

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 1 of 74

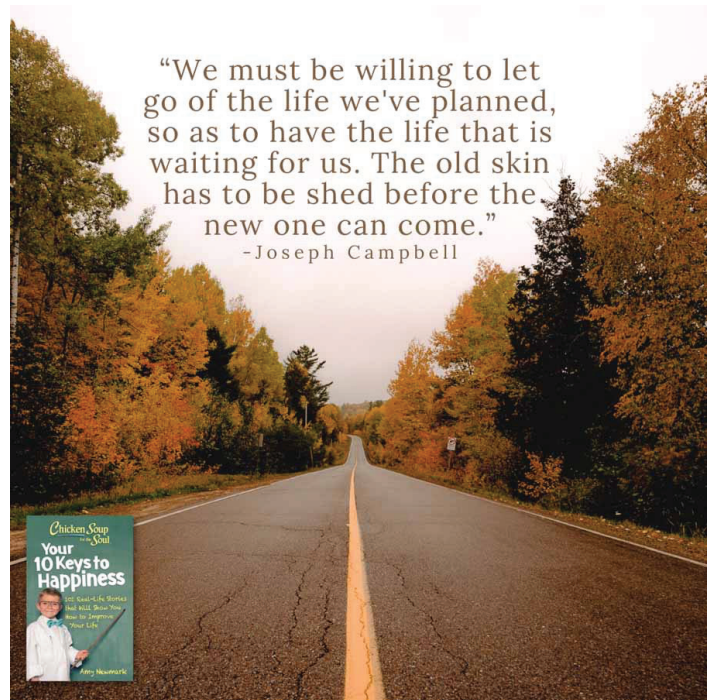
- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Newsweek Bulletin](#)
- [3- New Groton Police Sign arrives in Groton](#)
- [4- Officer Cleveland rescues a duck](#)
- [5- We the People Column: Justice William O. Douglas: Horatio Alger of the Supreme Court](#)
- [7- All Over Roofing Ad](#)
- [7- Frost is Back!](#)
- [8- South Dakota Average Gas Prices](#)
- [9- Drought Monitor](#)
- [10- Lori's Pharmacy tree at Wage Library](#)
- [11- SD Soil Health Coalition Column](#)
- [13- NSU Wrestling](#)
- [15- NSU Men's Basketball](#)
- [16- Arizona Street Preacher in Critical Condition After Being Shot in Head](#)
- [17- A Growing Number of Iranians Are Working Underground To Translate the Bible Into Their Heart Languages](#)
- [18- SD SearchLight: \\$1.5 billion of construction planned for new bombers at Ellsworth](#)
- [18- SD SearchLight: What's being done to address the high number of Native children in foster care in SD](#)
- [22- SD SearchLight: How the Argus Leader and South Dakota Searchlight reported The Lost Children series](#)
- [23- SD SearchLight: Biden signs stopgap spending bill, avoiding government shutdown](#)
- [25- Weather Pages](#)
- [29- Daily Devotional](#)
- [30- 2023 Community Events](#)
- [31- Subscription Form](#)
- [32- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [33- News from the Associated Press](#)

## Coming up

### Saturday, Nov. 18

State Volleyball Tournament at Rapid City  
Robotics at Harrisburg  
Thrift Store open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

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



“We must be willing to let go of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us. The old skin has to be shed before the new one can come.”

-Joseph Campbell

### Sunday, Nov. 19

United Methodist: Conde worship, 8:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday school and Christmas Practice, 10:30 a.m.

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

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

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

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

## **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 2 of 74

## The Bulletin by Newsweek

### World in Brief

**Trump Ballot:** Attorneys representing a group of Michigan activists have petitioned the state Supreme Court to review a lower court's decision permitting the inclusion of former President Donald Trump's name on the state's presidential primary ballot.

**CDC Backlash:** The CDC has refuted criticism from a House committee report alleging a secretive biolab discovery in Reedley, California.

**Fatal Fire:** At least 26 people have died in a fire at the Yongju Coal Company building in the city of Lyuliang in northern China, officials say.

**War in Ukraine:** A Putin-linked propagandist, Vladimir Solovyov, suggested that nuclear war is "inevitable", and that a nuclear strike against a non-nuclear nation might not cause widespread destruction.

**Israel-Hamas War:** A U.N. human rights official urged Israel to cease using water as a "weapon of war" in Gaza, highlighting the critical impact of fuel shortages on clean water access.

**Santos Removal:** House Ethics Committee Chairman Michael Guest has introduced a resolution aiming to expel Representative George Santos from Congress. This action follows a report documenting campaign fraud and violations of House rules, and comes as Santos declared he would not run for reelection in 2024.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 3 of 74



**The new lighted sign for the Groton Police Department has arrived in Groton. The sign was made possible by donations from various Groton residents. The next step is to remove the Wage Memorial stone in the building and take that stone to the current Wage Memorial history room, then fill in the hole and install the sign.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 4 of 74



**The job of a Groton police officer! Officer Justin Cleveland had to rescue a duck on US Highway 12 near the Sixth Street entrance. There was a call of a duck in the middle of the road. The stunned duck was rescued by Cleveland and was taken off the road.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

*We the People*

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



By David Adler

## Justice William O. Douglas: Horatio Alger of the Supreme Court

William O. Douglas, the longest serving Supreme Court Justice in American history (1939-1975), whose outsized life on and off the bench required two autobiographical volumes and inspired both devoted followers and passionate detractors, was at the center of the Court's most important 20th Century rulings. President Franklin D. Roosevelt might have expected as much when he nominated Douglas, just 40 years old, to replace Justice Louis Brandeis, who was forced by a heart attack to leave the Judicial Palace. At the time of his appointment, Douglas had been an eminent law professor at Columbia and Yale and was at the forefront of important national reforms in the world of law, business, regulation, and the Security and Exchange Commission, where he served as its third chairman.

Roosevelt had eminently good reasons for naming Douglas to the Court. Once seated, Douglas proceeded to influence the direction of the Court for the next 36 years. Anyone serving for so many years in a period that ran from FDR and the heels of the Great Depression, through difficult challenges and cases in the Second World War, through leadership in battling racism and promoting the sea changes in equal protection, through the trauma of McCarthyism and the tumult of the Vietnam War and the 1960s, into the battles for press freedom and the Nixon Presidency, is bound to stir controversy. Douglas did.

To his legion of supporters, Douglas was a Justice committed to democracy and individual liberty, to a galaxy of freedoms—speech, press, and privacy—that defined a free people and a free nation. A true believer in democracy, Douglas perceived freedom of speech as "the glory of our government." He was profoundly committed to the right of the people to hear all the evidence before selecting our nation's leaders. As his career progressed, Justice Douglas came to embrace a Jeffersonian theory of natural rights. He wrote, "The rights of men are inalienable." They inhere, he wrote, "because of the divine spark in every human being."

To his detractors, Douglas was a judicial activist who shunned the duty of craftsmanship and close reasoning in writing opinions. His opinions, they said, resembled hastily written notes on cocktail napkins, reflective of his desire to move to the next project, whether it was a lecture, a book or national and international travel. He was a maverick and led an unconventional lifestyle, marrying his fourth wife when he was 66 and she was 22. In April 1970, President Richard Nixon persuaded then House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford to commence impeachment proceedings against Douglas, the first Justice since Samuel Chase in 1804 to be threatened with removal. The effort against Douglas was defeated in the House Judiciary Committee.

What is most fascinating about William O. Douglas was the fact that he was the Court's Horatio Alger. As such, his meteoric rise from poverty and illness to elevated stations in the politics, jurisprudence, and life of the nation, punctuated by his appointment to the High Bench at the tender age of 40, was altogether improbable.

Douglas was born in 1898, in Maine, Minnesota, but spent his childhood in Yakima, Washington. His father, a Presbyterian minister, died when Douglas was six years old, leaving his family penniless. His early

# Groton Daily Independent

**Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 6 of 74**

life was a struggle against poverty and polio, shadowed by a lonely, widowed mother who frequently reminded young William that he would never become the man that his father was.

Douglas was told by doctors that he would never walk again. But he looked to the surrounding Cascade foothills as a therapeutic remedy. He began with baby steps which, in time, led to solitary hikes and, with years of work, a granite-hewed physique that seemed, decades later, out of place in courtrooms filled with attorneys who knew their way around buffets and bars. Douglas said that his long hikes in the Cascades instilled in him a love for the outdoors and the environment, which he championed to the end of his life, plus a deep-seated affection for solitude.

Douglas worked his way through Whitman College, taking jobs as he could find them. His impoverished circumstances forced him, as a student, to live in a tent for at least a year. Following graduation from Whitman in 1920, he taught school for two years and then, with six cents to his name, he "hopped a freight train and rode east," with the intention of enrolling in Columbia Law School in New York City.

The long train ride, Douglas explained in an autobiography, was a life-changing experience, one that shaped his view about the law and law enforcement. He wrote about the fear that he felt when he witnessed "rail-yard bulls"—railroad security agents and police officers—yank hobos from the trains, beat them mercilessly, and take their meager belongings.

Douglas, blessed with a photographic memory and recognized by law faculty members at Columbia as brilliant, graduated near the top of his class, supporting himself through tutoring opportunities and various odd jobs. He observed that his work schedule, from morning to night, left little time for school and study, which meant he "took education on the run."

How a person in Douglas's shoes could emerge as a candidate for one of the nation's highest positions is a fascinating story, which we continue next week.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 7 of 74



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....

18.) am scared of spiders  
and public speaking

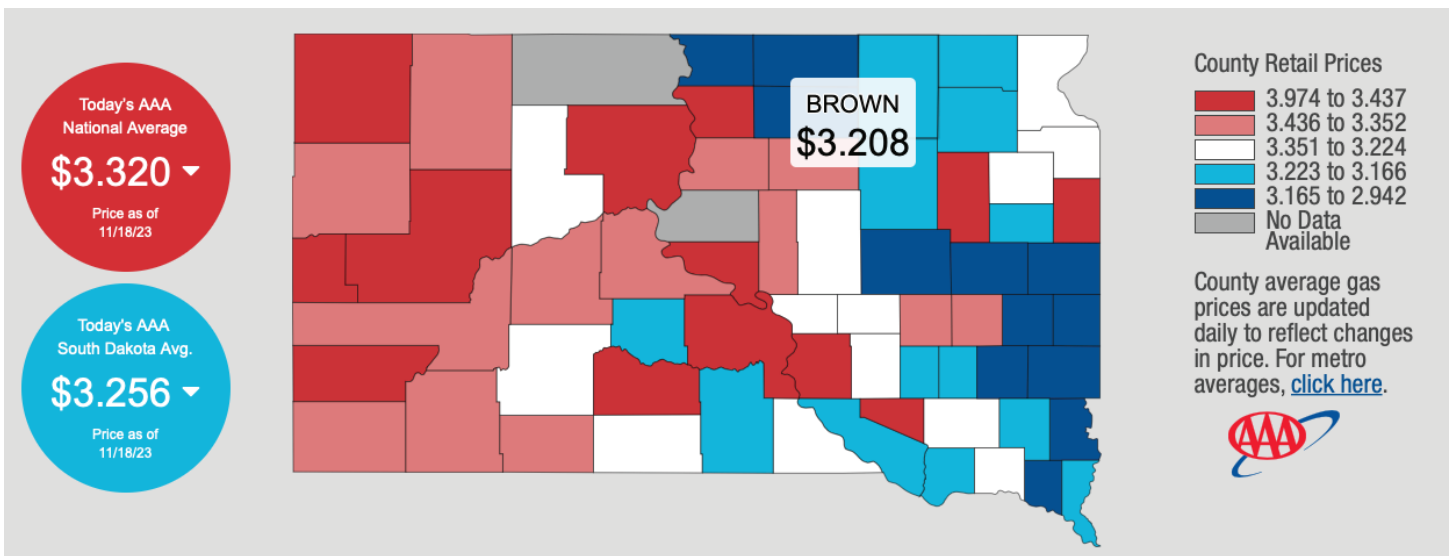
# Broton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 8 of 74

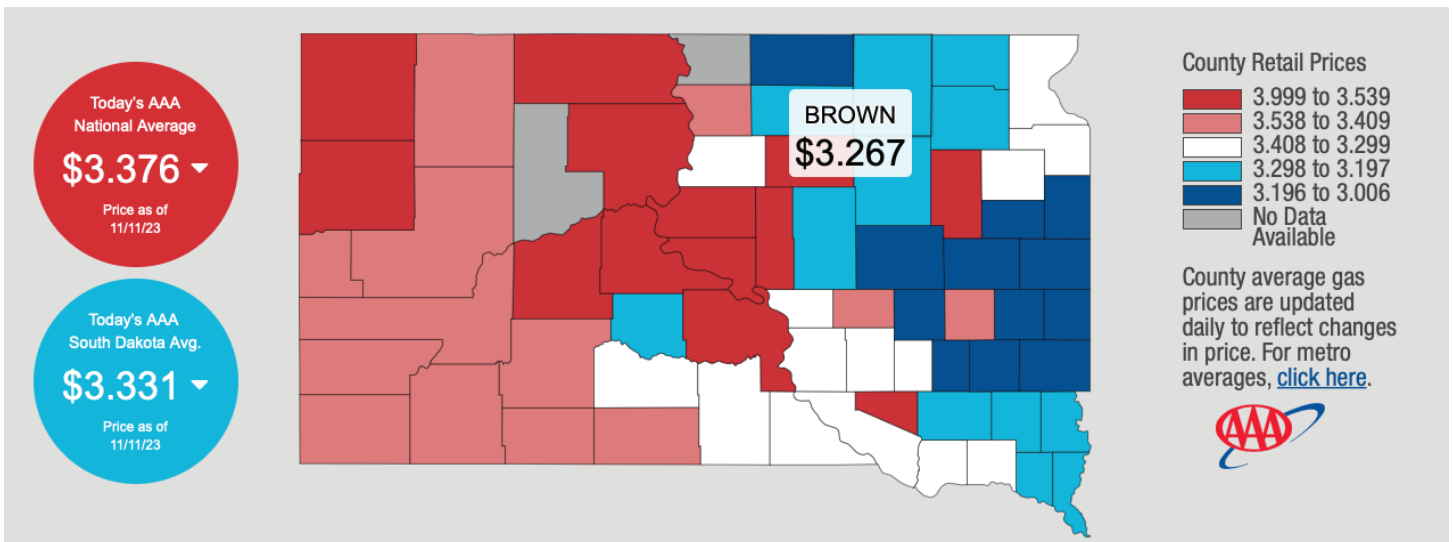
## South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$3.256	\$3.409	\$3.910	\$4.164
Yesterday Avg.	\$3.269	\$3.442	\$3.922	\$4.188
Week Ago Avg.	\$3.331	\$3.481	\$4.011	\$4.269
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.588	\$3.766	\$4.234	\$4.345
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.591	\$3.759	\$4.242	\$5.111

### This Week



### Two Weeks Ago





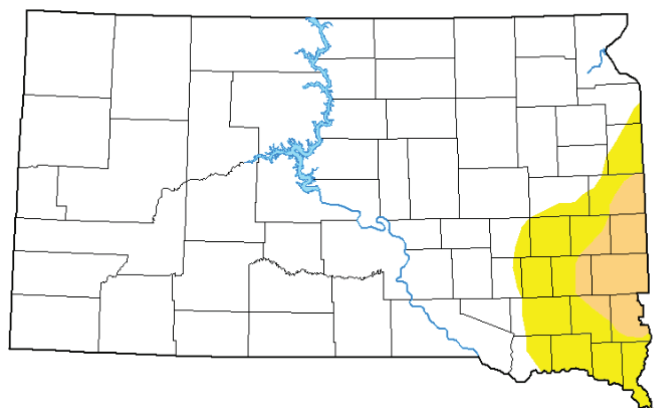
# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 9 of 74

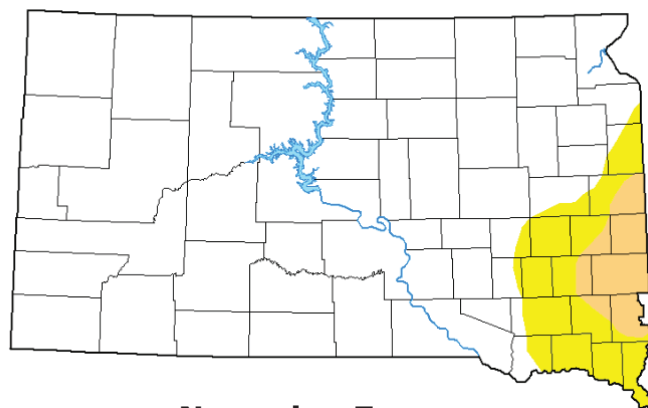
## Drought Classification

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

## Drought Monitor



November 14



November 7

Pockets of drought were mainly focused across eastern and southern sections of the region, with worsening conditions noted in parts of Kansas and neighboring states. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, topsoil moisture was rated more than one-half very short to short on November 12 in Kansas (69%), Nebraska (61%), and Colorado (60%). On the same date, 17% of the U.S. winter wheat crop was rated in very poor to poor condition, although state-level numbers were higher in Kansas (33% very poor to poor) and Nebraska (18%).

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 10 of 74



**Another tree was decorated at the Wage Memorial Library in Groton. Lori Giedt is repairing the star of pill bottles with a hot glue gun while Nancy Sundstrom was arranging the decorations on the tree. This is the tree for Lori's Pharmacy. (Photo by Paul Kosel)**



## Wintertime is decision time

By Stan Wise

### South Dakota Soil Health Coalition

PIERRE, SD – It's often said that the best time to start improving your land was 20 years ago, but the second-best

time is right now. That statement might be harder for ranchers to swallow with winter on their doorstep, nothing growing in their pastures, and a tally of their hay inventory running in the back of their minds.

However, the first step in taking any new action is making a decision, and winter is perfect deciding weather. This time of year affords landowners a chance to take a breath, analyze what they have done in the past, and make a plan for the future of their operations.

"Now is a good time to kind of map out where you were this year and then figure out where you were at different times of the year in each of your pastures and then plan out the grazing for next year," Natural Resources Conservation Service State Rangeland Management Specialist Emily Rohrer said.

She said that NRCS recommends three basic concepts for designing a grazing plan to improve rangeland diversity and health: Include time for pastures to rest in a grazing rotation, leave adequate grass stubble height, and change the season of pasture use.

### Resting pastures

"As you're building your grazing plan, make sure you're putting in that growing season rest so you're not grazing one pasture for the whole green season. You give it some rest throughout the year," Rohrer said. "We recommend between 30 and 45 days of growing season rest, at least."

Dividing rangeland into separate pastures allows ranchers to rotate their livestock between the pastures, meaning each individual pasture gets more rest time. This rest time is important so plants can recover and maintain optimal forage production. Rangeland that is overgrazed experiences a decline in forage production.

The rest time for pastures can vary depending on plant species, how much they are grazed and how much precipitation they receive. In drought years, pastures will need longer recovery times.

### Maintaining plant health

Leaving adequate stubble height is another important practice for grassland health.

Rohrer said NRCS recommends the "take half, leave half concept – taking half of the production and leaving the other half for ground cover or for nutrient cycling and different biological processes."

"If you graze a plant too much, the roots stop growing, and it takes a while for the roots to begin to grow again," Rohrer said. "So, we always recommend not taking too much of that plant, or if you do take a lot, just allowing a lot of rest in order for the roots to begin growing again because the roots are the part of the plant that brings up water and nutrients so the grasses can grow."

Rohrer said that maintaining plant and root health and leaving enough stubble and residue in the pasture as soil cover stores more carbon in the soil and improves soil health.

"You are reducing erosion issues or soil crusting. Having a little bit of residue on the soil surface helps promote infiltration, so you could capture more rain," Rohrer said.

### Changing season of use

Rohrer said it's important not to graze the same pastures at the same time every year.

"We recommend at least two weeks of difference in season of use, but more is better in most situations," Rohrer said. "Grazing at different times of the year promotes different species. So then that can help promote more diversity in your range system. So, you're not grazing the same plant year after year, which can degrade that plant over time. You're giving it that rest when it needs it."

Healthy rangelands are diverse ecosystems with complex relationships between plants, animals, fungi, and microbes both above and below the ground. This biodiversity is a benefit not only to wildlife but also

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 12 of 74

to agricultural producers. Livestock need to graze on many different types of grasses, shrubs and forbs to get the nutrients they need to thrive.

By changing a pasture's season of use every year, rangeland managers promote the biodiversity that will feed their livestock and improve their soil health. By improving their soil, ranchers can increase their rangeland's water infiltration rates and storage capacities, which results in greater drought resilience.

## Other decisions

Rohrer said that now is a good time for producers to predict next year's forage production.

"You can figure out if you have enough feed for the year or if you need to use some of those non-traditional feed sources like cover crops or if you want to try bale grazing in the fall," Rohrer said.

There are some tools to help ranchers do just that.

"We have the South Dakota Drought Tool that can predict or give you the current production based on the rainfall for the year. So, you can pick the closest weather stations to your operation and then run it, and it'll give you kind of an estimate of production for the year," Rohrer said. "If it's in a drought, you can reduce stocking rates, or if it's above normal, maybe you might think about buying some stockers or something like that."

"We also have the South Dakota Grazing Tool. It helps you create a forage inventory and an animal balance. So, you're balancing how many animals you have with how much forage you have so you're not overgrazing," she said. "And then it has a couple of different cool grazing plan sheets in there to help you build a grazing plan."

The South Dakota Drought Tool and Grazing Tool can be accessed online at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-by-state/south-dakota/range-pasture](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-by-state/south-dakota/range-pasture).

"NRCS offers free resources and free technical assistance for producers. They can come in and ask for help creating a grazing plan, or we do have some financial resources available," Rohrer said. "If they want to develop more water in a pasture or cross-fence something so they can put more rest into the rotation, we have financial assistance programs that can help with that, as well."

*The South Dakota Soil Health Coalition also offers free resources, technical assistance, and some cost-share opportunities for implementing best land management practices. To learn more these resources, visit [www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org](http://www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org) or contact the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition at [sdsoilhealth@gmail.com](mailto:sdsoilhealth@gmail.com) or 605-280-4190.*

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 13 of 74

## NSU Wrestling

### **Block and Bloomquist Lead Wolves with 2-0 Records from SD Showcase**

Brookings, S.D. – The No. 11 Northern State University wrestling team went 1-2 from the SD Showcase on Friday with a win over Dakota Wesleyan and a pair of losses to No. 15 Augustana and No. 12 South Dakota State. The Wolves tallied 16 match victories across the three duals, including 12 bonus point wins. Northern moves to 2-2 on the year following the competition.

#### **HOW IT HAPPENED vs. #15 AUGUSTANA**

The Wolves fell 26-18 to the Vikings in a dual that saw one Northern State starter in action. Teagan Block kicked off the scoring for NSU with a victory by fall over Thurman Christensen at 1:11. Braydon Mogle added a 6-point victory as well with Kade Sammons falling by injury default at 0:55. Tyson Lien grabbed the third and final victory for the Wolves, pinning Danny Reynolds at 1:01.

#### FINAL RESULTS vs. #15 AUGUSTANA

	NSU	AU
125 Christian Olsen (AU) over Brenden Salfrank (NSU) (Dec 9-6)	0	3
133 Teagan Block (NSU) over Thurman Christensen (AU) (Fall 1:11)	6	0
141 Braydon Mogle (NSU) over Kade Sammons (AU) (Inj. 0:55)	6	0
149 Kyle Boeke (AU) over Carter Ban (NSU) (Dec 8-2)	0	3
157 Connor Simmonds (AU) over Cael Larson (NSU) (Dec 8-3)	0	3
165 Payton Anderson (AU) over Spencer Roth (NSU) (Maj. 14-5)	0	4
174 Coy Gunderson (AU) over Mason Fey (NSU) (TF 19-4)	0	5
184 Tyson Lien (NSU) over Danny Reynolds (AU) (Fall 1:01)	6	0
197 Zack Peterson (AU) over Ryan Hirschhorn (NSU) (TF 19-3 5:15)	0	5
285 Edward Hajas (AU) over Ayden Viox (NSU) (Dec 6-3)	0	3
	18	26

#### **HOW IT HAPPENED vs. #12 SOUTH DAKOTA STATE**

The Wolves fell to the Jackrabbits 33-6 in their second dual of the evening. South Dakota State took a 18-0 lead through the first five weights, however Chase Bloomquist broke through for NSU at 165-pounds. Bloomquist notched a 5-2 decision win over Brock Fettig. No. 12 Treyton Cacek recorded the second victory for the Wolves defeating Jaxon Bowes in a 10-4 decision.

#### FINAL RESULTS vs. #12 SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

	NSU	SDSU
125 Tanner Jordan (SDSU) over Landen Fischer (NSU) (Maj. 18-6)	0	4
133 Derrick Cardinal (SDSU) over Jason Henschel Jr. (NSU) (TF 19-4 6:38)	0	5
141 Caleb Gross (SDSU) over Braydon Mogle (NSU) (Dec 2-0)	0	3
149 Daniel Kimbell (SDSU) over Wyatt Turnquist (NSU) (Dec 11-8)	0	3
157 Cael Swenson (SDSU) over Devin Bahr (NSU) (Dec 5-4)	0	3
165 Chase Bloomquist (NSU) over Brock Fettig (SDSU) (Dec 5-2)	3	0
174 Cade Devos (SDSU) over Sam Kruger (NSU) (TF 18-3)	0	5
184 Treyton Cacek (NSU) over Jaxon Bowes (SDSU) (Dec 10-4)	3	0
197 Thomas Dineen (SDSU) over Ryan Hirschhorn (NSU) (Fall 2:53)	0	6
285 Luke Rasmussen (SDSU) over Nathan Schauer (NSU) (Maj. 14-1)	0	4
	6	33

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 14 of 74

## HOW IT HAPPENED vs. DAKOTA WESLEYAN

It was all Northern State in the night cap with the Wolves recording a 54-0 victory

The two teams wrestle seven of the ten weights and NSU tallied six bonus point wins

Landen Fischer kicked off the dual with a victory by fall over Will Farren at 4:17

Block followed up with his second victory of the evening, defeating Tyson Durham in a 16-0 technical fall

The Wolves then rattled off three straight pins led off by No. 1 Wyatt Turnquist defeating Zach Kolbe at 1:03 in the match at 149-pounds

Carter Ban downed Elijah Isakson at 2:46 and Bloomquist defeated Dylan Arrendondo at 1:32 give Northern State a 35-0 lead

Ryan Hirsch Korn and Nathan Schauer closed out the shut-out for NSU defeating Colten Hink in a 13-7 decision and Tanner Hennings in a 13-2 major decision

Forfeit wins for the Wolves included Jason Henschel Jr. at 133, Sam Kruger at 174, and Cacek at 184

## FINAL RESULTS vs. DAKOTA WESLEYAN

		NSU	DWU
125	Landen Fischer (NSU) over Will Farren (DWU) (Fall 4:17)	6	0
133	Jason Henschel Jr. (NSU) over Forfeit	6	0
141	Teagan Block (NSU) over Tyson Durham (DWU) (TF 16-0)	5	0
149	Wyatt Turnquist (NSU) over Zach Kolbe (DWU) (Fall 1:03)	6	0
157	Carter Ban (NSU) over Elijah Isakson (DWU) (Fall 2:46)	6	0
165	Chase Bloomquist (NSU) over Dylan Arredondo (DWU) (Fall 1:32)	6	0
174	Sam Kruger (NSU) over Forfeit	6	0
184	Treyton Cacek (NSU) over Forfeit	6	0
197	Ryan Hirsch Korn (NSU) over Colten Hink (DWU) (Dec 13-7)	3	0
285	Nathan Schauer (NSU) over Tanner Hennings (DWU) (Maj. 13-2)	4	0
		54	0

## UP NEXT

The Wolves will return to action on Friday, December 1 taking on the University of Sioux Falls. It will be the first meeting between the programs with the Cougars in their inaugural season. Match start time is set for 7 p.m. in Sioux Falls.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 15 of 74

## NSU Men's Basketball

### **Home Opener Slips Away from the No. 21 Wolves against the Tigers**

Aberdeen, S.D. – The No. 21 Northern State University men's basketball team dropped a back-and-forth battle to Emmanuel University on Friday evening. The Wolves held the lead a handful of times, however the game slipped away in the second half.

#### THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 53, EU 65

Records: NSU 0-3, EU 2-1

Attendance: 2157

#### HOW IT HAPPENED

The Wolves and Tigers traded leads throughout the first half, with Emmanuel holding the upper hand, 33-30 at the break

EU out-scored NSU by 11 in the second half, shooting 45.5% from the floor and 50.0% from the 3-point line

Northern tallied a game leading 23 points off turnovers, 12 second chance points, and seven made 3-pointers, as well as ten assists

They added 25 rebounds, six steals, and one block, in addition to 26 points in the paint and eight points off the bench

The Wolves shot 33.3% from the floor, 25.0% from the 3-point line, and 66.7% from the foul line in the game

Michael Nhial led two in double figures with a season high 15 points and eight rebounds, hitting 6-of-12 from the floor

Josh Dilling dished out a team best five assists, while Augustin Reede led the team from the arc with three made 3-pointers

#### NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Michael Nhial: 15 points, 50.0 FG%, 8 rebounds

Augustin Reede: 11 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal

Josh Dilling: 9 points, 5 assists, 3 rebounds

#### UP NEXT

The Wolves return to Wachs Arena today for a 7:30 p.m. match-up against Upper Iowa.

## Arizona Street Preacher in Critical Condition After Being Shot in Head

By Jesse T. Jackson - November 17, 2023

On Wednesday (Nov. 15), Hans Schmidt, a 26-year-old outreach director at Victory Chapel First Phoenix, was shot in the head while he was street preaching in Glendale, Arizona.

Schmidt, who is a military veteran, a husband, and a father of two young children, was on the corner of 51st Avenue and Peoria around 6 p.m. Wednesday evening and was preaching through a megaphone.

According to Paul Sanchez, a nearby worker who has witnessed the outreach director street preach many times, there was a car filled with people who were screaming at Schmidt to "get off the street."

"There was a lot of everything, really, hateful comments, people yelling at him, 'Get off the street,' all sorts of mean things," Sanchez told a local news outlet.

"My husband was shot in the head yesterday while street preaching on the corner of 51st Ave and Peoria," Schmidt's wife Zulya shared on Facebook one day after the attack took place.

"If anyone has any info please contact 911," Zulya urged. "Thank you for your prayers. Believing God has the final say. I love you so much babe."

Victory Chapel First Phoenix's website says that Schmidt is "in critical condition and in desperate need of a miracle."

More details of Schmidt's condition were provided in a church update on Thursday. "Hans was taken to the ER where they discovered he had been shot after conducting a CT scan," the update said. "He began seizing and was intubated. There has been some movement; however, physician's [sic] are uncertain how much is voluntary and began draining fluid from his brain. He remains in critical condition, please continue praying."

*Jesse is the Content Editor for ChurchLeaders and Site Manager for ChristianNewsNow. An undeserving husband to a beautiful wife, and a father to 4 beautiful children. He serves as a deacon, a growth group leader, and is a member of University Baptist Church in Beavercreek, Ohio. Follow him on twitter here (<https://twitter.com/jessetjackson>). Accredited member of the Evangelical Press Association.*



## A Growing Number of Iranians Are Working Underground To Translate the Bible Into Their Heart Languages

By Janna Firestone - November 16, 2023

Everyone has a “heart language,” often the first language learned and spoken at home. Words read and spoken in a person’s heart language are much more meaningful and more easily understood. That’s why many Iranians are working tirelessly to translate the Bible into dozens of their own heart languages.

“Every person in the world needs the Bible in the language they understand the best,” says unfoldingWord, a non-profit that helps church networks with Bible translation. One Iranian translator, “Miriam,” agrees: “Having the gospel in my heart language makes it much easier to talk to my family about Jesus.”

Christians in closed countries struggle to have access to a Bible and often lack traditional church interaction and community, which are vital to the learning and growing journey. The Christian Post interviewed “Evan Thompson” (a fake name to protect his identity) with unfoldingWord to get a better understanding of what it’s like for Christians in Iran.

“There are 1.45 billion people in the world who speak about 5,500 languages that do not have the whole Bible in their heart languages,” Thompson said. “The Church has expanded exponentially in the last 20 years. And what these folks have learned is that you can lead someone to Christ, but if they don’t have a church, they don’t survive on their own.”

Especially in closed countries such as Iran, governments can forbid or strictly limit any missional activity. Iranian leaders prohibit people in Iran from studying their heart languages in schools. Farsi is the official national language of Iran, but many natives speak other dialects much more fluently.

“All of these oppressive countries, like Sudan, like Iran, and some others we could name, are trying to Islamize their whole population,” Thompson explained. “And one of the ways that they do that is by forcing them to speak this one national language, and it’s causing their heart languages to die out.”

Thompson drew a parallel to American schools. “It’s very much like anybody that comes to America from someplace else, and we put them in American schools to learn English,” he said. “Unless their family makes it a point to keep their native languages...alive in their families, by the second or third generation, the kids can’t speak their native language anymore.”

The ministry provides a way in Iran—and in other parts of the world—for local Christians to translate the Bible. “We don’t make Bible translations. We help develop Bible translators. Because that’s what the Church really needs all over the world,” Thompson said.

**Bible Translation Has Given Iranians Like ‘Miriam’ Hope**

“Miriam” (not her real name) also spoke with The Christian Post about how she, along with other Iranian translators, risks her life to translate the Bible in Iran.

“I cannot even imagine leaving this work unfinished. I must complete this work and see the result. I want to see my beloved ones experience salvation in Christ,” Miriam said. “This is my dream: that my people can talk about God and speak his name freely without any hesitation; without any fear they can talk about God.”

*Janna serves as Director of Women’s Ministries at LifeSpring Covenant Church. You’ll find her engaging in authentic conversation, enjoying a good laugh, or embarking on an outdoor adventure. Janna has contributed to several books for women and youth in the church, spoken to women’s groups across the country, led small groups, and found a deep appreciation for soul care. She lives in Colorado with her husband and two sons.*



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **\$1.5 billion of construction planned for new bombers at Ellsworth**

**BY: SETH TUPPER - NOVEMBER 17, 2023 6:21 PM**

RAPID CITY — The Air Force will spend \$1.5 billion on 35 construction projects to accommodate new bomber planes at a base near Rapid City, according to the base commander.

Nine projects are underway, said Col. Derek Oakley, who leads the 28th Bomb Wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base. He spoke Friday to the Black Hills Forum and Press Club.

"If you see an airman downtown, pat them on the back and tell them you've got their back, because they're tired," Oakley said. "There's a lot going on right now at Ellsworth."

The construction is for B-21 Raiders, which are under development by Northrop Grumman and are expected to arrive at Ellsworth sometime this decade.

The number of people connected to the base is expected to grow along with the facilities. Oakley said the base's current population of military personnel, spouses, children, civilian workers and contractors is 7,728. That's projected to grow over the next two decades by more than 4,000 people, to 11,792.

Ellsworth currently hosts B-1 bombers, which were developed in the 1970s. Ellsworth also hosts a squadron that remotely pilots MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aircraft.

B-1s from Ellsworth were heavily used against Islamic terror groups in Iraq and Syria. A previous Ellsworth commander, Gentry Boswell, now a brigadier general, told the Press Club in November 2015 that Ellsworth B-1s had dropped 5,000 bombs on Islamic State targets so far that year alone.

The B-1s will be phased out as B-21s are built and placed in operation. The first B-21 test flight was earlier this month in Palmdale, California, just prior to Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit with President Joe Biden near San Francisco.

Oakley said the B-21 is being developed with China's growing military in mind.

"While we were spending 20 years fighting in the Middle East, we were not paying attention to the growth that was happening in the Indo-Pacific region, and particularly with China," Oakley said. "China is now a peer competitor."

Ellsworth will be the first of several bases to receive B-21s. The Air Force plans to buy at least 100 at a cost up to about \$700 million apiece.

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

### **What's being done to address the high number of Native children in foster care in SD**

**BY: MAKENZIE HUBER AND ANNIE TODD - NOVEMBER 17, 2023 6:00 AM**

South Dakota government officials, tribal leaders, tribal child welfare coordinators, foster families and legislators agree: The overrepresentation of Native American children in the foster care system is a problem.

Indigenous children made up nearly 74% of foster children in the state by mid-2023 — five times the actual representation of Native American children in South Dakota's population. One in five Native American children in South Dakota are placed into foster care before they turn 18.

Those statistics are symptoms of larger issues, and the removal of children from their familial connections can lead to a cycle: their future children are at a higher risk of ending up in the foster system. The

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 19 of 74

1978 Indian Child Welfare Act was supposed to fix the problem.

The first step, in nearly every interview conducted by the Argus Leader and South Dakota Searchlight for its nine-part series "The Lost Children," is to bring all key players to the table to discuss the issue and possible solutions.

Gov. Kristi Noem said she recognizes solving the issue will not just be "a program and a payment," and the state can't solve it alone.

"You've got to have prevention and intervention and training and services for when these families have a crisis," Noem said. "By only talking about these kids when they're already in the foster care system, that will do nothing to guarantee that we're not sitting here in 10 years again."

A 2004 task force analyzed South Dakota's ICWA compliance, setting forth 30 recommendations for the state to implement. Most of the recommendations have been implemented, state officials say. At the time, nearly 60% of children in South Dakota's child welfare system were Native American.

The share of Native American children in the system had increased to 73.9% as of June 30, 2023.

An effort to establish a new task force to study the issue failed in the Legislature in 2023. The South Dakota ICWA Coalition plans to work with lawmakers to bring the bill back next session, which begins in January.

Noem was critical of the task force bill, saying past recommendations that haven't been implemented yet are tribal responsibilities. Those responsibilities include:

Recruiting Native American foster homes throughout the state.

Fully staffing and funding ICWA offices to include paralegals and attorneys, as well as fully staffing and funding juvenile and family courts on each reservation.

Creating a brochure to be distributed to families in court explaining the Indian Child Welfare Act and their rights under ICWA.

Regularly informing South Dakota DSS, the attorney general, state's attorneys and the circuit courts about changes in tribal law regarding child protection issues.

Responding to South Dakota DSS contacts by phone or in writing to prevent perception by DSS or state court that the tribe doesn't want to participate in pending state court proceedings.

But at the same time, Noem said the state "can take an incredible lead from the tribal governments."

"Tell us what they need. And don't just say we need more money," she said. "We need to be spending money wisely in ways that are really effective. So, boy, we would entertain – and have asked them many times – what more we can do to partner and serve."

South Dakota ICWA Coalition Director Jessica Morson, who has been in the role for five years, said she has never been contacted by Noem's office during her tenure. She has not reached out directly to Noem's office either.

Morson wants to see an audit of ICWA cases over the past few years in South Dakota to ensure the law is being followed. That would be possible through a task force or coalition, she said.

Oglala Sioux Tribe Vice President Alicia Mousseau, a vocal supporter of the task force bill and critic of the Legislature when it failed, said a new task force is necessary to review the 2004 recommendations and collaborate on how to solve root causes of children entering the foster care system.

"If we show our tribal members the state is willing to work with us on helping these kids and these families, then it won't be us against them," Mousseau said. "There's that long history there and that fear is real: needing the safeguard against the state. But we need to change that narrative and we're only going to do that by working together."

## OST Task Force

After the task force bill and two other ICWA-related bills failed during the legislative session, Department of Social Services Secretary Matt Althoff, who'd only been on the job a couple of months, offered to open communication with the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Mousseau had helped revive the tribe's Child Protective Services Task Force in 2022 with goals to address staffing shortages in the tribe's CPS and ICWA offices and other improvements.

The state DSS leadership team visited Pine Ridge earlier this year. The state and tribe have continued

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 20 of 74

to meet virtually since then, Althoff said.

"We're committed to meeting mindfully," Althoff said. "We've committed to bringing identified issues that are very into the technicals of ICWA that we're focused on and that happen to be in our scope."

Mousseau's goal with Oglala's relationship with the state DSS is to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would outline the relationship, how the two entities would work on ICWA cases together and define the state's responsibilities and role when they have to come onto the Pine Ridge reservation.

"I don't know why the state wouldn't want to enter into an MOU with us. It's beneficial for all of us to work together. ICWA is about working together," Mousseau said.

The MOU remains in the draft stage as each party makes suggestions and edits.

## Enhancing ICWA

Rep. Tamara St. John, R-Sisseton, is planning to introduce legislation that would take portions of the federal ICWA law and mold it to fit South Dakota.

While the legislation is still in the development stage, St. John said she hopes the legislation can fill in gaps regarding ICWA compliance in the state — specifically prioritizing ICWA over other federal foster care recommendations, defining active efforts to achieve Native family reunification and neglect, and opening up communication and partnerships between tribal and state partners.

"The state's goal is to do right by ICWA. How do we attack this issue together?" St. John said. "This is a South Dakota issue. These are South Dakota families."

## Tribal licensing and sovereignty

Tribes are already licensing foster parents, and experts agree that the state should respect that licensure, even if it's outside reservation boundaries. Additionally, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe is in the process of applying for Title IV-E funds, which are federal funds that help cover foster care expenses and would make the federal dollars flow directly to the tribe rather than relying on a state contract. Five tribes contract with the state to receive Title IV-E funds.

Frank Edwards, a sociologist at Rutgers University in New Jersey, said the state should be willing to sit down with tribes and hear what they have to say.

"I think sovereignty has to be aspect number one. Listen to what the tribes are asking for and listen to what the tribes say that they need, and defer to their judgment," Edwards said. "Because they know what's best for their kids."

## Foster villages & Culture Camps

Activists and experts are trying to keep Native American foster children connected to their communities and their cultures through foster villages and culture camps.

Foster care villages, like Simply Smiles in La Plant on the Cheyenne River Reservation and the Uchi House in Fort Thompson on the Crow Creek Reservation, are meant to keep Native children in their communities, cared for by staff who are licensed foster parents. However, Simply Smiles closed temporarily due to internal staffing struggles and the Uchi House has not opened because it does not have enough staff yet. The Cheyenne River tribal nation is in the process of acquiring the Simply Smiles village.

And for Native children who live in urban areas — whether foster, adopted or simply separated from reservation life — South Dakota Urban Indian Health, in Sioux Falls, hosted its first culture camp this summer in Sisseton. The children participated in cultural activities such as harvesting sage, sweat lodge ceremonies, beading, dancing and building tipis.

"I think the kids had some great positive role models from the adults that we had with them. We were able to explain and connect with culture," said Michaela Seiber, the chief executive officer of the organization.

## South Dakota's Family First prevention initiative

Prevention services and stopping the removal of children from their families is already on the minds of the federal government. Title IV-E funds are being shifted to a new program called Family First Prevention Services.

South Dakota is one of the last four states to create a plan, which has yet to be finalized and approved by the federal government. Creation of the plan is a three-year process, with South Dakota being in its

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 21 of 74

first year.

The Family First approach funds prevention services addressing child abuse and neglect at its root, including substance abuse treatment for parents, mental health services and parenting classes. All services must be evidence-based, meaning there's science to support the outcomes of the program.

However, parenting skill classes targeted for Native American families, such as the Positive Indian Parenting curriculum designed by the National Indian Child Welfare Association and used by the state Department of Social Services, as well as South Dakota Urban Indian Health, do not yet meet the standards set by the Family First Prevention Services program.

Additionally, the state has taken steps to address substance abuse and behavioral health issues outside of Family First initiatives through investing \$15 million to expand regional crisis centers, supporting raises for medical staff at these centers and more.

"I think we've taken a pretty robust approach to providing these services and expanding them state-wide," Noem said. "Especially the progress we've made the last five years compared to the previous 10."

## **Diverting all children from the foster system**

A DSS-approved safety plan keeps a child out of Child Protection Services custody but the agency is still involved by monitoring the situation. In the plan, people close to the family are designated to be overseers of the situation and report back to CPS if they think the child is in danger.

Safe harbor families are part of a church-based network that accepts temporary placements of children while parents deal with crises.

"Everybody talks about what's the best way to keep the kids safe, without removing them or taking them into custody. And so it's temporary," said Holly Christensen, executive director of the Foster Network in Sioux Falls. She added she's been seeing safety plans be used more often in the past few years.

Christesen believes the more often safety plans and in-home care are used, the less often children enter the foster care system.

## **Family residential treatment centers for substance abuse**

South Dakota has two family-based residential treatment programs in the state, one in Rapid City and one in Sioux Falls. The programs allow mothers and pregnant mothers suffering from substance use disorders to seek treatment with up to two children. The families live at the program center for up to a year while they receive treatment, parenting guidance and transitional services.

The New Start program is operated by Volunteers for America, Dakotas, in Sioux Falls. The program, which was expanded in 2020, can serve up to 42 families with up to three people in each family. Children must be younger than school age.

The majority of New Start clients identify as Native American.

The demand for such services is larger than the state's capacity right now, said Becky Deelstra, marketing director for Volunteers of America, Dakotas.

A mother being separated from her child when seeking treatment is a barrier to being successful, Deelstra added.

"We know that if we can help a mom with her addiction, we're helping the children she has," Deestra said. "Her unborn children or her future children can be in a healthier environment as they grow up and develop."

*Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.*

*Annie Todd covers state politics for the Argus Leader in Sioux Falls. She was born and raised in Colorado and graduated from the University of Wyoming.*

## How the Argus Leader and South Dakota Searchlight reported The Lost Children series

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER AND ANNIE TODD - NOVEMBER 17, 2023 12:30 PM



**South Dakota Searchlight reporter Makenzie Huber and Argus Leader reporter Annie Todd interview Gov. Kristi Noem, Department of Tribal Relations Secretary David Flute and Department of Social Services Secretary Matt Althoff at the Governor's Office in the South Dakota State Capitol on Sept. 26, 2023.** (Samantha Laurey/Argus Leader)

Children can quickly lose interest in you when you're helping them stack blocks, but also when you're speaking with their grandmother about why she's caring for them.

They fall asleep in her arms as you witness her choke up, flashing back to when she and her younger brothers were split as young siblings at a child protective services office.

In that moment, you understand why a young grandmother is protecting her eight grandchildren from the child welfare system, while their mom struggles with addiction and homelessness. Without grandma, the siblings could be split between other relatives or foster homes and could have fractured ties in the future, like she does with her own.

Throughout the last six months, reporters for the Argus Leader and South Dakota Searchlight partnered to spend hundreds of hours traveling across the state to learn about the issues Native families and children face inside South Dakota's child welfare system. Native American children accounted for nearly 74% of the foster care system at the end of fiscal year

2023 — despite accounting for only 13% of the state's overall child population.

We sat in a living room, watching as a mother agonized about having her parental rights terminated and failing her daughters. We ate buffalo brisket in a church hall as a group of Cheyenne River Sioux grandmothers explained their dream to create a holistic service option that kept families intact while parents sought treatment for substance abuse. We were welcomed into homes and workspaces to learn and watch how parents — biological or adopted — try to do what's best for their children with love and care.

We've read dozens of studies on the impact of removing Native children from their culture and communities. We've made phone calls and emails to experts across the U.S., who deal regularly with the child welfare system. We read books to understand how child welfare funding works. We attended a two-day conference on child maltreatment and how South Dakota continues to combat it through cultural pathways, new federal policies and more.

After weeks of asking, we were granted a rare hour-long sitdown interview with Gov. Kristi Noem, Department of Social Services Secretary Matt Althoff and Department of Tribal Relations Secretary David Flute in Pierre.

The resulting project, *The Lost Children*, examines why 45 years after the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act, South Dakota continues to have one of the highest rates of Native child removal in the nation.

We were drawn to the story after lawmakers killed three bills during the 2023 legislative session that would've enshrined portions of the federal ICWA law into state law and would have created a task force to examine the issues Native children face in the child welfare system. At the time, some lawmakers said they were waiting for the U.S. Supreme Court to rule on ICWA's constitutionality in the case of *Brackeen v. Haaland*. The court upheld ICWA in June.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 23 of 74

We filed multiple public records requests seeking data on the number of children in foster care in South Dakota as well as their demographics. While most of our state records requests were handled in a timely manner, one of our records requests wasn't fulfilled until Thursday, Nov. 16, almost two weeks after the series started publishing. We gathered information already publicly available from DSS, the U.S. Health and Human Services Department, the U.S. Children's Bureau and the National Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect. We wanted to know what recommendations from a 2004 state commission studying the overrepresentation of Native children in foster care had been implemented.

Thousands of miles were put on our cars as we met sources in Pine Ridge, Fort Thompson, Eagle Butte, Sisseton, Winner, Pierre and Sioux Falls. One of us even took time out of a family vacation in Oregon to meet with an expert based in Portland. If we couldn't meet with an expert, we called them.

Samantha Laury joined the Argus Leader as its visual journalist halfway through the project and helped us to capture the pain parents face when their parental rights are terminated and the hope foster parents have for a better support system.

If you want to reach out to us about your experiences within South Dakota's foster care system — as a foster, adoptive or biological parent; a former foster child; or with professional experience in the system — please fill out this Google form. We will continue to report on this topic and the impact it has on children, families, tribes and South Dakota taxpayers.

*Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.*

*Annie Todd covers state politics for the Argus Leader in Sioux Falls. She was born and raised in Colorado and graduated from the University of Wyoming.*

## Biden signs stopgap spending bill, avoiding government shutdown

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - NOVEMBER 17, 2023 11:26 AM

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden has signed the stopgap spending bill, giving his administration and Congress about two months to work out agreement on the dozen annual spending bills.

Those appropriations measures were supposed to become law by the start of the fiscal year on Oct. 1, but disagreement about whether to adhere to the total spending level set in the debt limit law approved this summer or to renegotiate has delayed the process.

"Last night I signed a bill preventing a government shutdown. It's an important step but we have more to do," Biden wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Friday morning. "I urge Congress to address our national security and domestic needs — and House Republicans to stop wasting time on extreme bills and honor our bipartisan budget agreement."

The short-term spending bill, also called a continuing resolution or CR, keeps funding flat and policy nearly identical to the last batch of full-year spending bills. Those were approved last December and totaled about \$1.7 trillion.

Congress passed its first short-term spending bill in late September, creating a new deadline Friday at midnight to negotiate a deal on the full-year spending bills.

But House Republicans plunged into internal turmoil shortly afterward when eight GOP lawmakers and Democrats voted to remove former Speaker Kevin McCarthy, a California Republican, from that leadership role.

House Republicans spent several weeks unable to unify behind three nominees before electing Mike Johnson, a Louisiana Republican.

Johnson earlier this month proposed a second stopgap spending bill that would fund part of the government through mid-January and the rest of the programs through early February. The so-called "laddered" approach, which includes two funding deadlines instead of one, is not typically how short-term spending bills are drafted.

Despite concern from Democrats and some Republicans about the two deadlines, the U.S. House approved the bill Tuesday on a 336-95 vote and the Senate cleared the legislation for Biden's signature late

# Groton Daily Independent

**Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 24 of 74**

Wednesday night by a vote of 87-11.

The new spending law will give the Biden administration and Congress until Jan. 19 to reach bipartisan agreement on the Agriculture-FDA, Energy-Water, Military Construction-VA and Transportation-HUD spending bills.

The eight other bills have funding through Feb. 2, giving lawmakers a bit more time to negotiate a final agreement. Those bills include Commerce-Justice-Science, Defense, Financial Services, Homeland Security, Interior-Environment, Labor-HHS-Education, Legislative Branch and State-Foreign Operations.

The dozen bills make up the discretionary side of the annual federal budget and account for roughly one-third of total government spending.

Funding for mandatory programs, including Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, makes up the remaining two-thirds of government spending and is classified as mandatory.

That funding doesn't go through the annual appropriations process and mostly runs on autopilot.

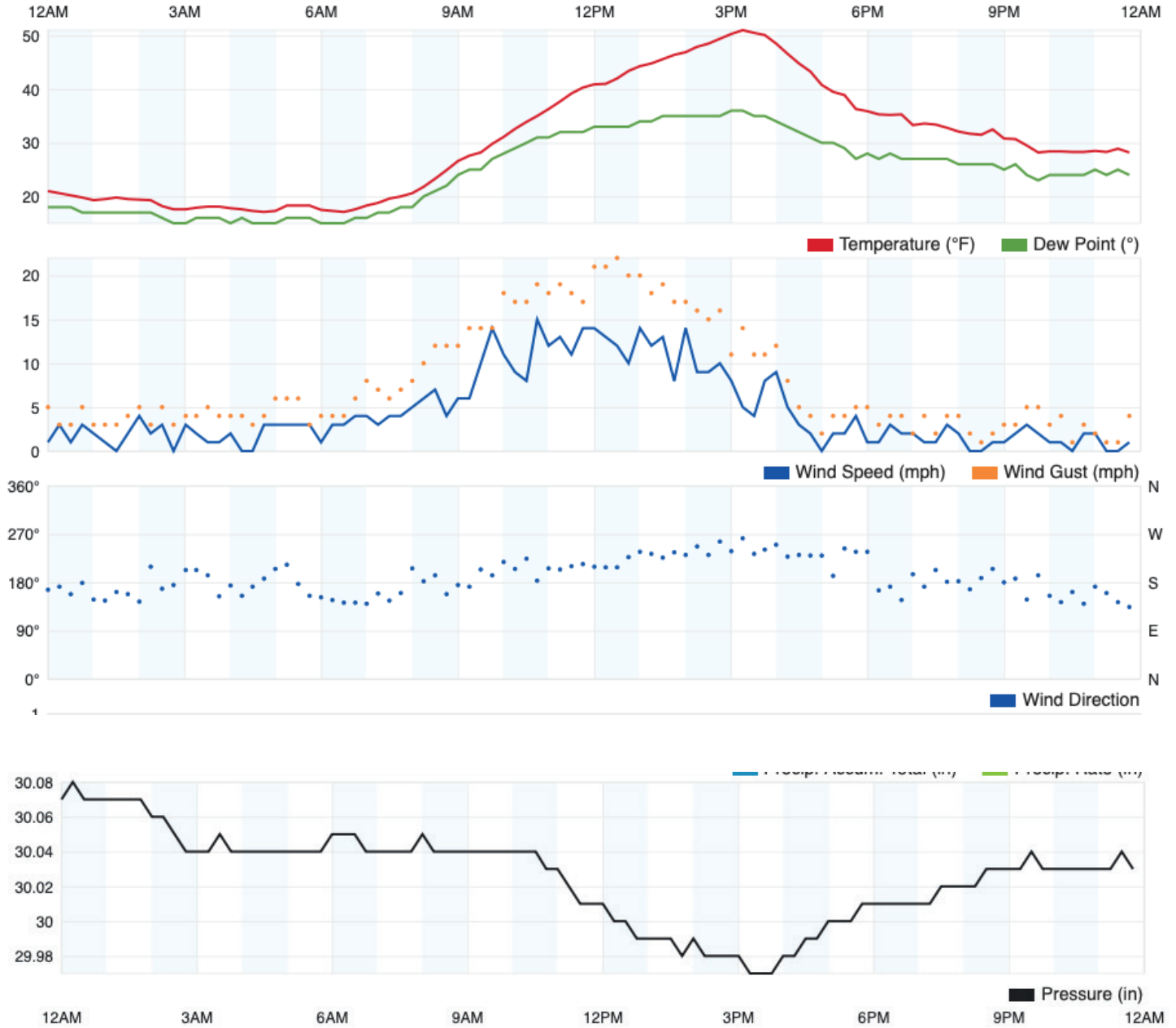
*Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.*



# Groton Daily Independent








Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 25 of 74

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs




# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 26 of 74

Sat Nov 18	Sun Nov 19	Mon Nov 20	Tue Nov 21	Wed Nov 22	Thu Nov 23	Fri Nov 24
						
55°F 33°F	55°F 39°F	49°F 27°F	35°F 20°F	32°F 15°F	27°F 12°F	25°F 16°F
S 6 MPH	SE 11 MPH	ESE 8 MPH	NW 22 MPH	NW 17 MPH	NNW 15 MPH	NNW 13 MPH 10%

### Weekend

November 18-19<sup>th</sup>, 2023




**50-60°**

Warmest across central SD

Chance of rain Sunday evening

### Mon-Wed


November 20-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023



**36-51°**

Cooler across the Prairie Coteau

Chance of rain into Monday morning, then dry



weather.gov/aberndeen

November 18, 2023 3:16 AM

Temperatures over the weekend will remain in the 50s to around 60. Clouds will start to move in Sunday afternoon with a chance (30 to 60%) of rain Sunday evening into Monday. Temperatures for the first half of the work week will be decreasing.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 27 of 74

## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 51 °F at 3:21 PM

Low Temp: 17 °F at 4:52 AM

Wind: 22 mph at 12:20 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 9 hours, 27 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 71 in 1908

Record Low: -13 in 1896

Average High: 41

Average Low: 18

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.49

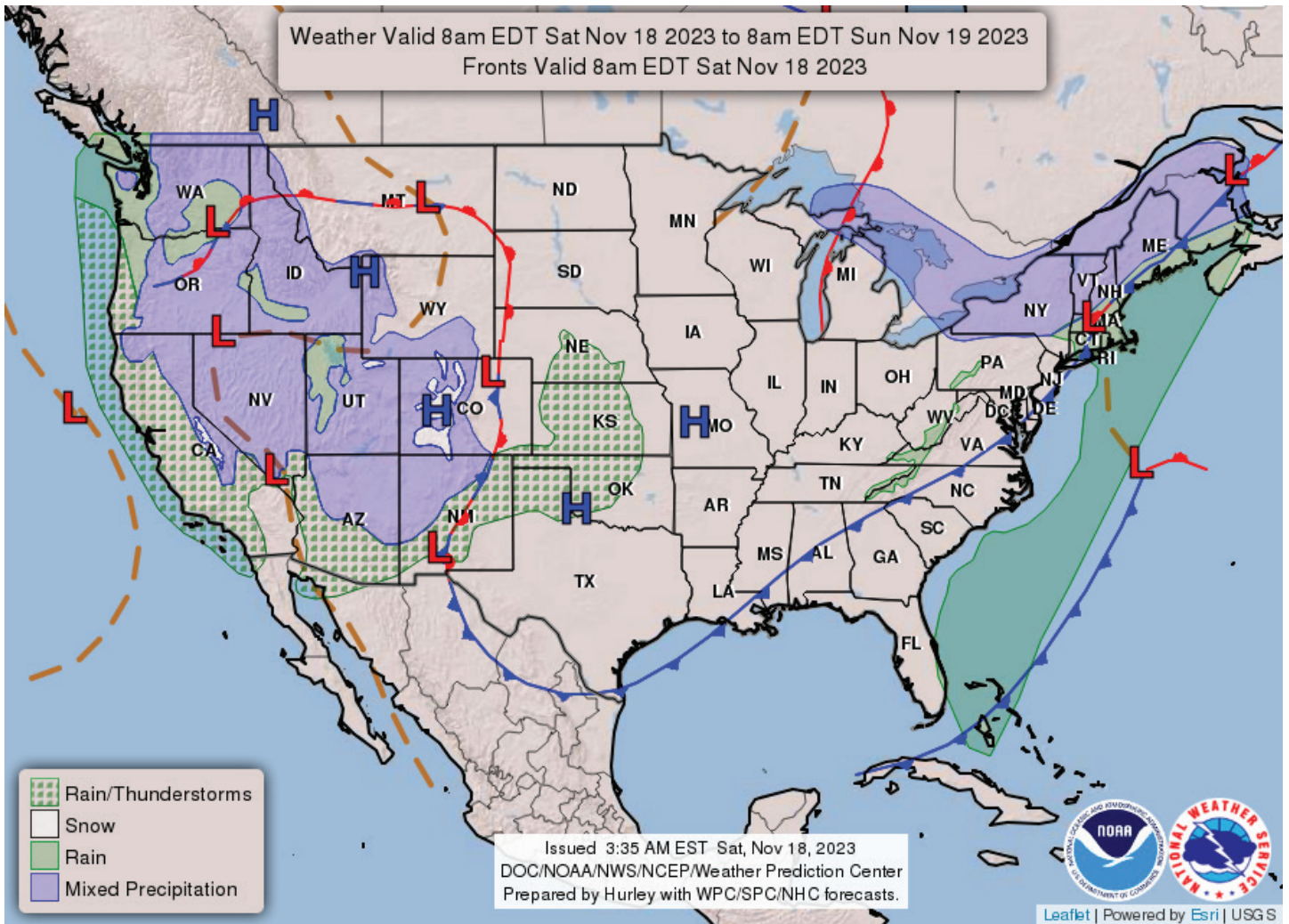
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.17

Average Precip to date: 20.96

Precip Year to Date: 23.15

Sunset Tonight: 5:01:20 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:35:06 AM



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 28 of 74

## Today in Weather History

November 18, 1985: Snowfall of 3-8 inches fell over western, central and northern South Dakota, with the most significant amount of 8 inches at Huron in Beadle County and White River in Mellette County. Strong winds exceeding 40 mph over the area produced near-blizzard conditions at times, with considerable blowing and drifting snow. Additional storm total snowfall amounts included; 6.0 inches in Murdo; 5.5 inches at Gettysburg, 5.0 inches near Stephan, in Eureka, and 12SSW of Harrold; and 4.0 inches in McLaughlin.

November 18, 1992: Three to eleven inches of snow fell in the northeast third of South Dakota and into west central Minnesota from the 18th into the 19th. Storm total snowfall amounts included; 11.0 inches in Browns Valley and near Bryant, 9 inches near Sisseton, Summit and Wheaton MN, 8 inches near Victor and Wilmot, 7.9 inches at Artichoke Lake MN, and 7.0 inches in Clear Lake.

1421: The notorious St. Elizabeth's flood occurred during the night of November 18, to November 19 in what is now known as the Netherlands. A strong storm on the North Sea coast caused several dikes to break allowing the lower lands to flood. Some villages around Dordrecht were lost, causing an estimated 6,000 casualties.

1873 - A severe storm raged from Georgia to Nova Scotia causing great losses to fishing fleets along the coast. In Maine, the barometric pressure reached 28.49 inches at Portland. (David Ludlum)

1929: A magnitude 7.2 earthquake off the coast of the Grand Banks, Newfoundland caused a submarine landslide that triggered a tsunami that killed people on the Burin Peninsula of Newfoundland. The under-sea landslide damaged several miles of transatlantic telegraph cables, resulting in much of the \$400,000 in damage. South Carolina and Portugal felt this tsunami.

1955 - An early season cold snap finally came to an end. Helena, MT, experienced 138 consecutive hours of subzero temperatures, including a reading of 29 below zero, which surpassed by seven degrees their previous record for the month of November. Missoula MT broke their November record by 12 degrees with a reading of 23 below zero, and Salt Lake City UT smashed their previous November record of zero with a reading of 14 below. Heavy snow in the Great Basin closed Donner Pass CA, and total crop damage from the cold wave amounted to eleven million dollars. (David Ludlum)

1957 - A tornado, 100 yards in width, travelled a nearly straight as an arrow 27-mile path from near Rosa AL to near Albertville AL, killing three persons. A home in the Susan Moore community in Blount County was picked up and dropped 500 feet away killing one person. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - The first of two successive snowstorms struck the northeastern U.S. The storm produced up to 20 inches of snow in southern New Hampshire. Two days later a second storm produced up to 30 inches of snow in northern Maine. (Storm Data)

1987 - It was a windy day across parts of the nation. Gale force winds whipped the Great Lakes Region. Winds gusting to 80 mph in western New York State damaged buildings and flipped over flatbed trailers at Churchville. In Montana, high winds in the Upper Yellowstone Valley gusted to 64 mph at Livingston. Strong Santa Ana winds buffeted the mountains and valleys of southern California. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing along a warm front drenched Little Rock AR with 7.01 inches of rain, smashing their previous record for the date of 1.91 inches. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - A second surge of arctic air brought record cold to parts of the north central U.S. Eleven cities in the Upper Midwest reported record low temperatures for the date, including Rochester MN with a reading of 4 degrees below zero. Strong winds ushering the arctic air into the north central U.S. produced squalls in the Lower Great Lakes Region. Snowfall totals in northern Ohio ranged up to twenty inches in Ashatabula County and Geauga County. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 29 of 74

Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### SLIPPERY ROADS

Driving through a fierce snow-storm, Greg lost control of his car, and it slipped into a deep ditch. A truck stopped, and the driver got out and surveyed the situation. After a few moments, he yelled at Greg and said, "Hey, you, let me tell you how to drive on slippery roads."

"Forget it!" said Greg. "I don't need advice, I need help."

David knew what it was to need help. On one occasion he cried out, "I entrust my spirit into your hand. Rescue me, Lord, for You are a faithful God."

David demonstrated his complete faith in God when he proclaimed these words. And, Jesus, when He was dying on the cross, showed His absolute confidence in God, when He uttered this same phrase. And, Stephen repeated these identical words when he was being stoned to death, confidently expressing his Hope in God as he was passing into eternity.

How blest we are to be able to join David, Jesus, and Stephen in knowing that we can say with no hesitation, "I entrust my spirit into your hand, Lord." It does not matter what we have or what we do, whether we live alone in a cell or have large families, whether we manage great corporations or work alone, unnoticed. We have the same opportunity as they did to entrust ourselves and all that we have or ever will have to Him.

Prayer: How grateful we are, Heavenly Father, to know that we can - if we choose - trust You to care for and be with us in and through all the dangers of life. Thanks! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: I entrust my spirit into your hand. Rescue me, Lord, for You are a faithful God. Psalm 31



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

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 30 of 74

## 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

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 31 of 74

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# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 32 of 74



## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.17.23

6 12 31 33 69 17

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$289,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.15.23

15 16 26 34 51 1

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$2,250,000**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 22 Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.17.23

5 8 27 33 39 17

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 37 Mins 7 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.15.23

8 18 26 31 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$57,000**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 37 Mins 8 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.15.23

14 15 30 58 59 17

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 6 Mins 8 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.15.23

3 4 51 53 60 6

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$280,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 6 Mins 8 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 33 of 74

News from the  Associated Press

## Friday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

SDHSAA State Playoffs=

Class A=

Consolation Semifinal=

Dakota Valley def. Wagner, 25-19, 25-17, 29-27

Platte-Geddes def. Lennox, 25-23, 25-14, 25-23

Semifinal=

Rapid City Christian def. Miller, 25-18, 25-17, 25-14

Sioux Falls Christian def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-19, 25-16, 24-26, 25-11

Class AA=

Consolation Semifinal=

Brandon Valley def. Sioux Falls Lincoln High School, 25-20, 25-18, 25-23

Watertown def. Aberdeen Central, 25-21, 25-19, 25-23

Semifinal=

Harrisburg def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 25-21, 25-13, 19-25, 25-21

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Sioux Falls Washington, 25-18, 21-25, 25-22, 21-25, 15-12

Class B=

Consolation Semifinal=

Colman-Egan def. Faulkton, 12-25, 18-25, 25-10, 25-23, 19-17

Wolsey-Wessington def. Gayville-Volin High School, 27-29, 25-12, 25-20, 25-21

CSemifinal=

Chester def. Castlewood, 25-13, 25-20, 25-21

Warner def. Burke, 25-16, 25-22, 25-11

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

## Stewart has 16 in South Dakota's 85-81 victory against VMI

By The Associated Press undefined

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP) — Kaleb Stewart scored 16 points as South Dakota beat VMI 85-81 on Friday in the first round of the Arizona Tip-Off.

Stewart shot 7 for 15, including 2 for 5 from beyond the arc for the Coyotes (3-1). Lahat Thioune scored 13 points and added 13 rebounds. Mayuom Buom shot 5 of 5 from the field and 1 for 3 from the line to finish with 11 points.

The Keydets (1-3) were led by Brennan Watkins, who recorded 27 points. VMI also got 16 points, eight rebounds and two blocks from Koree Cotton. In addition, Taeshaud Jackson had 13 points and 10 rebounds.

## South Dakota tribe to declare state of emergency due to rampant crime on reservation

By TRISHA AHMED Associated Press/Report for America

The leader of a South Dakota tribe is expected to declare an emergency on the state's largest Native American reservation because of rampant crime that he said hasn't been curbed due to the U.S. government's inadequate funding for law enforcement.

The state of emergency declaration planned for Saturday on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation comes

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 34 of 74

nearly six months after a federal judge ruled the U.S. government has a treaty obligation to support law enforcement on the reservation, but declined to determine whether the Oglala Sioux Tribe is entitled to the full funding amount requested.

Oglala Sioux President Frank Star Comes Out said in an interview Friday that conditions on the reservation have worsened since the ruling, prompting him to sign the emergency proclamation.

The U.S. government and its agencies — namely the Interior Department and the Bureau of Indian Affairs — are primarily responsible for the breakdown of law and order on the reservation and negotiations between the government and the tribe are not progressing, Star Comes Out said.

"I feel they're stalling," he said.

A draft of the proclamation obtained by The Associated Press said the U.S. government has failed "to fulfill the United States' treaty, statutory and trust responsibilities to provide adequate law enforcement on the Reservation."

Gun violence, drug offenses and rapes have become increasingly common on the Pine Ridge reservation. Only 33 officers and eight criminal investigators are responsible for more than 100,000 emergency calls each year across the 5,400-square-mile (14,000-square-kilometer) reservation, tribal officials have said.

The reservation is roughly the size of Connecticut, while the population size is a subject of dispute.

Oglala Sioux officials contend the tribe is entitled to federal funding for 120 fully equipped officers for the reservation, something the federal government has disputed.

Ben Fenner, an attorney for the tribe, said the current staffing equates to four or five officers per shift at any given time.

U.S. District Judge Roberto Lange told the federal government in May to reevaluate its census-based population estimates for the reservation of 19,800 to 32,000, which are lower than the tribe's figure of 40,000. The judge said the federal estimates likely represent an undercount.

Star Comes Out said police response times on the reservation take hours, if they respond at all.

"With five police officers, it's just impossible," he said. "Our officers are overworked, underpaid. They're outmanned. And it's dangerous for them to respond to calls by themselves."

When asked for a response to the tribe's expected declaration, the Bureau of Indian Affairs said in an email that it does not comment on ongoing litigation.

Giovanni Rocco, a spokesperson for the Interior Department, noted in an email to the AP that the department's Law Enforcement Task Force has recommended the federal government increase law enforcement staffing levels on reservations.

Robert Miller, a law professor at Arizona State University with expertise in federal Native American law, said the tribe's proclamation does not have any legal impact. However, it raises attention to the issue and puts pressure on the U.S. government.

"The tribe is litigating a serious life and death matter and alleging that the United States has violated both its trust responsibility and treaty response to help protect the Oglala Sioux people," said Miller, an enrolled citizen of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe in Oklahoma.

"Can the tribe force the United States to pay more money to fund needed tribal services? Every tribal nation faces issues like this," he said.

Miller said the case is far from over.

Tribal leaders depicted the ruling as a victory in May, saying the important point is the court confirmed the federal government has a duty to fund policing on the reservation and ordered U.S. officials to meet with Oglala Sioux leaders "to work together promptly to figure out how to more fairly fund tribal law enforcement."

The case's outcome could affect other reservations, including some where Native women are killed at a rate more than 10 times the national average. The Northern Cheyenne Tribe in Montana filed a similar lawsuit.

Lange, the judge in the Oglala Sioux case, has noted the Pine Ridge reservation is among the most impoverished places in the country.

"In recent years, communities on the Reservation have struggled with dangerous and highly addictive

drugs and experienced unprecedented levels of violence and threats to public safety," he wrote. "In the Tribe's view, a lack of competent and effective law enforcement on the Reservation is a big reason for the crisis."

While neither side disputes crime is very high on the reservation and its police are underfunded, the judge wrote, the federal government insists "the funding is fair given budget constraints and Congress's decision to underfund law enforcement services in Indian country generally."

## **Shifa Hospital patients, staff and displaced leave the compound as Israel strikes targets in south**

By NAJIB JOBAIN, SAMY MAGDY and DAVID RISING Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP) — Patients, staff and displaced people left Gaza's largest hospital Saturday, health officials said, leaving behind only a skeleton crew to care for those too sick to move and Israeli forces who had taken over the facility earlier in the week.

The exodus from Shifa Hospital in Gaza City came the same day internet and phone service was restored to the Gaza Strip, ending a telecommunications blackout that forced the United Nations to shut down critical humanitarian aid deliveries because it was unable to coordinate its convoys.

In the south, an Israeli airstrike hit a residential building on the outskirts of the town of Khan Younis, killing at least 26 Palestinians, according to a doctor at the hospital where the bodies were taken.

Israel's military has been searching Shifa Hospital for traces of a Hamas command center that it alleges was located under the building — a claim Hamas and the hospital staff deny - and urging the several thousand people still there to leave.

On Saturday, the military said it had been asked by the hospital's director to help those who would like to leave do so by a secure route.

The military said it did not order any evacuation, and that medical personnel are being allowed to remain in the hospital to support patients who cannot be moved.

But Medhat Abbas, a spokesman for the Health Ministry in Hamas-controlled Gaza, said the military had ordered the facility cleared, giving the hospital an hour to get people out.

Later, Dr. Ahmed Mokhallalati, a Shifa physician, said on social media that there were some 120 patients remaining who were unable to leave, including some in intensive care and premature babies, and that he and five other doctors were staying behind to care for them.

Israel has signaled plans to expand its offensive south while continuing operations in the north. In Khan Younis, the attack early Saturday hit Hamad City, a middle-class housing development built in recent years with funding from Qatar. In addition to the 26 people killed, another 20 were wounded, said Dr. Nehad Taeima at Nasser Hospital.

Israel rarely comments on individual strikes, saying only that it is targeting Hamas and trying to avoid harm to civilians. In many of the Israeli strikes, women and children have been among the dead.

The war, now in its seventh week, was triggered by Hamas' Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel, in which militants killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted some 240 men, women and children.

More than 11,400 Palestinians have been killed in the war, two-thirds of them women and minors, according to Palestinian health authorities. Another 2,700 have been reported missing, believed buried under rubble. The count does not differentiate between civilians and combatants, and Israel says it has killed thousands of militants.

The U.N. has warned that Gaza's 2.3 million people are running critically short of food and water, but it was not immediately clear when the agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA, would be able to resume the delivery of aid that was put on hold Friday.

The Palestinian telecommunications provider said it was able to restart its generators after UNRWA donated fuel. The end of the communications blackout meant a return to news and messages from journalists and activists in the besieged enclave on social media platforms as service began to return late Friday night.

AID DRIES UP

# Groton Daily Independent

**Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 36 of 74**

Gaza's main power plant shut down early in the war and Israel has cut off the electricity supply. That makes fuel necessary to power the generators needed to run not only the telecommunications network, but water treatment plants, sanitation facilities hospitals and other critical infrastructure.

Israel has barred entry of fuel since the start of the war, saying it would be diverted by Hamas for military means. It has also blocked food, water and other supplies except for a trickle of aid from Egypt that aid workers say falls far short of what's needed.

Going forward, Israel said it would allow in 10,000 liters (2,641 gallons) of fuel daily for communications service to continue, according to the U.S. State Department. Additionally, Israel agreed Friday after an American request to let a "very minimal" amount of fuel into Gaza each day for humanitarian purposes, Israeli National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi said. COGAT, the Israeli military body responsible for Palestinian affairs, said it would amount to 60,000 liters (15,850 gallons) a day for the U.N.

Still, that is only 37% of the fuel needed by UNRWA to support its humanitarian operations, including food distribution and the operation of generators at hospitals and water and sanitation facilities, the U.N. said.

Gaza has received only 10% of its required food supplies each day in shipments from Egypt, according to the U.N., and the water system shutdown has left most of the population drinking contaminated water, causing an outbreak of disease.

Dehydration and malnutrition are growing, with nearly all residents in need of food, according to the U.N.'s World Food Program.

## MARCH FOR HOSTAGES

Israeli officials previously vowed fuel would not be let in until Gaza militants release the hostages. The government has been under heavy public pressure to show it is doing all it can to bring back people abducted in Hamas' attack.

Thousands of marchers — including families of over 50 hostages — embarked Friday on the fourth leg of a five-day walk from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, chanting, "Bring them home!" They were marching to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office to call on his war Cabinet to do more to rescue their loved ones. They have urged the Cabinet to consider a cease-fire or prisoner swap in return for the hostages.

Hamas offered to exchange all hostages for some 6,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails, which the Cabinet rejected.

## CONTINUED STRIKES

So far, Israel's ground assault has focused on northern Gaza as it vows to remove Hamas from power and crush its military capabilities. If the assault moves into the south, it is not clear where Palestinians can go. Egypt has refused to allow a mass transfer onto its soil.

Most of the territory's population is now sheltering in the south, including hundreds of thousands of people who heeded Israel's calls to evacuate Gaza City and the north to get out of the way of its ground offensive.

In addition to the attacks Friday and Saturday in the Khan Younis area, another 41 people were killed Friday in a strike that hit the Nuseirat Refugee Camp, which turned a building to rubble, according to staff from a nearby hospital.

Elsewhere Saturday, the Israeli military said its aircraft struck what it described as a hideout for militants in the urban refugee camp of Balata in the occupied West Bank. The Palestinian Red Crescent ambulance service said five Palestinians were killed in the strike.

The military alleged that those targeted had planned to carry out imminent attacks on Israeli civilians and military targets.

The deaths raised to 210 the number of Palestinians killed in West Bank violence since the Gaza war erupted on Oct. 7, making it the deadliest period in the territory since the second Palestinian uprising in the early 2000s.

## Jordan's foreign minister offers blistering criticism of Israel as its war on Hamas rages on

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

Jordan's foreign minister offered blistering criticism Saturday of Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip, describing it as "blatant aggression" against Palestinian civilians that threatens to engulf the wider Middle East.

Ayman Safadi's harsh assessment, alleging Israel was committing "war crimes" by besieging the Gaza Strip and cutting off food, medicine and fuel shipments, shows how strained relations have become between Israel and Jordan — which reached a peace deal in 1994.

"All of us have to speak loud and clear about the catastrophe that the Israeli war is bringing, not just on Gaza, but on the region in general," Safadi told the International Institute for Strategic Studies' Manama Dialogue summit in Bahrain. "This is not a time for mincing words. This is a time to state facts as they are."

He added: "This is not self-defense. This is a blatant aggression, the victims of which are innocent Palestinians."

Israel did not immediately respond to Safadi's comments, which included a call for an immediate cease-fire and end to the fighting. However, on hand was Brett McGurk, the White House's National Security Council coordinator for the Middle East, who said that "a release of large number of hostages would result in a significant pause in fighting ... and a massive surge of humanitarian relief."

"There's no returning to Oct. 6. That's true for Israel. It's true for Palestinians," McGurk said. "No country can live with the threats of terror like what we saw from Hamas unleashed, on Oct. 7 on their border. And at the same time, Palestinians deserve need and require safety and self-determination."

The European Union's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, added: "It's quite understandable that without the freedom of the hostages, nothing can be solved."

Safadi later offered a sharp retort to that: "Israel is taking 2.3 million Palestinians hostage."

The war began with Hamas' unprecedented Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel. Hamas militants killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted some 240 men, women and children, taking them back into the Gaza Strip.

Israel responded with a pounding campaign of airstrikes, then a ground offensive that surrounded Gaza City to the Gaza Strip's north. More than 11,400 Palestinians have been killed in the war, two-thirds of them women and minors, according to Palestinian health authorities. Another 2,700 have been reported missing, believed buried under rubble. The count does not differentiate between civilians and militants, and Israel says it has killed thousands of militants.

The annual Manama Dialogue in Bahrain typically focuses on Gulf Arab nations' fears about Iran in the region, something Borrell even joked about during his remarks. This year, however, the Israel-Hamas war has taken center stage, in part as Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates reached diplomatic recognition deals with Israel in 2020.

Friday night, Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa opened the summit with a call for a swap between Hamas and Israel for the hostages and a halt in the bloodshed.

"You want to call it a cease-fire. You want to call it a pause. You can call it whatever you want," the prince said. "The intention is a break so people can take stock. People can bury their dead. People can finally start to grieve. And maybe people can start to ask themselves about the intelligence failure that led to this crisis in the first place."

Speaking before the summit Saturday, Safadi described the Israeli government now led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the hardest-right coalition ever to govern the country, as apparently aiming to dislodge Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. He said that "will be a direct threat to our national security" in Jordan and Egypt.

"They all for years have been saying the only way to move forward is to kick the Palestinians out of their ancestral land and wipe the Palestinians out of the face of the Earth," Safadi said.

After the war, Safadi said Arab countries also would not "come and clean the mess after Israel."

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 38 of 74

"Let me be very clear. I know speaking on behalf of Jordan but having discussed this issue with many, with almost all our brethren, there'll be no Arab troops going to Gaza. None. We're not going to be seen as the enemy," he said. "How could anybody talk about the future of Gaza when we do not know what kind of Gaza will be left once this aggression ends?"

Safadi insisted the only way forward would be a two-state solution for the Israelis and Palestinians, even though the peace process has been moribund for years.

McGurk also offered what he described as "five no's" for the war: "No forced displacement, no reoccupation, no reduction in territory, no threats to Israel, no besiegement."

Meanwhile, efforts for Israel to reach new diplomatic recognition deals with Arab nations — particularly Saudi Arabia — appear frozen.

"We've been saying that the fallacy of assuming that you can parachute over the Palestinian issue to create regional peace is wrong," he said. "It will only bring disaster. And here we are. Show me who's talking about any regional project at this war, at this point, who's talking about integration? It's all about war."

McGurk, however, insisted that the Palestinians had a crucial place in any possible diplomatic deal between Israel and Saudi Arabia.

"In this case, what was true before Oct. 7 is even truer now," he said. "That central issue must be addressed. And as Hamas is degraded, we are determined to help address it."

## **ChatGPT-maker OpenAI fires CEO Sam Altman, the face of the AI boom, for lack of candor with company**

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

ChatGPT-maker Open AI said Friday it has pushed out its co-founder and CEO Sam Altman after a review found he was "not consistently candid in his communications" with the board of directors.

"The board no longer has confidence in his ability to continue leading OpenAI," the artificial intelligence company said in a statement.

In the year since Altman catapulted ChatGPT to global fame, he has become Silicon Valley's sought-after voice on the promise and potential dangers of artificial intelligence and his sudden and mostly unexplained exit brought uncertainty to the industry's future.

Mira Murati, OpenAI's chief technology officer, will take over as interim CEO effective immediately, the company said, while it searches for a permanent replacement.

The announcement also said another OpenAI co-founder and top executive, Greg Brockman, the board's chairman, would step down from that role but remain at the company, where he serves as president. But later on X, formerly Twitter, Brockman posted a message he sent to OpenAI employees in which he wrote, "based on today's news, i quit."

In another X post on Friday night, Brockman said Altman was asked to join a video meeting at noon Friday with the company's board members, minus Brockman, during which OpenAI co-founder and Chief Scientist Ilya Sutskever informed Altman he was being fired.

"Sam and I are shocked and saddened by what the board did today," Brockman wrote, adding that he was informed of his removal from the board in a separate call with Sutskever a short time later.

OpenAI declined to answer questions on what Altman's alleged lack of candor was about. The statement said his behavior was hindering the board's ability to exercise its responsibilities.

Altman posted Friday on X: "i loved my time at openai. it was transformative for me personally, and hopefully the world a little bit. most of all i loved working with such talented people. will have more to say about what's next later."

The Associated Press and OpenAI have a licensing and technology agreement allowing OpenAI access to part of the AP's text archives.

Altman helped start OpenAI as a nonprofit research laboratory in 2015. But it was ChatGPT's explosion into public consciousness that thrust Altman into the spotlight as a face of generative AI — technology that can produce novel imagery, passages of text and other media. On a world tour this year, he was mobbed

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 39 of 74

by a crowd of adoring fans at an event in London.

He's sat with multiple heads of state to discuss AI's potential and perils. Just Thursday, he took part in a CEO summit at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation conference in San Francisco, where OpenAI is based.

He predicted AI will prove to be "the greatest leap forward of any of the big technological revolutions we've had so far." He also acknowledged the need for guardrails, calling attention to the existential dangers future AI could pose.

Some computer scientists have criticized that focus on far-off risks as distracting from the real-world limitations and harms of current AI products. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission has launched an investigation into whether OpenAI violated consumer protection laws by scraping public data and publishing false information through its chatbot.

The company said its board consists of OpenAI's chief scientist, Ilya Sutskever, and three non-employees: Quora CEO Adam D'Angelo, tech entrepreneur Tasha McCauley, and Helen Toner of the Georgetown Center for Security and Emerging Technology.

OpenAI's key business partner, Microsoft, which has invested billions of dollars into the startup and helped provide the computing power to run its AI systems, said that the transition won't affect its relationship.

"We have a long-term partnership with OpenAI and Microsoft remains committed to Mira and their team as we bring this next era of AI to our customers," said an emailed Microsoft statement.

While not trained as an AI engineer, Altman, now 38, has been seen as a Silicon Valley wunderkind since his early 20s. He was recruited in 2014 to take lead of the startup incubator YCombinator.

"Sam is one of the smartest people I know, and understands startups better than perhaps anyone I know, including myself," read YCombinator co-founder Paul Graham's 2014 announcement that Altman would become its president. Graham said at the time that Altman was "one of those rare people who manage to be both fearfully effective and yet fundamentally benevolent."

OpenAI started out as a nonprofit when it launched with financial backing from Tesla CEO Elon Musk and others. Its stated aims were to "advance digital intelligence in the way that is most likely to benefit humanity as a whole, unconstrained by a need to generate financial return."

That changed in 2018 when it incorporated a for-profit business Open AI LP, and shifted nearly all its staff into the business, not long after releasing its first generation of the GPT large language model for mimicking human writing. Around the same time, Musk, who had co-chaired its board with Altman, resigned from the board in a move that OpenAI said would eliminate a "potential future conflict for Elon" due to Tesla's work on building self-driving systems.

While OpenAI's board has preserved its nonprofit governance structure, the startup it oversees has increasingly sought to capitalize on its technology by tailoring its popular chatbot to business customers.

At its first developer conference last week, Altman was the main speaker showcasing a vision for a future of AI agents that could help people with a variety of tasks. Days later, he announced the company would have to pause new subscriptions to its premium version of ChatGPT because it had exceeded capacity.

Altman's exit "is indeed shocking as he has been the face of" generative AI technology, said Gartner analyst Arun Chandrasekaran.

He said OpenAI still has a "deep bench of technical leaders" but its next executives will have to steer it through the challenges of scaling the business and meeting the expectations of regulators and society.

Forrester analyst Rowan Curran speculated that Altman's departure, "while sudden," did not likely reflect deeper business problems.

"This seems to be a case of an executive transition that was about issues with the individual in question, and not with the underlying technology or business," Curran said.

Altman has a number of possible next steps. Even while running OpenAI, he placed large bets on several other ambitious projects.

Among them are Helion Energy, for developing fusion reactors that could produce prodigious amounts of energy from the hydrogen in seawater, and Retro Biosciences, which aims to add 10 years to the human lifespan using biotechnology. Altman also co-founded Worldcoin, a biometric and cryptocurrency project

that's been scanning people's eyeballs with the goal of creating a vast digital identity and financial network.

## Sean 'Diddy' Combs and singer Cassie settle lawsuit alleging abuse 1 day after it was filed

By LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A lawsuit by singer Cassie containing allegations of beatings and abuse by music producer Sean "Diddy" Combs has been settled, the artists announced Friday, one day after the lawsuit was filed.

The settlement was announced in a statement sent by attorney Douglas Wigdor, who represents Cassie, whose full name is Casandra Ventura.

The statement said they had reached a deal "to their mutual satisfaction" Friday evening, but no terms of the agreement were disclosed and no further statements would be issued beyond those made by Ventura, Combs and Wigdor in the email distributed by the lawyer.

In her statement, Ventura said: "I have decided to resolve this matter amicably on terms that I have some level of control. I want to thank my family, fans and lawyers for their unwavering support."

Combs said: "We have decided to resolve this matter amicably. I wish Cassie and her family all the best. Love."

Ben Brafman, an attorney for Combs, did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment. On Thursday, he said in a statement that Combs "vehemently denies" the allegations.

The lawsuit alleged Combs brought the singer into his "ostentatious, fast-paced, and drug-fueled lifestyle" soon after she met him and signed to his label in 2005, when she was 19 and he was 37.

Ventura, now 37, said Combs, now 54, began a pattern of abuse as soon as their on-and-off relationship began in 2007.

The lawsuit alleged that, "prone to uncontrollable rage," Combs subjected Ventura to "savage" beatings in which he punched, kicked and stomped her. It alleges he plied her with drugs and forced her to have sex with other men while he masturbated and filmed them.

According to the lawsuit, as Ventura was trying to end the relationship in 2018, Combs forced her into her Los Angeles home and raped her.

The Associated Press does not typically name people who say they have been sexually abused unless they come forward publicly as Ventura has.

Combs is among the most influential hip-hop producers and executives of the past three decades. The founder of Bad Boy Records and a three-time Grammy winner, he has worked with a slew of top-tier artists including Notorious B.I.G., Mary J. Blige, Usher, Lil Kim, Faith Evans and 112.

This year, he released his fifth studio album, "The Love Album: Off the Grid," which earned two Grammy nominations this month. It was his first studio album in 17 years.

"The bad boy of entertainment is getting the key to the city from the bad boy of politics!" Mayor Eric Adams said in September as he presented a giant key to Combs in Times Square. Combs was born in New York City and raised in nearby Mount Vernon.

Ventura gained fame with the Ryan Leslie-produced hit single "Me & U," which rose to No. 1 on the Billboard Hot R&B/Hip-Hop songs chart in 2006. It was her only studio album. As an actor, she was in several projects including Fox's "Empire," "Step Up 2: The Streets" and "Spenser Confidential."

Brafman's statement on Thursday said Ventura had for the past six months persistently demanded \$30 million while threatening to write a damaging book about her relationship with Combs. The lawyer said the demands were rejected as "blatant blackmail."

Ventura withdrew the initial threat before filing a lawsuit "riddled with baseless and outrageous lies, aiming to tarnish Mr. Combs's reputation and seeking a payday," Brafman said.

Wigdor responded Thursday in a statement saying Combs had offered her "eight figures to silence her" and prevent the lawsuit from being filed.

"She rejected his efforts and decided to give a voice to all woman who suffer in silence," Wigdor said.



Wigdor praised his client in a statement included in his email announcing the settlement on Friday. "I am very proud of Ms. Ventura for having the strength to go public with her lawsuit. She ought to be commended for doing so," he said.

## The world's attention is on Gaza, and Ukrainians worry war fatigue will hurt their cause

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — When Tymofii Postoiuk and his friends set up an online fundraising effort for Ukraine, donations poured in from around the globe, helping to purchase essential equipment for Ukrainian armed forces.

As the fighting with Russia wore on and war fatigue set in, the donations slowed down, but money continued to come in steadily. Then the Israel-Hamas war broke out on Oct. 7.

With the start of another major conflict, social media networks including X, formerly known as Twitter, were flooded with news from the Middle East. "Our fundraising posts and updates simply get lost in between those tweets," Postoiuk said.

The result has been a broad shift in the world's attention away from Ukraine to the fighting in Gaza — a trend that worries many Ukrainians. They fear that a combination of global fatigue, competing political agendas and limited resources will result in less aid for their military, hurting the country's ability to sustain its confrontation with Russia.

"The longer we talk about our war, the less interest it holds for people," said 21-year-old Ivan Mahuriak, who lives in Lviv in western Ukraine. Like many other Ukrainians, he feels as if the world stopped paying attention to the war in Ukraine even before the Hamas attack on Israel.

The fatigue, he said, arises from the fact that dynamics on the ground are significantly less than in 2022, when Ukrainian armed forces managed to completely or partially push Russians out of several regions.

"In some places, the front line is still. But that doesn't mean that nothing is happening," he said. His brother, two cousins, several colleagues and friends are in the Ukrainian military and continue to fight Russian troops.

This year's much-touted counteroffensive, which took off in June, has progressed at a much slower pace, with Ukrainian troops struggling to dislodge Russians who are entrenched in captured territory. Additional U.S. funding for Ukraine is jeopardized by political fights in Washington, where the new war consumes attention at the highest levels.

Divisions over Ukraine have also emerged in the European Union, which says it cannot provide all the munitions it promised. EU summits and other high-level global meetings now tend to focus on the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.

United States President Joe Biden has made a point of linking U.S. support for Israel and Ukraine, saying both are vital for national security. Biden's secretary of transportation, Pete Buttigieg, paid an official visit to Ukraine on Nov. 8 to show that the U.S. commitment has not wavered.

"The fact that I am here is one way to demonstrate that, in addition to the great concern and attention that we have toward what is going on in the Middle East, we have as much attention, focus and commitment as we have ever had right here to Ukraine," he said, standing outside of St. Michael's Church in Kyiv.

But many Ukrainians are worried.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy acknowledged the fatigue earlier in November. "Yes. A lot of people, of course, in the world are tired," he said in an interview on NBC's "Meet the Press."

The war in the Middle East also presents an opportunity to Russian President Vladimir Putin by taking the spotlight off Ukraine.

"Of course, Russia is very happy with this war," Zelenskyy added.

Millions of Ukrainians are burdened by the realization that the war Russia initiated in their country won't end any time soon.

"No matter how frightening it may sound, I am preparing myself for the fact that this war will last my entire life," said Zoya Krasovska, a 34-year-old resident of Lviv, who says her greatest fear is that allies will divert resources to other conflicts.

"It's akin to receiving a diagnosis of an incurable illness, where you don't stop living because of it, but you live with the awareness that it is with you forever," Krasovska said.

Unlike 2022, when morale was high despite power outages, disrupted water service and blackouts, this year Ukrainians face the frustration of the slow counteroffensive and shortages of sophisticated weapons. Domestic politics have become a greater focus.

Postoiuk, a Netherlands-based development manager for the Way to Ukraine fund, said the team expected a decline in donations, but not to this extent. Since the Israel-Hamas war broke out, it takes at least twice as long to raise enough money to buy a car for the army — usually \$8,000 to \$14,000.

Through their work, they have collected nearly \$147,000 — money that supported 13 brigades and provided vehicles that included 15 pickups, three SUVs, an ambulance and a drone.

For the first time in the history of the fund, donations from within Ukraine have exceeded those from abroad, he said.

Ukraine's "war for independence is simply not on the agenda anymore, at least for now," he said.

Ivan Bezdudnyi, a 26-year-old from Kyiv, is consumed by the war in his country. For the past two years, he has been involved in documenting Russian war crimes. Little has changed for him personally since the outbreak of the war in the Middle East.

He does not worry that diminishing interest will affect Ukraine's war for long.

"When the wave of interest in Israel and Hamas subsides, and I tend to think it won't last long ... the level of attention we had will remain," he said. "Maybe not as high as in February or March of last year, but probably higher than it is now."

## Officials stock up on overdose antidote naloxone after fentanyl-laced letters disrupt vote counting

By GENE JOHNSON and ED KOMENDA Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — The suspicious letters sent to vote centers and government buildings in six states this month were undeniably scary, some containing traces of fentanyl or white powder, accompanied by not-so-veiled threats and dubious political symbols.

Harkening back to the anthrax attacks that killed five people in 2001, the mailings are prompting election officials already frustrated with ongoing harassment and threats to reach out to local police, fire and health departments for help stocking up on the overdose reversal medication naloxone.

Even if there's little risk from incidental contact with the synthetic opioid, having the antidote on hand isn't a bad idea amid an addiction epidemic that is killing more than 100,000 people in the U.S. every year — and it can provide some assurance for stressed ballot workers, election managers say.

"My team is usually in the direct fire just because we're opening up thousands or millions of ballots depending on the election," said Eldon Miller, who leads the ballot-opening staff at King County Elections in Seattle, which stocked up on naloxone after receiving a fentanyl-laced letter in August. "I always say to my team, your safety is my utmost importance."

The letters were sent this month to vote centers or government buildings in six states: Georgia, Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington and Kansas. Some were intercepted before they arrived, but others were delivered, prompting evacuations and briefly delaying vote counts in local elections. The FBI and U.S. Postal Inspection Service are investigating.

Some of the letters featured an antifascist symbol, a progress pride flag and a pentagram. While the symbols have sometimes been associated with leftist politics, they also have been used by conservative figures to label and stereotype the left. The sender's political leanings were unclear.

Fentanyl, an opioid that can be 50 times as powerful as the same amount of heroin, is driving an overdose crisis as it is pressed into pills or mixed into other drugs. Briefly touching it cannot cause an overdose, and

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 43 of 74

researchers have found the risk of fatal overdose from accidental exposure is low, unlike with powdered anthrax that can float in the air and cause deadly infections when inhaled.

Election workers across the country have been besieged by threats, harassment and intimidation since former President Donald Trump and his supporters began spreading false election claims after he lost the 2020 election.

"I hope we encourage people to not hurt election officials," said Ann Dover, the elections director in suburban Atlanta's Cherokee County, which did not receive a suspicious letter. "A lot of people are leaving the field. It's not just threats of physical harm. There's a lot of emotional and psychological abuse."

Dover reached out this month to fire officials who provided Narcan, the nasal spray version of naloxone. Naloxone can be obtained over the counter, given to people of all ages and does not harm people who do not have opioids in their system.

Her office also is taking new precautions with mail: leaving it in a particular spot and having one person designated to open it wearing gloves and a mask.

Lane County, Oregon, which received a suspicious letter, will provide naloxone kits and train elections staff on administering it. So will Lincoln County, Nevada, which did not get one.

The office of Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said this week it will provide naloxone to any of the state's 159 counties after a letter intercepted on its way to elections officials in Atlanta's Fulton County tested positive for opioids.

Condemning the letters, Raffensperger noted one of his sons died of a fentanyl overdose about five years ago: "We know how deadly this stuff is."

Some of the letters, including ones sent to King and Pierce counties in Washington state, bore striking similarities to the one King County received while counting votes in this year's August primary. The incident prompted King County Elections to procure naloxone, though the antidote was not needed then nor when its Renton office received a second fentanyl-laced letter this month.

"We felt like it was just a good idea to have on hand for all kinds of scenarios these days," King County Elections spokeswoman Halei Watkins said. "We have it in a few spots in the building, and include it with the first aid and emergency kits that go to our off-site vote centers."

Maya Doe-Simkins, co-director of Remedy Alliance/For The People, which launched last year to provide low-cost or free naloxone to community-based, harm-reduction programs, said governments should be more focused on providing the antidote to those who work with people likely to overdose.

There is no shortage of naloxone, which is available online and at some pharmacies, but its distribution leaves something to be desired, Doe-Simkins said.

"It is an absolute gross misuse of resources to spend money on ensuring that election officials have naloxone," Doe-Simkins said, especially because "the actual appropriate and evidence-based intervention for naloxone distribution is underfunded and under-resourced."

Chris Anderson, the elections supervisor in Seminole County, Florida, said his office hasn't received any envelopes containing fentanyl in the mail, but obtained several doses of Narcan this month from the fire department, which said it had plenty of supply.

"We can immediately save a life with those," Anderson said. "I appreciate the advice given to us from medical professionals, and we certainly will do everything we can not to have to use Narcan, but in that one instance where it's needed, I'd rather have and not need than need and not have."

In Tacoma, Washington, Pierce County Auditor Linda Farmer said her office obtained naloxone after neighboring King County's experience in August. The office received a threatening letter this month containing baking soda and took the occasion to re-emphasize naloxone is available.

"We reminded staff last week of where to find it," Farmer said.

## How the US strikes a delicate balance in responding to attacks on its forces by Iran-backed militias

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Iranian-backed militants in Iraq and Syria have long battled with U.S. and coalition forces, launching sporadic attacks against bases in the region where troops are deployed to fight Islamic State group insurgents.

But since Oct. 17, as civilian deaths in Israel's war against Hamas began to skyrocket, there has been a dramatic spike in attacks by Iran's proxies, operating under the umbrella name of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq.

While most of the more than five dozen attacks have been largely ineffective, at least 60 U.S. personnel have reported minor injuries. Most often those have been traumatic brain injuries from the explosions, and all troops have returned to duty, according to the Pentagon.

In response to the attacks, the U.S. has walked a delicate line. The U.S. military has struck back just three times as the Biden administration balances efforts to deter the militants without triggering a broader Middle East conflict.

A look at the attacks and the U.S. response:

**ATTACKS — WHEN, WHERE, WHY**

According to the Pentagon, Iranian-backed militants have launched 61 attacks on bases and facilities housing U.S. personnel in Iraq and Syria since Oct. 17. Of those, 29 have been in Iraq and 32 in Syria.

The U.S. has about 2,000 U.S. forces in Iraq, under an agreement with the Baghdad government, and about 900 in Syria, mainly to counter IS but also using the al-Tanf garrison farther south to keep tabs on Iranian proxies moving weapons across the border.

The latest jump in attacks began 10 days after Hamas' Oct. 7 incursion into Israel, where at least 1,200 people were killed. Israel's blistering military response has killed thousands of civilians trapped in Gaza and fueled threats of retaliation by a range of Iran-backed groups, including Hezbollah in Lebanon, Yemen-based Houthis, and militants in Iraq and Syria. Those threats escalated after an Oct. 17 blast at a Gaza hospital killed hundreds of civilians. Hamas blamed Israel for the explosion, but Israel has denied it, and both Israeli and U.S. officials have blamed it on a missile misfire by Islamic Jihad.

The bulk of the attacks on bases and facilities have been with one-way suicide drones or rockets, and in most cases there were no injuries and only minor damage. A significant number of the injuries, particularly the traumatic brain injuries, were in the initial attacks between Oct. 17 and 21 at al-Asad air base in Iraq and al-Tanf. One U.S. contractor suffered a cardiac arrest and died while seeking shelter from a possible drone attack.

**WHO ARE THESE GROUPS?**

With a power vacuum and years of civil conflict following the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, militias grew and multiplied in Iraq, some supported by Iran. A decade later, as the Islamic State extremist group swept across Iraq, a number of Iran-backed militias came together under the Popular Mobilization Forces umbrella group and fought IS.

The groups included the Asaib Ahl al-Haq, the Badr Brigades and Kataeb Hezbollah, or Hezbollah Brigades — a separate group from the Lebanese Hezbollah. A number of the Iraqi militias also operate in Syria, where Iran supports the government of Bashar Assad against opposition groups in the uprising-turned-civil-war that began in 2011.

After the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war, a group of the Iran-backed factions branded itself under the new Islamic Resistance in Iraq name, and began the latest spate of attacks on bases housing U.S. forces in Iraq and Syria.

The attacks put Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani in a difficult position. While he came to power with the Iranian-backed groups' support, he also wants continued good relations with the U.S. and has backed the ongoing presence of American troops in his country.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in a meeting with al-Sudani this month, warned of consequences

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 45 of 74

if Iranian-backed militias continued to attack U.S. facilities in Iraq and Syria. Al-Sudani then traveled to Tehran and met with Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, a meeting U.S. officials suggested was a positive development.

An official with one of the Iranian-backed militias said al-Sudani put "great pressure" on the militias not to carry out attacks during Blinken's visit. In return, he said, al-Sudani promised to push the Americans not to retaliate aggressively against militias that have carried out the strikes. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment publicly.

## PROPORTIONAL OR NOT ENOUGH?

Since the Oct. 7 Hamas attack, the Biden administration has moved warships, fighter jets, air defense systems and more troops into the Middle East in a campaign to discourage militant groups from widening the conflict.

But the U.S. military response to the attacks on its forces has been minimal. On Oct. 27, U.S. fighter jets struck two weapons and ammunition storage sites in eastern Syria near Boukamal that were used by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Iranian-backed groups. On Nov. 8, fighter jets dropped bombs on an IRGC weapons storage facility near Maysulun in Deir el-Zour. And on Nov. 12, U.S. airstrikes targeted a training facility and a safe house in the Bulbul district of Mayadin. U.S. officials said IRGC-related personnel were there and likely struck, but provided no details.

There are concerns within the administration that more substantial retaliation could escalate the violence and trigger more deadly attacks. The Pentagon says the strikes have degraded the group's military stockpiles and made the sites unusable.

But critics argue that the U.S. response pales in comparison with the 60 attacks and American injuries, and — more importantly — has obviously failed to deter the groups.

## IRAQ GOVERNMENT SENSITIVITIES

Though nearly half of the attacks have been on U.S. bases in Iraq, the U.S. has conducted retaliatory airstrikes only against locations in Syria.

The Pentagon defends the strike decisions by saying the U.S. is hitting Iranian Revolutionary Guard sites, which has a more direct impact on Tehran. Officials say the goal is to pressure Iran to tell the militia groups to stop the attacks. They also say the sites are chosen because they are weapons warehouses and logistical hubs used by the Iran-linked militias, and taking them out erodes the insurgents' attack capabilities.

A key reason the U.S. is concentrating on Syria, however, is that the U.S. doesn't want to risk alienating the Iraqi government by striking within its borders — potentially killing or wounding Iraqis.

In early January 2020, the U.S. launched an airstrike in Baghdad, killing Gen. Qassim Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, deputy commander of Iran-backed militias in Iraq. The strike frayed relations with the Iraqi government and spawned demands for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the country.

The U.S. considers its presence in Iraq as critical to the fight against IS, its ability to support forces in Syria and its ongoing influence in the region. Military leaders have worked to restore good relations with Baghdad, including providing ongoing support for Iraqi forces.

## Trump returns to Iowa for another rally and needles the state's governor for endorsing DeSantis

By THOMAS BEAUMONT and HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

FORT DODGE, Iowa (AP) — Former President Donald Trump will campaign Saturday in west-central Iowa as part of his fall push to sign up supporters and volunteers ahead of the state's leadoff caucuses, now less than two months away.

Trump is expected to headline an organizing rally in Fort Dodge, a GOP-leaning hub, the latest in a series of targeted regional stops aimed at seizing on the large crowds the former president draws to press attendees to commit to voting for him on Jan. 15.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 46 of 74

The midday event set for Fort Dodge High School would be Trump's sixth Iowa visit since late September. While Trump has led Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley comfortably in polls of likely caucus participants, Trump's campaign has been more aggressive in Iowa than any of the other early-voting states in the Republican presidential nominating calendar.

Speaking on a radio show Thursday to promote his appearance, Trump ripped DeSantis as "doing very poorly" even after winning the endorsement of Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds, who broke with the general practice of Iowa governors not to support a candidate before the caucuses.

"I was really good to her and then she said she was going to remain neutral. And I said, 'That's OK,' but I didn't really want her particularly," he told host Simon Conway.

"Ron is doing very poorly in the polls and I guess he put a full-court press on her," Trump said. "And she did that. And that's fine. I think it's fine. I don't think it's made any difference."

Trump has made regular stops in Iowa, appearing at eight events before audiences totaling more than 16,000, according to Trump's Secret Service detail, in the past eight weeks.

It's part of Trump's 2024 strategy to stress organization more than in 2016, when he finished a competitive second place, but did so without building the network of staff and volunteers to deliver what was unexpected support for the real estate mogul and reality television personality.

His lesser-known rivals, especially DeSantis, have been in Iowa more often as they hope to score a better-than-expected finish against the former president, who also leads comfortably in national Republican polls.

As Trump campaigns in Fort Dodge Saturday, DeSantis will be campaigning across southern Iowa, inching closer to reaching his goal of campaigning in each of Iowa's 99 counties. That's a traditional marker some candidates have tried to achieve to show their commitment to Iowa.

A recent memo to donors from DeSantis' campaign suggested that DeSantis' all-in strategy in Iowa, including last week's endorsement of the Florida governor by Reynolds was in keeping with his hope to rob Trump of "a big win in Iowa."

## El Salvador's Miss Universe pageant drawing attention at crucial moment for president

By MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Video montages of sash-clad pageant contestants strolling beaches in El Salvador, snapping selfies in front of fireworks and wandering the streets of downtown San Salvador speckled social media this week as celebrations for the Miss Universe 2023 pageant kicked off in the Central American country.

"As President (Nayib) Bukele said, El Salvador is changing," R'Bonney Gabriel, Miss Universe 2022, said in a speech before this year's contestants. "While we're here, we hope to shine a light on this country for the rest of the world to see."

The competition on Saturday night is the latest spectacle touted by Bukele in his effort to change the reputation of his historically violence-torn nation.

But opponents and analysts say such displays are also being used by the populist leader to distract from human rights abuses in his crackdown on gangs and steps he has taken to curb criticism. Constitutional scholars and critics warn that he is slowly withering the country's delicate democracy.

The Miss Universe pageant comes at a key time for Bukele, just months before a presidential election in February. Bukele is running for reelection despite clear term limits laid out in El Salvador's constitution, a move that has upset watchdogs both in and out of the country.

"You give the public something to showcase to divert attention from the fact that you're doing it while eroding the rule of law and democratic checks and balances in the country," said Tiziano Breda, a Central America expert at Italy's Instituto Affari Internazionali.

Bukele's government did not respond to a written request for comment by the Associated Press.

Since Bukele came to power in 2019, he has made drastic changes to the country of 6.5 million people.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 47 of 74

Most notable has been his war on El Salvador's gangs that have terrorized much of the country for decades.

Following a burst of gang violence last year, Bukele suspended some constitutional rights and has since locked up more than 72,000 people for alleged gang ties without due process. He also has gone after journalists, labor organizers, human rights groups and other critical voices, and mobilized an elaborate communications machine to spread government propaganda.

The sharp decline in violence following the assault on gangs gained Bukele strong support from most Salvadorans and polls suggest he will coast to reelection.

Observers, however, warn that there is a need to be concerned over human rights abuses and Bukele's consolidation of power.

A 2022 report by the U.S. State Department highlighted "significant human rights issues," and earlier this month several private citizens and opposition parties filed petitions with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal seeking to annul Bukele's reelection bid.

Bukele, who once dubbed himself on social media the "world's coolest dictator," has taken the criticism in stride. At times he ignores detractors and in other moments he forcefully accuses foreign governments of hypocrisy, all the while making bold spectacles a sort of trademark of his presidency.

In 2021, he announced in a recorded message played at a bitcoin conference in Miami that the cryptocurrency would become a national currency in El Salvador. Shortly thereafter, El Salvador became the first nation to take that step. Questions were raised at the time, and the plunge in cryptocurrency's value last year only fed the doubts. The government has not been transparent about its holdings, but analysts believe they remain at a sharp loss.

Bukele pivoted to new ventures and kept charging forward.

He hosted international surfing competitions and the 2023 Central American and Caribbean Games, which experts quickly dubbed a textbook case of "sportswashing" — using sports to divert attention from controversy or burnish reputations.

"Successfully hosting an international event can give a regime confidence to kind of act with impunity. Sport is a bit of a shortcut way to win yourself, not even popularity, just an acceptance," Alan McDougall, a sports historian at the University of Guelph in Canada, told AP earlier this year.

Domestically oriented projects like a new mega-prison for gang suspects and the sparkling national library unveiled this week are also presented to the public in carefully choreographed spectacles. The library event included drones that flew into the sky above the capital and arranged themselves in Bukele's image.

The president does appear to be working to blunt criticism from the Biden administration. Last month, El Salvador slapped a hefty fee on African migrants connecting through its airport as the U.S. government pressured governments in the region to do more to control northward migration.

The result has been what Breda, the Central American analyst, described as a "softer public denunciation" by the U.S. and other players in the region.

Now, as Bukele faces criticism for seeking reelection, the Miss Universe competition has quite literally taken the spotlight in the Central American nation.

"We now have become the safest country in Latin America. We would like to thank the Miss Universe Organization for joining us in this historic process," Bukele said in a video announcing the event earlier this year. "El Salvador is changing."

Social media influencers are commenting on fashion choices of contestants, others show competitors stepping onto the red carpet in elegant dresses and heels or doing yoga on the beach in their pageant sashes.

Contestants like Lisbeth Valverde Brenes, representing Costa Rica, sing Bukele's tune to local content creators as she walks around the city center, praising El Salvador's security while adding, "I'll have to come back."

And mixed in with the videos of the pageant on Bukele's social media feeds — his preferred form of communication — are photos of him and supporters celebrating his reelection campaign.

His critics are pushing back.

The rights group Movement for Victims of the State of Emergency announced it will hold a protest on the

same day as Miss Universe events wrap up. "El Salvador isn't a country of marvels, Bukele has converted it into a prison," the group said.

Breda, the analyst, cautions that this all cuts two ways.

"For Salvadorans, this is a way to rebuild their national identity, seeing their country as one that's being referred to as a tourist hotspot. ... I see the good in that," he said.

But, he added, "If that comes at the expense of democracy, the dismantling of checks and balances, I don't know if that's a net positive overall."

## **In India, 40 workers are trapped in a tunnel for a 7th day as rescuers wait for a new drill**

By BISWAJEET BANERJEE Associated Press

LUCKNOW, India (AP) — Forty workers were trapped in a collapsed road tunnel in northern India for a seventh day Saturday as rescuers waited for a new machine to drill through the rubble so they could crawl to their freedom.

On Friday, the drilling was interrupted when some machine bearings became damaged by the breaking of rocks and clearing of debris, officials said, adding a new challenge to the long-drawn rescue efforts.

A new machine was expected to reach the accident site later Saturday, allowing rescuers to start drilling again, said Vijay Singh, an officer at the control room.

Authorities began drilling into the rubble and debris on Thursday and have so far covered a stretch of 24 meters (79 feet), said Devendra Patwal, a disaster management official, said. It may require up to 60 meters (197 feet) to enable the trapped workers' escape, Patwal told The Associated Press on Friday.

Earlier, the rescuers had hoped to complete the drilling by Friday night and create an escape tunnel of pipes welded together. But rescue efforts hit a snag after a loud cracking sound came from within the tunnel, startling the authorities, who paused the drilling after they found parts of the machine damaged, Tarun Kumar Baidya, director at the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited, said from the accident site.

As the rescue operation stretched into its seventh day, families of those trapped were frustrated and angry. Relatives from various states have spent nights near the tunnel, seeking updates. The recent setback has only exacerbated their worries.

Krishna Patel, whose 20-year-old nephew is among the trapped, had hoped to see his relative on Friday. "The administration keeps changing the timeline for when they may be rescued. It's very frustrating," he said.

Some of the workers felt fever and body aches Wednesday, but officials have said there has been no deterioration in their condition. Nuts, roasted chickpeas, popcorn and medicine are being sent to them via a pipe every two hours.

Patwal said two doctors at the accident site were in regular contact with the trapped workers to ensure their physical and mental well-being. "We are trying our best to keep the spirit of the trapped laborers high because it is a trying time for all — the rescuers as well as the trapped people," he said.

The construction workers have been trapped since Sunday when a landslide caused a portion of the 4.5-kilometer (2.8-mile) tunnel they were building to collapse about 200 meters (650 feet) from the entrance. The hilly area is prone to landslides and subsidence.

The site is in Uttarakhand, a mountainous state dotted with Hindu temples that attract many pilgrims and tourists. Highway and building construction has been constant to accommodate the influx.

The tunnel is part of the busy Chardham all-weather road, a flagship federal project connecting various Hindu pilgrimage sites.

About 200 disaster relief personnel have been at the site using drilling equipment and excavators in the rescue operation, with the plan to push 80-centimeter-wide (2.6-foot-wide) steel pipes through an opening of excavated debris.

A machine used earlier in the week was slow in pushing the pipes through the debris, a state govern-



ment statement said. It was replaced with an American Auger machine with a drilling capacity of up to 5 meters (16 feet) per hour and is equipped with a 99-centimeter (3.2-foot) diameter pipe to clear debris. Rescuers are waiting for another American Auger to replace the damaged one.

State officials have contacted Thai experts who helped rescue a youth soccer team trapped in a cave in Thailand in 2018, state government administrator Gaurav Singh said. They also have approached the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute for possible help.

## **Milei echoes Trump with fraud claims that inject uncertainty into Argentina's presidential runoff**

By DAVID BILLER and DANIEL POLITI undefined

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — This may sound familiar: A self-styled outsider aims to win the presidency and purge the political establishment so he can restore order to a broken nation — if only he can overcome a system rigged against him.

But this isn't former President Donald Trump, or even happening in the U.S. It's Argentine presidential candidate Javier Milei, the latest politician to follow Trump's playbook and claim that election results are dubious and that gatekeepers may deprive him of the nation's top job.

Analysts say it is a tactic to fire up Milei's base and promote vigilance at polling stations, or set the stage for refusing to concede a loss.

The right-wing economist rose to fame blasting the political class on television and has welcomed comparisons to Trump. His message that a corrupt elite has left the country behind resonates with Argentines coping with rising poverty and 142% annual inflation.

Milei represents upheaval, and casting doubt on the electoral system — in a nation where it is widely trusted — is true to form. Since Argentina's return to democracy a half century ago, no candidate in any national race has formally challenged results, according to the electoral appeals court.

Pre-election polls in the Nov. 19 runoff between Milei and Economy Minister Sergio Massa show a dead heat.

Before the first round, most had shown Milei narrowly ahead, yet Massa won handily, by 7 percentage points. Claims of fraud exploded on social media, and some Milei supporters volunteered to monitor the vote at the country's more than 100,000 polling stations.

Luis Paulero, 30, is one of them. He cared little for politics and, although voting is mandatory, had never before cast a ballot. But Milei "sparked passion in me," Paulero said at a small rally in Ezeiza, about 20 miles (30 kilometers) from Argentina's capital.

He says he is disgusted that the governing party might steal the presidency. "I've been watching it on TikTok videos; all the fraud that was done seems wrong, it's undemocratic," said Paulero, a delivery app driver.

At least partly, Milei is stoking fraud claims himself. In an interview Nov. 7, he said the first-round vote wasn't clean.

"There were irregularities of such proportion that they put the result in doubt," Milei said. He continued: "Whoever counts the vote controls everything."

Earlier, Milei had said that were it not for fraud during the August primaries, he would have snagged 35% of the vote instead of 30%.

He has provided no evidence in either instance. Still, die-hard boosters have brought signs reading "Don't Screw With My Vote!" and "One Stolen Vote is Fraud!" to small rallies.

Elections in Argentina have always had some irregularities, but not enough to alter results, said Gala Díaz Langou, executive director of Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth, a Buenos Aires-based think tank.

Many allegations on social media have noted that nearly 1,700 polling stations recorded zero votes for Milei in preliminary results of the first round — "statistically impossible," Milei and his supporters said.

But an analysis by Argentine fact-checking agency Chequeado showed that nearly all those stations had

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 50 of 74

no votes for any candidate, indicating their results hadn't been uploaded. The number of stations where one candidate received zero votes but others had votes were comparable for Milei and Massa.

The voting process in Argentina is decidedly antiquated. Polling stations have paper ballots for each party and voters pick the one they want, put it in an envelope that they place into a cardboard ballot box.

It is easy for voters to steal ballots or rip them up because they go into a room alone where they ballots are located. Voting monitors make sure they are replaced, and oversee the vote count. Recruiting enough of them is a challenge for Milei's fledgling Liberty Advances party.

While questioning the shortcomings of Argentina's voting system shouldn't be taboo, Milei sowing doubt about it is a political strategy, said Brian Winter, a longtime Argentina expert and vice president of the New York-based Council of the Americas.

"It shows that he sees some risk that he could lose. You don't say these things from a position of strength," he said.

Milei's national network is far outmatched by the muscle of Massa's Peronism, a nebulous movement with both left- and right-wing factions that has been the dominant force in Argentine politics for decades. As such, he has summoned his faithful to monitor the election.

Milei's party on Thursday presented a complaint to an electoral judge, initially asserting "colossal fraud" and grabbing headlines, but later walked back claims and said its goal was merely to nudge authorities to take "extreme precautions."

Milei is working to "make sure he mobilizes people and gives his base a reason to fight for, make them feel they're being bullied and not considered, that Peronism is trying to impose its will on everybody else," Ana Iparraguirre, partner at pollster GBAO Strategies, said by phone from Buenos Aires.

But many Argentines are loath to spend 12 hours observing the vote then scrutinizing the count, said Carlos Andrés Ferreira, the campaign chief of Milei's party in Fiorito, a working-class city on Buenos Aires' outskirts.

In the first round, Milei's party had observers in just over half of Fiorito's 200 voting stations, Ferreira said. At one school, Ferreira was horrified to find seven of his party's eight monitors had failed to show. He said that some of his peers speculate they were paid to stay home and that he believes vote counters at unmonitored tables trashed half of Milei's votes.

"They're bandits. They don't believe in democracy. They're fascists," said Ferreira, adding that the number of votes for Milei in stations where his party had monitors was about double that of other stations. "I don't believe in coincidences."

The ability to dispute results is a fundamental part of any democratic process. But there are indications that Trump-style, unsubstantiated challenges have spread around the world, Kevin Casas-Zamora, secretary-general of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, said by phone from Stockholm.

Some of Trump's statements were echoed in fraud claims by Myanmar's military-backed party after it was routed in Nov. 2020 — which were rejected by the Asian nation's election commission — as well as in unsubstantiated fraud allegations of Peruvian candidate Keiko Fujimori after she lost the 2021 race.

His clearest copycat was former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. Like Trump, he first challenged the results that put him in the presidency; he argued his margin of victory should have been larger, though never provided any evidence. Ahead of his reelection bid, Bolsonaro attacked the reliability of the system and then sought an audit that failed. He refused to concede, and his supporters rioted in the capital.

Milei is undoubtedly "laying the groundwork to not recognize the result of the election if they lose," said Beatriz Busaniche, president of the Via Libre foundation, a nonprofit that has worked on voting reform issues.

Speaking Thursday, Massa told reporters it would be "very detrimental" to follow Trump and Bolsonaro's rejection of results.

While his claims of fraud clearly reflect the influence of Trump and Bolsonaro, they represent no existential risk to Argentina's democracy that is strong, said Winter, of the Council of the Americas. And unlike the former American and Brazilian presidents, he doesn't control the levers of power he would need to overturn results.

What's more, Milei's new allies appear reluctant to back fraud claims.

Patricia Bullrich, the candidate for the country's main opposition coalition who placed third in the first round then endorsed Milei, said in an interview that she didn't believe there was fraud on the scale of swaying an election. At the same time, she called on supporters to become monitors.

Díaz Langou, of the Buenos Aires-based think tank, said he thinks it would be "difficult, if not impossible" to steal an election in Argentina. Fraud claims are, however, still a threat, he said.

"These rumors of fraud can erode the legitimacy of any government assuming power, regardless of the winner, and this could lead to problems in the medium term, transcending the election."

## **IBM, EU and Disney pull ads from Elon Musk's X as concerns about antisemitism fuel backlash**

By KELVIN CHAN and HALELUYA HADERO AP Business Writer

Advertisers are fleeing social media platform X over concerns about their ads showing up next to pro-Nazi content and hate speech on the site in general, with billionaire owner Elon Musk inflaming tensions with his own posts endorsing an antisemitic conspiracy theory.

IBM said this week that it stopped advertising on X after a report said its ads were appearing alongside material praising Nazis — a fresh setback as the platform formerly known as Twitter tries to win back big brands and their ad dollars, X's main source of revenue.

The liberal advocacy group Media Matters said in a report Thursday that ads from Apple, Oracle, NBCUniversal's Bravo network and Comcast also were placed next to antisemitic material on X.

"IBM has zero tolerance for hate speech and discrimination and we have immediately suspended all advertising on X while we investigate this entirely unacceptable situation," the company said in a statement.

Apple, Oracle, NBCUniversal and Comcast didn't respond immediately to requests seeking comment on their next steps.

The European Union's executive branch said separately Friday it is pausing advertising on X and other social media platforms, in part because of a surge in hate speech. Later in the day, Disney, Lionsgate and Paramount Global also said they were suspending or pausing advertising on X.

Musk sparked outcry this week with his own tweets responding to a user who accused Jews of hating white people and professing indifference to antisemitism. "You have said the actual truth," Musk tweeted in a reply Wednesday.

Musk has faced accusations of tolerating antisemitic messages on the platform since purchasing it last year, and the content on X has gained increased scrutiny since the war between Israel and Hamas began.

"We condemn this abhorrent promotion of Antisemitic and racist hate in the strongest terms, which runs against our core values as Americans," White House spokesperson Andrew Bates said Friday in response to Musk's tweet.

X CEO Linda Yaccarino said X's "point of view has always been very clear that discrimination by everyone should STOP across the board."

"I think that's something we can and should all agree on," she tweeted Thursday.

Yaccarino, a former NBCUniversal executive, was hired by Musk to rebuild ties with advertisers who fled after he took over, concerned that his easing of content restrictions was allowing hateful and toxic speech to flourish and that would harm their brands.

"When it comes to this platform — X has also been extremely clear about our efforts to combat antisemitism and discrimination. There's no place for it anywhere in the world — it's ugly and wrong. Full stop," Yaccarino said.

The accounts that Media Matters found posting antisemitic material will no longer be monetizable and the specific posts will be labeled "sensitive media," according to a statement from X. Still, Musk decried Media Matters as "an evil organization."

The head of the Anti-Defamation League also hit back at Musk's tweets this week, in the latest clash between the prominent Jewish civil-rights organization and the billionaire businessman.

"At a time when antisemitism is exploding in America and surging around the world, it is indisputably dangerous to use one's influence to validate and promote antisemitic theories," ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt said on X.

Musk also tweeted this week that he was "deeply offended by ADL's messaging and any other groups who push de facto anti-white racism or anti-Asian racism or racism of any kind."

The group has previously accused Musk of allowing antisemitism and hate speech to spread on the platform and amplifying the messages of neo-Nazis and white supremacists who want to ban the ADL.

The European Commission, meanwhile, said it's putting all of its social media ad efforts on hold because of an "alarming increase in disinformation and hate speech" on platforms in recent weeks.

The commission, the 27-nation EU's executive arm, said it is advising its services to "refrain from advertising at this stage on social media platforms where such content is present," adding that the freeze doesn't affect its official accounts on X.

The EU has taken a tough stance with new rules to clean up social media platforms, and last month it made a formal request to X for information about its handling of hate speech, misinformation and violent terrorist content related to the Israel-Hamas war.

X isn't alone in dealing with problematic content since the conflict.

On Thursday, TikTok removed the hashtag #lettertoamerica after users on the app posted sympathetic videos about Osama bin Laden's 2002 letter justifying the terrorist attacks against Americans on 9/11 and criticizing U.S. support for Israel. The Guardian news outlet, which published the transcript of the letter that was being shared, took it down and replaced it with a statement that directed readers to a news article from 2002 that it said provided more context.

The videos garnered widespread attention among X users critical of TikTok, which is owned by Beijing-based ByteDance. TikTok said the letter was not a trend on its platform and blamed an X post by journalist Yashar Ali and media coverage for drawing more engagement to the hashtag.

The short-form video app has faced criticism from Republicans and others who say the platform has been failing to protect Jewish users from harassment and pushing pro-Palestinian content to viewers.

TikTok has aggressively pushed back, saying it's been taking down antisemitic content and doesn't manipulate its algorithm to take sides.

## **Taiwan envoy says he's hopeful Biden-Xi meeting will reduce tensions in the Asia-Pacific region**

By DIDI TANG Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The 92-year-old businessman who represented Taiwan at this week's summit of Asia-Pacific leaders in San Francisco expressed hope Friday that the meeting between U.S. President Joe Biden and China's Xi Jinping should help to reduce tensions between the two superpowers and in the region.

Morris Chang, the founder of the microchip giant Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, also suggested the meeting could help to promote economic stability and reliable supply chains.

"You don't have to be a leader to know that if there is no peace, there is no supply chain to start with," Chang said at a news conference at the close of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

Chang said the Biden-Xi meeting was a "good" one, pointing to their agreement to resume high-level military communications.

"It should help reduce the tensions between the U.S. and China, and it should increase stability of Taiwan Strait," Chang said.

Taiwan, a self-governed island of 23 million people, remains the thorniest issue in U.S.-China relations, as Beijing and Washington clash over its sovereignty. Tensions have flared in recent years as Beijing increases military pressure on the island, which it claims to be part of Chinese territory and vows to seize by force if necessary to achieve national unification.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 53 of 74

Washington has a security pact with Taiwan to deter any armed attack from Beijing and has stepped up its support for the island. The U.S. insists the matter must be solved peacefully, without taking a side.

It was a high priority when Xi and Biden met Wednesday for four hours at an estate outside San Francisco in their first face-to-face meeting in a year.

Xi sought assurances from Biden that the U.S. would not support Taiwan's independence and requested that Washington support China's peaceful reunification with Taiwan.

"China will realize reunification, and this is unstoppable," the Chinese president said.

Biden, meanwhile, urged Xi to refrain from military exercises in and around the Taiwan Strait.

Since September 2020, the Chinese military has been sending warships and warplanes near the island on a near-daily basis. In August 2022, Beijing fired missiles toward the island and blockaded it for days after Nancy Pelosi, then the House speaker, visited the island despite Beijing's objections.

Biden told Xi that Washington remains unchanged in its policy toward Taiwan and that it opposes any unilateral changes to the status quo from either side.

"We expect cross-strait differences to be resolved by peaceful means," Biden said.

Sun Yun, director of the China program at the Washington-based Stimson Center think tank, said Washington won't accept Beijing's new demand to support peaceful reunification.

"This is categorically different from the U.S. goal that the resolution of the Taiwan issue must be peaceful, which does not impose a precondition on what the outcome will look like, only that it must be peaceful," Sun said. "This is a request we have seen the Chinese interlocutors floating around recently. It is improbable for the U.S. to accept it."

In San Francisco, Chang represented Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen in attending the summit because Beijing opposed Tsai being present.

Chang, representing Taiwan at the APEC summit for the seventh time, said he was tasked by Tsai to send the message that Taiwan is committed to regional peace and prosperity and that the island will work with its partners to control climate change, build more resilient supply chains and reduce the digital divide.

"I think I've done it — that I tried my best to convey the four messages," Chang said.

Chang said he had "many interactions" with Biden, thought there was no formal talk, and said he spoke with senior U.S. officials, including Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Lael Brainard, Biden's economic adviser.

Chang said he also had "serious" discussions with at least half of the leaders of the 21 economies in the region, including Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, on issues such as regional peace, economic development and supply chains, but that he didn't speak with Xi during the summit.

## Colorado judge finds Trump engaged in insurrection, but rejects constitutional ballot challenge

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — A Colorado judge on Friday found that former President Donald Trump engaged in insurrection during the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol but rejected an effort to keep him off the state's primary ballot because it's unclear whether a Civil War-era Constitutional amendment barring insurrectionists from public office applies to the presidency.

The lawsuit, brought by a left-leaning group on behalf of a group of Republican and independent Colorado voters, contended that Trump's actions related to the attack ran afoul of a clause in the 14th Amendment that prevents anyone from holding office who "engaged in insurrection or rebellion" against the Constitution.

The decision by District Judge Sarah B. Wallace is the third ruling in a little over a week against lawsuits seeking to knock Trump off the ballot by citing Section 3 of the amendment. The Minnesota Supreme Court last week said Trump could remain on the primary ballot because political parties have sole choice over who appears, while a Michigan judge ruled that Congress is the proper forum for deciding whether Section 3 applies to Trump.

In her decision, Wallace said she found that Trump did in fact "engage in insurrection" on Jan. 6 and

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 54 of 74

rejected his attorneys' arguments that he was simply engaging in free speech. Normally, that would be enough to disqualify him under Section 3, but she said she couldn't do so for a presidential candidate.

Section 3 does not specifically refer to the presidency, as it does members of the U.S. Senate or House of Representatives. Instead, the clause refers to "elector of President and Vice President," along with civil and military offices.

"Part of the Court's decision is its reluctance to embrace an interpretation which would disqualify a presidential candidate without a clear, unmistakable indication that such is the intent of Section Three," the judge wrote in the 102-page ruling.

Trump campaign spokesman Steven Cheung called the ruling "another nail in the coffin of the un-American ballot challenges."

"These cases represent the most cynical and blatant political attempts to interfere with the upcoming presidential election by desperate Democrats," Cheung said in a statement.

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, the group that filed the case, said they would appeal to the Colorado Supreme Court.

"The Court found that Donald Trump engaged in insurrection after a careful and thorough review of the evidence," said attorney Mario Nicolais, who was representing the voters who brought the lawsuit. "We are very pleased with the opinion and look forward to addressing the sole legal issue on appeal, namely whether Section 3 of the 14th Amendment applies to insurrectionist presidents."

Whether it's the Colorado case or one filed in another state, the question ultimately is likely to reach the U.S. Supreme Court, which has never ruled on Section 3. The group suing in the Michigan case, Free Speech for People, filed an appeal Thursday in state court.

Legal experts said it was significant that Wallace found Trump had engaged in insurrection. She wrote that she agreed with the petitioners' claim that he "incited" the attack.

"It's a stunning holding for a court to conclude that a former president engaged in insurrection against the United States," said Derek Muller, a Notre Dame law professor who has followed the case closely. "And there's a good chance that, on appeal, a court bars him from the ballot."

Trump has called the attempt to remove "election interference" funded by "dark money" Democratic groups. His attorneys argued in court that Trump was simply engaging in his First Amendment rights on Jan. 6, that he did not incite an insurrection and that Section 3 was never meant to apply to presidential candidates.

They also contended that no single judge should end a candidacy based on an interpretation of a clause that has been used only a handful of times in 150 years.

"The petitioners are asking this court to do something that's never been done in the history of the United States," Trump attorney Scott Gessler said during closing arguments. "The evidence doesn't come close to allowing the court to do it."

The petitioners argued that there is little ambiguity in Section 3, which was mainly used before Jan. 6 to prevent former Confederates from taking control of the government after the Civil War. It prohibits those who swore an oath to uphold the Constitution and then "engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same" from holding state or federal office, unless granted amnesty by a two-thirds vote of Congress.

During a weeklong hearing earlier this month, they called a law professor who testified that the clause was widely understood to bar former Confederates from becoming president. He also showed post-Civil War documents indicating that even an act such as buying Confederate war bonds could make someone ineligible for office.

The attorneys seeking to knock Trump off the ballot contended he was simply disqualified, as plainly as if he failed to meet the 35-year age limit for the office. That this had never happened before was a reflection, they said, on Trump and his actions.

Legal historians say Section 3 fell into disuse after Congress granted an amnesty from its provisions to most former Confederates in 1872. It was revived after the attack on the Capitol, which was intended to stop Congress' certification of Democrat Joe Biden's win.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 55 of 74

The case turned on 150-year-old records from the debate over the 14th Amendment. Wallace said there is "scant direct evidence" that the measure was intended to apply to the presidency. She noted that Trump attorneys flagged a finding by one law professor that an early draft specified the presidency and vice presidency, but the final version did not. The provision also refers to "officers of the United States," a phrase that elsewhere in the Constitution does not include the top two offices.

But the petitioners' legal historian testified that in the years after the Civil War it was widely understood that Section 3 would prevent Jefferson Davis, the former president of the Confederacy, from being elected president of the United States. He also unearthed records from the debate in which one senator asked if the measure applied to the presidency and an author read back the "officers of the United States" language. The senator who asked the question was then convinced that it did, indeed, include the president, according to the testimony.

"The record demonstrates an appreciable amount of tension between the competing interpretations, and a lack of definitive guidance in the text or historical sources," Wallace wrote.

The recent cases against Trump mark a new flurry of interest in the long-ignored provision that only started to gain attention after Jan. 6.

The group that filed the Minnesota and Michigan challenges, Free Speech For People, also tried to remove Republican Reps. Madison Cawthorn and Marjorie Taylor Greene from the ballot in 2022 by citing Section 3. Cawthorn's case became moot when he lost his primary, and a judge ruled against the lawsuit seeking to oust Greene.

CREW successfully used Section 3 to remove a rural New Mexico County Commissioner who entered the Capitol on Jan. 6 and was later convicted of a misdemeanor.

## DeSantis, Haley and Ramaswamy get personal and friendly during 'family discussion' in Iowa

By HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The Republicans battling to be their party's alternative to former President Donald Trump came together Friday for a different kind of cattle call, bringing personal and at times emotional stories to what an influential Iowa Christian organization billed as a friendly conversation.

Three candidates — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley and entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy — sat side-by-side at a festive Thanksgiving table for a "family discussion" in Des Moines Friday. Trump did not attend, though he was invited.

The field around Trump is winnowing with less than two months before the Iowa caucuses kick off the GOP nominating calendar. In a sign of the urgency the field faces, many of his rivals are going after each other more frequently with jabs that have often turned personal.

But there was little sign of such tension Friday — except perhaps toward the candidate missing from the conversation.

The candidates addressed each other by their first names and at times noted where they agreed. The conversation often led them back to pieces of their stump speeches, as foreign policy on Israel, China and the Russia-Ukraine war, religious liberty and agriculture were raised, but the interactions between them were friendly.

The candidates also shared emotional stories during the unusual forum that offered a more collegial, intimate conversation, moderated by Family Leader President and CEO Bob Vander Plaats.

All three connected their opposition to legalized abortion to difficulties they had having children. DeSantis talked about his wife Casey's miscarriage and its impact on them. Ramaswamy gestured for his three-year-old son to join him onstage after detailing how his wife, Apoorva, thought she had suffered a second miscarriage.

Haley mentioned the difficulty she had getting pregnant. Vander Plaats later asked her to address her stance on abortion, which calls for consensus on the issue.

Haley has urged Republicans to not push for a national abortion ban with next to no chance of passing

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 56 of 74

Congress. But when pressed by Vander Plaats on whether she would have signed a new law banning most abortions after about six weeks of pregnancy as governor, as Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds did this year, she said yes.

"Whatever the people decide," Haley said.

As governor, she signed the most conservative abortion bill South Carolina Republicans were able to pass through both chambers at the time, restricting the procedure at 20 weeks.

Friday's event deviated from more testy moments on the campaign trail, a welcome change for many of the voters who attended.

Glenn Gibisch of Downers Grove, Illinois, was looking forward to the forum, preferring its approach over the debates. He came to the forum expecting to continue backing Trump, but he walked away feeling excited about DeSantis after hearing from him directly about his values.

"I like the format of not attacking anybody," said Gibisch, 71, adding that he was better able to consider the candidates' background and principles.

This week, DeSantis and Ramaswamy both criticized Haley after she said Tuesday that social media companies should ban people from posting anonymously online.

DeSantis posted on social media that the proposal was "dangerous and unconstitutional," while Ramaswamy referenced the idea as "disgusting." Ramaswamy and Haley have frequently feuded in recent candidate debates, culminating with Haley calling Ramaswamy "scum" after he attacked her daughter for using TikTok, the video-sharing app that many Republicans want to ban due to its links to China.

The rivalry between DeSantis and Haley is also growing, with both sides competing hard for major donors and arguing over who has a better chance of beating Trump.

The Family Leader reiterated that the event was not a debate after the Republican National Committee's counsel's office circulated a letter to campaigns dated Oct. 28 reminding candidates of their pledge not to participate in non-sanctioned debates. The letter warned candidates that attending the Family Leader's forum would disqualify them from future RNC debates.

After DeSantis committed to attending anyway last Friday, Vander Plaats posted on social media and the RNC issued a second letter to campaigns stating that the two had come to an agreement on the format and the forum would proceed as planned.

Trump, the dominant front-runner for the 2024 Republican nomination, has skipped all three primary debates so far and instead hosted large rallies to appeal to his supporters, as he will on Saturday in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Phoebe Flury of North Liberty, Iowa, liked what she heard from the candidates Friday but ultimately decided that she'll stick by Trump, the "strongest candidate."

For her, it didn't matter that the former president wasn't there.

"It's time for the other candidates to show who they are," Flury, 47, said. "We've already seen four plus years of Trump."

On stage, though, Trump's absence didn't go unmentioned.

"You know how that goes with Thanksgiving, right?" Vander Plaats quipped after DeSantis brought some heat in his answer to the moderator's question about why he, not Trump, should be the GOP nominee. "Sometimes some guests don't show up."

## UN stops delivery of food and supplies to Gaza as communications blackout hinders aid coordination

By WAFAA SHURAF, JACK JEFFERY and LEE KEATH Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The United Nations was forced Friday to stop deliveries of food and other necessities to Gaza and warned of the growing risk of widespread starvation after internet and telephone services collapsed in the besieged enclave because of lack of fuel.

Israel announced that it will allow two tanker trucks of fuel into Gaza each day for the U.N. and communication systems. That amount is half of what the U.N. said it needs for lifesaving functions for hundreds



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 57 of 74

of thousands of people in Gaza, including powering water systems, hospitals, bakeries and the trucks delivering aid.

Israel has barred entry of fuel since the start of the war, saying it would be diverted by Hamas for military means. It has also blocked food, water and other supplies except for a trickle of aid from Egypt that aid workers say falls far short of what's needed.

The communications blackout largely cut off Gaza's 2.3 million people from one another and the outside world.

The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA, couldn't bring in its aid convoy Friday because of the communications cutoff, spokesperson Juliette Touma said.

"An extended blackout means an extended suspension of our humanitarian operations in the Gaza Strip," Touma told The Associated Press.

Phone and internet services in parts of the Gaza Strip were partially restored Friday night after a limited quantity of fuel for generators was provided, according to NetBlocks, a group that tracks internet outages.

Israeli forces have signaled they could expand their offensive toward Gaza's south while continuing operations in the north. Troops have been searching the territory's biggest hospital, Shifa, for traces of a Hamas command center Israel alleges was located under the building — a claim Hamas and the hospital staff deny.

On Friday, the military said it found the body of another hostage, Cpl. Noa Marciano, in a building adjacent to Shifa, like that of another hostage found Thursday, Yehudit Weiss. Hundreds of mourners, many carrying Israeli flags, attended Marciano's funeral Friday in her hometown of Modi'in.

The war, now in its sixth week, was triggered by Hamas' Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel, in which the militants killed more than 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted some 240 men, women and children.

More than 11,400 Palestinians have been killed in the war, two-thirds of them women and minors, according to Palestinian health authorities. Another 2,700 have been reported missing, believed buried under rubble. The count does not differentiate between civilians and militants, and Israel says it has killed thousands of militants.

## AID DRIES UP

After an American request, Israel agreed to let a "very minimal" amount of fuel into Gaza each day, national security adviser Tzachi Hanegbi said. COGAT, the Israeli military body responsible for Palestinian affairs, said it would amount to 60,000 liters (15,850 gallons) a day for the U.N.

For the communications network, Israel also agreed on another 10,000 liters a day (2,640 gallons), a U.S. State Department official said.

UNRWA and other humanitarian groups need at least 120,000 liters (31,700 gallons) a day to run lifesaving functions, Touma said.

Gaza has received only 10% of its required food supplies each day in shipments from Egypt, according to the U.N., and the water system shutdown has left most of the population drinking contaminated water, causing an outbreak of disease.

Dehydration and malnutrition are growing, with nearly all residents in need of food, said Abeer Etefa, a Mideast regional spokeswoman for the U.N.'s World Food Program.

"People are facing the immediate possibility of starvation," she said Thursday from Cairo.

## MARCH FOR HOSTAGES

Israeli officials previously vowed fuel would not be let in until Gaza militants release the hostages. The government has been under heavy public pressure to show it is doing all it can to bring back people abducted in Hamas' attack.

Thousands of marchers — including families of over 50 hostages — embarked Friday on the fourth leg of a five-day walk from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, chanting, "Bring them home!" They are marching to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office, calling on his war Cabinet to do more to rescue their loved ones. They have urged the cabinet to consider a cease-fire or prisoner swap in return for the hostages.

Hamas has offered to exchange all hostages for some 6,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails, which the Cabi-

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 58 of 74

net has rejected.

## CONDITIONS AT SHIFA

With Israeli troops fanned out around the Shifa hospital complex, doctors spoke of horrifying conditions inside. Electricity has been out for nearly a week, leaving incubators for infants and ventilators for ICU patients defunct. Nearly 7,000 people are trapped there with little food, including patients, staff and civilian families.

Hospital Director Mohammed Abu Selmia told Al Jazeera television that 52 patients have died since fuel ran out — up from 40 reported before Israeli troops stormed in on Wednesday. He said staff were amputating limbs of some patients to avoid infection spreading because of shortages in medicines.

More were on the verge of death as their wounds are “open with maggots coming out of them,” another doctor, Faisal Siyam, told Al Jazeera.

Dr. Ahmad Mukhalalti said most of the 36 premature infants suffer from severe diarrhea because there is no clean water. He said Israeli troops had taken away all the bodies from the morgue and from a mass grave that staff dug days earlier in the courtyard. The Israeli military had no comment on the report. The doctors’ accounts could not be independently verified.

Abu Selmia said Israeli troops should either bring them fuel to power equipment or allow an evacuation. “The hospital has become a giant prison,” he said. “We are surrounded by death.”

Israel’s military said it delivered 4,000 liters of water and 1,500 ready-made meals to Shifa, but staff said it was too little for the numbers of people there.

Israeli military spokesman Col. Richard Hecht acknowledged that the troops’ search for traces of Hamas was going slowly. “It’s going to take time,” he said.

Israel faces pressure to prove its claim that Hamas set up its main command center in and under the hospital. So far, Israel has shown photos and video of weapons caches that it says were found inside as well as what it said was a tunnel entrance. The AP could not independently verify the Israeli claims.

The allegations are part of Israel’s broader accusation that Hamas uses Palestinians as human shields across the Gaza Strip, contending that is the reason for the large numbers of civilian casualties during weeks of bombardment.

## STRIKES IN THE SOUTH

Airstrikes continued to hammer the southern sector of Gaza, where most of the territory’s population is now sheltering. Among them are hundreds of thousands of people who heeded Israel’s calls to evacuate Gaza City and the north to get out of the way of its ground offensive.

In the Nusseirat refugee camp, a strike crushed a building to rubble killing at least 41 people, staff at the nearby hospital said. Residents said dozens more were buried in the wreckage.

Early morning strikes outside the city of Khan Younis killed 11 members of a family that evacuated from Gaza City. Dozens of wounded, including babies and young children, streamed into the nearby hospital.

At the morgue, Alaa Abu Hasira wept over the bodies from the strike that were lined up side by side on the floor, including her son, daughter and several sisters. “All my loved ones are gone,” she sobbed.

So far, Israel’s ground assault has focused on northern Gaza as it vows to remove Hamas from power and crush its military capabilities. If the assault moves into the south, it is not clear where Palestinians can go. Egypt has refused to allow a mass transfer onto its soil.

As the war continues to inflame tensions elsewhere, Israeli troops clashed with Palestinian gunmen in Jenin in the occupied West Bank, killing at least three Palestinians. The fighting broke out late Thursday during an Israeli raid.

Israel’s military said five militants were killed. The Palestinian Health Ministry said three people died. The militant Islamic Jihad group claimed the three dead as members and identified one as a local commander.

## Rosalynn Carter, 96-year-old former first lady, is in hospice care at home, Carter Center says

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

Former first lady Rosalynn Carter is in hospice care at home in Plains, Georgia, joining former President Jimmy Carter, who has been receiving end-of-life care since February, their family announced Friday.

The Carter family said they are "grateful for the outpouring of love and support" but asked for privacy. The Carters have been married for 77 years and are the longest-married presidential couple in U.S. history.

The family announced earlier this year that the 96-year-old former first lady is suffering from dementia. The former president, now 99, entered hospice care at home in February but remains alert, those close to him say.

They have been together through Jimmy Carter's rise from their Georgia farm to his election to the presidency in 1976. After his 1980 defeat, the couple established The Carter Center in Atlanta as a global center to advocate human rights, democracy and public health.

"I loved politics," Rosalynn Carter told The Associated Press in 2021. She said she had "the best time" campaigning on her husband's behalf in what they both described as "a full partnership."

Long after leaving the White House, Jimmy Carter said, "The best thing I ever had happen in my life was when she said she'd marry me."

The family's announcement Friday brought a new round of tributes.

Georgia Sen. Raphael Warnock called the former first lady "a remarkable woman of great faith" and said "her service to Georgia and our country is part of an incredible legacy."

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization who worked with the Carters on public health initiatives for decades, wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, that he was "thinking of the former First Lady and the President tonight, and appreciating their lifelong dedication to making the world a better, fairer, healthier place for all."

The couple's grandson, Jason Carter, said in a recent interview that his grandparents have enjoyed spending their "last chapter" together at home, celebrating their longevity, family and love in the same tiny Georgia town where they both were born.

"That word love is really the one that defines certainly their personal relationship, but also the way they approach this world," said Jason Carter, who is now chair of The Carter Center's governing board.

Beyond her role as top presidential adviser, Rosalynn Carter became one of the world's leading advocates for mental health care and elevating the role of caregivers in American life. She helped the Carter administration push through significant health care legislation during her husband's term, and she continued her work after their White House years by establishing a fellowship for journalists to concentrate on more impactful ways to cover mental health issues.

She emphasized for years the need to reduce stigma attached to people who struggle with mental health conditions. Decades after leaving the White House, she testified on Capitol Hill urging Congress to put treatment and insurance for mental health conditions on par with other conditions in the U.S. health care system. She traveled the world helping developing nations confront their lack of mental health resources.

"I want people to know what I know — that today because of research and our knowledge of the brain, mental illnesses can be diagnosed and treated effectively, and the majority of those with these illnesses can recover and lead fulfilling lives ... going to school, working, raising a family, and being productive citizens in their communities," she said.

At the height of the Carters' political power, the Washington press corps of the late 1970s dubbed Rosalynn Carter "the Steel Magnolia," reflecting the quiet grace stereotypical of the era's Southern political wives and a tough core that made her a force on her husband's behalf and in her own right.

"She knew what she wanted to accomplish," said Kathy Cade, a White House adviser to Rosalynn Carter.

Expanding the role of first lady, she worked in her own office in the East Wing with her own staff and on her own initiatives. She also huddled with the president's advisers and sat in on top-level meetings, raising eyebrows in Washington power circles.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 60 of 74

"She didn't say anything in Cabinet meetings, but she wanted to be fully informed so she could give her husband good advice," said Carter biographer Jonathan Alter.

Alter considers Rosalynn Carter's only peers as influential first ladies to be Eleanor Roosevelt and Hillary Clinton, although he said the Carters' partnership was more seamless, because it lacked the infidelity and personal drama of the Roosevelts and Clintons.

The bond also involved friendly rivalry and humor: "I never knew I'd be married to somebody that old," Jimmy Carter wisecracked when his wife was 91.

They often raced to finish writing their next books or tried to best the other in tennis, skiing or any other pursuit.

Rosalynn Carter was at the center of her husband's political campaigns, starting with his first state Senate race in 1962.

"In the beginning, I wrote letters to people. He would go out and then I would write letters to them," she told The Associated Press. "But then it developed into a full-time job for me, working to help him get elected."

She first campaigned solo during Jimmy Carter's 1966 bid for governor. She was initially nervous but warmed to the role and ultimately demonstrated what White House adviser Stuart Eizenstat called "uncanny political instinct."

In the White House, it was Rosalynn Carter who urged her husband to think more about the 1980 election as he set priorities, and talk through how decisions might play in the media. When Jimmy Carter stayed in Washington to work every angle to free the American hostages in Iran, the first lady hit his reelection campaign trail.

"I campaigned solid every day the last time we ran," she told the AP.

Her emphasis on mental health and reducing stigma traced back to her husband's Georgia campaigns.

Voters "would stand patiently" waiting to tell of their family struggles, she once wrote. After hearing one overnight mill worker's story of caring for her afflicted child, Rosalynn Carter decided to take the issue to the candidate. She showed up at her husband's rally that day, unannounced, and stood in line to shake his hand like everyone else.

## Speaker Johnson says he'll make 44,000 hours of Jan. 6 footage available to the general public

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Mike Johnson said Friday he plans to publicly release thousands of hours of footage from the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol, making good on a promise he made to far-right members of his party when he was campaigning for the job.

"This decision will provide millions of Americans, criminal defendants, public interest organizations, and the media an ability to see for themselves what happened that day, rather than having to rely upon the interpretation of a small group of government officials," Johnson said in a statement.

The newly elected speaker said the first tranche of security footage, around 90 hours, will be released on a public committee website Friday, with the rest of the 44,000 hours expected to be posted over the next several months. In the meantime, a public viewing room will also be set up in the Capitol for viewing the footage.

For the last several months, the GOP-led House Administration Committee has made the video available by appointment only to members of the media, criminal defendants and a limited number of other people. The video shows some of the fighting up close and gives a bird's eye view of the Capitol complex — one that visitors rarely see — as hundreds of President Donald Trump's supporters stormed the building, violently attacking police officers and breaking in through windows and doors.

By expanding this access to the general public, Johnson is fulfilling one of the pledges he made last month to the most conservative members of his party, including Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., who orchestrated the ouster of former Speaker Kevin McCarthy. Both Gaetz and Trump — who is currently running for reelection

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 61 of 74

as he faces federal charges for his role in the Jan. 6 attack — applauded Johnson's decision.

In a post on his Truth Social platform, Trump congratulated the speaker "for having the courage and fortitude" to release the footage.

The move by Johnson will grant the general public a stunning level of access to sensitive and explicit Jan. 6 security footage, which many critics have warned could endanger the safety of staff and members in the Capitol complex if it gets into the wrong hands. The hours of footage detail not only the shocking assault rioters made on U.S. Capitol Police as they breached the building but also how the rioters accessed the building and the routes lawmakers used to flee to safety.

A request for comment from Capitol Police was declined.

Johnson said Friday that the committee is processing the footage to blur the faces of individuals "to avoid any persons from being targeted for retaliation of any kind." He added that an estimated 5% of the footage will not be publicly released as it "may involve sensitive security information related to the building architecture."

Gripping images and videos from the Capitol attack by Trump supporters have been widely circulated by documentarians, news organizations and even the rioters themselves. But until this year, officials held back much of the surveillance video from hundreds of security cameras stationed in and around the Capitol.

In February, McCarthy gave then-Fox News host Tucker Carlson exclusive access to the footage, a move that Democrats swiftly condemned as a "grave" breach of security with potentially far-reaching consequences.

The conservative commentator aired a first installment to millions of viewers on his prime-time show in the spring, working to bend perceptions of the violent, grueling siege that played out for the world to see into a narrative favorable to Trump.

It is all part of a larger effort by Republicans to redefine the narrative around the deadly insurrection after the findings of the House Jan. 6 committee last year. The select committee of seven Democrats and two Republicans spent months painstakingly documenting, with testimony and video evidence, how Trump rallied his supporters to head to the Capitol and "fight like hell" as Congress was certifying his loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

The committee's final report released last December concluded that Trump criminally engaged in a "multi-part conspiracy" to overturn the lawful results of the 2020 presidential election and failed to act to stop his supporters from attacking the Capitol.

The panel passed their investigation to the Justice Department, recommending federal prosecutors investigate the former president on four crimes, including aiding an insurrection. And in August, Trump was indicted on four felony counts for his role in the attack as the Justice Department accused him of assaulting the "bedrock function" of democracy.

## **The flu is soaring in seven US states and rising in others, health officials say**

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. flu season is underway, with at least seven states reporting high levels of illnesses and cases rising in other parts of the country, health officials say.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention posted new flu data on Friday, showing very high activity last week in Louisiana, and high activity in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, New Mexico and South Carolina. It was also high in the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, the U.S. territory where health officials declared an influenza epidemic earlier this month.

"We're off to the races," said Dr. William Schaffner, a Vanderbilt University infectious diseases expert

Traditionally, the winter flu season ramps up in December or January. But it took off in October last year, and is making a November entrance this year.

Flu activity was moderate but rising in New York City, Arkansas, California, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. And while flu activity has been high in Alaska for weeks, the state did not

report data last week, so it wasn't part of the latest count.

Tracking during flu season relies in part on reports of people with flu-like symptoms who go to doctor's offices or hospitals; many people with the flu are not tested, so their infections aren't lab-confirmed. COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses can sometimes muddy the picture.

Alicia Budd, who leads the CDC's flu surveillance team, said several indicators are showing "continued increases" in flu.

There are different kinds of flu viruses, and the version that's been spreading the most so far this year usually leads to a lesser amount of hospitalizations and deaths in the elderly — the group on whom flu tends to take the largest toll.

So far this fall, the CDC estimates at least 780,000 flu illnesses, at least 8,000 hospitalizations and at least 490 flu-related deaths — including at least one child.

Budd said that it's not yet clear exactly how effective the current flu vaccines are, but the shots are well-matched to the flu strains that are showing up. In the U.S., about 35% of U.S. adults and 33% of children have been vaccinated against flu, current CDC data indicates. That's down compared to last year in both categories.

Flu vaccination rates are better than rates for the other two main respiratory viruses — COVID-19 and RSV. About 14% of adults and 5% of children have gotten the currently recommended COVID-19 shot, and about 13.5% of adults 60 and older have gotten one of the RSV shots that became available earlier this year.

## **Biden and López Obrador have talked fentanyl and US-Mexico migration. They pledged solidarity**

By COLLEEN LONG and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — President Joe Biden and Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador pledged Friday to work side-by-side to confront illicit fentanyl trafficking into the U.S. and to manage the growing number of migrants traveling north to the border between their nation.

"Nothing is beyond our reach in my view if Mexico and the United States stand together and work together," Biden said.

Biden's relationship with López Obrador has at times been tense, in part because of Biden's willingness to criticize Mexico on topics such as fentanyl production and the killing of journalists. And López Obrador isn't afraid to snub the U.S. leader. He skipped a Los Angeles summit last year where leaders tackled the issue of migration because the U.S. didn't invite Cuba, Nicaragua or Venezuela. He also initially said he would skip this year's APEC conference, but changed his mind.

The two men were all smiles and compliments before the press on Friday, with Biden telling López Obrador: "I couldn't have a better partner than you," and the Mexican leader calling Biden a "good man" and an "extraordinary president."

They were in San Francisco for the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation conference, where Biden has held a series of face-to-face meetings with other leaders, including China's President Xi Jinping and the leaders of Japan and South Korea, as he seeks to reassure the region that the U.S. and China are competitors, not zero-sum rivals.

Biden and Lopez Obrador set to work talking migration as the U.S. strains to manage a rising number of southern border crossings.

They also discussed deadly fentanyl trafficking, particularly after Biden secured an agreement with Xi to curb the illicit opioid. Mexico and China are the primary sources for synthetic fentanyl trafficked into the U.S. Nearly all the chemicals needed to make it come from China, and the drugs are then mass-produced in Mexico and trafficked via cartels into the U.S.

"I want to tell you about my great conversation with Xi Jinping on that issue," Biden told López Obrador.

The issues of fentanyl and immigration are related. Human smuggling over the border is a part of cartel operations that also include drug trafficking into the U.S.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 63 of 74

"We're working side-by-side to combat organized crime," Biden said.

The powerful opioid is the deadliest drug in the U.S. today. More than 100,000 deaths a year have been linked to drug overdoses since 2020 and about two-thirds of those are related to fentanyl. The annual death toll is more than 10 times the level in 1988, at the height of the crack epidemic.

"We're aware of the damage it poses to the United States youth," López Obrador said through an interpreter.

And migration challenges facing the U.S. are growing increasingly intractable. Democratic leaders at the state and local level are begging for federal assistance to help care for migrant families living in squalid shelters and sleeping in police stations. Republicans are loudly critical of Biden's border policies as too lax. And Congress has not passed an immigration overhaul in decades.

Biden asked for \$14 billion from Congress for border security but the temporary spending bill he just signed did not have funding for the border, Ukraine aid or Israel.

There are rising numbers of migrants at the border. Arrests for illegal crossings along the U.S.-Mexico line were up 21% to 218,763 in September, and Biden has repeatedly said Congress should act to fix outdated immigration laws. But in the meantime, his administration has developed policies that aim to deter migrants from making a dangerous and often deadly journey while also opening up new legal immigration pathways.

Mexico's support is critical to any push by the U.S. to clamp down at the southern border, particularly as migrants from nations as far away as Haiti are making the trek on foot up through Mexico and are not easily sent back to their home countries.

López Obrador said the administration's policies of cracking down on illegal crossings while opening up other legal pathways for others to come to the U.S. lawfully was "a humane way to address the migration phenomenon."

Earlier this year, Mexico agreed to continue to accept migrants from Venezuela, Haiti, Cuba and Nicaragua who are turned away at the border, and up to 100,000 people from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador who have family in the U.S. will be eligible to live and work there.

According to data on asylum-seekers in Mexico, people from Haiti remained at the top with 18,860 so far this year, higher than the total for the whole of 2022.

Meanwhile, the U.S. is accepting 30,000 people per month from the four countries for two years and offering them the ability to work, as long as they come legally, have eligible sponsors and pass vetting and background checks.

Guatemala and Colombia will open regional hubs where people can go to make asylum claims in the hope of stopping them from traveling on foot. But Mexico has so far refused to allow the U.S. to set one up.

López Obrador also used Friday's meeting with Biden to take up the case for Cuba and urged the U.S. president to resume a dialogue with the island nation and end U.S. sanctions.

## Author A.S. Byatt, who wrote best-seller 'Possession' and had a beetle named after her, dies at 87

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British author A.S. Byatt, who wove history, myth and a sharp eye for human foibles into books that included the Booker Prize-winning novel "Possession," has died at the age of 87.

Byatt's publisher, Chatto & Windus, said Friday that the author, whose full name was Antonia Byatt, died "peacefully at home surrounded by close family" on Thursday.

Byatt wrote two dozen books, starting with her first novel, "The Shadow of the Sun," in 1964. Her work was translated into 38 languages.

"Possession," published in 1990, follows two young academics investigating the lives of a pair of imaginary Victorian poets. The novel, a double romance which skillfully layers a modern story with mock-Victorian letters and poems, was a huge bestseller and won the prestigious Booker Prize.

Accepting the prize, Byatt said "Possession" was about the joy of reading.

"My book was written on a kind of high about the pleasures of reading," she said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 64 of 74

"Possession" was adapted into a 2002 film starring Gwyneth Paltrow and Aaron Eckhart. It was one of several Byatt books to get the film treatment. "Morpho Eugenia," a gothic Victorian novella included in the 1992 book "Angels and Insects," became a 1995 movie of the same name, starring Mark Rylance and Kristin Scott Thomas.

Her short story "The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye," which won the 1995 Aga Khan Prize for Fiction, inspired the 2022 fantasy film "Three Thousand Years of Longing." Directed by "Mad Max" filmmaker George Miller, it starred Idris Elba as a genie who spins tales for an academic played by Tilda Swinton.

Byatt's other books include four novels set in 1950s and '60s Britain that together are known as the Frederica Quartet: "The Virgin in the Garden," published in 1978, followed by "Still Life," "Babel Tower" and "A Whistling Woman." She also wrote the 2009 Booker Prize finalist "The Children's Book," a sweeping story of Edwardian England centered on a writer of fairy tales.

Her most recent book was "Medusa's Ankles," a volume of short stories published in 2021.

Byatt's literary agent, Zoe Waldie, said the author "held readers spellbound" with writing that was "multi-layered, endlessly varied and deeply intellectual, threaded through with myths and metaphysics."

Clara Farmer, Byatt's publisher at Chatto & Windus — part of Penguin Random House — said the author's books were "the most wonderful jewel-boxes of stories and ideas."

"We mourn her loss, but it's a comfort to know that her penetrating works will dazzle, shine and refract in the minds of readers for generations to come," Farmer said.

Born Antonia Susan Drabble in Sheffield, northern England, in 1936 — her sister is novelist Margaret Drabble — Byatt grew up in a Quaker family, attended Cambridge University and worked for a time as a university lecturer.

She married economist Ian Byatt in 1959 and they had a daughter and a son before divorcing. In 1972, her 11-year-old son, Charles, was struck and killed by a car while walking home from school.

Charles died shortly after Byatt had taken a teaching post at University College London to pay for his private school fees. After his death, she told The Guardian in 2009, she stayed in the job "as long as he had lived, which was 11 years." In 1983, she quit to become a full-time writer.

Byatt lived in London with her second husband, Peter Duffy, with whom she had two daughters.

Queen Elizabeth II made Byatt a dame, the female equivalent of a knight, in 1999 for services to literature, and in 2003 she was made a chevalier (knight) of France's Order of Arts and Letters.

In 2014, a species of iridescent beetle was named for her — *Euhylaeogena byattae* Hesperheide — in honor of her depiction of naturalists in "Morpho Eugenia."

## Thousands of bodies lie buried in rubble in Gaza. Families dig to retrieve them, often by hand

By WAFSA SHURFA and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The wreckage goes on for block after devastated block. The smell is sickening. Every day, hundreds of people claw through tons of rubble with shovels and iron bars and their bare hands.

They are looking for the bodies of their children. Their parents. Their neighbors. All of them killed in Israeli missile strikes. The corpses are there, somewhere in the endless acres of destruction.

More than five weeks into Israel's war against Hamas, some streets are more like graveyards. Officials in Gaza say they don't have the equipment, manpower or fuel to search properly for the living, let alone the dead.

Israel says its strikes target fighters and the infrastructure of Hamas, the militant group behind the deadly Oct. 7 attack that killed about 1,200 people in Israel. Hamas often operates in residential areas, and Israel accuses it of using the civilian population as human shields, though it does not explain specific targeting reasons for most strikes.

The victims are often everyday Palestinians, many of whom have yet to be found.



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 65 of 74

Omar al-Darawi and his neighbors have spent weeks searching the ruins of a pair of four-story houses in central Gaza. Forty-five people lived in the homes; 32 were killed. In the first days after the attack, 27 bodies were recovered.

The five still missing were al-Darawi's cousins.

They include Amani, a 37-year-old stay-at-home mom whose husband and four children also died. There's Aliaa, 28, who was taking care of her aging parents. There's another Amani, who died with her 14-year-old daughter. Her husband and their five sons survived.

"The situation has become worse every day," said the 23-year-old, who was once a college journalism student. The smell has become unbearable.

"We can't stop," he said. "We just want to find and bury them" before their bodies are lost in the rubble forever.

More than 11,400 Palestinians have been killed, two-thirds of them women and minors, according to Palestinian health authorities. The U.N. humanitarian affairs office estimates that about 2,700 people, including 1,500 children, are missing and believed buried in the ruins.

The missing add layers of pain to Gaza's families, who are overwhelmingly Muslim. Islam calls for the dead to be buried quickly — within 24 hours if possible — with the shrouded bodies turned to face the holy city of Mecca. Traditionally, the body is washed by family members with soap and scented water, and prayers for forgiveness are said at the gravesite.

The search is particularly difficult in northern Gaza, including Gaza City, where Israeli ground forces are battling Hamas militants. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled southward, terrified by the combat and pushed by Israeli warnings to evacuate. In the south, continued Israeli airstrikes and shelling mean nowhere is safe in the tiny territory.

The Palestinian Civil Defense department, Gaza's primary search-and-rescue force, has had more than two dozen workers killed and over 100 injured since the war began, said spokesman Mahmoud Bassal.

More than half its vehicles are either without fuel or damaged by strikes, he said.

In central Gaza, outside the northern combat zone, the area's civil defense director has no working heavy equipment at all, including bulldozers and cranes.

"We actually don't have fuel to keep the sole bulldozer we have operating," said Rami Ali al-Aidei.

At least five bulldozers are needed just to search a series of collapsed high-rise buildings in the town of Deir al-Balah, he said.

This means that bodies, and the desperate people searching for them, are not the focus.

"We're prioritizing areas where we think we will find survivors," said Bassal.

As a result, the search for bodies often falls to relatives or volunteers like Bilal Abu Sama, a former freelance journalist.

He ticks off a handful of Deir al-Balah's victims: 10 corpses still lost in what is left of the al-Salam Mosque; two dozen bodies missing in a destroyed home; 10 missing in another mosque attack.

"Will those bodies remain under the rubble until the war ends? OK, when will the war end?" said Abu Sama, 30, describing how families dig through the wreckage without tools. "The bodies will be decomposed. Many of them have already decomposed."

On Tuesday, 28 days after an airstrike flattened his home, Izzel-Din al-Moghari found his cousin's body.

Twenty-four people from his extended family lived in the home in the Bureij refugee camp. All but three were killed.

Eight are still missing.

A bulldozer came three days after the strike to clear the road, then left quickly for another collapsed building. The bulldozer came again Tuesday and helped find al-Moghari's cousin.

Al-Moghari then went back into the wreckage in search of his father and other relatives.

"I am stunned," he said. "What we lived through is indescribable."

Gaza has become a place where many families are denied even the comfort of a funeral.

Al-Darawi, the man searching for his cousins, understands that.

"Those who found their dead are lucky," he said.

## **E-40 discusses new album, being an underrated hip-hop legend and cookbook with Snoop Dogg**

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr. AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — E-40 built a three decade-plus career on the foundations of an unorthodox rap flow, schooling listeners with life lessons through his streetwise perspective.

With a heavy dose of Bay Area slang, E-40 created a lane for his unique hip-hop vernacular that has made him one of the genre's most revered artists. As a savvy businessman, he's leveraged his connections in the rap world to the wine, ice cream and food brand industries, including a Filipino food business inside Oracle Park in San Francisco.

Now at 56, there's no slowing down for E-40, who released his 27th studio album "Rule of Thumb: Rule 1" on Friday. His new project comes more than 30 years after his debut, "Federal."

The new album — which features NBA YoungBoy, Too Short, Larry June, Gucci Mane, B.G. and E-40's son Droop-E — is the first installment of the "Rule of Thumb" album series. He plans to release the sequel album early next year.

In a recent interview, E-40 spoke with The Associated Press about being an underrated legend, his unorthodox rap style and the new cookbook called "Snoop Dogg Presents: Goon With The Spoon," which released earlier this week.

Answers have been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: What's the meaning behind your album title?

E-40: I feel like "Rule of Thumb" is just common sense. It's certain rules and regulations that you must just know off top. It doesn't take a rocket scientist. You don't have to have a quarter of a brain to comprehend that. I'm teaching life lessons. Giving it to them straight, not fake and not fabricating things. It's a lot of lightweight storytelling and a lot of life lessons, consequences and repercussions. I mix it up like a gumbo pot. I'm multi-dimensional. I don't do just one style of rap. My beats aren't always the same. I'm everywhere like air.

AP: Where does your unorthodox rap style and wisdom come from?

E-40: Being chipped from a different cliff, being carved from a different clay, and made from a different fabric. I'm wired different than most. I'm from an era of morals and respect, and we follow guidelines. That's always been me. ... I always told stories. I talked about the repercussions and the consequences. If you go do this, you do know that little 30-second decision that you made could cost you 30 years in prison or you might be buried 6 feet deep. I always talked about the consequences if you go do something. I speak the real.

AP: You're highly respected within hip-hop, but how does the feeling of being underrated bother you?

E-40: My life is beautiful. I'm very successful. I'm financially set. I'm financially good. I'm still accumulating bread. I'm still breaking boundaries. But anything that's different is always going to be questionable. There will never be a rapper like E-40, whether you like me or not. You just got to give it to me. I got my own thing. I've been successful for 36 years with music since 1988. Let that soak in. I've got to be doing something right. Can't just be no damn luck. I come from the ground up. All your favorite independent CEOs, they respect me because I was first. I laid the foundation for independent music.

Do I still feel underrated? Yes, I do. But I know what comes with the package. They like people that's in the pocket and never go outside the box. That's not me.

AP: You have a new cookbook. When did your passion for cooking start?

E-40: I'm the oldest of four. Moms would work two or three jobs. My mom and dad divorced when I was 8 years old. I had a lot of responsibilities being the oldest, so I cooked. We all knew how to cook. We taught ourselves how to cook. I worked at a restaurant when I was a teenager. There was a Caucasian man that I'd love dearly to this day. His name is Lewis. He taught me how to cook escargot, orange

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 67 of 74

roughly with almonds with lemon butter sauce with white wine. He taught me how to do London Broil and chicken cordon bleu.

AP: How did you and Snoop connect on this cookbook?

E-40: Snoop, that's my guy. He cooks as well. He was like, "Earl, my book was very successful. I sold over a million copies. It's a bestseller. Let me present it."

I was like "Snoop, I rock with you. You're legendary. You're a good friend of mine. I've been knowing you for over 30-plus years. We're family. Thank you. Let's do it."

When you put your pride to the side, bigger things happen. He's got some recipes in there. I got some recipes in there. He's got adult beverages. I have adult beverages. It only makes sense. We both co-pack. We do the whole thing. Teamwork makes the dream work. It's enough money out there for all of us.

AP: You've met with Vice President Kamala Harris at the White House, received an honorary doctorate from Grambling State University and had a street named after you in your hometown of Vallejo, California. How has hip-hop impacted your life?

E-40: Shout out to DJ Kool Herc, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, Run-DMC. Those dudes really paved the way for people like myself to diversify our portfolios and find other ways to make financial gain on a legitimate note. This beats the streets. You can make more money here than you could ever in the streets.

AP: Will you ever release a book with your slang terms?

E-40: If I do the book of slang, it's going to hurt people's feelings. Because they think that their favorite rapper made the words up, and it came from me. Or if it didn't come from me, I got it from the soil — the trenches where most rappers that are from the urban community get their (expletive) from.

I've been around for more than a half a century. I know all this. I've got receipts to back it up. One day, I want to sit down and go word-for-word of all the words I've coined. I want to go to the year, the song, everything. I want to ask "Who said it before me?" If they try to lie about it, I've got receipts. I was the first rapper screaming "Tycoon." That's one of many. "Slappin." "Choppers." I've got so many of them. Just for that, I'm going to do a book of slang. The real way in 2024 style.

## Ethics chairman launches a new bid to expel George Santos after a withering report on his conduct

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The chairman of the House Ethics Committee announced Friday he has filed a resolution to force a vote on expelling Rep. George Santos, R-N.Y., from Congress, one day after the committee issued a withering report detailing substantial evidence that Santos converted campaign donations for his own personal use.

Santos easily survived an expulsion vote earlier this month as lawmakers in both parties stressed the need to allow due process, as Santos is also facing nearly two dozen charges in federal court. But the release of the committee's findings has generated new momentum for ousting the scandal-plagued freshman. Shortly after the report was released, Santos announced he would not seek reelection.

"The evidence uncovered in the Ethics Committee's Investigative Subcommittee investigation is more than sufficient to warrant punishment and the most appropriate punishment, is expulsion," said Rep. Michael Guest, R-Miss.

The Ethics Committee referred its findings to the Justice Department, serving up new evidence that could potentially play into the federal charges against Santos. Lawmakers opted to do their work without going through a lengthy formal process that would be used to make a recommendation to the House on the appropriate form of punishment.

Guest emphasized in his statement that he was filing the expulsion resolution separate from the committee process and was doing so in his personal capacity as a member of the House. Several other members of the Ethics panel have also come out in favor of expulsion now that the investigation is complete.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 68 of 74

Expulsion from the House requires a two-thirds vote, a high bar. It's the sternest form of punishment available to the House and has occurred just five times in the history of the chamber — three times during the Civil War for disloyalty to the union and twice after convictions on federal charges, most recently in 2002.

Santos assailed the committee's report in a tweet on X as a "disgusting politicized smear." He said he will have a press conference on the Capitol steps on Nov. 30. The vote on whether to expel him is likely to take place before then.

The Ethics panel appointed to investigate Santos met nine times over the course of its investigation, interviewed more than 40 witnesses and authorized 37 subpoenas. Among the most damaging of the allegations was that he used campaign donations to pay for stays in Atlantic City and the Hamptons and to pay for a Botox treatment at a local spa.

The panel also described Santos as uncooperative with their investigation, declining to voluntarily testify or provide a statement under oath.

The findings by the investigative panel may be the least of Santos' worries. The congressman faces a 23-count federal indictment that alleges he stole the identities of campaign donors and then used their credit cards to make tens of thousands of dollars in unauthorized charges. Federal prosecutors say Santos, who has pleaded not guilty, wired some of the money to his personal bank account and used the rest to pad his campaign coffers.

Santos, who represents parts of Queens and Long Island, is also accused of falsely reporting to the Federal Election Commission that he had loaned his campaign \$500,000 when he actually hadn't given anything and had less than \$8,000 in the bank. The fake loan was an attempt to convince Republican Party officials that he was a serious candidate, worth their financial support, the indictment says.

## He was told his 9-year-old daughter was dead. Now she's believed to be alive and a hostage in Gaza

By LEANNE ITALIE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Emily Tony Korenberg Hand celebrated her eighth birthday last year romping with friends and family among the jugglers, acrobats and stilt walkers for her circus-themed party at Kibbutz Be'eri, not far from the Gaza Strip.

On Friday, when she turned 9, there was no party. Emily is believed to be somewhere in Gaza among the hostages taken by Hamas militants who swarmed her kibbutz Oct. 7 during the incursion into Israel that left some 1,200 dead and 240 abducted.

"She won't even know it's her birthday. She won't know what day it is," her tearful father, Thomas Hand, 63, said via Zoom. "Can you imagine the fear?"

Soon after the Hamas attacks, Hand had been told by leaders of Be'eri that Emily was among the dead after she had spent the night at a friend's house on the kibbutz. His shock and grief at the news was tinged with comfort.

"I was sort of relieved because I'd rather that than have her taken hostage," he recalled thinking. "The way they told me was Emily has been found. She was found in the kibbutz, and she'd been found dead. I'll never forget those three statements."

Then, on Oct. 31, Hand's world turned upside down once again.

That's when the Israeli military informed him Emily's body had not been recovered, nor her DNA found among the blood and many dead at Be'eri. There was no blood in the bomb shelter she would have used or in the house where she had gone for her sleepover.

"I had to shift my whole brain and digest this new information. And when they told me, I just went, 'No, no, no no,'" he said, his voice cracking.

Hand and his daughter, both dual Irish-Israel citizens, weren't strangers to heartbreak. When Emily was 2½, her mother, Liat Korenberg, died of breast cancer. Korenberg and Hand had never married and were living apart, she in Haifa and he at Be'eri after he married another woman.

Before Liat succumbed, she and Emily moved in with Hand at Be'eri so Emily's transition would be easier. Liat suffered for just over two years.

At the kibbutz, Emily quickly made friends and settled into school. She has varied interests: Brazilian dance, judo, volleyball, tennis and piano. She loves gymnastics. She excels at academics. "This year she wanted to learn the guitar. I hope that happens," her father said.

Emily, he said, is a leader among her friends. "She didn't demand to be. People just followed her," he said.

Emily's life includes her father's now ex-wife, Narkis Hand, and two older children from his marriage that ended more than 20 years ago. Emily remains close with Narkis and her now-grown half-siblings, including 26-year-old Natalie. They also live at Be'eri, a tight-knit community Hand discovered as a volunteer before he decided to stay 30 years ago.

"Emily loved cooking so Emily and Natalie would cook together," said Hand, a Dublin native. "Narkis really became Emily's second mother. Even Narkis' mother, she became a second grandmother."

In a message to her sister, Natalie told The Times of Israel: "I want to tell you that we are doing everything to get you home. We know you are being held hostage. We love you so much and miss you."

Hand was in New York for media interviews but also to unveil a billboard of Emily on Friday in Times Square. It's the first of hundreds to go up around the United States with images of the hostages as some protesters continue to tear down "kidnapped" posters. A billboard, Hand said, can't be ripped apart.

"Can you imagine what that poor little child is going through every single day, terrified for her life?" he said. "Death. Death in my head is an easier option."

## Defeated Virginia candidate whose explicit videos surfaced says she may not be done with politics

By SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

HENRICO, Va. (AP) — Susanna Gibson lost her Virginia legislative race this month, but she may not be done with politics.

Gibson, a Democrat whose House of Delegates campaign and personal life were rocked by news reports that she had livestreamed sex acts with her husband on a pornographic website, isn't ruling out another run for office someday, she told The Associated Press in her first interview since the controversy erupted in September.

While expressing regret about what unfolded, Gibson is unapologetic about her participation in the online sex acts. She maintains that a crime was committed when members of the news media were alerted to the existence of videos documenting what had been livestreamed. Moving forward, she says she wants to find ways to support and encourage other women running for office, particularly those who might find themselves in situations that bear similarities to hers.

Gibson, who has faced harassment and death threats since the disclosure of the videos, said of her aims: "Using what platform I have to make sure that this does not remain acceptable. Doing what I can do to prevent this from happening to any other woman. I'm still figuring out next steps and what that looks like. But that is my plan."

Gibson said she had no idea the videos existed until they were brought to her attention by reporters. Two preemptive opposition research efforts into her own background that she had approved — a common political practice — did not turn them up, she said.

Gibson and her husband had no idea their livestreaming would be recorded in any fashion, she said.

"Consent to allow someone to view something that exists only as a moment in time or exists only in their memory is very different than consenting to allowing someone to have something that remains a permanent object and can be shared or viewed indefinitely," Gibson said in the interview.

The platform the couple used currently warns in its privacy policy and other explanatory materials that it cannot control the use of content and that streams may be recorded.

Daniel Watkins, an attorney for Gibson who specializes in defamation cases, has said the dissemination of the videos was a violation of Virginia's revenge porn law. The law makes it a crime to "maliciously"

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 70 of 74

disseminate nude or sexual images of another person with the intent to “coerce, harass, or intimidate.”

Gibson, who maintains that nothing about her use of the streaming platform had any bearing on her qualifications to hold public office, said sex between consenting adults should never merit a news story.

“What is newsworthy is abortion rights are on the line in Virginia,” she said. “What is newsworthy is gun violence. What is not newsworthy is someone’s consensual sex life within the confines of their marriage or with any partner.”

Ken Nunnenkamp, executive director of the Republican Party of Virginia, said he didn’t think it was the consenting sex that voters took issue with but rather the fact it was streamed online. He called the behavior disqualifying for public office.

Many outlets that covered the story focused on the fact that Gibson sought tips in the form of tokens, which the site says can be converted to cash, in return for carrying out specific sex acts.

She noted that tokens are of nominal value and said she never made money from engaging on the platform.

A nurse practitioner with degrees from the University of Virginia and Columbia University, Gibson said she decided to run for office after the Roe v. Wade decision guaranteeing a constitutional right to an abortion was overturned last year. She won a competitive June primary and centered her message to voters on protecting abortion rights as the state’s Republican governor, Glenn Youngkin, pledged to enact stricter limits.

Gibson said she “never once” thought of dropping out of the race. But what she went through in the immediate aftermath of the disclosures, she said, “I wouldn’t wish it on my worst enemy.”

Journalists loitered outside her home for days, unfamiliar vehicles lingered in the street and death threats landed in her mailbox, she said. Her social media mentions are still replete with criticism and slurs.

“I could barely get up off the floor for about two weeks,” she said, adding that anyone reading about her account should think about how it would feel “to know that your naked body is going to be splashed all over the internet.”

Gibson said “of course” she regrets the part she played in allowing that to happen. But she added it was a choice she made “in the context of my loving marriage” and that she was not ashamed and had done nothing wrong.

Even as news coverage of the matter slowed, the harassment continued. In mid-October, someone made a false report of fatal gun violence in her home that resulted in a massive police response at a time her young children were there, Gibson said.

Henrico police confirmed they received a report of a firearms violation in Gibson’s block and determined on the scene that there was no threat.

While some donors and top Democratic Party officials generally distanced themselves from the controversy, Gibson said she had plenty of support, including from one of the state’s most prominent female politicians, L. Louise Lucas. Gibson’s campaign staffers stood by her, friends flew in from around the country to comfort her and over 2,000 new donors contributed to her campaign in the immediate aftermath, she said.

Abortion rights groups and a leading LGBTQ+ advocacy group continued to support her campaign.

“I was personally really amazed by the way she persevered,” said Han Jones, political director of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia.

Gibson temporarily stopped seeing patients at the clinic where she worked and focused instead on knocking on doors. She hit about 100 a day for two months, she said.

Ultimately, she lost to her Republican opponent, David Owen, by about 2 percentage points, a narrower margin than some had expected. Gibson, who said she thinks the controversy had minimal impact on the outcome, secured about the same share of votes in the competitive 57th District as Democratic gubernatorial candidate Terry McAuliffe did there in 2021, according to an analysis by the nonpartisan Virginia Public Access Project.

“I won’t lose next time,” Gibson said at one point — though when asked about the possibility of another run for office she was noncommittal.

Gibson plans to return soon to caring for patients and says lawmakers should expect to see her lobbying

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 71 of 74

the General Assembly on issues like privacy and revenge porn, abortion and LGBTQ+ rights.

But where she's "laser-focused" is finding an avenue to support female candidates, particularly those who might find themselves navigating harassment over issues related to their sexuality.

"There are going to be very few millennial women who are aging into running for office, who don't have some kind of picture or video on their device, on a partner's device, somewhere on their iCloud, right?" she said.

In addition to hiring Watkins, Gibson said she's retained an attorney who specializes in sex crimes and has made a complaint with local police and the FBI.

Watkins' argument that distributing the videos constitutes an offense under Virginia's "revenge porn" law is plausible, according to Mary Anne Franks, a professor at George Washington University Law School who specializes in intellectual property, technology and civil rights law.

Franks wrote in a lengthy emailed assessment of the case that Virginia's law on non-consensually distributed intimate imagery is broader than some other states' in that the material doesn't have to be private.

While Gibson called it "enraging" to be "reduced" by some people to this controversy, she said she's moving forward holding her head high.

"You don't get to treat women like this and have us sit down and be quiet," she said.

\_\_\_ Associated Press writer Matthew Barakat contributed to this report.

## **Spend this holiday TV season with Paddington, Melissa McCarthy, Lori Loughlin and more**

By ALICIA RANCILIO Associated Press

Festive TV programming is starting to stack up like toys in Santa's sleigh.

Holiday favorites like "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and "A Christmas Story" will soon return, along with new family friendly films including "Dashing Through the Snow" on Disney+ and Melissa McCarthy's "Genie" on Peacock.

There's music to enjoy too, with Hannah Waddingham leading an Apple TV+ special and the annual Tabernacle Choir concert airing on PBS. Plus, familiar faces including Lori Loughlin, Teri Hatcher and Lacey Chabert have holiday rom-coms airing.

Here's where — and when, in Eastern Standard Time — to watch this year's holiday TV bonanza.

### **GETTING AN EARLY START**

Hulu has its own original feel-good holiday movies: "A Christmas Frequency" starring Denise Richards and "Reporting for Christmas," which are among the offerings available now.

"Desperate Housewives" star Hatcher stars in a cute twist on Kate Hudson's "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" with "How to Fall in Love by the Holidays," now up on the Roku Channel. Hatcher plays a reporter reluctantly writing a column with tips on finding in love in time for Christmas — and sparks her own romance.

Loughlin returns in her first original holiday movie since getting ensnared in a massive college admissions bribery scandal, called "A Christmas Blessing," now available on Great American Family. Loughlin plays a chef who has just wrapped her long-running TV cooking show and is planning a two-year sojourn to write a book. A quick detour to Milwaukee to handle some family business ends up taking her longer than expected when she finds love with James Tupper.

Paul Hollywood and Prue Leith judge "The Great American Baking Show: Celebrity Holiday," also on Roku Channel, where celeb contestants including comedians Joel McHale, Phoebe Robinson and Heather McMahan compete in a bake-off.

Chris "Ludacris" Bridges plays Eddie, a dad who has been anti-Christmas because of a traumatic childhood experience in "Dashing through the Snow" for Disney+. When his estranged wife (Teyonah Parris) asks him to take their young daughter out on Christmas Eve, they encounter a man named Nick (played by Lil Rel Howery), who seems to think he's Santa Claus. Eddie thinks the man needs medical attention but ends up going on a magical adventure. It begins streaming Friday.

Young shopping mall workers find love in "The Holiday Shift." Premiering Friday on Roku Channel, the

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 72 of 74

five-episode series stars Varun Saranga, Jean-Luc Bilodeau, Devyn Nekoda, Nadine Bhabha and Sarah Levy of "Schitt's Creek."

The likeability and comedic talents of Leighton Meester ("Gossip Girl") and Robbie Amell ("Upload") infuse some fresh air into the genre with "EXmas," out on Amazon Freevee Friday. They play former fiancées, Graham and Ali, who find themselves in a nightmare scenario when Graham surprises his family by returning home for the holidays — and finds Ali already there as a special guest.

## MORE HOLIDAY LOVE

Another exciting duo to watch is former "Party of Five" co-stars Lacey Chabert and Scott Wolf who again, play siblings in "A Merry Scottish Christmas" for the Hallmark Channel premiering Saturday at 8 p.m.

Jenn Lilley and Matthew Morrison also jet set in their Great American Family film, "A Paris Christmas Waltz" airing at 8 p.m. on Sunday.

Hatcher offers a second holiday movie helping this season with a rekindling romance rom-com. She co-stars in "Christmas at the Chalet" with William DeVry on Nov. 25 at 8 p.m. on Lifetime.

Chabert also has two holiday movies this year. She stars in "Haul Out the Holly: Lit Up" — a sequel to last year's hit, "Haul out the Holly" — about a neighborhood that takes their holiday decoration competition very seriously. The lights go up Nov. 25 at 8 p.m. on Hallmark Channel.

Kristoffer Polaha and Bethany Joy Lenz filmed a time-traveling romance story at the famed Biltmore Estate in North Carolina. "A Biltmore Christmas" debuts on Hallmark at 8 p.m. on Nov. 26.

Loni Anderson, Morgan Fairchild, Linda Gray, Donna Mills and Nicollette Sheridan team up in "Ladies of the '80s: A Divas Christmas" for Lifetime at 8 p.m. on Dec. 2. The quintet portray former soap opera co-stars who come together for a live holiday special and play matchmakers with their producer and director.

Another Hallmark regular, Jonathan Bennett, returns with a dose of holiday cheer in "Christmas on Cherry Lane" airing at 8 p.m. Dec. 9. He stars alongside Vincent Rodriguez III ("Crazy Ex-Girlfriend"), Erin Cahill and John Brotherton. The project is also an onscreen reunion for James Denton and Catherine Bell of "The Good Witch."

A book editor in New York returns to her family farm and the Amish community she lived in as a child where she helps save a family bakery and meets a handsome local. "Christmas at the Amish Bakery" premieres Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. on UPtv.

In "Yes, Chef!", Tia Mowry stars as a culinary instructor whose life takes a surprising turn when she competes in an annual Kringle Cook-Off where she finds career challenges and a possible love interest. Buddy Valastro, known as The Cake Boss, makes his acting debut. It airs Dec. 10 on Lifetime at 8 p.m.

## SOMETHING NEW FOR THE KIDS

Nickelodeon's "The Tiny Chef Show" presents a Thanksgiving-themed show called "Fwendsgiving" on Nov. 20.

Melissa McCarthy plays a genie who brings holiday cheer to Paapa Essiedu in the new comedy "Genie," debuting Nov. 22 on Peacock.

The weekend after Thanksgiving is a big one for Candace Cameron Bure's household. Both she and her daughter, Natasha Bure, have movies on Great American Family this season. Candace's movie "My Christmas Hero" airs Nov. 24 at 8 p.m. and Natasha makes her acting debut in "A Christmas for the Ages" alongside Cheryl Ladd, at 8 p.m. on Nov. 26.

"The Bad Guys: A Very Bad Holiday," based on the animated feature "The Bad Guys," features villains Mr. Wolf, Mr. Piranha, Mr. Snake, Mr. Shark, and Ms. Tarantula, setting out to do what they do best, (be bad) on Christmas. But when the holiday is canceled, they change course to pull off a happy holiday. Drops on Netflix Nov. 30.

## IT WOULDN'T BE CHRISTMAS WITHOUT...

Some classics still hold up, such as the 1974 movie "The Year Without a Santa Claus," featuring the voice of Andy Rooney as Santa. To the dismay of children, Santa decides he's burnt out and needs to take a holiday off. One little boy recognizes how hard Santa works and rallies everyone to give gifts to Santa so he can feel the love. The movie begins playing on Saturday, Nov. 18 on TBS and Sunday, Nov. 19 on TNT.

CBS will air the Christmas classic "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" at 8 p.m. on Nov. 27. It will repeat



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 73 of 74

at 8 p.m. on Dec. 16, followed by long-time favorites "Frosty the Snowman" and "Frosty Returns."

Apple TV+ once again makes "A Charlie Brown Christmas" available for free Dec. 16 and 17 so viewers can test out the streaming service, and enjoy the Christmas classic.

The 24-hour marathon of "A Christmas Story" begins Dec. 24 on both TNT and TBS.

## HANUKKAH SPECIALS

Nick Jr. will air Hanukkah-themed programming beginning at 8 p.m. on Dec. 8 with a special "Paddington" episode followed by an episode of "Bossy Bear."

Hallmark Channel also will have a Hanukkah-themed movie called "Round and Round" starring Vic Michaelis and Bryan Greenberg. It airs at 8 p.m. on Dec. 10.

## HOLIDAY TUNES

"Ted Lasso" star Hannah Waddingham taps into her musical theater background by hosting her own Christmas special for Apple TV+ called "Hannah Waddingham: Home for Christmas." Debuting Nov. 22, the event was taped in front of a live audience at the London Coliseum and features special guests.

"Season of Light: Christmas with The Tabernacle Choir," airs Dec. 12 on PBS at 8 p.m. and Dec. 17 at 8 p.m. on BYUtv. Broadway's Lea Salonga leads the annual concert with the beloved Tabernacle Choir that was recorded in 2022 to air this year. Sir David Suchet narrates.

Fox's hit show "The Masked Singer" gets into the holiday spirit with "The Masked Singer Holiday Sing-Along" on Dec. 12, featuring season 10 contestants, "Masked Singer" alums and Nick Cannon, Jenny McCarthy-Wahlberg, Ken Jeong, Robin Thicke and Nicole Scherzinger as "carolers."

## Biden signs a bill averting a government shutdown for now, with Israel and Ukraine aid still stalled

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — President Joe Biden signed a temporary spending bill a day before a potential government shutdown, pushing a fight with congressional Republicans over the federal budget into the new year, as wartime aid for Ukraine and Israel remains stalled.

The measure passed the House and Senate by wide bipartisan margins this week, ensuring the government remains open until after the holiday season, and potentially giving lawmakers more time to sort out their considerable differences over government spending levels for the current budget year. Biden signed the bill Thursday in San Francisco, where he was hosting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

News of the signing came late at night. The president signed the bill at the Legion of Honor Museum, where he held a dinner for APEC members.

The spending package keeps government funding at current levels for roughly two more months while a long-term package is negotiated. It splits the deadlines for passing full-year appropriations bills into two dates: Jan. 19 for some federal agencies and Feb. 2 for others, creating two dates when there will be a risk of a partial government shutdown.

The two-step approach was championed by new House Speaker Mike Johnson, a Republican, and was not favored by many in the Senate, though all but one Democrat and 10 Republicans supported it because it ensured the government would not shut down for now.

Johnson has vowed that he will not support any further stopgap funding measures, known as continuing resolutions. He portrayed the temporary funding bill as setting the ground for a spending "fight" with the Senate next year.

The spending bill does not include the White House's nearly \$106 billion request for wartime aid for Israel and Ukraine. Nor does it provide humanitarian funding for Palestinians and other supplemental requests, including money for border security. Lawmakers are likely to turn their attention more fully to that request after the Thanksgiving holiday in hopes of negotiating a deal.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 147 ~ 74 of 74

## Today in History: November 18, more than 900 die at Jonestown

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Saturday, Nov. 18, the 322nd day of 2023. There are 43 days left in the year.

On Nov. 18, 1978, U.S. Rep. Leo J. Ryan of California and four others were killed on an airstrip in Jonestown, Guyana, by members of the Peoples Temple; the killings were followed by a night of mass murder and suicide resulting in the deaths of more than 900 cult members.

In 1883, the United States and Canada adopted a system of standard time zones.

In 1936, Germany and Italy recognized the Spanish government of Francisco Franco.

In 1963, the Bell System introduced the first commercial touch-tone telephone system in Carnegie and Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

In 1966, U.S. Roman Catholic bishops did away with the rule against eating meat on Fridays outside of Lent.

In 1976, Spain's parliament approved a bill to establish a democracy after 37 years of dictatorship.

In 1985, the comic strip "Calvin and Hobbes," created by Bill Watterson, was first published.

In 1987, the congressional Iran-Contra committees issued their final report, saying President Ronald Reagan bore "ultimate responsibility" for wrongdoing by his aides.

In 1991, Shiite Muslim kidnappers in Lebanon freed Anglican Church envoy Terry Waite and Thomas Sutherland, the American dean of agriculture at the American University of Beirut.

In 1999, 12 people were killed when a bonfire under construction at Texas A&M University collapsed.

In 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that the state constitution guaranteed gay couples the right to marry.

In 2005, eight months after Robert Blake was acquitted of murdering his wife at a criminal trial, a civil jury decided the actor was behind the slaying and ordered him to pay Bonny Lee Bakley's children \$30 million.

In 2020, President Donald Trump filed for a recount of Wisconsin's two largest Democratic counties, paying the required \$3 million cost and alleging that they were the sites of the "worst irregularities" although no evidence of illegal activity had been presented. (The recounts resulted in a slightly larger lead for Democrat Joe Biden.)

In 2012, in Israel's offensive against Islamic militants, 12 people were killed when an Israeli missile ripped through a two-story home in a residential area of Gaza City.

In 2021, more than half a century after the assassination of Malcolm X, two of his convicted killers were exonerated; a New York judge dismissed the convictions of Muhammad Aziz and the late Khalil Islam after prosecutors and the men's lawyers said a renewed investigation had found new evidence that undermined the case against them.

In 2022, Attorney General Merrick Garland named a special counsel to oversee the Justice Department's investigation into the presence of classified documents at former President Donald Trump's Florida estate, into key aspects of a separate probe involving the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection and efforts to undo the 2020 election.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Brenda Vaccaro is 84. Author-poet Margaret Atwood is 84. Actor Linda Evans is 81. Actor Susan Sullivan is 81. Country singer Jacky Ward is 77. Actor Jameson Parker is 76. Actor-singer Andrea Marcovicci is 75. Rock musician Herman Rarebell is 74. Singer Graham Parker is 73. Actor Delroy Lindo is 71. Comedian Kevin Nealon is 70. Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback Warren Moon is 67. Actor Oscar Nunez is 65. Actor Elizabeth Perkins is 63. Singer Kim Wilde is 63. Actor Tim Guinee is 61. Rock musician Kirk Hammett (Metallica) is 61. Rock singer Tim DeLaughter (dee-LAW'-ter) is 58. Author and lecturer Brené Brown is 58. Actor Romany Malco is 55. Actor Owen Wilson is 55. Actor Dan Bakkedahl is 55. Singer Duncan Sheik is 54. Actor Mike Epps is 53. Actor Peta Wilson is 53. Actor Chloe Sevigny (SEH'-ven-ee) is 49. Country singer Jessi Alexander is 47. Actor Steven Pasquale is 47. Rapper Fabolous is 46. Actor-director Nate Parker is 44. Rapper Mike Jones is 43. Actor Mekia Cox is 42. Actor-comedian Nasim Pedrad (nah-SEEM' peh-DRAHD') is 42. Actor Allison Tolman is 42. Actor Christina Vidal is 42. Actor Damon Wayans Jr. is 41. Country singer TJ Osborne (Brothers Osborne) is 39. U.S. Olympic track star Allyson Felix is 38. Fashion designer Christian Siriano is 38. Actor Nathan Kress is 31.