

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Coming up

### Monday, Nov. 20

St. John's Lutheran: Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m..

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

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

JH GBB hosts Britton-Hecla (7th at 6 p.m., 8th at 7 p.m.)

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

Senior Menu: Spanish rice with hamburger, green beans, mandarin oranges, vanilla pudding, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: French bread pizza, green beans.

### Tuesday, Nov. 21

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 9 a.m.

Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Senior Menu: Ham and bean soup, egg salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, fruit.

School Breakfast: Waffles.

School Lunch: Chicken Alfredo, cooked carrots.

## Groton Daily Independent

PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460



### Wednesday, Nov. 22

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Bible Study, 2:45 p.m.;

Thanksgiving Eve Service, 7 p.m.

No School - Thanksgiving Break

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult

Bible Study begins at 7 pm

Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, sweet potatoes, vegetable carpi blend, chocolate pudding with bananas, whole wheat bread.

### Thursday, Nov. 23

THANKSGIVING DAY

Community Thanksgiving Dinner at the Groton Community Center, 11:30 a.m.

No School - Thanksgiving Break

### Friday, Nov. 24

No School - Thanksgiving Break

### Saturday, Nov. 25

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.

## OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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The  
**Bulletin**  
by **Newsweek**

## World in Brief

took more than 20 people hostage.

**Walmart Shooting:** The police are looking for a person responsible for the shooting of two people in a Walmart parking lot in South Anchorage, Alaska. Officers have not released a description of the suspect or publicly identified the victims.

**Argentina Election:** Right-wing populist Javier Milei won Argentina's run-off presidential election on Sunday, with citizens handing victory to an outsider who has promised a significant shake-up to fix the battled economy and rising poverty.

**Gag Order Against Trump:** An appeals court will hear arguments today on whether to reinstate a gag order on Donald Trump in the election interference case. Prosecutors say it is needed to prevent Trump from making inflammatory comments about court staff.

**Teasing a 2024 Run:** West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin alluded to a presidential run in the 2024 election on Sunday while also criticizing President Joe Biden for being pulled to the "extreme left."

**Weather Forecast:** The National Weather Service said thunderstorms and heavy rain extending from the Lower Mississippi Valley to the Northeast were possible due to a storm system set to develop in the days leading up to Thanksgiving.

**War in Ukraine:** Russian forces are allegedly considering the re-introduction of a high-altitude Soviet-era aircraft amid recent surveillance failures, U.K. intelligence sources said on Sunday.

**Rosalynn Carter Dies at 96:** Tributes poured in for former first lady Rosalynn Carter, who died at 96 after entering hospice care following a dementia diagnosis. Her loss highlighted decades of humanitarian work and push for mental health care.

**Israel-Hamas War:** Health officials said 31 premature babies have been evacuated from Gaza's al-Shifa Hospital. Israel released footage that its forces said shows a Hamas tunnel under the medical facility. Meanwhile, concerns are rising of an escalation after Yemen's Houthi rebels seized control of an Israeli-owned cargo ship in the Red Sea and

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## BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY

November 21, 2023, 8:45 A.M.

COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS, COURTHOUSE ANNEX - 25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN

1. Call To Order - Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Opportunity of Public Comment
4. First Reading Ordinance #261 – Title 4 Zoning, Chapter 4.2015 – “Fences”
5. Ted Dickey – NE Council of Government (NECOG)
  - a. Administration Contract
  - b. Drawdown Request #1
  - c. Initial Requirements
    - i. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
    - ii. Resolution Assuring Fair Housing
    - iii. Excessive Force Policy
    - iv. Certification Regarding Restrictions on Lobbying
    - v. Relocation, Displacement & Acquisition Plan
    - vi. Code of Conduct Policy
6. Dave Lunzman, Sheriff
  - a. Discuss RFP for in-car cameras and deputy body cameras
7. TIF Administrative Fee discussion
8. Planning & Zoning – Flood Plain Development Permits (FPDP)
9. Consent Calendar
  - a. Approval of General Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2023
  - b. Claims/Payroll
  - c. HR Report
  - d. Approve & Authorize Chairman to sign MOU with SDSU For 4-H Advisor
  - e. Claim Assignments
  - f. Lease Agreement
  - g. Travel Request
10. Other Business
11. Executive Session (if requested per SDCL 1-25-2)
12. Adjourn

Brown County Commission Meeting

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone.

<https://meet.goto.com/BrCoCommission>

You can also dial in using your phone. United States: +1 (872) 240-3311

Access Code: 601-168-909 #

Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://meet.goto.com/install>

Public comment provides an opportunity for the public to address the county commission but may not exceed 3 minutes. Public comment will be limited to 10 minutes (or at the discretion of the board).

Public comment will be accepted virtually when the virtual attendance option is available.

Official Recordings of Commission Meetings along with the Minutes can be found at <https://www.brown.sd.us/node/454>

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## Operation Christmas Child collection site in Bristol

Westside Wesleyan Church of Bristol has been a drop-off point for Samaritan's Purse Shoeboxes for six years. The Bristol location is the drop off for groups, individuals and churches contributing to the Operation Christmas Child program in northeast South Dakota. Pictured are Jeff (left) and Brooke (right) Smidt along with Jeff's mom, Tandra (middle). Last year 594 boxes were left off. Monday is the last day for delivery. From there, the trailer will be taken to Sioux Falls, then to Denver and then to North Carolina where the boxes will be sorted and sent to various places around the world. (Photos by Paul Kosel)



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ALL OVER ROOFING

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

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



## Frosty is Back!!!

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



## 2023 Frosty Clues

I....

20.) have 2 pets that I LOVE!

## Practicing Gratitude

I love Thanksgiving. I love preparing the food all day and enjoying it while sitting around a table with some of the people I love most. And there is one holiday tradition that I have grown to adore. As we sit down to eat, we share one thing we feel grateful for this year.

Practicing gratitude has been shown to improve aspects of mental health and our sense of well-being, and it isn't hard to understand why. Saying or thinking "I am grateful for..." feels really good and doing so regularly can help shape our outlook on the world and our place in it. I know this, and still, I fail to follow through with regularly practicing gratitude like some experts recommend.

There is no time like the present, right? Let's try it.

Here are some things this Prairie Doc is feeling particularly thankful for this year:

I am thankful for my health, thankful to be alive. As I grow older, and as I continue to walk with my patients as they encounter disease and sometimes death, the simple wonder of being alive and feeling well has never felt so clear. None of us will avert death but feeling gratitude for life does make each day a little sweeter.

I am grateful for my family and friends who have sustained me through difficult times and shared in my joy. I am on the receiving end of hugs, snuggles, and the hilarious and warm actions of my children, who give me laughter and hope every day.

I am incredibly grateful to be a physician. I feel fortunate to have a profession that gives me meaning and connects me to people and my community. I am indebted to my colleagues and mentors, including my Prairie Doc cohorts and the original Prairie Doc, Rick Holm, who generously shared so much with me about being a physician.

There. That felt good. I hope you'll try it too, around the Thanksgiving table, privately in a journal, or however it works for you. Let's make a habit of practicing gratitude.

Kelly Evans-Hullinger, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices internal medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org) and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show providing health information based on science, built on trust, on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



**Kelly Evans-Hullinger, MD**

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## Weekly Vikings Recap - Vikings vs. Broncos

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

The Minnesota Vikings and Denver Broncos entered their Sunday night primetime matchup as one of the most anticipated games of the week. Just a month ago, both teams were thinking that their season might be over. However, thanks to a three and five-game winning streak for the Broncos and Vikings respectively, both teams entered Sunday night's game with an eye for the playoffs. And the game did not disappoint.

The first half started poorly for the Vikings as Josh Dobbs fumbled on just the third play of the game when he received a pitch from TJ Hockenson on a trick play. Thankfully, the Vikings shut down any momentum for the Broncos and held them only to a field goal. After trading punts, the Vikings' offense got rolling thanks to the running attack of Alexander Mattison and Ty Chandler. Coming into the game, the Broncos were one of the worst rush defenses in the NFL, and it was evident that the Vikings wanted to exploit it as they ran the ball on seven out of their first 10 plays. The highlight of the drive, however, came on a Josh Dobbs touchdown to Josh Oliver after Dobbs broke what seemed like a guaranteed sack from the Broncos defender. If there has been one constant throughout Dobbs' first three games with the Vikings it's that he has a strong lower body that makes it hard for defenders to take him down.

The rest of the half was uneventful, to say the least for both the Broncos and Vikings as neither team could find the endzone and had to settle for multiple field goals. As the first half ended, the Vikings went into halftime with a 10-9 lead after not allowing a Broncos touchdown. Impressively, this was the Vikings' fourth straight game without allowing a touchdown in the first half. The Vikings' defense has become more and more dominant each week.

The second half started great for the Vikings, as the defense forced an immediate three-and-out. The Vikings' offense picked up where it left off in the first half as they continued to run the ball down the throat of the Broncos' defense. After the Vikings reached the RedZone, they found themselves in a tough 3rd down. However, the magic of Josh Dobbs came to life again as he ran it in for a 10-yard touchdown to give the Vikings a 17-9 lead, his third straight game with a rushing touchdown.

After the Vikings' defense forced another three-and-out, all momentum was on the Vikings' side. However, the turnover issues that plagued the Vikings earlier in the year returned. On back-to-back drives, Alexander Mattison first fumbled the ball, and then Josh Dobbs threw an interception. Thankfully, the Vikings' defense completely shut down the Broncos' offense as they held them to field goals on both possessions, which kept the Vikings' lead intact, 17-15.

After the Vikings kicked a field goal to improve their lead to 20-15, the Broncos' offense had one last drive to finally score their first touchdown of the game. Sadly, that is exactly what they did as Russell Wilson dinked and dunked down the field before eventually finding Courtland Sutton in the endzone to give the Broncos a 21-20 lead.

Unfortunately, the Josh Dobbs magic did not come alive on the final drive as the Vikings failed to move the ball down the field to set up a field goal and eventually turned the ball over on downs to give the Broncos the victory, officially ending the Vikings' five-game win streak.

Vikings 20 - Broncos 21

Looking ahead, the Vikings will face the Chicago Bears next week, their last game before the bye week. Despite the loss, the Vikings still sit in a wild card spot in the NFC playoffs.



## A new cost of climate change: \$8.3B in crop insurance payouts to S.D. farmers

Bart Pfankuch

South Dakota News Watch

South Dakota farmers have received nearly \$10 billion in payouts from the Federal Crop Insurance Corp. over roughly the past two decades, with payments specifically due to weather disasters rising significantly during that time.

Between 2001 and 2022, South Dakota was among the top states in the nation for receiving insurance payouts for crop losses due to weather disasters, a trend environmentalists have said reveals a hidden but rapidly rising cost of climate change that is increasing the frequency and severity of storms that damage crops.

Of the \$9.6 billion sent to state farmers and ranchers in that time frame, more than \$8.3 billion was claimed for weather-related losses due to excess moisture, drought, hail, wind or freezing temperatures, according to a new analysis by the nonprofit Environmental Working Group (EWG). The rest was for losses not related to weather.

Farmers who buy crop insurance can receive settlements anytime their crops are damaged or destroyed or when they are unable to plant, thereby eliminating anticipated income.

American taxpayers have funded a large portion of the payouts, as nearly 65% of the premiums for the crop insurance program run by the U.S. Department of Agriculture are subsidized with federal funding.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the crop insurance program will cost taxpayers \$16.3 billion in fiscal year 2023 when average U.S. farm incomes are at or near record highs. American farmers overall received \$19.1 billion in crop insurance payouts in 2022, a record and far above the \$3 billion paid out in 2002, according to EWG.

Critics of the USDA program, which include some environmental and tax watchdog groups, have said the crop insurance program needs reforms to reduce taxpayer support. That would increase transparency in regard to flow of funds and encourage farmers to make their operations more resilient against the long-term effects of climate change, they have said.

Renewal of the crop insurance program is part of the 2023 Farm Bill now under consideration by the

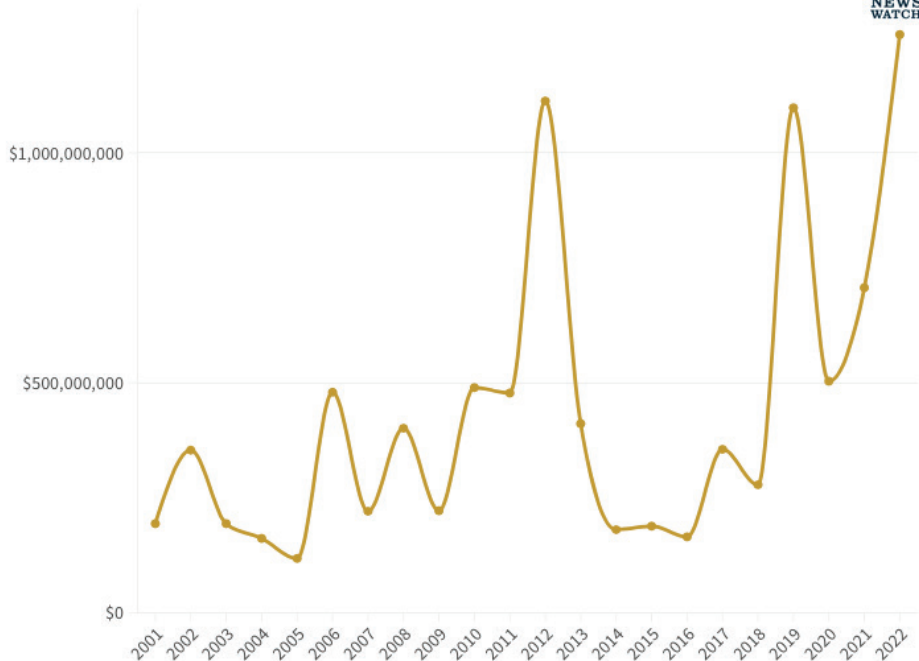


**Researchers with the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology test for salinity in a stock pond facing drought conditions in northwestern South Dakota in 2022. Drought can raise salinity levels and make the water toxic to livestock.**

(Photo: Courtesy of South Dakota School of Mines and Technology)



## Insurance payouts for crops by year in South Dakota



Source: Environmental Working Group • Graphic: Michael Klinski / SD News Watch

U.S. Congress.

### Climate change, extreme weather connected

Anne Schechinger, Midwest director for EWG and the author of the crop insurance analysis, said there is a strong correlation between rising crop insurance payouts and the increasing impacts of climate change.

"We know that these payments will keep going up, and that the program is going to be more and more expensive for taxpayers and farmers as this extreme weather gets worse," Schechinger said in an interview with News Watch.

"We're very confident there's a strong connection to climate change here because farms are some of the businesses most vulnerable to climate change purely because of the nature of farming."

While the USDA oversees the program, the insurance policies are sold and managed by private companies. A previous analysis by the EWG found that a third of all crop insurance payout funds – about \$33 billion over the past 10 years – have been absorbed by the dozen or so big insurance companies and their agents that sell policies and not to farmers who work the land and absorb the risk.

"The reality is that not that many U.S. farmers benefit from these programs and that the money is mostly going to these larger and wealthier farmers," Schechinger said. "And the insurers are definitely making billions of dollars every year under the crop insurance program ... and that's money coming from farmers and taxpayers that is not going to farmers."

Over the 22-year period examined by EWG, South Dakota farmers received the third-most payments among all states for losses due to drought (\$4.1 billion) and excess moisture (\$3.3 billion), and the sixth-most payments for hail damage (\$620 million).

Though claim amounts varied by year and weather conditions, the overall payments to South Dakota farmers for crop losses have risen steadily over the past two decades, with sharp increases shown in the past decade: \$180 million paid out in 2014, \$188 million in 2015 and \$1.3 billion in 2022.

### Farmers rely on program for stability

Despite the rising costs and payouts, however, South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation president Scott VanderWal said the crop insurance program remains a critical component of the economic equation that allows agricultural producers to remain in business.

The need for the program remains great in South Dakota and across the country, Vanderwal said, as American farmers seek to feed the nation and world and take on great risk in an industry largely dependent on the weather for success.

"It's so vitally important for the ability of farmers and ranchers to manage their risk," said VanderWal, who also serves as vice president of the American Farm Bureau, which is a certified agency allowed to sell crop insurance.

"When you're so totally depending on the weather for your livelihood, with all these crops growing outside and subject to hail storms, floods and drought, you have to be able to manage that risk. And that is

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what crop insurance is all about."

VanderWal, who grows corn and soybeans and raises cattle near Volga, S.D., said his family has purchased crop insurance since the 1990s and received indemnity payments a few times over the years.

VanderWal said the program has saved family farms in South Dakota from financial devastation numerous times, most recently in 2019 when extreme wet weather prevented many row crop farmers from even planting a crop. USDA data show that South Dakota farmers received nearly \$1 billion in crop insurance payments solely due to flooding that year.

"That was an absolutely disastrous year, and a lot of people would have failed financially if they didn't have crop insurance," VanderWal said. "That kept us alive because the stakes are high, landlords still want to be paid, there's still overhead and machinery costs to be paid."

VanderWal said he is aware of criticisms of the crop insurance program and noted that one area of recent reform has been to crack down on potential fraud. He said the program continues to evolve, with a new pilot program underway to expand coverage of weaned calves for livestock producers.

As he travels the country in support of farming, VanderWal said he continues to defend the crop insurance program and battle back against misimpressions, including that some farmers are using crop insurance to fleece the federal government and taxpayers.

"They need to know that farmers and ranchers do have skin in the game, that we're paying premiums and it's not a freebie," he said. "There's a perception out there that farmers get rich taking in crop insurance payments. But I can tell you that if we have a crop insurance indemnity on a field, we don't make any money on it. It just lessens the pain and keeps you in business for the next year."

VanderWal said taxpayer subsidization of the program, long supported by Congress, is important to ensure that American farmers can stay in business during hard times and keep domestic food production viable.

"That's the investment the American public is making to ensure that the industry that raises our food, fiber and fuel remains viable and strong so we don't find ourselves depending on other countries for our food like we do for energy a lot of the time," he said.

VanderWal said crop insurance keeps farmers financially stable so that despite any major market shift or global crisis, America will remain strong because the public can rely on farmers to produce their food.

"These are all upheavals that cause disruptions in markets, but because we can feed ourselves we don't have to worry about getting our food from other countries," he said. "That's so incredibly important and part of our national security in the United States."

## **Payouts support farms and farm communities**

Beyond individual losses caused by extreme weather, crop insurance protects entire communities that rely on farm-related spending, said Jerry Schmitz, executive director of the South Dakota Soybean Association.

"If these folks have a tremendous loss, and they aren't able to pay their bills, the grocery stores, seed stores and other local business suffer, too," Schmitz said.

According to USDA data, South Dakota was joined by North Dakota and Iowa as other Great Plains states that were considered "hot spots" for high levels of crop insurance payouts over the past two decades.

The top South Dakota counties for drought payouts during that time period were Hutchinson, Edmunds



— “ —  
Everybody agrees that the climate has been changing. ... For the most part, everybody recognizes that they better be taking care of what they have and making it better for the next generations.

— ” —  
Jerry Schmitz, executive director  
of the SD Soybean Association

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and Sully. The top counties for excess moisture payouts were Brown, Spink and Marshall.

## Other factors at play

While both VanderWal and Schmitz acknowledge that damaging weather events have been more frequent and severe in recent years, they point to other possible reasons that crop insurance payouts have risen.

While EWG said only about 20% of U.S. farmers carry crop insurance, USDA data reviewed by News Watch show that participation is far higher in South Dakota. Records show that 87% of the state's 16.6 million acres of crops are insured, including 89% of corn acres and 99% of soybean acres. In general, far fewer livestock producers purchase crop insurance when compared to two-crop farmers.

Beyond that, the value of crops has risen steadily in recent years, raising the level of insurance producers need to carry in order to cover losses in a disaster and consequently raising payouts when losses occur.

Furthermore, the cost of operating a farm has increased, causing a jump in both premiums and payouts. For example, Schmitz said an 80,000 kernel bag of seed corn cost \$25 when he began farming around 1980 but runs up to \$400 now. A basic tractor purchased at that time for \$25,000 would easily top \$250,000 in 2023, he said.

Schmitz added that in recent years, farmers have faced new forms of weather challenges, including the "derecho" storm and straight-line wind event that damaged buildings in Sioux Falls and crops across eastern South Dakota in July 2022.

Schmitz also said the crop insurance program is critical for young farmers, who will form the future of agriculture in America. While many experienced farmers have created more stability in their operation and are more able to absorb a loss, young farmers are not as well positioned financially, he said.

"It's especially important for younger producers just getting into the business," he said. "The older guys have been through it and built up a little equity and understand the ups and downs and can balance that. But for a young person coming in, with the debt they've acquired just to get into the business and suddenly they have a loss of income, it's pretty impactful."

## Taxation group seeks limits on payouts

Taxpayers for Common Sense, a Washington budget watchdog group, is urging Congress to pass two measures aimed at tightening the rules of the crop insurance program to reduce costs and increase transparency.

The group supports both the Assisting Family Farmers through Insurance Reform Measures Act and the Crop Insurance Transparency Act.

Those measures would, among other things, put limits on the payouts individual farms could receive under the crop insurance program and eliminate taxpayer subsidies for the wealthiest farmers, those who own but do not operate a farm, or those of foreign residency.

The group argues that widespread use of the crop insurance program has led to increasing prices of farmland, consolidation of farms and reduced agricultural conservation and crop diversification.

The organization further noted that federal emergency disaster declarations, enacted separately and in addition to crop insurance policies, have provided \$20 billion in payments to farmers since 2018, including



**Even minor flooding, such as this wet field in Hand County in April 2023, can affect a farmer's ability to plant or harvest a crop.** (Photo: Bart Pfankuch /

South Dakota News Watch)

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those who already benefited from crop insurance policies.

"Common sense reforms to the federal crop insurance program can save taxpayers tens of billions of dollars, while also benefiting beginning farmers and the environment," the group said in a September 2023 position paper.

## Extreme weather likely to continue

Schechinger said the data show that extreme weather is likely to continue, with disasters occurring with even greater uncertainty than in the past.

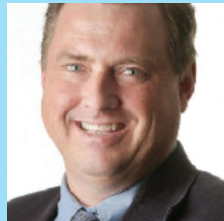
She noted that in some South Dakota counties, farmers received insurance payments for losses due to both drought and excess moisture in the same calendar year. Congress or the USDA could implement reforms to encourage farmers, for example, to reduce tillage or increase use of cover crops or use other "climate smart" practices to strengthen the land against the impacts of extreme weather caused by climate change, she said.

"We really think the crop insurance program needs to be reformed to help farmers increase their resiliency to extreme weather," Schechinger said. "The program itself is not bad. The issue is that it really promotes business as usual, which just is not going to work anymore with increasing intensity of extreme weather as the climate crisis worsens."

Schmitz counters that American farmers are known for being "some of the most sustainable farmers in the world," but he also acknowledges that more can be done to protect the land and water and increase resilience of farms to extreme weather events.

"Everybody agrees that the climate has been changing, and we're always looking to improve," he said. "For the most part, everybody recognizes that they better be taking care of what they have and making it better for the next generations."

— This article was produced by South Dakota News Watch, a non-profit journalism organization located online at [sdnewswatch.org](http://sdnewswatch.org).



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

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What are the major public health impacts of climate change and what's being done on the public health side to mitigate these risks?

-- Jane Sherwood, Ocala, FL

Public health experts have worried about climate change for decades, but accelerated warming globally has now led to a reexamination of just how bad our greenhouse gas sins might be affecting our own health and well-being. More heat-related illnesses and infectious diseases, lower air quality, food and water insecurity, and a heightened risk of natural disasters are a few of the ways climate change is wreaking havoc on our mental and physical health.

Heat-related illnesses are a prominent concern. Rising temperatures amplify the rate and intensity of heatwaves, leading to heat exhaustion, heatstroke and aggravation of pre-existing conditions. Vulnerable people like the elderly, children and those with chronic illnesses, face heightened risks. A recent update to the Lancet Countdown, a yearly survey of climate change health impacts, found that global heat deaths could increase by 370 percent in coming years if we don't significantly rein in carbon emissions. Infectious diseases find favorable conditions to thrive and spread due to changing climate patterns. Warmer temperatures expand the geographic range of disease-carrying insects like mosquitoes and ticks, resulting in the spread of diseases like malaria, dengue fever, Lyme disease and Zika virus. And changes in rainfall patterns and temperatures affect water and foodborne diseases, exacerbating public health risks.

Air quality worsens as climate change increases smog formation, triggers wildfires and increases pollen. These factors aggravate conditions like asthma and allergies, leading to more respiratory illnesses. Food and water insecurity arise from altered precipitation patterns impacting crop yields and water availability. Droughts, floods and extreme weather events disrupt food production, leading to malnutrition and shortages. Contaminated water sources from floods or poor sanitation lead to waterborne diseases.

Moreover, mental health is affected by the psychological toll of climate-related disasters, loss of livelihoods, displacement and a looming sense of uncertainty about the future. Anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorders are increasingly observed in affected communities.

It's important to ID links between climate change and public health, but it's another matter entirely to mitigate them. Policymakers are working on adaptive measures that seek to enhance public health systems to better cope with climate-related health challenges. These include improving disease surveillance, early warning systems for extreme weather events, and capacity building in healthcare facilities to handle increased patient loads. Meanwhile, government entities at every level need to implement climate-friendly policies and practices—heat wave preparedness plans, insect control programs, promoting sustainable practices for food and water security—in order to model good behavior for their constituencies.

Collaboration among various sectors is essential to tackling the complex intersection of climate change and public health. By implementing robust policies, fostering community resilience and prioritizing public health in climate action plans, we can build a healthier, more resilient future.

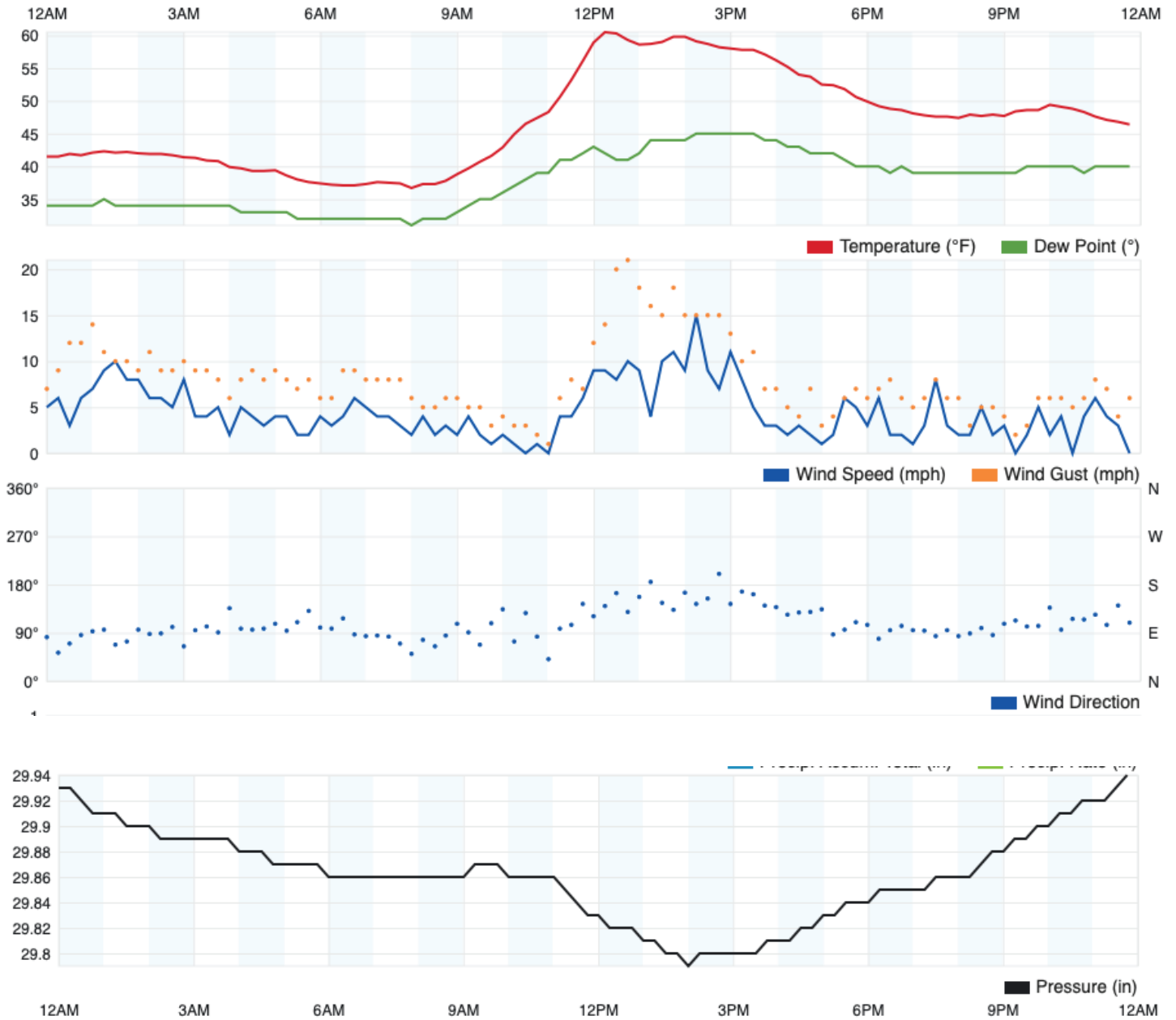


**Accelerated global warming may be affecting public health in more dramatic ways than we ever imagined...** Credit: Pexels.com.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Nov 20	Nov 21	Nov 22	Nov 23	Nov 24	Nov 25	Nov 26
51°F	42°F	52°F	31°F	32°F	33°F	33°F
28°F	29°F	21°F	15°F	17°F	19°F	18°F
E	NNW	SSW	N	NNW	W	W
7 MPH	22 MPH	15 MPH	12 MPH	11 MPH	15 MPH	15 MPH

Still Above Average Temperatures

Today  
Rain done by evening  
Highs: 47 - 52°F

Tuesday  
Dry and clear  
Highs: 39 - 47°F

Wednesday  
Slightly warmer, clouds increasing towards evening  
Highs: 48 - 60°F

35 mph gusts possible Monday night to Tuesday morning

NOAA

November 20, 2023 2:44 AM

The rain is going to continue today but is expected to be done by this evening. Temperatures for the next few days will stay above average with a slight increase on Wednesday. Winds could gust up to 35 mph tonight and into Tuesday morning, so be sure to secure any outdoor decorations or furniture you may have out!

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 61 °F at 12:21 PM

Low Temp: 37 °F at 7:54 AM

Wind: 21 mph at 12:41 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 9 hours, 23 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 69 in 1962

Record Low: -12 in 1985

Average High: 40

Average Low: 17

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.53

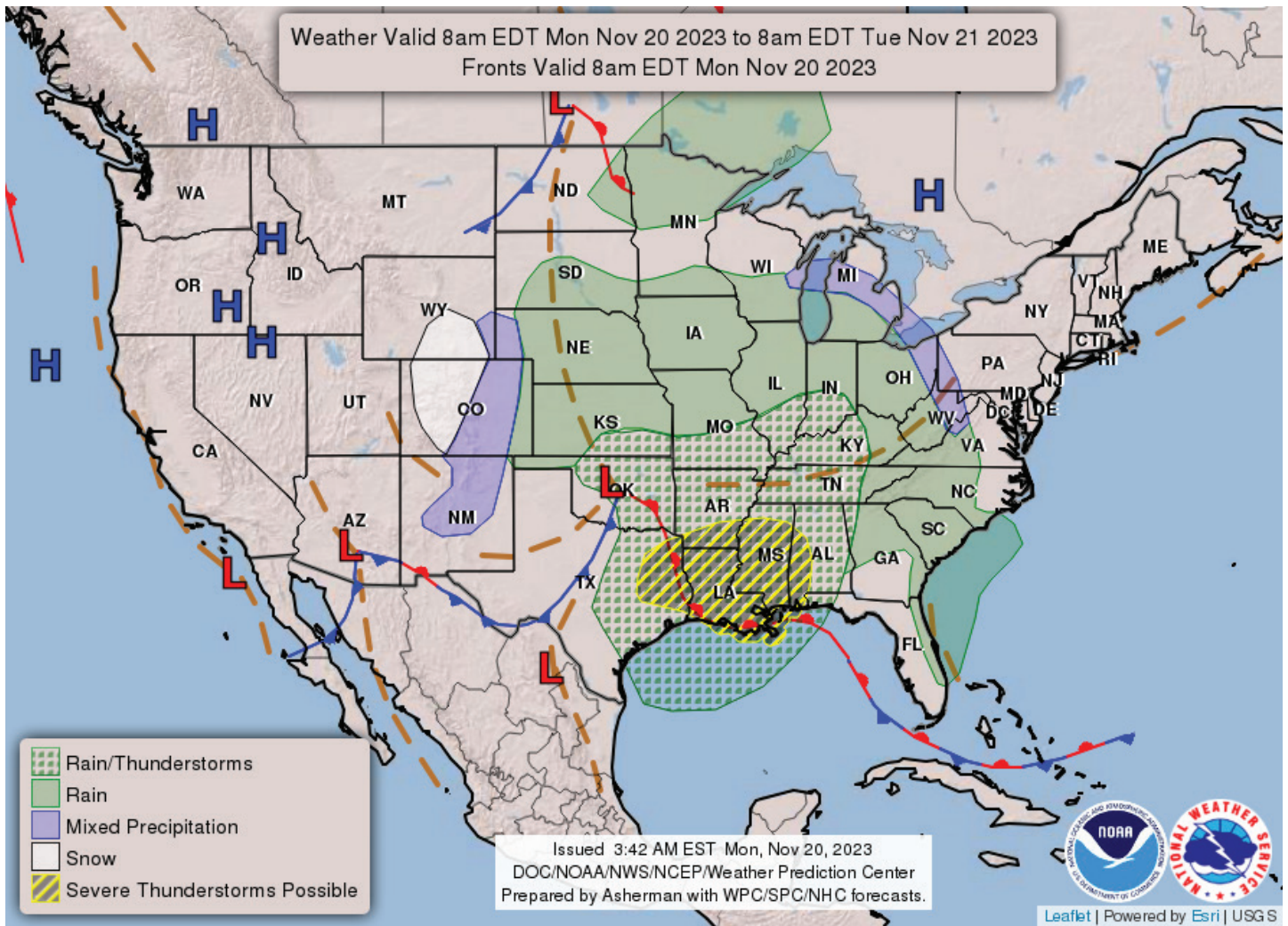
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.17

Average Precip to date: 21.00

Precip Year to Date: 23.15

Sunset Tonight: 4::59:35 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:37:45 AM





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## Today in Weather History

November 20, 1975: A storm center located in Oklahoma on Tuesday, November 18th, moved northeastward across Kansas into Iowa and Wisconsin on Wednesday the 19th and Thursday the 20th. Light rain began in the eastern half South Dakota on the morning of the 19th. The rain changed to snow during the afternoon and continued through the evening of the 20th. The winds increased, and blizzard conditions were reached by 6 pm CST on Wednesday the 19th. The snow was driven by sustained winds 40 to 50 miles per hour, gusting to 75 mph on some occasions, which reduced visibility to less than one-half mile. Heavy snow ranging from six to fifteen inches fell over an area southeast of a line from Todd to Aurora to Grant County. Traffic came to a standstill by Wednesday evening the 19th. The snow abruptly ended on the night of the 20th, but winds diminished rather slowly that night. Storm total snowfalls included 9 inches at Clear Lake and 7 inches at Watertown.

November 20, 1977: The second blizzard of the month began very early on Saturday, November 19th and continued through most of Sunday, November 20th. Wind speeds exceeding 50 mph caused much blowing and drifting snow. Visibility was reduced to near zero. Most of the roads in the northern and western parts of the state were blocked. Snowfall amounts north of Milbank and Pierre to Ardmore exceeded five inches. Most of the counties in the northwest and a significant portion of those in the north-central parts of the state reported snowfall amounts exceeding ten inches. Some drifts reached 4 to 5 feet. The highest reported snowfall was 20 inches in Eagle Butte. An eastbound train from Milbank had six freight cars derailed near Albee, in Grant County as a result of the storm. Snowfall totals from this blizzard included; 20 inches at Eagle Butte; 14 inches at Leola; 12 inches at Timber Lake and Britton; 11 inches 4NNE Victor and at Mobridge; 10 inches at 6SE McIntosh, 4W Mellette, Sand Lake, and Ipswich; 9.3 inches in Aberdeen; 9 inches 4NW Onida, at Sisseton, and 2N Onaka; 8 inches at Selby; 7 inches at McLaughlin and Waubay; 6 inches at Conde and Faulkton; 5 inches at Summit and Webster; 4 inches at Pierre, Wilmot and Highmore; and 3 inches at Watertown, Clear Lake, Miller, 3NE Raymond, Redfield, and Wheaton. The 9 inches at Sisseton helped to contribute to the snowiest November on record for Sisseton, which recorded 27.5 inches for November 1977.

1900: An unusual tornado outbreak in the Lower Mississippi Valley resulted in 73 deaths and extensive damage across Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

1985: Kate intensified to a major Category 3 Hurricane and as she moved west of Key West, Florida with top winds of 115 mph and a minimum central pressure of 954 millibars or 28.17 inches of mercury. The next day Kate made landfall between Panama City and Apalachicola, Florida. Tides ran 8 to 10 feet above normal. Many power poles and lines were downed. Several roads were washed out.

2014: From the NWS Office in Buffalo, New York, "the epic November 17-19th 2014 lake effect event will be remembered as one of the most significant winter events in Buffalo's snowy history. Over 5 feet of snow fell over areas just east of Buffalo, with mere inches a few miles away to the north. There were 13 fatalities with this storm, hundreds of major roof collapses and structural failures, 1000s of stranded motorists, and scattered food and gas shortages due to impassable roads. Numerous trees also gave way due to the weight of the snow, causing isolated power outages. While this storm was impressive on its own, a second lake effect event on Nov-19-20 dropped another 1-4 foot of snow over nearly the same area and compounded rescue and recovery efforts. Storm totals from the two storms peaked at almost 7 feet, with many areas buried under 3-4 feet of dense snowpack by the end of the event."

2015: Season's first snow is Chicago's largest November snowfall in 120 years starting on November 20 and ending on the 21st. The season's first snowfall dropped as much as 17 inches across Chicago's northern suburbs, and the total of 11.2 inches at O'Hare International Airport made it the largest November snowfall in 120 years.

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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### STRAIGHT FROM AZALEA AVENUE

Jane was particular in each prayer she offered to God. Her "This Is What I'm Asking You For, Jesus" list contained extremely detailed information about each person or item that she had written on her prayer list.

One night following her "In Jesus' Name, Amen" end of her prayer, she paused for a moment and then added the words: "Lord, these requests come directly to You from 417 Azalea Avenue, Savannah, Georgia!"

It would be interesting if we knew in detail what was on Jane's prayer list. But it does not matter. What we do know is that whatever was on her list was asked for "In Jesus' Name."

When Jesus said that we could "ask for anything in My name," we must always remember that our "asking" must be consistent with the character of God and will of God. We cannot expect God to grant our requests if they are contrary to whom we know He is.

We know without any doubt that our God is a holy God, a righteous God, a caring God, and a God who loved us so much that He sent His Son into the world to die for us and become our Savior and Lord. Indeed, when we consider these four primary characteristics of God, we realize that they lead to a significant fact about our God: He will bless what honors Him. A simple way to evaluate each of our requests is to ask: Will what I'm asking God for, honor Him?

Prayer: Father, we know that You want us to have the desires of our hearts. Help us understand Your will so that our requests will receive Your blessings. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it! John 14:13-14



We all need the encouragement, comfort, and peace that comes through God's grace. Our daily devotionals, known as Seeds of Hope, have been a means through which thousands of people have experienced this grace. Each devotional comes from God's Word and we pray this good "seed" finds good soil in your heart. Our aim is that the Seeds of Hope will be a great source of daily encouragement to you and that God will use them to draw you near to Him

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## 2023 Community Events

- 01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center
- 01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 01/31/2023-02/03/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Drop Off 6-9pm, Community Center
- 02/04/2023-02/05/2023 Lion's Club Prom & Formal Dress Consignment Sale 1-5pm, Community Center
- 02/25/2023 Littles and Me, Art Making 10-11:30am, Wage Memorial Library
- 03/25/2023 Spring Vendor Fair, 10am-3pm, Community Center
- 04/01/2023 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
- 04/06/2023 Groton Career Development Event
- 04/08/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
- 04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
- 05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 06/16/2023 SDSU Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament
- 06/17/2023 Groton Triathlon
- 07/04/2023 Couples Firecracker Golf Tournament
- 07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
- 07/26/2023 GGA Burger Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 08/04/2023 Wine on Nine 6pm
- 08/10/2023 Family Fun Fest, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- 08/11/2023 GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
- 09/08/2023 Family Fun Fest 3:30-5:30pm
- 09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 09/09-10/2023 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
- 09/10/2023 Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
- 09/10/2023 Emmanuel Lutheran Church Sunday School Rally 9:00am
- 09/10/2023 7th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 4-6pm
- 09/15/2023 Homecoming Parade
- 10/13/2023 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
- 10/14/2023 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
- 10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
- 10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
- 11/05/2023 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Fall Dinner, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- 11/11/2023 Groton American Legion Annual Turkey Party 6:30 pm.
- 11/23/2023 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
- 11/26/2023 Snow Queen Contest, 4 p.m.
- 12/02/2023 Live & Silent Auctions at Olive Grove Golf Course 4pm-close

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.17.23

6 12 31 33 69 17

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$289,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 30  
DRAW: Mins 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.18.23

9 18 22 26 34 6

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$2,300,000**

NEXT 16 Hrs 45 Mins 22  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.19.23

11 14 29 42 43 3

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.18.23

2 7 14 15 28

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$61,000**

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 22  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.18.23

27 32 40 45 47 B

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 29 Mins 21  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.18.23

34 50 51 61 67 20

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$295,000,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 29 Mins 21  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### **Avery scores 22, Seller adds 20 to help UCF beat S. Dakota State 83-80 at Jacksonville Classic**

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. (AP) — Marchelus Avery scored 22 points, including four 3-pointers, and Jaylin Sellers scored 20 Sunday night to help UCF beat South Dakota State 83-80 at the Jacksonville Classic.

Darius Johnson finished with 11 points and four steals and Omar Payne, who made 4 of 4 from the field and 2 of 2 from the free-throw line, added 10 points and three steals for UCF (3-1)

Johnson made a layup through contact and missed the and-1 free throw but Sellers grabbed the offensive rebound, was fouled and hit two free throws to give UCF an 81-78 lead with 7 seconds to play.

Zeke Mayo made two foul shots to make it a one-point game and Payne answered with a pair throws to make it 83-80 with 4 seconds remaining before Charlie Easley missed a potential tying 3-point shot.

Easley led South Dakota State (1-3) with 21 points on 8-of-13 shooting, 3 of 6 from 3-point range. Luke Appel fouled out with 19 points, Mayo scored 12 and Nate Barnhart hit three 3s and finished with 11 points.

UCF returns home for a week off before Stetson visits Nov. 26. South Dakota State plays at Southern Miss on Wednesday.

### **Microsoft hires OpenAI founders to lead AI research team after ChatGPT maker's shakeup**

By The Associated Press undefined

Microsoft announced Monday that it has hired Sam Altman and another architect of ChatGPT maker OpenAI after they unexpectedly departed the company days earlier in a corporate shakeup that shocked the artificial intelligence world.

Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella tweeted that the U.S. tech giant is committed to its partnership with OpenAI, whose chatbot kicked off the generative AI craze by producing human-like text, images, video and music.

Nadella wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, that he looked "forward to getting to know" OpenAI's new chief executive, former Twitch leader Emmett Shear, and the rest of the management team.

Microsoft invested billions of dollars in the startup and helped provide the computing power to run its AI systems. Now, it's bringing two of OpenAI's co-founders directly into the fold.

"We're extremely excited to share the news that Sam Altman and Greg Brockman, together with colleagues, will be joining Microsoft to lead a new advanced AI research team," Nadella said.

In reply on X, Altman said "the mission continues," while OpenAI co-founder and former President Brockman posted, "We are going to build something new & it will be incredible."

The moves come after a weekend of drama and speculation about how the leadership would shake out at OpenAI. Altman was active on X, posting a photo of himself with an OpenAI guest pass on Sunday and saying this is "first and last time i ever wear one of these."

Hours earlier, he tweeted, "i love the openai team so much," which drew heart replies from Brockman, who quit after Altman was fired, and Mira Murati, OpenAI's chief technology officer who was initially named as interim CEO.

It's not clear what transpired between the announcement of Murati's interim role Friday and the hiring of Shear, who co-founded Twitch, an Amazon-owned livestreaming service popular with video gamers.

An OpenAI spokeswoman didn't immediately reply to an email seeking comment.

The company said Friday that Altman was pushed out after a review found he was "not consistently candid in his communications" with the board of directors, which had lost confidence in his ability to lead the company.

Altman helped catapult ChatGPT to global fame and in the past year has become Silicon Valley's sought-

after voice on the promise and potential dangers of artificial intelligence.

He went on a world tour to meet with government officials earlier this year, drawing big crowds at public events as he discussed both the risks of AI and attempts to regulate the emerging technology.

Altman posted Friday on X that "i loved my time at openai" and later called what happened a "weird experience."

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

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

## China welcomes Arab and Muslim foreign ministers for talks on ending the war in Gaza

By KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China's top diplomat welcomed four Arab foreign ministers and the Indonesian one to Beijing on Monday, saying his country would work with "our brothers and sisters" in the Arab and Islamic world to try to end the war in Gaza as soon as possible.

The ministers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority and Indonesia chose to start a tour of world capitals in Beijing, a testament to both China's growing geopolitical influence and its long-standing support for the Palestinians.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told the foreign diplomats that their decision to start in Beijing shows their high level of trust in his nation.

"China is a good friend and brother of Arab and Islamic countries," Wang said in opening remarks at a state guest house before their talks began. "We have always firmly safeguarded the legitimate rights and interests of Arab (and) Islamic countries and have always firmly supported the just cause of the Palestinian people."

China has long backed the Palestinians and been quick to denounce Israel over its settlements in the occupied territories. It has not criticized the initial Hamas attack on Oct. 7 — which killed about 1,200 people — while the United States and others have called it an act of terrorism. However, China does have growing economic ties with Israel.

The Saudi foreign minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, called for an immediate cease-fire and the entry of humanitarian aid and relief to the Gaza Strip.

"There are still dangerous developments ahead of us and an urgent humanitarian crisis that requires an international mobilization to deal with and counter it," he said.

He added they appreciated the resolution issued by the United Nations Security Council, calling for urgent and extended humanitarian pauses in Gaza, "but we still need more efforts and cooperation."

China — the world's second-largest economy after the U.S. — has become increasingly outspoken on international affairs and even gotten directly involved in some recently, albeit cautiously.

In March, Beijing helped broker an agreement that saw Saudi Arabia and Iran reestablish ties after seven years of tension in a role previously reserved for longtime global heavyweights like the U.S. and Russia.

The five foreign ministers will visit a number of capitals in an effort to pursue a cease-fire, get aid into Gaza and end the war, Prince Faisal said last weekend. The secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Hissein Brahimi, is also accompanying them to Beijing.

Israel's retaliatory strikes on the Gaza Strip have so far killed more than 11,500 people, according to Palestinian health authorities. Another 2,700 have been reported missing, believed buried in rubble.

"This isn't Israel's first war against the Palestinian people," said Riyad Al-Maliki, the Palestinian Authority foreign minister. "However, Israel wants this to be its last war, where it takes full control of the Palestinian people's presence on what's left of the historical land of Palestine."

Israel's ambassador to China, Irit Ben-Abba, said Monday, that her country is allowing sufficient humanitarian aid into Gaza in collaboration with international organizations and that "putting pressure on Israel in

this regard is politically motivated and is not conducive to the humanitarian assistance which is needed.”

She also said that they hoped for “no one-sided” resolution by the Security Council and that they expected a clear statement calling for the “unconditional release of the 240 hostages” who were abducted by Hamas during its attacks, “rather than calling for a cease-fire.”

## Heavy fighting breaks out around another Gaza hospital after babies evacuated from Shifa

By NAJIB JOBAIN and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP) — Heavy fighting erupted Monday around a hospital in northern Gaza where thousands of patients and displaced people have been sheltering for weeks, as Israeli forces focus on clearing medical facilities that they say Hamas militants use for cover.

A shell struck the second floor of the Indonesian Hospital, killing at least 12 people, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza and a medical worker inside the facility. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

The advance on the Indonesian Hospital came a day after the World Health Organization evacuated 31 premature babies from Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, the territory’s largest, where they were among more than 250 critically ill or wounded patients stranded there days after Israeli forces entered the compound.

The plight of Gaza’s hospitals is at the focus of a battle of narratives over the war’s brutal toll on Palestinian civilians, thousands of whom have been killed or buried in rubble since the six-week-old war was sparked by Hamas’ Oct. 7 rampage into southern Israel.

Israel says Hamas uses civilians as human shields, while critics say Israel’s siege and relentless aerial bombardment amount to collective punishment of the territory’s 2.3 million Palestinians.

Marwan Abdallah, the medical worker at the Indonesian Hospital, said Israeli tanks were operating less than 200 meters (yards) from the hospital, and that Israeli snipers could be seen on the roofs of nearby buildings. As he spoke over the phone, the sound of gunfire could be heard in the background.

Abdallah said the hospital had received dozens of dead and wounded in airstrikes and shelling overnight. He said medical staff and displaced people fear Israel will besiege the hospital and force its evacuation.

Health Ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qidra, who is now based in southern Gaza, said some 600 patients, 200 healthcare workers and 2,000 displaced people were sheltering there.

### BABIES EVACUATED

U.N. bodies were able to safely evacuate the babies, who were in critical condition, from Shifa to a hospital in southern Gaza, and plan to transport them to a hospital in neighboring Egypt. Four other babies died in the two days before the evacuation, according to Mohamed Zaqout, the director of Gaza hospitals.

Over 250 patients with severely infected wounds and other urgent conditions remain in Shifa, which could no longer provide most treatment after it ran out of water, medical supplies and fuel for emergency generators amid a territory-wide blackout. Israeli forces battled Palestinian militants outside its gates for days before entering the facility last Wednesday.

Israel’s army said it had strong evidence supporting its claims that Hamas maintained a sprawling command post inside and under the hospital’s 20-acre complex, which includes several buildings, garages and a plaza.

The military released a video showing what it said was a tunnel discovered at the hospital, 55-meter (60-yard) long and about 10 meters (33 feet) below ground. It said the tunnel included a staircase and a firing hole that could be used by gunmen, and ended at a blast-proof door that troops have not yet opened.

The Associated Press couldn’t independently verify Israel’s findings, which included security camera video showing what the military said were two foreign hostages, one Thai and one Nepalese, who were captured by Hamas in the Oct. 7 attack and taken to the hospital.

The army also said an investigation had determined that Israeli army Cpl. Noa Marciano, another captive whose body was recovered in Gaza, had been injured in an Israeli strike on Nov. 9 that killed her captor, but was then killed by a Hamas militant in Shifa.



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Hamas and hospital staff have denied the allegations of a command post under Shifa. Senior Hamas official Osama Hamdan dismissed the latest announcement, saying "the Israelis said there was a command and control center, which means that the matter is greater than just a tunnel."

## THREE IN FOUR PEOPLE DISPLACED

Israel has repeatedly ordered Palestinians to leave northern Gaza and seek refuge in the south, which has also been under aerial bombardment since the start of the war. Some 1.7 million people, nearly three quarters of Gaza's population, have been displaced, with 900,000 packing into crowded U.N.-run shelters, according to the U.N.

Doctors Without Borders, an international aid group, said 70 people were killed and at least 52 wounded, including children, in strikes in the southern town of Khan Younis on Saturday. It said it was performing 10 burn surgeries a day at the town's overwhelmed Nasser Hospital, where hundreds of people who need such surgeries must wait for care.

More than 11,500 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to Palestinian health authorities. Another 2,700 have been reported missing, believed buried in rubble. The count does not differentiate between civilians and combatants, and Israel says it has killed thousands of militants.

About 1,200 people have been killed on the Israeli side, mainly civilians during the Oct. 7 attack, in which Hamas dragged some 240 captives back into Gaza. The military says 65 Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza ground operations.

Hamas has released four hostages, Israel has rescued one, and the bodies of two were found near Shifa.

Israel, the United States and Qatar, which mediates with Hamas, have been negotiating a much larger hostage release for weeks. Israel's three-member war cabinet is to meet with representatives of the hostages' families on Monday evening.

## YEMEN REBELS SEIZE SHIP

Yemen's Houthi rebels seized a Israeli-linked cargo ship in the southern Red Sea and took its 25 crew members hostage Sunday, raising fears that regional tensions heightened by the war were spilling into the seas. The Iran-backed rebel group said it would continue to target ships connected to Israel.

No Israelis were aboard the Bahamas-flagged Galaxy Leader, which was operated by a Japanese company with crewmembers from the Philippines, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Mexico. Public shipping databases associated the ship's owners with Ray Car Carriers, a company founded by Abraham Ungar, who is known as one of the richest people in Israel.

Ungar told The Associated Press he was aware of the incident but couldn't comment as he awaited details. A ship linked to him experienced an explosion in 2021 in the Gulf of Oman. Israeli media blamed it on Iran at the time.

The Galaxy Leader was taken to Yemen's port city of Hodeida, according to the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations. Japanese officials were negotiating with the rebels for the release of the ship and its crew, said Japan Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno.

## **A curious South African sea snail is a prized dish in Asia. That has meant a trail of destruction**

By GERALD IMRAY Associated Press

HAWSTON, South Africa (AP) — Nearly every house in Hawston has a boat in its yard, sometimes two. It takes a moment to realize many are out of action, grass sprouting through holes in hulls that haven't touched water for years. They are relics of another time, when people fished for their livelihood and the ocean provided more than enough.

Those languishing boats and other economic problems in Hawston are the result of changes in the market to South African abalone, a curious fist-sized sea snail that is a highly prized morsel in East Asia and the unwitting instigator of 30 years of trouble for fishing communities along Africa's southern coast. Abalone here was abundant and especially tasty, yet the demand largely put the village and its traditional fishers out of business, or made them criminals overnight.

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Raphael Fisher was born into fishing, as just about everyone was in Hawston. He grew up diving for the abalone that South Africans call perlemoen — or, affectionately, “perly” — in the rocky coves. He was learning to work his father’s boat in his late teens. Every boy wanted to be a perly fisher in Hawston, he said. It was the thing.

But over the last three decades, poachers have swept in and swept up every snail they could find — every sackful a fat payday. They can get \$50 a kilogram. It’s reduced the endangered South African abalone to unprecedented low levels, wildlife groups say.

At first, the South African government banned abalone fishing completely. Now, strict quotas give Fisher and other small operators lucky enough to get them the rights to catch 120 kilograms a year. Hardly anything.

“The fishing has all been taken away,” he said. “It’s totally different now. They took the bread out of people’s mouths.”

It’s why a different poaching — not for big profits, but to put food on the table — has also ensnared so many traditional fishers up and down this coast. Fisher faced that temptation.

A 2022 report by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime estimated the illegal trade heading to the hub of Hong Kong was worth nearly \$1 billion between 2000 and 2016, and growing.

The total legal abalone fishing quota in South Africa is set at a maximum of 100 metric tons a year. Hong Kong is importing between 2,000-3,000 metric tons of illegal South African abalone a year, the report estimated. Some is moved on to other big markets in China, Japan and Taiwan.

Organized crime and turf battles over illegal abalone that are sometimes marked by brutal gang killings have overwhelmed South African coastal communities. Thousands of poor young men have been drawn in as foot soldiers.

Hawston and its troubles are likely unknown in Hong Kong, where the high-class Forum restaurant offers cooked South African abalone at \$190 a can for customers to take away. Abalone is more than a delicious treat for millions of Chinese, said Wendy Chan, managing director at the Lamma Rainbow, a local seafood restaurant on Hong Kong’s Lamma Island.

“It carries a symbolic meaning,” Chan said. “After you have abalone, you will become wealthy or it will bring you good luck in the upcoming year.”

It’s a sign of prestige or something you would give as a gift. Chan also rates South African abalone highly, as so many do, with its rich taste and slightly chewy texture.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature says nearly half of all abalone shellfish species around the world are threatened with extinction, many affected by pollution and climate change and part of the larger story of devastation of marine wildlife.

Danie Keet, chairman of the Community Against Abalone Poaching group, has seen gang-related abalone poaching play out for 15 years in nearby Gansbaai, another South African coastal town. The poachers arrive in groups in broad daylight on pickup trucks and in their wetsuits, rubber duck boats towed behind them, he said.

It’s highly organized. Divers prize the abalone off the reefs and get them to shore in bags. Runners hide them in the dunes for others to take to stash houses. Lookouts watch for police and can warn the divers, who keep cellphones with them sealed watertight in condoms.

They are all the first cogs in a \$60 million-a-year illicit business, according to the TRAFFIC Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network.

Keet said authorities don’t have the resources to patrol hundreds of miles of coastline and the poaching has become embedded.

“In the beginning they used to dive at night a lot. That changed as they noticed that they can just get away with it,” Keet said.

The demand has spurred an alternative to wild abalone — farmed abalone. HIK Abalone has a total of around 13 million abalone at any one time at their two south coast farms.

Abalone as far as the eye can see — from tiny specks to as big as your hand — in rows and rows of

open-top tanks. None have felt the ocean or a rock. Here, they cruise surprisingly quickly under black plastic cones they have for underwater hiding places. They are bred, fed and set to be killed at the farm to be shipped, dried or canned, to Hong Kong, a few exported live for high-end customers.

Farms are tinkering with the abalone life cycle by selective breeding to get them to grow to a size they can be sold and eaten as fast as possible, said HIK CEO Bertus van Oordt.

"Our main aim is to get them bigger, faster," van Oordt said.

The farms that have sprouted up have no role in conservation. Van Oordt said he would like to do something, but it's unclear what effect the tank-bred abalone may have in the wild. Van Oordt said he is also unwilling to put abalone in the sea "to create a bigger poaching environment."

"If the government comes up with a plan so we can protect what we put back in, we'll be in," van Oordt said. "We'll give the abalone for free."

Officially, authorities are sticking to fishing quotas for now, but there are signs of change after a government-led meeting of all players early this year, said Markus Burgener, a senior program coordinator at TRAFFIC. It was "the most positive development I've seen for years and years," Burgener said.

The key, Burgener said, must be involving communities like Hawston instead of shutting them out.

Faced with the choice of his life when abalone fishing was banned and poaching ramped up, Fisher, 53, found another way. He works at the HIK farm.

His distrust of the system stems from the fact his father, a pioneer of Hawston's fishing community for years, was denied a quota, his livelihood cut off with a swipe of a pen from someone in an office.

The younger Fisher's job at HIK has enabled him to keep two small fishing boats going. They are guarded in his yard by two of his other prized assets, dogs Zara and Toby, growling precautions against the crime born out of the unemployment and poverty of Hawston.

Hawston's harbor is broken-down, the scarcity of abalone leaving it far less used. A spray of graffiti on one of the walls still announces, "We Love Hawston."

Fisher does fish his abalone quota, banding together in a small consortium with others to share costs, but it's a part-time affair now. With sunglasses perched on top of a baseball cap, he scans the sky and the sea as his father might have, assessing what weather is coming and if he can go fishing this weekend. Not necessarily for abalone. Just fishing.

"When it's in you, it's in you," he said.

## **An appeals court is set to hear arguments asking for Trump's gag order to be put back in place**

By ERIC TUCKER, ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal appeals court is hearing arguments Monday on whether to reinstate a gag order against Donald Trump in the federal case charging him with plotting to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election.

Prosecutors with special counsel Jack Smith's team will urge a three-judge panel of the Washington-based appeals court to put back in place an order barring the former president from making inflammatory statements about lawyers in the case and potential witnesses.

The prosecutors say those restrictions are necessary to prevent Trump from undermining confidence in the court system and intimidating people who may be called to testify against him. Defense lawyers have called the gag order an unconstitutional muzzling of Trump's free speech rights and say prosecutors have presented no evidence to support the idea that his words have caused harm or made anyone feel threatened.

The gag order is one of multiple contentious issues being argued ahead of the landmark March 2024 trial. Defense lawyers are also trying to get the case dismissed by arguing that Trump, as a former president, is immune from prosecution and protected by the First Amendment from being charged. The outcome of Monday's arguments won't affect those constitutional claims, but it will set parameters on what Trump as both a criminal defendant and leading presidential candidate can and cannot say ahead of the trial.

The order has had a whirlwind trajectory through the courts since U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan imposed it last month in response to a request from prosecutors, who cited among other comments Trump's repeated disparagement of Smith as "deranged."

The judge lifted it days after entering it, giving Trump's lawyers time to prove why his words should not be restricted. But after Trump took advantage of that pause by posting on social media comments that prosecutors said were meant to sway his former chief of staff against giving unfavorable testimony, Chutkan put it back in place.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit later lifted it as it considered Trump's appeal. The judges hearing the case include Cornelia Pillard and Patricia Millett, both appointees of former President Barack Obama, and Brad Garcia, who joined the bench earlier this year after being nominated by President Joe Biden.

The panel is not expected to immediately rule on Monday. Should the judges rule against Trump, he'll have the option of asking the entire court to take up the matter. His lawyers have also signaled that they'll ask the Supreme Court to get involved.

The four-count indictment in Washington is one of four criminal cases Trump faces as he seeks to reclaim the White House in 2024.

He's been charged in Florida, also by Smith's team, with illegally hoarding dozens of classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate. He's also been charged in state court in New York in connection with hush money payments to a porn actress who alleged an extramarital affair with him, and in Georgia with scheming to subvert the 2020 presidential election in that state.

## **No more Thanksgiving 'food orgy'? New obesity medications change how users think of holiday meals**

By JONEL ALECCIA AP Health Writer

For most of her life, Claudia Stearns dreaded Thanksgiving. As a person who struggled with obesity since childhood, Stearns hated the annual turmoil of obsessing about what she ate — and the guilt of overindulging on a holiday built around food.

Now, after losing nearly 100 pounds using medications including Wegovy, a powerful new anti-obesity drug, Stearns says the "food noise" in her head has gone very, very quiet.

"Last year, it felt so lovely to just be able to enjoy my meal, to focus on being with friends and family, to focus on the joy of the day," says Stearns, 65, of Somerville, Massachusetts. "That was a whole new experience."

As millions of Americans struggling with obesity gain access to a new generation of weight-loss drugs, Stearns' experience is becoming more common — and more noticeable at the times of year when cooking, eating and a sense of abundance can define and heighten gatherings of loved ones and friends. Medical experts and consumers say the drugs are shifting not only what users eat, but also the way they think about food.

For some, it means greater mental control over their meals. Others say it saps the enjoyment from social situations, including traditionally food-centric holidays like Thanksgiving, Passover and Christmas.

"It's something that really changes a lot of things in their life," says Dr. Daniel Bessesen, chief of endocrinology at Denver Health, who treats patients with obesity. "They go from food being a central focus to it's just not."

### **UNDERMINING THE FESTIVITIES?**

The new obesity drugs, originally designed to treat diabetes, include semaglutide, used in Ozempic and Wegovy, and tirzepatide, used in Mounjaro and recently approved as Zepbound. Now aimed at weight loss, too, the drugs delivered as weekly injections work far differently than any diet. They mimic powerful hormones that kick in after people eat to regulate appetite and the feeling of fullness communicated between the gut and the brain. Users can lose as much as 15% to 25% of their body weight, studies show.

"That's how it works — it reduces the rewarding aspects of food," explains Dr. Michael Schwartz, an

expert in metabolism, diabetes and obesity at the University of Washington in Seattle.

For Stearns, who started treatment in 2020, using the weight-loss medications means she can take a few bites of her favorite Thanksgiving pies — and then stop.

"I would not feel full," she says, "but I would feel satisfied."

Yet such a shift can have broader implications, both religious and cultural, because it alters the experience of festive and religious holidays that are often built around interactions with food — and lots of it.

"I'm Italian. For us, it's like going to church, going to a table," says Joe Sapone, 64, a retiree from Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, who lost about 100 pounds with dieting and Mounjaro. He no longer needs what he called "the food orgy" of a holiday, but he acknowledges it was an adjustment.

"Part of succeeding at this is disconnecting a good time with what you eat," he says. "Am I still going to have fun if I don't eat that much?"

## CHANGES IN ENJOYMENT

Many users welcome what they say is greater control over what they eat, even during the emotionally charged holiday season.

"I may be more selective of the items I put on my plate," says Tara Rothenhoefer, 48, of Trinity, Florida. She lost more than 200 pounds after joining a clinical trial testing Mounjaro for weight loss in 2020. "I don't care about the bread as much. I still eat what I enjoy."

But others on the drugs lose their appetites entirely or suffer side effects — nausea, vomiting, diarrhea — that undermine the pleasure of any food.

"I've had a handful of patients over the years who were really miserable because they didn't enjoy food in the same way," says Dr. Katherine Saunders, an obesity expert at Weill Cornell Medicine and co-founder of Intellihealth, a clinical and software company that focuses on obesity treatment.

But, she added, most people who have turned to weight-loss medications have spent years struggling with the physical and mental burdens of chronic obesity and are relieved to discover a decreased desire for food — and grateful to shed pounds.

When people stop taking the drugs, their appetites return and they regain weight, often faster than they lost it, studies show. One early analysis found that two-thirds of patients who started taking weight-loss drugs were no longer using them a year later.

Part of that may be due to high cost and ongoing supply shortages. But the larger question of what it means to alter a basic human drive like appetite needs to be considered as well, says Dr. Jens Juul Holst of the University of Copenhagen. He is one of the researchers who first identified the gut hormone GLP-1, or glucagon-like peptide 1, which eventually led to the new class of obesity drugs.

Speaking at an international diabetes conference this fall, Holst offered a philosophical critique of the new medications' real-world impact.

"Why is it that you've lost weight? That's because you've lost your appetite. That's because you've lost the pleasure of eating and the reward of having a beautiful meal," Holst told his colleagues. "And how long can you stand that? That is the real, real question."

## Michigan school shooting survivor heals with surgery, a trusted horse and a chance to tell her story

By MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

MAYFIELD TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP) — For Kylie Ossege, the 19-year-old college student who survived two deadly mass school shootings in Michigan — one as a senior at Oxford High School in 2021 and another 14 months later as a freshman at Michigan State University — Blaze stands as a source of comfort in a world otherwise shattered by bullets.

Ossege runs a brush along Blaze's broad forehead, then gives him a kiss between the eyes.

"I feel very at home when I'm with him," Ossege says of the 13-year-old American Quarter Horse she has owned since 2019. "He's my best friend."

A better friend than time, perhaps, which now gathers for Ossege like dust in a corner, a clingy bundle

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of haunting memories that she can neither forget nor sweep away: Fifteen minutes as she lay shot and bleeding in an Oxford High School hallway. Six weeks recovering in a hospital. Fourteen months between a deadly high school shooting and another at MSU. And daily physical pain she can never fully escape.

Ossege was severely wounded during the Nov. 30, 2021, attack on Oxford High School, about 40 miles (60 kilometers) north of Detroit.

She heard "something like a balloon popping," then fell to the ground, where she laid next to classmate Hana St. Juliana, who died in the shooting. A heavy backpack filled with textbooks and a laptop weighed Ossege down. She was unable to feel her legs. Or move.

"It was the longest 15 minutes of my life," she said.

Eventually, help arrived. Ossege was loaded into an ambulance and rushed to a hospital in nearby Pontiac, where she would spend the next six weeks recovering, longer than any of the six Oxford students and a staff member who were injured in the attack. Four died: St. Juliana, Justin Shilling, Madisyn Baldwin and Tate Myre, with whom Ossege had partnered at a bullying prevention program at the local middle school on the morning of the shooting.

The shooter was an Oxford student named Ethan Crumbley, whom Ossege says she didn't know and whose name she will not utter. Instead, Ossege plans to deliver an in-person victim impact statement during his sentencing hearing on Dec. 8.

"I'm excited to have my words heard and my story heard," said Ossege, who spent two weeks writing the statement that she estimates will take about 10 minutes to deliver.

Crumbley, 17, could be ordered to spend the rest of his life in prison.

"That is what everyone is hoping for," Ossege said, herself included.

Ossege delivered a memorable address at Oxford High's commencement in 2022, urging her classmates and the community to "radiate and shine," a favorite saying she long has shared with her mother, Marita, and one that still appears on a sign outside Oxford Elementary School.

But coming back hasn't been easy.

Ossege said she has "tried to remain as positive as I can through this whole journey," but her body provides a daily reminder of the shooting.

On the day of the Oxford shooting, a bullet traveled through Ossege's clavicle and ribs and exited her back, causing a concussion of the spinal cord that left her briefly paralyzed. She underwent a surgical procedure to remove a portion of her vertebral bone and relieve pressure from a spinal cord hematoma.

Following intense physical and occupational therapy, Ossege is able to walk again, but suffers constant pain.

"The only thing that makes it feel better is taking medications and laying down or sitting down," said the MSU sophomore who, inspired by her own caregivers, is studying kinesiology on the East Lansing campus that's so sprawling Ossege sometimes orders an Uber to drive her the equivalent of a 10-minute walk — "because 10 minutes can be miserable for me."

A family friend connected Ossege with an executive at Northwell Health, home to a neurosurgery team at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City that it was thought could provide her with relief. On July 17, doctors performed a successful, five-hour fusion procedure that stabilized Ossege's spine using screws and rods.

Dr. Daniel Sciubba, one of the surgeons, said injuries to the elements supporting the structure of Ossege's spine forced her to tilt forward, "almost like an unstable building that begins leaning under gravity." The result was extreme pain in her neck and upper back.

Sciubba said the surgery fixed the structural issues with Ossege's spine. He expects her pain levels to diminish over time and for her to eventually return to physical activities she enjoyed before the shooting.

"Now, it's a matter of recovery," Sciubba said. "She has hobbies like tennis and horseback riding. We expect her to get back to those."

Ossege said the surgery "has been a mood booster" that's also provided pain relief.

Meanwhile, she is dismayed that mass shootings continue to plague the U.S., including the second one she lived through, when a gunman killed three students and wounded five others on Michigan State's

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campus in February.

Ossege and her suitemates huddled for hours in a bathroom until the all-clear was given. An Oakland County sheriff's deputy who befriended Ossege during the Oxford shooting drove to MSU, picked her up and took her home. They arrived at 3 a.m.

"I'm angry and I'm sad at this world that shootings keep happening," Ossege said. "And that me and my friends have experienced two at this point. However, I'm hopeful that we can create change eventually."

Ossege is active with the MSU chapter of March For Our Lives, a group advocating against gun violence. She said she is heartened by continued support she receives from friends and family, including her father, older brother and mother, who left her job at a radiology center to help care for her daughter on a full-time basis.

When Ossege is home from school, she makes the 30-minute drive north from Oxford to Mayfield Township, where Blaze is boarded. When she arrived for a visit on a recent Saturday, the muscular brown horse with a flowing black mane and a pizza-slice-shaped white patch on his forehead spotted his owner and galloped quickly toward her.

"Hey!" she said, giving Blaze a carrot and then later grooming him, a practice she said helps with her post-traumatic stress disorder.

"He's just awesome. He takes care of me. He's so safe," Ossege said. "He's just a big puppy dog."

Ossege and Blaze walked to a field where he could graze. She smiled and stared at him as he dug his thick teeth into the late-autumn grass, a black toupee sliding forward off the top of his head.

"There's still light in this world," Ossege said. "Still good in this world."

## Right-wing populist Milei set to take Argentina down uncharted path: 'No room for lukewarm measures'

By DANIEL POLITI and DAVID BILLER Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — What many deemed impossible just months ago is reality: Right-wing populist Javier Milei resoundingly won Argentina's presidency.

And with his victory Sunday night, the fiery freshman lawmaker has thrust the country into the unknown regarding just how extreme his policies will be, following a campaign that saw him revving a chainsaw to symbolically cut the state down to size.

With almost all votes tallied, Milei handily beat Economy Minister Sergio Massa, 55.7% to 44.3%. Milei won all but three of the nation's 24 provinces and Massa had conceded even before the electoral authority began announcing preliminary results.

Milei, 53, a self-described anarcho-capitalist with a disheveled mop of hair, made his name by furiously denouncing the "political caste" on television programs. His pledge for abrupt, severe change resonated with Argentines weary of annual inflation soaring above 140% and a poverty rate that reached 40%. He will take power on Dec. 10.

Once in office, he has said he will slash government spending, dollarize the economy and eliminate the Central Bank as well as key ministries, including those of health and education. An admirer of former U.S. President Donald Trump, he has likewise presented himself as a crusader against the sinister creep of global socialism with plans to purge the government of corrupt establishment politicians. In the weeks before the runoff, though, he walked back some of his more unpopular proposals, such as loosening gun controls and sweeping, indiscriminate privatization.

"Hang on to your hat," Benjamin Gedan, director of the Latin America Program at the Washington-based Wilson Center, told The Associated Press by phone. "Milei has toned down his anti-establishment rage lately and downplayed his more outlandish proposals, but it's going to be a wild ride, given his combative style, inexperience and the few allies he has in Congress."

Supporters celebrated Sunday night outside Milei's headquarters in downtown Buenos Aires, drinking beer and chanting as fireworks went off overhead. They waved both Argentine flags and the yellow Gadsden flag, emblazoned with the words "Don't Tread On Me," which Milei's movement has adopted as its own.

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"We no longer want the past; we are betting on the future," said Ezequiel Fanelli, 45, who works for an insurance company and had a Gadsden flag in hand.

"We believe it's a change. Clearly, it's not easy; it's doesn't happen overnight. It's a collective construction, not just his alone," Fanelli added.

By wresting power from Massa's Peronist party that has dominated Argentine politics for decades, Milei's victory represents a political paradigm shift in the country. He is the first outsider to reach the presidency and considerably farther right-wing than anyone who has held the position before.

"I have a lot of faith in the policies that he can push forward, and I hope he can fulfill everything he proposed without obstacles in the middle," said Ayalen Abalos, a 22-year-old tourism student.

Indeed, implementing his agenda will be one of the main challenges, analysts say.

"Milei and his hardcore supporters will see his decisive victory as a mandate for radical change and an endorsement of his conservatism. That would be a mistake," Gedan said. "Many Argentines voted for him reluctantly, unwilling to support the economy minister of a collapsed economy."

And while the broad margin of victory reflects support from the people, he will need political allies, as well, said Mariel Fornoni of the political consulting firm Management & Fit. His fledgling Liberty Advances party, for example, has zero governors.

"Without political support, he won't be able to do what he said he was going to do," said Fornoni. Complicating his challenge further, "he has had little prior leadership experience — he has never led a legislative chamber, a province, or a company."

But the way in which voters proved willing to hand the country's reins to someone untested lays bare the deep discontent Argentines harbor for the ruling class and the status quo. It marks the culmination of an improbable rise to power. Milei parlayed his television stardom into a lawmaker seat in Argentina's lower house of Congress two years ago. Just months ago, his presidential bid was viewed as a mere sideshow — until he scored the most votes in August primary elections and sent shockwaves through the political landscape.

Milei, a libertarian economist, focused much of his campaign on economic proposals, casting blame on successive administrations for printing money with abandon to fund state spending. Ahead of the first round, Milei sometimes carried a chainsaw at rallies, a symbol of his intention to cut state spending.

In the run-up to the vote, Massa and his allies had cautioned Argentines that his opponent's plan to eliminate key ministries and otherwise sharply curtail the state would threaten public services, including health and education, and welfare programs many rely on. Milei accused his opponent of running a "campaign of fear" and, in his final campaign spot, stared starkly into the camera and promised he would not privatize education, healthcare nor soccer clubs.

The wide margin of Milei's victory suggests voters agreed that the hype was overblown, and were turned off, said Andrei Roman, CEO of Brazil-based pollster Atlas Intel, one of the only pollsters to correctly call the election's first round. There was a virtually tie in the province of Buenos Aires, home to almost 37% of the national electorate and a key bastion of Peronism. Massa kicked his party's machine into overdrive there to bring in votes — but to little avail, representing "the total defeat of Peronism," Roman said.

"Massa's campaign pushed the strategy of fear regarding Milei a lot and I think it backfired," he said, highlighting one of Massa's spots that showed a young child picking up a stray gun and shooting his friend. Such issues are hardly people's primary concerns, so they see it as "just foul play, and a cheap, unconvincing strategy."

Some of Milei's positions appear to echo those of more conservative Republicans in the U.S.; he opposes sex education, feminist policies and abortion, which is legal in Argentina, and rejects the notion that humans have a role in causing climate change.

His fiery, profanity-laden rhetoric has already inserted the country into the global culture war that has overwhelmed political discourse in the U.S. and Brazil. Like Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro, the former presidents of those nations, Milei had made unfounded claims of election fraud before Sunday's runoff that many analysts said raised concern about him eroding democratic norms.



Milei's rise also means the rise of Victoria Villaruel, his controversial running mate who has worked for years to change the prevailing narrative regarding Argentina's brutal 1976-1983 dictatorship. She has long said that the number of victims from Argentina's bloody 1976-1983 military dictatorship is far below what human rights organizations have long claimed, among other controversial positions.

"Despite Milei, despite all his campaign mistakes, despite all his peculiarities that raise doubts, concerns ... despite all of that, the demand for change prevailed," said Lucas Romero, the head of Synopsis, a local political consulting firm.

## The lion, the wig and the warrior. Who is Javier Milei, Argentina's president-elect?

By DAVID BILLER and DANIEL POLITI Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — His legions of fans call him "the crazy" and "the wig" due to his ferocity and unruly mop of hair, while he refers to himself as "the lion." He thinks sex education is a Marxist plot to destroy the family, views his cloned mastiffs as his "children with four paws" and has raised the possibility people should be allowed to sell their own vital organs.

He is Javier Milei, Argentina's next president.

A few years ago, Milei was a television talking head that bookers loved because his screeds against government spending and the ruling political class boosted ratings. At the time, and up until mere months ago, hardly any political expert believed he had a real shot at becoming president of South America's second-largest economy.

But Milei, a 53-year-old economist, has rocked Argentina's political establishment and inserted himself into what has long been effectively a two-party system by amassing a groundswell of support with his prescriptions of drastic measures to rein in soaring inflation and by pledging to crusade against the creep of socialism in society.

### 'ANARCHO-CAPITALIST' LIBERTARIAN

At the heart of his economic plan for Argentina is a proposal to replace the local currency, the peso, with the U.S. dollar. He has repeatedly said the only way to end the scourge of inflation, which has topped 140%, is to prevent politicians from continuing to print money. As such, he plans to extinguish the Central Bank.

A self-described "anarcho-capitalist," Milei's libertarianism was a novelty for Argentina. He has spoken in favor of loosening the country's labor laws and promoted a vision of starkly smaller government to boost economic growth. That entails eliminating half of the government ministries, including health and education. As a symbol of the deep cuts he champions, he has at times campaigned with a revving chainsaw in hand.

Reducing the state's size dovetails with his calls for the "political caste" to be purged from Argentina's government, much as former U.S. President Donald Trump spoke of "draining the swamp" in reference to the entrenched establishment. Milei has often drawn comparisons to Trump, a leader he openly admires.

Before entering the public spotlight, Milei was chief economist at Corporación America, one of Argentina's largest business conglomerates that, among other things, runs most of the country's airports. He worked there until 2021, when he won his seat as a lawmaker.

### CULTURE WARRIOR

Milei doesn't just see himself as a right-leaning politician, but also as a culture warrior with the mission of shaking up Argentine society. Some of Milei's positions appear to echo more conservative Republicans in the U.S. while his fiery, profanity-laden rhetoric has already lifted him to prominence in the global culture war that at times overwhelms political discourse in the U.S., neighboring Brazil and elsewhere.

Milei opposes feminist policies and abortion, which Argentina legalized in recent years, and has proposed a plebiscite to repeal the law. He also rejects the notion humans have a role in causing climate change. In a television appearance, he denounced Pope Francis, who is Argentine, as an "imbecile" for defending social justice and called the head of the Roman Catholic Church "the representative of malignance on Earth."

In the same vein as Trump's slogan, "Make America Great Again," Milei has said he will return the country to an unspecified period of greatness.

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"Argentina is going to reclaim the place in the world that it should never have lost," Milei said at his victory rally Sunday. His followers have embraced the comparison, and often wear hats bearing the words "Make Argentina Great Again."

## PERSONAL LIFE

The son of a passenger transport businessman and a homemaker, the economist doesn't like to talk much about his childhood and has said his young years were marked by a tense relationship with his father.

A younger Milei played in a Rolling Stones tribute band and served as a goalkeeper in the youth divisions of the Chacarita soccer club. But he decided to put aside soccer during the hyperinflation period of the late 1980s to study economics.

These days, the only family member with whom he has a close relationship is his sister, Karina Milei, who ran his campaign. He calls her "the boss," and has repeatedly characterized her as the architect of his rise to power.

During his repeated television appearances, Milei didn't just talk about economics and politics. He also delved into his personal life and once presented himself as an expert in tantric sex, openly discussing how he had repeatedly participated in group sex and providing tips.

For much of his adult life, Milei did not have a serious romantic partner and he isn't known to have friends. After saying for months that he didn't have time to date, he started a relationship in July with actress and artist Fátima Flórez. She is known for her imitations of Vice President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, who was president 2007-2015.

Milei had a deep connection with his English Mastiff, Conan, who passed away. He now has at least four others reportedly cloned using Conan's DNA, all of which are named after economists.

Despite the "wig" nickname, his hair is real.

## Canned seafood moves beyond tuna sandwiches in a pandemic trend that stuck

By JULIE WATSON and HAVEN DALEY Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Sardines swirling in preserved lemons. Mackerel basking in curry sauce. Char-grilled squid bathing in ink. All are culinary delicacies long popular in Europe that are now making their mark on U.S. menus.

The country's canned seafood industry is moving well beyond tuna sandwiches, a pandemic-era trend that began with Americans in lockdown demanding more of their cupboard staples.

Since then, the U.S. market has only expanded, fueled by social media influencers touting the benefits of the high-powered protein food in brightly colored metal containers. On the TikTok channel Tinned — Fashionado, Kris Wilson posts recipes for quick meals, including one mixing leftover rice, soy sauce, avocado and a runny egg with a tin of smoked mussels from the Danish company Fangst.

Tinned fish, as it's called in Europe, is now a regular offering on menus at wine bars from San Francisco to Houston to New York, where patrons scoop the contents straight out of the can. There are even tinned fish clubs that mimic wine clubs by sending members monthly shipments of various seafood packed in various combinations of spices, oils and sauces. Videos on tinned fish, from tastings to how-to tips on cleaning the fishy smell from cans, have generated more than 30 million views on TikTok.

U.S. canned seafood industry sales have grown from \$2.3 billion in 2018 to more than \$2.7 billion so far this year, according to market research firm Circana.

Becca Millstein opened a Los Angeles-based tinned fish business in 2020 after eating more of it during coronavirus lockdowns.

"When we were all quarantining at home, preparing 100% of our meals day in and day out, it was very time consuming to create satiating meals," she said. "I just found myself eating so much canned fish, and at the same time, the options that I found when strolling up and down the aisles of my local grocery store just were not great."

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Millstein lived in Spain in college and spent time in Portugal, both countries where tinned fish has long been a part of people's diets, so she knew there were better options to be had.

"I was eating the same canned fish that my great grandmother Rose in Brooklyn was eating in the 1930s," she said. "I thought that was just insane."

Her company, Fishwife Tinned Seafood Co., set out to offer high-quality, sustainably sourced seafood.

Millstein said she sought out canneries in Spain and Portugal and contacted fishers along the West Coast who connected her to canneries in Oregon and Washington.

"Our mission is really to just galvanize the canned fish industry and transform and make it what we think it can be," Millstein said, adding that means offering much more "than tuna fish sandwiches."

Priced from \$7.99 to \$10.99 per tin, Fishwife products are meant to be delicacies that can be served over rice bowls, on charcuterie boards or in salads, Millstein said. She added that her company's sales grew by 250% from 2021 to 2022, and are on track to jump about 150% this year, though she declined to release dollar figures.

To that end, Fishwife's products include smoked salmon brined in salt, garlic salt and brown sugar then hand-packed into cans with Sichuan chile crisps crafted in the Chinese city of Chengdu. Its anchovies from the Cantabrian Sea are packed with premium Spanish extra virgin olive oil, sourced directly from farmers in northern Spain.

The company's smoked albacore tuna is caught in the Pacific Northwest, with one fishing pole at a time to minimize harm to marine species such as sea turtles, sharks, rays, dolphins and seabirds that can be caught unintentionally during commercial fishing operations.

"These are products that you would want to serve to people who are coming over for dinner," Millstein said. "They're not just something that you would want to maybe like mash up really quickly and feed yourself for a quick, cheap protein fix."

Simi Grewal, a co-founder of the San Francisco wine shop and bar DECANTsf, said her business turned to tinned fish to feed customers partly because it doesn't have a kitchen suitable for cooking.

"It's super versatile, especially when we're talking about pairing with wine," she said.

Tinned fish at the shop runs anywhere from \$8 for Ati Manel garfish, a needle-like fish offered in olive oil from Portugal, to \$36 for Conservas de Cambados 'Sea Urchin Caviar' from Spain's Galician estuaries.

"People make a lot of assumptions about, you know, tinned fish being a cheap product. And you know, when you come here, this is a very highly curated program," she said. "I spend hours and hours a month researching these folks and trying to find what are the newest items that they have out."

Maria Finn, a chef and author in the Bay Area, said tinned fish is attracting everyone from foodies in search of the newest taste to doomsdayers stocking their bunkers. She takes the mussels from Patagonia Provisions on her annual mushroom hunts for a quick lunch and keeps packed cans of Wild Planet sardines in her bag in case wildfire threatens her home.

"I figure if anything can keep you alive for a long time, it's going to be a tin of sardines packed in olive oil," she joked.

Tinned fish can last up to five years and requires no refrigeration, offering an environmentally friendly alternative to meat, which is the largest agricultural source of greenhouse gasses and has a bigger carbon footprint than any other protein source. The way humans produce and consume food contributes nearly 30% to greenhouse gas emissions, according to scientists.

But tinned fish is not without its drawbacks.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has cautioned people, especially pregnant women, to avoid eating too much fish, especially tuna or swordfish that may contain high amounts of mercury. But many tins contain smaller fish like sardines and anchovies that have the added benefit of being low in mercury. The canned products, however, tend to have a higher salt content than fresh seafood, health officials say.

Greenpeace has expressed concerns about overfishing to meet the growing demand and cautions buyers to do their research to make sure the products are sustainable. Longlining is one of the most commonly used methods for fishing tuna, which can snare other species like turtles or dolphins, according to the

environmental group.

California was once home to thriving sardine canning factories in the coastal town of Monterey, which inspired John Steinbeck's "Cannery Row." The industry disappeared decades ago as the fish population plummeted. The canneries have long been replaced with hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops.

John Field, a research fishery biologist with the National Marine Fisheries Service, doesn't see large factories ever coming back, but he said the trend could help small local canneries and sustainable fishing.

He admits thought that he's not so sure about ordering a tin off a menu.

"Personally, when I go out to an expensive dinner, I probably would prefer to have fresh fish than from a can," he said.

## **31 premature babies are evacuated from Gaza's largest hospital, but scores of trauma patients remain**

By NAJIB JOBAIN and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP) — Health officials said 31 premature babies in "extremely critical condition" were transferred safely Sunday from Gaza's main hospital and will go to Egypt, while over 250 patients with severely infected wounds and other urgent conditions remained stranded days after Israeli forces entered the compound to look for Hamas operations.

The plight of the babies, along with the Israeli claims against Shifa Hospital, have become potent symbols in the devastating war between Israel and Hamas. An Israeli offensive has taken a heavy toll on Palestinian civilians, while Israel has accused Hamas of using Shifa and other hospitals as headquarters for military operations.

The newborns from the hospital, where power was cut and supplies ran out while Israeli forces battled Palestinian militants outside, were receiving urgent care in the southern Gaza city of Rafah. They had dehydration, hypothermia and sepsis in some cases, said Mohamed Zaqout, director of Gaza hospitals. Four other babies died in the two days before the evacuation, he said.

A World Health Organization team that visited Shifa said most of the remaining patients had amputations, burns or other trauma. Plans were being made to evacuate them in the coming days.

Later Sunday, Israel's army said it had strong evidence supporting its claims that Hamas maintains a sprawling command post inside and under Shifa. Israel has portrayed the hospital as a key target in its war to end Hamas' rule in Gaza following the militant group's move into southern Israel six weeks ago.

The army said it found a 55-meter (60-yard) tunnel about 10 meters (33 feet) under the hospital's 20-acre complex, which includes several buildings, garages and a plaza. It said the tunnel included a staircase and a firing hole that could be used by snipers, and ended at a blast-proof door that troops have not yet opened.

The Associated Press couldn't independently verify Israel's findings, which included security camera video showing what the military said were two foreign hostages, one Thai and one Nepalese, taken to the hospital following the Oct. 7 attack.

The army also said an independent medical report had determined that Israeli army Cpl. Noa Marciano, whose body was recovered in Gaza, had been killed by Hamas in the hospital. Marciano had been injured in an Israeli strike Nov. 9 that killed her captor, according to Israel's intelligence assessment. The injuries were not life-threatening but she was then killed by a Hamas militant in Shifa, the army said.

Hamas and hospital staff have denied the allegations of a command post under Shifa. Critics describe the hospital as a symbol of what they call Israel's reckless endangerment of civilians. Thousands have been killed in Israeli strikes in Gaza, which is severely short of food, water, medicine and fuel.

Senior Hamas official Osama Hamdan dismissed the Israeli military's announcement and didn't deny that Gaza has hundreds of kilometers of tunnels. However, he said, "the Israelis said there was a command and control center, which means that the matter is greater than just a tunnel."

### HOSTAGE NEGOTIATIONS

About 1,200 people have been killed on the Israeli side, mainly civilians during the Oct. 7 attack in which

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Hamas dragged some 240 captives back into Gaza and shattered Israel's sense of security. The military says 63 Israeli soldiers have been killed, including 12 over the past 24 hours.

Hamas has released four hostages, Israel has rescued one, and the bodies of two were found near Shifa. Israel, the United States and Qatar, which mediates with Hamas, have been negotiating a hostage release for weeks. "We are hopeful that we can get a significant number of hostages freed in the coming days," Israel's ambassador to the U.S., Michael Herzog, told ABC's "This Week."

Qatar's prime minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, said the sticking points were "more practical, logistical."

Israel's three-member war cabinet is to meet with representatives of the hostages' families on Monday evening.

## SHIP SEIZED

Yemen's Houthi rebels seized a Israeli-linked cargo ship in the southern Red Sea and took its 25 crew members hostage Sunday, an action that raised fear that regional tensions heightened by the war were spilling onto the seas. The Iran-backed rebel group said it would continue to target ships connected to Israel.

No Israelis were aboard the Bahamas-flagged Galaxy Leader, which was operated by a Japanese company with crewmembers from the Philippines, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Mexico, officials said. Public shipping databases associated the ship's owners with Ray Car Carriers, a company founded by Abraham "Rami" Ungar, who is known as one of the richest people in Israel.

Ungar told The Associated Press he was aware of the incident but couldn't comment as he awaited details. A ship linked to him experienced an explosion in 2021 in the Gulf of Oman. Israeli media blamed it on Iran at the time.

The Galaxy Leader was seized some 150 kilometers (90 miles) off the coast of Yemen, near the coast of Eritrea, and taken to the port city of Hodeida, according to the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, citing a security officer with the ship's company.

Japanese officials were negotiating with Houthi rebels for the release of the ship and its crew, said Japan Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno.

## HEAVY FIGHTING IN THE NORTH

Heavy clashes were reported in the built-up Jabaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza. "There was the constant sound of gunfire and tank shelling," Yassin Sharif, who is sheltering in a U.N.-run hospital there, said by phone.

The commissioner-general of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, Philippe Lazzarini, said 24 people were killed the day before in what witnesses described as an Israeli airstrike on a U.N.-run school in Jabaliya. The Israeli military, which has repeatedly called on Palestinians to leave northern Gaza, said only that its troops were active in the area "with the aim of hitting terrorists."

"This war is having a staggering and unacceptable number of civilian casualties. ... This must stop," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a statement on that strike and another on a U.N.-run school within 24 hours.

More than 11,500 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to Palestinian health authorities. Another 2,700 have been reported missing, believed buried in rubble. The count does not differentiate between civilians and combatants; Israel says it has killed thousands of militants.

Attacks by Israeli forces and settlers have killed 215 Palestinians in the West Bank since the war began, according to Palestinian health officials.

## COLDER WEATHER ADDS TO MISERY

More than two-thirds of Gaza's population of 2.3 million have fled their homes. The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, or UNRWA, is struggling to provide basic services to hundreds of thousands of displaced people. Seventeen of its facilities have been directly hit, the agency said.

Their misery has worsened in recent days because of cold winds and driving rain.

Over the weekend, Israel allowed UNRWA to import enough fuel to continue humanitarian operations for another couple of days, and to keep internet and telephone systems running. Israel cut off all fuel imports

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at the start of the war, causing Gaza's sole power plant and most water treatment systems to shut down. Israel has repeatedly struck what it says are militant targets across the south, often killing civilians.

The evacuation zone is already crowded with displaced civilians, and it was not clear where they would go if the offensive moved closer. Egypt has refused to accept any influx of Palestinian refugees, in part because of fears that Israel would not allow them to return.

But some patients and foreign nationals reportedly got through. Turkey's Health Ministry said it evacuated 110 people — including patients and their relatives — from an unspecified part of Gaza to Egypt. Another 87 people who were from Turkey or breakaway northern Cyprus entered Egypt from Gaza late Sunday, Turkish officials said, with the groups to be flown Monday to Turkey.

Palestinian-Canadian Khalil Manaa, 71, left Gaza for Egypt on Sunday. After fleeing to southern Gaza, he said he and relatives shared a home crammed with 40 people. "And there, we also were subjected to intense strikes. ... A rocket hit our house," he said.

## **Biden is spending his 81st birthday honoring White House tradition of pardoning Thanksgiving turkeys**

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Liberty and Bell are ready for their presidential pardons.

The two Thanksgiving turkeys were due at the White House on Monday to play their part in what has become an annual holiday tradition: a president sparing them from becoming someone's dinner.

"We think that's a great way to kick off the holiday season and really, really a fun honor," Steve Lykken, chairman of the National Turkey Federation and president of the Jennie-O Turkey Store, said in an interview with The Associated Press.

The event, set for the South Lawn this year instead of the Rose Garden, marks the unofficial start of the holiday season in Washington, and Monday was shaping up to be an especially busy opening day.

President Joe Biden, the oldest president in U.S. history, also was celebrating his 81st birthday on Monday. In the afternoon, his wife, first lady Jill Biden, was accepting the delivery of an 18-and-a-half foot Fraser fir from Fleetwood, North Carolina, as the official White House Christmas tree.

Lykken introduced Liberty and Bell on Sunday at the Willard Intercontinental, a luxury hotel close to the White House. The gobblers checked into a suite there on Saturday following their red-carpet arrival in the U.S. capital after a dayslong road trip from Minnesota in a black Cadillac Escalade.

"They were raised like all of our turkeys, protected, of course, from weather extremes and predators, free to walk about with constant access to water and feed," Lykken said Sunday, as Liberty and Bell strutted around the Willard's newly renovated Crystal Room on plastic sheeting laid over the carpet. Young children in the crowd of onlookers — many of them employees and guests of the Jennie-O company — yelled "gobble, gobble" at them.

The male turkeys, both about 20 weeks old and about 42 pounds, were hatched in July in Willmar, Minnesota — Jennie-O is headquartered there — as part of the "presidential flock," Lykken said. They listened to music and other sounds to prepare them for Monday's hoopla at the White House.

"They listened to all kinds of music to get ready for the crowds and people along the way. I can confirm they are, in fact, Swifties, and they do enjoy some Prince," Lykken said, meaning that Liberty and Bell are fans of Taylor Swift. "I think they're absolutely ready for prime time."

The tradition dates to 1947 when the National Turkey Federation, which represents turkey farmers and producers, first presented a National Thanksgiving Turkey to President Harry Truman.

Back then, and even earlier, the gobbler was given for the first family's holiday consumption. But by the late 1980s, the tradition had evolved into an often humorous ceremony in which the birds are pardoned, given a second chance at life after they are spared from ending up on a family's Thanksgiving table.

In 1989, as animal rights activists picketed nearby, President George H.W. Bush said, "But let me assure you, and this fine tom turkey, that he will not end up on anyone's dinner table, not this guy -- he's granted a presidential pardon as of right now -- and allow him to live out his days on a children's farm

not far from here.”

After Biden pardons his third pair of turkeys on Monday, Liberty and Bell will be returned to their home state to be cared for by the University of Minnesota’s College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources Sciences.

“You can imagine the wonderful care they’re going to get from students and veterinarians and professors, etc., and so they will hopefully have a chance, maybe, to go see a hockey game or spend time with Goldy the gopher,” Lykken said, referring to the university’s mascot.

A little over 200 million turkeys will be eaten on Thanksgiving, Lykken said.

Biden will eat his Thanksgiving turkey with family on Nantucket, a Massachusetts island, continuing a long family tradition. On Sunday, he and the first lady served an early Thanksgiving meal to hundreds of service members from the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and the USS Gerald R. Ford at Norfolk Naval Station in Virginia, the largest installation of its kind in the world, along with their families.

Markus Platzer, the Willard’s general manager, said the hotel’s role in introducing the turkeys is the “highlight of the year.” The Willard has been involved for more than 15 years, he said, calling the turkeys “very special guests of ours.”

“There are so many bad things going on globally that this is something where everybody, you know, brings a smile into the face of the people, at least for a few minutes,” Platzer said Sunday.

## **Georgia deputy who shot absolved man had prior firing for excessive force. Critics blame the sheriff**

By RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

When Staff Sgt. Buck Aldridge fatally shot Leonard Cure during a roadside struggle after pulling him over for speeding, it wasn’t the first time a traffic stop involving the Camden County sheriff’s deputy had spiraled into violence.

Last year, Aldridge dragged a driver from a car that crashed after fleeing the deputy on Interstate 95. Body and dash camera video obtained by The Associated Press show the driver on his back as Aldridge punches him. Records indicate the deputy faced no disciplinary action.

Personnel records show Aldridge was fired in August 2017 by a police department in the same Georgia county after he threw a woman to the ground and handcuffed her during a traffic stop. The Camden County Sheriff’s Office hired him nine months later.

Aldridge stopped Cure for speeding Oct. 16 and ended up shocking the 53-year-old Black man with a Taser after he refused to put his hands behind him to be cuffed. Body and dash camera videos show Cure fought back and had a hand at the deputy’s throat when Aldridge shot him point-blank.

Relatives have said Cure likely resisted because of psychological trauma from spending 16 years imprisoned in Florida for an armed robbery he didn’t commit. Officials exonerated and freed him in 2020.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation is investigating Cure’s death and will submit its findings to prosecutors. Aldridge’s attorney said the video shows he fired in self-defense. Regardless, critics question whether he should have been wearing a badge given his history of aggression.

“This guy should have never been on the force,” said Timothy Bessent Sr., president of Camden County’s NAACP chapter.

The AP obtained Aldridge’s personnel records as well as reports and videos from the June 2022 chase and arrest using Georgia’s open records law.

A former U.S. Marine, Aldridge, 41, worked nearly five years for the Kingsland Police Department in Georgia’s southeast corner. His file shows Aldridge was disciplined for using unnecessary force in February 2014 and May 2017. The second time he was suspended for three days without pay.

The department fired Aldridge for his third infraction just three months later. Police records say Aldridge was assisting with a traffic stop when he tried to handcuff a woman — not to arrest her, but to keep her outside her car. One deputy told investigators Aldridge cuffed the woman after “picking her up and throwing her on the ground.” She was cited for letting an unlicensed person drive her car.

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Aldridge was hired by the sheriff's office in May 2018. He disclosed his firing on his job application.

Aldridge's termination wouldn't automatically disqualify him from working for another agency, though some would consider it a huge liability, said retired police Maj. Neill Franklin.

"If someone's terminated from another police department for use of excessive force, they're not getting hired by the Maryland State Police or the Baltimore Police Department," said Franklin, who led training programs for both agencies. "It's just not worth the risk."

Bessent and other advocates say it's an example of Camden County Sheriff Jim Proctor tolerating unnecessary violence.

Proctor, who has been sheriff for a decade, declined to comment. Spokesman Capt. Larry Bruce cited the investigation into Cure's death and pending civil litigation involving other deputies.

Since last year, six Camden County deputies have been indicted on felony charges and fired for violence against jail detainees and a motorist.

In September 2022, jail security cameras recorded guards rushing into the cell of Jarrett Hobbs, who was punched in the head and neck and hurled against a wall. Hobbs was charged with assaulting jailers until his attorney obtained the video. His charges were dropped, and three deputies were indicted.

Two more jailers were charged and fired for incidents in March and July. Security video showed one push a detainee to the floor and punch him before another guard intervened. The other deputy shoved a handcuffed detainee headfirst into a door, knocking him unconscious.

"You've got these deputies running wild and doing what they want to do," said Harry Daniels, a civil rights attorney who won a legal settlement for Hobbs. "The consequences have come from the GBI and the district attorney's office. It should not come from an outside agency."

He points to Christine Newman, named "Deputy of the Month" two months after a dash camera recorded her slapping a handcuffed driver across the face and slamming the woman's head into a patrol SUV. The driver had refused to exit her vehicle after being pulled over for a rolling stop Jan. 16, 2022.

Newman was fired a year later after being indicted on charges including aggravated assault and violating her oath of office. She has pleaded not guilty. Newman's attorney, Robert Persse, called her a "loyal deputy" whom he looks forward to defending in court.

The number of deputies facing charges "indicates a culture that may not encourage use of force, but certainly tolerates inappropriate use of force," said retired LaGrange, Georgia, Police Chief Louis Dekmar.

"If folks are held accountable and there are clear lines, you generally don't see that in law enforcement agencies," said Dekmar, a former president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

A spike in claims involving the sheriff's office caused Camden County's government to get dropped by its insurance company in July, said Mike Spiers, the county's risk management director. The county got new policies, he said, but its deductible for liability jumped from \$25,000 per claim to \$250,000.

Aldridge was placed on administrative leave while the GBI investigates Cure's death.

"Buck Aldridge is a fine officer and the video speaks for itself," said Adrienne Browning, Aldridge's attorney. "It's clear his life was in danger and he defended himself."

Video released of the fatal confrontation along I-95 shows Aldridge telling Cure he's being charged with reckless driving for speeding in excess of 100 mph (161 kph). Cure argues, but obeys commands to get out and put his hands on his truck. However, he ignores commands to put his hands behind him.

That's when Aldridge fires his Taser into Cure's back. Cure fights back, and video shows them grappling beside the highway. Cure maintains a grip on Aldridge's face and neck after being struck with a baton.

"Yeah, bitch!" Cure says. Then he slumps to the ground after Aldridge fires a single shot.

Dekmar, Franklin and a third expert told AP they believe the shooting was legal, as Aldridge appeared to be in danger when he fired. But they also criticized how Aldridge began the encounter by shouting at Cure and said made no effort to deescalate.

"He escalated the situation with Mr. Cure," said former Memphis police officer Thaddeus Johnson, a criminal justice professor at Georgia State University and a senior fellow for the Council on Criminal Justice. "He has no control over his emotions."

Johnson said Aldridge showed a similar lack of control during a June 2022 arrest after chasing two



speeding cars.

After one car crashes, body and dash camera video shows Aldridge shouting expletives as he approaches with his gun drawn. The driver is on his back when Aldridge starts dragging him headfirst from the car, then punches him.

The driver resists being cuffed but complies after another deputy's dog bites him and Aldridge shocks him with a Taser. The driver was charged with drug trafficking, reckless driving and fleeing an officer.

Aldridge was promoted to staff sergeant two months later. His sheriff's personnel file shows no disciplinary actions.

Johnson said he sees no justification for Aldridge punching the arrested driver. Even if prosecutors don't charge him in Cure's death, he said, "from what I saw in the video, he deserves to be fired."

"We have to hold officers to a higher standard," Johnson said, "even though they are human."

## **A Montana farmer with a flattop and ample lobbyist cash stands between GOP and Senate control**

By MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

BIGFORK, Mont. (AP) — After 17 years in the U.S. Senate, Democrat Jon Tester is a well-known commodity in Montana — a plain-spoken grain farmer with a flattop and a carefully cultivated reputation as a moderate.

The 67-year-old lawmaker smiled and laughed his way through the crowd at a Veterans Day event in Bigfork, a small town on Flathead Lake where the population has surged in recent years. He chatted with veterans who supported him and some who didn't, then stood behind a lectern in the Bigfork High School gymnasium to promote his biggest recent accomplishment: expanded federal health care for millions of veterans exposed to toxic smoke at military "burn pits."

Tester has survived three close elections and a changed national political landscape to emerge as the lone Democrat still holding high office in Montana. The 2024 election brings possibly his stiffest challenge yet: Republicans, just two seats short of Senate control, are expected to spend tens of millions on attack ads painting him as a Washington insider tainted by lobbyist cash.

Ousting Tester also would cement a Republican lock on a state that voted overwhelmingly for Republican Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election.

Tester entered the Senate after selling Montana voters on his authenticity, and the former high school band teacher's message hasn't changed much. He still mingles comfortably with union members, ranchers and veterans, has a record of working on their behalf, and says his heart remains firmly in his sparsely populated state, a vast expanse that spans from the arid Great Plains to the lush forests of the Pacific Northwest.

Still, authenticity is harder to sell when you've become a top Washington fundraiser. He's taken in almost \$20 million for next year's election, ranking Tester sixth among Senate candidates nationwide, according to Federal Election Commission data through September. Tester insisted that the money hasn't changed him, that he doesn't even know where it all comes from.

"I can't tell you who's donating to me. Even from within the state of Montana, I can't tell you who donates to me because I don't look at that list," he said in an interview. "It's not important. I trust that those people believe in me and I'm going to continue to do the same job."

His campaign reports reveal abundant lobbyist cash, the kind that rarely comes from people who don't want something, and yet the lawmaker's journey from outsider to fundraising behemoth has largely been one of necessity. With West Virginia Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin's decision against seeking another term, Tester has become a top target for Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and his massive fundraising operation.

McConnell's aspirations to again be majority leader could get bogged down if a primary fight develops between his anointed candidate in Montana, U.S. Navy SEAL Tim Sheehy, and U.S. Rep. Matt Rosendale,

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one of the far-right House members who ousted fellow Republican Kevin McCarthy of California as House speaker. Dozens of state lawmakers have encouraged Rosendale to enter. He ran against Tester in 2018 and lost despite a huge push from then-President Trump.

Republican unity next November would narrow Tester's path to victory, especially if he's branded as a Washington insider. As he's gained seniority and influence — and as election spending nationwide has exploded — the flood of campaign cash that's flowed toward Tester has left him vulnerable to attack.

The potency of the authenticity issue even within his own party was on display during a recent town hall hosted by Tester in the Democratic stronghold of Butte, where a group of activists pressed him repeatedly to call for a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war. The lawmaker, who heads the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on defense, rebuffed their pleas, saying Israel had a right to defend itself against the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas.

That rankled Noah Sohl of Missoula, who said he twice voted for Tester and supported the Democrat's last reelection by making phone calls and registering voters. The nursing student drew a straight line between donations to Tester's campaign by defense industry lobbyists and Tester's opposition to a cease-fire.

After becoming the panel's chairman in 2021, Tester received more than \$160,000 in contributions from employees and committees representing the defense industry. The donations came at a crucial juncture for both the defense budget and Lockheed Martin, which benefited from \$1.8 billion for the F-35 fighter jet that Tester's subcommittee pushed as part of a military spending package.

Sohl pledged not to help Tester this election if he won't change his stance on a cease-fire. Sohl acknowledged that could benefit Republicans.

"They're all licking their chops over the fact that among his (Tester's) constituents, there's a rising group that don't agree with him," Sohl said. "His big thing is, 'I'm not like those Republicans. I'm a true Montanan just going to Washington to fight for the people who voted for me.' But it seems like he lost his footing."

Tester dismissed any notion that campaign donations sway his vote or that he's fundamentally changed since 2006. He also brushed off the increased pressure on him since Manchin's departure.

Veterans issues resound in Montana, which has the second-highest percentage of veterans in the U.S. among the adult civilian population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Tester chairs the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

"I take my cues directly from the veterans of this state," Tester told the assembly at Bigfork High School.

In the front row sat Terry Baker, who served in the Vietnam War and voted against Tester the first time he ran. Tester's backing of veterans converted Baker into a supporter. He said the lawmaker remains the only Democrat he has ever voted for.

"He's been a tremendous asset for all the veterans' groups," said Baker, 72, of Kalispell. "The fact that there are a tremendous amount of veterans in Montana, that will help Tester out."

Montana itself has changed significantly since Tester came to office. There's been an influx of newcomers from Arizona, Washington state, California and Texas. Farmland is yielding to subdivisions even as cities such as Bozeman and Missoula have housing crises.

The state's politics have lurched rightward. When Tester entered the Senate, Democrats held almost every statewide elected office in Montana, from governor, secretary of state and attorney general, to two of the state's three seats in Congress. Since the 2020 election, that's down to Tester's seat.

Republican state lawmakers maneuvered unsuccessfully to hobble his chances for a fourth term this spring. They proposed election rule changes that would have allowed only the top two candidates to advance from next year's Senate primary. That likely would have kept third-party candidates off the general election ballot and could have tipped the election for Republicans.

Past races for Tester's seat were close enough some Republicans blamed third-party candidates for the Democrat's victories. Concern that could happen again can't be discounted. Montana Libertarian Party Chairman Sid Daoud announced Monday that he's entering next year's Senate race, raising Republican fears of a third-party spoiler.

Tester rode to office on the unpopularity of the Iraq war and a specter of scandal that plagued his

predecessor, three-term Sen. Conrad Burns, over the Republican's close ties to "super-lobbyist" Jack Abramoff. Abramoff was jailed for conspiracy and fraud. No charges were filed against Burns, a former cattle auctioneer who dismissed criticism over the matter as "old political hooey."

Challenges to Tester's authenticity dogged him during the 2018 election cycle, when he ranked for a time as the top recipient of lobbyist donations among members of Congress. He currently ranks second with \$407,000 in contributions from lobbyists, putting him just behind Washington state Democratic Sen. Maria Cantwell, according to the research group OpenSecrets.

Those direct contributions do not include millions of dollars expected to be spent on the race from outside groups, including McConnell's formidable operation and comparable Democratic organizations.

So far, there is nothing to indicate that money flowing Tester's way swayed his decision-making or that he did anything wrong. Still, Republicans have highlighted the ties to lobbyists in an ad campaign launched earlier this month that declares "after nearly two decades in Washington, Jon Tester has changed."

Tester invited anyone who think he's changed to come out and "pick rock" at the farm near the small town of Big Sandy that he runs with his wife, Sharla. He said he's still cognizant that in Montana, every connection with voters is vital.

To his way of thinking, that makes authenticity the kind of thing money can't buy. "This is an eyeball-to-eyeball state," he said.

## **With the world's eyes on Gaza, attacks are on the rise in the West Bank, which faces its own war**

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

QUSRA, West Bank (AP) — When Israeli warplanes swooped over the Gaza Strip following Hamas militants' deadly attack on southern Israel, Palestinians say a different kind of war took hold in the occupied West Bank.

Overnight, the territory was closed off. Towns were raided, curfews imposed, teenagers arrested, detainees beaten, and villages stormed by Jewish vigilantes.

With the world's attention on Gaza and the humanitarian crisis there, the violence of war has also erupted in the West Bank. Israeli settler attacks have surged at an unprecedented rate, according to the United Nations. The escalation has spread fear, deepened despair, and robbed Palestinians of their livelihoods, their homes and, in some cases, their lives.

"Our lives are hell," said Sabri Boum, a 52-year-old farmer who fortified his windows with metal grills last week to protect his children from settlers he said threw stun grenades in Qaryout, a northern village. "It's like I'm in a prison."

In six weeks, settlers have killed nine Palestinians, said Palestinian health authorities. They've destroyed 3,000-plus olive trees during the crucial harvest season, said Palestinian Authority official Ghassan Daghlas, wiping out what for some were inheritances passed through generations. And they've harassed herding communities, forcing over 900 people to abandon 15 hamlets they long called home, the U.N. said.

When asked about settler attacks, the Israeli army said only that it aims to defuse conflict and troops "are required to act" if Israel citizens violate the law. The army didn't respond to requests for comment on specific incidents.

U.S. President Biden and other administration officials have repeatedly condemned settler violence, even as they defended the Israeli campaign in Gaza.

"It has to stop," Biden said last month. "They have to be held accountable."

That hasn't happened, according to Israeli rights group Yesh Din. Since Oct. 7, one settler has been arrested — over an olive farmer's death — and was released five days later, the group said. Two other settlers were placed in preventive detention without charge, it said.

Naomi Kahn, of advocacy group Regavim, which lobbies for settler interests, argued that settler attacks weren't nearly as widespread as rights groups report because it's a broad category including self-defense, anti-Palestinian graffiti and other nonviolent provocations.

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"The entire Israeli system works not only to stamp out this violence but to prevent it," she said.

Before the Hamas assault, 2023 already was the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank in over two decades, with 250 Palestinians killed by Israeli fire, most during military operations.

Over these six weeks of war, Israeli security forces have killed another 206 Palestinians, the Palestinian Health Ministry said, the result of a rise in army raids backed by airstrikes and Palestinian militant attacks. In the deadliest West Bank raid since the second Palestinian intifada, or uprising, of the 2000s, Israeli forces killed 14 Palestinians in the Jenin refugee camp Nov. 9, most of them militants.

While for years settlers enjoyed the support of the Israeli government, they now have vocal proponents at the highest levels of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition. This month, Netanyahu appointed Zvi Sukkot, a settler temporarily banned from the West Bank in 2012 over alleged assaults targeting Palestinians and Israeli forces, to lead the subcommittee on West Bank issues in parliament.

Palestinians who've endured hardships of Israeli military rule, in its 57th year, say this war has left them more vulnerable than ever.

"We've become scared of tomorrow," said Abdelazim Wadi, 50, whose brother and nephew were fatally shot by settlers, according to health authorities.

Conflict has long been part of daily life here, but Palestinians say the war has unleashed a new wave of provocations, disrupting even their grim routine.

## THE SETTLERS IN FATIGUES

Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza in the 1967 Mideast war. Settlers claim the West Bank as their biblical birthright. Most of the international community considers the settlements, home to 700,000 Israelis, illegal. Israel considers the West Bank disputed land, and says the settlements' fate should be decided in negotiations. International law says the military, as the occupying power, must protect Palestinian civilians.

Palestinians say that in nearly six decades of occupation, Israeli soldiers often failed to protect them from settler attacks or even joined in.

Since the war's start, the line between settlers and soldiers has blurred further.

Israel's wartime mobilization of 300,000-plus reservists included the call-up of settlers for duty and put many in charge of policing their own communities. The military said in some cases, reservists who live in settlements replaced regular West Bank battalions deployed in the war.

Tom Kleiner, a reservist guarding Beit El, a religious settlement near the Palestinian city of Ramallah, said the Oct. 7 Hamas attack's brutality cemented his conviction that Palestinians are determined to "murder us."

"We don't kill Arabs without any reason," he said. "We kill them because they're trying to kill us."

Rights groups say uniforms and assault rifles have inflated settlers' sense of impunity.

"Imagine that the military supposed to protect you is now made of settlers committing violence against you," said Ori Givati, of Breaking the Silence, a whistleblower group of former Israeli soldiers.

Bashar al-Qaryoute, a medic from the Palestinian village of Qaryout, said residents from the nearby settlement Shilo, now wearing fatigues, have blocked all but one road out. He said they smashed Qaryout's water pipeline, forcing residents to truck in water at triple the price.

"They were the ones always burning olive trees and creating problems," al-Qaryoute said. "Now they're in charge."

## THE CURFEW

"Close it!" a soldier barked at Imad Abu Shamsiyya when he met the young man's eyes through his open window. Then, he pointed his rifle.

Over 52 years, Abu Shamsiyya has witnessed crises strike the heart of Hebron, the only place in which Jewish settlers live amid local residents, not in separate communities.

He thought life in the maze of barbed wire and security cameras couldn't get worse. Then came the war.

"This terror, these pressures," he said, "are unlike before."

The Israeli military has barred 750 families in Hebron's Old City — where some 700 radical Jewish settlers live among 34,000 Palestinians under heavy military protection — from stepping outside except for one hour in the morning and one in the evening on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursday, said residents and

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Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem.

Schools have closed. Work has stopped. Sick people have moved in with relatives in the Palestinian-controlled part of town. Israeli settlers often roam at night, taunting Palestinians trapped indoors, according to footage published by B'Tselem.

Checkpoints instill dread. Soldiers who in the past just glanced at Abu Shamsiyya's ID now search his phone and social media. They pat him down, he said, gawking and cursing.

"Hebron is a blatant microcosm of how Israel is exerting control over the Palestinians population," said Dror Sadot, of B'Tselem.

The Israeli military didn't respond to a request for comment on the curfew.

## THE SETTLER RAID

The grinding of a bulldozer's gears. The crack of a gun. With a glance, parents let each other know the drill: Grab the children, lock the doors, keep away from windows.

Palestinians say settlers storm the northern village of Qusra almost daily, covering olive orchards in cement and dousing cars and homes in gasoline.

On Oct. 11, settlers tore through dusty streets, shooting at families in their homes. Within minutes, three Palestinian men were dead.

Israeli forces sent to disperse armed settlers and Palestinian stone-throwers fired into the crowd, killing a fourth villager, Palestinian officials said.

The next day, settlers heeded social-media calls to ambush a funeral procession the village coordinated with the army. They cut off roads and sprayed bullets at mourners who sprang from cars and sprinted through fields, attendees said.

Ibrahim Wadi, a 62-year-old chemist, and his 26-year-old son Ahmed, a lawyer, were killed. The funeral for four became one for six.

Settlers' online posts rejoicing at the deaths, shared with The Associated Press, stung Ibrahim's brother, Abdelazim, almost as much as the loss.

"The mind breaks down, it stops comprehending," he said.

## THE GHOST TOWN

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said Israel should "wipe out" Palestinian town Hawara after a gunman killed two Israeli brothers in February, sending hundreds of settlers on a deadly rampage.

Another far-right religious lawmaker, Zvika Fogel, said he wanted to see the commercial hub "closed, incinerated."

Today, Hawara resembles a ghost town.

The army shuttered shops "to maintain public order" after Palestinian militant attacks, it said. Abandoned dogs roam among vandalized storefronts. Posters with a Talmudic justification for killing Palestinians adorn road blocks: "Rise and kill first."

From the war's start, much of the West Bank's main north-south highway has been closed to Palestinians, said anti-settlement watchdog Peace Now. Commutes that took 10 to 20 minutes now take hourlong detours on dangerous dirt roads.

The restrictions, said Palestinian politician Mustafa Barghouti, "have divided the West Bank into 224 ghettos separated by closed checkpoints."

The 160,000 Palestinian laborers who passed those checkpoints to work in Israel and Israeli settlements before Oct. 7 lost their coveted permits overnight, said Israel's defense agency overseeing Palestinian civil matters. The agency allowed 8,000 essential workers to return to factories and hospitals earlier this month. There's no word on when the rest can.

"My grandfather relies on me, and now I have nothing," said Ahmed, a 27-year-old from Hebron who lost his barista job in Haifa, Israel. He declined to give his last name for fear of reprisals.

"The pressure is building. We expect the West Bank to explode if nothing changes."

## THE OLIVE HARVEST

Palestinians wait all year for the autumn moment that olives turn from green to black. The two-month

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harvest is a beloved ritual and income boost.

Violence has marred the season. Soldiers and settlers blocked villagers from reaching orchards and used bulldozers to remove gnarled roots of centuries-old trees, they say.

Hafeeda al-Khatib, an 80-year-old farmer in Qaryout, said soldiers shot in the air and dragged her from her land when they caught her picking olives last week. It's the first year she can remember not having enough to make oil.

In a letter to Netanyahu this month, Smotrich called for a ban on Palestinians harvesting olives near Israeli settlements to reduce friction.

Palestinians say settlers' efforts have done the opposite.

"They've declared war on me," said Mahmoud Hassan, a 63-year-old farmer in Khirbet Sara, a northern community. He said reservist settlers have surrounded it. If he ventures 100 meters (yards) to his grove, he said, soldiers standing sentry scream or fire into the air. He needs permission to leave home and return.

"There is no room anymore for talking to them or negotiating," he said.

The military said it "thoroughly reviewed" reports of violence against Palestinians and their property. "Disciplinary actions are implemented accordingly," it said, without elaborating.

## THE EVACUATION

Rights groups say the goal of settler violence is to clear Palestinians from land they claim for a future state, making room for Jewish settlements to expand.

The Bedouin hamlet of Wadi al-Seeq was pushed to its breaking point by three detained Palestinians' ordeal over nine hours Oct. 12. The harrowing accounts were first reported by Israel's Haaretz daily. Weeks of vigilante violence had already forced 10 families to flee when masked settlers in army uniforms barreled through that day, slamming a Bedouin resident and two Palestinian activists onto the ground and shoving them into pickups, villagers said.

One of the activists, 46-year-old Mohammed Matar, told AP they were bound, beaten, blindfolded, stripped to their underwear and burned by cigarettes.

Matar said reservist settlers urinated on him, penetrated him anally with a stick, and screamed at him to leave and go to Jordan.

When released, Matar left. So did Wadi al-Seeq's 30 remaining families. They took their sheep to the creases of the hills east of Ramallah and abandoned everything else.

The Israeli military said it fired the commander in charge and was investigating.

Matar said that to move on, he needs Israel to hold someone accountable.

"I'd be satisfied with the bare minimum," he said, "the tiniest shred of justice."

## Rosalynn Carter: Advocate for Jimmy Carter and many others, always leveraging her love of politics

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

PLAINS, Ga. (AP) — The Washington chattering class, often unsure what to make of outsiders, dubbed Rosalynn Carter the "Steel Magnolia" when she arrived as first lady.

A devout Baptist and mother of four, she was diminutive and outwardly shy, with a soft smile and softer Southern accent. That was the "magnolia." She also was a force behind Jimmy Carter's rise from peanut farmer to winner of the 1976 presidential election. That was the "steel."

Yet that obvious, even trite moniker almost certainly undersold her role and impact across the Carters' early life, their one White House term and their four decades afterward as global humanitarians advocating peace, democracy and the eradication of disease.

Through more than 77 years of marriage, until her death Sunday at the age of 96, Rosalynn Carter was business and political partner, best friend and closest confidant to the 39th president. A Georgia Democrat like her husband, she became in her own right a leading advocate for people with mental health conditions and family caregivers in American life, and she joined the former president as co-founder of The Carter Center, where they set a new standard for what first couples can accomplish after yielding power.

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"She was always eager to help his agenda, but she knew what she wanted to accomplish," said Kathy Cade, a White House adviser to the first lady and later a Carter Center board member.

Rosalynn Carter talked often of her passion for politics. "I love campaigning," she told The Associated Press in 2021. She acknowledged how devastated she was when voters delivered a landslide rebuke in 1980.

Cade said a larger purpose, though, undergirded the thrills and disappointments: "She really wanted to use the influence she had to help people."

Jimmy Carter biographer Jonathan Alter argues that only Eleanor Roosevelt and Hillary Clinton rival Rosalynn Carter's influence as first lady. The Carters' work beyond the White House, he says, sets her apart as having achieved "one of the great political partnerships in American history."

Cade recalled her old boss as "pragmatic" and "astute," knowing when to lobby congressional brokers without her husband's prompting and when to hit the campaign trail alone. She did that for long stretches in 1980 when the president remained at the White House trying to free American hostages in Iran, something he managed only after losing to Ronald Reagan.

"I was in all the states," Rosalynn Carter told the AP. "I campaigned solid every day the last time we ran."

She flouted stereotypes of first ladies as hostesses and fashion mavens: She bought dresses off the rack and established an East Wing office with her own staff and initiatives — a push that culminated in the Mental Health Systems Act of 1980 to steer more federal money to treating mental health, though Reagan reversed course. At The Carter Center, she launched a fellowship for journalists to pursue better coverage of mental health issues.

She attended Cabinet meetings and testified before Congress. Even when fulfilling traditional responsibilities, she expanded the first lady's role, helping to establish the regular music productions still broadcast as public television's "In Performance at the White House." She presided over the inaugural Kennedy Center Honors, prestigious annual awards that still recognize seminal contributions to American culture. She hosted White House dinners but danced only with her husband.

Her approach befuddled some Washington observers.

"There was still a women's page in the newspaper," Cade recalled. "The reporters who were on the national scene didn't think it was their job to cover what she was doing. She belonged on the women's page. And the women's page folks had difficulty understanding what she was doing, because she wasn't doing the more traditional first lady things."

Grandson Jason Carter, now Carter Center board chairman, described her "determination that never stopped." She was "physically small" but "the strongest, most remarkably tough woman that you would ever hope to see."

Including as Jimmy Carter's political enforcer.

She "defended my grandfather in a lot of contexts, including against Democrats and others," confronting, in person or via telephone, people she thought had damaged his cause, Jason Carter said.

"There are certainly stories out there of her — despite her reputation as quiet-spoken — cursing a blue streak at folks who said bad things about my grandfather," he added, laughing as he imagined his grandmother threatening befuddled power players with "a string of F-bombs."

The younger Carter, himself a one-time Georgia state senator and unsuccessful candidate for governor, called her "the best politician in the family."

Yet she nearly always connected politics to policy and those policy outcomes to people's lives — connections forged from her earliest years in the Depression-era Deep South.

Eleanor Rosalynn Smith was born Aug. 18, 1927, in Plains, delivered by nurse Lillian Carter, a neighbor. "Miss Lillian" brought her son, Jimmy, then almost 3, back to the Smith home a few days later to meet the baby.

Not long after, James Earl Carter Sr. moved his family to a farm outside Plains. But the Carter and Smith children attended the same all-white schools in town. Years later, Rosalynn and Jimmy would quietly support integration — and call for it more vocally at Plains Baptist Church. But growing up, they accepted Jim Crow segregation as the order of the day, she wrote in a memoir.

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Rosalynn and Jimmy each endured challenges of rural Depression life. But while the Carters were considerable landholders, the Smiths were poor, and Rosalynn's father died in 1940, leaving her to help raise her siblings. She recalled this period as inspiration for her emphasis on caregivers, a way of classifying people that Alter, the biographer, said was not used widely in discussions of American society and the economy until Rosalynn Carter used her platform.

"There are only four kinds of people in this world," she said. "Those who have been caregivers; those who are currently caregivers; those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers."

As she grew up, Rosalynn became close to one of Jimmy's sisters. Ruth Carter later engineered a date between her brother and Rosalynn during one of his trips home from the U.S. Naval Academy during World War II. Jimmy, newly commissioned as a Navy lieutenant, and Rosalynn were married July 7, 1946, at Plains Methodist Church, her home church before she joined his Baptist faith.

Rosalynn had been a bright student in high school and at nearby Georgia Southwestern College. She contemplated becoming an architect but explained later that, beyond simply falling in love with Jimmy, marrying a Naval officer was the best path for what she wanted most: to leave her hometown of about 600 people.

As Jimmy's career advanced, Rosalynn took care of their growing family. When Earl Carter, by then a state lawmaker, died in 1953, Jimmy decided to leave the Navy and move the family home to Plains. He did not consult Rosalynn. On their long car ride back from Washington, she gave him the silent treatment, talking to him only through their eldest son.

What they would later call a "full partnership" did not sprout until a few years later, when a desperate Jimmy asked Rosalynn to answer phones at the peanut farm's warehouse. She was soon managing the books and dealing with customers.

"I knew more on paper about the business than he did, and he would take my advice about things," she recalled to the AP.

The lesson did not immediately carry over to Jimmy's political ambitions.

Already an appointed school board member, he decided to run for state Senate in 1962, again without consulting Rosalynn. This time, she embraced the decision because she shared his goals.

Four years later, Jimmy ran for governor, giving Rosalynn the first chance to campaign by herself. He lost. But they spent the ensuing four years preparing for another bid, traveling the state together and separately, with a network of friends and supporters. It would become the model for the "Peanut Brigade" they used to blanket Iowa and other key states in the 1976 Democratic primary season.

Those campaigns for governor solidified mental health as Rosalynn's signature issue.

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 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.

"I want to know what you are going to do about mental health when you are governor," she asked him. His reply: "We're going to have the best mental health system in the country, and I'm going to put you in charge of it."

By the time they got to the White House, Rosalynn had distinguished herself as the center of Carter's inner circle, even if those beyond the West Wing did not appreciate her role.

"Unlike many first ladies, she didn't quarrel with the White House staff, because they thought she was fantastic," Alter said, calling her relationship with staff smoother than the president's.

Carter sent her on diplomatic missions. She took Spanish lessons to aid her Latin America voyages. She decided herself to travel in 1979 to Cambodian refugee camps. Spurred by a Friday briefing, she was on a plane the next week, having put together an international delegation to address the crisis.

"She wasn't just going to have pictures made ... she watched people die," Cade said.

The first lady worked closely with policy chief Stu Eizenstat on mental health legislation but did not confine herself to her own priorities.



"She did a lot of very quiet and behind-the-scenes lobbying" of congressional figures concerning the administration agenda, Cade recalled, but she "was very firm about the fact that we never talked about who she was calling" so that she would never upstage the president.

She traveled to U.S. state capitals and urged lawmakers to adopt vaccine requirements for schoolchildren, winning over converts to policies that largely remain intact today, recent fights over COVID-19 vaccine mandates notwithstanding.

She was involved throughout intense negotiations at Camp David with Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat and Israel's Menachem Begin, both of whom warmed to the first lady.

Jimmy's mother, who lived at the White House, sometimes rankled her daughter-in-law by seeming to posture as the home's lead hostess. But Lillian Carter plainly acknowledged the pecking order. The president "listens to her," Miss Lillian told reporters.

Not always, of course.

Rosalynn wanted her husband to delay the treaty ceding control of the Panama Canal, pushing it to a second term. She met regularly, without the president, with pollster Pat Caddell. They discussed a reelection path she knew was perilous on the heels of inflation, rising interest rates, oil shortages and the Iran hostage situation.

Distraught upon their return to Plains in 1981, she dived back into the farming business. But the void would not begin to close until the former president conceived The Carter Center. In their Atlanta outpost, she found an enduring platform from which to travel the world, pushing to eradicate Guinea worm disease and other maladies in developing countries, monitoring elections, elevating discussion of women's and girls' rights and continuing her mental health advocacy. All while living in the same Georgia village she once wanted to leave forever.

"My grandparents, you know, have a microwave from 1982. ... They've got a rack next to their sink where they dry Ziploc bags, reuse them," Jason Carter said recently, explaining their "simple" and "frugal" style in the same home where the Carters lived when Jimmy was first elected as a state senator.

There, the former first lady welcomed foreign dignitaries, President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden, aspiring politicians seeking advice and, as her health declined, a new generation of Carter Center leadership. She liked to serve pimento cheese sandwiches, fruit and, depending on the guest list, a few glasses of wine. And she came with an agenda.

"Mrs. Carter would always be the first one at the door, and she would insist on walking me to the door at the end," Carter Center CEO Paige Alexander said of her sessions in Plains. "That final walk ... so she could get her last points in was, I think, quite indicative of the relationship that they had and how she managed it from the Governor's Mansion all the way through."

## **Marcos says China showing interest in South China Sea atolls closer to coast of the Philippines**

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER and AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of the Philippines said the situation in the South China Sea "has become more dire" as China expands its presence in an area where multiple nations have competing territorial claims.

China has showed interest in atolls and shoals that are "closer and closer" to the coast of the Philippines, with the nearest atoll about 60 nautical miles (111 kilometers) away, Marcos said.

"Unfortunately, I cannot report that the situation is improving," Marcos said Sunday. "The situation has become more dire than it was before."

Marcos spoke during a question and answer session after he delivered a talk at the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu. The Philippines president stopped in Hawaii to meet with U.S. military leaders and the local Filipino community on his way home from a regional summit meeting in San Francisco.

The visit held both geopolitical and personal significance for the leader. Marcos's father, the late dictator

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Ferdinand Marcos, was forced into exile in Hawaii in 1986 after he was ousted in an army-backed "people power" uprising in the Philippines.

His trip comes at a time when the U.S. and the Philippines have been deepening their long-standing alliance in a shift after Marcos' predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, nurtured cozy ties with China and Russia.

China claims virtually the entire South China Sea as its own territory and refuses to acknowledge claims from the Philippines and four other other governments to some or all of the waterway. Beijing has dismissed the findings of a U.N.-backed arbitration tribunal that invalidated China's sweeping historical claims under the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Marcos reiterated that his nation wouldn't yield.

"The Philippines will not give a single square inch of our territory to any foreign power," he said in his speech.

The U.S. says China has militarized several islands it built in the area, arming them with anti-ship and anti-aircraft missile systems, laser and jamming equipment, and fighter jets.

Marcos said features in the South China Sea are "slowly being turned into bases." He said Adm. John Aquilino, the top U.S. military commander in the Indo-Pacific region, showed him a model of one earlier in the day.

The level of commitment China made "to those military bases" was "remarkable," Marcos said.

Tensions in the area have risen recently as China has blockaded an isolated Philippine marine outpost on Second Thomas Shoal, also known as Ayungin Shoal.

Last month, a Chinese coast guard ship and an accompanying vessel rammed a Philippine coast guard ship and a military-run supply boat near the contested shoal, according to Philippine officials. China accused the Philippine vessels of trespassing in what it said were Chinese waters "without authorization" despite repeated radio warnings.

The U.S. and the Philippines have a mutual defense treaty dating to 1951.

Marcos said the U.S., as its only treaty ally, was its main partner. But he said Manila also was seeking to strengthen ties with other nations sharing its ideals and values, noting the examples of Australia, Japan and South Korea.

He said the Philippines also was seeking to negotiate a code of conduct with Vietnam and Malaysia, other nations with whom it has territorial conflicts.

Marcos' remarks came after he met Friday with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

He told reporters afterward that they agreed the challenges in the South China Sea "should not be the defining element" of their relationship. Marcos said the two leaders tried to come up with mechanisms to lower tensions in the South China Sea.

Many Filipinos immigrants to Hawaii come from the same province as Marcos, Ilocos Norte, and support him. But he still faced small protests at the airport and at a convention hall where he met members of the local Filipino community.

Satu Limaye, the vice president of the East-West Center, noted the U.S. and the Philippines have a long, complicated relationship. He pointed to years when the U.S. ruled the archipelago as a colony, their signing of the defense treaty and when the U.S. military withdrew from major bases in the country in the 1990s.

Limaye said it's important to watch how the U.S. and the Philippines manage their nations' long and complex relationship while facing their common concern, China.

## Rosalynn Carter, outspoken former first lady, dies at 96

By BILL BARROW and MICHAEL WARREN Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Former first lady Rosalynn Carter, the closest adviser to Jimmy Carter during his one term as U.S. president and their four decades thereafter as global humanitarians, has died at the age of 96.

The Carter Center said she died Sunday after living with dementia and suffering many months of declining health. The statement said she "died peacefully, with family by her side" at 2:10 p.m. at her rural

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Georgia home of Plains.

"Rosalynn was my equal partner in everything I ever accomplished," the former president said in the statement. "She gave me wise guidance and encouragement when I needed it. As long as Rosalynn was in the world, I always knew somebody loved and supported me."

President Joe Biden called the Carters "an incredible family because they brought so much grace to the office."

"He had this great integrity, still does. And she did too," Biden told reporters as he was boarding Air Force One on Sunday night after an event in Norfolk, Virginia. "God bless them." Biden said he spoke to the family and was told that Jimmy Carter was surrounded by his children and grandchildren.

Later, the White House released a joint statement from the president and first lady Jill Biden saying that Carter inspired the nation. "She was a champion for equal rights and opportunities for women and girls; an advocate for mental health and wellness for every person; and a supporter of the often unseen and uncompensated caregivers of our children, aging loved ones, and people with disabilities," the statement added.

Reaction from world leaders poured in throughout the day.

The Carters were married for more than 77 years, forging what they both described as a "full partnership." Unlike many previous first ladies, Rosalynn sat in on Cabinet meetings, spoke out on controversial issues and represented her husband on foreign trips. Aides to President Carter sometimes referred to her — privately — as "co-president."

"Rosalynn is my best friend ... the perfect extension of me, probably the most influential person in my life," Jimmy Carter told aides during their White House years, which spanned from 1977-1981.

The former president, now 99, remains at the couple's home in Plains after entering hospice care himself in February.

Fiercely loyal and compassionate as well as politically astute, Rosalynn Carter prided herself on being an activist first lady, and no one doubted her behind-the-scenes influence. When her role in a highly publicized Cabinet shakeup became known, she was forced to declare publicly, "I am not running the government."

Many presidential aides insisted that her political instincts were better than her husband's — they often enlisted her support for a project before they discussed it with the president. Her iron will, contrasted with her outwardly shy demeanor and a soft Southern accent, inspired Washington reporters to call her "the Steel Magnolia."

Both Carters said in their later years that Rosalynn had always been the more political of the two. After Jimmy Carter's landslide defeat in 1980, it was she, not the former president, who contemplated an implausible comeback, and years later she confessed to missing their life in Washington.

Jimmy Carter trusted her so much that in 1977, only months into his term, he sent her on a mission to Latin America to tell dictators he meant what he said about denying military aid and other support to violators of human rights.

She also had strong feelings about the style of the Carter White House. The Carters did not serve hard liquor at public functions, though Rosalynn did permit U.S. wine. There were fewer evenings of ballroom dancing and more square dancing and picnics.

Throughout her husband's political career, she chose mental health and problems of the elderly as her signature policy emphasis. When the news media didn't cover those efforts as much as she believed was warranted, she criticized reporters for writing only about "sexy subjects."

As honorary chairwoman of the President's Commission on Mental Health, she once testified before a Senate subcommittee, becoming the first first lady since Eleanor Roosevelt to address a congressional panel. She was back in Washington in 2007 to push Congress for improved mental health coverage, saying, "We've been working on this for so long, it finally seems to be in reach."

She said she developed her interest in mental health during her husband's campaigns for Georgia governor.

"I used to come home and say to Jimmy, 'Why are people telling me their problems?' And he said, 'Because you may be the only person they'll ever see who may be close to someone who can help them,'" she explained.

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After Ronald Reagan won the 1980 election, Rosalynn Carter seemed more visibly devastated than her husband. She initially had little interest in returning to the small town of Plains, where they both were born, married and spent most of their lives.

"I was hesitant, not at all sure that I could be happy here after the dazzle of the White House and the years of stimulating political battles," she wrote in her 1984 autobiography, "First Lady from Plains." But "we slowly rediscovered the satisfaction of a life we had left long before."

After leaving Washington, Jimmy and Rosalynn co-founded The Carter Center in Atlanta to continue their work. She chaired the center's annual symposium on mental health issues and raised funds for efforts to aid the mentally ill and homeless. She also wrote "Helping Yourself Help Others," about the challenges of caring for elderly or ailing relatives, and a sequel, "Helping Someone With Mental Illness."

Frequently, the Carters left home on humanitarian missions, building houses with Habitat for Humanity and promoting public health and democracy across the developing world.

"I get tired," she said of her travels. "But something so wonderful always happens. To go to a village where they have Guinea worm and go back a year or two later and there's no Guinea worm, I mean the people dance and sing — it's so wonderful."

In 2015, Jimmy Carter's doctors discovered four small tumors on his brain. The Carters feared he had weeks to live. He was treated with a drug to boost his immune system, and later announced that doctors found no remaining signs of cancer. But when they first received the news, she said she didn't know what she was going to do.

"I depend on him when I have questions, when I'm writing speeches, anything, I consult with him," she said.

She helped Carter recover several years later when he had hip replacement surgery at age 94 and had to learn to walk again. And she was with him earlier this year when he decided after a series of hospital stays that he would forgo further medical interventions and begin end-of-life care.

Jimmy Carter is the longest-lived U.S. president. Rosalynn Carter was the second longest-lived of the nation's first ladies, trailing only Bess Truman, who died at age 97.

Eleanor Rosalynn Smith was born in Plains on Aug. 18, 1927, the eldest of four children. Her father died when she was young, so she took on much of the responsibility of caring for her siblings when her mother went to work part time.

She also contributed to the family income by working after school in a beauty parlor. "We were very poor and worked hard," she once said, but she kept up her studies, graduating from high school as class valedictorian.

She soon fell in love with the brother of one of her best friends. Jimmy and Rosalynn had known each other all their lives — it was Jimmy's mother, nurse Lillian Carter, who delivered baby Rosalynn — but he left for the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, when she was still in high school.

After a blind date, Jimmy told his mother: "That's the girl I want to marry." They wed in 1946, shortly after his graduation from Annapolis and Rosalynn's graduation from Georgia Southwestern College.

Their sons were born where Jimmy Carter was stationed: John William (Jack) in Portsmouth, Virginia, in 1947; James Earl III (Chip) in Honolulu in 1950; and Donnel Jeffery (Jeff) in New London, Connecticut, in 1952. Amy was born in Plains in 1967. By then, Carter was a state senator.

Navy life had provided Rosalynn her first chance to see the world. When Carter's father, James Earl Sr., died in 1953, Jimmy Carter decided, without consulting his wife, to move the family back to Plains, where he took over the family farm. She joined him there in the day-to-day operations, keeping the books and weighing fertilizer trucks.

"We developed a partnership when we were working in the farm supply business," Rosalynn Carter recalled with pride in a 2021 interview with The Associated Press. "I knew more on paper about the business than he did. He would take my advice about things."

At the height of the Carters' political power, Lillian Carter said of her daughter-in-law: "She can do anything in the world with Jimmy, and she's the only one. He listens to her."

Ceremonies celebrating the life of Rosalynn Carter will take place after the Thanksgiving holiday in Atlanta and Sumter County, Georgia, the Carter Center announced Sunday evening.

The repose on Nov. 27, at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, is open to the public. A private funeral and interment will take place Nov. 29 but the services will be broadcast on TV and streamed online, the center said.

## Reactions to the death of Rosalynn Carter, former first lady and global humanitarian

ATLANTA (AP) — Reactions to the death of Rosalynn Carter, former first lady and global humanitarian:

President Joe Biden said the Carters “brought grace” to the White House. “He had this great integrity, still does. And she did too,” Biden told reporters as he was boarding Air Force One to leave Norfolk, Virginia on Sunday night. “God bless them.” Biden said he spoke to the family and was told that Jimmy Carter was surrounded by his children and grandchildren.

Later the White House released an official joint statement from the president and first lady Jill Biden saying that Carter inspired the nation. “She was a champion for equal rights and opportunities for women and girls; an advocate for mental health and wellness for every person; and a supporter of the often unseen and uncompensated caregivers of our children, aging loved ones, and people with disabilities,” the statement said.

Former President George W. Bush called Carter a woman of dignity and strength. “There was no greater advocate of President Carter, and their partnership set a wonderful example of loyalty and fidelity. She leaves behind an important legacy in her work to destigmatize mental health. We join our fellow citizens in sending our condolences to President Carter and their family,” Bush said in a statement with former first lady Laura Bush.

U.S. Sen. Jon Ossoff of Georgia said Carter would be remembered for her compassionate nature and passion for women’s rights, human rights and mental health reform. “The State of Georgia and the United States are better places because of Rosalynn Carter,” Ossoff said in a statement. “I join all Georgians and Americans in mourning her loss. May Rosalynn Carter’s memory be a blessing.”

Vice President Kamala Harris said Rosalynn Carter redefined the role of first lady and lived a life of service, faith, compassion, and moral leadership. “As a humanitarian, a public servant, and a global leader, Mrs. Carter improved the lives of millions — and inspired countless more to dedicate their lives to service. Her legacy will be a beacon for generations to come,” Harris said in a statement.

Former President Donald Trump said Carter “earned the admiration and gratitude” of the nation. “From her days as a U.S. Navy spouse, to the Georgia Governor’s Mansion, to her tenure as First Lady of the United States, and her later work at the Carter Center and volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, she leaves behind a legacy of extraordinary accomplishment and national service,” Trump said on Truth Social.

In a separate statement, former first lady Melania Trump said Carter leaves behind a meaningful legacy. “We will always remember her servant’s heart and devotion to her husband, family, and country. May she rest in peace,” Melania Trump said on X, formerly Twitter.

Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Carter was a “saintly and revered public servant” driven by faith, compassion and kindness. “On the world stage, First Lady Carter was a pioneer. Her historic, high-stakes diplomatic mission to Latin America in 1977 ushered in a new era of engagement in the region. Two years later, she became the first sitting First Lady to address the World Health Organization, where she argued that mental health was an aspect of physical health — and that health is a human right,” Pelosi said in a statement offering condolences to the Carter family.

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Bill and Hillary Clinton called Carter a champion of human dignity. "Thanks to her mental health advocacy, more people live with better care and less stigma. Because of her early leadership on childhood immunization, millions of Americans have grown up healthier. And through her decades of work at the Carter Center and with Habitat for Humanity, she spread hope, health, and democracy across the globe," the former president and former secretary of state said in a joint statement. "Rosallynn will be forever remembered as the embodiment of a life lived with purpose."

Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens called Carter "the model for the modern day First Lady" and praised her work promoting mental health awareness. "She never stopped advocating for mental health or the Equal Rights Amendment," Dickens said in a statement. "The city of Atlanta joins all of Georgia — and mourners around the world — as we honor the memory of First Lady Rosallynn Carter."

Former first lady Michelle Obama said Rosallynn Carter sometimes offered advice during their periodic lunches at the White House. "She reminded me to make the role of First Lady my own, just like she did. I'll always remain grateful for her support and her generosity," Obama said in a statement. "Today, Barack and I join the world in celebrating the remarkable legacy of a First Lady, philanthropist, and advocate who dedicated her life to lifting up others. Her life is a reminder that no matter who we are, our legacies are best measured not in awards or accolades, but in the lives we touch."

Habitat For Humanity, the Georgia-based charity that the Carters worked for tirelessly, said its members were saddened by the former first lady's passing. "She was a compassionate and committed champion of #HabitatforHumanity and worked fiercely to help families around the world," the nonprofit said on X.

Carter's legacy will be a source of pride for her home state, said U.S. Rep. Nikema Williams, the chair of the Democratic Party of Georgia. "Georgia Democrats join our entire state, nation, and the world in mourning the loss of former First Lady Rosallynn Carter — an extraordinary humanitarian, fierce mental health advocate, and beloved daughter of Georgia," Williams said.

The Carter Center said it was grieving the passing of its co-founder. "She was a partner in good deeds with her husband, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, as they traversed the globe to strengthen democracy, resolve conflicts, advance human rights, and eliminate debilitating diseases after their time in the White House," the center said in a statement. In lieu of flowers, Carter requested that those wishing to honor her memory do so through contributions to the Carter Center's Mental Health Program or the Rosallynn Carter Institute for Caregivers, the statement said.

## **The Bidens start Thanksgiving early by serving dinner and showing 'Wonka' to service members**

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — President Joe Biden visited naval installations in Virginia on Sunday to kick off the Thanksgiving holiday week, introducing an early screening of the upcoming movie "Wonka" and sharing a "friendsgiving" meal with service members and their relatives.

Biden also paid tribute Sunday to former first lady Rosallynn Carter, who died Sunday, and to President Jimmy Carter. "They brought so much grace to the office," Biden said.

The president and first lady Jill Biden headed to a packed auditorium at Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads to introduce the new film centered around the early life of Roald Dahl's fictional eccentric chocolatier, Willy Wonka. It will be officially released Dec. 15.

He joked to the many youngsters in the crowd: "I like kids more than adults" and added "I wish I could

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stay and watch Wonka with you.”

Instead, the Bidens helped serve dinner with service members from the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and the USS Gerald R. Ford at Norfolk Naval Station, the largest installation of its kind in the world, along with their families.

“You literally are the backbone, the spine, the spine of this nation,” the president said. “Only 1% of you, that’s all, that protects the 99% of us.”

The event featured around 400 service members and their relatives seated in folding chairs and around wooden, circular tables inside a concrete-floored hanger that included three display Blackhawk helicopters, a towering American flag and a screen with the image of the White House surrounded by falling leaves and the words “Happy Thanksgiving.”

“I mean from the bottom of my heart,” the president said. “Family members, you are the heart of this operation.” He said he would be passing out dressing and joked, “If you don’t like dressing, just come up and pretend you do and say hi to me.”

But the president actually served up mashed potatoes while attendees lined up for the buffet-style meal. Jill Biden spooned out sweet potato casserole to attendees. They stood on either side of Chef Robert Irvine, whose foundation helped organize the meal, and both chatted up those going through the line, which included a lot of children.

At one point, a child asked Jill Biden something. She laughed and served a portion of casserole that contained all marshmallows, forgoing any sweet potatoes.

The menu also featured slow-roasted bourbon-brined turkey topped with giblet gravy and cranberry-orange compote, maple-mustard glazed spiral-cut smoked ham, brioche-cornbread stuffing, candied walnuts, roasted garlic and crème fraiche, and a toasted espresso mascarpone Chantilly cream.

As the event was wrapping up, attendees presented Biden with a birthday cake. He turns 81 on Monday.

Meanwhile, Biden’s 2024 Republican rival Donald Trump was scheduled for a military visit Sunday in Texas. The former president, who has a commanding early lead in the 2024 GOP primary, was in Edinburg after serving meals to National Guard soldiers, troopers and others who will be stationed at the U.S.-Mexico border over Thanksgiving.

Trump is promoting hard-line immigration proposals he argues will better secure the border. He and top Republicans have long criticized the Biden administration for failing to do more to crackdown on people entering the United States illegally.

For the Bidens, offering support to the nation’s military has a personal connection. Their son Beau served in Iraq as a member of the Delaware National Guard. He died of brain cancer in 2015 at the age of 46, when Joe Biden was vice president.

Jill Biden talked about Beau’s deployment at the Wonka event, telling the crowd: “I know there are many here who miss their mom or dad or spouse.”

“While nothing can make up for that empty chair at the table, for us, the kindness of our community and finding moments of joy helps make it a little bit easier,” she said.

As he prepared to celebrate with the troops at home, the war between Israel and Hamas and the fate of hostages, including Americans, being held by the militants in Gaza, were front and center for the president. A reporter asked Biden upon his arrival in Norfolk when more hostages might go free, to which he replied, “I’m not in a position to tell you that” and added, “I want to make sure they’re out and then I’ll tell you.”

The Bidens learned of Rosalynn Carter’s death during their visit, announcing her passing just before serving the friendsgiving meal. Jill Biden asked diners to “include the Carter family in your prayers” during the holiday season. Carter, she said, “was well-known for her efforts on mental health and caregiving and women’s rights.”

Biden, speaking to reporters as he was boarding Air Force One to leave Norfolk, described the Carters as a couple of grace and integrity, and praised Jimmy Carter as a person who worked as hard for others after he left the White House as he did in office.

“Imagine, they were together for 77 years,” he added. “God bless them.”

Biden also talked at the dinner with service members about watching Beau Biden’s children while he was

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deployed, but then appeared too overcome with emotion to continue and said, "I don't want to talk about this." The sadness was fleeting. A moment later he lightheartedly bent down and joked with a 6-year-old, saying "What are you, 17?"

"Happy, happy Thanksgiving," Biden said. "May God love you all."

Friendsgiving with the military has become a tradition for the Bidens. Last year, they dished out mashed potatoes and other sides as part of the buffet-style meal in Cherry Point, North Carolina, home to more than 9,000 military personnel and roughly 8,000 military family members.

In 2021, the Bidens visited the Army's Fort Bragg in North Carolina for an early Thanksgiving meal in a hangar for about 250 service members and their families. Troops got chocolate chip cookies bearing the presidential seal.

The president and first lady plan to spend this Thanksgiving on Nantucket, a Massachusetts island.

## Notable quotes from former first lady Rosalynn Carter

The Associated Press undefined

Rosalynn Carter, from her 1984 book, "First Lady from Plains"

On the campaign: "Later I was thankful for those early months when there were no large crowds, although I wanted them at the time, and when there were no press with me to record every slipup or misstatement. I was soon able to anticipate questions and to answer them, falteringly at times, but I learned. I also developed a standard stump speech and learned to get my message across in the often small time allotted no matter what questions were asked."

On her relationship with the president: "I often acted as a sounding board for him. While explaining a particular issue to me, he could think it through himself; and I and the rest of the family often argued with him more strenuously than his advisers or staff did. To us he was the same participant in our nightly dinner table discussions that he had always been. I soon discovered that it was easier for me to learn about people's needs as I traveled than it was for him. ... A president, no matter who he is, can become very isolated if he's not careful."

On criticism that she was too powerful: "Jimmy and I had always worked side by side; it's a tradition in Southern families, and one that is not seen as in any way demeaning to the man. Once the press and our persistent opponents heard about my attendance at the (Cabinet) meetings, very soon it was rumored that I was 'telling' Jimmy what to do! They obviously didn't know Jimmy!"

On making mental health her top priority: "I wanted to take mental illnesses and emotional disorders out of the closet, to let people know it is all right to admit having a problem without fear of being called crazy. If only we could consider mental illnesses as straightforwardly as we do physical illnesses, those affected could seek help and be treated in an open and effective way."

## A timeline of key moments from former first lady Rosalynn Carter's 96 years

The Associated Press undefined

PLAINS, Ga. (AP) — Landmarks and notable events in the life of former U.S. first lady Rosalynn Carter: Aug. 18, 1927: Eleanor Rosalynn Smith is born at her family home in Plains, Georgia. She is the daughter of Wilburn Edgar Smith, a mechanic, and Allie Murray Smith, a seamstress and postal worker.

Late August 1927: "Miss Lillian" Carter, a neighbor and nurse who delivered Rosalynn, brings her son, Jimmy, nearly 3 years old, to meet the new baby.

1940: Rosalynn's father dies, leaving her to help her mother raise her younger siblings.



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1945: She begins dating Jimmy Carter, now a Naval Academy midshipman and the brother of her close friend, Ruth Carter.

Spring 1946: She graduates from Georgia Southwestern College.

July 7, 1946: She marries Jimmy at Plains Methodist Church, her childhood congregation. They would have four children: John William ("Jack"), born 1947; James Earl III ("Chip"), 1950; Donnel Jeffrey, 1952; and Amy Lynn, 1967.

1946-1953: Rosalynn manages the Carter household while Jimmy serves in the Navy's nuclear submarine program, attaining the rank of lieutenant commander.

1955: She begins helping Jimmy in the farm warehouse; she soon "knew more on paper about the business than he did," she recalled ahead of their 75th anniversary.

1962: She helps Jimmy campaign for state Senate, an office he would win in a contested election that was ultimately settled in court.

1966: Rosalynn begins campaigning on her own for the first time during Jimmy's first run for Georgia governor, a race he loses. But their model of campaigning separately would be key to winning four years later and to capturing the presidency in 1976.

1975-76: She leads the "Peanut Brigade" of Carter family, friends and supporters from Georgia who spread out across Iowa and other key nominating states to widen the campaign's person-to-person reach. The same model they used in Georgia revolutionizes presidential campaigning, with Rosalynn as Jimmy's top surrogate.

Jan. 20, 1977: Rosalynn, the newly sworn-in 39th president and their family draw special attention on Inauguration Day by walking down Pennsylvania Avenue rather than riding in an armored limousine. The Carters enroll daughter Amy in a Washington, D.C., public school that is majority-Black. In Atlanta, when Carter was governor, Amy had attended private school.

Summer 1977: Rosalynn makes a 13-day diplomatic trip to seven Latin American nations and Caribbean islands. She also urges Jimmy to delay action on treaties yielding control of the Panama Canal, arguing it is too politically costly for a first term. He proceeds with the treaties.

September 1978: Rosalynn is with Jimmy at Camp David for much of the intense negotiations with Israel's Menachem Begin and Egypt's Anwar Sadat. She listens to and advises the president daily before the three leaders reach the Camp David Accords. Begin and Sadat both warm to the first lady, and Sadat becomes especially close to the Carters.

November 1979: Rosalynn leads a delegation to Cambodian refugee camps, bringing international media attention to the humanitarian crisis. She convinces the president to admit more refugees to the U.S.

Summer and fall 1980: She campaigns nearly daily on Jimmy's behalf, while he stays at the White House working to win the release of American hostages in Iran.

1980: She helps win congressional approval for the Mental Health Systems Act, dedicating more federal money to local centers for treating mental health; Republican Ronald Reagan would later reverse course as president.

November 1980: Jimmy Carter is denied a second term by Reagan, who wins 51.6 percent of the popular vote to 41.7 percent for Carter and 6.7 percent for independent John Anderson.

1982: The Carters co-found The Carter Center in Atlanta with a mission of resolving conflicts, protecting human rights, advocating democracy and preventing disease around the world.

1984: Rosalynn releases her memoir, "First Lady from Plains," in which she admits to missing Washington. It is the first of her five books.

September 1984: She travels to New York City, where the Carters volunteer building homes for Habitat for Humanity; this would become their annual Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project.

1987: She establishes the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers, located at her collegiate alma mater, to advocate for Americans who are unpaid caregivers.

Summer 1989: Rosalynn travels with Jimmy on a weeklong Africa tour that includes an international conference on Guinea worm eradication, perhaps The Carter Center's most ambitious public health initiative.

1996: She establishes the Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism, based at The Carter

Center, to help working journalists produce better reporting on the topic.

1999: She is awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Bill Clinton.

July 10, 2007: She testifies before a U.S. House subcommittee, urging Congress to require that health insurance policies cover mental health treatment on par with treatment for other illness.

November 2016: She hosts the Rosalynn Carter Symposium on Mental Health Policy for the 32nd time.

October 2019: In Nashville, the Carters participate in person for the last time in their Habitat for Humanity work project; the program would continue.

April 30, 2021: The Carters receive President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden at their home in Plains. The couples were friends since the 1976 campaign, when Biden, then a young lawmaker from Delaware, became the first U.S. senator to endorse Carter for president.

July 7, 2021: The Carters celebrate their 75th wedding anniversary. Offering advice for a successful marriage, she says, "each (person) should have some space. That's really important."

Feb. 18, 2023: The Carter family announces that Jimmy is entering home hospice care. They would later say they thought he would live only days but rebounded to celebrate their 77th wedding anniversary and his 99th birthday later in the year.

May 30, 2023: The family announces that Rosalynn has dementia.

Sept. 23, 2023: The Carters make a surprise appearance in the Plains Peanut Festival parade, riding in a Secret Service vehicle with the windows down for what would be her last public appearance.

Nov. 17, 2023: The Carter family announces that she has entered home hospice care.

Nov. 19, 2023. Rosalynn Carter dies at home in Plains, Georgia, in the same house where the Carters lived when Jimmy was elected to the state Senate in 1962.

## **Fires in Brazil threaten jaguars, houses and plants in the world's largest tropical wetlands**

By LUCAS DUMPHREYS and DIANE JEANTET Associated Press

POCONE, BRAZIL (AP) — Firefighters in Brazil's Pantanal wetlands earlier this month celebrated the end of the fire season on Facebook, saying in a Nov. 7 post that "it is a relief for everyone who lives in the region."

They spoke too soon.

In the first two weeks of November, fires fueled by unusually dry and hot weather destroyed nearly 770,000 hectares (1.9 million acres) of the world's largest tropical wetlands, preliminary figures from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro show. This accounts for 65% of the damage done by fires in the region this year.

Brazil's National Institute for Space Research, a federal agency, detected 3,380 fires in the Pantanal in the first 17 days of November, compared to just 69 in the same period a year ago, and well beyond previous fire season records dating back to 1998.

The Pantanal holds thousands of plant and animal species, including 159 mammals, and it abounds with jaguars, according to the World Wildlife Fund. During the rainy season, rivers overflow their banks, flood the land and make most of it accessible only by boat and plane. In the dry season, wildlife enthusiasts flock to see the normally furtive jaguars lounging on riverbanks, along with macaws, caimans and capybaras.

Much of the Encontro das Aguas (Meeting of the Waters) park, located at the border of Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul states — known for its large jaguar population — had turned from emerald green to dark brown. A team of Associated Press journalists on the ground spotted a large jaguar licking its paws by the river banks, lying on a bed of burnt vegetation.

"If this continues every year, there won't be anymore (jaguars), they'll go away, they'll find a way, like people and run to the city," said Leonisio da Silva, a 53-year-old resident of the park. "It is going to end."

Jaguars in the park, which covers more than 1,000 square kilometers (over 400 square miles), are accustomed to human observation and have been a top ecotourism draw for more than 15 years. Their preservation and that of their natural habitat are essential in a region.

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Firefighters, troops and volunteers are working night and day to try and stop the fires, which are threatening not only the region's rich fauna and flora but also houses and touristic guesthouses.

And there is little outlook for any near-term help from rainfall.

"This is so atypical," said Renata Libonati, who coordinates the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro's alert system for fires in the Pantanal. The fire season usually ends in October, when the air gets more humid and it begins to rain. "What we're seeing is an extension of the fire season."

Libonati said the heat wave that swept through much of Brazil this week, combined with the El Niño phenomenon led to higher temperatures and drier weather conditions, both favorable to fires.

Firefighters and authorities in the Pantanal region are also faced with a logistical nightmare.

Angelo Rabelo, president of a local environmental group that oversees a protected area of about 300,000 hectares (1,160 square miles), runs his own fire brigade, currently comprised of eight members, working alongside a small team of national forest firefighters. "Access to some areas, especially the fire heads, necessarily implies ... the arrival of helicopters," he said.

The state of Mato Grosso do Sul launched on Nov. 14 a joint task force, mobilizing the state's entire fleet of aircraft to help firefighters, either dropping water on fires or flying out firefighters to the region's most remote locations. It also declared a state of emergency in four municipalities most affected by forest fires and where parks and protected areas were particularly at risk.

The neighboring state of Mato Grosso said it had also strengthened its workforce, with about 200 federal and state firefighters on the ground. The state's Secretary of Environment said it will invest an additional 6.4 million reais (1.3 million dollars) in the region.

Intense fires were reported around the main accessways to the biome, or area classified according to the species that live in that location. Videos shared on social media showed a car driving down the BR-262 highway, with flames on each side, as if passing through a corridor of fire.

Thick smoke emanating from the fires reduced visibility this week, with the Federal Highway Police closing the BR-262 at one point, and reports of a small private plane crashing, injuring four. Lack of visibility also hindered rescue efforts, firefighters said.

Some on the ground were also growing frustrated with authorities' seemingly slow response.

Enderson Barreto, a 25-year-old veterinarian in Porto Jofre, a small municipality close to the Meeting of the Waters park, said his and other colleagues' pleas for help weeks ago were left unanswered, until it was too late.

"We alerted several times in relation to the fires," Barreto said, adding that people told them they were being too alarmist. "Greater energy should have been put out when the fires were not in such large proportions. Today it is totally out of control."

When he is not rescuing animals from the fires, Barreto is helping firefighters combat the flames. He said the impacts were "unmeasurable."

Fires are frequent in the Pantanal and vegetation can regenerate quickly with rain. But when the fires are too intense, or attack more densely forested areas, the wildlife that survive are left stranded without habitat.

This year's fires, for now, are not as dramatic as those of 2020, when flames engulfed more than 3.5 million hectares of wetlands, or about 30% of the Pantanal, killing and injuring countless animals, including jaguars.

From where he was standing, Barreto said, small reptiles and amphibians seem to be the main victims in this year's tragedy.

"They are invisible victims, but they are the base of the chain, for the balance of this ecosystem," the young veterinarian said.

## The Adult Survivors Act launched over 2,500 sex abuse suits. Now, it's expiring

By MICHAEL HILL Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — For a year, a special New York law has cleared the way for a wave of headline-grabbing lawsuits against famous men accused of sexual misconduct, including former President Donald Trump, hip hop mogul Sean “Diddy” Combs and the comedian and actor Russell Brand.

But when the Adult Survivors Act expires after Thanksgiving, it also will have led to a multitude of legal claims by women who say they were sexually abused while serving time in the New York’s prisons and jails.

More than 2,500 lawsuits have been filed so far under the law, which created a year-long suspension of the usual time limit to sue over an alleged sexual assault.

Some of those lawsuits have targeted employers, or institutions such as hospitals, accused of failing to do enough to stop abuse by doctors or other workers. The large majority, though, have been filed against the state, New York City and local counties and involve allegations of abuse at state prisons and local jail systems.

Survivors called it an opportunity to finally be heard.

“For so long, I didn’t have a voice. And it didn’t matter, I thought. Like, who was I?” said Alexandria Johnson, who says she was raped multiple times while incarcerated in state prison and a New York City jail. “I have to keep going forward with this because it matters. ... There’s so many stories, so many, not just mine.”

After Thursday, people will once again be barred from suing over abuse that happened many years ago.

New York was one of several states to revisit laws in recent years that set time limits for civil legal claims stemming from sexual assaults, though usually for people abused as children. Advocates say New York’s current window gives traumatized adults a chance to seek accountability from big institutions and powerful men who can use their wealth and position to shield themselves.

“The reason we fought so hard for this bill is because trauma takes time,” Safe Horizon CEO Liz Roberts said.

Precise counts for Adult Survivor Act filings were not yet available this week, but there were at least 2,587 electronic filings in state courts, with some lawsuits filed on behalf of multiple people. More than half those filings were prison-related claims against the state. Hundreds of additional filings named New York City’s corrections department.

The act was modeled after a previous New York law offering people abused as children a temporary window to file claims. By the time the Child Victims Act’s two-year window closed in August 2021, almost 11,000 people filed lawsuits, many involving the Roman Catholic Church.

Gov. Kathy Hochul said the initial law “forgot” people who suffered the same type of abuse as adults. She signed a new law opening a one-year window for adult survivors on Nov. 24, 2022.

A series of high-profile lawsuits followed.

One of the first filed after the window opened was against Trump. A jury in May found the former president liable for sexually abusing writer E. Jean Carroll in 1996 and awarded her \$5 million. Trump has denied the allegation.

Harvey Weinstein was sued last month by actress Julia Ormond, who accused the former film producer of sexually assaulting her in 1995 and then hindering her career. Weinstein, who has been convicted of rape in New York and California, denied the allegations through his lawyer.

Grammy-winning music executive Antonio “L.A.” Reid was sued by Drew Dixon, who worked for Reid when he was chief executive of Arista Records. She says Reid sexually assaulted her twice in 2001, including an incident on a private plane. No attorney for Reid was listed in electronic filings.

Combs was accused in a lawsuit by R&B singer Cassie last week of subjecting her to a long-term relationship that included beatings and rape. The two artists announced a settlement a day after the filing. Combs denied the allegations.

Brand was accused in a lawsuit of sexually assaulting a film extra during the making of “Arthur” in 2010.

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British media outlets in September published claims by four women who said they were sexually assaulted by Brand, who says his relationships were "always consensual."

Bill Cosby was accused in a lawsuit of sexually assaulting a young comedy writer more than 50 years ago. Joan Tarshis initially made the allegations against Cosby in 2014 that are in the new lawsuit. A Cosby spokesperson did not address the specifics of Tarshis's claims, but asked of the recent lawsuits against famous men: "When is it going to stop?"

The Associated Press does not typically name people who say they were sexually assaulted unless they consent to being identified or decide to tell their stories publicly, as Carroll, Ormond, Dixon, Tarshis and Cassie have done.

Many more lawsuits allege assaults by relatively unknown people at everyday locations. One woman claimed in a lawsuit against a spa that she was fondled by a masseuse. Another woman who checked in airline passengers sued her employer over abuse by a manager.

The surge of lawsuits alleging assaults behind bars illustrates what attorney Adam Slater called a "widespread and systemic" issue of assaults on inmates. His firm said it made more than 1,200 filings alleging abuse in state prisons and more than 470 alleging abuse at New York City's Rikers Island complex.

Anna Kull, who represents Johnson, expects to file up to 600 cases related to assaults in prisons and jails. "Just a staggering amount of cases where male correctional officers were sexually assaulting female inmates," Kull said.

Johnson's lawsuit against New York City says she was raped in her Rikers Island cell by four corrections officers in 2014 while being held for a parole violation on a drug charge. A separate claim against the state said she was raped several times by a guard in 2015 at a state prison north of the city while she was pregnant. The lawsuit says the last assault caused her water to break prematurely and led to the loss of her baby.

Johnson said she still struggles with the trauma.

"I had big dreams, hopes of us going to the nursery and me getting out and raising my son and getting my life together," she said. "They took that from me."

Attorneys representing the state and city have denied the allegations in court filings and have sought dismissal of the two lawsuits. The city and state corrections departments separately said they have a zero-tolerance policy for sexual abuse.

Dozens more people have sued medical providers over abusive doctors in the past year.

Attorney Mallory Allen is representing more than 100 men who say they were sexually assaulted by Dr. Darius Paduch, a New York-area urologist who specialized in male reproductive health. Paduch also faces criminal charges accusing him of abusing patients.

One former patient, James O'Connell, said he sued a hospital system over alleged abuse by Paduch after glimpsing a law firm's early morning TV ad seeking potential plaintiffs. He hopes his action helps bring change.

"I have nephews. I have a son. If I can do something to make sure that there's a far lesser chance of anything like this ever happening to them, then I'll do whatever I need," O'Connell said.

## **AP Top 25: Ohio State jumps Michigan, moves to No. 2. Washington, FSU flip-flop at Nos. 4-5**

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

Ohio State passed Michigan and moved up to No. 2 in The Associated Press college football poll Sunday, a week before the Big Ten rivals play another top-five matchup, and No. 4 Washington flip-flopped with No. 5 Florida State.

Georgia remained No. 1 and received a season-high 61 first-place votes. The Bulldogs have been atop the rankings for 23 straight weeks, the second-best streak in the history of the poll and 10 behind the record held by Southern California (2003-05).

The top five teams, all unbeaten, had held their places for five straight weeks. All improved to 11-0 on

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Saturday, but their order changed Sunday.

Michigan had been No. 2 since the preseason but slipped a spot after playing its closest game yet. The Wolverines, without suspended head coach Jim Harbaugh, beat Maryland 31-24.

The Buckeyes received one first-place vote after blowing out Minnesota.

"Our team did a great job of staying focused this week," Ohio State coach Ryan Day said after the game. "Not easy to do for anybody, but we did stay in the moment and played well. But the moment we got in that locker room, it's on to next week."

Washington won 22-20 on the road against Oregon State, which slipped five spots to No. 15, and moved up a spot. The Huskies have their highest ranking since reaching No. 4 in 2016, their lone playoff season and the last time the Pac-12 had a team in the College Football Playoff.

Florida State dropped a spot after beating FCS North Alabama 58-13, but it suffered a far more significant loss. Quarterback Jordan Travis was carted off the field in the first quarter with what appeared to be a serious injury to his lower left leg.

No. 6 Oregon, No. 7 Texas, No. 8 Alabama and No. 9 Louisville all held their spots after victories, and Missouri moved up to No. 10.

## POLL POINTS

Michigan and Ohio State will be a matchup of top-five teams for the 13th time, the most of any rivalry. The Buckeyes are 7-4-1 in those games.

The Buckeyes and Wolverines will enter this season's game exactly as they did last year: Both unbeaten, with Ohio State ranked No. 2 and Michigan No. 3. The Wolverines won The Game for the second straight season.

"The guys on the team, we think about it every day, especially the way the last two years have gone," Buckeyes quarterback Kyle McCord said. "So, to be in kind of the same position that we were last year with a chance to right the ship, I think everybody's definitely excited."

Oklahoma-Texas is the only other rivalry that has double-digit top-five matchups. The Sooners and Longhorns have met 10 times as top-10 teams.

Nebraska and Oklahoma are next at eight top-10 matchups.

## IN-N-OUT

Utah (7-4) is out of the AP Top 25 for the first time this season. The Utes plummeted from No. 16 after losing 42-18 at Arizona. Utah has dropped three of four. The Wildcats are up to 16th.

The Utes saw their streak of 33 straight poll appearances dating back to the 2021 season snapped. It was the fifth-longest active streak in the country behind Alabama, Georgia, Ohio State and Michigan.

North Carolina also fell out again after losing to Clemson.

Moving into the poll was No. 23 Toledo (10-1) for the first time this season. The Rockets are ranked for the first time since Nov. 1, 2015.

Iowa is back in at No. 20 after clinching the Big Ten West championship with 15-13 victory against Illinois.

## CONFERENCE CALL

Toledo's entry increased the number of schools from non-Power Five conferences in the Top 25 to a season-high four.

The Rockets from the Mid-American Conference join No. 18 Tulane from the American Athletic Conference, No. 22 Liberty from Conference USA and No. 24 James Madison from the Sun Belt.

JMU stayed in the poll after taking its first loss of the season, 26-23 in overtime to Appalachian State.

SEC — 6 (Nos. 1, 8, 10, 12, 14, 25).

Pac-12 — 4 (Nos. 4, 6, 15, 16).

Big 12 — 4 (Nos. 7, 13, 19, 21).

Big Ten — 4 (Nos. 2, 3, 11, 20).

ACC — 2 (Nos. 5, 9).

American — 1 (No. 18).

Conference USA — 1 (No. 22).

Sun Belt — 1 (No. 24).

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Mid-American — 1 (No. 23)

Independent — 1 (No. 17).

RANKED vs. RANKED

No. 2 Ohio State at No. 3 Michigan, Saturday. The Buckeyes and Wolverines also lead in ranked matchups (this will be 49) and top-10 matchups (26).

No. 15 Oregon State at No. 6 Oregon, Friday. Sixth meeting with both teams ranked and second consecutive.

## Trump picks up the endorsement of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott during a visit to a US-Mexico border town

By JILL COLVIN, PAUL J. WEBER and MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

EDINBURG, Texas (AP) — Donald Trump picked up the Texas governor's endorsement Sunday during a visit to a U.S.-Mexico border town and promised that his hard-line immigration policies in a second presidential term would make Greg Abbott's "job much easier."

"You'll be able to focus on other things in Texas," Trump told Abbott as they each appeared before a crowd of about 150 at an airport hangar in Edinburg.

Abbott, a longtime ally and fellow border hawk, said he was proud to endorse the former president, who is the Republican Party's front-runner for the 2024 nomination.

"We need a president who's going to secure the border," Abbott said, speaking in a town that is about 30 miles from the Hidalgo Port of Entry crossing with Mexico. "We need Donald J. Trump back as our president of the United States of America."

Earlier, Trump served meals to Texas National Guard soldiers, troopers and others who will be stationed at the border over Thanksgiving. Trump and Abbott handed out tacos, and the former president shook hands and posed for pictures.

"What you do is incredible, and you want it to be done right," Trump told them.

Abbott said about the Guard members and Texas troopers who are stationed at the border: "They should not be here at this time. They should be at home." He said that "the only reason why they are here is because we have a president of the United States of America who is not securing our border."

Trump has been laying out immigration proposals that would mark a dramatic escalation of the approach he used in office and that drew alarms from civil rights activists and numerous court challenges. Though Trump has peppered campaign speeches with his immigration plans, he only made brief remarks in border country on Sunday. He spoke for only about 10 minutes against a backdrop of state police choppers, a plane and an armed patrol boat — all used by Texas at the border.

Trump did not get into the policies he would pursue if elected. He did complain about inflation, the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 and news media coverage. He said most technology outside of wheels and walls eventually becomes obsolete.

"We just need the walls. And it worked," Trump said.

His plan calls for building more of the wall along the border.

He also wants to:

— revive and expand his controversial travel ban, which initially targeted seven Muslim-majority countries. Trump's initial executive order was fought all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld what Trump complained was a "watered down" version that included travelers from North Korea and some Venezuelan officials.

— begin new "ideological screening" for all immigrants, aiming to bar "Christian-hating communists and Marxists" and "dangerous lunatics, haters, bigots and maniacs" from entering the United States. "Those who come to and join our country must love our country," he has said.

— bar those who support Hamas. "If you empathize with radical Islamic terrorists and extremists, you're disqualified," Trump says. "If you want to abolish the state of Israel, you're disqualified. If you support Hamas or any ideology that's having to do with that or any of the other really sick thoughts that go through

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people's minds — very dangerous thoughts — you're disqualified."

— deport immigrants living in the country who harbor "jihadist sympathies" and send immigration agents to "pro-jihadist demonstrations" to identify violators. He would target foreign nationals on college campuses and revoke the student visas of those who express anti-American or antisemitic views.

— invoke the Alien Enemies Act to remove from the United States all known or suspected gang members and drug dealers. That law was used to justify internment camps in World War II. It allows the president to unilaterally detain and deport people who are not U.S. citizens.

— end the constitutional right to birthright citizenship by signing an executive order his first day in office that would codify a legally untested reinterpretation of the 14th Amendment. Under his order, only children with at least one U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident parent would be eligible for a passport, Social Security number and other benefits.

— terminate all work permits and cut off funding for shelter and transportation for people who are in the country illegally.

— crack down on legal asylum-seekers and reimplement measures such as Title 42, which allowed Trump to turn away immigrants at the U.S.-Mexico border on the grounds of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

— press Congress to pass a law so anyone caught trafficking women or children would receive the death penalty.

— shift federal law enforcement agents, including FBI and Drug Enforcement Administration personnel, to immigration enforcement, and reposition at the southern border thousands of troops currently stationed overseas. "Before we defend the borders of foreign countries we must secure the border of our country," he said.

Trump has made frequent trips to the border as a candidate and president. During his 2016 campaign, he traveled to Laredo, Texas in July 2015 for a visit that highlighted how his views on immigration helped him win media attention and support from the GOP base.

The border has also become a centerpiece of Abbott's agenda and the subject of an escalating fight with the Biden administration over immigration. The three-term governor has approved billions of dollars in new border wall construction, authorized razor wire on the banks of the Rio Grande and bused thousands of migrants to Democrat-led cities across the United States.

Abbott is expected to soon sign what would be one of Texas' most aggressive measures to date: a law that allows police officers to arrest migrants suspected of entering the country illegally and empowers judges to effectively deport them. The measure is a dramatic challenge to the U.S. government's authority over immigration. It already has already drawn rebuke from Mexico.

Still, the Texas GOP's hard right has not always embraced Abbott. Trump posted on his social media platform earlier this year that the governor was "MISSING IN ACTION!" after Republicans voted to impeach Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, a Trump ally. Abbott was also booed at a 2022 Trump rally.

But Abbott's navigation within the GOP has built him broad support in Texas, where he has outperformed more strident Republicans down-ballot and helped the GOP make crucial inroads with Hispanic voters.

Democrats tried to use the trip to portray Trump's plans as extreme.

"Donald Trump is going after immigrants, our rights our safety and our democracy. And that is what really is on the ballot last year," Biden reelection campaign manager Julie Chavez Rodriguez said on a conference call with reporters.

Pollings show many voters aren't satisfied with the Biden administration's handling of the border.

A Marquette Law School poll of registered voters conducted in late September gave Trump a 24-point advantage over Biden on handling immigration and border security issues — 52% to 28%.



## French performers lead a silent Paris march for peace between Israelis and Palestinians

PARIS (AP) — Holding olive branches and white banners, French performers from different religious and ethnic backgrounds led thousands of people on a silent march through central Paris on Sunday to call for peace between Israelis and Palestinians and unity in France.

The crowd, which included actors Isabelle Adjani and Emmanuelle Beart as well as singers and other cultural figures, marched from the Arab World Institute toward the Museum of Art and History of Judaism, located across the Seine River.

"We have a blue sky on top of our head today and in Israel, in Palestine, they're having bombs, they're having war. We're not helping the situation by choosing sides or throwing hate on one side or another," Nadia Fares said.

The silence at Sunday's march "will balance, hopefully, the cacophony we have all over the world," she said.

France, home to significant Jewish and Muslim populations, has seen weeks of protests and tensions over the Israel-Hamas war.

The French government is pushing for a truce to get humanitarian aid to Palestinian civilians in Gaza and also trying to negotiate the release of eight French hostages held by Hamas. Another 40 French citizens were killed in the Oct. 7 Hamas attack in southern Israel.

French President Emmanuel Macron spoke Sunday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, and with the leaders of Qatar and Egypt on Saturday, as part of his diplomatic efforts.

Macron confirmed his support for Israel's right to defend itself but denounced "too numerous civilian losses" in Gaza, according to a French presidential statement. He urged an immediate humanitarian truce leading to a cease-fire.

Macron also expressed concern about violence against Palestinian civilians in the West Bank and called for resumed diplomatic efforts toward a two-state solution.

On Saturday, thousands of pro-Palestinian and left-wing activists rallied in Paris and around Britain on to call for a cease-fire, the latest of several such protests in major cities around the world since the Israel-Hamas war started.

Survivors of Nazi atrocities during World War II also joined young Jewish activists outside the Paris Holocaust memorial to sound the alarm about resurgent antisemitic hate speech, graffiti and abuse linked to the war in the Mideast.

## A suspect in the killings of four people is found dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, police say

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — A suspect in Tennessee died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound while on the run Sunday after a series of shootings that killed four of his female relatives and seriously injured a fifth person, police said.

Officers found the body of Mavis Christian Jr., 52, in his car during a manhunt following shootings at three locations in Memphis that left three women and a teenage girl dead and a teenage girl critically wounded, the Memphis Police Department said.

Police said Christian was related to the victims but could not immediately specify how they were related. The names of the victims have not yet been released.

"We are deeply saddened by the tragic and senseless shootings on Saturday ... resulting in the deaths of four innocent family members and a fifth victim critically injured," the police department said in a statement posted on social media. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims and their loved ones as our community grieves more lives taken by domestic violence."

Memphis Police Chief Cerelyn "CJ" Davis said that "incidents like these shake us all to our core."

The suspect's uncle, Melvin Christian, said he didn't know what might have triggered the violence.

"I hadn't seen him in years," Melvin Christian said when reached by phone Sunday.

He said he didn't know any details about the shootings, including who had been shot. When told that four people had died, he replied, "Oh Lord."

Memphis police officers responded to a reported shooting at 9:22 p.m. Saturday on the 100 Block of Howard Drive. Police found a woman with an apparent gunshot wound who was pronounced dead at the scene.

Investigators determined there were two other connected fatal shootings. At Field Lark Drive, a woman and a 13-year-old girl were killed and a 15-year-old girl was critically wounded. Another woman was found fatally shot on Warrington Road, Memphis Police Officer Christopher Williams said earlier.

Police believed Mavis Christian Jr. was responsible for the shootings and began a search involving local, state and federal law enforcement agencies until his body was found.

His criminal record stretched back to a 1996 aggravated assault charge, the Commercial Appeal reported, citing court records. He also faced charges of felony domestic violence, aggravated assault, theft and vandalism in 2018, the newspaper also reported.

## **Dissent over US policy in the Israel-Hamas war stirs unusual public protests from federal employees**

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal government workers from the State Department to NASA are circulating open letters demanding that President Joe Biden pursue a cease-fire in Israel's war against Hamas. Congressional staffers are picking up microphones in front of the Capitol, speaking out to condemn what they say is the silence of lawmakers about the toll on Palestinian civilians.

As the deaths soar in Gaza, Biden and Congress are facing unusually public challenges from the inside over their support for Israel's offensive. Hundreds of staffers in the administration and on Capitol Hill are signing on to open letters, speaking to reporters and holding vigils, all in an effort to shift U.S. policy toward more urgent action to stem Palestinian casualties.

"Most of our bosses on Capitol Hill are not listening to the people they represent," one of the congressional staffers told the crowd at a protest this month. Wearing medical masks that obscured their faces, the roughly 100 congressional aides heaped flowers in front of Congress to honor the civilians killed in the conflict.

The objections coming from federal employees over the United States' military and other backing for Israel's Gaza campaign is partly an outgrowth of the changes happening more broadly across American society. As the United States becomes more diverse, so does the federal workforce, including more appointees of Muslim and Arab heritage. And surveys show public opinion shifting regarding U.S. ally Israel, with more people expressing unhappiness over the hard-right government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

After weeks of seeing images of bloodied children and fleeing families in Gaza, a significant number of Americans, including from Biden's Democratic Party, disagree with his support of Israel's military campaign. A poll by The Associated Press and NORC Center for Public Affairs Research in early November found 40% of the U.S. public believed Israel's response in Gaza had gone too far. The war has roiled college campuses and set off nationwide protests.

As of late this past week, one open letter had been endorsed by 650 staffers of diverse religious backgrounds from more than 30 federal agencies, organizers said. The agencies range from the Executive Office of the President to the Census Bureau and include the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of Defense.

A Biden political appointee who helped organize the multiagency open letter said the president's rejection of appeals to push Netanyahu for a long-term cease-fire had left some federal staffers feeling "dismissed,

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in a way.”

“That’s why people are using all sorts of dissent cables and open letters. Because we’ve already gone through the channels of trying to do it internally,” this person said.

The letter condemns both the Hamas killings of about 1,200 people in Israel in the militants’ Oct. 7 incursion and the Israeli military campaign, which has killed more than 11,500 Palestinians in Gaza, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. The letter calls for the U.S. to push for a cease-fire and a release of hostages held by Hamas and of Palestinians that the signers say are unjustly detained by Israel, as well as greater action overall on behalf of Gaza’s civilians.

The organizers of the executive branch and congressional protests all spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity, citing fear of professional and other repercussions. The federal employees speaking up in opposition to the U.S. policy appear to be seeking a balance, raising their objections in a way that doesn’t deprive them of a seat at the table and risk their careers.

Some current and former officials and staffers said it’s the public nature of some of the challenges from federal employees that is unusual. It worries some, as a potential threat to government function and to cohesion within agencies.

The State Department has an honored tradition of allowing formal, structured statements of dissent to U.S. policy. It dates to 1970, when U.S. diplomats resisted President Richard Nixon’s demands to fire foreign service officers and other State Department employees who signed an internal letter protesting the U.S. carpet-bombing of Cambodia.

Ever since, foreign service officers and civil servants have used what is known as the dissent channel at moments of intense policy debate. That includes criticism of the George W. Bush administration’s prosecution of the war in Iraq, the Obama administration’s policies in Syria, the Trump administration’s immigration restrictions on mainly Muslim countries and the Biden administration’s handling of the 2021 U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

But dissent cables, which are signed, are classified and not for public release.

In State Department tradition, at least, if “for whatever reason a criticism or complaint were not taken into account or were not believed to be sufficient to change policy, well, then, it was time to move on. It was done,” said Thomas Shannon, a retired career foreign service officer who served in senior positions at the State Department. “It was time to salute, and execute.”

Shannon was briefly interim secretary of state in the Trump administration. There, he fended off a recommendation from White House spokesman Sean Spicer that State Department staffers who signed a dissent cable against President Donald Trump’s so-called Muslim ban should quit.

Growing diversity of the State Department’s workforce is a positive, Shannon said. But “in the foreign service as in military service, discipline is real and it’s important,” he said, citing the need for consistent, cohesive foreign policy.

“I guess I’m just saying I’m not a fan of open letters,” Shannon said.

State Department officials say several expressions of dissent have made their way through the formal channels to Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

One State Department official, 11-year veteran Josh Paul, quit late last month to protest the administration’s rush to provide arms to Israel.

Blinken addressed internal opposition to the administration’s handling of the Gaza crisis in a department-wide email to staffers this past Monday. “We’re listening: what you share is informing our policy and our messages,” he wrote.

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said the dissent was welcome. “One of the strengths of this department is that we do have people with different opinions,” he said.

Unlike the dissent cables, the multiagency open letter and another endorsed by more than 1,000 employees of the U.S. Agency for International Development have been made public. They also are anonymous, with no names of signers publicly attached to them.

The USAID letter with 1,000 staffers backing it, which was given to The Washington Post, Foreign Policy

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and others, calls for an immediate cease-fire. But one longtime USAID staffer said it distressed some of the agency's staffers, including some who are Jewish, by not addressing the Hamas killings of civilians in Israel. The delivery of the letter to news organizations also seemed outside the agency's tradition of handling matters internally in a consultative way, the staffer said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

In comparison, an internal State Department memorial for all civilians killed since Oct. 7, organized by Muslim, Christian and Jewish employee organizations, brought more solace, and seemed to bring colleagues of diverse outlooks and backgrounds closer together, that USAID staffer said.

The organizers of the multiagency open letter said they acted out of frustration after other efforts, particularly a tense meeting between White House officials and Muslim and Arab political appointees, seemed to have no effect.

Staying silent, or resigning, would shirk their responsibility to the public, the staffer said. "If we just leave, there's never going to be any change."

## Today in History: November 20 Future Queen Elizabeth marries Prince Philip

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Nov. 20, the 324th day of 2023. There are 41 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 20, 1947, Britain's future queen, Princess Elizabeth, married Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, at Westminster Abbey.

On this date:

In 1789, New Jersey became the first state to ratify the Bill of Rights.

In 1945, 22 former Nazi officials went on trial before an international war crimes tribunal in Nuremberg, Germany. (Almost a year later, the International Military Tribunal sentenced 12 of the defendants to death; seven received prison sentences ranging from 10 years to life; three were acquitted.)

In 1952, President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower announced his selection of John Foster Dulles to be his secretary of state.

In 1967, the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Clock at the Commerce Department ticked past 200 million.

In 1969, the Nixon administration announced a halt to residential use of the pesticide DDT as part of a total phaseout.

In 1985, the first version of Microsoft's Windows operating system, Windows 1.0, was officially released.

In 1992, fire seriously damaged Windsor Castle, the favorite weekend home of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.

In 1998, forty-six states embraced a \$206 billion settlement with cigarette makers over health costs for treating sick smokers.

In 2000, lawyers for Al Gore and George W. Bush battled before the Florida Supreme Court over whether the presidential election recount should be allowed to continue.

In 2003, Michael Jackson was booked on suspicion of child molestation in Santa Barbara, California. (Jackson was later acquitted at trial.) Record producer Phil Spector was charged with murder in the shooting death of an actor, Lana Clarkson, at his home in Alhambra, California. (Spector's first trial ended with a hung jury in 2007; he was convicted of second-degree murder in 2009.)

In 2012, former boxing champion Hector "Macho" Camacho was shot while sitting in a car in his hometown of Bayamon, Puerto Rico. (Camacho died four days later after doctors removed him from life support.)

In 2015, Jonathan Pollard, a former U.S. Navy intelligence analyst, was released from prison after 30 years behind bars for spying for Israel.

In 2017, CBS News suspended Charlie Rose, and PBS stopped distribution of his nightly interview show, after a Washington Post report carried accusations of sexual misconduct from eight women.

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In 2018, President Donald Trump declared that he would not further punish Saudi Arabia for the murder of U.S.-based columnist Jamal Khashoggi (jah-MAHL' khahr-SHOHK'-jee), dismissing reports from U.S. intelligence agencies that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman must have at least known about the plot to kill the writer.

In 2022, a 22-year-old gunman opened fire at a gay nightclub in Colorado Springs, killing at least five people and leaving 18 injured before he was subdued by patrons.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Estelle Parsons is 96. Comedian Dick Smothers is 85. President Joe Biden is 81. Singer Norman Greenbaum is 81. Actor Veronica Hamel is 80. Broadcast journalist Judy Woodruff is 77. Singer Joe Walsh is 76. Actor Richard Masur is 75. Opera singer Barbara Hendricks is 75. Former national security adviser John Bolton is 75. Actor Bo Derek is 67. Former NFL player Mark Gastineau is 67. Reggae musician Jimmy Brown (UB40) is 66. Actor Sean Young is 64. Pianist Jim Brickman is 62. Actor Ming-Na is 60. Actor Ned Vaughn is 59. Rapper Mike D (The Beastie Boys) is 58. Rapper Sen Dog (Cypress Hill) is 58. Actor Callie Thorne is 54. Actor Sabrina Lloyd is 53. Actor Joel McHale is 52. Actor Marisa Ryan is 49. Country singer Dierks (duhkrz) Bentley is 48. Actor Joshua Gomez is 48. Actor Laura Harris is 47. Olympic gold medal gymnast Dominique Dawes is 47. Country singer Josh Turner is 46. Actor Nadine Velazquez (veh-LAHZ'-kehz) is 45. Actor Jacob Pitts is 44. Actor Andrea Riseborough is 42. Actor Jeremy Jordan is 39. Actor Dan Byrd is 38. Actor Ashley Fink is 37. Rock musician Jared Followill (Kings of Leon) is 37. Actor Jaina Lee Ortiz is 37. Actor Cody Linley is 34. Pop musician Michael Clifford (5 Seconds to Summer) is 28.