the two countries together but said he is "open to suggestions."

Republican Sen. Joni Ernst of Iowa said she wants to see Ukraine aid passed, and "I don't care how it happens." She said she is open to the spending cuts that Republicans proposed for the Israel funding in the House.

In recent weeks, though, a growing group of Senate Republicans have joined the majority of House Republicans who are advocating to slow down or stop U.S. aid to Ukraine. Ohio Sen. J.D. Vance has been one of the most forceful opponents of the assistance, calling Ukraine's war against Putin and Russia "an endless conflict with no plan from the Biden administration."

The House could pass the Israel aid by the end of the week. In an interview on Fox News on Monday, Johnson said he would call Schumer to talk about the House bill. He said the legislation would be offset by the IRS funding because "we're not just going to print money and send it overseas, because the other concern we have that is overriding is our own strength as a nation, which is tied to our fiscal stability."

The top Democrat on the House Ways and Means Committee, New York Rep. Richard Neal, and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden, D-Ore., both immediately rebuked the cuts for the IRS.

" Hamas depends on sham charities and other illicit finance schemes to fund its operations, but this proposal would cut resources to IRS criminal investigators who are actively helping American allies stop terrorist financing and sanctions evaders," Wyden said.

In a statement, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre called the House proposal a "nonstarter."

"Playing political games that threaten the source of funding for Israel's self-defense — now and into the future — would set an unacceptable precedent that calls our commitment to one of our closest allies into question," she said.

An Israeli ministry, in a 'concept paper,' proposes transferring Gaza civilians to Egypt's Sinai

By AMY TEIBEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — An Israeli government ministry has drafted a wartime proposal to transfer the Gaza Strip's 2.3 million people to Egypt's Sinai peninsula, drawing condemnation from the Palestinians and worsening tensions with Cairo.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office played down the report compiled by the Intelligence Ministry as a hypothetical exercise — a "concept paper." But its conclusions deepened long-standing Egyptian fears that Israel wants to make Gaza into Egypt's problem, and revived for Palestinians memories of their greatest trauma — the uprooting of hundreds of thousands of people who fled or were forced from their homes during the fighting surrounding Israel's creation in 1948.

"We are against transfer to any place, in any form, and we consider it a red line that we will not allow to be crossed," Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, said of the report. "What happened in 1948 will not be allowed to happen again."

A mass displacement, Abu Rudeineh said, would be "tantamount to declaring a new war."

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So far more than 8,000 Palestinians, the vast majority of them civilians, have been killed since Israel went to war against Hamas after its Oct. 7 attack.

AIMED AT PRESERVING SECURITY FOR ISRAEL

The document is dated Oct. 13, six days after Hamas militants killed more than 1,400 people in southern Israel and took over 240 hostage in an attack that provoked a devastating Israeli war in Gaza. It was first published by Sicha Mekomit, a local news site.

In its report, the Intelligence Ministry — a junior ministry that conducts research but does not set policy — offered three alternatives “to effect a significant change in the civilian reality in the Gaza Strip in light of the Hamas crimes that led to the Sword of Iron war.”

The document’s authors deem this alternative to be the most desirable for Israel’s security.

The document proposes moving Gaza’s civilian population to tent cities in northern Sinai, then building permanent cities and an undefined humanitarian corridor. A security zone would be established inside Israel to block the displaced Palestinians from entering. The report did not say what would become of Gaza once its population is cleared out.

Egypt’s Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the report. But Egypt has made clear throughout this latest war that it does not want to take in a wave of Palestinian refugees.

Egypt has long feared that Israel wants to force a permanent expulsion of Palestinians into its territory, as happened during the war surrounding Israel’s independence. Egypt ruled Gaza between 1948 and 1967, when Israel captured the territory, along with the West Bank and east Jerusalem. The vast majority of Gaza’s population are the descendants of Palestinian refugees uprooted from what is now Israel.

Egypt’s president, Abdel Fattah El-Sissi, has said a mass influx of refugees from Gaza would eliminate the Palestinian nationalist cause. It would also risk bringing militants into Sinai, where they might launch attacks on Israel, he said. That would endanger the countries’ 1979 peace treaty. He proposed that Israel instead house Palestinians in its Negev Desert, which neighbors the Gaza Strip, until it ends its military operations.

Yoel Guzansky, a senior fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv, said the paper threatened to damage relations with a key partner.

“If this paper is true, this is a grave mistake. It might cause a strategic rift between Israel and Egypt,” said Guzansky, who said he has consulted for the ministry in the past. “I see it either as ignorance or someone who wants to negatively affect Israel-Egypt relations, which are very important at this stage.”

Egypt is a valuable partner that cooperates behind the scenes with Israel, he said. If it is seen as overtly assisting an Israeli plan like this, especially involving the Palestinians, it could be “devastating to its stability.”

QUESTIONS OF LEGITIMACY — AND OTHER POSSIBLE DESTINATIONS

Egypt would not necessarily be the Palestinian refugees’ last stop. The document speaks about Egypt, Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates supporting the plan either financially, or by taking in uprooted residents of Gaza as refugees and in the long term as citizens. Canada’s “lenient” immigration practices also make it a potential resettlement target, the document adds.

At first glance, this proposal “is liable to be complicated in terms of international legitimacy,” the document acknowledges. “In our assessment, fighting after the population is evacuated would lead to fewer civilian casualties compared to what could be expected if the population were to remain.”

An Israeli official familiar with the document said it isn’t binding and that there was no substantive discussion of it with security officials. Netanyahu’s office called it a “concept paper, the likes of which are prepared at all levels of the government and its security agencies.”

“The issue of the ‘day after’ has not been discussed in any official forum in Israel, which is focused at this time on destroying the governing and military capabilities of Hamas,” the prime minister’s office said.

The document dismisses the two other options: reinstating the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority as the sovereign in Gaza, or supporting a local regime. Among other reasons, it rejects them as unable to deter attacks on Israel.

The reinstatement of the Palestinian Authority, which was ejected from Gaza after a weeklong 2007 war

that put Hamas in power, would be “an unprecedented victory of the Palestinian national movement, a victory that will claim the lives of thousands of Israeli civilians and soldiers, and does not safeguard Israel’s security,” the document says.

Israel’s economy recovered from previous wars with Hamas, but this one might go longer, hit harder

By AMY TEIBEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Just last month, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu predicted a new era of peace and prosperity in the Middle East, based on growing acceptance of Israel within the region.

Today, with the Israel-Hamas war in its fourth week, that vision is in tatters.

The mobilization of 360,000 reservists and the evacuation of 250,000 Israelis from their homes, according to numbers provided by the Israeli military, has upended many businesses. Restaurants and stores have emptied. Airlines have canceled most flights to Israel, and tourists have called off trips. A main natural gas field has been shut down, farms have been destroyed for lack of workers and businesses have furloughed tens of thousands of workers.

Israel has vowed to crush the Gaza Strip’s ruling Hamas group, which killed 1,400 people and took more than 240 others hostage in an Oct. 7 rampage in southern Israel. Israeli airstrikes have flattened entire neighborhoods in Gaza and killed more than 8,000 people, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza.

Israel’s economy bounced back after previous wars with Hamas, but this round could last longer, possibly months, because the military’s self-declared mission is to end Hamas rule, not just contain the militants.

Escalation of the conflict is a tangible threat. Israel is already engaged in low-level fighting on three additional fronts – Lebanon, the West Bank and Syria. A long and possibly multi-front conflict could make it more difficult for the economy to recover than in the past. And even before the war, Israel’s economy was smarting from Netanyahu’s controversial proposal to weaken the judiciary.

Israel’s Finance Ministry has presented an economic aid plan that includes \$1 billion in grants for businesses hurt by the war. Critics say it doesn’t go far enough and have demanded the redirection of some of the billions of dollars allocated to pet projects of ultra-Orthodox and pro-settler parties under coalition agreements.

This week, a group of 300 leading economists called on Netanyahu and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich to “come to your senses!”

“The grave blow that Israel was dealt requires a fundamental change in national priorities and a massive rechanneling of funds to deal with war damage, aid to victims, and the rehabilitation of the economy,” they said in a letter, predicting wartime expenses would soar into the billions of dollars.

They urged Netanyahu and Smotrich to “immediately suspend funding to any activities that are not crucial to the wartime effort and the rehabilitation of the economy — and first and foremost, funds budgeted for coalition agreements.”

Smotrich, leader of a pro-settler party, told Israel’s Army Radio last week that “whatever doesn’t involve the wartime effort and the state’s resilience will be halted.” But skepticism remains.

Financial barometers paint a bleak picture. The local currency, the shekel, has reached a 14-year low, while the benchmark stock index is down about 10% this year. The tech industry, the engine of Israel’s economic growth, started bleeding even before the war began.

Fitch Ratings, Moody’s Investors Service and S&P all warned in recent days that an escalation of the conflict could result in a downgrade of Israel’s sovereign debt rating.

Israel’s central bank has cut its 2023 economic growth forecast to 2.3% from 3% — assuming the fighting is contained in the country’s south.

The central bank has earmarked \$30 billion to shore up the shekel. At a news briefing this week, central bank Gov. Amir Yaron emphasized the resilience of an economy that he characterized as “robust and stable.”

“The Israeli economy knew how to recover from difficult periods in the past and return rapidly to prosperity, and I have no doubt that it will do so this time as well,” Yaron said.

The country entered the war with foreign exchange reserves of some \$200 billion. Additionally, the Biden administration wants Congress to approve \$14 billion in emergency aid for Israel, most of it military funding, in addition to the \$3.8 billion it receives annually.

At the start of the war, Israel ordered Chevron to halt production at the Tamar natural gas field to lower the vulnerability to prospective missiles. Energy expert Amit Mor estimated the shutdown could cost Israel \$200 million a month in lost revenue.

If the Hamas-allied Hezbollah militia in Lebanon joins the war in full force, that could affect production at two other fields, including Israel's largest, Mor said. But he doesn't think the war would have a chilling effect on further energy exploration.

"The players are aware of the political risk. It's existed for a long time," he said.

Even before war broke out, Israel — an entrepreneurial dynamo with an economy rivaling countries in Western Europe — was struggling. Its coffers, once swollen by tech investments, were clobbered by the proposed judicial overhaul, which seeks to dilute the powers of the country's courts. The government says the unelected judiciary has too much power, but supporters regard it as the most serious check on politicians' powers. Concerns about Israel's governance, rising inflation, and a worldwide slowdown in tech investments last year also weighed on the economy.

Investments in Israeli startups, which attracted a record \$27 billion in 2021, sank by almost half last year. With investors spooked by the judicial proposal and the mass protests it sparked, investments plunged an additional 68% in the first half of this year, compared to the same period last year, according to Israel's Start-Up Nation Policy Institute.

With tech accounting for 48% of Israel's exports, its prosperity is crucial to the economy.

The government's Israel Innovation Authority did a pulse check of startups during the war and found that the slowdown in capital-raising, along with employees' call-up to reserve duty, "pose a challenge to a significant number of high-tech companies," Chief Executive Dror Bin said.

"There are companies in danger of being closed within the next few months," Bin said.

Still, Yaron's emphasis on the Israeli economy's resilience has a historical basis. The Bank of Israel calculated that the 2014 war in Gaza cost the economy 0.4% of gross domestic product, and the 2006 war in Lebanon pared 0.5%, said Professor Michel Strawczynski, an economist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and former director of the research department at the central bank.

"I'm expecting a big blow in the last quarter of 2023. It's hard to say how bad, but I wouldn't be surprised if it contracts 15% in annualized terms," Strawczynski said. "But slowly, activity will resume" as economic activity pent up in wartime is released, he said.

If the war achieves its objectives, "then we will see a rebound in activity, though we don't know when it will be," Strawczynski said. "Things will also depend on how many fronts there are. But the important thing is length."

UAW reaches deal with General Motors that ends strikes against Detroit automakers pending votes

By TOM KRISHER Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — The United Auto Workers announced Monday that it reached a tentative deal with General Motors, capping a whirlwind few days in which GM, Ford and Stellantis agreed to generous terms that would end the union's six weeks of targeted strikes, pending approval of the rank and file.

The deal UAW President Shawn Fain closed on his 55th birthday is modeled on the ones agreed to with crosstown rivals Ford and Jeep-maker Stellantis, and would give workers higher raises than they've received in years. If approved, it would also claw back some concessions the UAW agreed to almost two decades ago, when the automakers were in desperate financial shape.

Analysts say Fain's combative stance with the companies paid off for the workers, winning them pay and cost-of-living raises that would top 30% by the time the contracts expire in April 2028. Workers would get an immediate 11% pay bump upon ratification.

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But analysts say the deals run the risk of forcing the automakers to raise prices beyond those charged by competitors with nonunion factories. And they come at a time when the auto industry is trying to fund a costly and historic shift away from the internal combustion engine to electric vehicles.

"The three tentative agreements show the UAW's power and the car companies' weakness," said Erik Gordon, a business and law professor at the University of Michigan. "The companies are trying to figure out how to transition to EVs without losing too many billions of dollars, and now face a huge bump in labor costs for the products that will finance the EV transition."

Fain, the first UAW president directly elected by members in the union's 88-year history, campaigned against the union establishment by telling workers the companies are the enemy and the UAW would be at war with them. He decried what he called corporate greed, outrageous CEO salaries and a system where the union acted as a business partner with the automakers.

"We wholeheartedly believe that our strike squeezed every last dime out of General Motors," Fain said in a video Monday on X, formerly Twitter.

Fain said the agreements are large enough for the UAW to use them to recruit new members at nonunion factories owned by Tesla, Toyota and others.

"One of our biggest goals coming out of this historic contract victory is to organize like we've never organized before," Fain said Sunday night while announcing details of the contract with Ford. "When we return to the bargaining table in 2028, it won't be just with the Big Three."

The GM pact came after the UAW added another plant to the list of those on strike against the company, ramping up the pressure to bargain on the last Detroit holdout. About 4,000 workers at GM's Spring Hill, Tennessee, complex — the company's largest — walked out Saturday night, threatening production of four vehicles and parts that supply nine other factories as far afield as Mexico.

Seeking to bring the talks to an end and facing an estimated \$200 million per week in losses, GM CEO Mary Barra went to the union's Detroit headquarters to finalize the deal.

It came during a furious few days of agreements that still need to be ratified by 146,000 UAW members at all three companies. Ford agreed to a new contract last week and was followed by Stellantis on Saturday, which raised the pressure on GM to settle for essentially the same terms.

Union members could still vote down the deals, and there is some sentiment for holding out to get more. But the contracts seem likely to bring labor peace to the domestic auto industry.

Fain, though, didn't get everything he wanted. He started off seeking 40% raises and even asked for a 32-hour work week for 40 hours of pay.

Mike Huerta, president of a striking UAW local in Lansing, Michigan, was hesitant to celebrate the deal before seeing more information, saying "the devil's in the details."

"Our bargainers did their job. They're going to present us with something and then we get to tell them it was good enough or it wasn't," said Huerta.

Huerta said Monday that it's been a tough few nights on the picket lines with dropping temperatures and rain. "We were ready to continue if we needed to," he said. "And if we do turn it down, we'll be ready to go back again."

Shammira Marshall, a forklift driver at GM's parts warehouse in Van Buren Township, near Detroit, said the holidays will be a bit nicer this year thanks to the tentative deal.

"Christmas, Thanksgiving, the New Year — that'll help," she said of her expected raise.

President Joe Biden praised the deals to end strikes that had threatened the country's economic growth. He joined striking workers on a picket line last month and spoke to Fain on Monday to offer congratulations. The deals, he said, marked a victory for collective bargaining: "These agreements ensure the iconic Big Three can still lead the world in quality and innovation."

Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University in Detroit, said the contracts will cost the automakers billions and force them to cut costs elsewhere or raise prices. Ford said earlier that its deal with the union would raise labor costs by \$850 to \$900 per vehicle.

Yet with serious competition from nonunion automakers, GM, Ford and Stellantis could have trouble raising prices, Masters said.

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A study this month by Moody's Investors Service found that annual labor costs could rise by \$1.1 billion for Stellantis, \$1.2 billion for GM and \$1.4 billion for Ford in the final year of the contract. The study assumed a 20% increase in hourly labor costs.

Wells Fargo Analyst Colin Langan estimated that the contracts would drive up the companies' hourly total labor costs by about 30%, to \$76.08 at Ford, \$78.15 at GM and \$75.63 at Stellantis. Analysts have said that foreign automakers with U.S. factories generally have hourly labor costs of \$45 to \$60, which includes what they spend on worker benefits.

With increased costs and geopolitical uncertainty, Detroit automakers face an increasingly difficult future, Masters said.

EVs may not be as profitable as combustion engine vehicles for quite a long time, making it harder for the companies to fund the transition, Masters said. "We could very well look at a situation four or five years from now in which these companies are not profitable, and they haven't been able to make this transition as they had hoped."

But Barra, whose company already has started to cut other costs, said Monday that the deal works for GM and "reflects the contributions of the team while enabling us to continue to invest in our future and provide good jobs in the U.S.,"

The union contends that the companies are making billions of dollars in profits and can afford to pay workers to make up for previous concessions. It says labor expenses are only 4% to 5% of a vehicle's costs. With Stellantis yet to report third-quarter numbers, the three companies combined have posted net income in 2023 of about \$24.5 billion through September.

At GM, workers would get cost-of-living pay that would bring raises to a compounded 33%, with top assembly plant workers making more than \$42 per hour. Top-scale workers there now make around \$32 per hour.

Starting wages for new GM hires would rise by 70% including cost-of-living adjustments, to more than \$30 per hour.

Some wage tiers were eliminated, and it would take just three years for new workers to get to the top of the assembly pay scale, the union said.

The UAW began targeted strikes against all three automakers on Sept. 15 after its contracts with the companies expired. At the peak, about 46,000 UAW workers were on strike — about one-third of the union's 146,000 members at all three companies.

Lawyers argue whether the Constitution's 'insurrection' clause blocks Trump from the 2024 ballot

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Colorado lawyers seeking to disqualify former President Donald Trump from running for the White House again argued on Monday that his role in the January 2021 assault on the U.S. Capitol runs afoul of the Constitution's insurrection clause, opening a hearing that could break new ground in constitutional law.

Attorney Eric Olson recounted Trump's violent rhetoric preceding the Jan. 6 attack and his encouraging a crowd that came within "40 feet" of the vice president when it stormed the Capitol. He said Trump "summoned and organized the mob."

"We are here because Trump claims, after all that, that he has the right to be president again," Olson said. "But our Constitution, the shared charter of our nation, says he cannot do so."

Trump's legal team and presidential campaign assailed the lawsuit as little more than an attempt by Democrats to derail his attempt to reclaim his old job. Trump is so far dominating the Republican presidential primary.

Before the hearing on the lawsuit began, Trump's lawyers filed a motion to have the judge recuse herself because she had donated in the past to a liberal group in the state. She said no. The campaign also noted the current lawsuit was filed by a liberal nonprofit in a state that voted for Democrat Joe Biden in 2020.

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"They send money to these dark money groups — they go to a Democratic jurisdiction and a Democratic judge," Trump spokesman Jason Miller said.

Monday's hearing in Colorado state court is in the first of two lawsuits that could end up reaching the U.S. Supreme Court. On Thursday, the Minnesota Supreme Court hears oral arguments in a similar case.

Ultimately, either the Colorado or Minnesota case is expected to land at the U.S. Supreme Court, which has never ruled on the Civil War-era provision. Section Three of the 14th Amendment prohibits those who swore an oath to uphold the Constitution and then "engaged in insurrection" against it from holding higher office.

The Colorado testimony began with details about the Jan. 6 assault that was intended to stop Congress from certifying Biden's election win. Witnesses included some who were there.

Officer Daniel Hodges of Washington's Metropolitan Police Department recalled being beaten and having someone try to gouge out his eye as he defended the Capitol from the rioters. Footage from the body camera he was wearing that day was shown in court.

"I was afraid for my life and my colleagues," Hodges said. "I was afraid for the people in the U.S. Capitol building — congressmen, the vice president and what these people would do to them and how it would affect our democracy."

Democratic Rep. Eric Swalwell testified that members of the House watched the attack on their phones with mounting alarm as they grabbed gas masks and contemplated how to defend themselves. He said they all followed Trump's messages on Twitter carefully.

"We connected the president's tweets to our own safety in the chamber and also the integrity of the proceedings," said Swalwell, who was manager of the House's impeachment of Trump for the attack and also filed a federal lawsuit against him for inciting the riot.

Former Capitol Police Officer Winston Pigeon testified about several hours of what he called "hand-to-hand combat" with Trump supporters storming the Capitol. The plaintiffs' lawyers played several videos capturing the day's violence, as well as a montage of Trump tweets and statements falsely blaming election fraud for his 2020 loss, culminating in his heated speech to the crowd on Jan. 6.

The case will pivot on whether the Jan. 6 attack meets the meaning of "insurrection" in the 14th Amendment. It will also hinge on whether Trump's action meets the definition of "engaging" and whether the rarely used provision was meant to apply to the presidency.

Trump's lawyers contend the former president was simply exercising his free speech rights to warn about election results he did not believe were legitimate. They noted cases where the congressional authors of Section Three declined to use it more than a century ago against people who only rhetorically backed the confederacy.

His lawyers said none of the issues are simple in a provision of the Constitution that hasn't been used in 150 years. In court filings, they said the insurrection clause was never meant to apply to the office of president, which is not mentioned in the text, unlike "Senator or Representative in Congress" and "elector of President and Vice President."

"This is a legal Hail Mary by the Democrats," said Mike Davis, an attorney who appeared with representatives of the Trump campaign outside court before the trial began. "This case is going to fail."

An attorney representing Trump, Scott Gessler, called the lawsuit "anti-democratic" and noted that at least one other presidential candidate — socialist labor organizer Eugene Debs — ran from prison without people trying to disqualify him.

A former Colorado secretary of state, Gessler said there is an informal principle in election law known as "the rule of democracy," which essentially means to "err on the side of letting people vote" whenever there is an ambiguity.

At the start of Monday's hearing — held in a large downtown Denver courtroom filled with attorneys, journalists and several armed sheriff's deputies — the judge rejected the motion by Trump's attorneys that asked her to step aside because she once contributed money to a liberal group.

Trump's campaign said it had filed a motion for the judge, Sarah B. Wallace, to recuse herself because she had made a \$100 donation in October 2022 to the Colorado Turnout Project, a group whose website

says it was formed to “prevent violent insurrections” such as the Jan. 6 attack.

She was appointed to the bench in August of that year by Gov. Jared Polis, a Democrat. Wallace denied the motion, saying she didn’t recall the donation, made before she formally took the bench, until the motion was filed and has no preconceptions about the legal issues in the case.

“I will not allow this legal proceeding to turn into a circus,” she said.

Messi wins record-extending 8th Ballon d’Or, Bonmati takes women’s award

PARIS (AP) — The list reads 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2019, 2021, and now 2023.

Lionel Messi won the men’s Ballon d’Or for a record-extending eighth time on Monday after fulfilling his life’s ambition by leading Argentina to the World Cup title in Qatar last year.

Adding to his silverware the one major trophy that eluded him in his storied career was the decisive factor in an otherwise quite mundane season — for his standards — at Paris Saint-Germain.

The 36-year-old Messi won ahead of Manchester City forward Erling Haaland and his former PSG teammate Kylian Mbappe.

Messi thanked his Argentina coach, teammates and staff for making his victory possible.

“Tonight I’m enjoying myself. It’s a pleasure that will never leave me, and I hope to be able to enjoy it for many years to come,” Messi said through a translator. “Becoming world champion was the title we were missing. I’d like to thank everyone who helped make Argentina the world champion team.”

Messi also paid tribute to the late Diego Maradona, who also helped Argentina win the World Cup, back in 1986.

“This title and this trophy,” Messi said, “I share them with you and all our Argentina comrades.”

Aitana Bonmati won the women’s award for guiding Spain to victory at the Women’s World Cup in August. She also helped Barcelona win the Women’s Champions League and Spanish league.

A year after missing out on the shortlist for the 2022 Ballon d’Or, and despite leaving top-level European soccer behind, Messi has recovered his crown.

He won the sport’s biggest individual prize due to his tremendous World Cup. In Qatar, Messi was involved in 10 goals for Argentina, scoring seven and assisting three. He scored twice in the final against France.

His final season with PSG was less shiny. Although PSG won a record-extending 11th French league, it again exited the Champions League in the round of 16.

Nobody else has won more than five Ballon d’Or. Cristiano Ronaldo has five, and Michel Platini, Johan Cruyff and Marco van Basten each won it three times.

Since moving to Inter Miami in the United States, Messi has already picked up his first silverware there by inspiring the team to victory in the U.S. Leagues Cup.

Messi’s latest win marked the first time a Major League Soccer-based player got such recognition. Messi received the trophy from former Manchester United star David Beckham, who is one of the owners of his new club.

“I’m very happy with the decisions I’ve made and to be with Miami,” Messi said.

He succeeded Karim Benzema.

Mbappe hoped another Frenchman could win the Ballon d’Or after he scored a hat trick in the World Cup final, though France lost in a penalty shootout.

Haaland led City to a treble of trophies last season — Champions League, English Premier League, FA Cup — while scoring 52 goals.

Bonmati had already been awarded UEFA best women’s player and the Golden Ball for the top Women’s World Cup player. She scored three times and assisted twice at the tournament.

She followed in the footsteps of her teammate Alexia Putellas, who took the past two awards.

Bonmati won ahead of Sam Kerr and Salma Paralluelo.

“We are a country that lives football, intensely,” Bonmati said. “We have a unique talent in Spain.”

For the first time last year, the trophy awarded by France Football magazine was based on achievements from the past season. It was previously awarded based on performances through a calendar year. Stanley

Matthews won the first Ballon d'Or in 1956.

The women's trophy was created in 2018, and both were canceled in 2020 because of the pandemic.

In other awards, the best under-21 player was Jude Bellingham, while Haaland won the Gerd Müller award for the best striker of the year.

The Lev Yashin award for best goalkeeper went to Emiliano Martinez. In addition to his trophy, the Argentina goalkeeper collected boos and whistles from the audience at the Theatre du Chatelet that included Mbappe and France coach Didier Deschamps.

Martinez was criticized for the excessive tone of his World Cup celebrations. He carried a doll with Mbappe's face on it while standing alongside teammate Messi as Argentina paraded the trophy back home. Martinez, who also made a crude gesture after winning the Golden Glove award for best goalkeeper, was filmed mocking Mbappe in the team dressing room after the game.

The humanitarian prize named after the late Brazil midfielder Socrates went to Vinicius Junior, for his involvement in the foundation he set up for underprivileged children. The Real Madrid player, who has been the target of racist abuse in the Spanish league, pledged to keep up the fight against racism.

Biden administration is moving toward a narrower student loan relief targeting groups of borrowers

By COLLIN BINKLEY and SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is moving toward a narrower student loan relief plan that would target specific groups of borrowers — those with soaring interest, for example — rather than a sweeping plan like the one the Supreme Court rejected in June.

The Education Department on Monday released a draft of new federal rules paving the way for a second attempt at student loan relief. The proposal targets groups that are seen as especially vulnerable, focusing on those who owe so much, or make so little income, that they otherwise may never repay their loans.

Though full details are likely months away, the department says it wants to cancel some or all student debt for: borrowers whose balances exceed what they originally owed; those who have loans that entered repayment 25 or more years ago; those who used loans to attend career-training programs that led to "unreasonable" debt loads or insufficient earnings; those who are eligible for other loan forgiveness programs but did not apply.

A fifth group is also being discussed — "those who are experiencing financial hardship that the current student loan system does not currently adequately address."

"President Biden and I are committed to helping borrowers who've been failed by our country's broken and unaffordable student loan system," Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said in a statement. "We are fighting to ensure that student debt does not stand in the way of opportunity or prevent borrowers from realizing the benefits of their higher education."

President Joe Biden's initial plan was broader. It would have canceled up to \$20,000 in federal student loans for those with annual incomes below \$125,000 or couples below \$250,000. But after that was rejected by the court's conservative majority, he called on the Education Department to try again using a different legal basis.

The new proposal aims to tackle issues that are seen as some of the biggest culprits behind skyrocketing debt.

It would help counter interest that snowballs beyond borrowers' original balances. It would offer relief to borrowers who attended for-profit college programs with poor outcomes. It would also help older borrowers who took out loans decades ago and struggle to make payments.

The department says it will continue to refine the proposal as it goes through a federal rulemaking process. The public will be able to provide written feedback next year.

The draft proposal would give the department authority to wipe away federal student loans entirely for borrowers in some categories.

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For those who started repaying loans more than 25 years ago, the proposal says that “the secretary may waive the outstanding balance of a loan” — amounting to total cancellation. It’s the same for borrowers who are eligible for other cancellation programs but haven’t applied.

Loans used to attend low-value college programs would also be wiped away. Borrowers would fall into that category if they attended a program that fails new standards outlined in a separate federal rule known as gainful employment.

For those with snowballing interest, the proposal would reset their loans back to the original balance, effectively canceling unpaid interest.

Even a more limited plan for relief is sure to draw fierce opposition from Republicans, who see cancellation as an unfair burden on taxpayers.

The latest attempt rests on the Higher Education Act of 1965, a wide-reaching law that gives the education secretary power to “compromise, waive or release” certain debts. But the law is unclear on how the secretary can wield that authority, creating a legal gray area that has been the subject of debate since Biden took office.

The proposal aims to settle the dispute by creating new federal rules detailing cases that merit cancellation. Before the rules can be enacted, they must be weighed by a committee of government outsiders in a process known as negotiated rulemaking. The new draft will be taken up when the committee meets next week.

The committee is made up of negotiators who represent a range of viewpoints on student loans. It includes students and officials from a range of colleges, along with loan servicers, state officials and advocates including the NAACP.

Meetings began earlier this month and are scheduled to continue into December.

At the end of the process, negotiators will vote on a proposed rule. If they reach consensus, the department will move forward with it. If they don’t, the agency will propose its own plan, which can be finalized after a public comment period.

Biden called for a plan to help “as many borrowers as possible,” but his administration seems to be moving away from the type of mass cancellation that he promised in August 2022.

That plan was estimated to cost \$400 billion. It’s unclear how much the second proposal will cost.

In a separate action on Monday, the Education Department moved to correct errors by a student loan servicer that failed to send billing statements on time.

The department is withholding \$7.2 million in payment to the loan servicer MOHELA after finding that it failed to send timely billing statements to 2.5 million borrowers recently. In some cases, borrowers received their bills within seven days of their due date. As a result, the department said, 800,000 borrowers were delinquent on their payments.

The department ordered MOHELA to put all affected borrowers into forbearance — a temporary hold on payments — until the issue is resolved.

Federal student loan payments resumed in October for the first time since the start of the pandemic. Some in the industry have warned of potential problems as understaffed loan servicers bring millions of borrowers back into repayment at the same time.

Ivanka Trump testimony delayed to Nov. 8, will follow dad Donald Trump on stand at civil fraud trial

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Ivanka Trump’s testimony at her father’s New York civil fraud trial is being delayed until next week so there is sufficient time for her to be questioned, a judge said Monday.

Former President Donald Trump’s eldest daughter had been set to take the witness stand on Friday, when the Manhattan trial typically meets for a half-day session, but lawyers in the case said her testimony is likely to take a full day, if not longer.

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Judge Arthur Engoron, who last week rejected Ivanka Trump's bid to avoid testifying, said she will now appear on Nov. 8. The judge had floated the idea of making Friday a full-day court session, but Donald Trump's lawyers said they couldn't do that because of other commitments.

"I think we're all OK with Ivanka on Wednesday the 8th," Engoron said in court after discussing the matter with state lawyers and Donald Trump's defense team.

The scheduling change now puts Ivanka Trump on the witness stand at the end of a blockbuster stretch in a case that threatens to disrupt her family's real estate empire.

She'll be testifying hours before her father, the 2024 Republican front-runner, holds a campaign rally in Miami near the televised debate he's skipping with rivals for the party's presidential nomination.

New York Attorney General Letitia James sued Donald Trump, his company and top executives — including sons Eric and Donald Trump Jr. — last year, alleging they conspired to exaggerate his wealth on financial statements that were used to secure loans and make deals.

Ivanka Trump, a former executive at her father's Trump Organization, was originally listed as a defendant in James' lawsuit, but an appeals court dismissed her from the case in June, saying claims against her were too old.

Donald Trump and the other defendants have denied wrongdoing. Donald Trump 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.

Originally scheduled to precede her father on the witness stand, Ivanka Trump will now follow him as the final witness called by James' lawyers. Donald Trump Jr. and Eric Trump are scheduled to testify on Wednesday and Thursday. Donald Trump is expected on the witness stand on Nov. 6.

Following Ivanka Trump's testimony, the defense will start calling witnesses. Trump's lawyers listed 127 names on a witness list submitted before the trial began Oct. 2. Some overlap state witnesses.

Ivanka Trump left her job as a Trump Organization executive vice president in January 2017, joining her father's presidential administration as an unpaid adviser. After Donald Trump exited the White House in 2021, she moved to Florida.

Ivanka Trump fought a subpoena to testify at the civil fraud trial, arguing through a lawyer that the state failed to properly serve her and that she shouldn't be forced to testify because she isn't a party to the case and doesn't live in New York. She could still appeal Engoron's ruling that requires her to take the witness stand.

Ivanka Trump's lawyer, Bennet Moskowitz, told Engoron at a hearing Friday that state lawyers "just don't have jurisdiction over her." One of Donald Trump's lawyers, Christopher Kise, argued that state lawyers "just want another free-for-all on another of President Trump's children."

State lawyers countered 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, ordering Ivanka Trump to testify, cited documents showing she 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," he 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 a Doral, Florida, golf resort and a hotel and condo skyscraper in Chicago, according to court filings.

According to James' office, Ivanka Trump retained a financial interest in Trump Organization operations even after leaving for the White House, including an interest in the now-sold Washington hotel.

In court papers that included emails and other documents, 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.

Putin claims without proof that airport riots targeting Israelis were staged from Ukraine

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin sought Monday to deflect blame from the Kremlin for a riot in the southern region of Dagestan that targeted a flight from Israel, charging without evidence that Ukrainian agents of Western spy agencies were behind the rampage.

More than 20 people were hurt — none Israelis — in the clashes Sunday night that Putin cast as part of U.S. efforts to weaken Russia.

Hundreds of angry men, some carrying banners with antisemitic slogans, rushed onto the tarmac of the airport in Makhachkala, the capital of the predominantly Muslim region, looking for Israeli passengers on the flight from Tel Aviv.

Police officers and civilians were injured and two of them were in critical condition, regional health authorities said. More than 80 people were detained in the unrest, according to police. Russia's Investigative Committee has opened a criminal probe on charges of organizing mass unrest.

U.S. National Security Council spokesman John Kirby called Putin's allegation that Western entities were behind the violence "classic Russian rhetoric."

"The West had nothing to do with this," he added, criticizing Putin for not doing more to condemn the violence, which he described as "a chilling demonstration of hate."

Russia has issued carefully calibrated criticism of both sides in the war between Israel and Hamas, a conflict that is giving Moscow new opportunities to advance its role as a global power broker and challenge Western efforts to isolate it over Ukraine.

Speaking to top government officials in televised comments, Putin said the Israel-Hamas war had been triggered by "the terrorist attack against peaceful citizens of Israel and other countries" but said that the Israeli response indiscriminately targeted civilians "who have nowhere to run and nowhere to hide."

Video and photos on social media showed some in the crowd waving Palestinian flags and shouting "Allahu akbar!" or "God is great," as they broke into the airport terminal. Some held handwritten banners saying, "Child killers are not welcome in Dagestan" and "We're against Jewish refugees."

Some rushed onto the tarmac Sunday night and surrounded the jet belonging to the Russian carrier Red Wings, only to find it empty. Others stopped a bus carrying passengers from the flight from Israel, including some children who underwent medical treatment and their parents, and started examining their passports. They eventually let them go after some passengers on the bus who had dual Russian and Israeli citizenship showed their Russian passports, according to Russian media reports.

It took the authorities several hours to disperse the mob, which hurled stones at police.

Putin avoided any assessment of the authorities' response to the airport's seizure but launched a new attack against the U.S. on Monday, blaming it for sowing chaos in the Middle East and fueling the fighting in Ukraine.

"The ruling elites of the U.S. and its satellites are the main beneficiaries of the global instability," Putin said. "They are earning their bloody rent from it."

Without offering evidence, he also accused "agents of Western special services" in Ukraine of using social networks to provoke the rampages in Dagestan to weaken Russia.

"I'm not certain if everyone in the U.S. leadership is aware of that," he added. "It wouldn't hurt if they run a probe into what their special services have been doing in Ukraine, trying to inspire pogroms in Russia. They are real scum, it's impossible to call them otherwise."

Russia's state news agency RIA Novosti cited Dagestan Gov. Sergei Melikov as saying that the unrest was coordinated in a Telegram channel run by "traitors" based in Ukraine, with the goal of destabilizing Dagestan and fueling unrest.

Some local Telegram channels had said before the unrest that "refugees from Israel" were coming to Dagestan. Following some of those posts, a crowd reportedly gathered outside a hotel in the Dagestani city of Khasavyurt on Saturday, searching for Israeli nationals staying in the hotel, but left after not finding any.

Following the Dagestan unrest, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Israel "expects

the Russian law enforcement authorities to protect the safety of all Israeli citizens and Jews wherever they may be and to act resolutely against the rioters and against the wild incitement directed against Jews and Israelis.”

The Israeli Ambassador to Moscow, Alexander Ben Zvi, told the RTVI news outlet that no passengers on the flight, which included Israelis, Russians and people with dual citizenship, were hurt.

The Makhachkala airport resumed operations at 2 p.m. Monday. Some Russian airlines offer flights from Israel to Makhachkala with a subsequent connection to Moscow, a cheaper option compared to direct flights.

In the wake of the rampage, Israel’s National Security Council and the Foreign Ministry said they have updated the travel warning to the highest Level 4 for Dagestan and other regions in southern Russia, advising Israelis to avoid visiting them and urging all those currently there to leave.

Ex-cop who fired into Breonna Taylor’s apartment in flawed, fatal raid goes on trial again

By DYLAN LOVAN Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — A former Louisville police officer who fired into Breonna Taylor’s apartment the night she was killed is going on trial in federal court this week for violating Taylor’s civil rights during the botched 2020 raid.

The trial will mark a second attempt by prosecutors to convict Brett Hankison for his actions on the night Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman, was shot to death by police after they knocked down the door of her apartment. Hankison was acquitted in a state trial last year.

Jury selection lasted all day Monday and will continue Tuesday morning. Lawyers are working to select 16 from a pool of about 50 potential jurors.

Taylor was shot to death by officers who were executing a drug search warrant, which was later found to be flawed. Taylor’s boyfriend fired a single shot that hit one of the officers as they came through the door, and officers returned fire, striking Taylor in her hallway multiple times. The other 32 bullets fired in the raid came from police, investigators determined.

When gunfire erupted, Hankison ran to the side of the apartment and sprayed bullets through Taylor’s windows, later saying he thought he saw a figure with a rifle. None of the rounds he fired hit anyone, despite straying into another apartment where a couple with a child lived. Officers found no drugs or long guns in Taylor’s apartment.

Hankison is one of four officers who were charged by the U.S. Department of Justice last year with violating Taylor’s civil rights. The two counts of civil rights violations against him carry a maximum penalty of life in prison if he is convicted.

Taylor’s killing along with George Floyd’s death at the hands of Minnesota police in 2020 ignited protests that summer around the country over racial injustice and police brutality. U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland announced the federal indictments in the Taylor case in August 2022, remarking that Taylor “should be alive today.”

Another former Louisville officer, Kelly Goodlett, admitted she helped fabricate a portion of the Taylor warrant that linked Taylor to alleged drug activity. Goodlett pleaded guilty to a federal charge of conspiracy last year.

Former detective Joshua Jaynes and former Sgt. Kyle Meany were also charged with conspiring to deprive Taylor of her civil rights. Jaynes and Meany are set to be tried together next year. Goodlett is expected to testify against them. Hankison is the only officer of the four charged by federal officials who was present at the March 13, 2020, raid.

The night of the raid, Hankison’s 10 shots didn’t hit anyone as he fired his handgun through Taylor’s glass slider door and bedroom window, but his bullets flew into neighboring apartments with people inside.

He took the witness stand at his 2022 trial in state court and said after a fellow officer was shot in the leg, he moved away from the front door and to the side of the apartment, where he began firing.

“I thought I could put rounds through that bedroom window and stop the threat,” Hankison said.

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The officer shot in the leg, Jonathan Mattingly, and another, Myles Cosgrove, were at the door when it was knocked down and fired the shots that killed Taylor, prosecutors said. Cosgrove and Hankison were later fired by the police department. Mattingly retired.

A crucial point in Hankison's state trial last year was whether he could see into Taylor's apartment when gunfire erupted. Prosecutors said other officers who testified at trial did not recall Hankison being in the doorway. But Hankison told investigators that he thought he saw a figure firing an AR-15 rifle from inside the apartment when the door opened.

During that trial, when asked if he did anything wrong during the raid, Hankison replied, "absolutely not," though he acknowledged firing into the window and patio door. As for Taylor, he said, "She didn't need to die that night." That prompted Breonna Taylor's mother to leave the courtroom.

A jury cleared Hankison of wanton endangerment charges at that trial.

The judge in the federal trial, U.S. District Judge Rebecca Grady Jennings, postponed Hankison's trial about two months after Hankison's lawyers asked for more time to process massive amounts of evidence turned over by federal prosecutors. Potential jurors were being individually questioned on Monday.

The federal trial is expected to last two to three weeks.

US consumers keep spending despite high prices and their own gloomy outlook. Can it last?

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER and ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — A flow of recent data from the U.S. government has made one thing strikingly clear: A surge in consumer spending is fueling strong growth, demonstrating a resilience that has confounded economists, Federal Reserve officials and even the sour sentiments that Americans themselves have expressed in opinion polls.

Yet economists caution that such vigorous spending isn't likely to continue in the coming months. Many households have been pulling money from a shrinking pool of savings. Others have been turning increasingly to credit cards. And the additional savings that tens of millions of households amassed during the pandemic — from stimulus aid and reduced opportunities to travel, dine out and visit entertainment venues — are nearly depleted, economists say.

Still, the truth is no one knows where things go from here, given the unusual nature of the post-pandemic economy. The "death of the consumer" and an ensuing recession have been forecast by most economists for at least a year. So far, not only is no recession in sight but consumers as a whole appear to be in robust health. Spending might cool in the coming months, yet it's far from clear it will collapse.

The durability of consumers' willingness to shop has caught the attention of Fed officials, who have signaled that they will keep their key interest rate unchanged when they meet this week. But they've also made clear that they are monitoring the economic data for any sign that inflation could reignite and require further rate hikes.

In the meantime, businesses, especially those in the sprawling service sector, are benefiting from what still appears to be pent-up demand, likely driven by higher-income earners, after the restrictions of the pandemic. Last week, Royal Caribbean Group reported robust quarterly earnings. Travelers crowded their cruise ships and spent more even as the company raised prices.

"The acceleration of consumer spending on experiences (has) propelled us towards another outstanding quarter," said CEO Jason Liberty. "Looking ahead, we see accelerating demand."

What's behind the outsize gains, so far? Economists point to several drivers: Sturdy hiring and low unemployment, along with healthy finances for most households emerging from the pandemic. Wealthier households, in particular, have enjoyed substantial growth in home values and stock portfolios, which are likely juicing their spending.

"We continue to believe that you shouldn't bet against the consumer until actual job losses are on the horizon," said Tim Duy, chief U.S. economist at SGH Macro Advisers.

With inflation slowing — it's at a still-high 3.7%, down from a peak of 9.1% in June 2022 — average

wages are starting to outpace price gains.

In many lower-paying industries, like hotels, restaurants and warehouses, companies have struggled to find and keep workers and have raised pay accordingly. Julia Pollak, chief economist at ZipRecruiter, calculates that for the lowest-paid 10% of workers, wages have jumped 25% since the first quarter of 2020, when the pandemic began. That's well ahead of the 18% increase in prices over that time.

And most households started 2023 in better shape than they were in before the pandemic erupted, according to a report from the Fed. The net worth of the median household — the midpoint between the richest and poorest — jumped 37% from 2019 through 2022 as home prices shot higher and the stock market rose. That was the biggest surge on records dating back more than 30 years.

At the same time, the net worth of the richest one-tenth of households leaped by \$28 trillion — or about one-third — from the first quarter of 2020 to the second quarter of 2023, according to the Fed. The poorer one-half of Americans gained a bigger percentage increase but in total dollars much less, from about \$2 trillion to \$3.6 trillion. (Those figures aren't adjusted for inflation.)

"When wealth is growing by the amount that it has been the past three years ... I do think that it's playing a larger role in this spending strength than maybe we thought it would," said Sarah Wolfe, U.S. economist at Morgan Stanley.

Aditya Bhave, senior economist at Bank of America, noted that the spending isn't all driven by the affluent. Spending on the bank's credit and debit cards by households with incomes below \$50,000 has risen faster than spending by higher-earning clients.

Some Americans, while keeping a close watch on their finances, still feel they have room to indulge themselves. Valerie Zaffina, a 74-year-old retired teacher who was picking up a piece of jewelry last week at a Kohl's store in Ramsey, New Jersey. She said she and her husband live on fixed incomes and are cautious spenders.

But Zaffina has nevertheless decided on one big splurge — about \$5,000 to decorate her rental apartment, including a \$2,500 couch and a \$600 rug. It's her first major decorating project in 18 years.

"I had kind of a frustrating year, and I wanted to do something for myself," she said. "So, yeah, I'm redecorating. I'm in the throes of that, but I'm sticking to a budget."

Many analysts still warn of a new crop of headwinds facing consumers and the economy. Nearly 30 million student loan borrowers had to start paying their loans this month. And government dysfunction in Washington could lead to a government shutdown next month.

A report Friday showed that while inflation-adjusted income fell last month along with the savings rate, consumers still ramped up their spending. That trend, economists say, is unsustainable.

Even so, those challenges may not prove as damaging as feared. Student loan payments, for example, jumped even before an Oct. 1 deadline for resuming them, Bhave noted. And few borrowers appear to have taken advantage of a 12-month grace period the Biden administration put in place, suggesting that most borrowers can afford to resume paying the money back — at least for now.

"There's a lot of gloom and doom," around the consumer, Bhave said. "And yet the data keep surprising to the upside."

Illinois man pleads not guilty to hate crime and murder charges in attack on Muslim mother and son

By SOPHIA TAREEN Associated Press

JOLIET, Ill. (AP) — A man accused of murder, attempted murder and a hate crime in an attack on a Palestinian American woman and her young son pleaded not guilty Monday following his indictment by an Illinois grand jury.

Joseph Czuba, 71, is charged in the fatal stabbing of six-year-old Wadea Al-Fayoume and the wounding of Hanaan Shahin on Oct. 14. Authorities said the victims were targeted because of their Muslim faith and as a response to the war between Israel and Hamas.

Shahin told police that Czuba, her landlord in Plainfield in Will County, was upset over the war and at-

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tacked them after she had urged him to "pray for peace."

Czuba appeared in court Monday wearing a red jail uniform, socks and yellow rubber slippers.

His attorney George Lenard entered the not guilty plea after the judge read the 8-count indictment. Czuba did not speak, looking down at the podium with his hands folded behind his back as he stood before the judge in the court in Joliet, 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Chicago.

Shahin, 32, is recovering from multiple stab wounds. Hundreds of people attended her son's funeral on Oct. 16 where he was remembered as an energetic boy who loved playing games. He had recently had a birthday.

The boy's father and other family members attended the hearing. They declined to speak to reporters.

The murder charge in the indictment against Czuba describes the boy's death as the result of "exceptionally brutal or heinous behavior." The attack on the family — which renewed fears of anti-Islamic discrimination in the Chicago area's large and established Palestinian community — has drawn condemnation from the White House.

Judge David Carlson ruled that Czuba will remain detained as he awaits a Jan. 8 court hearing.

In arguing to keep Czuba detained, Will County Assistant State's Attorney Michael Fitzgerald said Czuba was a danger to Shahin and others.

"We also believe he is a threat to the safety of the community," he said.

Czuba's attorneys disagreed, citing Czuba's age and the fact that he is a veteran without any criminal convictions.

Lenard and Fitzgerald declined to comment to reporters after the hearing.

Shahin asked the public to "pray for peace" and said her son was her best friend in a statement issued last week through the Chicago chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

The attack comes amid rising hostility against Muslim and Jewish communities in the U.S. since Hamas attacked Israel.

Halloween weekend shootings across US leave at least 11 dead, scores injured

By CURT ANDERSON Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Shootings across the U.S. over the weekend before Halloween have left at least 11 people dead and more than 70 injured, authorities said.

The deaths between Friday and Sunday included two in Tampa, Florida, three in Texarkana, Texas, and two each in Dodge City, Kansas; San Antonio, Texas; and Mansfield, Ohio, according to police. Many involved altercations arising from Halloween celebrations, including the mass shooting in Tampa's Ybor City section early Sunday as bars were closing and scores of people in costumes spilled out on the streets before groups began arguing.

The spate of weekend violence unfolded as people mourn the 18 killed by a gunman last week in Lewiston, Maine. More than 1,000 people turned out Sunday for a vigil.

"A neighborhood bar. A bowling alley. A Halloween party. It seems we can't go one day without a mass shooting in America," said Kris Brown, president of Brady, a gun violence prevention group. "Anger plus firearms is a deadly combination that can escalate any situation into a warzone in seconds."

One suspect, 22-year-old Tyrell Phillips, is charged with second-degree murder in the Tampa mass shooting and there may be other arrests, Police Chief Lee Bercaw said Sunday. Police initially said there were 18 injured in Tampa but have now revised that number to 16, with five remaining hospitalized Sunday night.

Phillips had his initial court appearance Monday but has not yet entered a plea. He remains jailed without bail pending another hearing set Thursday. Court records did not yet list an attorney to speak for Phillips.

In Indianapolis, a shooting early Sunday at a large party left a teenager dead and nine other teens and young adults between the ages of 16 and 21 injured, police said. The injured were in stable condition.

As of Monday morning, there have been no arrests, said Officer Samone Burris, who said "the case remains active and the investigation is ongoing." Multiple firearms were found at the scene.

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"I am frustrated and angry at the news of young people shot at a Halloween party last night," Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett said in a statement Sunday morning. "There are far too many guns in the hands of those who have no business having them, and shocking violence is too often the result."

In Chicago, police said at least 15 people were injured, two of them critically, after a shooter fired shots into a crowd at a Halloween party early Sunday. The suspect was taken into custody, but officials had not announced any charges as of Monday morning.

In Texas, five people were killed and another six were hurt in two separate shootings Saturday night. San Antonio police said a 13-year-old girl was wounded and her parents were killed after shootout at a house party. A 20-year-old man arrived at the party and an argument ensued, police said. The man started firing a gun, and a 40-year-old man returned fire.

The older man and a 35-year-old woman died at the home, police said. The younger man and his relative and the 13-year-old girl were taken to the hospital with wounds that were not life threatening, police said. Police have announced no charges.

In Texarkana – 450 miles (724 kilometers) away along the Arkansas border — police said three people died and three others were wounded during a party in the backroom of a business. Two men started fist fighting when rifles were pulled and gunfire erupted, police said. No arrest has been made.

A 17-year-old boy was killed and three people between the ages of 20 and 24 were injured in a shooting early Saturday, according to police in Cumberland, Maryland.

Officers responding to a report of a shooting in an alley around 1:40 a.m. found a "chaotic scene" and the teen with a gunshot wound, city police said in a statement. The teen later died at a hospital, police said. Three others with gunshot wounds related to the violence arrived at the hospital, but police said their injuries weren't considered life-threatening.

Cyprus prepares for a potential migrant influx due to the ongoing Israel-Hamas war

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Cyprus is doubling the existing 1,153-person capacity of its main migrant reception camp as the island nation prepares for potentially a large influx of people if the crisis in neighboring Israel and Gaza escalates, authorities said Monday.

The Pournara reception camp — on the outskirts of the capital Nicosia — will see an increase in staffing to adequately provide needed care to new arrivals and expedite asylum application processing, Cypriot Interior Minister Constantinos Ioannou said in a statement.

Authorities have evaluated different venues where migrants could be accommodated if arrivals exceed the capacity of the center and would immediately ask the European Union to dispatch more personnel to help process asylum applications, the statement said.

Nearly 200 migrants arrived in Cyprus aboard four separate boats on Saturday alone, likely setting sail from Lebanon which is 108 miles (174 kilometers) from the country's eastern coastline - reported state broadcaster CyBC.

Regular clashes have flared up between Israeli forces and armed groups in Lebanon since the war between Israel and the militant Palestinian group Hamas erupted following the latter's deadly Oct. 7 attack.

According to the most recent official statistics, migrant arrivals by boat in August and September more than tripled from the same period last year.

Follow AP's coverage of migration issues at <https://apnews.com/hub/migration>

Some striking UAW members carry family legacies, Black middle-class future along with picket signs

By COREY WILLIAMS and AISHA I. JEFFERSON Associated Press

WAYNE, Mich. (AP) — As Britney Johnson paced the picket line outside Ford's Wayne Assembly plant, she wasn't just carrying a sign demanding higher pay and other changes.

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Autoworker jobs have long been a pillar of the Black middle class in America, and the strikes and the fight for higher wages have had even deeper significance for workers like Johnson.

Johnson's great-grandfather, grandfather and mother all worked on assembly lines for one or more of Detroit's automakers, as did some of her uncles.

"We told her she's representing our family," Johnson's mother, Tracy Brooks, jokes.

It seems the efforts of Johnson and her co-workers were starting to pay off. All striking Ford workers were called Wednesday by the United Auto Workers to return to their jobs after the union said it reached a tentative contract agreement with Ford that would give them a 25% general wage increase, plus cost of living raises that will put the pay increase over 30%, to above \$40 per hour for top-scale assembly plant workers by the end of the contract. Union members still must approve the deal.

Ford's deal was followed Saturday by a similar one with Stellantis and one Monday with General Motors that could end the nearly 6-week-old strikes that at the peak saw about 46,000 workers walk off their jobs and thousands more laid off.

Union wages, and the battles to keep them, have elevated the fortunes of countless Black families, Brooks said.

Brooks' grandfather, Bobbie Allen Sr., left Texas in the early to mid-1900s and found work at Ford Motor Co. Despite having only an eighth grade education, Allen was able to build homes, buy 40 acres of land in rural southeastern Michigan, purchase luxury cars and take his family on vacations.

"It meant a lot, being in the union," Brooks said. "Those were the good jobs that were available for Blacks. They knew they could go in there and work hard, make money and obtain things like homes and cars. It allowed them to have the ability to take care of their families and help to build that Black middle class."

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was a "significant rise" in the Black middle class nationwide, particularly in Detroit and other metro areas, said Andre Perry, a senior fellow at Brookings Metro, a program at the public policy nonprofit, the Brookings Institution.

Black people were able to buy homes in urban neighborhoods that were once predominantly white.

"Black people could take advantage of that and buy homes in neighborhoods throughout Detroit," Perry said. "And as a consequence, you had also thriving commercial corridors, businesses and other ancillary enterprises that supported the rise in income among Black workers."

The union provided protection for Black workers who historically faced harsher treatment in the workplace than their white colleagues, Brooks added.

"Without the union jobs, (employers) can do anything, say anything and you're out the door," she said. "At least with the union, you have some type of cushion."

Brooks, 61, was in her early 30s when she began working the assembly line at what was then Daimler Chrysler. Her seven years in that job helped pay for her training to become a preschool teacher and buy a home.

"(My grandfather's) goal was to have his own property," Brooks said. "It was his, that no one could take and he worked hard to get that. Being able to own land and property, that was one of the things that was emphasized with us — that property was money."

Giving city residents the chance to earn a good living and buy homes in Detroit was included in a 2019 land development deal with Fiat Chrysler, which merged with PSA Peugeot in 2021 to form Stellantis. Detroit required the automaker to hire more than 3,800 residents for its new assembly plant in the city, with pay starting at \$17 per hour, climbing to \$28.

"What we want is for people to own homes and raise families in this city," Mayor Mike Duggan said in 2019 "If you're making \$60,000 you can get a nice house in the city of Detroit."

The auto industry and union jobs have been "so important to our quality of life and economic future here in Detroit," said Anika Goss, chief executive of Detroit Future City, a nonprofit focused on improving the lives of the city's residents through community and economic development.

As the auto industry muddled through downturns, car buyers' shifting tastes and the migration of jobs overseas, cities dependent on manufacturing jobs suffered.

In 1980, there were 84,920 people in Detroit employed as machine operators and laborers, according to

U.S. Census data. A decade later, that number had dropped to 52,316.

The Chicago and Detroit metropolitan areas each lost more than 100,000 manufacturing jobs between 1995 and 2005, the Brookings Institution wrote in 2006.

Currently, individuals and families earning between \$55,000-\$139,000 are in the middle-class income bracket. Only about 25% of Detroit's residents are in that range, and about two-thirds of city residents earn less than \$50,000 per year, Goss said.

Yolanda Martin, 55, is a second-generation Ford employee who has spent 34 years with the company. She said a two-tier wage system prevents newer employees from making the same financial gains as legacy autoworkers like herself and her late father, who spent 40 years at Ford.

"That is something that I believe is so detrimental to the middle class. It basically wiped out the opportunity for them to be able to make those" higher salaries, said Martin, who has held various positions at Ford and is currently apprenticing to become an industrial electrician.

Martin described her childhood during the 1970s and 1980s in her predominantly Black Detroit neighborhood as among the "happiest times" of her life. The Grandmont-Rosedale community was safe, had plenty of shopping and entertainment, and residents looked out for one another. Families usually had two parents and regularly took vacations, and most children received a new car once they learned how to drive because at least one parent worked for an automaker, she explained.

The community is still strong today and unlike other areas of Detroit, Grandmont-Rosedale staved off blight and maintained its resiliency, according to Tracy Hadden Loh, a fellow at the Brookings Institution, adding that 92% of the neighborhood's residents are Black.

Now living in Novi, an upper-middle-class suburb about 28 miles (45 kilometers) northwest of Detroit, Martin worries that future generations of autoworkers won't be able to afford to live in nicer communities or send their children to better schools.

"I shouldn't be working next to a person who makes half of what I make, and they're doing the exact same thing," Martin said. "And that's what I think the fight is about, to kind of bring it to where we're all on an even playing field."

Eyedrops from CVS, Rite Aid and others carry possible infection risk, FDA says

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. health regulators are warning consumers not to use more than two dozen varieties of over-the-counter eyedrops because of the risk of infections that could lead to blindness.

The Food and Drug Administration advisory applies to lubricating drops sold by six companies, including CVS Health, Target, Rite Aid and Cardinal Health. Consumers should stop using the products immediately and avoid purchasing any that remain on pharmacy and store shelves, the FDA said in a statement Friday.

The agency asked the companies to recall their products last week, because FDA inspectors found unsanitary conditions and bacteria at the facility producing the drops. The FDA did not disclose the location of the factory or when it was inspected.

No injuries related to the products had been reported at the time of the announcement, but the FDA encouraged doctors and patients to submit cases through the agency's online reporting system.

Earlier this year, federal officials linked an outbreak of drug-resistant bacteria to eyedrops from two companies, EzriCare and Delsam Pharma. More than 80 people in the U.S. tested positive for eye infections from the rare bacterial strain, according to the most recent update from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

After the products were recalled in February, health inspectors visited the manufacturing plant in India that made the eyedrops and uncovered problems with how they were made and tested, including inadequate sterility measures.

Navajo sheep herding at risk from climate change. Some young people push to maintain the tradition

By MELINA WALLING and JOHN LOCHER Associated Press

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. (AP) — Whenever Amy Begaye's extended family butchered a sheep, she was given what she considered easy tasks — holding the legs and catching the blood with a bowl. She was never given the knife.

That changed recently.

In the pale light of dawn at this year's Miss Navajo Nation pageant, 25-year-old Begaye and another contestant opened a week of competition with a timed sheep-butchering contest. Begaye says preparing to compete, which also required she practice spoken Navajo and learn more about her culture, brought out another side. It taught her to be confident: that she, as a gentle young woman, could be courageous and independent enough to fulfill such an important responsibility.

"We butcher the sheep because it is a way of our life," said Begaye, who won this year's pageant and is preparing to speak about the importance of sheep as a cultural ambassador over the next year. "That's how my ancestors were able to provide food for their families."

That way of life is in peril. Climate change, permitting issues and diminishing interest among younger generations are leading to a singular reality: Navajo raising fewer sheep. Keeping hundreds of sheep, of historically prized Churro and other breeds, used to be the norm for many families living on a vast reservation that straddles parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. But today some families have given up raising them all together. The ones who do report having far fewer sheep, sometimes just a handful. Still, many Navajo shepherds say they will keep their sheep as long as they can, and some younger people are speaking out and finding ways to pass on the tradition.

WATER IMPACTS

Navajo, who use every part of sheep, became stewards of the animals that arrived with Spanish colonists around the late 16th century. They raised them for meat and wool and helped turn the region into an economic powerhouse that supplied local trading posts with the expertly woven rugs that became an icon of the Southwest. But over the centuries, violence and outside influences have inflicted damage on shepherds.

Beginning in 1864, the U.S. Army forced several thousand Navajo into exile during what came to be known as the Long Walk; they returned to destroyed homes and livestock. Some hid with their sheep and survived, only for the government to again kill thousands of sheep during forced herd reductions in the early 1930s.

Most afternoons these days, shaggy herding dogs encourage a flock of sheep to follow Jay Begay Sr. out to graze. The brassy tinkling of livestock bells rings out over a vast plain of dry grasses near the community of Rocky Ridge, Arizona, close to the border between Navajo and Hopi lands. Begay Sr. uses a walking stick to wind past pockets of yellow flowers, heavily trafficked anthills and the occasional prickly pear. Eventually the afternoon sun casts long shadows, and with a breathy whistle or two, Begay Sr. leads them back on the half-mile trek to their corral, the dogs loping not far behind.

For Begay Sr., his wife Helen and his son, Jay Begay Jr., this way of life is precious. But Begay Jr. has noticed his parents slowing down, and they have reduced their numbers, from 200 down to 50.

It's a story familiar to many others in Navajo Nation.

"A friend of mine says, 'You can't blame people for not wanting to work this hard,'" Begay Jr. said. It's harder now, he added, "because of the way the climate is changing."

A mega drought across the Western U.S. has sucked moisture from the land, leaving cracks and barrenness in its wake. The next count of sheep isn't planned until 2024, but Navajo Department of Agriculture officials say the number is lower than the 200,000 counted in 2017. Adding to the problem is the long-standing issue of water scarcity on Navajo Nation, where roughly a third of people lack reliable access to clean water. The Supreme Court recently decided that the federal government was not obligated to identify or secure water rights for the reservation.

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The previous Miss Navajo, Valentina Clitso, says she has seen the impacts of water shortages firsthand, including on livestock. During her travels as an ambassador for Navajo culture, she says people have voiced concerns about springs running dry, about hauling water across long distances. Less forage for the sheep also means families have to spend more on expensive feed in the winter.

COMPOUNDING PROBLEMS

Lester Craig, who lives near Gallup, remembers when his family had over 600 sheep. His mother would buy their school clothes by selling the wool, and she would weave, too.

Now Craig has just a few sheep and goats, some horses and a few dogs, including one herding dog named Dibé, the Navajo word for "sheep."

Like Begay Jr., Craig worries about climate change. He pays more for feed in the winter and must haul water from a filling station in Gallup, about an hour roundtrip.

But Craig doesn't just haul water because of drought. The land where his family lives was contaminated in 1979 by a tailing spill from a uranium mine — he points over the ridge in the direction of the site of the biggest radioactive spill in U.S. history.

The windmill wells near his house functioned but had polluted water. For a long time they used them anyway, not knowing anything was wrong. It was clear, clean water, or so they thought. Now they know, and no longer use those wells.

To prevent erosion, a problem worsened by wild horses that have been allowed to run rampant on the reservation, the allowed number of sheep and other livestock is controlled by grazing permits. Craig has seen the erosion, and tears up thinking about how the contours of the land he once roamed as a child have changed.

Leo Watchman, director of the Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture, says grazing management is the worst it's ever been on the reservation. Among other things, he cites bureaucratic inconsistencies between the federal government and Navajo jurisdictions and holdups on environmental studies that determine how many animals can be kept on any given area of land.

He says thousands of people have been waiting for years for grazing permits. Meanwhile, others have permits they don't use or trespass on land they don't have the right to graze on. Sometimes all of this happens amongst family members who live near each other — a recipe for land disputes.

HOPEFUL FUTURE

Meranda Laughter, who works at the Tractor Supply Co. in Gallup, says over the last five years her family has gone from 300 to just 10 sheep. Despite the sharp drop, Laughter thinks they will eventually increase their flock's size, and that continued education and better management can alleviate some of the problems that have been stacked on top of the drought.

"We need to give time for the land to breathe," she said.

For Craig, a big concern is that some of the younger generation, including his own family, aren't interested in carrying on the tradition of keeping sheep.

That's something Begaye echoes as she describes what it's like to be a young Navajo. Like some other young people, she wanted to leave the reservation and experience city life. And for a while, she did. She went to Utah Tech University in St. George. But then she started to realize that someday she would want to pass on her culture to her children.

The experience of returning home and helping care for her grandmother, who has dementia, helped shape her choice to reengage with her culture. That led her to compete to be Miss Navajo, and thus help her community band together to overcome challenges and strengthen traditions like sheep herding.

"It just hit me," she said. "This is who I am. This is where I come from. These are my roots, and I don't really want to change that."

Takeaways from the AP's investigation into aging oil ships

By HELEN WIEFFERING and GRACE EKPU Associated Press

OKITIPUPA, NIGERIA (AP) — Until early last year, a rusting oil ship named the Trinity Spirit floated off the coast of Nigeria, pulling crude oil from the ocean floor. Then, last February, it exploded, collapsing into the ocean along with 40,000 barrels of oil.

Five workers were killed and two others presumed dead, their bodies never found. Oil slicks were visible in satellite imagery for days.

The Associated Press drew on ship databases, court documents, and the accounts of three survivors to offer an inside look at the yearslong decline of the aging ship, the numerous warning signs, and the explosion's messy aftermath — as the survivors, who complained of dangerous working conditions and withheld wages, were accused of setting the ship ablaze.

The Trinity Spirit also fits a wider pattern of old tankers put to work storing and extracting oil even while on the brink of mechanical breakdowns. Here are takeaways from AP's report.

This story was supported by funding from the Walton Family Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

WHAT KIND OF SHIP WAS THE TRINITY SPIRIT?

The Trinity Spirit was part of a class of vessels that extracts oil offshore and stores it at sea. They are known as floating production storage and offloading units — FPSOs — or as FSOs, floating storage and offloading units, when used only for storage. Since the 1970s, they've become increasingly popular for developing oil in deep waters and in places where no pipelines exist. According to the environmental group SkyTruth, there are some 240 in operation today.

FPSOs are unlike most ships for one key reason: They stay in place. Once attached to the ocean floor, they can linger at the same oil field for years or even decades. Many spent the first half of their lives as oil tankers, and were later repurposed into stationary ships.

WHAT CAUSED THE OIL SHIP TO EXPLODE?

Nigerian authorities haven't published a conclusive reason as to why the Trinity Spirit exploded, but photos of the ship shortly before it exploded and the accounts of three survivors point to it being in a state of near-total disrepair. The engine room flooded twice, one crew member told AP, and the main generator plant was damaged and never repaired. The surviving crew members said maintenance had all but stopped on the 46-year-old ship.

Though a company that had operated the ship accused two surviving crew members of illegally storing oil on the ship and setting it on fire, the two men told AP they were sleeping when the explosion happened. The criminal charges against them were later dropped.

HAVE THERE BEEN BREAKDOWNS ON OTHER OIL SHIPS?

Yes. The AP found at least eight oil ships that have been shut down after a fire, a major safety hazard, or the death of a worker in the last decade. That figure includes an FPSO called the Bunga Kertas, floating off the coast of Malaysia, which paused operations in the same month that the Trinity Spirit caught fire because "integrity issues" were discovered in the ship's hull. Soon after, a diver involved in the repair process was killed.

According to press coverage, the Bunga Kertas was at one point intended for use only through 2014. Yet the safety issues were discovered in 2022.

Until this fall, another oil ship, the FSO Safer, had for years risked a catastrophic spill in the Red Sea. "It could break up at any time – or explode," the United Nations said in a statement this spring. The Safer was built in the same year as the Trinity Spirit and fell into disrepair while it was still carrying more than a million barrels of oil.

WHAT ABOUT OIL SHIPS THAT ARE STILL OPERATING?

More than 30 ships are older than the Trinity Spirit and still operating around the world, according to

AP's review. Among them is the Al-Zaafarana, floating off the coast of Egypt, which at 54 years is one of the oldest FPSOs still in service. Close behind it are oil ships in Malaysia and Brazil, each at least half a century old. In Nigeria, the FPSO Mystras is still in service at 47 years old, despite industry reports that the ship was originally built to operate only through 2014.

As a fleet, the ships are getting older. The average hull age of FPSOs has increased from 22 to nearly 28 years since 2010, according to Rystad Energy, and in 2021, the American Bureau of Shipping said several dozen ships were nearing the end of their intended lives.

Deadly explosion off Nigeria points to threat posed by aging oil ships around the world

By HELEN WIEFFERING and GRACE EKPU Associated Press

OKITIPUPA, Nigeria (AP) — It was the dead of night when the ship caught fire, Patrick Aganyebi remembers, but the flames made it seem as bright as day.

The explosion that night woke him and knocked him to the floor. He tucked his phone and his ID card in his pockets, strapped on a life jacket and made his way to the upper deck. As the flames barreled toward him, he prepared to jump nearly 100 feet (30 meters) into the sea.

Five workers were killed and two others presumed dead in the blast on the Trinity Spirit, a rusting converted oil tanker anchored 15 miles (24 km) off the coast of Nigeria that pulled crude oil from the ocean floor. It was by the grace of God, Aganyebi said, that he and two fellow crewmen escaped, rescued by a pair of fishermen as the burning vessel sank along with 40,000 barrels of oil.

The Trinity Spirit's explosion in February of last year stands among the deadliest tragedies on an oil ship or platform in recent years. The Associated Press' review of court documents, ship databases, and interviews with crew members reveals that the 46-year-old ship was in a state of near-total disrepair, and the systems meant to ensure its safe and lawful operation — annual inspections, a flag registry, insurance — had gradually fallen away.

The Trinity Spirit fits a pattern of old tankers put to work storing and extracting oil even while on the brink of mechanical breakdowns. At least eight have been shut down after a fire, a major safety hazard, or the death of a worker in the last decade, according to an AP review. More than 30 are older than the Trinity Spirit and still storing oil around the world.

Jan-Erik Vinnem, who has spent his career studying the risks of offshore oil production, said he's sometimes shocked when he sees pictures of oil ships in Africa.

"I call them 'floating bombs,'" he said.

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AGING HULLS

The Trinity Spirit was part of a class of vessels that extracts oil offshore and stores it at sea. They are known as floating production storage and offloading units — FPSOs — or as FSOs, floating storage and offloading units, when used only for storage. Since the 1970s, they've become increasingly popular for developing oil in deep waters and in places where no pipelines exist. According to the environmental group SkyTruth, there are some 240 in operation today.

FPSOs are unlike most ships for one key reason: They stay in place. Once attached to the ocean floor, they can linger at the same oil field for years or even decades. They may be surveyed by in-country regulators or hired inspectors, but they operate outside the normal flow of shipping traffic and the added safety and legal inspections that take place in port.

"If a vessel is sitting in a country's domestic waters and is not going around trading ... then you're not going to have that same level of oversight," said Meghan Mathieson, strategy director at the Canadian-

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based Clear Seas Centre for Responsible Marine Shipping.

More than half the current fleet of FPSOs are recycled oil tankers, according to Oslo-based Rystad Energy, which keeps data on the ships. Senior analyst Edvard Christoffersen said that without a major repair, most oil ships have hulls built to last about 25 years. But some FPSOs are used far longer, sometimes to dangerous effect.

In the same month that the Trinity Spirit caught fire, inspectors found problems with an aging FPSO moored off the coast of Malaysia. The Bunga Kertas was built as an oil tanker in the 1980s, and press coverage of its conversion to an FPSO in 2004 said the vessel had an intended service life of 10 more years.

But it was 18 years later when a safety issue on the Bunga Kertas led to a pause in operations. The ship's hull had "integrity issues," according to stakeholder Jadestone Energy. Four months later a diver was killed while repairing the damage. Petronas, the operator at the time, did not respond to a request for comment.

Until this fall, another aging ship floating off the coast of Yemen seemed dangerously close to spilling a massive amount of oil. The FSO Safer was built in the same year as the Trinity Spirit, and became a floating hazard over years of neglect amid the country's civil war. Seawater had leaked into the ship's engine room by 2020.

"It could break up at any time – or explode," the United Nations said in a statement this spring.

The ship held more than a million barrels of oil — risking a spill that could have decimated fisheries in the Red Sea, threatened desalination plants and washed oil on the shores of countries around the Horn of Africa, according to the U.N. After years of alarm and negotiations, the oil was transferred onto another tanker this August, but the rusting Safer remains off Yemen's coast, awaiting funds to be scrapped.

Age isn't the only measure of a ship's health: Climate, storms and wave patterns can add stress to ship components or increase the pace of corrosion, just as careful maintenance can extend a ship's life.

But the fleet's growing age is well known in the industry. The average hull age of FPSOs has increased from 22 to nearly 28 years since 2010, according to Rystad Energy. The American Bureau of Shipping — one of several companies known as classification societies that certify vessels' safety — launched a working group in 2021 to address the challenges of older FPSOs, noting that 55 ships were approaching the end of their intended lives.

"A lot of these things are foreseeable," said Ian Ralby, a maritime security expert who helped sound the alarm about the Safer.

"If they are not well maintained and not watched carefully," Ralby said, "they can sink, they can spill, and they can, as the Trinity Spirit showed, blow up."

DANGEROUS TO ABANDON

There has been little to no public explanation of what led to the Trinity Spirit's explosion, though multiple Nigerian agencies had responsibility for overseeing the ship. The Trinity Spirit had been on the same oil field for more than two decades. According to Aganyebi, after the ship arrived in Nigeria, it was never brought to shore for major upgrades or repairs.

Warning signs began years before it caught fire. In 2015, the American Bureau of Shipping canceled its classification and ceased inspections of the ship. There's no record the Trinity Spirit had insurance after that point, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence. In the next several years, the ship lost its privilege to fly the flag of Liberia, becoming a stateless vessel.

By 2019, Nigeria's petroleum regulator had revoked the Trinity Spirit's license to pump oil. Nigeria's head of maritime safety, quoted in local press coverage, said his agency had directed the ship to stop operating five years before the blast. Yet the Trinity Spirit was never forced to leave.

Up till the moment of the explosion, there was oil on board. As recently as 2021, according to satellite imagery and ship transponder data, oil was loaded onto a tanker that later docked at a Shell refinery in the Netherlands.

Adeyemi Adeyiga, a spokesperson for Nigeria's Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, which regulates the country's oil resources, said the sale was legal because the oil was produced before the license

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was revoked. And a spokesperson for Shell said the company conducts robust reviews of its supply chain and complies with all laws and regulations.

Though the federal government investigated the Trinity Spirit's explosion, more than a year later no findings have been released. For months, it seemed the only scrutiny would fall on the surviving men.

Not long after their escape, and still in the throes of recovery, Aganyebi and a fellow crewman were arrested on accusations of "Murder, Arson, and Malicious Damage," according to their charging documents. Police were acting on a complaint from Shebah Exploration and Production Company Limited — the Trinity Spirit's longtime operator.

An attorney in Lagos took on the case pro bono.

"They committed no offense, they did nothing wrong. They were staffers of the company," Benson Enikuomihin said. In an interview, he accused Shebah of drumming up criminal charges to distract from the company's missteps. Anything that took place on the Trinity Spirit should be considered illegal after the license to the oil field was revoked, he said.

Yinka Agidee, an attorney specializing in Nigeria's oil and gas sector who was not involved in the case, said the Trinity Spirit represented an "accident waiting to happen," and showed that local authorities failed to enforce their own orders.

"I'm not sure if it's a question of people closing their eyes or deliberately not doing what they're supposed to have done," she said. "But that has resulted in an accident and there has been a loss of life. So we need some explanation."

Interviews and an exploration of documents provide a lack of clarity about who was responsible for the Trinity Spirit in the final years of its decline. Though Shebah hired Aganyebi and the rest of the Trinity Spirit's crew, CEO Ikemefuna Okafor said in an email to the AP that the company wasn't responsible for the ship's neglect. The company reported the surviving crew to police, he said, because it had evidence of illegal storage of oil on the ship.

According to Okafor, liquidators seized ownership of the Trinity Spirit in 2018 due to Shebah's outsized debt. Yet in a deposition given one year before the explosion, the company's former president, Ambrosie Orjiako, described how Shebah continued to run operations.

Sustaining fuel purchases, food supplies, and "skeletal manpower" wasn't easy, Orijako said, because "there's no revenue coming in." But he managed to fund the minimal operations with family resources, he said, because the FPSO "would be dangerous to abandon."

Adeyiga, the spokesperson for Nigeria's Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, said it was still finalizing its investigation into the ship's explosion and would continue working to prevent similar tragedies from happening.

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency did not respond to repeated requests for comment, but issued notice in December that all FPSOs and FSOs in Nigeria's waters must have a flag, be certified by a classification society, and maintain official plans for ship maintenance and emergency response.

SAVE OUR SOULS

The deck of the Trinity Spirit was an expanse of rust. Orange rust coated the floor, crept over pipes and trailed from crevices in the walls, according to cell phone photos taken four months before the explosion. Equipment failures plagued the ship's interior: The engine room flooded twice, Aganyebi said, and the main generator plant was damaged and never repaired.

Shebah had started running operations on the ship in 2004, taking over from Houston-based ConocoPhillips. But the site's wells had passed peak oil production several years earlier, according to the energy research firm Wood Mackenzie. Within a few years Shebah's venture showed signs of financial stress.

Oil and gas operators tend to operate on the edge of financial wealth or financial ruin, said David Hammond, founder of the nonprofit Human Rights at Sea.

"These things go from boom to bust," he said. "The workers are the last people to be looked after."

Aganyebi worked in the engine room of the Trinity Spirit. Within a year of joining the crew in 2014, he said, Shebah stopped reliably paying his wages. Lawrence Yorgolo, who operated the crane on the ship,

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and Pius Orofin, a deck operator — the only other survivors of last year's fire — alleged the same in interviews with the AP. The men said they stayed on board the ship because they had few other options and hoped they would someday be paid.

The staff sent repeated letters asking for the money they were owed, the men told AP. One of their last attempts was dated July 2019, with a subject line of "SAVE OUR SOUL (SOS)." They wrote they had worked 15 months without salary and endured, with "pains and hardship," the "harsh condition and occupational hazards" of life on board the Trinity Spirit.

Shebah by that time owed millions of dollars. A trio of banks had sued the company over its alleged failure to make payments on a \$150 million loan, and in 2016 a judge ruled that Shebah must repay nearly the full amount. A government-run entity, the Asset Management Corporation of Nigeria, moved to take over the company and the assets of its president. The ship's staffing dwindled from nearly 40 people to 10.

For those who remained, there were times on the ship when there was nothing to eat, the survivors told AP. Yorgolo recalled how the crew went hungry one year on Christmas. On a separate occasion — the worst of them, he said — the engine room flooded and the staff worked for three days without food. The radio operator sent a message pleading with oil operators nearby to come to their aid.

"Our management was furious," Yorgolo said.

When the radio operator next went to shore, according to Aganyebi, Yorgolo and Orofin, Shebah didn't allow him back on the ship. He was the designated person to fire a flare or call for help in an emergency. Had the radio operator been on board the night of the explosion, Aganyebi said, "maybe those people that have died — they wouldn't have died."

The AP's attempts to reach the former radio operator were unsuccessful.

When it broke in two and began to sink, the Trinity Spirit had at least 40,000 barrels of oil on board, according to Nigeria's environmental department, which responded to examine the spill. It was capable, like most FPSOs, of storing more than a million barrels.

The agency said oil wasn't leaking from the submerged tanks nor had it washed up on shore, but letters still arrived from community members in nearby Ondo and Delta states complaining about the spill. Oil sheens were visible fanning out from the vessel in satellite imagery for days.

Five bodies were recovered, and two were never found.

SINKING SHIP

Among the more than 30 ships identified by the AP as older than the Trinity Spirit is the Al-Zaafarana, floating off the coast of Egypt. At 54 years, it is one of the oldest FPSOs still in service. Close behind it are FPSOs in Malaysia and Brazil, each at least half a century old.

Along Nigeria's coast, about 200 miles (320 km) south of where the Trinity Spirit caught fire, the FPSO Mystras is still in service at 47 years old, although industry reports have noted structural issues on the ship. The classification society DNV severed ties with the Mystras three years ago, ending its regular inspections. According to Rystad Energy, it was originally designed to operate only through 2014.

The Mystras' owner, NNPC Limited, did not respond to AP's requests for comment.

Further inland, the Trinity Spirit's surviving crew members have been left to eke out a living as they wait for the wages they say were never paid. Aganyebi's vision is poor from the glare of the explosion; Orofin's hearing is damaged from the noise. He has a long scar on his leg. Both men spent 19 days in jail.

Yorgolo, who was the only survivor not charged with a crime, fell on his back when he jumped from the burning vessel and was unconscious when fishermen pulled him into their boat. He believes he wasn't named as a suspect only because he spent months in the hospital suffering from an injured spine.

The charges were dropped in October last year after the Ondo State Ministry of Justice reviewed the case. In conversations with AP, the men vehemently denied setting the vessel on fire or illegally storing oil. They blamed the explosion on their employer, Shebah, and the years without maintenance on the ship.

For Aganyebi, it was clear the company had abandoned the Trinity Spirit long ago.

"No medical personnel, no safety officer, no radio man in that gigantic vessel," he said.

Off the coast of Nigeria, the ship is still visible — split in two pieces and half submerged. As recently as

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September, in satellite imagery, oil appeared to be leaking from the site of the wreck. It's unclear when authorities will remove the hazard or salvage the remaining oil, as slowly, the ship sinks further into the sea.

Today in History: October 31, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is assassinated

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 31, the 304th day of 2023. There are 61 days left in the year. This is Halloween.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 31, 1984, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two Sikh security guards.

On this date:

In 1864, Nevada became the 36th state as President Abraham Lincoln signed a proclamation.

In 1941, work was completed on the Mount Rushmore National Memorial in South Dakota, begun in 1927.

In 1961, the body of Josef Stalin was removed from Lenin's Tomb as part of the Soviet Union's "de-Stalinization" drive.

In 1964, Theodore C. Freeman, 34, became the first member of NASA's astronaut corps to die when his T-38 jet crashed while approaching Ellington Air Force Base in Houston.

In 1967, Nguyen Van Thieu (nwen van too) took the oath of office as the first president of South Vietnam's second republic.

In 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered a halt to all U.S. bombing of North Vietnam, saying he hoped for fruitful peace negotiations.

In 1992, Pope John Paul II formally proclaimed that the Roman Catholic Church had erred in condemning the astronomer Galileo for holding that the Earth was not the center of the universe.

In 1999, EgyptAir Flight 990, bound from New York to Cairo, crashed off the Massachusetts coast, killing all 217 people aboard.

In 2005, President George W. Bush nominated Judge Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court.

In 2015, a Russian passenger airliner crashed in a remote part of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula 23 minutes after taking off from a popular Red Sea resort, killing all 224 people on board.

In 2018, notorious gangster James "Whitey" Bulger was found beaten to death at a federal prison in West Virginia; the 89-year-old former Boston crime boss and longtime FBI informant had been transferred there hours earlier.

In 2019, President Donald Trump announced that he would be making Palm Beach, Florida, his permanent residence after leaving the White House rather than returning to Trump Tower in New York.

In 2020, actor Sean Connery, who rose to international stardom as the suave secret agent James Bond and then carved out an Oscar-winning career in other rugged roles, died at his home in the Bahamas at the age of 90.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Lee Grant is 98. Former CBS anchorman Dan Rather is 92. Folk singer Tom Paxton is 86. Actor Ron Rifkin is 85. Actor Sally Kirkland is 82. Actor Brian Doyle-Murray is 78. Actor Stephen Rea is 77. Olympic gold medal long-distance runner Frank Shorter is 76. Actor Deidre Hall is 76. TV show host Jane Pauley is 73. Actor Brian Stokes Mitchell is 66. Movie director Peter Jackson is 62. Rock musician Larry Mullen Jr. is 62. Actor Dermot Mulroney is 60. Rock musician Mikkey Dee is 60. Rock singer-musician Johnny Marr is 60. Actor Rob Schneider is 60. Country singer Darryl Worley is 59. Actor-comedian Mike O'Malley is 58. Rap musician Ad-Rock (The Beastie Boys) is 57. Rapper Vanilla Ice is 56. Rock musician Rogers Stevens (Blind Melon) is 54. Rock singer Linn Berggren (Ace of Base) is 53. Reality TV host Troy Hartman is 52. Gospel singer Smokie Norful is 50. Actor Piper Perabo (PEER'-uh-boh) is 47. Actor Brian Hallisay is 45. Actor Samaira (SAH'-mee-rah) Armstrong is 43. Actor Eddie Kaye Thomas is 43. Rock musician Frank Iero (My Chemical Romance) is 42. Actor Justin Chatwin is 41. Actor Scott Clifton is 39. Actor Vanessa Marano is 31. Actor Holly Taylor is 26. Actor Danielle Rose Russell is 24. Actor-singer Willow Smith is 23.