

Groton Daily Independent

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Coming up

Sunday, Nov. 12

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10 a.m.; Sunday school and Christmas practice, 10 a.m.; Fall Dinner, 11 a.m.; Charge Conference, 2 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: St. John's worship, 9 a.m.; Zion worship, 11 a.m.; Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship / Milestones for JK and kindergarten, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 6 p.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School at 9:15 a.m., Worship Service at 10:30 a.m.

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

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

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

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



Death Notice: Alan Strom

Alan Strom, 68, of Groton passed away November 11, 2023 at Avera St. Lukes Hospital, Aberdeen surrounded by his family. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Monday, Nov. 13

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

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

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

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

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

Senior Menu: Breaded cod, parsley buttered potatoes, creamy coleslaw, rainbow sherbet, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Pancake on a stick.

School Lunch: Tater tot hot dish.

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GHS Interns Series

Sperry interns at Dakota Pet Care

by Dorene Nelson

Ashlyn Sperry, a senior at Groton Area High School, is interning with Dr. Chanda Nilsson, who is a former Groton graduate. "I like being around animals, so choosing Dakota Pet Care for my internship was easy!" Sperry explained. "Besides that I have already worked here during the summer so I knew what to do and what was expected of me."

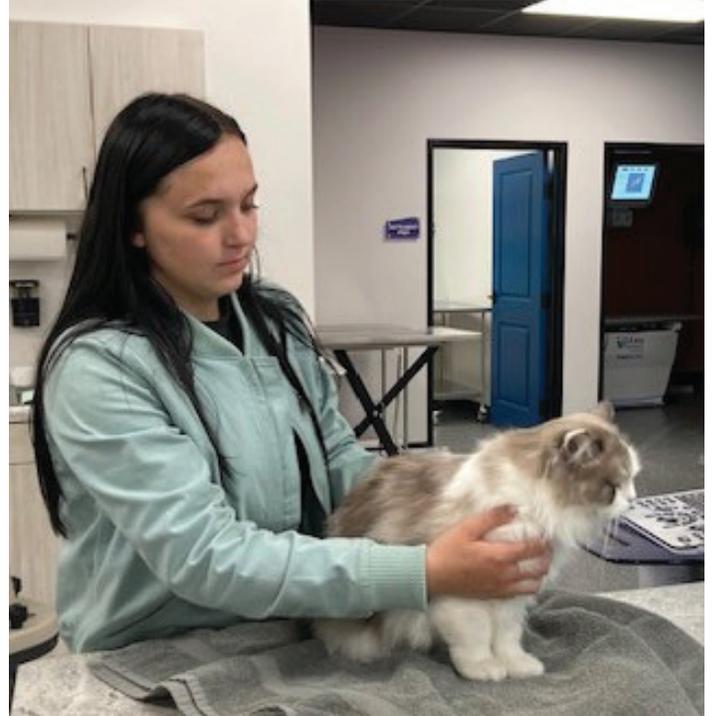
"In school I participate in trap shooting, FCCLA, and FFA," she listed. "I have a variety of jobs here at Dakota Pet Care. One very important job is to keep the examination rooms clean in between animal visits."

"Today I will help with holding and comforting a cat who is going to have an ultrasound," Ashlyn said. "At least this kind of test does not cause the animal any pain."

"My favorite part of this job is watching the surgeries," she admitted. "It is fascinating to see how everything is done. Because of my interest in this area, I plan to attend South Dakota State University to become a veterinarian."

"Sometimes the most difficult part is being able to communicate with different people about their pets," Ashlyn smiled. "We treat animals here who are dearly loved by their humans!"

Ashlyn is the daughter of Ryan and Amanda Sperry.



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ALL OVER ROOFING

RAISING THE ROOFING STANDARDS,
ALL OVER YOUR TOWN!
FREE HAIL STORM ESTIMATES!

605.759.0000
1205 6TH AVE SW SUITE 2, ABERDEEN, SD 57401



Frosty is Back!!!

Please check the Groton Daily Independent for daily clues as to who the Groton Area Mystery Frosty is. The unveiling of Frosty will take place at the Groton Area Snow Queen and Talent Contest on Sunday, November 26th at 4:00pm. The Groton Chamber voted to gift Snow Queen \$100 in Chamber Bucks for the winner of the Mystery Frosty competition.



2023 Frosty Clues

I....

12.) Prefer salty over sweet

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NSU Women's Basketball

The Wolves Rally Back to Take Down Rogers State

Claremore, Okla. – The Northern State women's basketball team took down Rogers State Friday in an exciting second half comeback. The win saw Madelyn Bragg score a career-high 25 points and the Wolves shoot a season high 45.5% from the floor.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 68, RSU 59

Records: NSU 1-1, RSU 1-1

Attendance: 423

HOW IT HAPPENED

Northern State tallied 16 points in the first quarter, 16 in the second, 18 in the third, and 18 in the fourth. NSU trailed 37-32 at the half and rallied back in the fourth quarter holding RSU to just eight points. Although it was a late comeback for the Wolves the game saw ten lead changes and six tie scores, with Northern grabbing the lead at 7:41 in the fourth and running away with the game.

The Wolves shot well in the contest, notching marks of 45.5% from the floor, 26.3% from the 3-point line, and 76.5% from the foul line.

Northern State tallied 28 points in the paint, seven points off the bench, ten points off turnovers, and 12 second-chance points.

In addition, NSU tallied 35 rebounds, out-rebounding their opponents by ten, 15 assists, eight steals, and three blocks.

Madelyn Bragg led the Wolves offense scoring a career high 25 points, hitting 10-of-14 from the floor and 5-of-6 from the free throw line.

Rianna Fillipi and Brynn Alfson notched 12 points apiece, while Fillipi dished out a team leading five assists.

NORTHERN STATE STATSTICAL STANDOUTS

Madelyn Bragg: 25 points, 7 rebounds, 71.4 FG %

Rianna Fillipi: 12 points, 6 rebounds, 5 assists

Brynn Alfson: 12 points, 5 rebounds, 75.0 FT %

UP NEXT

The Northern State women are set to face off against South Dakota Mines and Black Hills State next Friday and Saturday out West. Tip-off times are set for 6 p.m. on Friday, November 17 against the Hardrockers and 5 p.m. on Saturday, November 18 versus the Yellowjackets from Spearfish.

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NSU Men's Basketball

Dilling Sets Career High as No. 21 Wolves Fall to Griffons

St. Joseph, Mo. – Despite a valent second half comeback, the No. 21 Northern State University men's basketball team fell to Missouri Western State in regional action on Saturday. The Wolves tallied a game high 44 points in the final 20 minutes of play, however poor shooting from beyond the arc stifled the offense.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 72, MWSU 75

Records: NSU 0-2, MWSU 2-0

Attendance: 1492

HOW IT HAPPENED

The Wolves trailed 35-28 at the half and rallied to out-score the Griffons 44-40 in the second however it was not enough

Northern shot 43.3% from the floor, 48.4% in the second half, and 80.0% from the foul line, but was unable to record a long range score going 0-of-26 from beyond the arc

NSU combined for 35 rebounds, six assists, three steals, and three blocks in the game

They scored a game high 46 points in the paint and seven points off turnovers, as well as eight points off the bench, on fast break, and off offensive boards

Josh Dilling dropped a career high 28 points, shooting 62.5% from the floor and playing 35 minutes

Jackson Moni nearly recorded a double-double with 12 points and nine rebounds, as well as a team leading four assists

Trey Longstreet led the team off the bench with six points and two blocks in the game that saw only seven Wolves take the floor

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Josh Dilling: 28 points, 62.5% FG%, 3 rebounds

Jackson Moni: 12 points, 9 rebounds, 4 assists

UP NEXT

Northern makes their home debut next Friday and Saturday from Wachs Arena. NSU host the Small College Basketball Champions Classic feature two NCAA Division III and two NCAA Division II contests each day. The Wolves will tip-off at 7:30 p.m. each day facing Emmanuel University out of Georgia on Friday and a familiar foe Upper Iowa on Saturday.

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NSU Wrestling

Six Place at DWU Open for No. 11 Northern State

Mitchell, S.D. – In their second open of the 2023-24 season the No. 11 Northern State University wrestling team tallied six top-4 finishes at the Dakota Wesleyan Open. The Wolves were led by runner-up finishers Carter Ban (149) and Mason Fey (174). Full open results are linked above.

HOW IT HAPPENED

Teagan Block took third at 133-pounds with wins over Braiden Kort of Augustana (dec 10-6), Juan Lugo of Briar Cliff (TF 17-1), Kevin Honas of Fort Hays State (TF 15-0), Andrew Ramirez Jr. of Minot State (TF 18-1), and Jarros Gilliam of Briar Cliff (TF 17-0)

Ban took second at 149-pounds with wins over Ty Borge of Minnesota WCT (TF 17-2), Cael Larson of Augustana (dec 5-1), Marcell Dely of Fort Hays State (inj. 3:41), and Torry Early of Chadron State (12-1)

Cael Larson had the busiest day for the Wolves going 5-2 with a fourth place finishes and wins over Carson Turnis of Morningside (TF 16-1), Ian Johnson of Minnesota WCT (fall 4:17), Clayton Robinson of Chadron State (dec 8-4), Noah Styskal of Morningside (dec 5-2), and Ben Peters of Briar Cliff (15-9)

Fey also recorded a runner-up placing at 174-pounds with wins over Elijah Sterner of SMSU (dec 7-4), Jayvier Pellman of Minnesota ECT (fall 0:38), Jonah Gruenes of Augustana (dec 6-5), and Ethan Gregg of Briar Cliff (fall 1:56)

At 184-pounds, Tyson Live took fourth with victories over Hayden Wempen of Morningside (dec 10-7), Matthew Rodriguez of For Hays State (maj. 10-2), Adam Sylvester of SMSU (dec 6-3), and Cayden White of Minot State (TF 17-1)

Ryan Hirschorn was the final placer for NSU, taking fourth at 197-pounds with wins over Ryan Patterson of Fort Hays State (dec 3-2) and Shane Hansen of Minot State (fall 2:00)

OPEN RECORDS

Brenden Salfrank (125): 2-2

Teagan Block (133): 5-1

Clay Gates (133): 2-2

Carter Ban (149): 4-1

Cael Larson (157): 5-2

Spencer Roth (165): 2-2

Kaden Broer (165): 3-2

Mason Fey (174): 4-1

Tyson Lien (184): 4-2

Tanner Meyers (197): 1-2

Ryan Hirschorn (197): 2-2

UP NEXT

Northern heads to the SD Showcase next Friday, November 17 from Brookings and the campus of South Dakota State University.

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NSU Volleyball

Northern Upsets No. 14 Minnesota Duluth, Headed to NSIC Postseason

Aberdeen, S.D. – In sweeping fashion, the Northern State University volleyball team capped off the regular season with a victory over No. 14 Minnesota Duluth. With the win the Wolves solidified a fifth place standing in the NSIC with an 11-7 league record.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 3, UMD 0

Records: NSU 19-8 (11-7 NSIC), UMD 17-9 (10-8 NSIC)

Attendance: 474

HOW IT HAPPENED

The two teams battled 28-26 in the first set with Northern coming away on top and the Wolves continued the momentum with 25-15 and 25-22 victories in the second and third

Northern recorded a match leading 41 kills, 39 assists, and 67 digs, adding ten blocks and four aces

Offensively NSU hit .178 and defensively they held UMD to a .036 attack percentage

Natalia Szybinska led two Wolves in double figures with 13 kills and a team leading six blocks

For the second straight match, Keri Walker averaged over 12 assists per set, notching 37 total in the win Abby Meister and Reese Johnson led the defense with 29 and ten digs respectively

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Natalia Szybinska: 13 kills, 6 blocks, 2 digs

Keri Walker: 37 assists, 9 digs, 4 blocks, 1 ace

Abby Meister: 29 digs, 1 assist

UP NEXT

The NSIC Volleyball Tournament kicks off on November 14 with the quarterfinal round. Northern is slated to play St. Cloud State on the road. Start time is set for 6 p.m. in St. Cloud. For full tournament details visit the tournament page [HERE](#).

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NSU Football

Northern Football Tallies 24-Point Road Win in 2023 Finale

Marquette, Mich. – The Northern State University football team closed out their 2023 campaign with a dominating victory over Northern Michigan on the road. The Wolves racked up 486 yards of total offense in the win with six touchdowns, including a 88-yard kick return by Hank Kraft.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 44, NMU 20

Records: NSU 5-6, NMU 0-11

Attendance: 2101

HOW IT HAPPENED

The Wolves tallied 14 points in both the first and third quarters, and added 16 in the second; while the Wildcats notched six in the second and seven in both the third and fourth

Northern's dynamic duo gave NSU a 14-0 lead through the first on a 22-yard receiving score by Dakota Larson and 47-yarder by Dewaylon Ingram; both served up by Jacob Van Landingham

NSU kicked off the second with a safety and Ingram followed that with his second touchdown of the afternoon, a 12-yard reception

Northern Michigan broke through with a field goal at 7:07, however Northern was not finished in the half as Van Landingham recorded his fourth touchdown of the afternoon, a 24-yard pass to Hunter DeRize

The Wildcats closed out the half with their second field goal and Northern State led 30-6

Hank Kraft tallied both touchdowns for the Wolves in the third, kicked off by an 88-yard kick return and score to open the half

Less than four minutes later, Kraft rushed 49-yards to the endzone for his second score of the day and the Wolves final touchdown of the game

NMU added two more touchdowns in the game, one in the third and one in the fourth, however it was not enough to bring the game within reach

Northern State recorded a game leading 22 first downs, 186 yards rushing, 300 yards passing, and 486 yards of total offense; they averaged 14.3 yards per completion and 5.2 yards per rush

The Wolves defense recorded three interceptions by Lynden Williams, Jake Adams, and Donovan McConnell, as well as two sacks

In addition, NSU held NMU to just 37 yards rushing in the game, a season low for the Wolves in 2023

Van Landingham completed 20-of-30 attempts for 290 yards and four touchdowns

Kraft led the rushers with 79 yards, followed by Brett Brenton with 71

Larson tallied his third 100-plus yard game of 2023, racking up 157 total yards with one touchdown

As has been the trend to close out the season, Jake Adams led the defense with a career high 15 tackles, including 11 solo stops, one fumble recovery, and one interception

William Berry and Jakob Desmet added the two sacks for a total of 14 lost yards by the Wildcats

Drew Smook went 6-for-6 in point after attempts and recorded 366 kickoff yards

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Jacob Van Landingham: 290 yds passing, 11 yds rushing, 4 touchdowns

Hank Kraft: 79 yds rushing, 2 touchdowns, 88 kick return yds

Dakota Larson: 157 yds, 1 touchdown

Jake Adams: 15 tackles, 1 fumble recovery, 1 interception

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

With his 69 yards receiving Dewaylon Ingram broke his own single season school record for receiving yards with 1,204 in 2023

Ingram finishes his career third all-time in receiving yards and second all-time in receiving touchdowns

Larson closes out his career as the Northern State school record holder with 3,654 receiving yards and 31 receiving touchdowns

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Veteran Steve Dresbach, Groton, receives a quilt from the Groton Legion Auxiliary recognizing his previous military service. Presenting quilt is Bob Thomason and Laila Roberts.

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)

Groton Veteran's Day Program



American Legion officers participating in Friday's Veterans Day program. L-R Bob Thomason, Legion District 4 Commander, Jane Seibel, Legion Auxiliary District 4 President, and Bruce Babcock, Groton Post 39 Commander. (Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



Five veterans were recognized at the Groton Area Veteran's Day Program held Friday. Here are the veterans with their families. (Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)

Hughes County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash
Where: Mile Marker 260, SD 1804, 11 miles north of Pierre, SD
When: 4:32 p.m., Friday, November 10, 2023

Driver 1: Male, 19, Fatal injuries
Vehicle 1: Jeep, model and year undetermined

Driver 2: Male, 27, Serious, non-life threatening injuries
Vehicle 2: 2023 Chevy 2500

Hughes County, S.D.- One person died Friday evening in a two vehicle crash in Hughes County.

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

Preliminary crash information indicates a 2023 Chevy 2500 and a Jeep collided head-on on SD 1804 near mile marker 260, 11 miles north of Pierre, SD. There were no passengers in either vehicle.

The 19-year-old male driver of the Jeep was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Seatbelt use is under investigation.

The 27-year-old male driver of the 2023 Chevy 2500 sustained serious, non-life threatening injuries and was transported to a nearby hospital.

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.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Three SD projects receive a combined \$51 million for climate-smart agriculture

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - NOVEMBER 11, 2023 1:00 PM

A land trust, state university and conservation group will receive a combined total of \$51 million in federal funding to incentivize "climate-smart" agriculture in South Dakota.

The biggest grant went to Ducks Unlimited, a hunter-led organization focused on habitat conservation. It was awarded \$25 million by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to restore over 25,000 acres of grassland in South Dakota over the next five years.

Ducks Unlimited and its partners – including the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition – will pay landowners to turn unproductive farmland or overgrazed pasture acres back into healthy grassland. Additionally, the team will help ranchers develop livestock grazing plans to ensure pastures are not overgrazed, and Ducks Unlimited will contribute funds toward fencing and water tanks to keep livestock from trampling sensitive areas of newly established grass.

The grants are awarded through the USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program. During a Nov. 1 visit to Minnesota, President Joe Biden announced \$1.1 billion in program awards to 81 projects, including three in South Dakota.

Bruce Toay, Ducks Unlimited's manager of conservation programs in South Dakota, said project partners have decades of experience with land programs. Ducks Unlimited, for example, has helped conserve over 1 million acres of wildlife habitat in South Dakota since 1984.

The programs benefit the climate by restoring and preserving natural areas where plants pull carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, from the atmosphere.

"The program will sequester more carbon into the soil, improve water quality and flood storage, and reduce soil erosion and nutrient loss," Toay said. "And we're going to be able to measure it by taking soil samples and seeing, for example, how many metric tons of CO2 we're putting back into the soil."

That data will inform future conservation programs.

"In this part of the world, the best way to sequester carbon in the soil is to restore grasslands," Toay said. "These native grasslands have root systems that can be 20 feet deep, putting carbon way deep into the soil. Compare that to corn or soybeans and it's markedly different."

Two other South Dakota projects are also receiving funding from the program. The South Dakota Agricultural Land Trust was awarded \$18.3 million to conserve 8,000 acres. The organization will give ranchers one-time checks for easements to perpetually conserve working ranch grasslands on the periphery of the Black Hills, according to Executive Director Tony Leif.

South Dakota State University's Every Acre Counts program will receive \$8 million to help farmers identify the best uses of their land through "precision profitability analysis." The grant extends the program for five years.

"We're hoping we can expand the reach of the program," said Anthony Bly, an SDSU Extension soils field specialist who administers the program. The analyses conducted through the program generally find farmers are losing money by planting crops on acres that would make money being leased for conservation or used for another purpose, according to Bly.

"We've found that 10% of the land that's planted now is marginal," Bly said, referring to land that's "too wet, too dry or too salty" to result in crop yields that pay the costs of planting, fertilizing and harvesting.

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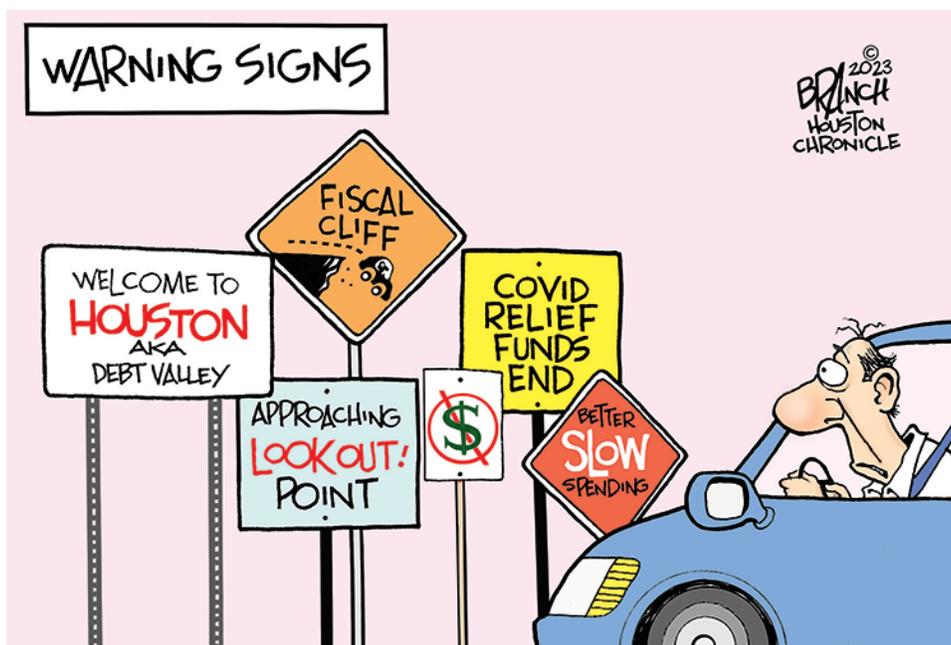
THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

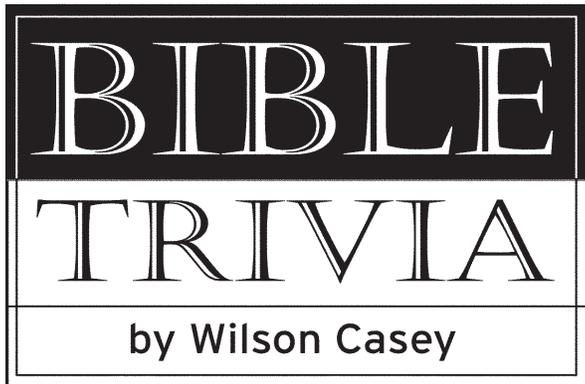
The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

PROVERBS 15:3



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

2. A woman of this place is the only woman in the Bible (KJV) described as a wench. *En-rogel, Gilead, Damascus, Ziba*

3. Who met a man (or angel) and then wrestled him until the breaking of the day? *Solomon, Goliath, Aaron, Jacob*

4. What group of consecrated men did not cut their hair? *Canaanites, Midianites, Nazarites, Hagarites*

5. In Genesis 32, who/what was Mahanaim? *Messenger, Mountain, Ford, Place*

6. Who was the mother of Moses? *Abigail, Jochebed, Elisheba, Athaliah*

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) En-rogel, 3) Jacob, 4) Nazarites, 5) Place, 6) Jochebed

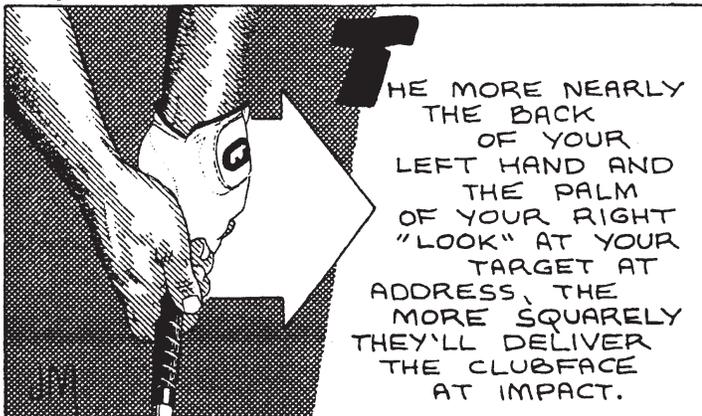
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





How to Distinguish Heart Disease Symptoms From Panic Attacks

DEAR DR. ROACH: How can you tell with at least a moderate degree of certainty that you might really have a heart or blood pressure problem, as opposed to just having an anxiety attack that is less serious? — *D.S.*

ANSWER: A panic attack is an abrupt change in mental state. They are usually unexpected, sometimes with or without identifiable triggers. Symptoms of a panic attack vary from person to person, but among the most common are feelings of heart palpitations; sweating; trembling or shaking; shortness of breath; chest pain or discomfort; dizziness; numbness or a “pins and needles” feeling; abdominal pain or nausea; feeling abnormally hot or cold; feeling detached from oneself or from reality; and a fear of dying, losing control or “going crazy.”

Most of us have had some of these feelings from time to time, and some of these symptoms are identical to ones of heart disease, specifically of angina pectoris — the classic symptom of poor blood flow to the heart. There are many conditions, both medical and psychiatric, that can cause these symptoms as well, so acquiring a moderate degree of certainty isn’t always easy.

A very careful history exam helps. With chest pain due to heart disease, for example, symptoms are commonly brought on by exertion; whereas with a panic disorder, there might not be a trigger, or it may be triggered by psychological stress. Some people have highly specific triggers, such as open spaces or needles. Some people can trigger a panic attack just by worrying that they are

The time course of the symptoms can be very helpful. With a panic attack, the attack starts, and chest discomfort (for example) will then occur. In people with heart disease, chest discomfort starts, and then people will get anxious.

I had a wise cardiology professor who told me to always consider heart disease even if a person’s history is suggestive of a panic attack. I generally check their blood pressure and order an electrocardiogram, blood testing (including thyroid tests) and sometimes other tests when considering the diagnosis of a panic attack.

There is very effective treatment available for people with panic disorder (people with recurrent unexpected panic attacks that lead to avoidant behaviors), both through therapy and medication. But your question implies that being pretty sure of the diagnosis is wise before dismissing the possibility of cardiac disease or other medical diseases.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I’m sure you’ve answered this question before, but how important do you think the digital rectal exam is for a 70-year-old man with normal findings in his PSA tests? My previous doctor who retired would routinely do them during my annual physical, but my current doctor said it’s my choice. So, I’ve opted not to have it done. Thoughts? — *Anon.*

ANSWER: The PSA test is much better at diagnosing than a finger is. There are cases where a clinician felt a tumor that would have been missed by the PSA test, so there is some small benefit to the digital rectal exam. But the benefit is quite modest.

There are men who have come to expect that part of the exam and feel unsatisfied without it, just as there are some men who absolutely refuse it. So, a wise clinician gives the patient the choice after explaining the small benefit and nonexistent risk.

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

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Jessie Buckley, left, and Riz Ahmed star in "Fingernails." Courtesy of Apple TV+

"Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse" (PG) -- In the sequel to the 2018 hit animated film "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse," Shameik Moore reprises his role as Miles Morales. Miles is currently trying to balance his newfound Spider-Man title with the qualms of life when he comes across

an old friend, Gwen (Hailee Steinfeld). Feeling more misunderstood than ever, Miles gets enticed by the fact that Gwen is now in a task force of spider-people who protect the multiverse and decides to join her amid his inexperience. In turn, his thirst to prove himself leads him down a rocky road where sacrifice is inevitable. Putting the stellar voice cast aside (Issa Rae, Oscar Isaac, Daniel Kaluuya), the animation of these films continues to be inventive and breathtaking, and it excels in building on Miles' unique origin story. Out now. (Netflix)

"A Haunting in Venice" (PG-13) -- Director and actor Kenneth Branagh brought back his version of Agatha Christie's sharp-witted detective Hercules Poirot for the third time in this spooky mystery film out now on streaming. The now retired (but not for long) Poirot decides to accompany writer Ariadne Oliver (Tina Fey) to a Halloween party in a Venetian palazzo. At the party, opera singer Rowena announces a seance to contact her recently deceased daughter, but shortly after the seance ends, a murder is committed in perfect timing for Poirot to jump on the case! This film is a much better addition to Branagh's trilogy than his previous "Death on the Nile," having garnered \$119 million in the box office with a \$60 million budget. Plus, Oscar winner Michelle Yeoh is always a welcome sight! (Hulu)

"Fingernails" (R) -- In this sci-fi romance film, Anna (Jessie Buckley) and Ryan (Jeremy Allen White) are a seemingly perfect match -- with evidence to prove it! Three years before, they took and aced the fingernail test created by the Love Institute, an institution that works to help to establish certainty and rid doubts in romantic relationships. Curious to know more about the institute, Anna takes up a job there and starts gravitating toward another instructor named Amir (Riz Ahmed). Finding herself torn between her longing for Amir and the stability she has with Ryan, Anna grapples with whether she's truly with her perfect match, or if such a thing even exists. Out now! (Apple TV+)

"Please Don't Destroy: The Treasure of Foggy Mountain" (R) -- The comedy troupe Please Don't Destroy, consisting of Ben Marshall, John Higgins and Martin Herlihy, was founded in 2017 while the trio were students at New York University. In 2021, they were hired as writers for "Saturday Night Live" and have since been featured in a variety of different sketches on the show. Now, the trio has made a jump from TV to movies with lead roles in a comedy film produced by Judd Apatow and narrated by John Goodman. They play three clueless department store workers who attempt to find a treasure from their childhood, but unbeknownst to them, they're not the only ones searching for it. Conan O'Brien and "SNL's" Bowen Yang also star in the film, premiering Nov. 17. (Peacock)

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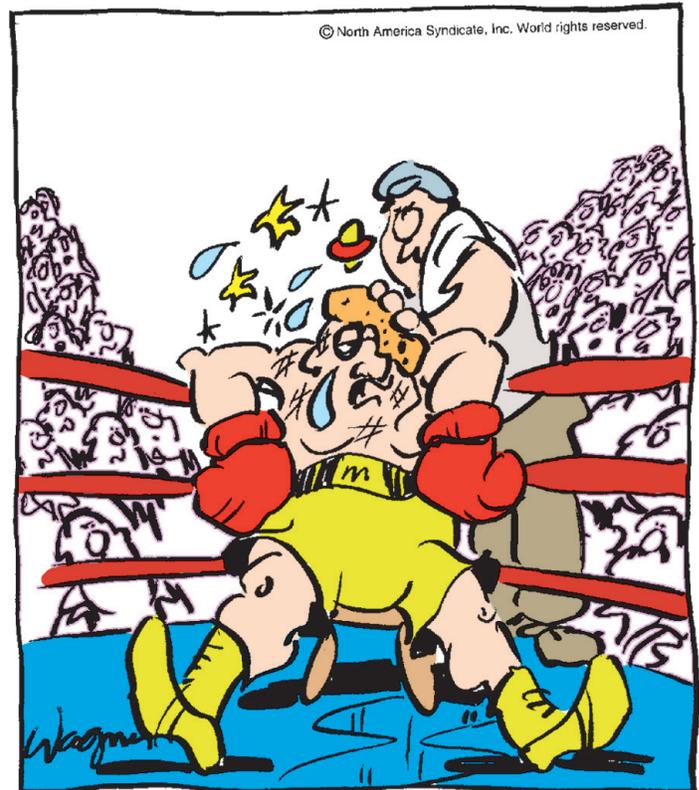
1. Who wrote and released "Desolation Row"? How long was the song?
2. Which group released "Our Day Will Come"?
3. "If I Fell," "Tell Me Why" and "Can't Buy Me Love" were released from which movie?
4. Who released "Come Softly To Me" and when?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "How can people be so heartless? How can people be so cruel?"

Answers

1. Bob Dylan wrote and released the song in 1965. When asked, Dylan claimed the Desolation Row location was in Mexico, but others in the know said it was in Manhattan along Eighth Avenue. The song was over 11 minutes long.
2. Ruby & the Romantics, in 1963. The songwriters weren't pleased, hoping instead to aim for easy listening. But the Ruby version topped the charts, and nobody could argue with that.
3. "A Hard Day's Night," the first Beatles film, released in 1964. The film did well and received a nom for Best Original Screenplay.
4. The Fleetwoods, in 1959.
5. "Easy To Be Hard," by Lynn Kellogg, playing the character Sheila in the rock musical "Hair" in 1967. Two years later the song was covered by Three Dog Night, climbing to No. 4 on the Billboard chart.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



"Did you get the license number?"

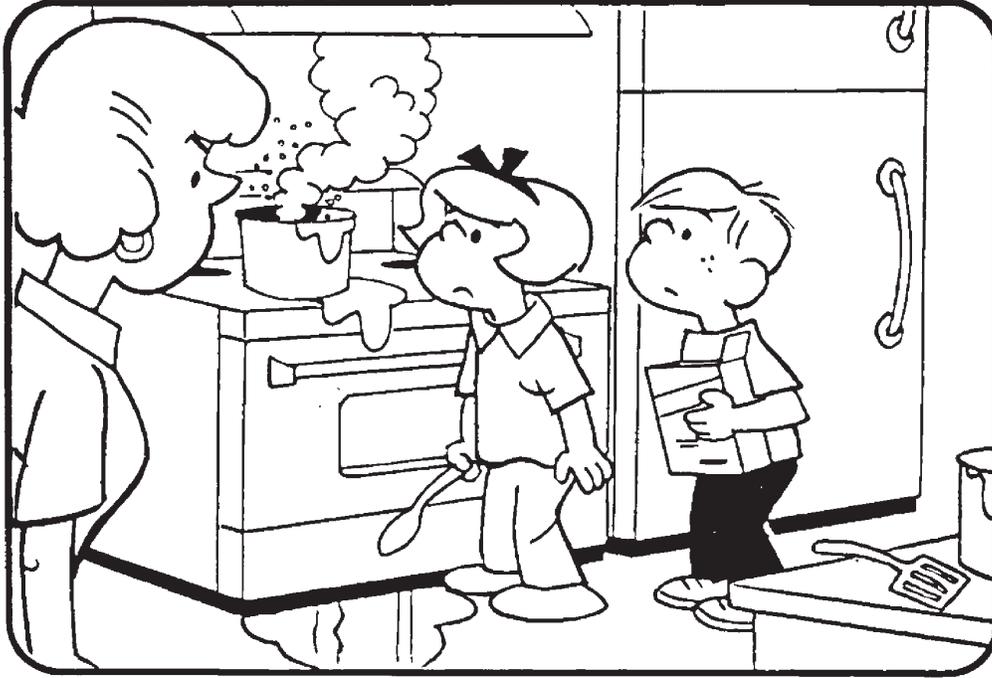
Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



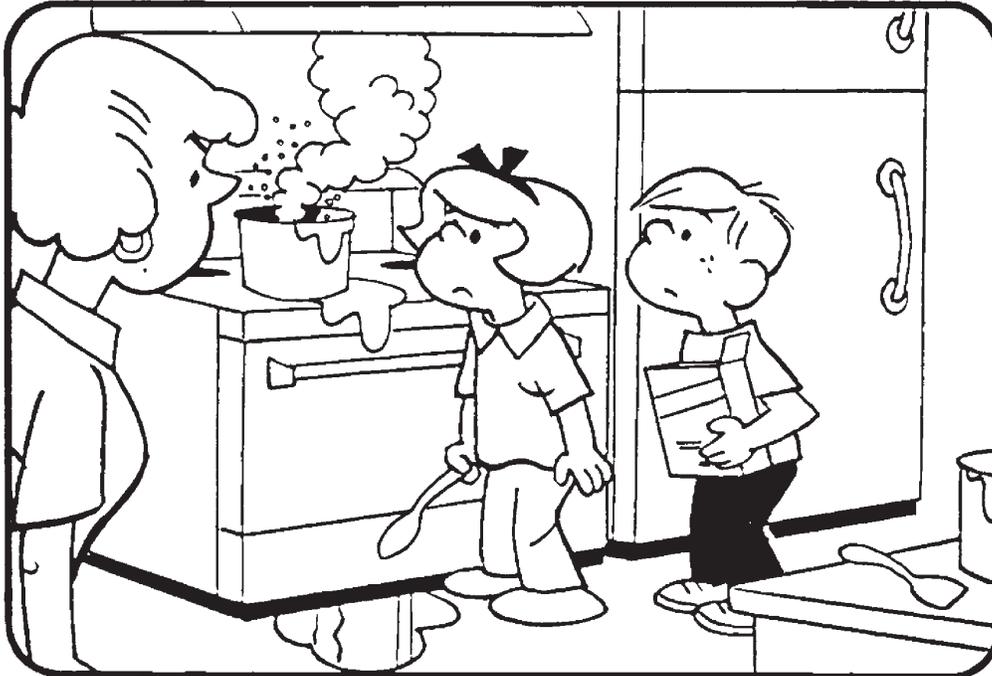
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Hair is different. 2. Oven window is missing. 3. Puddle is smaller. 4. Arm is moved. 5. Handle is smaller. 6. Spatula is different.

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by
Jo Ann
Derson

* OK, I'll say it: I love tradition, but sometimes I want to mix it up for Thanksgiving dinner. I keep the main dishes the same as they always are, but I add my drama in the details. For instance, mix your choice of herbs into a stick of softened butter. Using a plastic baggie with the corner cut off or a decorating bag, pipe the herbed butter onto a butter dish. Refrigerate and enjoy the oohs and ahs. -- JoAnn

* "In the week before Thanksgiving, have a leftovers day and get all those bits and pieces out of the refrigerator. It will make it easier to clean so you'll have room for the turkey and the sides." -- S.T. in South Carolina

* "For easier cooking, when making large holiday meals, simply choose two side dishes that can be oven cooked in the same amount of time at an average temperature. I like one or two that can be cooked in the micro-

wave as well." -- E.U. in Texas

* "For a delightful twist on cranberry jelly, slice and sprinkle with orange zest. Dress up your mashed potatoes with a sprinkling of chopped fresh chives." -- via email

* The night before serving your large sit-down dinner, put all the serving pieces on the table, and all the dinnerware in the dining room. You don't want to have one person trying to get plates and spoons when you are getting dinner on the table. -- JoAnn

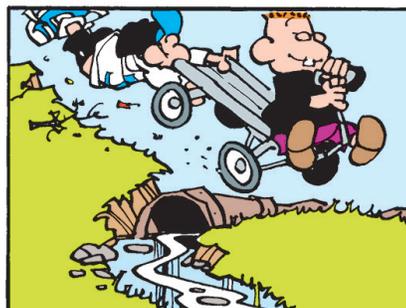
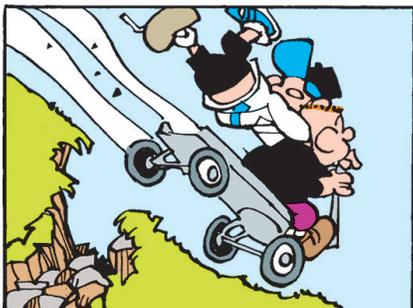
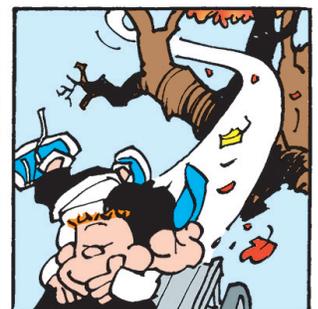
* "You know what works really well to keep hot casseroles hot when waiting for other sides to finish? A cooler. Line it with a towel and set your casseroles inside. Then, when they are on the table, stick the cooler back in the kitchen. You can throw the casserole dishes back in dirty after you pack away leftovers. Add some warm soapy water and they can even wait until the next day to get cleaned." -- M.B. in Georgia

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

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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Mausoleum
- 5 "Born Free" lioness
- 9 Branch
- 12 Ornamental jug
- 13 Jupiter counterpart
- 14 Sheepish remark
- 15 Famed diarist
- 17 Squeak stopper
- 18 Historic times
- 19 Grown-up
- 21 Town square
- 24 Tizzy
- 25 Occupy the throne
- 26 Imaginary
- 30 Right angle

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11
12					13					14		
15				16						17		
			18					19	20			
21	22	23					24					
25					26	27					28	29
30				31						32		
33			34						35			
		36						37				
38	39					40	41					
42				43	44					45	46	47
48				49						50		
51				52						53		

- 31 Count with an orchestra
- 52 Columnist Maureen
- 11 Beer ingredient
- 31 Novelist Malamud
- 32 Simile center
- 53 Milky gem
- 16 Monk's title
- 34 Memo letters
- 33 Bloated, in a way
- DOWN**
- 20 Cato's 502
- 35 Lunar program
- 35 Computer brand
- 1 Earl Grey, e.g.
- 21 Get ready, briefly
- 37 Mouths (Lat.)
- 36 Literary Jane
- 2 Have
- 22 Humdinger
- 38 Felines
- 37 Puccini work
- 3 Gents
- 23 Like the Supremes and the Pointer Sisters
- 39 "The Hajj" author
- 38 Curry spice
- 4 Light wind
- 24 Use scissors
- 40 From the start
- 40 Roundish do
- 5 Poet Pound
- 26 Lose color
- 41 Elmer of cartoons
- 42 Palindromic constellation
- 6 Meadows
- 27 Tempe sch.
- 44 "The Matrix" role
- 43 Yearly charge
- 7 Day light
- 28 Addict
- 45 Dandy guy
- 48 Up to
- 8 With suspicion, as a look
- 29 Zhivago's love
- 46 Actress Mendes
- 49 Oboe insert
- 9 Complete reversal
- 10 Banister
- 50 Cupid's realm
- 47 Moray, for one
- 51 Compass dir.

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— King Crossword —

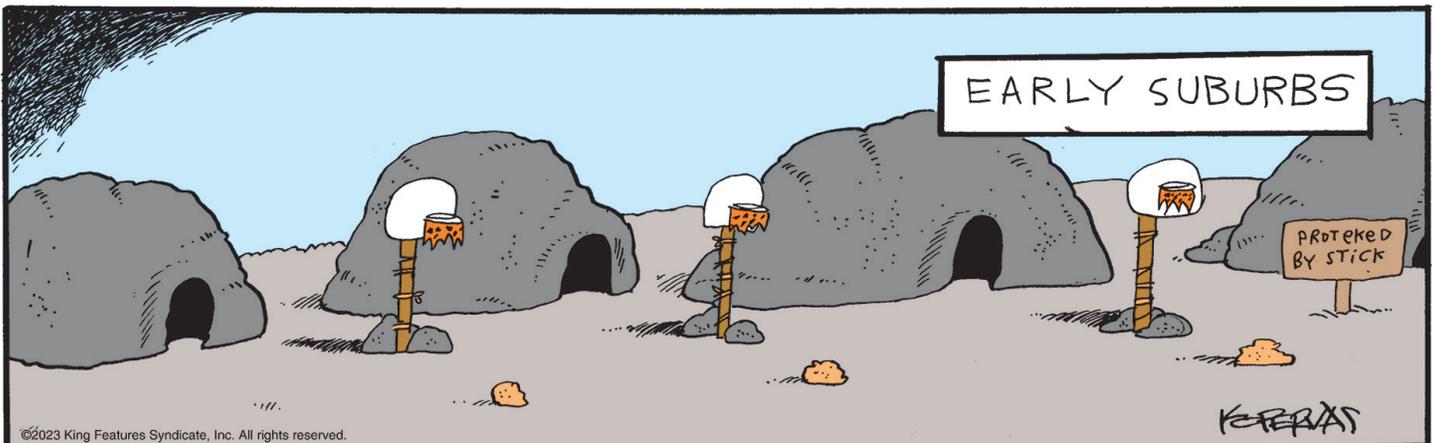
Answers

Solution time: 23 mins.

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E	W	E	R		Z	E	U	S		B	A	A		
A	N	N	E	F	F	R	A	N	K		O	I	L	
				E	R	A	S			A	D	U	L	T
P	L	A	Z	A			S	N	I	T				
R	U	L	E			F	A	N	C	I	F	U	L	
E	L	L			B	A	S	I	E		A	S	A	
P	U	F	F	E	D	U	P			A	C	E	R	
			E	Y	R	E				O	P	E	R	A
C	U	M	I	N			A	F	R	O				
A	R	A			A	N	N	U	A	L	F	E	E	
T	I	L			R	E	E	D			L	O	V	E
S	S	E			D	O	W	D			O	P	A	L

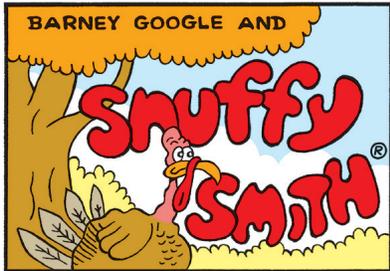
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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Hal Foster's **Prince Valiant** BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES

RHODA CONTINUES HER TALE OF THE FALL OF LOCKBRAMBLE: "AFTER HIS LADY WINNIFRED DIED, LORD GRUNYARD—WHO HAD NEVER BEEN THE STRONG SORT—FELL TO PIECES. HE NEGLECTED HIS ESTATE AND VASSALS, AND AT LAST SIMPLY LEFT FOR HIS EXTENDED DEBAUCHERY IN CAMELOT..."

T. YEATES 9/16/12

... "SHOWING EXTREMELY POOR JUDGMENT IN APPOINTING HIS AMBITIOUS CONFIDANT, SIR ROGER RUNETYNE, AS OVERSEER IN HIS ABSENCE — I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY MET THAT ILL-MANNERED VILLAIN."

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"ROGER'S AVARICE IS MATCHED ONLY BY HIS FOOLISHNESS. HE HAD ONCE MADE PILGRIMAGE TO THE LEVANT, AND BECAME ENTRANCED BY A HEATED INFUSION HE DRANK THERE—IT IS CALLED TEA."

"THE IDIOT MANAGED TO CONVINCe HIMSELF THAT HE COULD ACCUMULATE MUCH WEALTH GROWING THE TREE FROM WHICH THIS 'TEA' IS DERIVED, AND SELLING HIS BEVERAGE TO ALL BRITAIN! HE IMPORTED THE PLANTS, AND ORDERED THE PEASANTRY TO DEVOTE THEMSELVES WHOLLY TO THIS INVESTMENT—TO THE NEGLECT OF THEIR OWN WELL-BEING..."

NEXT: Rebellion

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

I SLEPT LIKE A LOG LAST NIGHT.

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THAT EXPLAINS WHY OUR BED WAS FULL OF SANDUST.

PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Food Recalls

How does a food product get put on the shelves or in the freezers of our grocery stores without benefit of inspection? Especially when they're imported from another country? Inquiring minds would like to know how that happens.

We're not likely to get answers anytime soon. But we can, at least, get quick alerts when those items are recalled.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service is a good site to watch, or better yet, sign up for alerts. At this writing, there is a product (empanadas) under recall that the USDA is concerned might not be fit for human consumption. At the same time, there are two different dog foods that might be contaminated with salmonella, which can affect not only the dogs but the humans feeding the dogs. Then there are the meatballs with Listeria, the pork products that weren't inspected, the burritos with Listeria, the soup with undeclared allergens and much more. For more information on these recalls or to sign up for email notices, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls.

Food Manufacturing is another good site to watch for up-to-the-minute recall and alert information (www.foodmanufacturing.com/recalls-alerts).

Recalls.gov is yet another site for recall notices, and not just food. The site also lists motor vehicles, boats, medicine, cosmetics and environmental products. To sign up for any or all of the alert categories, click "Sign Up for E-Mail" on the left side of the screen and choose those of interest. Of all the recall sites, this one is most comprehensive because of the variety of categories of products. For example, if you wonder if your vehicle has ever had a recall, you can enter its VIN. Or go directly to www.nhtsa.gov.

Signing up for email alerts might be a good idea. If you find that you are getting duplicate information, you can always cancel one. But it's better to be informed and safe.

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1. Name the jockey who won the Kentucky Derby in consecutive years riding Gato Del Sol in 1982 and Sunny's Halo in 1983.

2. What auto race, founded in 1906, was initially contested over 276 miles through the mountains of Sicily near Palermo, Italy?

3. What 2023 film, directed by George Clooney and based on the book by Daniel James Brown, is the story of the University of Washington rowing team that won the gold medal at the 1936 Berlin Summer Olympics?

4. What New Orleans Saints offensive lineman threw New York Jets safety Damien Robinson's helmet during an on-field altercation in November 2001?

5. What member of the Baltimore Orioles was suspended 10 days for a positive steroid test less than three weeks after recording his 3,000th career hit in 2005?

6. Name the Pro Football Hall of Fame defensive tackle for the Pittsburgh Steelers who appeared in a 1979 Coca-Cola commercial called "Hey Kid, Catch!"

7. What French Formula One driver was killed in a gruesome crash during a qualifying session at the 1973 United States Grand Prix?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. Eddie Delahoussaye.

2. Targa Florio.

3. "The Boys in the Boat."

4. Kyle Turley.

5. Rafael Palmeiro.

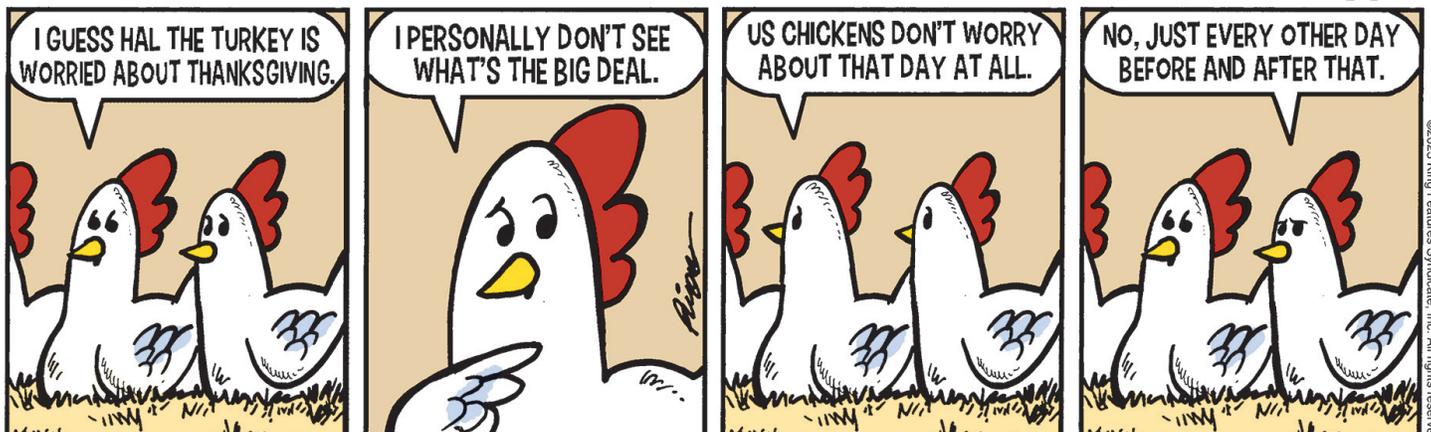
6. "Mean" Joe Greene.

7. Francois Cevert.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Shaggy Dogs Aren't Impervious to Cold Weather

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: On my morning walks, I've noticed that someone in a house down the street puts their dog outside, tied to the porch railing, with only a pan of water. They stay out there all morning. Now that the weather has turned cold, I still see this dog tied up every morning outside. Even with a shaggy coat, the dog is shivering. What can I do to stop this?
-- Francesca W., via email

DEAR FRANCESCA: If this person isn't someone you know, and you're nervous about knocking on their door to talk to them about it, then contact the

animal control department for your town, city or county. If you live in an area where there is no animal control unit, call the nearest shelter or Humane Society to make a report.

In cold temperatures, even temps above freezing, dogs can suffer a cold injury. Their paws and noses -- any exposed skin -- are at risk for frostbite. Hypothermia can be deadly, or it can permanently impair their immune system and overall health. A thick coat doesn't provide as much protection from the cold as one might think.

Many cities have laws against leaving pets out in extreme cold or heat. And tying up a dog outside, even for a few hours, is also unacceptable. If no one else is saying anything about it, go ahead and make some noise by calling any organization that can help and finding out where you can go to make it happen even faster. Thank you for paying attention to and helping that dog out.

Readers, have you dealt with a similar situation? Tell us about it at ask@pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* That straight-line rise of bubbles in your holiday champagne glass is due to the soap-like compounds called surfactants that not only give the beverage its signature bubble chain, but also contribute to its unique flavor.

* If the human eye was a digital camera, it would have 576 megapixels.

* In 1994, a 75-pound bag of cocaine fell out of a plane and landed in the middle of a Florida crime watch meeting.

* Karl Josef Silberbauer, the SS officer who arrested Anne Frank and those in hiding with her during WWII, later bought a copy of Anne's published diary to see if he was mentioned in it.

* Alcohol kills one person every 10 seconds worldwide.

* Sand from the Sahara Desert, which contains phosphorus, is blown by the wind all the way to the Amazon rainforest, where it replaces the phosphorus annually washed away by rains and floods.

* While in prison in 1924, Adolf Hitler wrote to a Mercedes dealership in Munich to beg for a car loan for a limousine he admired, until his royalties for "Mein Kampf" came in.

* Chimpanzees can develop their own fashion trends.

* Christmas ham, originally a pagan tradition, was endorsed by the Catholic Church as a test of truthful conversion from Judaism.

* Actor Al Pacino was the first "face" on Facebook.

* Death penalty trials are 20 times more expensive than those seeking a sentence of life imprisonment without parole.

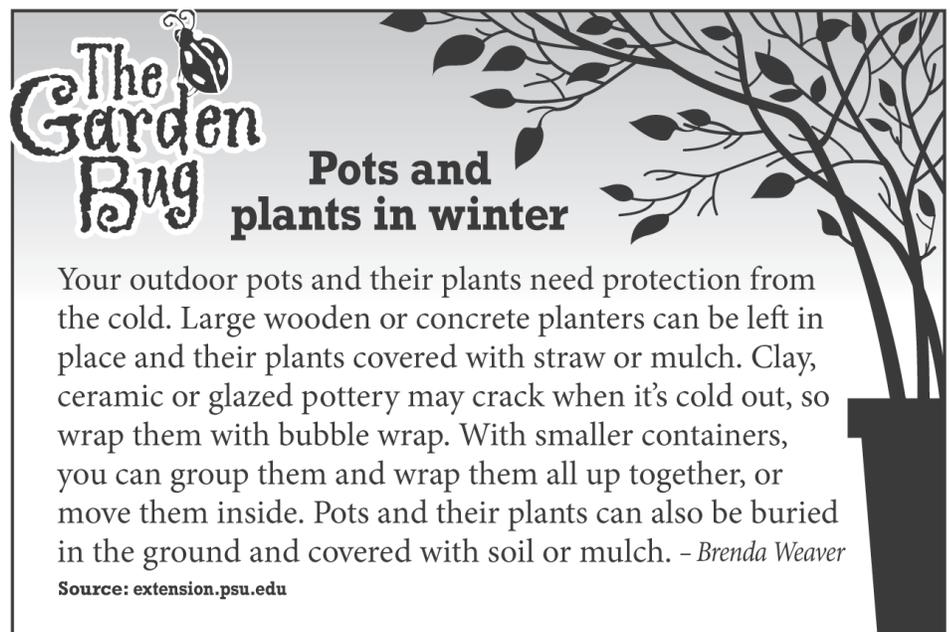
* Doritos originated from the leftover tortillas at Disneyland.

* English phrases such as "long time no see," "no go" and "no can do" come from literal translations of Chinese phrases.

* In Japanese mythology, Namazu is a giant catfish that causes earthquakes.

Thought for the Day: "Every job is a self-portrait of the person who does it. Autograph your work with excellence." -- Ted Key

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The Garden Bug

Pots and plants in winter

Your outdoor pots and their plants need protection from the cold. Large wooden or concrete planters can be left in place and their plants covered with straw or mulch. Clay, ceramic or glazed pottery may crack when it's cold out, so wrap them with bubble wrap. With smaller containers, you can group them and wrap them all up together, or move them inside. Pots and their plants can also be buried in the ground and covered with soil or mulch. - *Brenda Weaver*

Source: extension.psu.edu



by Freddy Groves

Alert: Disability Benefits Questionnaire Scam

The Veterans Administration Office of Inspector General recently issued a fraud alert. They don't do that very often, but this one is important: the Disability Benefits Questionnaire.

The DBQs are those forms you give to your health care provider that, along with information from your provider, lets the VA evaluate your disability claim. The fraud involves trying to get money out of veterans in

exchange for getting a provider to fill out the questionnaire and getting the claim filed.

You do not have to pay to have that done. It's free at the VA or through their accredited representatives.

Per the alert, it's the initial filing that's free. Later, if there's an appeal, yes, there might be fees for that appeal. Apparently, the scammers are asking for a percentage of any payments that you get or fees to file your first claim.

And there's more: The scammers might want to send you to a different health care provider, claiming you'll have a better chance for higher benefits, likely by "finding" a diagnosis to get a better claims decision. For this reason they might even tell you to stay away from the VA exams. Worse, you might be asked to have your benefit payments deposited into the scammer's bank account.

To avoid the scammers, if you want help from a genuine accredited rep, go to the VA's database to see if your proposed rep is listed: www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp.

If you have an accredited rep and there are fees, discuss them in advance and check to see if those fees are legit: www.va.gov/ogc/accreditation.asp.

Remember: Even if your rep is on the up and up, you're responsible for the accuracy of the information in your disability claim. Don't take chances. If you submit fraudulent paperwork, it's a federal offense.

Want to know what the VAOIG has been doing in your state and what they uncovered? Go to www.vaog.gov/reports/data-dashboard and click on your state. That will give you all the reports they've done near you.

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Wishing Well®

4	5	7	5	4	2	4	5	8	2	5	6	3
W	E	C	A	I	B	S	S	P	I	Y	L	Y
4	7	8	3	7	3	6	2	8	2	6	7	5
D	H	R	O	A	U	I	N	O	D	F	R	G
2	6	7	6	2	4	7	2	8	7	3	4	2
I	E	M	I	N	O	E	G	S	N	S	M	O
6	3	8	7	2	8	5	3	4	7	3	4	6
S	T	P	H	F	E	O	A	I	A	R	S	E
3	5	8	2	5	3	4	6	8	7	8	7	3
T	I	R	T	N	D	G	N	O	N	U	C	I
2	8	3	8	6	2	6	4	7	4	5	2	4
I	S	A	I	R	E	I	A	E	I	G	S	N
8	6	4	7	3	4	8	3	6	8	6	8	6
D	C	E	D	R	D	E	Y	H	A	E	S	D

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

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1. LITERATURE: What is Dorothy's last name in "The Wizard of Oz"?
2. GEOGRAPHY: Which U.S. states share a border with Mexico?
3. MOVIES: What are Indiana Jones and his father searching for in "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade"?
4. TELEVISION: Which TV dramedy is set on Wisteria Lane?
5. LANGUAGE: What is a common Latin phrase meaning "something for something"?
6. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is the fastest fish?
7. INVENTIONS: Where was the first compass invented?
8. SCIENCE: How long does it take for the sun's light to reach Earth?
9. U.S. STATES: Which state is the smallest in land size?
10. MEDICAL: What is a common name for aphthous stomatitis?

Answers

1. Gale.
2. Four: California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.
3. The Holy Grail.
4. "Desperate Housewives."
5. Quid pro quo.
6. Sailfish.
7. China.
8. Eight minutes.
9. Rhode Island.
10. Canker sore.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Thank You is Never Enough: Honoring Our Veterans

As we celebrate Veterans Day, it is important for all of us to take a step back and remember the reason for the holiday.

Throughout our nation's history, brave men and women have stepped up to serve the United States of America. While they each likely felt an individual calling to do so, there is something that connects them all. Every veteran in American history has had a belief in a purpose greater than any one person.

When our nation was created, it was founded upon the ideal that each and every one of us has God-given rights that cannot be taken away. Our Democratic form of government secures those rights. And every man and woman who has ever served in the United States military fought to protect our rights, our Freedoms, and our self-governance.

Those who serve make great sacrifices. They sacrifice time with their families. And many of them sacrifice their physical and mental wellbeing. They do this because they know that their cause is one worth fighting for – America is worth fighting for.

We live in a time where some people are turning their backs on the traditional American values that made us the nation we are today. But those who serve have never turned their backs on America.

I am proud to be from a state that still respects the ideal upon which our nation was founded. South Dakotans have held true to our values. We love America. We fight for what is right. And we never forget the people who have sacrificed so that we can enjoy our Freedoms.

We have thousands of active-duty military members and veterans living in South Dakota. The members of the South Dakota National Guard have received numerous national awards for their strength and readiness. There is no one that I trust more to keep our state and our nation safe than our National Guard. I thank them for their continued service.

On Veterans Day, we remember those who fought. We pay our respect to our veterans. It is important that we do this. We can never ask people to continue to serve their nation without also showing them that they will receive the respect and honor they deserve for doing so.

I encourage everyone to continue to thank veterans for their service. Don't just do it in honor of Veterans Day – thank our veterans every day of the year. Those who served this nation could never receive enough thanks for what they have done.

I will always do all that I can to make South Dakota the best state in America to live, work, and retire as a veteran. I hope that our veterans know how much we appreciate them and all they have done for us.

To all of the veterans who have served the United States of America, thank you. God bless you.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



A Secure America Starts at the Border

For the third year in a row, attempted illegal border crossings set a new record. In total, 8 million illegal immigrants have crossed into the United States since President Biden took office – one-fifth being “gotaways” that were seen by Customs and Border Protection, but evaded apprehension. Presumably, more made it through without any detection at all. The border crisis has gotten worse and worse for three years, and it’s long past time for a serious course correction from the Biden administration.

The kind of unchecked illegal immigration we’re seeing represents a serious security threat. The Department of Homeland Security recently warned that, “Terrorists and criminal actors may exploit the elevated flow [of migration] and increasingly complex security environment to enter the United States.” The Biden administration’s failure to secure the southern border has serious implications for our national security and public safety in our country.

By all indications, bad actors are in fact taking advantage of the chaos at the southern border. The Border Patrol chief recently said his agency is arresting an average of more than 47 people per day with “serious criminal histories.” In the last 12 months, 169 individuals on the terrorist watch list were caught trying to illegally enter the country. This is just the individuals who are being caught. How many of the individuals that Border Patrol fails to apprehend threaten security or safety?

The current crisis is, unfortunately, the predictable result of decisions made early on in the Biden administration. Before the president took office, his team was warned of the possibility of a migrant surge. Nevertheless, the president immediately went about dismantling his predecessor’s immigration policies and weakened our border security. He then ended pandemic-era policies that enabled expedited deportation. While the president has finally, half-heartedly acknowledged this crisis, the policy changes he has put in place are far too little and far too late. And now, the White House’s request for additional funding that would provide more resources to sanctuary cities gives Americans little confidence that the administration is actually interested in solving the crisis at the southern border.

The reality is that the solution to the border crisis is not solely a matter of money, it’s a matter of policy. Senate Republicans recently put forward a set of proposals to stem the flow of illegal immigrants. The plan would require border wall construction to proceed. It would close loopholes in our asylum system that are often abused. And it would prevent the Biden administration’s catch-and-release policies from sending illegal immigrants into the United States with court dates years into the future. It’s time we fix this problem, and Republicans are offering solutions. The question is whether our Democrat colleagues will join us in finally addressing this crisis.

Recent events should serve as a wake-up call that it’s time to protect our national security and secure the southern border. Lax enforcement and policies like catch-and-release only encourage more people to attempt to enter the United States illegally. A porous border invites the threat of terrorists and criminals. My Senate Republican colleagues and I will continue to advance these kinds of serious solutions to the border crisis.

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



The Big Three – Groundhog Day, Again

BIG Update

Nearly 55,000 veterans call South Dakota home. These veterans are our friends, family, and neighbors. They served to protect us and our country to help ensure freedom continues to ring. I've had the privilege to meet and thank many veterans through programs like the Honor Flight and the Vietnam War Commemoration. The Honor Flight Network is an organization that brings veterans to Washington, D.C. to see the war memorials created to honor their service and sacrifice. And the Vietnam War Commemoration is an organization I partner with to give Vietnam-era veterans a long-overdue welcome home. Over the past few years, I've had the honor to meet and thank nearly 900 Vietnam-era veterans for their service and hear their unique stories.

Each veteran's story paints a picture of the brave sacrifice they made. I'm grateful for their service.

BIG Idea

Butte County Sheriff Fred Lamphere understands how the border crisis affects South Dakota. Although our state isn't near the southern border, illegal immigration has cost South Dakota taxpayers \$56.9 million in 2023.

I've been an advocate for securing the southern border for years. The Biden Administration's open border has created crises for governors, mayors, and law enforcement across America. Sheriff Lamphere and I talked about solutions, like HR 2 that passed the House with my support. It includes the strongest border policies ever seen in Congress. Now it's time for the Senate to take action.

BIG News

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has started using public airports to house illegal immigrants. This is unsafe and is an improper use of our transportation and commerce hubs.

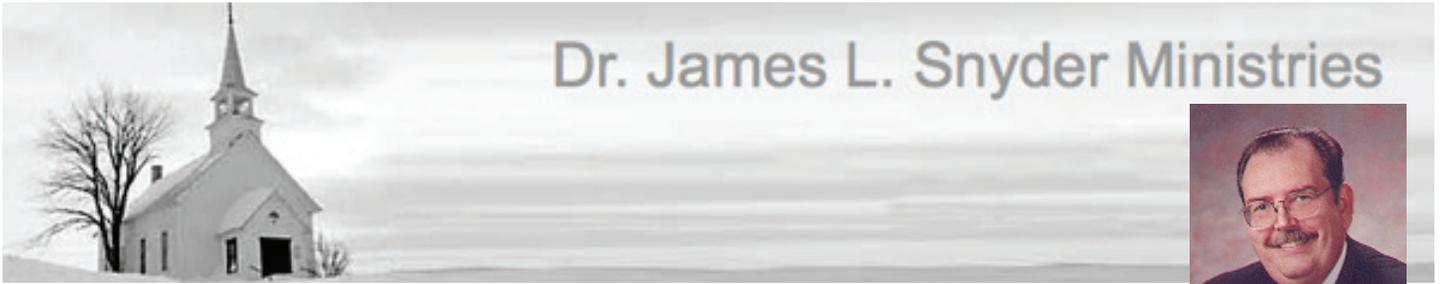
Individuals on the terrorist watch list have come across our southern border, along with illicit drugs and an increase of violent crime. Our airports are supposed to be safe and secure – but housing undocumented migrants does the opposite.

This week, I urged Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg to block the continuation of this unsettling use of our public airports.

This is just another attempted band-aid on the Biden Administration's failed border policies. Allowing unfettered entry into the U.S. through the southern border is a choice, and the Biden Administration continues to make the wrong one. We must address the root issue and put strong border security measures in place.

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The Cookie Monster Has Returned



Sitting in my office working on some projects, I was suddenly surrounded by a familiar aroma. This surprised me because I had no idea what was happening.

That aroma was familiar, but I couldn't identify it.

I'm like that most of the time. My nose doesn't work quite like The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. I don't smell many things, and what I do smell I can't identify. On the other hand, my wife can smell something three days before it happens. How she does that, I don't know.

Thinking about what I was smelling, it did have some familiarity to it. I know I smelled this aroma before and needed to find out what it was.

The more I sniffed, the stronger that aroma became. Then, I had a flash in my head. I recognized that aroma. The aroma coming from the kitchen was freshly baked cookies.

It's the time of the year when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage spends a lot of time making cookies. You name the cookie, and she's making it. She can make cookies that I have not heard of before. That is her specialty.

I leaned back in my office chair, trying to figure out what to do next. It is the time of the year when she makes cookies, and I smelled that cookie aroma all morning. What is my next step?

Should I sneak out to the kitchen and see what she was doing?

If I do that, I am asking for trouble. Leaning back in my chair, I looked around my office and noticed one thing that could help. There was my coffee cup, and it was empty. All I needed to do was take my cup to the kitchen for a refill. I think that might work.

With a very joyful demeanor, I picked up my cup and marched to the kitchen, expecting to see those cookies. I contemplated what cookies I would see, but there is nothing like seeing them in person.

As I entered the kitchen, my wife said, "And why are you coming into the kitchen?"

I'm not a gambler, but I knew I had to lay my cards on the table, or I would be in trouble.

"Oh, my dear," I said with a smile, "I'm here to get another cup of coffee."

Looking at me with one of her looks, she said, "So, you're not here for any cookies?"

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"Cookies? I didn't know you were making cookies today."

"You couldn't smell those cookies?" she said with a snicker.

I had to divert her attention, so I complimented her, "This is the best coffee I've had in a long time. I just had to have another cup. Thank you so much for it."

Looking at me, she said, "If I give you a cookie, will you stay out of the kitchen for the rest of the day?"

I must confess I would do anything for a cookie. So I agreed to this, and she gave me a fresh cookie. I smiled at her and said, "Thank you so much."

Basking in the aroma of that cookie, I headed to my office. What could be better?

Munching on that cookie was the best thing I had done all morning. I don't know how she does it, but she makes the best cookies in the world.

I finished that cookie and tried not to think of any cookies anymore. I remembered that cookie was given to me with the provision I would not come into the kitchen that day. Why did I make such an agreement?

It was hard for me to return to work; I could only think of cookies. I don't care what cookie it is; if it comes from our kitchen, it is the best cookie in the world.

Something happened that I wasn't expecting. My wife popped into my office with another cookie and said, "I gotta run across town to get something for my cookies. Here's another cookie if you promise not to come into the kitchen while I'm gone."

All I could see was the cookie in her hand. I nodded excitedly and took the cookie, and she left my office. It was a delight to have another cookie, and I munched on it rather slowly but enjoyably.

The cookie disappeared rather quickly, and my wife had been gone for at least half an hour, and all I could think of was cookies, cookies, cookies.

Getting up out of my chair, I slowly walked toward the kitchen. As you go into our kitchen on the right, a table connects with the kitchen sink. I noticed on that table piles of freshly baked cookies.

I thought of my agreement with her that I would not go into the kitchen, and I stood there, reached my arm around the corner, found several cookies, picked them up, and returned to my office. I think I got away with some more cookies.

Not long after that, I heard The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage come into the house and go into the kitchen. Then I heard her say, "Oh, the cookie monster has returned."

I then knew I was in trouble.

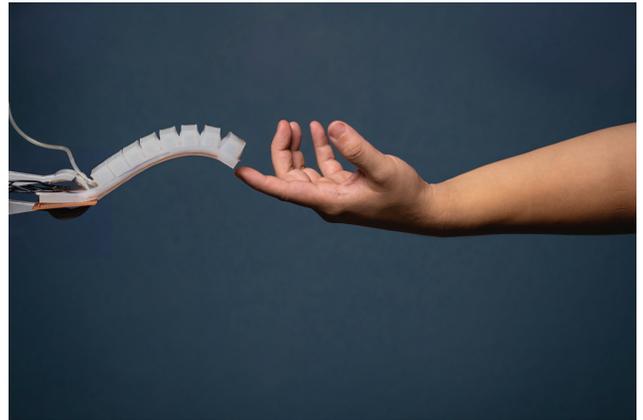
A scripture verse came to my mind, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Ouch! I think I know what to do. Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, here I come.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What are softbotics and how can this emerging field help us better understand animal evolution and achieve our conservation goals?

-- James Penfield, Boone, IA

Soft robotics, AKA softbotics, an emerging field of robotics, is revolutionizing how we design and build machines. Unlike traditional rigid robots, soft robots are inspired by the flexibility and adaptability found in nature, such as in the movement of animals like octopi and worms. These robots are made from pliable materials that let them mimic the dexterity and agility of living organisms. This innovative technology is not only changing the landscape of robotics



Soft robotics, AKA softbotics, is not only changing the landscape of robotics but also providing valuable insights into animal evolution.

Credit: UC San Diego Jacobs School of Engineering, FlickrCC.

but also providing valuable insights into animal evolution.

At its core, soft robotics aims to replicate and harness the qualities of soft, living organisms to create robots that are better suited for complex, dynamic environments. Traditional hard, rigid robots are often limited in their ability to navigate and interact with unpredictable surroundings. Soft robots can bend, stretch, and deform, making them better equipped to handle real-world challenges.

In 2023, researchers at Carnegie Mellon University's Department of Mechanical Engineering, along with paleontologists from Spain and Poland, used fossil evidence to create a robotic replica of pleurocystitid, a marine organism that lived 450 million years ago and is thought to be one of the first echinoderms able to moving using a muscular stem. "We are building robot analogues to study how locomotion has changed," says lead researcher Carmel Majidi of Carnegie Mellon. "Many fundamental principles of biology and nature can only fully be explained if we look back at the evolutionary timeline of how animals evolved."

The connection between soft robotics and animal evolution is evident when we consider how these robots are designed and built. Scientists and engineers draw inspiration from nature, studying the movement and behavior of animals to inform the design of soft robots. For example, an octopus' ability to squeeze through tight spaces and manipulate objects with its flexible tentacles has inspired the development of soft robots that can perform similar tasks, such as search and rescue missions in collapsed buildings.

Animals have evolved over the millennia to develop structures and behaviors that optimize their survival and reproduction. Soft robotics seeks to emulate these evolutionary solutions, creating machines that can perform tasks with a level of versatility and efficiency that was previously unattainable. Studying the biomechanics of animals like snakes, which move gracefully despite their lack of legs, has inspired the creation of serpentine soft robots that can navigate tight spaces and uneven terrain.

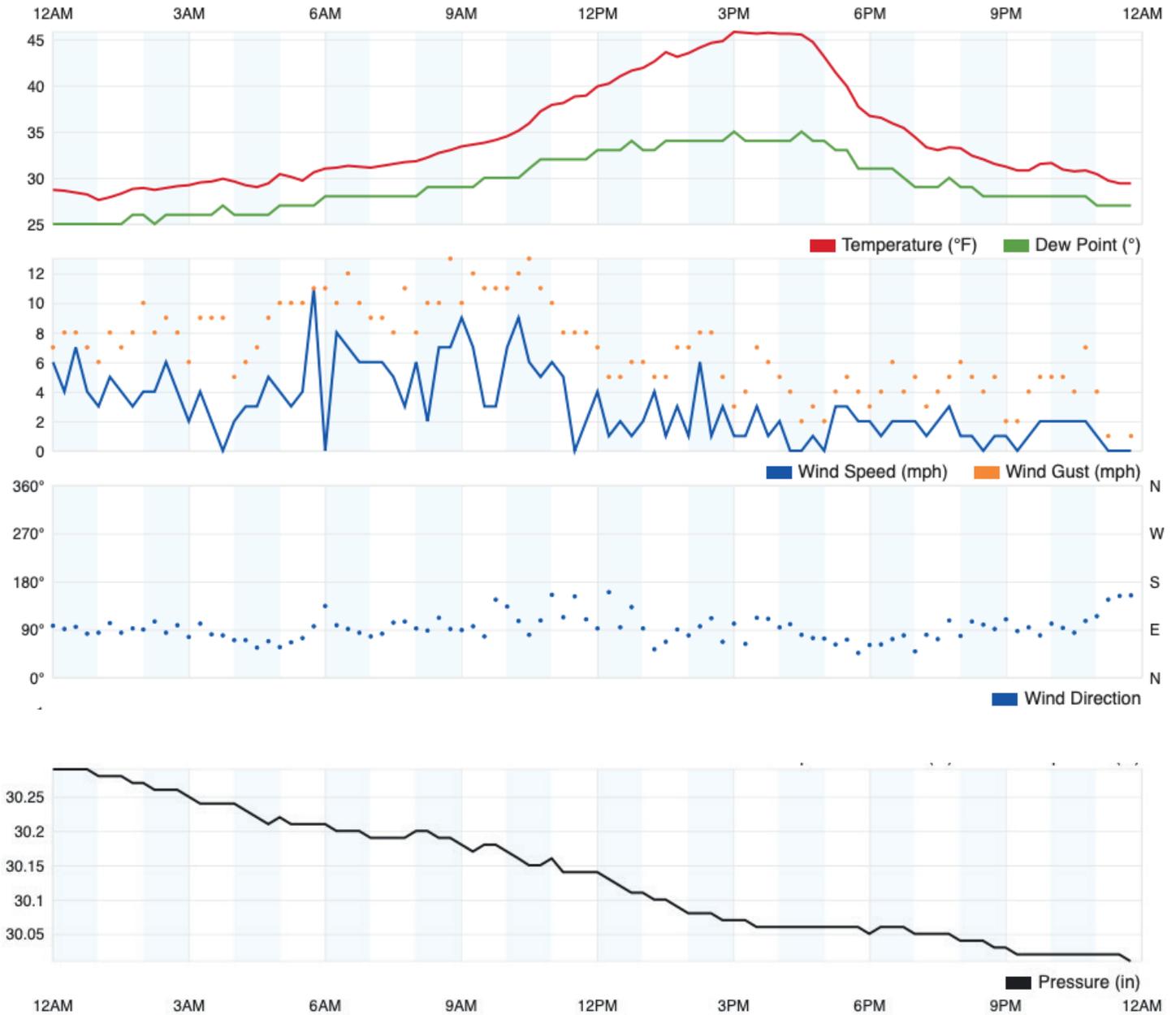
Soft robotics is not merely an attempt to mimic nature but a way to explore the principles that underlie the remarkable adaptations found in living organisms. This exploration can lead to breakthroughs in a wide range of applications, from medical devices to environmental monitoring and even space exploration.

One particularly exciting area of research is developing soft robots for use in ecological and wildlife studies. These robots can be designed to mimic specific animals, enabling researchers to observe and interact with wildlife in their natural habitats more unobtrusively. This has the potential to revolutionize our understanding of animal behavior and ecology by providing unprecedented insights into their lives.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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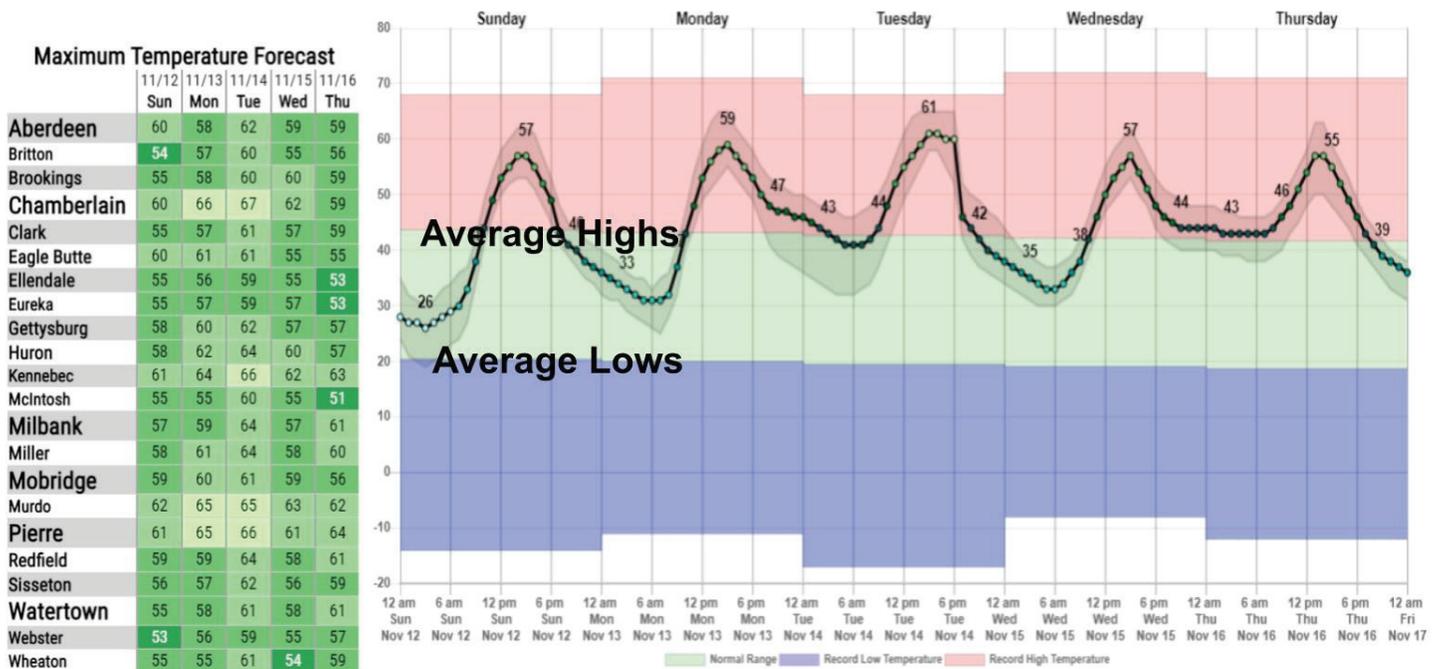
Sun Nov 12	Mon Nov 13	Tue Nov 14	Wed Nov 15	Thu Nov 16	Fri Nov 17	Sat Nov 18
57°F	58°F	62°F	57°F	56°F	53°F	51°F
27°F	42°F	30°F	38°F	31°F	30°F	36°F
SSW	SE	S	NE	S	W	W
19 MPH	23 MPH	18 MPH	9 MPH	18 MPH	13 MPH	11 MPH



Mild & Dry Next Several Days

November 12, 2023
2:59 AM

Trends



The next several days will feature well above normal temperatures. We will see a bit windy conditions today (20 to 35mph) out of the northwest. Winds will pick up again Monday as well.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 46 °F at 3:48 PM

Low Temp: 28 °F at 1:01 AM

Wind: 15 mph at 9:18 AM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 9 hours, 41 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 68 in 1905

Record Low: -14 in 1896

Average High: 44

Average Low: 21

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.36

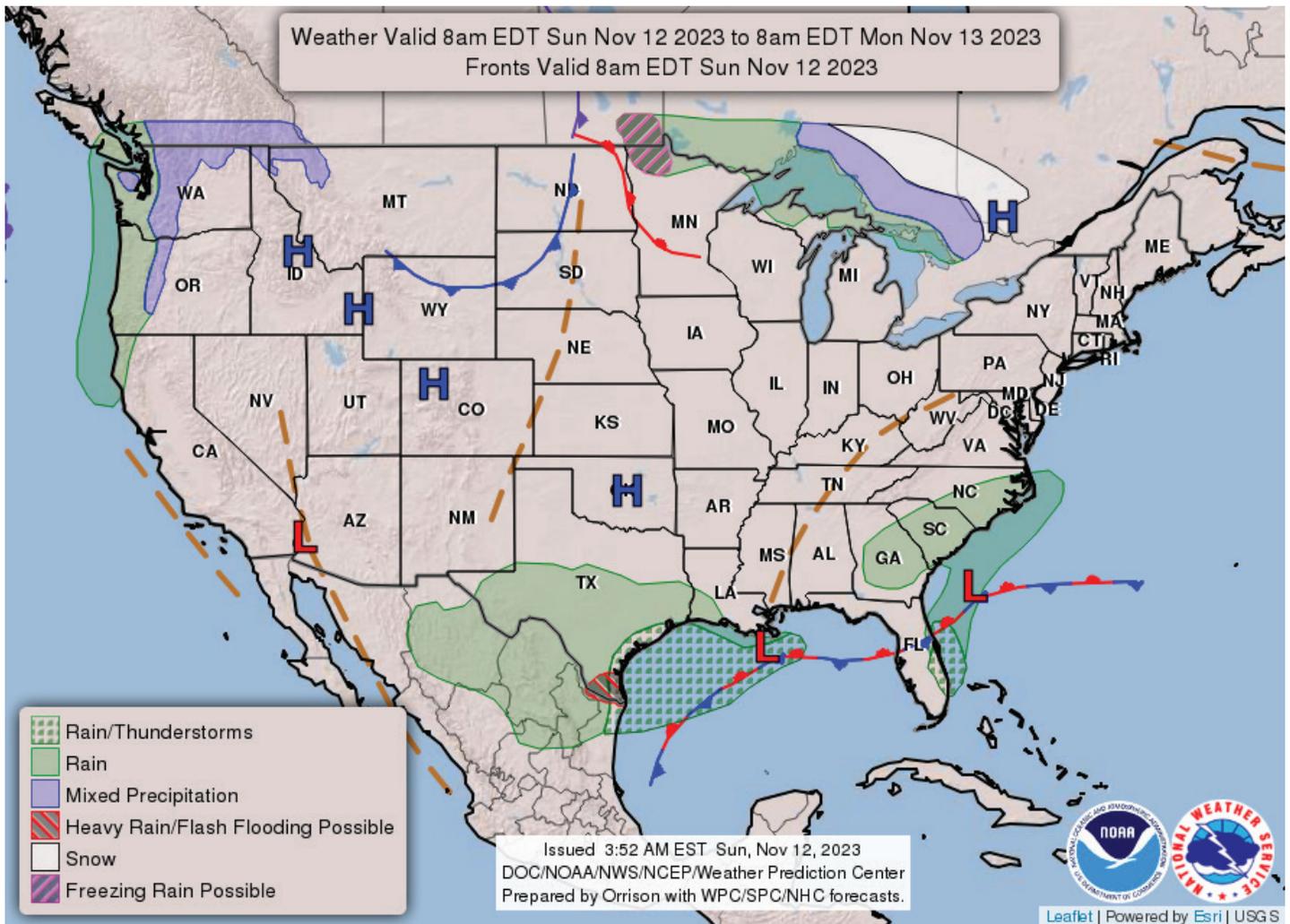
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.17

Average Precip to date: 20.83

Precip Year to Date: 23.15

Sunset Tonight: 5:07:29 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:26:57 AM



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Today in Weather History

November 12, 1993: A winter storm moved through the area on November 12th and 13th. A wintry mix of precipitation in the form of freezing rain, sleet, and snow began during the afternoon on the 12th in western portions of Minnesota, while heavy snow fell in a swath from southwest South Dakota through central and northeast parts of the state, with generally four to eight inches reported. Freezing rain also preceded the snow in south-central South Dakota. Significant accumulation of ice occurred within about a 70-mile wide area from west central Minnesota into the Arrowhead region. Up to five inches of snow fell on top of the ice, making travel extremely hazardous. In South Dakota, locally heavier snowfall amounts included 12 inches at Midland and 10 inches central Hughes County. Several schools and other community events were closed due to the ice and snow. In south central South Dakota, trees were damaged by heavy ice, some of which fell on power lines, causing an outage. Other snowfall amounts include; 8.0 inches in Blunt; 7.0 inches in Murdo and near Victor; and 6.0 inches near Onida, Faulkton, Highmore, and Leola.

November 12, 2003: High winds brought down a 70-foot gas station sign in Kennebec. The sign fell onto a shed, causing considerable damage to the shed. A 25-foot radio tower on the Kennebec courthouse was also knocked down by the winds.

1906 - The mercury soared to 106 degrees at Craftonville, CA, a November record for the U.S. (The Weather Channel)

1959 - Between Noon on the 11th and Noon on the 12th, a winter storm buried Helena, MT, under 21.5 inches of snow, which surpassed their previous 24 hour record by seven inches. (The Weather Channel)

1968 - A severe coastal storm produced high winds and record early snows from Georgia to Maine. Winds reached 90 mph in Massachusetts, and ten inches of snow blanketed interior Maine. (David Ludlum)

1970: The deadliest tropical cyclone ever recorded, and one of the deadliest natural disasters in modern times occurred on this day in East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. The Bhola Cyclone first formed over the Bay of Bengal on November 8 and traveled north. This cyclone reached peak intensity, Category 3, on the 11, and made landfall on the coast of East Pakistan the following afternoon. The Bhola Cyclone killed an estimated 500,000 people and caused nearly \$90 million in damage (1970 USD).

1974 - A great Alaska storm in the Bering Sea caused the worst coastal flooding of memory at Nome AK with a tide of 13.2 feet. The flooding caused 12 million dollars damage, however no lives are lost. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Heavy snow spread across much of New England. Totals in Massachusetts ranged up to 14 inches in Plymouth County. The seven inch total at the Logan Airport in Boston was their highest of record for so early in the season, and the 9.7 inch total at Providence RI was a record for November. Roads were clogged with traffic and made impassable as snowplow operators were caught unprepared for the early season snowstorm. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather in the Lower Mississippi Valley during the afternoon and early evening hours. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Bovina MS. Morning thunderstorms drenched Atlanta TX with more than four inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thirty-three cities reported record high temperatures for the date as readings soared into the 70s and 80s from the Southern and Central Plains to the Southern and Middle Atlantic Coast Region. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Scottsbluff NE was a record for November, and highs of 76 degrees at Rapid City SD and 81 degrees at Chattanooga TN were the warmest of record for so late in the season. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2003 - Thunderstorms developed in southern California and produced torrential downpours across parts of the Los Angeles area. More than 5 inches of rain fell in just 2 hours in southern Los Angeles, producing severe urban flooding. Small hail also accompanied the storms, accumulating several inches deep in some areas of the city. Nearly 115,000 electrical customers lost power as the storms affected the area (Associated Press).

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

I MUST KNOW THEM!

Years ago there was a king who would leave his palace and walk through the streets of his city dressed as though he was one of his subjects. His guards feared for his life and often would try to stop him. Said one, "You must not do silliness for security's sake!"

"But," he replied, "I can't rule my people unless I know them and how they live."

What a comfort to know that our God knows us and understands us from having lived a human life in and through His Son, Jesus. Whatever we face He has faced and whatever path we travel He has traveled. Jesus learned life's secrets in the school of experience and can now bring us His encouragement, strength, insight, and guidance.

We often forget that Jesus gained His knowledge of life's ways because He was here among "us." And He is now with His Father and remembers what it is like to be lonely and rejected, abandoned and fearful, alone and afraid, weary, and worn out. He understands what it means to be tempted and tried, scorned and rejected, bullied and beaten, and even forsaken by His very own "disciples in training."

And it is because He passed through all of these experiences that now, in Heaven, He can be touched with our problems, and give us His help, hope, and healing, empathy and understanding, sympathy and strength. Remember, He endured and survived whatever His Father brought into His life, and His Father – our Heavenly Father – will do the same for us!

Prayer: We are grateful, Father, that You know us, understand us, and now intercede for us. This gives us the confidence to hold on to You tightly and never give up. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. Hebrews 4:14-16



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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.10.23

13 33 59 68 70 8

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$245,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.11.23

5 25 27 38 50 7

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,150,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.11.23

10 24 27 31 37 11

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 16 Hrs 48 Mins

DRAW: 46 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.11.23

8 9 17 30 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$53,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.11.23

5 17 19 41 49 5

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.11.23

1 12 14 24 57 7

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$235,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL SDHSAA Playoffs

Class 11AAA Championship= Sioux Falls Lincoln High School 31, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 7

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

South Dakota turns back North Dakota 14-10 after giving up opening kickoff return TD

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Keyondre Jones and Charles Pierre Jr. ran for touchdowns in the second half and South Dakota's defense kept North Dakota in check for a 14-10 win on Saturday.

The Coyotes (8-2, 6-1 Missouri Valley Football Conference), ranked sixth in the FCS Coaches Poll, held the No. 12 Fighting Hawks (6-4, 4-3) to a field goal after Red Wilson returned the opening kickoff 99 yards for a touchdown.

South Dakota had two turnovers and just 187 yards in the first half but held North Dakota to 99 yards. The Fighting Hawks turned a fumble into a CJ Elrichs 42-yard field goal on the last play of the first half.

A 14-yard punt return by Carter Bell set the Coyotes up at midfield and Jones capped a quick six-play drive with a 2-yard run at 6:54 of the third quarter.

Pierre's 10-yard scamper capped a 13-play, 81-yard drive with 8:26 to go.

South Dakota ended up with 416 yards of offense with Aidan Bouman completing 20-of-28 passes for 307 yards.

North Dakota finished with 211 yards.

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

South Dakota State clinches at least a share of the Missouri Valley Football Conference title

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio (AP) — Mark Gronowski threw for 295 yards and three touchdowns, with 166 yards and two touchdowns going to Jadon Janke, and South Dakota State beat Youngstown State 34-0 on Saturday to clinch at least a share of the Missouri Valley Football Conference title for the second year in a row.

Top-ranked South Dakota State (10-0, 7-0), which entered with a one-game lead over both Northern Iowa and South Dakota, has won 24 games in a row dating to last season. The Jackrabbits have won 13 of the 15 meetings with Youngstown State as members of the MVFC.

Isaiah Davis added 130 yards rushing and a touchdown for South Dakota State.

The Jackrabbits ended the first half with a six-point swing. Youngstown State's 29-yard field-goal attempt was blocked and Isaiah Stalbird returned it 17 yards to near midfield. Gronowski connected with Janke for a 20-yard completion and Hunter Dustman made a 43-yard field goal as time expired for a 20-0 lead at the break.

Youngstown State was outgained 232-88 in the first half.

South Dakota State scored on the first offensive play of the third quarter when Gronowski found Janke wide open along the left sideline for a 56-yard touchdown.

Mitch Davidson was 17-of-29 passing for 149 yards with one interception for Youngstown State (6-4, 4-3).

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Classes on celebrities like Taylor Swift and Rick Ross are engaging a new generation of law students

By HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A South Dakota law professor typically teaches about dense topics like torts and natural resources. But next semester, he and his fearless students are shaking things up by turning their attention to Taylor Swift.

Sean Kammer wanted his legal writing course to draw on music and art to help his students reconsider legal language and craft persuasive arguments. The self-described “Swiftie” thought a focus on the cultural icon was also a way to connect with his students.

Never in his wildest dreams did Kammer expect the attention that the announcement generated — the class filled up quickly and jealous alumni even reached out.

“The reaction from students has been exciting,” he said. “If we can have fun while we’re exploring some of these complex theoretical problems or issues, I believe students will be inspired to think deeper and to push themselves further.”

Swifties at the University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law aren’t the only ones having fun. Law professors across the country are increasingly drawing on popular culture and celebritydom — sometimes with the help of celebrities themselves — to engage a new generation of students and contextualize complicated concepts in the real world.

Courses on Swift, Rick Ross and Succession supplement traditional law school courses with fun and accessible experiences that professors say they often didn’t have themselves.

Students at the Georgia State University College of Law were hustlin’ everyday to get to class — especially on Tuesday when they got to hear directly from Ross for the final day of a course that chronicled the legal intricacies of the rapper, record executive and Wingstop franchise owner’s life.

Moraima “Mo” Ivory, director of the school’s entertainment, sports and media law program, wants her students to see for themselves what goes into the albums, television shows and movies they enjoy. She chooses a star each year and invites guest speakers from their world, along with the title character themselves, to bring legal deals, defenses and drama to life.

“We’re talking about critical legal principles, but we’re watching them as they happen and as they happened,” she said. “It really just turns that lightbulb on for law students.”

Ivory said she could’ve heard a pin drop in one class about mixtapes that featured guest DJ Drama.

“It was never my experience that I walked out of a law school classroom excited about what I had learned,” Ivory said.

For third-year law student Luke Padia, the experience makes concepts feel more tangible than reading a textbook or case law, he said.

“No knock on the other courses,” the 26-year-old from Lawrence, Kansas, said. “I just find that my attention is more easily grabbed when I’m sitting in class listening to Steve Sadow talk about how he was able to get Rick Ross out of jail as opposed to sitting in constitutional law or torts or whatever it may be.”

Frances Acevedo, a 25-year-old from Pembroke Pines, Florida, in her third year of law school, said she’s walked away from the class with an understanding of how important a team is to an artist’s success — a message Ross emphasized.

“I can sit at the table and talk money with multibillionaires,” Ross said to students, faculty and guests gathered for the course finale. “But when it’s time for me to move forward, I sit down with my team.”

Courses on A-list celebrities have captivated undergraduate and graduate students across the country for years, increasingly in courses analyzing race and gender. The attention on female artists and artists of color is a sign of growing respect for them and for different modes of artistic expression, said Kinitra Brooks, an English professor at Michigan State University.

Brooks’ course on Beyonce’s Lemonade album and Black feminism was so popular that she published a reader that other professors can use. The pop culture material offers “immediate relatability,” which Brooks thinks makes students more likely to participate, allow their ideas to be challenged and be willing

to challenge the artist, too.

Bella Andrade, a junior at Arizona State University, looks forward to her class on the psychology of Taylor Swift every week. The self-proclaimed "huge Swiftie" has been listening to her music for "forever and a day," but the class includes a range of fans. There are "10 out of 10" Swifties, along with people who barely know her music, which "leads to some really great conversations," she said.

"I think I've developed a much deeper understanding of different topics in social psychology," said Andrade, who is from Minneapolis. "Taking topics that I've known about or heard about before but really applying them in a sense to something that I'm really invested in ... really solidifies meaning."

Courses that incorporate pop culture offer a different context for the fundamentals that students learn in their traditional courses, said Cathy Hwang, who co-taught a University of Virginia corporate law course last year inspired by Succession.

The class investigated the show's prickly – and often duplicitous – legal matters, like hostile takeovers and securities law. Hwang said she was trying to engage and nurture a love of learning in students who "grew up with different interactions with technology and pop culture than what I did."

"To me, it's not so much what's my teaching style, but what's the students' learning style?" Hwang said. "It's important, I think, as a teacher to keep evolving and trying to meet students where they are."

Associated Press video journalist Sharon Johnson contributed from Atlanta.

Heavy fighting rages near main Gaza hospital as Netanyahu dismisses calls for a cease-fire

By NAJIB JOBAIN and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli strikes pounded Gaza City overnight and into Sunday as ground forces battled Hamas militants near the territory's largest hospital, where health officials say thousands of medics, patients and displaced people are trapped with no electricity and dwindling supplies.

In a televised address on Saturday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected growing international calls for a cease-fire unless it includes the release of all the nearly 240 hostages captured by Hamas in the Oct. 7 rampage that triggered the war, saying Israel was bringing its "full force" to the battle.

Israel has vowed to end Hamas' 16-year rule in Gaza and crush its military capabilities, while blaming the militants for the war's heavy toll on the 2.3 million Palestinians trapped in the besieged territory.

Israel has come under mounting international pressure, even from its closest ally, the United States, as the war enters a sixth week. An estimated 300,000 pro-Palestinian protesters marched peacefully through London on Saturday — the biggest demonstration in the city since the war began.

HEAVY FIGHTING NEAR SHIFA HOSPITAL

In Gaza City, residents reported heavy airstrikes and shelling overnight, including in the area around Shifa Hospital. Israel, without providing evidence, has accused Hamas of concealing a command post inside and under the hospital compound, allegations denied by Hamas and hospital staff.

"We spent the night in panic waiting for their arrival," said Ahmed al-Boursh, a resident taking shelter in the hospital. "They are outside, not far from the gates."

The hospital's last generator ran out of fuel on Saturday, causing the death of a premature baby, another child in an incubator and four other patients, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza. It says another 37 babies are at risk of death because there's no electricity.

Health Ministry Undersecretary Munir al-Boursh said Israeli snipers have deployed around Shifa, firing at any movement inside the compound. He said airstrikes had destroyed several homes next to the hospital, killing three people, including a doctor.

"There are wounded in the house, and we can't reach them," he told Al Jazeera television in an interview from the hospital. "We can't stick our heads out of the window." It was not clear if he was related to the other man with the same surname.

Israel's military said there was a safe corridor for civilians to evacuate from Shifa to southern Gaza, but

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people sheltering in the hospital said they were afraid to go outside. The military said troops would assist in moving babies on Sunday, and that it was in contact with hospital staff. It was not possible to independently ascertain the situation in and around the hospital.

The Health Ministry says there are still 1,500 patients at Shifa, along with 1,500 medical personnel and between 15,000 and 20,000 people seeking shelter. Thousands have fled Shifa and other hospitals, but physicians said it's impossible for everyone to get out.

The Palestinian Red Crescent rescue service said another Gaza City hospital, Al-Quds, is "no longer operational" because it has run out of fuel. Gaza's sole power plant was forced to shut down a month ago, and Israel has barred any fuel imports, saying Hamas would use them for military purposes.

With Shifa and other hospitals now inaccessible, people sheltering in Gaza City said they were cut off from emergency care. Heba Mashlah, who was sheltering at a U.N. compound along with thousands of families, said a strike late Saturday killed four people and wounded 15.

"The wounded are bleeding, and no one is able to come and help them," she said, adding that the dead were buried inside the compound. The U.N. Development Program confirmed one of its compounds was hit. U.N. agencies have not been able to provide services in the north for weeks.

NETANYAHU REJECTS US POSTWAR VISION

Netanyahu has said the responsibility for any harm to civilians lies with Hamas. Israel has long accused the group, which operates in dense residential neighborhoods, of using civilians as human shields.

The Israeli military said that during a battle in Gaza City, its forces helped clear a corridor for civilians to exit a building before coming under fire. The troops returned fire, killing the militants, it said.

On Saturday, Netanyahu began to outline Israel's postwar plans for Gaza, which contrast sharply with the vision put forth by the United States.

Netanyahu said Gaza would be demilitarized and that Israel would retain security control, with the ability to enter Gaza freely to hunt down militants. He also rejected the idea that the Palestinian Authority, which currently administers parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, would at some stage control Gaza. Hamas drove the PA's forces out of Gaza in a week of street battles in 2007.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said the U.S. opposes an Israeli reoccupation of Gaza and envisions a unified Palestinian government in both Gaza and the West Bank as a step toward Palestinian statehood. Even before the war, Netanyahu's government was staunchly opposed to Palestinian statehood.

EVACUATION WINDOWS, BUT NO PAUSES

The U.S. has also pushed for temporary pauses that would allow for wider distribution of badly needed aid to civilians in the besieged territory, where conditions are increasingly dire.

But Israel has only agreed to brief daily periods during which civilians can flee the area of ground combat in northern Gaza and head south on foot along two main north-south roads. Israel is meanwhile striking what it says are militant targets across southern Gaza as well, often killing women and children.

The war has displaced over two-thirds of Gaza's population, with most fleeing south. Egypt has allowed hundreds of foreign passport holders and medical patients to exit through its Rafah crossing. It has also allowed hundreds of trucks loaded with food and medicine — but no fuel — to enter, but aid workers say it's nowhere near enough to meet the mounting needs.

More than 11,000 Palestinians, two-thirds of them women and minors, have been killed since the war began, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza, which does not differentiate between civilian and militant deaths. About 2,700 people have been reported missing and are thought to be trapped or dead under the rubble.

At least 1,200 people have been killed on the Israeli side, mostly civilians killed in the initial Hamas attack. Forty-six Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza since the ground offensive began.

About 250,000 Israelis have been forced to evacuate from communities near Gaza, where Palestinian militants are still firing barrages of rockets, and along the northern border with Lebanon, where Israeli forces and Hezbollah militants have traded fire repeatedly.

Drought and mismanagement have left a French island parched. That holds lessons for the mainland

By GREGOIRE MEROT Associated Press

MAMOUDZOU, Mayotte (AP) — Drop by disappearing drop, water is an ever more precious resource on Mayotte, the poorest place in the European Union. Taps flow just one day out of three in this French territory off Africa's eastern coast, because of a drawn-out drought compounded by years of underinvestment and water mismanagement.

Diseases like cholera and typhoid are on the rebound, and the French army recently intervened to distribute water and quell tensions over supplies. The crisis is a wakeup call to the French government about the challenges and cost of managing human-caused climate change across France's far-flung territories.

Racha Mousdikoudine, a 38-year-old mother of two living in Labatoir, washes dishes with bottled water, when she can get it. When the water taps run, she says, "I have to choose between taking a shower or preserving my water supply."

"This shortage will be global in a few years. This is an opportunity for all French people to stand in solidarity with us. To be with us, to find solutions and make visible the situation happening in Mayotte," she said. "Because this can happen in all French departments."

She is helping coordinate a protest movement called "Mayotte is Thirsty" that is demanding accountability for alleged embezzling, leaks and lack of investment in sustainable water supplies. At one recent protest, residents sang, shouted and banged empty plastic bottles as they marched into the Mayotte water management company.

The government is pinning its hopes on the upcoming rainy season, though residents say it won't be enough to fix the deep-seated water problems. On a crisis visit last week, France's minister for overseas territories thanked the people of Mayotte for "accepting the unacceptable."

The water taps determine the rhythm of life in Mayotte, an island territory of about 350,000 people northwest of Madagascar.

Once every three days, water flows between 4 p.m. and 10 a.m. Families rush to prepare food, wash dishes, clean their homes and anything else involving water. Those living in Mayotte's poorer neighborhoods without plumbing line up at public taps with paint buckets, plastic jerrycans, reused bottles — anything to collect water.

Then for 48 hours, they're dry again.

"It is important to keep talking with the authorities, but we are not going to sit idly by," said Mousdikoudine. "If we stay at home, politicians will still say that the population is resilient, that we can manage this situation. But we cannot do it, lives are at stake, our physical and mental health, as well as our children's lives."

The most disadvantaged communities are hit the hardest by the water crisis in Mayotte, where the population is majority Black and many are struggling migrants from neighboring Comoros facing a new government crackdown.

Previously, water was among Mayotte's rare riches. The mountainous and forested district of Combani, in central Mayotte, is full of springs and interspersed with rivers. The reservoirs of Combani, and Dzoumogne further north, provide 80% of the water distributed on the island.

Now the bare banks of the reservoir at Combani are cracked by the sun. Its capacity is 1.75 million cubic meters, but it now stands only 10% full. The Dzoumogne reservoir is at 6.5% capacity.

Mayotte is in its sixth year of drought, and just had its driest year since 1997, according to the national weather service. Scientists say human-induced climate change has made drought more frequent and extreme in some parts of the world.

But even without drought, Mayotte's water system wasn't capable of fulfilling local needs.

Overseas Affairs Minister Philippe Vigier said during a visit last week that 850 leaks have been spotted since September. Residents regularly film facilities of water network management company Smae, a subsidiary of big French utility Vinci, spewing water into the void and share them online.

And only one new water borehole, delivering a few hundred cubic meters per day, has been put into

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service so far as part of an ambitious "Marshall Plan" for water announced in September.

The local water union blames the water rationing on lack of production capacity, not lack of water.

The central government is promising emergency work on drilling for new springs, the renovation of a desalination plant, and extending state distribution of bottled water to all residents and not just the most vulnerable.

Residents worry it won't come fast enough, and have heard such promises before. The desalination plant has already faced years of delays, missed deadlines and allegations of pocketed subsidies.

It doesn't have to be this way.

In the neighboring Comoros, with a similar volcanic terrain and wet and dry seasons, the U.N. Development Program has a \$60 million water management project aimed at better capturing rainwater and tracking usage.

While Comoros is one of the world's poorest countries, France is one of the world's richest and shouldn't need U.N. aid. But Mayotte's water crisis underlines inequalities and often awkward relationships between the central government in Paris and former colonies that remain part of France.

On Mayotte, richer residents invest in personal water tanks at a cost of 1,600 euros (\$1,700) for each installation, to ensure water flows continuously.

But most of the Mayotte population lives below the French poverty line and must heed the local government's repeated messages that "every drop counts." With 50% living on less than 160 euros (\$170) per month, according to state statistics agency Insee, 5.50-euro (\$5.90) packs of bottled water imported from mainland France are not an option for most.

Instead, they drink brackish water or nothing. Hunger, too, is worsening, as drought cuts into crop production.

Local medics cite a rise in acute gastroenteritis — 20 patients in intensive care recorded for this reason in one month — as well as typhoid and cholera.

But Ben Issa Ousseni, president of the departmental council of Mayotte, told local broadcaster Mayotte 1ère that he believes "the crisis is still ahead of us."

He does not rule out the possibility of a total disruption of supply in homes.

Millions of Indians set a new world record celebrating Diwali as worries about air pollution rise

By BISWAJEET BANERJEE Associated Press

LUCKNOW, India (AP) — Millions of Indians celebrated Diwali on Sunday with a new Guinness World Record number of bright earthen oil lamps as concerns about air pollution soared in the South Asian country.

Across the country, dazzling multi-colored lights decked homes and streets as devotees celebrated the annual Hindu festival of light symbolizing the victory of light over darkness.

But the spectacular and much-awaited massive lighting of the oil lamps took place — as usual — at Saryu River, in Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh state, the birthplace of their most revered deity, the god Ram.

At dusk on Saturday, devotees lit over 2.22 million lamps and kept them burning for 45 minutes as Hindu religious hymns filled the air at the banks of the river, setting a new world Record. Last year, over 1.5 million earthen lamps were lit.

After counting the lamps, Guinness Book of World Records representatives presented a record certificate to the state's top elected official Yogi Adityanath.

Over 24,000 volunteers, mostly college students, helped prepare for the new record, said Pratibha Goyal, vice-chancellor of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Avadh University, in Ayodhya.

Diwali, a national holiday across India, is celebrated by socializing and exchanging gifts with family and friends. Many light earthen oil lamps or candles, and fireworks are set off as part of the celebrations. In the evening, a special prayer is dedicated to the Hindu goddess Lakshmi, who is believed to bring luck and prosperity.

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Over the weekend, authorities ran extra trains to accommodate the huge numbers trying to reach their hometowns to join family celebrations.

The festival came as worries about air quality in India rose. A "hazardous" 400-500 level was recorded on the air quality index last week, more than 10 times the global safety threshold, which can cause acute and chronic bronchitis and asthma attacks. But on Saturday, unexpected rain and a strong wind improved the levels to 220, according to the government-run Central Pollution Control Board.

Air pollution level is expected to soar again after the celebrations end Sunday night because of the fireworks used.

Last week, officials in New Delhi shut down primary schools and banned polluting vehicles and construction work in an attempt to reduce the worst haze and smog of the season, which has posed respiratory problems for people and enveloped monuments and high-rise buildings in and around India's capital.

Authorities deployed water sprinklers and anti-smog guns to control the haze and many people used masks to escape the air pollution.

New Delhi tops the list almost every year among the many Indian cities with poor air quality, particularly in the winter, when the burning of crop residues in neighboring states coincides with cooler temperatures that trap deadly smoke.

Some Indian states have banned the sale of fireworks and imposed other restrictions to stem the pollution. Authorities have also urged residents to light "green crackers" that emit less pollutants than normal firecrackers. But similar bans have often been disregarded in the past.

The Diwali celebrations this year were marked as authorities prepared to inaugurate in January an under-construction and long-awaited temple of the Hindu god Ram at the site of a demolished 16th-century Babri mosque in Ayodhya city in Uttar Pradesh state.

The Babri Masjid mosque was destroyed by a Hindu mob with pickaxes and crowbars in December 1992, sparking massive Hindu-Muslim violence that left some 2,000 people dead, most of them Muslims. The Supreme Court's verdict in 2019 allowed a temple to be built in place of the demolished mosque.

Dutch election candidates make migration a key campaign issue in the crowded Netherlands

By MIKE CORDER Associated Press

TER APEL, Netherlands (AP) — It is a familiar sight in this remote rural town: a migrant in a headscarf and thick winter coat carrying her belongings to the overcrowded reception center as a storm brews over the flat landscape.

For many here and across this nation once known as a beacon of tolerance, it is too familiar.

"Immigration is spiraling out of control," Henk Tapper said while visiting his daughter in Ter Apel two weeks before the Netherlands votes in parliamentary elections on Nov. 22.

Candidates across the political spectrum are campaigning on pledges to tackle migration problems that are crystallized in Ter Apel, just over 200 kilometers (120 miles) northeast of Amsterdam. Once mostly known for its monastery, the town has now become synonymous with Dutch struggles to accommodate large numbers of asylum-seekers.

In the summer of 2022, hundreds of migrants were forced to sleep outside because the reception center was full. The Dutch branch of Doctors Without Borders sent a team to help the migrants, the first time it was forced to deploy within the Netherlands.

The center still is overcrowded and locals complain of crime and public order problems blamed on migrants who wander in small groups through the village.

It is not only asylum seekers, though. Political parties also are pledging to crack down on labor migrants and foreign students, who now make up some 40% of university enrollments.

Tapper said he plans to vote for anti-Islam lawmaker Geert Wilders' Freedom Party which advocates a halt in asylum seekers and opting out of EU and United Nations agreements and treaties on refugees and asylum.

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The migration debate in the Netherlands echoes across Europe, where governments and the European Union are seeking ways to rein in migration. Italy recently announced plans to house asylum seekers in Albania.

In Germany, the center-left government and 16 state governors have agreed on a raft of measures to curb the high number of migrants flowing into the country. They include speeding up asylum procedures and restricting benefits for asylum-seekers.

Outgoing Prime Minister Mark Rutte was part of an EU delegation visiting Tunisia over the summer to hammer out a deal with the North African nation intended to combat the often lethal smuggling of migrants across the Mediterranean Sea.

Meanwhile, many Dutch voters are calling for tougher domestic policies in this country once famed for its open-arm approach to refugees dating all the way back to the Pilgrim Fathers who lived in Leiden after fleeing religious persecution in England and before setting sail for what is now the United States.

One of the leading candidates to succeed Rutte is herself a former refugee. Now, Dilan Yeşilgöz, leader of the center-right People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) advocates making her adopted country less welcoming.

"Our laws, our regulations are ... way more attractive than the laws and regulations of the countries around us, which makes us more attractive for people to come here," she told The Associated Press.

Yeşilgöz is the daughter of Turkish human rights activists who fled to the Netherlands when she was a child.

"Being a refugee myself, I think it's very important that ... we take the decisions to make sure that true refugees have a safe place," she said. "And politicians who refuse to take those difficult decisions they are saying to the true refugees, but also to the Dutch public: 'You're on your own.'"

The vote is shaping up to be very close, with the VVD and the recently formed conservative populist party New Social Contract leading in polls against a center-left bloc of Labor and Green Left.

According to the official Dutch statistics agency, just over 400,000 migrants arrived in the Netherlands last year — that includes asylum seekers, foreigners coming to work in the Netherlands and overseas students. The number was pushed higher by thousands of Ukrainians fleeing the war sparked by Russia's invasion.

Ekram Jalboutt, born to Palestinian parents in a Syrian camp, has been granted asylum in the Netherlands and doesn't like what she sees in the debate about migration. "I hate the idea of playing with this card of migration in this political game," she said at the headquarters of the Dutch Refugee Council, where she now works.

The recently formed New Social Contract party wants to set a "guideline" ceiling of 50,000 migrants a year allowed into the Netherlands — including asylum seekers, labor migrants and students. Along with the VVD, it wants to introduce an asylum system that differentiates between people fleeing persecution and those fleeing war. The latter group would have fewer rights, including the right to family reunifications. Acrimonious discussions on such moves brought down the last ruling Dutch coalition in July.

The number of new arrivals blends into another major problem Tapper highlighted— a chronic shortage of housing in this crowded nation of about 18 million people.

"There are houses for foreigners, and Dutch people can hardly get a house ... that is a bit strange here in the Netherlands," he said.

Advocates for cracking down on migration argue that people granted refugee status are also fast-tracked into scarce social housing and can leapfrog Dutch people who can languish for years on waiting lists.

The Dutch Refugee Council argues that refugees make up only a small proportion of people whose applications for social housing are fast-tracked.

"The political debate about asylum and migration is very polarized," said Anna Strolenberg, a spokeswoman for the council. "We see most political parties proposing solutions that are too simplistic, that are not realistic, and they're actually capitalizing on the gut feelings of people."

Follow AP's coverage of global migration at <https://apnews.com/hub/migration>

Long walk to school: 30 years into freedom, many kids in South Africa still walk miles to class

By MOGOMOTSI MAGOME Associated Press

DUNDEE, South Africa (AP) — On weekdays, 14-year-old Luyanda Hlali gets up before dawn to fetch firewood and cow dung to start a fire and boil some water before her four siblings and parents wake up.

The mornings are a hive of activity in the Nhlangothi home, in the tiny village of Stratford in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province. Once her chores are done, Luyanda embarks on a 10-kilometer (6-mile) walk to her school.

There are no school buses. There is only the long, dusty road where thieves and bad men can accost her.

Luyanda is one of tens of thousands of children in South Africa's poorest and most remote rural communities who still face long walks to the nearest public school, nearly 30 years after the nation ushered in democratic change.

The hardships underscore the children's unequal access to education; the lack of government-funded school transportation has exacerbated myriad dangers.

Girls face the threat of assault and robberies are rampant. Parents, local leaders and activists say the situation perpetuates already existing inequalities in a country described by the World Bank as the most unequal in the world.

In KwaZulu-Natal, campaigners and activists are pressing authorities to provide transport for over 200,000 schoolchildren like Luyanda — kids who have to walk 3 kilometers or more to school.

That distance, under President Cyril Ramaphosa's government policy, requires authorities to provide transportation for the students. But with poverty soaring and unemployment in the country of 56 million people at over 25%, school buses are low on the list of priorities.

Psychologist Melinda du Toit says the lack of school transportation is indicative of the socio-economic realities of South Africa and its inherent inequality. Those who cannot afford to live in urban areas will continue to lack basic services.

A 2020 Amnesty International report said children's experience in South Africa "still very much depends on where they are born, how wealthy they are, and the color of their skin."

South Africa's education system, the report said, "continues to be dogged by stark inequalities and chronic underperformance that have deep roots in the legacy of apartheid, but which are also not being effectively tackled" by the government.

In KwaZulu-Natal, where more than 30% of the province's 12.4 million people are unemployed and on welfare, many say they have to choose between buying food or paying 350 South African rands, roughly \$19, a month for public transport.

"Sometimes these children go to school without eating breakfast," said Bongwiwe Nhlangothi, Luyanda's grandmother.

She says she fears the most when her grandchildren are on the road.

"There are drug addicts around here, when they come across the children in the early hours of the morning, they rob them of their phones, threaten them with knives and try to rape them," Nhlangothi said.

A school principal in a village located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) from the coalmining town of Dundee, recounted his struggle to get more school buses approved after some of his students, girls, were raped by local thugs.

"The bus was full and they had to walk to school," the principal said, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal.

The school has two old buses but they can only take about 65 children — and he has more than 400 students in his school. The principal said he fears one of the buses could permanently break down — or crash.

In September 2022, 18 students were killed in the province when their overcrowded minivan crashed on the way to school in the town of Pongola.

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Matthew Ngcobo, a councilman in the municipality of Endumeni, took The Associated Press to a ravine where children have to cross a shallow but rapid river on foot.

"This place is very dangerous," Ngcobo said. "The last time when it rained heavily, a motorist had to be rescued after his car was swept away."

"Imagine children having to go through this daily to get access to education," he added.

Some parents have resorted to boarding their children to live closer to their schools — but that can be costly and leaves them without precious help at home.

Bayanda Hlongwane, a ninth grader at the Ebusi Combined School in the village of Wasbank, said he was often late and "the teachers would not let me in."

He begged his parents to let him live closer. They relented and he is now staying with relatives, only about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from his school.

Activist Tebogo Tshesane who works for Equal Education, a nonprofit organization, says the campaign for better school transportation across KwaZulu-Natal started back in 2014, sparked by letters from students who were walking for up to two hours to school.

The latest government figures have 1,148 schools in KwaZulu-Natal on a waiting list for government-funded school transportation.

The provincial department of education declined to be interviewed for this story.

The consistent answer from the education department is that there is no money, so the children keep walking.

"It is a day to day challenge," said Tshesane.

A fragile global economy is at stake as US and China seek to cool tensions at APEC summit

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and China are the two global economic heavyweights. Combined, they produce more than 40% of the world's goods and services.

So when Washington and Beijing do economic battle, as they have for five years running, the rest of the world suffers, too. And when they hold a rare high-level summit, as Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping will this week, it can have global consequences.

The world's economy could surely benefit from a U.S.-China détente. Since 2020, it has suffered one crisis after another — the COVID-19 pandemic, soaring inflation, surging interest rates, violent conflicts in Ukraine and now Gaza. The global economy is expected to grow a lackluster 3% this year and 2.9% in 2024, according to the International Monetary Fund.

"Having the world's two largest economies at loggerheads at such a fraught moment," said Eswar Prasad, senior professor of trade policy at Cornell University, "exacerbates the negative impact of various geopolitical shocks that have hit the world economy."

Hopes have risen that Washington and Beijing can at least cool some of their economic tensions at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, which starts Sunday in San Francisco. The meeting will bring together 21 Pacific Rim countries, which collectively represent 40% of the world's people and nearly half of global trade.

The marquee event will be the Biden-Xi meeting Wednesday on the sidelines of the summit, the first time the two leaders will have spoken in a year, during which time frictions between the two nations have worsened. The White House has sought to tamp down expectations, saying to expect no breakthroughs.

At the same time, Prasad suggested that the threshold for declaring a successful outcome is relatively low. "Preventing any further deterioration in the bilateral economic relationship," he said, "would already be a victory for both sides."

The U.S.-China economic relationship had been deteriorating for years before it erupted in 2018, at the instigation of President Donald Trump, into an all-out trade war. The Trump administration charged that China had violated the commitments it made, in joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, to open

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its vast market to U.S. and other foreign companies that wanted to sell their goods and services there.

In 2018, the Trump administration began imposing tariffs on Chinese imports to punish Beijing for its actions in trying to supplant U.S. technological supremacy. Many experts agreed with the administration that Beijing had engaged in cyberespionage and had improperly demanded that foreign companies turn over trade secrets as the price of gaining access to the Chinese market. Beijing punched back against Trump's sanctions with its own retaliatory tariffs, making U.S. goods more expensive for Chinese buyers.

When Biden took office in 2021, he kept much of Trump's confrontational trade policy, including the China tariffs. The U.S. tax rate on Chinese imports now exceeds 19%, versus 3% at the start of 2018, before Trump imposed his tariffs. Likewise, Chinese import taxes on U.S. goods are up to 21%, from 8% before the trade war began, according to calculations by Chad Bown of the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

One of the tenets of Biden's economic policy has been to reduce America's economic reliance on Chinese factories, which came under strain when COVID-19 disrupted global supply chains, and to solidify partnerships with other Asian nations. As part of that policy, the Biden administration last year forged the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity with 14 countries.

In some ways, U.S.-China trade tensions are even higher under Biden than they were under Trump. Beijing is seething over the Biden administration's decision to impose — and then broaden — export controls that are designed to prevent China from acquiring advanced computer chips and the equipment to produce them. In August, Beijing countered with its own trade curbs: It began requiring that Chinese exporters of gallium and germanium, metals used in computer chips and solar cells, obtain government licenses to send those metals overseas.

Beijing has also taken aggressive actions against foreign companies in China. Orchestrating what appears to be a counterespionage campaign, its authorities this year raided the Chinese offices of the U.S. consulting firms Capvision and the Mintz Group, questioned Shanghai employees of the Bain & Co. consultancy and announced a security review of the chipmaker Micron.

Some analysts speak of a "decoupling" of the world's two biggest economies after decades in which they relied deeply on each other for trade. Indeed, imports of Chinese goods to the United States were down 24% through September compared with the same period of 2022.

The rift between Beijing and Washington has forced many other countries into a delicate predicament: Deciding which side they're on when they actually want to do business with both countries.

The IMF says such economic "fragmentation" is damaging to the world. The 190-country lending agency estimates that higher trade barriers will subtract \$7.4 trillion from global economic output after the world has adjusted to the higher trade barriers.

And those barriers are rising: Last year, the IMF said, countries imposed nearly 3,000 new restrictions on trade, up from fewer than 1,000 in 2019. The agency foresees international trade growing just 0.9% this year and 3.5% in 2024 — down sharply from the 2000-2019 annual average of 4.9%.

The Biden administration insists it isn't trying to undermine China's economy. On Friday, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen met with her Chinese counterpart, Vice Premier He Lifeng, in San Francisco and sought to set the stage for Biden-Xi summit.

"Our mutual desire — both China and the United States — is to create a level playing field and ongoing, meaningful and mutually beneficial economic relations," Yellen said.

Xi, too, has reason to try to restore economic cooperation with the United States. The Chinese economy is under heavy strain. Its real estate market has collapsed, youth unemployment is rampant and consumer spirits are low. The raids on foreign businesses have spooked international companies and investors.

"With serious headwinds facing the Chinese economy and many U.S. firms packing up their bags and leaving China, Xi needs to convince investors that China is still a profitable place to conduct business," said Wendy Cutler, vice president of the Asia Society Institute and a former U.S. trade negotiator. "This will not be an easy sell."

Complicating matters is that the tensions between Washington and Beijing go well beyond economics.

Under Xi, the Chinese Communist Party has punished dissent in Hong Kong and the autonomous Muslim region of Xinjiang. His government made aggressive territorial demands in Asia, engaging in deadly border clashes with India and bullying the Philippines and other neighbors in parts of the South China Sea it claims as its own. It has increasingly threatened Taiwan, which it considers a renegade Chinese province.

U.S.-China tensions could intensify next year with presidential elections in Taiwan and the United States, where criticism of Beijing is among the few areas that unite Democrats and Republicans.

Xi's policies appear to be costing China in the battle for world opinion. In a recent survey of people in 24 countries, the Pew Research Center reported that the United States was viewed more favorably than China in all but two (Kenya and Nigeria) nations.

Could China change course?

Speaking at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington, Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, an Illinois Democrat who serves on a House committee that monitors China, noted optimistically that Xi has reversed himself before — notably in declaring a sudden end to the draconian zero-COVID policies that crippled China's economy last year.

"We have to give that possibility a chance, even at the same time that we hedge and protect our interests," Krishnamoorthi said. "That's what I'm hoping we also see come out of this meeting."

Netanyahu rejects growing calls for a cease-fire as Israel battles Hamas outside main Gaza hospital

By WAFAA SHURAFI and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pushed back Saturday against growing international calls for a cease-fire, saying Israel's battle to crush Gaza's ruling Hamas militants will continue with "full force."

A cease-fire would be possible only if all 239 hostages held by militants in Gaza are released, Netanyahu said in a televised address.

The Israeli leader also insisted that after the war, now entering its sixth week, Gaza would be demilitarized and Israel would retain security control there. Asked what he meant by security control, Netanyahu said Israeli forces must be able to enter Gaza freely to hunt down militants.

He also rejected the idea that the Palestinian Authority, which currently administers autonomous areas in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, would at some stage control Gaza. Both positions run counter to post-war scenarios floated by Israel's closest ally, the United States. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said the U.S. opposes an Israeli reoccupation of Gaza and envisions a unified Palestinian government in both Gaza and the West Bank at some stage as a step toward Palestinian statehood.

For now, Netanyahu said, "the war against (Hamas) is advancing with full force, and it has one goal, to win. There is no alternative to victory."

Pressure was growing on Israel after frantic doctors at Gaza's largest hospital said the last generator had run out of fuel, causing the death of a premature baby, another child in an incubator and four other patients. Thousands of war-wounded, medical staff and displaced civilians were caught in the fighting.

In recent days, fighting near Shifa and other hospitals in northern Gaza has intensified and supplies have run out. The Israeli military has alleged, without providing evidence, that Hamas has established command posts in and underneath hospitals, using civilians as human shields. Medical staff at Shifa have denied such claims and accused Israel of harming civilians with indiscriminate attacks.

Shifa hospital director Mohammed Abu Selmia said the facility lost power Saturday.

"Medical devices stopped. Patients, especially those in intensive care, started to die," he said by phone, with gunfire and explosions in the background. He said Israeli troops were "shooting at anyone outside or inside the hospital" and prevented movement between buildings.

The World Health Organization later said it lost communication with its contacts at Shifa, according to a post on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Israel's military confirmed clashes outside the hospital, but Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari denied Shifa was

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under siege. He said troops will assist Sunday in moving babies treated there and said "we are speaking directly and regularly" with hospital staff.

Amos Yadlin, a former head of Israeli military intelligence, told broadcaster Channel 12 that as Israel aims to crush Hamas, taking control of the hospitals would be key but require "a lot of tactical creativity," without hurting patients, other civilians and Israeli hostages.

Six patients died at Shifa after the generator shut down, including the two children, spokesmen with the Hamas-run Health Ministry said.

The "unbearably desperate situation" at Shifa must stop now, the International Committee of the Red Cross director general, Robert Mardini, said on social media. U.N. humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths posted that "there can be no justification for acts of war in health care facilities."

Elsewhere, the Palestinian Red Crescent said Israeli tanks were 20 meters (65 feet) from al-Quds hospital in Gaza City, causing "a state of extreme panic and fear" among the 14,000 displaced people sheltering there.

Israel's military released footage which it said showed tanks operating in Gaza. The images showed shattered buildings, some on fire, and destroyed streets empty of anyone but troops.

A 57-nation gathering of Muslim and Arab leaders in Saudi Arabia called in their communique for an end to the war in Gaza and the immediate delivery of humanitarian aid. They also called on the International Court of Justice, a U.N. organ, to open an investigation into Israel's attacks, saying the war "cannot be called self-defense and cannot be justified under any means."

Netanyahu has said the responsibility for any harm to civilians lies with Hamas, which denied it was preventing people in Gaza City from fleeing.

The spokesman of the Hamas military wing said militants were ambushing Israeli troops and vowed that Israel will face a long battle. The Qassam Brigades spokesman, who goes by Abu Obaida, acknowledged in audio aired on Al-Jazeera that the fight is disproportionate "but it is terrifying the strongest force in the region."

Israel's military has said soldiers have encountered hundreds of Hamas fighters in underground facilities, schools, mosques and clinics during the fighting. Israel has said a key goal of the war is to crush Hamas, which has ruled Gaza for 16 years.

Following Hamas' deadly Oct. 7 attack on Israel, in which at least 1,200 people were killed, Israel's allies have defended the country's right to protect itself. But now into the second month of war, there are growing differences over how Israel should conduct its fight.

The U.S. has pushed for temporary pauses that would allow for wider distribution of badly needed aid to civilians in the besieged territory where conditions are increasingly dire. However, Israel has only agreed to brief daily periods during which civilians can flee the area of ground combat in northern Gaza and head south on foot along the territory's main north-south artery. Over the weekend, Israel said it opened a second route along the coast.

Since these evacuation windows were first announced a week ago, tens of thousands of civilians have fled the north, including on Saturday, according to U.N. monitors.

A stream of people fled southward on the main road, some on donkey-drawn carts. One man pushed two children in a wheelbarrow.

"Where to go, and what do they want from us?" said Yehia al-Kafarnah, one fleeing resident.

Palestinian civilians and rights advocates have pushed back against Israel's portrayal of the southern evacuation zones as "relatively safe." They note that Israeli bombardment has continued across Gaza, including airstrikes in the south that Israel says target Hamas leaders but that have also killed women and children.

Demonstrations and outrage continued. Police said 300,000 Palestinian supporters marched peacefully in London, the largest such event there since the war started. Right-wing counterprotesters clashed with police.

FEAR GROWS INSIDE SHIFA

"Shelling and explosions never stopped," said Islam Mattar, one of thousands sheltering at Shifa. "Children here are terrified from the constant sound of explosions."

The Health Ministry told Al Jazeera there were still 1,500 patients at Shifa, along with 1,500 medical personnel and between 15,000 and 20,000 people seeking shelter.

Thousands have fled Shifa and other hospitals that have come under attack, but physicians said it's impossible for everyone to get out.

"We cannot evacuate ourselves and (leave) these people inside," a Doctors Without Borders surgeon at Shifa, Mohammed Obeid, was quoted as saying by the organization.

CASUALTIES RISE

More than 11,070 Palestinians, two-thirds of them women and minors, have been killed since the war began, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza, which does not differentiate between civilian and militant deaths. About 2,700 people have been reported missing and are thought to be possibly trapped or dead under the rubble.

At least 1,200 people have been killed in Israel, mainly in the initial Hamas attack, Israeli officials say. The military on Saturday confirmed the deaths of five reserve soldiers; 46 Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza since the ground offensive began.

Nearly 240 people abducted by Hamas from Israel remain captive. Late Saturday, thousands of Israelis participated in a rally in Tel Aviv, calling for the return of hostages. In Caesarea, hundreds of protesters gathered near Netanyahu's home, calling for his removal.

About 250,000 Israelis have been forced to evacuate from communities near Gaza and along the northern border with Lebanon, where Israeli forces and Hezbollah militants have traded fire repeatedly.

Latvia's president says West must arm Ukraine to keep Russia from future global adventures

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Latvia's president says Russia is planning for a long war in Ukraine and he has a message for countries wavering on continuing military support to Kyiv: Keep supplying arms or the Ukrainians will lose and Russia will have a green light for threatening others in the future.

Edgars Rinkēvičs said in an interview with The Associated Press that "it is important to actually fight for international peace, and peace in Europe, because if we stop Russia in Ukraine, then Russia is not going to be able to challenge other countries."

He pointed to the disruptive role that Russia's Wagner mercenary group is playing in Africa and to Russian meetings with officials from Hamas, the Gaza Strip's ruling militants whose surprise attack in Israel on Oct. 7 killed some 1,200 people.

In July, Rinkēvičs was sworn in as president of Latvia, which was part of the Soviet Union until its break-up in August 1991. The Baltic nation, population 1.9 million, in 2004 joined both the European Union and NATO, holding a key point on their eastern flank with its 214-kilometer (133-mile) border with Russia.

Rinkēvičs, who was Latvia's foreign minister for 13 years before being elected president, said that despite some members of the 27-nation EU having "their opinions," at the end of the day the alliance has agreed on sanctioning Russia and on providing more support to Ukraine over Russia's February 2022 invasion.

"Interestingly enough, at this point, the EU is more divided when it comes to the Middle East, rather than to Ukraine," he said in Thursday's interview.

He said it is important for the West to support both Ukraine and Israel against attacks on "our values" and the international order. He also stressed the need to push for humanitarian pauses in the Gaza fighting to provide assistance to Palestinian civilians, whose death toll in Israel's retaliation for the Hamas attack has topped 11,000, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

Rinkēvičs said Iran is "very pleased to see this kind of development in the Middle East," and pointed to Tehran's supply of arms and other equipment to Russia for its fight in Ukraine.

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It's in NATO's security interests "that both cases are viewed the same way," he said. "I do believe also that it will be much easier for us to keep peace in Europe if Ukraine succeeds rather than we let Ukraine down, or for that matter, also to let the situation in the Middle East to get out of control."

Rinkēvičs said Ukrainian soldiers are fighting "in a very brave way" and the West has the responsibility to respond to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's appeal for more weapons, "because we have not provided as much as we should have."

He said Russia is mobilizing its economy, resources and military machinery "for a very long war." It tried to win the war quickly and realized it can't, and now Moscow wants to "strangle" Ukraine, he said, predicting it will reprise attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure in the coming months, as it did last winter.

Rinkēvičs said the EU and NATO need to prepare for a long war in Ukraine.

"The EU has realized that we need more defense and military," he said. "And at this point, I would love to see that this is going to be a bit faster process. But still, those things are now finally moving."

But many European members of NATO still need to reach the target of spending 2% of GDP on defense, he said, adding that Latvia expects to spend 2.4% of GDP on defense next year and 3% in 2027. Europe's defense industrial production needs to be increased, he added.

Many experts and officials have said Russian President Vladimir Putin's hope is to outlast Western support for Ukraine in a long war.

"I think this is very important that he fails," Rinkēvičs said.

If the world sees that Europe and the United States are failing to provide support to Ukraine, he said, "then I think that is going to be increasing pressure on Israel."

"Also, I think that Iran is going to be more assertive," he said. "Let's also not forget about the whole Asia region, and let's not forget about Taiwan."

The Latvian leader said Russia is turning from an autocracy to a totalitarian regime and resorting to propaganda worse than the Cold War.

They are showing "brutal pictures or video or animation videos about destroying cities in Europe, or the United States, using nuclear weapons, saying that the use of nuclear weapons is actually just a piece of cake," he said.

They are calling Ukrainians "kind of a lower human race — it's very much resembling what Nazi Germany was saying about the Jews," he added.

Rinkēvičs, who is in New York to launch Latvia's bid for a U.N. Security Council seat in 2026-2027, announced in 2014 that he is gay and is one of Europe's few LGBTQ+ heads of state.

If people can accept a gay head of state, Rinkēvičs said, "then I believe that very quickly also they are going to be more inclusive, more open to the whole community. That's the message also I hope will be received everywhere else."

Pope Francis removes a leading US conservative critic as bishop of Tyler, Texas

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis on Saturday ordered the removal of the bishop of Tyler, Texas, a conservative prelate active on social media who has been a fierce critic of the pontiff and has come to symbolize the polarization within the U.S. Catholic hierarchy.

A one-line statement from the Vatican said Francis had "relieved" Bishop Joseph Strickland of the pastoral governance of Tyler and appointed the bishop of Austin as the temporary administrator.

Strickland, 65, has emerged as a leading critic of Francis, accusing him in a tweet earlier this year of "undermining the deposit of faith." He has been particularly critical of Francis' recent meeting on the future of the Catholic Church during which hot-button issues were discussed, including ways to better welcome LGBTQ+ Catholics.

Earlier this year, the Vatican sent in investigators to look into his governance of the diocese, amid reports that priests and laypeople in Tyler had complained and that he was making unorthodox claims.

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The Vatican never released the findings and Strickland had insisted he wouldn't resign voluntarily, saying in media interviews that he was given a mandate to serve as bishop in 2012 by the late Pope Benedict XVI and couldn't abdicate that responsibility.

The conservative website LifeSiteNews, which said it interviewed Strickland on Saturday, quoted him as saying one of the reasons given for his ouster was his refusal to implement Francis' 2021 restrictions on celebrating the old Latin Mass.

Francis' crackdown on the old liturgy has become a rallying cry for traditionalist Catholics opposed to the pontiff's progressive bent. Strickland told LifeSite he refused to implement the restrictions "because I can't starve out part of my flock."

He said he stood by his decision, would do it again and "I feel very much at peace in the Lord and the truth that he died for."

His firing sparked an immediate outcry among some conservatives and traditionalists who had held up Strickland as a leading point of Catholic reference to counter Francis' progressive reforms. Michael J. Matt, editor of the traditionalist newspaper The Remnant, wrote that with the firing, Francis was "actively trying to bury fidelity to the Church of Jesus Christ."

"This is total war," Matt wrote on X, formerly Twitter. "Francis is a clear and present danger not only to Catholics the world over but also to the whole world itself."

The two Vatican investigators sent into investigate Strickland — Bishop Dennis Sullivan of Camden, N.J., and the retired bishop of Tucson, Ariz., Bishop Emeritus Gerald Kicanas — "conducted an exhaustive inquiry into all aspects of the governance and leadership of the diocese," said the head of the church in Texas, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo.

After their investigation, a recommendation was made to Francis that "the continuation in office of Bishop Strickland was not feasible," DiNardo said in a statement Saturday.

The Vatican asked Strickland to resign Thursday, but he declined, prompting Francis to remove him from office two days later, DiNardo's statement said.

It is rare for the pope to remove a bishop from office. Bishops are required to offer to resign when they reach 75. When the Vatican uncovers issues with governance or other problems that require a bishop to leave office before then, the Vatican usually seeks to pressure him to offer to resign for the good of his diocese and the church.

That was the case when another U.S. bishop was forced out earlier this year following a Vatican investigation. Bishop Richard Stika of Knoxville, Tenn., resigned voluntarily, albeit under pressure, following allegations he mishandled sex abuse allegations and his priests complained about his leadership and behavior.

But with Strickland, the Vatican statement made clear that he had not offered to resign and that Francis had instead "relieved" him from his job.

Francis has not been shy about his concerns about the right wing in the U.S. Catholic hierarchy, which has been split between progressives and conservatives who long found support in the doctrinaire papacies of St. John Paul II and Benedict XVI, particularly on issues of abortion and same-sex marriage.

In comments to Portuguese Jesuits in August, Francis blasted the "backwardness" of these conservative bishops, saying they had replaced faith with ideology and that a correct understanding of Catholic doctrine allows for change over time.

Strickland had been associated with the most extreme of these bishops, including the former Vatican ambassador to the U.S., Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, a fierce Francis critic who in 2018 called for the pope to resign.

Strickland backed Vigano's conspiracy theories about the COVID-19 pandemic, and on Saturday Vigano wrote that Strickland's ouster showed a "cowardly form of authoritarianism" by Francis. "This affair will reveal who stands with the true Church of Christ and who chooses to stand with His declared enemies," Vigano wrote on X.

Most recently, Strickland had criticized Francis' monthlong closed-door debate on making the church more welcoming and responsive to the needs of Catholics today. The meeting debated a host of previously taboo issues, including women in governance roles and welcoming LGBTQ+ Catholics, but in the end, it

final document didn't veer from established doctrine.

Ahead of the meeting, Strickland said it was a "travesty" that such things were even on the table for discussion.

"Regrettably, it may be that some will label as schismatics those who disagree with the changes being proposed," Strickland wrote in a public letter in August. "Instead, those who would propose changes to that which cannot be changed seek to commandeer Christ's Church, and they are indeed the true schismatics."

In a statement Saturday, the diocese of Tyler announced Strickland's removal but said the church's work would continue in Tyler.

"Our mission is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to foster an authentic Christian community, and to serve the needs of all people with compassion and love," it said.

In a social media post sent a few hours before the Vatican's noon announcement, Strickland wrote a prayer about Christ being the "way, the truth and the life, yesterday, today and forever." He had changed the handle from his previous @bishoptyler to @BishStrickland.

The incoming temporary administrator for Tyler, Austin Bishop Joe Vásquez, said he would be travelling to the diocese over the coming weeks to be on hand for the priests, staff and lay faithful "to assess their needs."

He asked for prayers for his work and the people of Tyler "during this time of transition."

House Republicans look to pass two-step package to avoid partial government shutdown

By KEVIN FREKING and STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Mike Johnson unveiled his proposal on Saturday to avoid a partial government shutdown by extending government funding for some agencies and programs until Jan. 19 and continuing funding for others until Feb. 2.

The approach is unusual for a stopgap spending bill. Usually, lawmakers extend funding until a certain date for all programs. Johnson decided to go with the combination approach, addressing concerns from GOP lawmakers seeking to avoid being presented with a massive spending bill just before the holidays.

"This two-step continuing resolution is a necessary bill to place House Republicans in the best position to fight for conservative victories," Johnson said in a statement after speaking with GOP lawmakers in an afternoon conference call. "The bill will stop the absurd holiday-season omnibus tradition of massive, loaded up spending bills introduced right before the Christmas recess."

The bill excludes funding requested by President Joe Biden for Israel, Ukraine and the U.S. border with Mexico. Johnson said separating Biden's request for an emergency supplemental bill from the temporary, stopgap measure "places our conference in the best position to fight for fiscal responsibility, oversight over Ukraine aid, and meaningful policy changes at our Southern border."

Hardline conservatives, usually loathe to support temporary spending measures of any sort, had indicated they would give Johnson some leeway to pass legislation, known as a continuing resolution, or CR, to give Congress more time to negotiate a long-term agreement.

But some were critical in their reactions following the conference call.

"My opposition to the clean CR just announced by the Speaker to the @HouseGOP cannot be overstated," Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, tweeted on X. "Funding Pelosi level spending & policies for 75 days - for future 'promises.'"

The White House, meanwhile, panned the plan as "unserious," unworkable and a threat to national security and domestic programs.

"This proposal is just a recipe for more Republican chaos and more shutdowns—full stop," said press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, pointing to opposition from members of both parties. "House Republicans need to stop wasting time on their own political divisions, do their jobs, and work in a bipartisan way to prevent a shutdown."

The federal government is operating under funding levels approved last year by a Democratic-led House

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and Senate. Facing a government shutdown when the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, Congress passed a 47-day continuing resolution, but the fallout was severe. Kevin McCarthy was booted from the speakership days later, and the House was effectively paralyzed for most of the month while Republicans tried to elect a replacement.

Republicans eventually were unanimous in electing Johnson speaker, but his elevation has hardly eased the dynamic that led to McCarthy's removal — a conference torn on policy as well as how much to spend on federal programs. This past week, Republicans had to pull two spending bills from the floor — one to fund transportation and housing programs and the other to fund the Treasury Department, Small Business Administration and other agencies — because they didn't have the votes in their own party to push them through the House.

A document explaining Johnson's proposal to House Republicans, obtained by The Associated Press, said funding for four spending bills would be extended until Jan. 19. Veterans programs, and bills dealing with transportation, housing, agriculture and energy, would be part of that extension.

Funding for the eight other spending bills, which include defense, the State Department, Homeland Security and other government agencies would be extended until Feb. 2.

The document sent to GOP lawmakers and key staff states that Johnson inherited a budget mess. He took office less than three weeks ago and immediately began considering appropriations bills through regular order. Still, with just days remaining before a shutdown, a continuing resolution is now required.

Underscoring the concerns about the possibility of a shutdown, the credit rating agency Moody's Investors Service lowered its outlook on the U.S. government's debt on Friday to "negative" from "stable," citing the cost of rising interest rates and political polarization in Congress.

House Republicans pointed to the national debt, now exceeding \$33 trillion, for Moody's decision. Analysts have warned that with interest rates heading higher, interest costs on the national debt will eat up a rising share of tax revenue.

Johnson said in reaction to the Moody's announcement that House Republicans are committed to working in a bipartisan fashion for fiscal restraint, beginning with the introduction of a debt commission.

London pro-Palestinian march passes off peacefully but police clash with far-right protesters

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Pro-Palestinian demonstrators marched peacefully through central London on Saturday, even as right-wing counter-protesters clashed with police, after a week of angry debate over whether to permit the event on a day when Britain honored its war dead.

The day unfolded in a backdrop of tensions fueled by Home Secretary Suella Braverman who earlier this week characterized pro-Palestinian demonstrations as "hate marches" and called for Saturday's event to be blocked out of respect for Armistice Day events marking the end of World War I.

The skirmishes between police and counter-protesters carrying the Union flag of Great Britain and the red-and-white flag of England appeared to confirm the concerns that Braverman's comments would attract right-wing elements looking for an excuse to confront the pro-Palestinian marchers.

Braverman, who oversees law enforcement in Britain, must now resign, said Humza Yousaf, the first minister of Scotland.

"The far-right has been emboldened by the Home Secretary," Yousaf said on X, formerly known as Twitter. "She has spent her week fanning the flames of division. They are now attacking the Police on Armistice Day. The Home Secretary's position is untenable."

London police arrested 82 people at one location to prevent a breach of the peace. The force said they were part of a group of counter-protesters trying to reach the main protest march. Another 10 arrests were made throughout the day, on charges including possession of a knife and attacking an emergency worker.

Police described the counter-protesters as mostly soccer "hooligans" from around the U.K. who spent the day confronting officers who tried to prevent them from attacking the march. Nine officers were injured,

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including two who were hospitalized.

"The extreme violence from the right-wing protestors towards the police today was extraordinary and deeply concerning," Assistant Commissioner Matt Twist said in a statement. "They arrived early, stating they were there to protect monuments, but some were already intoxicated, aggressive and clearly looking for confrontation. Abuse was directed at officers protecting the Cenotaph, including chants of 'You're not English any more.'"

Twist said the march was the largest in London since the start of the conflict. Police estimated that some 300,000 people took part, snaking their way through the city from Hyde Park to the U.S. Embassy about 3 miles (5 kilometers) away.

More than 2,000 officers, some called in from surrounding forces, are on the streets of the capital this weekend to make to ensure marchers obey the law and to prevent potential confrontations with counter-protesters, the Metropolitan Police Service said.

Police are also taking steps to reassure the Jewish community, which has been targeted by a surge in antisemitic incidents since Hamas militants attacked Israel on Oct. 7 and Israeli forces responded with strikes and sending troops into the Gaza Strip.

"We know the cumulative impact continued protest, increasing tensions, and rising hate crimes are having across London and the fear and anxiety our Jewish communities in particular are feeling," the police said in a statement. "They have a right to feel safe in their city, knowing they can travel across London without feeling afraid of intimidation or harassment."

The law enforcement operation comes after Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mark Rowley resisted pressure from political leaders to ban the march.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Braverman have also expressed concern that the protests could spill over into Sunday, when King Charles III and the prime ministers of Commonwealth nations will lay wreaths at the national war memorial, known as the Cenotaph.

The commemoration events are "sacred" to Britain and should be a time for unity and "solemn reflection," Sunak said in a statement before Saturday's events got underway.

"It is because of those who fought for this country and for the freedom we cherish that those who wish to protest can do so, but they must do so respectfully and peacefully," he said.

While Sunak and Braverman's comments were directed at pro-Palestinian protesters, critics had said they risked sparking confrontations between the marchers and far-right groups.

Of most concern were Braverman's comments suggesting that London police had been more lenient toward pro-Palestinian demonstrators and Black Lives Matter supporters than right-wing protesters or soccer hooligans. Braverman said the Metropolitan Police force was ignoring lawbreaking by "pro-Palestinian mobs."

On Saturday, fights broke out near the Cenotaph between police and right-wing protesters chanting "England till I die." Police used batons to stop the protesters, and ceremonies at the memorial weren't interrupted. Other clashes took place in other parts of the city, including Chinatown and near the Houses of Parliament.

Following the confrontation near the Cenotaph, police said the counter-protesters were not a single group and officers were tracking them as they moved away into other parts of London. If they attempted to attack the pro-Palestinian march, "we will use all the powers and tactics available to us to prevent that from happening," police said.

Organizers of the pro-Palestinian demonstration say they have taken steps to ensure it doesn't conflict with Armistice Day events. The march moved off just after midday, more than an hour after the nation observed a two-minute silence, following a route from Hyde Park to the U.S. Embassy that doesn't go near the Cenotaph.

Ben Jamal, director of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, said the marchers are calling for an end to the bombing of Gaza, and he criticized Braverman for characterizing the protesters as extremists who were going to desecrate the Cenotaph. The group has sponsored marches every Saturday in London since the war began.

"We said to the police we did not want to be anywhere near Whitehall on Nov. 11; we did not want to disrupt preparations for the commemoration of remembrance on the Sunday," Jamal told the BBC. "It is inconceivable, unless she doesn't speak to the police, that the home secretary did not know that when she made her remarks."

In an effort to prevent confrontations, police declared an exclusion zone around the Cenotaph and stationed a 24-hour guard around the memorial. Protesters were also barred from the streets around the Israeli Embassy, near the start of the march, and some areas next to the U.S. Embassy.

While the march was largely peaceful, protesters continued to use language that has sparked concern among many Jewish groups and those who see Israeli actions in Gaza as legitimate acts of self-defense.

Marchers carried signs accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza and chanted "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." While Palestinian supporters say the chant is a call for freedom for everyone living in the area between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean, many Jews see it as a call for the destruction of Israel.

Such language strikes fear into the Jewish community, Lee Harpin, the political editor of the Jewish News, told Sky News. Even though he supports the right to protest, he said, the images from the demonstrations often have fringe elements spouting violent views.

"It's fair to say, I mean, for most of the Jewish community, looking on, looking at social media, seeing some of the banners, the hateful slogans being chanted, the headbands that look like they are Hamas-related at the very least, it's very frightening to, to, to witness mass demos taking place on the streets of London," he said. "That's not to say everybody on these demos ... is violent or hateful. But there's definitely a fringe on these demos every single week."

How researchers, farmers and brewers want to safeguard beer against climate change

By MELINA WALLING, AMANDA LOMAN and BROOKE HERBERT Associated Press

MOUNT ANGEL, Ore. (AP) — On a bright day this fall, tractors crisscrossed Gayle Goschie's farm about an hour outside Portland, Oregon. Goschie is in the beer business — a fourth-generation hops farmer. Fall is the off-season, when the trellises are bare, but recently, her farming team has been adding winter barley, a relatively newer crop in the world of beer, to their rotation, preparing barley seeds by the bucketful.

In the face of human-caused climate change impacting water access and weather patterns in the Willamette Valley — a region known for hops growing — Goschie will need all the new strategies the farm can get to sustain what they produce and provide to local and larger breweries alike.

All of a sudden, climate change "was not coming any longer," Goschie said, "it was here."

Climate change is anticipated to only further the challenges producers are already seeing in two key beer crops, hops and barley. Some hops and barley growers in the U.S. say they've already seen their crops impacted by extreme heat, drought and unpredictable growing seasons. Researchers are working with growers to help counter the effects of more volatile weather systems with improved hop varieties that can withstand drought and by adding winter barley to the mix.

Researchers have known for a while that beer production will be affected by climate change, said Mirek Trnka, a professor at the Global Change Research Institute. He and his team recently authored a study modeling the effect of climate change on hops, out last month in Nature Communications, that projected that yields in Europe will decrease between four to 18% by 2050. His first study on hops 15 years ago issued a similar warning to his latest paper.

"If we don't act, we're just going to also lose things that we consider not to be, for example, sensitive or related to climate change. Like beer," he said.

Climate change moves faster than we might realize — but still too slowly for many to notice, he said. The fact that researchers have started picking up on this means that there's promise for adaptation and solutions in the form of farming changes, but Trnka still has his concerns.

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Hops declines in Europe mean changes for American producers too. One craft brewery that gets some of their hops from Goschie said that the company is trying to replicate the flavors of German hops using new varieties grown in the U.S. because the ones they depend upon from Europe have been impacted by hot, dry summers over the last couple of years.

That's why some researchers are working on varieties of hops that can better withstand summer heat, warmer winters, changing pests and diseases and less snowfall, which could mean less available irrigation, said Shaun Townsend, an associate professor and senior researcher at Oregon State University. Townsend is working on a project where he subjects hops to drought stress to eventually create more drought-tolerant varieties.

It's no easy task, one that can take a decade, and one that also has to take into account brewers' main considerations, taste and yield. But the possibility of running out of water is a reality that's on people's radars, he said.

Better hops might still be a technology that's a work in progress, but the story of barley improvements is already well underway. Kevin Smith, professor of agronomy and plant genetics at the University of Minnesota, said that while spring barley is the dominant type for the U.S. beer industry, winter barley – which is planted in the fall and kept on fields during the coldest months of the year – may be more feasible now in the Midwest, where other barley types had been given up due to climate, plant disease and economic factors in favor of crops that are less risky.

Winter barley may also be desirable for craft breweries that have started emphasizing local ingredients and who want something grown close by. And it can also be grown as a cover crop, meaning that farmers can prevent erosion, improve their soil health and keep carbon stored in the ground by planting it during the off-season when fields are normally bare.

But there hasn't always been complete consensus on the promise of winter barley. Smith told a story about his predecessor, who was a longtime spring barley breeder. Another scientist – Patrick Hayes, a professor at Oregon State University – was describing to him his hopes for the future of winter barley. Smith's predecessor wrote on a business card, "it can't be done," referring to his firm belief that winter barley just wasn't worth the trouble.

Hayes kept the card in his office, and has made it his life's mission to work on improving winter barley.

There are now winter barley programs at nearly every state in the country, said Ashley McFarland, the vice president and technical director of the American Malting Barley Association. She doesn't think winter barley will ever be the entirety of the crop in the U.S., but says that producers will need to diversify their risk in order to be more resilient to climate shocks.

Molson Coors and Anheuser Busch, the two biggest beer companies in the U.S., issue annual environmental reports that pledge commitments to sustainably sourcing hops and barley and reducing water usage, but neither company responded to an Associated Press request for comment on the specifics of those efforts.

Hops can be a finicky crop when it comes to their climate, and without water, you simply can't make beer, said Douglass Miller, senior lecturer at Cornell who teaches a class on beer. He added that the price of beer might rise due to climate impacts on the supply chain — but so will the price of everything else on the menu. "All beverage categories are being impacted by this," he said.

No matter what farmers and companies do with hops and winter barley, climate change may affect what beer-lovers are able to buy in the future.

"It will be increasingly difficult for us as plant breeders to provide new varieties of barley and new varieties of hops that can meet, just, all of the terrors of the climate change process," Hayes said. "And I say terrors because ... it's that volatility, which is so, so frightening."

Nonprofits making progress in tackling homelessness among veterans, but challenges remain

By R.J. RICO Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Along a busy Atlanta residential road, a 68-year-old Vietnam War-era Army veteran has found what he calls a “match made in heaven.”

Harold Tilson Jr. found himself homeless earlier this year but for the past few months has been living in transitional housing run by the nonprofit Veterans Empowerment Organization, or VEO. It provides emergency and permanent housing for dozens of previously homeless military veterans.

“If you’re homeless and you need help, you couldn’t ask for a better place to go because they take care of just about everything,” Tilson said.

It’s part of a years-long effort by government agencies and nonprofits around the country to address homelessness among veterans. Since January 2020, the numbers of homeless veterans have fallen 11% and have gone down 55% over the past 13 years, according to a government count. That’s in sharp contrast with the general homeless population.

Authorities credit the Obama administration’s work to make housing veterans a top priority and more recently the \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package that boosted the Department of Veteran Affairs’ homeless programs and expanded rental aid. Advocates also point to partnerships between government agencies, nonprofits and corporate foundations.

Last month, the VA gave \$1 billion in grants to community nonprofits for the upcoming year to tackle the issue, the most ever, said Jill Albanese, director of clinical operations at the Veterans Health Administration’s Homeless Programs Office.

“This isn’t something that we’re doing on our own: This is really something that we’re doing through partnerships,” Albanese said. “They’re the experts on homelessness in their communities.”

Still, the number of veterans living on the streets is significant. There are more than 33,000 homeless veterans, according to the 2022 Point-in-Time count conducted by the VA and Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

And much still needs to be done, said Kathryn Monet, CEO of the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, calling it a “moving target” — just as people are moving out of homelessness, others become unhoused every day. Affordable housing is key, she said, though communities nationwide have struggled with that.

Along with housing, the VEO offers classes about financial literacy, securing VA benefits and how to get on a path toward employment and housing independence. There’s also a common area for reading and a gym for working out.

“We are proud to say that we are not a shelter. This is a program center, meaning the veteran has to put some skin in the game,” said Tony Kimbrough, a former military intelligence officer and CEO of the nonprofit, which started in 2008 with a single two-bedroom house. “We’re going to put a ton of it in there, but we expect a little bit of back-and-forth.”

Tilson became homeless in February when he was forced out of the triplex he was renting south of Atlanta.

He spent the next month and a half sleeping in the street or on business doorsteps, relying on friends from his church for food or access to a shower. Church members steered him to local nonprofits and he eventually landed at VEO, where he has been living in emergency housing, has taken a five-week financial literacy course and is focused on improving his credit score.

Tilson, who suffered a stroke last year, said he needs a knee replacement and hernia surgery to address the physical toll carrying his belongings took while he was homeless. A VA case manager is helping him get those, and he’s optimistic that in a few months he’ll get to move into his own place, with the help of VEO and another local nonprofit.

His friends from church are thrilled about the help he’s getting, Tilson said, but “nobody can be happier than me.”

In addition to 10 double-occupancy rooms housing veterans like Tilson in emergency shelter, the VEO campus has 41 apartment units where veterans pay a few hundred dollars in rent. VA funding makes up

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the difference, allowing the nonprofit to reinject the money and expand. Its next project is 20 single-occupancy bedrooms being built this winter.

VEO says its expansion would not be possible, without more than \$2.3 million in corporate donations from The Home Depot Foundation.

The Atlanta-based foundation has helped some 50,000 homeless veterans nationwide through its partnership with nonprofits like VEO. It has donated \$500 million to veterans causes since 2011, and on Friday announced a commitment to giving an additional \$250 million by 2030.

Company employees have also volunteered more than 1.5 million hours in service to veterans, including building or repairing 60,000 houses and facilities for former service members. On Friday, 20 members of "Team Depot" were finishing a weeklong project to build a garden, complete with a water feature, in honor of Veterans Day.

"When we think about the role that corporate foundations can play, it boils down to three things," said Jennifer A. Taylor, a political science professor at James Madison University and a military spouse who studies philanthropy and veterans issues. "Are you a funder — giving out grants for others to do the work? Are you a doer — taking employees out into the community? Or are you a convener — bringing thought leaders together? Home Depot is doing all of those things."

Home Depot CEO Ted Decker said the company's giving philosophy was always housing-centric but was "pretty disparate" before 2011. That's when then-CEO Frank Blake, realizing that tens of thousands of employees were veterans or spouses of veterans, decided to focus the company's philanthropy on veteran housing.

"It fit our culture," Decker said.

Despite the progress that's been made, there are still tens of thousands of homeless veterans, including nearly 3,500 in the Los Angeles area.

Navy veteran Malcolm Harvey III spent years living on the streets in Southern California, including Los Angeles' Skid Row. In 2015, a representative from the nonprofit U.S. Vets helped him get a job with the organization. Speaking gigs on behalf of The Home Depot Foundation followed.

Now, Harvey, 62, is married, owns a condo and works as program director at the Long Beach nonprofit People Assisting The Homeless.

"We can't become numb to this," Harvey said of the homelessness problem among former service members.

"We made a promise to them when they took that oath and put on that uniform and decided to defend this country," he said.

"We owe them a debt of gratitude. But we owe them more than that: We owe them action."

Hospitals have special protection under the rules of war. Why are they in the crosshairs in Gaza?

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The head of surgery at Gaza's largest and most advanced hospital held up his phone Saturday to the hammering of gunfire and artillery shelling. "Listen," said Dr. Marwan Abu Sada as fighting raged around Shifa Hospital.

Shells hissed through the hospital courtyard and crashed into wards while Israeli soldiers and Hamas militants locked in close quarters combat. Doctors tried to help patients even as they ran for cover.

Abu Sada described Shifa as a deathtrap for thousands of war-wounded, medical staff and displaced civilians sheltering there. The Israeli military denied it launched direct strikes or placed Shifa under siege.

In this Israel-Hamas war, hospitals in the main combat zone of northern Gaza have increasingly ended up in the crosshairs as Israeli tanks crunch through the hollowed-out heart of Gaza City. They have also become flashpoints for warring narratives.

Israel says Hamas militants are using hospitals as shields for fighters but hasn't provided evidence of

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that, while Palestinians and rights groups accuse Israel of recklessly harming civilians seeking shelter.

The battles around Shifa on Saturday raised an urgent question: When do medical facilities lose special protection under international humanitarian law?

WHAT DOES ISRAEL SAY?

Israel claims that Hamas locates military assets under hospitals and other sensitive sites like schools and mosques. Bloodshed serves Hamas' agenda, it says, winning international attention and sympathy for the Palestinian cause.

Israel has singled out Shifa, claiming Hamas operates its command headquarters beneath the hospital complex. The Israeli military has released an illustrated map of Shifa marked with claimed locations of the underground militant installations, without offering further evidence. Hamas, and Shifa Hospital Director Mohammed Abu Selmia, deny this.

Israel has said it will pursue Hamas fighters wherever they are, while trying to spare civilian lives.

"If we see Hamas terrorists firing from hospitals, we'll do what we need to do," Israeli army spokesperson Lt. Col. Richard Hecht said.

Last week Israel defended its bombing of an ambulance convoy evacuating wounded patients from Shifa, alleging that it was carrying Hamas fighters. That strike killed at least 12 bystanders, Abu Selmia said.

Asked about Saturday's events at Shifa, the chief Israeli military spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said the forces were not besieging Shifa Hospital but allowing a safe exit point on the hospital's eastern side. He said the army was in touch with hospital officials and would help to move babies being treated there to a different hospital Sunday.

Israeli forces also battled Hamas militants in the rubble-filled streets outside Gaza's Rantisi Hospital for Children, humanitarian officials reported. The Israeli army alleged it identified Hamas militants embedded among civilians in Rantisi when swarming the area last week. Some militants fled after the army opened an evacuation corridor for civilians, it said.

Rantisi Hospital shut down Friday after running out of fuel, said the World Health Organization, and it's unclear how many people evacuated.

Amos Yadlin, former head of Israeli military intelligence, told Israel's Channel 12 that the intensifying fight over Shifa and other hospitals creates moral and military dilemmas for commanders.

"Despite that we intend to deal with these hospitals," he added. "Today it's clear to all that they are the key command centers of Hamas."

WHAT DO PALESTINIANS SAY?

Throughout the war, Palestinian families fleeing bombed-out homes have taken refuge in medical compounds, believing them to be safer than other alternatives.

Kamal Najar, a 35-year-old who sheltered at Shifa with his toddler son and infant daughter this week, said he believed that the hospital would be "off-limits, even for Israel."

"It was the thing we somehow told ourselves wouldn't happen," he said, speaking by phone from the central city of Deir al-Balah, where he arrived by foot Friday after escaping what he said were strikes on the hospital with tens of thousands of others.

On Saturday, some 1,500 patients, along with 1,500 medical workers and some 15,000 displaced people were still stranded at Shifa, health authorities said. They said a blackout plunged Shifa Hospital into darkness and switched off life-saving equipment, killing several patients — including a newborn in an incubator.

Palestinian medical workers accuse Israel of mounting an all-out attack on infrastructure to punish the population and force a surrender. "It's to say, 'Not only will we kill and wound you, we will ensure you have nowhere to go to be treated,'" said Dr. Ghassan Abu Sitta, a British Palestinian surgeon working for Doctors Without Borders in Gaza City.

Some 190 medical workers were among more than 11,000 Palestinians killed since the start of the war, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza. Ongoing Israeli bombardment has wrecked 31 ambulances and knocked 20 hospitals out of operation, the ministry said. The war was triggered by Hamas' brutal Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel in which about 1,200 people were killed.

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"Death always feels close," said Naseem Hassan, a 48-year-old medic in the southern city of Khan Younis. Too many colleagues, he said, have left the hospital only to return hours later in body bags. He had a close call Thursday when two missiles landed just meters from his ambulance.

"This is a war of all-out destruction and there is no protection anywhere," he said. "Israel could be more precise but it's choosing not to be."

Israel has said it targets Hamas fighters, not civilians. However, it has used powerful explosives in strikes on densely populated areas that have killed large numbers of women and children.

WHAT DOES INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW SAY?

The claims and counterclaims over Gaza's hospitals have raised pressing questions about what is allowed under international laws governing war.

International humanitarian law lends hospitals special protections during war. But hospitals can lose their protections if combatants use them to hide fighters or store weapons, the International Committee of the Red Cross said.

Nonetheless, there must be plenty of warning before attacks to allow for the safe evacuation of patients and medical workers, ICRC legal officer Cordula Droege said.

Even if Israel succeeds in proving Shifa conceals a Hamas command center, the tenets of international law remain in place, said Jessica Wolfendale, expert in military ethics at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio.

"It doesn't license an instant attack," she said. "Steps need to be taken to protect the innocent as much as possible."

If the harm to civilians is disproportionate to the military objective, the attack is illegal under international law.

In an editorial published Friday in Britain's The Guardian newspaper, International Criminal Court prosecutor Karim Khan issued a warning to combatants that the burden of proof is on them if they claim hospitals, schools or houses of worship have lost their protected status because they are being used for military purposes. And the bar for evidence is very high.

"If there is a doubt that a civilian object has lost its protective status, the attacker must assume that it is protected," Khan wrote. "The burden of demonstrating that this protective status is lost rests with those who fire the gun, the missile, or the rocket in question."

Trump joins media outlets in pushing for his federal election interference case to be televised

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

Donald Trump is pushing for his federal election interference trial in Washington to be televised, joining media outlets that say the American public should be able to watch the historic case unfold.

Federal court rules prohibit broadcasting proceedings, but The Associated Press and other news organizations say the unprecedented case of a former president standing trial on accusations that he tried to subvert the will of voters warrants making an exception.

The Justice Department is opposing the effort, arguing that the judge overseeing the case does not have the authority to ignore the long-standing nationwide policy against cameras in federal courtrooms. The trial is scheduled to begin on March 4.

"I want this trial to be seen by everybody in the world," Trump said Saturday during a presidential campaign event in New Hampshire. "The prosecution wishes to continue this travesty in darkness and I want sunlight."

Lawyers for Trump wrote in court papers filed late Friday that all Americans should be able to observe what they characterize as a politically motivated prosecution of the Republican front-runner for his party's 2024 nomination. The defense also suggested Trump will try to use the trial as a platform to repeat his unfounded claims that the 2020 election that he lost to Democrat Joe Biden was stolen from him. Trump has pleaded not guilty.

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"President Trump absolutely agrees, and in fact demands, that these proceedings should be fully televised so that the American public can see firsthand that this case, just like others, is nothing more than a dreamt-up unconstitutional charade that should never be allowed to happen again," Trump's lawyers wrote.

The request for a televised trial comes as the Washington case has emerged as the most potent and direct legal threat to Trump's political fortunes. Trump is accused of illegally scheming to overturn the election results in the run-up to the violent riot at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, by his supporters.

Trump has repeatedly sought to delay the Washington trial date until after the 2024 election. But U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan, who was nominated for the bench by Democratic President Barack Obama, appears determined to keep it as scheduled.

On Friday in Florida, U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon, who is handling the separate classified documents prosecution of Trump, pushed back multiple deadlines in a way that makes it highly unlikely that case can proceed to trial in May, as had been planned. Trump is facing dozens of felony counts under the Espionage Act. He has pleaded not guilty.

The news outlets wrote in their request to Chutkan last month that a lack of transparency can sow distrust in the legal system. They said that is particularly dangerous in a case where "a polarized electorate includes tens of millions of people who, according to opinion polls, still believe that the 2020 election was decided by fraud."

"It would be a great loss if future generations of Americans were forever deprived of being able to access and view the events of this trial even years after the verdict, which would immeasurably improve the ability of future journalists and historians to retell accurately and meaningfully analyze this unique chapter of American history," Rebecca Blumenstein, president of editorial for NBC News, wrote in a court filing.

Some state courts allow cameras in the courtroom. The public has been able to watch proceedings held by the judge overseeing the Georgia election case against Trump and 18 co-defendants.

Photographers have been permitted to take photos of Trump inside the courtroom during his civil fraud trial in New York, but the trial has not been broadcast.

The Justice Department has said that knowledge that cameras are in the courtroom can affect lawyers and witnesses in "subtle ways" and lead to grandstanding. Noting the "ever-increasing acrimony in public discourse," prosecutors said witnesses who testify on camera may also be harassed or threatened.

"When a witness's image is captured on video, it is not just a fleeting image, but it exists indefinitely," the government said. "Were there an appeal and retrial, witnesses who were subjected to scrutiny and harassment on social media may be unwilling to testify again."

The coronavirus pandemic led the federal courts to temporarily relax its rules, allowing the public to listen to many proceedings over the telephone or videoconference. The U.S. Supreme Court has continued to provide a live audio feed of its arguments since the pandemic began.

The policymaking body of the federal courts adopted a new policy in September that allows judges to provide live audio access to nontrial proceedings in civil and bankruptcy cases. It does not apply in criminal cases.

News outlets had previously asked the federal courts policymakers to revise the rules to allow broadcasting, at least in cases where there is an extraordinary public interest. The chair of the advisory committee last month agreed to establish a subcommittee to study the issue, though it's highly unlikely any rules changes would come before Trump's trial.

Biden and Xi are set to meet next week at the APEC summit. No detail is too small to sweat

By WILL WEISSERT and DIDI TANG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When President Joe Biden meets Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Wednesday, there will be no such thing as a small detail.

How they greet? If they eat? Where they sit? Will there be flowers? Bottled water or in a glass? "Pretty

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intense," senior administration officials say of navigating delicate protocols.

Any encounter involving the president and a foreign leader means managing tricky logistics, political and cultural, and every occurrence or utterance can potentially jolt the world order. But few nations are more attuned to etiquette than the Chinese, and the often-conflicting interests between Washington and Beijing might mean the seemingly trivial becomes meaningful.

There's probably "very detailed planning of the actual choreography of who enters a room where, if there will be pictures taken and all of that," said Bonny Lin, senior fellow for Asian security and director of the China Power Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Biden and Xi will meet while both attend next week's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco. So far, even basic information has remained closely guarded. Statements Friday by China's government didn't mention the day or location. The White House, citing security concerns, says only that the meeting will be held "in the Bay area."

That could only increase the pressure as both sides potentially haggle over everything from meeting time and length to who enters the room first. Will they use a table or easy chairs? What about security presence and interpreter access?

Then there is the more obviously substantive: Will there be a joint statement after the meeting and how much of the session will be in public view?

The plan is to set aside enough time for in-depth conversations on issues that will be divided into different sessions, senior administration officials say. That recalls Biden's nearly three-hour meeting with Xi before the start of last year's G-20 summit in Bali.

The officials also noted that this will be Xi's first trip to the United States in six years, and his first to San Francisco since he was a provincial Communist Party secretary.

Victor Cha, former director for Asian Affairs on the White House's National Security Council, said organizing such meetings at APEC is easier than at a formal location. But, he said, hammering out talks on summit sidelines is still "a logistics nightmare."

"China, normally, if they come to United States, they want everything. They want all the pomp and circumstance. They want the highest possible respect that can be paid to them," Cha said. "That is politically not possible. And so, having APEC in San Francisco solves that problem in the sense that it's not the official White House that's hosting the meeting."

Even informal settings can bring high stakes.

When President Richard Nixon visited China in 1972, aiming to ease decades of animosity, he brought a new pair of shoes with rubber soles to climb the Great Wall.

President Barack Obama and Xi didn't wear ties during their 2013 meeting at Sunnylands, a modernist mansion in Rancho Mirage near Palm Springs, California. It was news then that Obama stayed overnight there while the Chinese delegation returned to a nearby hotel.

President Donald Trump and Xi wore dark suits for dinner at Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida four years later. The meal featured what Trump called "the most beautiful piece of chocolate cake."

Bonnie Glaser, managing director of the Indo-Pacific program at the German Marshall Fund, said that, for the upcoming meeting, Xi's team likely pushed for a venue away from the APEC site and talks lasting longer than those in Bali.

"The Chinese want a separate summit," she said.

The Chinese attach importance to the location, which this time may be more like Sunnylands than Anchorage, Alaska, where top U.S. and Chinese officials held rather tense 2021 talks. Chinese state media might fixate on the weather as a barometer for bilateral relations. Early forecasts are calling for rain with a high in the mid-60s for San Francisco.

Even on-site flowers could be important, as certain choices can symbolize harmony in Chinese culture. Plum blossom is a well-liked flower known in China for persevering amid harshness, while lotuses convey peace in the Chinese language. Chrysanthemums, by contrast, are associated with death.

Xi may expect Biden to greet him upon arrival. Xi's team could also want the leaders photographed to-

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gether without staff to convey a personal relationship.

"Chinese officials will want to project to their domestic audience that Xi is received by Biden with dignity and respect," said Ryan Hass, director of the John L. Thornton China Center at the Brookings Institute. He suggested that required "imagery of both leaders interacting on a personal basis, beyond the customary handshake in front of a bank of flags in a hotel conference room."

That could be as simple as a short walk together, Hass said. The Chinese also tend to emphasize food and might push for a meal.

During Nixon's 1971 visit, a military honor guard greeted him at the airport, but the much-watched series of toasts from both sides came later, only after a shark fin banquet dish was served. China offered a Texas-style barbecue at a luxury Beijing hotel to fete President George H.W. Bush in 1989, but blocked his invitation of Fang Lizhi, then the country's best-known dissident.

The APEC setting precludes a formal dinner. But lunch is possible. That's despite Xi scheduling his trips down to the minute and often packing in so much that there's no time to eat, according to a documentary on its diplomatic principles China released in 2017.

Both sides also always have security concerns. Obama wrote in his memoir of his 2009 China trip that his team was "instructed to leave any non-governmental electronic devices on the plane" and to operate assuming "that our communications were being monitored" and hotel rooms had hidden cameras.

Hillary Clinton's 1995 Beijing visit as first lady turned heads for a different reason when she declared that "human rights are women's rights, and women's rights are human rights." So did then-first lady Laura Bush's 2008 trip to the Olympics in Beijing after she stopped in Thailand and visited a refugee camp for people fleeing the government of China-backed Myanmar.

But protocols around U.S.-China leader interactions don't always have to address espionage threats or human rights matters.

Obama's daughter Sasha was 9 and studying Mandarin in school when she practiced a few phrases during a 2011 White House welcome ceremony for Chinese President Hu Jintao. When she and her sister Malia visited China with their mother, Michelle, on a goodwill tour three years later, the Chinese press dubbed the then-first lady "Mrs. Diplomatic."

That trip featured a toboggan ride away from the press after a Great Wall visit, and a game of table tennis where Michelle Obama joked that her husband played the game and "thinks he's better than he really is." Yet what unfolded felt stiff to some. The write-up in The New York Times carried the headline: "Even With Ping-Pong, a Formal Meeting in China."

Jim Biden's last name has helped open doors. It also has made him a target of House Republicans

By JOSHUA GOODMAN, ALAN SUDERMAN and CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press
ELLWOOD CITY, Pa. (AP) — When a health care startup dreamed of building a network of rural hospitals several years ago, it turned to Jim Biden.

Although he wasn't a public health consultant or a medical expert, Jim Biden was the brother of Joe Biden, who had recently finished his term as vice president. The company's chief executive believed Jim Biden would help provide the enterprise with "serious horsepower."

But Jim Biden wasn't the secret weapon that Americore Health Services was counting on. The company imploded in 2019, filing for bankruptcy amid a pile of lawsuits and a federal investigation into fraud allegations. Americore also accused Jim Biden of failing to repay \$600,000 in loans.

Some of the Florida-based company's hospitals closed, including one in Ellwood City, near the western edge of Pennsylvania, where medical equipment gathers dust and plywood covers broken windows. The only reminder of the bankrupt company's brief tenure as the town's biggest employer is a plaque honoring its donation to a nearby high school athletic field.

The fallout has extended to Washington, where Republicans are hunting for evidence that could be used

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to impeach Democratic President Joe Biden. It's a playbook that they've already used on Joe Biden's son Hunter, whose checkered history includes controversial overseas deal-making, accusations of tax evasion and a well-publicized struggle with addiction.

Republicans have not uncovered evidence directly tying the president to any wrongdoing. But his brother and son make attractive twin targets, having been close for decades and facing accusations of leveraging their last name into corporate paydays. House Republicans subpoenaed them on Wednesday as part of their investigation into a complicated web of transactions and relationships within the Biden family.

The latest focus has been on a series of payments that Republicans claim show the president benefited from his brother's work, including more than \$600,000 that Americore sent Jim Biden when the company was struggling to stay afloat.

Republicans have highlighted a \$200,000 personal check from Jim to Joe Biden on the same day — March 1, 2018 — that Jim Biden received an equal amount from Americore.

House Democrats point to bank records they say indicate Jim Biden was repaying a loan provided by his brother, who had wire transferred \$200,000 to him about six weeks earlier. The money changed hands while Joe Biden was a private citizen, after his stint as vice president and before announcing his successful White House bid.

"There is nothing more to those transactions, and there is nothing wrong with them," said Paul Fishman, an attorney representing Jim Biden. "And Jim Biden has never involved his brother in his business dealings."

He accused Republicans of pursuing "an unnecessary and intrusive review of Jim's private banking records."

White House spokesman Ian Sams said "extreme House Republicans won't let the truth get in the way of abusing their power to conduct a smear campaign against the president."

Jim Biden last year repaid Americore \$350,000 to settle a lawsuit filed by the company's court-appointed trustee. His lawyers for that proceeding said he played no role in the company's collapse and all the money he received was for his consulting work, not loans, as the trustee had alleged.

Biden's political adversaries have vowed to press forward with their investigations as an election year approaches.

Rep. James Comer, chairman of the House Oversight and Accountability Committee, said he's "troubled that Joe Biden's ability to recoup funds depend on his brother's cashing in on the Biden brand."

Comer, R-Ky., is also scrutinizing a daisy chain of transactions beyond those involving Americore. The lawmaker claims records show that Joe Biden benefited from "laundered China money" when Hunter and Jim Biden began working with a politically connected Chinese energy company in 2017.

Jim Biden's wife, Sara, cut a personal check to Joe Biden for \$40,000 on Sept. 3, 2017, which came weeks after a payment from Chinese interests.

House Democrats said bank records show Joe Biden had wired \$40,000 to his brother a little more than a month earlier, suggesting that the subsequent check was to repay a loan.

Representatives for Joe and Jim Biden did not provide explanations for the loans, which were made during a lucrative intermission in the president's career as an elected official. In the two years after leaving the vice presidency, Joe Biden and his wife, Jill, made \$15 million in book deals, speaking fees and university work.

Jim Biden's varied career has included stints working as a nightclub owner, selling health and pension benefit services to labor unions and working for a construction company seeking contracts in the Middle East. Last year he said he was looking to purchase a professional rugby franchise in Philadelphia. Jim Biden also has a checkered financial history that includes lawsuits over unpaid bills, trouble with mortgage payments and liens for unpaid federal, state and municipal taxes, court and land records show.

Concerns that Jim Biden's business ventures and missteps would cloud Joe Biden's political career stretch back decades.

After Joe Biden was elected to the Senate in 1972, Jim Biden ran a Delaware nightclub called Seasons Change that eventually shut down with roughly \$600,000 in unpaid debts, according to local newspapers.

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Jim Biden received some loans for the club because officials at one bank believed that his last name "would attract a trendy free-spending crowd," the Delaware News Journal reported in 1977. One of the officials tried to pressure Jim Biden to repay the money by telling him that delinquency could embarrass his brother.

According to a newspaper interview that the bank's chairman gave at the time, Joe Biden angrily called to complain. "Look," the senator said, "whatever goes on with my brother, it's his problem, and don't bring my name into it."

Jim Biden's personal financial troubles played a role in his brother's decision to quit his first presidential campaign in 1988, according to the book "What It Takes."

And his ties to lawyers entangled in a Mississippi bribery scheme became a target for Republicans in the 2008 race, when Joe Biden was Barack Obama's running mate.

The negative publicity doesn't seem to have driven a wedge between the brothers, and the president tapped Jim Biden to pick out furnishings for the Oval Office. He also attended a state dinner at the White House honoring Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June.

Joe and Jim Biden's lives have been intertwined in ways that transcend the typical closeness between siblings. The president is the oldest of four children, followed by his sister Valerie, Jim and youngest brother Frank. Their father was a used car salesman and their mother a homemaker, and they were often strapped for cash while growing up.

Jim Biden left the University of Delaware without graduating and raised money for his brother's first Senate campaign. After the 1972 election, Joe Biden's wife and baby daughter were killed in a car accident. His sons, Beau and Hunter, were badly injured. Jim Biden converted the garage of his brother's house into an apartment, helping with the boys in Delaware as the new senator shuttled back and forth to Washington.

In an interview last year with Internal Revenue Service agents investigating Hunter Biden's taxes, Jim Biden referred to his nephew as his "best friend." A memo summarizing the interview was released by House Republicans.

Hunter was similarly effusive in his memoir, "Beautiful Things," describing how his uncle brought him to rehab in California when he battled addiction to alcohol and crack cocaine following the 2015 death of Beau Biden to brain cancer.

"Dad knew that if his younger brother asked me to do something, I'd do it," Hunter recalled in his memoir. "Uncle Jim has his own superpower: he gets things done. So he jumped on a plane to Los Angeles, pulled me out of a room in the Hollywood Roosevelt, and said, 'I found a place. Let's go.'"

The uncle and nephew have also been in business with each other. Some deals fizzled, such as a disastrous purchase of a hedge fund, while others were lucrative, like consulting for CEFC China Energy.

Records released by House Republicans show more than \$1 million in payments linked to the Chinese firm were paid to Jim Biden's company.

But even when Jim Biden was making money, he struggled to stay solvent. In September 2017 he was sued by American Express over a \$65,000 unpaid credit card bill. Court records show the matter was dropped, and Jim Biden's representatives said the bill was paid.

In early 2018, Jim Biden sold a Florida vacation home for about \$1 million less than what he had paid for it a few years earlier after it was damaged by Hurricane Irma. Last year he was hit with a \$16,000 state tax lien in Pennsylvania, which was paid off a month later, according to local court records.

Republicans remain interested in what transpired with Americore, referencing payments from the company when writing that they've "uncovered evidence that President Biden directly benefited from Jim Biden's attempts to peddle influence."

It is not clear how Americore connected with Jim Biden. Tom Pritchard, a former company executive, said he immediately doubted Jim Biden's value to the startup.

The executive was perplexed that Jim Biden insisted on decorating his office with expensive furniture even as the company was losing money. And Jim Biden always seemed more interested in selling the image of a political insider than doing the hard work necessary to save the firm, Pritchard said.

"He was definitely going for the presidential look," Pritchard said in describing how Jim Biden displayed

signed photos of his brother and Obama in his office.

He added that Jim Biden "wanted to do as little as possible and reap the maximum benefits."

Fishman, the attorney representing Jim Biden, defended Jim Biden's contributions to the company, saying he "worked diligently to identify investors, strategic partners and business opportunities for Americore."

Pritchard said Jim Biden promised to leverage his brother's clout to attract investment from the Middle East, as well as to win contracts to conduct laboratory work for unions and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

In the end, the cash infusion from such countries as Qatar and Saudi Arabia never arrived. Instead, Jim Biden helped land a bridge loan for the company, according to court records. The money, more than \$19 million, was from a South Florida money manager, Michael Lewitt, with whom he had started a separate venture around the same time.

Jim Biden and Lewitt's company, Platinum Global Partners, listed as its address a small Delray Beach, Florida, body shop specializing in foreign car repairs, according to corporate registry records. It was dissolved in July 2020, barely 16 months after it was created.

Last month, the Securities and Exchange Commission accused Lewitt in a civil lawsuit of defrauding investors, many of them older people, who were told their savings would be used to purchase Wall Street securities — not funneled to Americore, an unlisted, unprofitable company. Lewitt, the fund's sole manager, is accused of taking \$4.7 million for himself. Lewitt did not respond to a request for comment.

Jim Biden was not named in the suit, and Fishman said he is not under investigation.

Pritchard said Biden's promises helped Americore persuade skeptical residents in small towns to embrace the company's takeovers. That was especially true, Pritchard said, in Ellwood City, where the hospital, like the old steel mill town, had been declining for decades.

At a hearing before a local judge in August 2017 to approve the sale, Americore's president, Grant White, invoked Jim Biden's involvement as he spoke emotionally about the company's plans.

"So when you say what's our motivation, why are people like Jim Biden, who could do many other things with his life, why am I doing this instead of investment banking and making a few bucks?" White said with Jim Biden nearby in the courtroom. "Because this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to actually make a difference."

Americore's collapse has left bitterness in Ellwood City, a traditionally blue-collar Democratic town won by then-Republican President Donald Trump in 2020.

At the same time the company was bleeding cash, Jim Biden received \$600,000 that former workers believed could have been directed to the struggling hospital.

Within two years of Americore acquiring the facility, the company capped paychecks at \$500 and the emergency room's CT scanner broke. Just days before Christmas in 2019, the last of the hospital's roughly 200 employees were laid off.

Scott Paglia, a respiratory therapist who worked at the hospital for two decades, remains angry over what happened. He blames Jim Biden for profiting from his hometown's misfortune and suspects Americore was intent on fraud from the outset.

"How do these people get away with this?" asked Paglia. But he's also angry at Jim Biden's brother.

The president, he said, "had to know he was selling the Biden name."

More than 800 Sudanese reportedly killed in attack on Darfur town, UN says

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Fighters from a paramilitary force and their allied Arab militias rampaged through a town in Sudan's war-ravaged region of Darfur, reportedly killing more than 800 people in a multiday attack, doctors and the U.N. said.

The attack on Ardamata in West Darfur province earlier this month was the latest in a series of atrocities in Darfur that marked the monthslong war between the Sudanese military and the paramilitary Rapid

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Support Forces, RSF.

Sudan has been engulfed in chaos since in mid-April, when simmering tensions between military chief Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan and the commander of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, exploded into open warfare.

The war came 18 months after both generals removed a transitional government in a military coup. The military takeover ended Sudan's short-lived fragile transition to democracy following a popular uprising that forced the overthrow of longtime strongman Omar al-Bashir in April 2019.

In recent weeks the RSF advanced in Darfur, taking over entire cities and towns across the sprawling region, despite the warring parties' return to the negotiating table in Saudi Arabia late last month. The first round of talks, brokered by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, failed to establish a cease-fire.

The dayslong attack in Ardamata came after the RSF took over a military base in the town after a brief fighting on Nov. 4 with troops there, said Salah Tour, head of the Sudanese Doctor's Union in West Darfur. He said the military withdrew from the base, adding that around two dozen wounded troops fled to Chad.

Spokespeople for the military and the RSF didn't respond to phone calls seeking comment.

After seizing the military base, the RSF and their allied Arab militias rampaged through the town, killing non-Arabs inside their homes and torching shelters housing displaced people, Tour said.

"They violently attacked the town," he said, adding that the RSF and their militias targeted the African Masalit tribe. "They went from house to house, killing and detaining people."

The Darfur Bar Association, an advocacy group, accused RSF fighters of committing "all types of serious violations against defenseless civilians" in Ardamata. It cited an attack on Nov. 6 during which the RSF killed more than 50 people including a tribal leader and his family.

The UNHCR said more than 800 people have been reportedly killed and 8,000 others fled to neighboring Chad. The agency, however, said the number of people who fled was likely to be an underestimate due to challenges registering new arrivals to Chad.

The agency said about 100 shelters in the town were razed to the ground and extensive looting has taken place there, including humanitarian aid belonging to the agency.

"Twenty years ago, the world was shocked by the terrible atrocities and human rights violations in Darfur. We fear a similar dynamic might be developing," said U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi.

The U.S. State Department said it was "deeply disturbed by eyewitness reports of serious human rights abuses by the RSF and affiliated militias, including killings in Ardamata and ethnic targeting of the Masalit community leaders and members.

"These horrifying actions once again highlight the RSF's pattern of abuses in connection with their military offensives," it said in a statement.

Ardamata is located a few kilometers (miles) north of Geneina, the provincial capital of West Darfur. The RSF and Arab militias launched attacks on Geneina, including a major assault in June that drove more of its non-Arab populations into Chad and other areas in Sudan.

The paramilitary group and its allied Arab militias were also accused by the U.N. and international rights groups of atrocities in Darfur, which was the scene of a genocidal campaign in the early 2000s. Such atrocities included rape and gang rape in Darfur, but also in the capital, Khartoum. Almost all reported cases were blamed on the RSF.

The U.N. Human Rights Office said in July a mass grave was found outside Geneina with at least 87 bodies, citing credible information. Such atrocities prompted the International Criminal Court's prosecutor to declare that he was investigating alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the latest fighting in Darfur.

The conflict killed about 9,000 people and created "one of the worst humanitarian nightmares in recent history," according to the U.N. Undersecretary-General Martin Griffiths. More than 6 million people were also forced out of their homes, including 1.2 million who have sought refuge in neighboring countries, according to the U.N. figures.

The fighting initially centered in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, but quickly spread to other areas across the

east African nation, including Darfur.

It turned the capital into a battle ground, wrecking most of civilian infrastructure, most recently the collapse of a bridge over the Nile River connecting Khartoum's northern part with the capital's sister city of Omdurman. Both sides traded accusations of having exploded the Shambat bridge.

Projects featuring Lady Bird Johnson's voice offer new looks at the late first lady

By JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — Texas college student Jade Emerson found herself entranced as she worked on a podcast about Lady Bird Johnson, listening to hour upon hour of the former first lady recounting everything from her childhood memories to advising her husband in the White House.

"I fell in love very quickly," said Emerson, host and producer of the University of Texas podcast "Lady Bird." "She kept surprising me."

The podcast, which was released earlier this year, is among several recent projects using Johnson's own lyrical voice to offer a new look at the first lady who died in 2007. Other projects include a documentary titled "The Lady Bird Diaries" that premieres Monday on Hulu and an exhibit in Austin at the presidential library for her husband, Lyndon B. Johnson, who died in 1973.

Lady Bird Johnson began recording an audio diary in the tumultuous days after her husband became president following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963. The library released that audio about a decade after her death. It adds to recorded interviews she did following her husband's presidency and home movies she narrated.

"I don't know that people appreciated or realized how much she was doing behind the scenes and I think that's the part that's only just now really starting to come out," said Lara Hall, LBJ Presidential Library curator.

"Lady Bird: Beyond the Wildflowers" shows library visitors the myriad ways Johnson made an impact. Hall said the exhibit, which closes at the end of the year, has been so popular that the library hopes to integrate parts of it into its permanent display.

In making her podcast, Emerson, who graduated from UT in May with a journalism degree, relied heavily on the interviews Johnson did with presidential library staff over the decades after her husband left the White House in 1969.

"Just to have her telling her own story was so fascinating," Emerson said. "And she just kept surprising me. Like during World War II when LBJ was off serving, she was the one who ran his congressional office in the 1940s. She had bought a radio station in Austin and went down to Austin to renovate it and get it going again."

The new documentary from filmmaker Dawn Porter, based on Julia Sweig's 2021 biography "Lady Bird Johnson: Hiding in Plain Sight" and a podcast hosted by the author, takes viewers through the White House years. From advising her husband on strategy to critiquing his speeches, her influence is quickly seen.

Porter also notes that Johnson was "a fierce environmentalist" and an advocate for women. She was also a skilled campaigner, Porter said. Among events the documentary recounts is Johnson's tour of the South aboard a train named the "Lady Bird Special" before the 1964 election.

With racial tensions simmering following the passage of the Civil Rights Act, President Johnson sent his wife as his surrogate. "She does that whistle-stop tour in the very hostile South and does it beautifully," Porter said.

"She did all of these things and she didn't ask for credit, but she deserves the credit," Porter said.

The couple's daughter Luci Baines Johnson can still remember the frustration she felt as a 16-year-old when she saw the message hanging on the doorknob to her mother's room that read: "I want to be alone." Lady Bird Johnson would spend that time working on her audio tapes, compiling her thoughts from photographs, letters and other information that might strike her memory.

"She was just begging for the world to give her the time to do what she'd been uniquely trained to do," said Luci Baines Johnson, who noted that her mother had degrees in both history and journalism from the University of Texas.

"She was just beyond, beyond and beyond," she said. "She thought a day without learning was a day that was wasted."

Emerson called her work on the podcast "a huge gift" as she "spent more time with Lady Bird than I did with anyone else in my college years."

"She's taught me a lot about just what type of legacy I'd like to leave with my own life and just how to treat people."

"Every time I hear her voice, I start to smile," she said.

Obesity drug Wegovy cut risk of serious heart problems by 20%, study finds

By JONEL ALECCIA AP Health Writer

The popular weight-loss drug Wegovy reduced the risk of serious heart problems by 20% in a large, international study that experts say could change the way doctors treat certain heart patients.

The research is the first to document that an obesity medication can not only pare pounds, but also safely prevent a heart attack, stroke or a heart-related death in people who already have heart disease — but not diabetes.

The findings could shift perceptions that the new class of obesity drugs are cosmetic treatments and put pressure on health insurers to cover them.

"It moves from a kind of therapy that reduces body weight to a therapy that reduces cardiovascular events," said Dr. Michael Lincoff, the study's lead author and a heart expert at the Cleveland Clinic.

Wegovy is a high-dose version of the diabetes treatment Ozempic, which already has been shown to reduce the risk of serious heart problems in people who have diabetes. The new study looked to see if the same was true in those who don't have that disease.

Experts have known for years that losing weight can improve heart health, but there hasn't been a safe and effective obesity medication proven to reduce specific risks, said Dr. Francisco Lopez-Jimenez, a heart expert at the Mayo Clinic. He expects the new findings to change treatment guidelines and "dominate the conversation" for years to come.

"This is the population who needs the medicine the most," said Lopez-Jimenez, who had no role in the study.

In the U.S., there are about 6.6 million people like those tested in the study, experts said.

The results were published Saturday in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and presented at a medical conference in Philadelphia. Novo Nordisk, the maker of Wegovy and Ozempic, has asked the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to include the heart benefits on Wegovy's label, like on Ozempic's.

The new study, paid for by the company, included more than 17,500 people in 41 countries. Participants were age 45 and older, had a body mass index of 27 or higher and were tracked for more than three years on average. They took typical drugs for their heart conditions, but they were also randomly assigned to receive weekly injections of Wegovy or a dummy shot.

The study found that 569, or 6.5%, of those who got the drug versus 701, or 8%, of those who received the dummy shot had a heart attack or stroke or died from a heart-related cause. That's an overall reduction of 20% in the risk of those outcomes, the researchers reported.

The drop appeared to be fueled primarily by the difference in heart attacks, but the number of serious health complications reported were too small to tell whether the individual outcomes were caused by the drug or by chance.

Study volunteers who took Wegovy lost about 9% of their weight while the placebo group lost less than 1%.

The Wegovy group also saw drops in key markers of heart disease, including inflammation, cholesterol,

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blood sugars, blood pressure and waist circumference, noted Dr. Martha Gulati, a heart expert at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. Changes in those markers began early in the study, before participants lost much weight.

"It means to me that it's more than just weight loss, how this drug works," said Gulati, who had no role in what she called a landmark study.

Still, "it remains unclear" how much of the results were a benefit of losing weight or the drug itself, an editorial accompanying the study noted.

About a third of all study volunteers reported serious side effects. About 17% in the Wegovy group and about 8% in the comparison group left the study, mostly because of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and other stomach-related problems.

Nearly three-quarters of participants were men and nearly 84% were white. Gulati and others said future research needs to include more women and racial and ethnic minorities.

Wegovy is part of a new class of injectable medications for obesity. On Wednesday, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved Eli Lilly's Zepbound, a version of the diabetes drug Mounjaro, for weight control.

Both carry high price tags — monthly costs are about \$1,300 for Wegovy and about \$1,000 for Zepbound. And both have been in shortage for months, with manufacturers promising to boost supplies.

The medications are often not covered by private health insurance or subject to strict preauthorization requirements. Medicare, the government health plan for older Americans, is prohibited from covering drugs for weight loss alone. But drugmakers and obesity treatment advocates have been pushing for broader coverage, including asking Congress to pass legislation to mandate that Medicare pay for the drugs.

Results from the latest study and others that show the obesity drugs have a direct effect on costly health problems could be a factor in shifting the calculus of coverage, said Dr. Mark McClellan, former chief of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the FDA. In 2006, Medicare was allowed to cover weight-loss surgery to treat the complications of severe obesity, if not obesity itself, he noted.

That approach "may end up being relevant here," he said.

Dozens of Chinese ships chase Philippine vessels as US renews warning it will defend its treaty ally

By JIM GOMEZ AND JOEAL CALUPITAN Associated Press

ABOARD THE BRP CABRA (AP) — As a U.S. Navy surveillance plane flew in circles, keeping a close watch, dozens of Chinese coast guard and accompanying ships chased and encircled Philippine vessels in the latest confrontation in one of the most dangerous flashpoints in the South China Sea.

At the height of Friday's four-hour faceoff in the high seas, a Chinese coast guard ship blasted a water cannon toward a Philippine motorboat delivering food and other supplies to Filipino forces on a marooned, rusting warship that serves as the country's fragile territorial outpost at Second Thomas Shoal.

China has steadfastly stood by its claim to virtually the entire strategic waterway, clashing with its smaller neighbors and drawing in the United States, Manila's treaty ally and China's main rival in the Asia-Pacific region. Washington and its allies have deployed navy ships and fighter aircraft to promote freedom of navigation and overflight, build up deterrence and reassure allies like the Philippines.

There are fears that the recurring confrontations at Second Thomas Shoal, which lies within the U.N.-sanctioned Philippine exclusive economic zone but is claimed by China and surrounded by its flotilla, could ignite an armed conflict pitting the U.S. against China. Philippine officials said Saturday they would never take any step that could ignite a larger conflict but would not be deterred in defending the country's sovereign rights in the South China Sea.

Despite the Chinese blockades and coercive maneuvers, the Philippine contingent managed to deliver supplies to the handful of Filipino marines aboard the BRP Sierra Madre and left without incident. The slightly listing Philippine warship, donated by the U.S., has been crumbling with age but is still actively

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commissioned, meaning an armed attack would be considered by Manila as an act of war.

Two Associated Press journalists and several other members of the media who were invited on board three Philippine coast guard ships securing two supply boats witnessed the dangerous cat-and-mouse maneuvers in rough waves. It's part of a shame campaign Philippine officials said they would press on to expose China's growing aggression in one of the world's most important trade routes.

Filipino forces would continue to adhere to the rule of law and would not be provoked by China's strong-arm tactics, Philippine coast guard Commodore Tarriela said.

"Regardless how dangerous the maneuver that they're going to throw at us, whether they use water cannon, whether they use military-grade laser, we are not going to allow them to make Philippine coast guard personnel on board our vessels to escalate the tensions," Tarriela said.

At least 38 Chinese ships were spotted in Second Thomas Shoal's vicinity on Friday, including a Chinese navy fast assault craft and a hospital ship, the Philippine coast guard said.

One of the Philippine coast guard ships, the BRP Cabra, was surrounded five times by the Chinese coast guard and other ships, but managed each time to move away until it was hemmed in near the shoal.

"We grow more confident each time we steer past through the Chinese blockades," the Cabra's commander, Emmanuel Dangate, told AP. "We feel all the more the need by all to follow the international regulations to prevent collisions."

The campaign to expose China's aggression at sea would continue, Tarriela said in a news conference, where photographs, video and drone shots of Friday's confrontations were shown.

"I believe that our effort in transparency initiative has been very successful in rallying support from the international community to condemn the illegal actions of China and to make the Filipino people aware of what's happening," Tarriela said.

Washington reacted to Friday's confrontation by repeating that it stands with its oldest ally in Asia "in the face of the People's Republic of China's repeated harassment in the South China Sea."

The U.S. State Department renewed a warning that Washington is obligated to defend the Philippines under a 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty if Filipino forces, public vessels or aircraft, including those of its coast guard "face an armed attack "anywhere in the South China Sea."

"The PRC's actions are inconsistent with international law and follow a pattern of dangerous operational behavior in the South China Sea," the State Department said in a statement. It cited a 2016 international arbitration decision that invalidated China's expansive claims to the waterway on historic grounds, including Second Thomas Shoal.

China refused to participate in the arbitration, which was brought up by the Philippines in 2013, after Chinese ships took control and surrounded another disputed area, Scarborough Shoal. Beijing dismissed the 2016 ruling as a sham and continues to defy it.

A Philippine government task force said Friday that vessels belonging to China's coast guard and its paramilitary maritime militia "recklessly harassed, blocked and executed dangerous maneuvers in another attempt to illegally impede or obstruct a routine resupply and rotation mission."

China's coast guard said it "followed the Philippines ships in accordance with the law, taking necessary control measures, and made temporary special arrangements for the Philippines side to transport food and other daily necessities," spokesperson Gan Yu said in a statement.

It urged the Philippines to stop actions that infringe upon China's rights and said China would continue to uphold its national sovereignty.

"China urges the Philippine side to immediately stop making trouble and provocation at sea and to tow away the illegal grounded vessel as soon as possible," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said at a briefing in Beijing.

China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, a 10-nation bloc that includes the Philippines, have stepped up efforts to hasten negotiations for a nonaggression pact called a code of conduct that aims to prevent war from breaking out in the South China Sea. But the skirmishes at Second Thomas Shoal would likely continue on a regular basis with Chinese ships, including its navy, surrounding the shoal and the Philippines vowing to defend it at all cost and keep its forces there.

Last month, a Chinese coast guard ship and another vessel blocked then collided with a Philippine coast guard ship and a military-run supply boat near the shoal. China accused the Philippine vessels of trespassing in what it said were Chinese waters.

Classes on celebrities like Taylor Swift and Rick Ross are engaging a new generation of law students

By HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A South Dakota law professor typically teaches about dense topics like torts and natural resources. But next semester, he and his fearless students are shaking things up by turning their attention to Taylor Swift.

Sean Kammer wanted his legal writing course to draw on music and art to help his students reconsider legal language and craft persuasive arguments. The self-described “Swiftie” thought a focus on the cultural icon was also a way to connect with his students.

Never in his wildest dreams did Kammer expect the attention that the announcement generated — the class filled up quickly and jealous alumni even reached out.

“The reaction from students has been exciting,” he said. “If we can have fun while we’re exploring some of these complex theoretical problems or issues, I believe students will be inspired to think deeper and to push themselves further.”

Swifties at the University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law aren’t the only ones having fun. Law professors across the country are increasingly drawing on popular culture and celebritydom — sometimes with the help of celebrities themselves — to engage a new generation of students and contextualize complicated concepts in the real world.

Courses on Swift, Rick Ross and Succession supplement traditional law school courses with fun and accessible experiences that professors say they often didn’t have themselves.

Students at the Georgia State University College of Law were hustlin’ everyday to get to class — especially on Tuesday when they got to hear directly from Ross for the final day of a course that chronicled the legal intricacies of the rapper, record executive and Wingstop franchise owner’s life.

Moraima “Mo” Ivory, director of the school’s entertainment, sports and media law program, wants her students to see for themselves what goes into the albums, television shows and movies they enjoy. She chooses a star each year and invites guest speakers from their world, along with the title character themselves, to bring legal deals, defenses and drama to life.

“We’re talking about critical legal principles, but we’re watching them as they happen and as they happened,” she said. “It really just turns that lightbulb on for law students.”

Ivory said she could’ve heard a pin drop in one class about mixtapes that featured guest DJ Drama.

“It was never my experience that I walked out of a law school classroom excited about what I had learned,” Ivory said.

For third-year law student Luke Padia, the experience makes concepts feel more tangible than reading a textbook or case law, he said.

“No knock on the other courses,” the 26-year-old from Lawrence, Kansas, said. “I just find that my attention is more easily grabbed when I’m sitting in class listening to Steve Sadow talk about how he was able to get Rick Ross out of jail as opposed to sitting in constitutional law or torts or whatever it may be.”

Frances Acevedo, a 25-year-old from Pembroke Pines, Florida, in her third year of law school, said she’s walked away from the class with an understanding of how important a team is to an artist’s success — a message Ross emphasized.

“I can sit at the table and talk money with multibillionaires,” Ross said to students, faculty and guests gathered for the course finale. “But when it’s time for me to move forward, I sit down with my team.”

Courses on A-list celebrities have captivated undergraduate and graduate students across the country for years, increasingly in courses analyzing race and gender. The attention on female artists and artists of color is a sign of growing respect for them and for different modes of artistic expression, said Kinitra

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Brooks, an English professor at Michigan State University.

Brooks' course on Beyonce's Lemonade album and Black feminism was so popular that she published a reader that other professors can use. The pop culture material offers "immediate relatability," which Brooks thinks makes students more likely to participate, allow their ideas to be challenged and be willing to challenge the artist, too.

Bella Andrade, a junior at Arizona State University, looks forward to her class on the psychology of Taylor Swift every week. The self-proclaimed "huge Swiftie" has been listening to her music for "forever and a day," but the class includes a range of fans. There are "10 out of 10" Swifties, along with people who barely know her music, which "leads to some really great conversations," she said.

"I think I've developed a much deeper understanding of different topics in social psychology," said Andrade, who is from Minneapolis. "Taking topics that I've known about or heard about before but really applying them in a sense to something that I'm really invested in ... really solidifies meaning."

Courses that incorporate pop culture offer a different context for the fundamentals that students learn in their traditional courses, said Cathy Hwang, who co-taught a University of Virginia corporate law course last year inspired by Succession.

The class investigated the show's prickly – and often duplicitous – legal matters, like hostile takeovers and securities law. Hwang said she was trying to engage and nurture a love of learning in students who "grew up with different interactions with technology and pop culture than what I did."

"To me, it's not so much what's my teaching style, but what's the students' learning style?" Hwang said. "It's important, I think, as a teacher to keep evolving and trying to meet students where they are."

Today in History: November 12 Stalin takes control of Soviet Union

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Nov. 12, the 316th day of 2023. There are 49 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 12, 1927, Josef Stalin became the undisputed ruler of the Soviet Union as Leon Trotsky was expelled from the Communist Party.

On this date:

In 1920, baseball got its first "czar" as Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis was elected commissioner of the American and National Leagues.

In 1936, the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge opened as President Franklin D. Roosevelt pressed a telegraph key in Washington, D.C. and gave the green light to traffic.

In 1942, the World War II naval Battle of Guadalcanal began. (The Allies would win a major victory over Japanese forces.)

In 1948, former Japanese premier Hideki Tojo and several other World War II Japanese leaders were sentenced to death by a war crimes tribunal.

In 1970, the Bhola cyclone struck East Pakistan; it is believed that as many as a half million people were killed.

In 1975, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas retired because of failing health, ending a record 36-year term.

In 1982, Yuri V. Andropov succeeded the late Leonid I. Brezhnev as leader of the U.S.S.R. with his election as general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee.

In 1996, a Saudi jetliner collided shortly after takeoff from New Delhi, India, with a cargo plane, killing 349 people.

In 2001, American Airlines Flight 587, headed to the Dominican Republic, crashed after takeoff from New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, killing all 260 people on board and five people on the ground.

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In 2009, Army psychiatrist Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan was charged with 13 counts of premeditated murder in the Fort Hood, Texas, shooting rampage. (Hasan, who was left paralyzed from the abdomen down when police shot him during the Nov. 5, 2009, attack, was later convicted and sentenced to death, but has not yet been executed.)

In 2012, the United States was re-elected to another three-year term on the U.N. Human Rights Council in the only contested election for the organization's top human rights body.

In 2017, President Donald Trump exchanged taunts with North Korea's leader, tweeting, "Why would Kim Jong-un insult me by calling me 'old,' when I would NEVER call him 'short and fat?'"

In 2018, Stan Lee, the Marvel Comics writer and publisher who revolutionized the comic book and developed superhero characters that made billions for Hollywood, died at age 95.

In 2019, Venice saw its worst flooding in more than 50 years, with the water reaching 6.14 feet above average sea level; damage was estimated in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

In 2020, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, a broad coalition of top government and industry officials, rejected President Donald Trump's claims of election fraud, saying that the election was "the most secure in American history."

In 2021, a judge in Los Angeles ended the conservatorship that had controlled the life and money of pop star Britney Spears for nearly 14 years.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Brian Hyland is 80. Actor-playwright Wallace Shawn is 80. Rock musician Booker T. Jones (Booker T. & the MGs) is 79. Sportscaster Al Michaels is 79. Singer-songwriter Neil Young is 78. Rock musician Donald "Buck Dharma" Roeser (Blue Oyster Cult) is 76. Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., is 74. Country/gospel singer Barbara Fairchild is 73. Actor Megan Mullally is 65. Actor Vincent Irizarry is 64. Olympic gold medal gymnast Nadia Comaneci (koh-muh-NEECH') is 62. Rock musician David Ellefson is 59. Retired MLB All-Star Sammy Sosa is 55. Figure skater Tonya Harding is 53. Actor Rebecca Wisocky is 52. Actor Radha Mitchell is 50. Actor Lourdes Benedicto is 49. Actor Tamala Jones is 49. Singer Tevin Campbell is 47. Actor Ashley Williams is 45. Actor Cote de Pablo is 44. Actor Ryan Gosling is 43. Contemporary Christian musician Chris Huffman is 43. Actor Anne Hathaway is 41. Pop singer Omarion is 39. NBA All-Star Russell Westbrook is 35. Folk-rock musician Griffin Goldsmith (Dawes) is 33. Actor Macey Cruthird is 31.