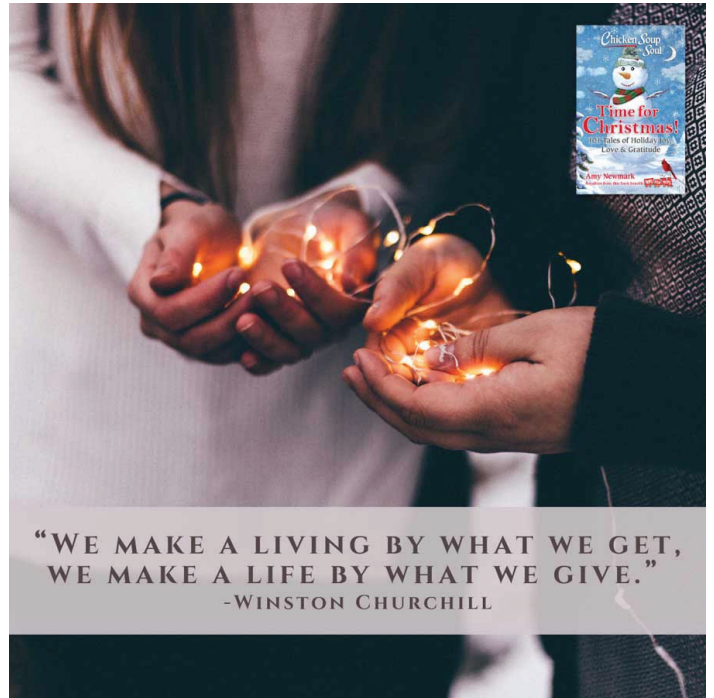


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## Coming up Thursday, Nov. 30

Fall Sports Awards Night, 7 p.m.  
Senior Menu: Baked chicken breast, mashed potatoes with gravy, California blend vegetables, lemon tart bar, whole wheat bread.  
School Breakfast: Muffins.  
School Lunch: Corndogs, fries.

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

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

### World in Brief

**War on Disney:** Elon Musk has warned that major advertisers pulling out from his X social media platform could "kill the company," after Disney CEO Bob Iger halted the media giant's advertising on X.

**U.S. Tests China:** U.S. Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti visited the state of Arunachal Pradesh in a move likely to provoke a strong response from China. China claims Arunachal Pradesh as "South Tibet."

**A Population Collapse:** South Korea faces a profound demographic shift as its young adult population is anticipated to halve by mid-century, contributing to concerns in the country grappling with the planet's lowest fertility rate.

**War in Ukraine:** Sergei Ryabkov, Russia's deputy foreign minister, warned of a potential armed conflict between Moscow and NATO nations over assistance to Ukraine, echoing previous Russian assertions that aiding countries might become "legitimate military targets."

**Yay Day:** Starbucks Rewards members can get 50% off their drink between 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. local time today to celebrate Yay Day. Starbucks will send Rewards members a Yay Day coupon on the Starbucks app.

### Burnt off wire caused power outage

A power outage was reported last evening on the 300 block between Third and Fourth Street. A wire burnt off to the fuse holder resulting in the outage.

**GDILIVE.COM**

Groton Area  
Tigers  
**GT**

Any interest in any of  
these basketball games on  
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Girls James Valley Christian JV  
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Girls Sisseton JV  
Girls Roncalli C  
Girls Roncalli JV  
Boys Roncalli C  
Boys Roncalli JV  
Girls Aberdeen Christian JV

**Text Paul at 605-397-7460**

## Veteran's Day Profile: Richard Taylor

*Editor's Note:*

*We thought it would be nice to publish the Veteran's Day stories that were told at the Veteran's Day Program. This will be the first in a series of those presented at the program. The stories were told by the high school students. The first is Richard Taylor as told by Cadence Feist.*

Hello, I am Cadence Feist. Today I am going to introduce you to a very important man in my life, my Grandpa Richard Taylor. My grandpa was introduced to the military at a young age, as his dad and two of his uncles were in the Navy.

After graduating from Pierre High School, he went to NDSCS in Wahpeton, ND, where he earned a degree in diesel mechanics. During this time, young men either got drafted, or enlisted in the military. My grandpa's draft status was 180, meaning if his name and number got called, he was drafted. Therefore, he decided to enlist for two and a half years, and off he went to boot camp. His bootcamp was in Golf Port, Mississippi, where it was hot and muggy. He said, "It was not that hard we just had to do what we were told and not talk back."

After bootcamp, my grandpa was in the Naval Support Activity, as a Navy Seabee, meaning that he was a part of the construction in the Navy. His rank would become 3rd Class Petty Officer. My grandpa was stationed in DaNang, South Vietnam, from 1968 to 1970. While there, he worked at the Triangle Repair Shop with 23 other men where they had 500 pieces of equipment to maintain.

My grandpa had the privilege to eat hot meals instead of MRE's all the time, but every meal had plain ol' rice, which is why he will not touch rice to this day. Being he was in Vietnam he was relatively safe even though the base was fired at a couple of times. The little damage that was done, it was easily fixed.

Communication was limited in the 1960's. Writing letters was the main form of communication to his dad. All his letters were censored so he could not say anything about the war or his location.

A couple fond memories that my grandpa has were going to the Enlistment Mens Club. On the day before pay-day, everyone was broke so they had "dime night." This night they would sell beers for a dime



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instead of a quarter. Another thing he remembers is on Christmas one year, the USO sent Bob Hope and Ann Margret to perform for them. He remembers they only gave away a few passes to get into the show, so he and many others went on top of a hill that looked down on the show and watched it from there.

The Navy was reducing the size of their force, so he was honorably discharged 180 days before his enlistment expired. He then spent a short time at Long Beach, California. Through his time in services, he was at Golf Port, Mississippi; Port Hueneme (pronounced y-nami), California; DaNang, Vietnam; and lastly Long Beach, California.

After he left Long Beach, he got on a plane to Phoenix, Arizona, to visit a friend and then went to Rapid to see another friend. Afterwards he went to Glenwood, Iowa to work in the construction field. He was one of the many people to construct the original Highway 12 between Groton and Bath.

Through being in the military my grandpa learned discipline, how to get up and go to work every day, and work for what you want. He did not have a free ticket.

Later on, he met my grandma Judy Drobny- Taylor, they were married in 1971 and went on to have 4 children Amanda, Richard, Dannielle, and Nicole. Now he has 10 grandchildren: Bryana, Brendon, Tage, Taryn, Cameron, Caelynn, Colton, Ellie, Jake, and me. He is now apart of the Groton Legion Auxiliary.

When asked to provide any messages to young adults who are contemplating the military he stated, "It's a good experience, teaches you discipline, you do what they tell you do and you can't screw around." He also thinks that it should be mandatory for at least two years, and it would do this younger generation some good to be yelled at 24/7 and learn respect. When I asked him for his opinion on me joining the military, he told me, "If you do, you will not regret it." Finally, he said, "good luck to anyone who enlists."

Presentation of the quilt

Grandpa, on behalf of the community and nation, with our deepest appreciation, we honor your service with this quilt of honor.

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## Angel Tree Cards Still Left

There are still plenty of cards left on Groton's Angel Trees. The left one is at Lori's Pharmacy on the counter. The right one is at Dollar General right when you walk in.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Q&A: Carbon pipeline execs say ethanol's future hangs in the balance

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - NOVEMBER 29, 2023 6:07 PM

MARION — If South Dakota's ethanol industry does not reduce the amount of heat-trapping carbon dioxide it emits into the atmosphere, the industry's future is grim.

That's according to two top executives of the remaining carbon-capture pipeline company hoping to capture, liquefy and bury carbon dioxide from South Dakota ethanol plants. They said markets around the globe are demanding lower carbon emissions.

"Electric vehicles are continuing to grow," said Summit Carbon Solutions CEO Lee Blank. "They are, and maybe not here, but in cities. Our gas consumption is going down. So how do we open up other markets so ethanol consumption goes up?"

One of those other markets, according to Summit, could be sustainable aviation fuel from a plant proposed in Lake Preston by a company called Gevo.

Summit's pipeline would cross land owned by state Rep. Karla Lems, R-Canton. She said a carbon-capture pipeline isn't the only way to lower emissions from corn-based ethanol.

"What would it mean if ethanol plants only purchased corn from farmers doing sustainable practices," Lems asked, "like no-till and cover crops, which pull carbon into the ground?"

In September, state regulators denied permits for Summit and another company seeking to build carbon pipelines in the state.

The other company, Navigator CO2, has since withdrawn its plan. Iowa-based Summit plans to resubmit an application after modifying its route.

The company aims to capture carbon dioxide emitted from 32 Midwest ethanol plants and transport it in liquefied form for underground storage in North Dakota, thereby making the project eligible for federal tax credits that incentivize the removal of greenhouse gasses from the atmosphere.

Summit's multi-billion-dollar project is led by Blank and Chief Operating Officer Jimmy Powell. Blank is an experienced agriculture industry executive, while Powell's background is in energy, pipelines and oil.

On Wednesday, the two sat down with South Dakota Searchlight at NuGen in Marion, which is one of Summit's partner ethanol plants.

The following are excerpts — edited for length — from that interview.

Why is your pipeline project important to ethanol plants?

Blank: The reason it's important to the ethanol industry is it lowers the carbon intensity on their products. And there are markets today nationally and globally that want a lower carbon-intensity fuel, and they'll pay a premium for that.

And so by lowering that carbon intensity on the ethanol that they're producing, they can sell that ethanol into premium markets and deliver a premium back to the ethanol plant.

Powell: To sell in these markets, and to sell to the sustainable aviation markets, which are evolving, you have to have a carbon intensity score of less than 50.

This plant [NuGen in Marion] is one of the newer plants, and it's in that ballpark. A lot of the plants that we partner with have a score in the 60s and 70s.

If they power this entire plant with a solar farm or wind turbines, it's going to give them a three- or

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five-point reduction. Meanwhile, by pulling the CO2 stream out of their process, it cuts it 25 to 30 points.

So they can't get the same bang for their buck doing anything but pulling the CO2 out.

Right now, it's about a 50-cent margin in those low-carbon fuel markets. So, if it's 15 cents to transport to those markets, they net 35 cents a gallon.

What is Summit Carbon Solutions' business model?

Blank: We partner with the plants. So it's a shared revenue model with the plants.

We're putting up all the capital for all the capture equipment, all the infrastructure, all the sequestration. We don't ask the plant to put up anything. And then, through the premiums — what we call "uplift," which is what Jimmy was just talking about, that 35 cents a gallon uplift — we share the operating costs and return on our capital back out of that, and then everything else is shared with the plant.

So the plants don't make any investment. But after we get a return on investment, everything from there is a shared model going forward.

So that's how we earn revenues off of this particular model through a shared partnership with the ethanol industry.

Who will receive the federal tax credits?

Blank: The tax credit is just one of the revenue streams that gets split in the revenue model as it comes in.

Once we put that ton of carbon in the ground, that generates the tax credit for that ton that's been sequestered.

And then, that tax credit comes back to the business and it's shared. After we take the operating expenses out of the company, just like everything else, that revenue from that tax credit is a shared model.

Sustainable aviation fuel is one of the future markets discussed that could make up for the loss in ethanol demand as electric vehicles grow in popularity. How does Summit fit into that?

Blank: The U.S. ethanol industry is supplying about 15 billion gallons into U.S. gasoline markets.

There are 100 billion gallons, globally, of aviation fuel. They all have sustainable goals that they want to try to meet by 2030, 2040, 2050.

They're saying that without low carbon-intensity ethanol, there is no way the airline industry will meet its sustainability goals. And that's because, basically, without the carbon pipeline, you can't get the carbon intensity score low enough on the ethanol to qualify for the sustainable aviation fuel markets.

And so, it's important that we get it done, because it opens up the ethanol industry to another market. It's not 100 billion gallons, because it's a blend, but it's an additional 50 billion gallons.

Think about that: The gasoline markets are only supplying 15 billion gallons today.

We can open this up for agriculture to another 50 billion gallons of ethanol. Imagine what that can do for the U.S. corn farmer and what it means to the value of his farming operation going forward.

Are you saying sustainable aviation fuel would be 50% ethanol?

Blank: No, it's a ratio.

So, remember, the first thing that has to happen is we have to lower the carbon intensity score of the ethanol. Then it has to go through a process through a sustainable aviation fuel plant that has to work to get it to a position where it's what they call a drop-in fuel.

And I'm not an engineer, so I'm not going to tell you exactly how that works, but that drop-in fuel then becomes a fuel that will fly.

As a matter of fact, yesterday, Virgin flew their first 100% sustainable Aviation fuel flight across the Atlantic Ocean with all drop-in sustainable aviation fuel.

Now, they can blend it, and they probably will blend it going forward. But it's a big blend. So you open up the ethanol markets to a massive market.

Powell: The goal of the major airlines, like Delta, United and Southwest, their goal is 3 billion gallons of sustainable aviation fuel by 2030. They're targets, but they are pushing for that today.

In this country today, there are less than 100 million gallons produced. So, plants have to be built and they have to be operational.

I'm sure you know about Gevo in this state being one. And if we don't have this project, if it's not successful in South Dakota, Gevo will not construct here.



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So, the 15 or so ethanol plants in this state will be disadvantaged from that aspect. They won't be able to access that.

To be clear, what percentage of sustainable aviation fuel would be ethanol?

Powell: Well, think about it like this: It's like the gasoline at Casey's. You can get 10% ethanol all the way to E85.

And so, it depends on what the airlines require. Is it 15% blend, 50% blend?

But globally, the way I think about it, the way it's been presented to us is that the mass demand in the market is about 50% of the total demand.

So, if there's 100 billion gallons of aviation fuel demand in the market, half of that would be available to sustainable aviation fuel.

Your project's ability to access land from unwilling landowners via eminent domain stems from its status as a common carrier pipeline — a type of pipeline required by law to offer its services to the public on a non-discriminatory basis. Who else do you anticipate will be asking you to carry their carbon dioxide?

Blank: There are lots of opportunities for that. There are fertilizer plants looking for transport and storage, and others.

But with the failure of Navigator, you know, there's now another piece of the ethanol industry that would like to think about coming on our pipe now that Navigator's no longer happening. Those are common carrier-type discussions. When the 45Q tax credit went from \$50 a ton to \$85 a ton, everything really became available.

And many people don't want the partnership like we have with this plant. Many just want us to ship it and sequester it for them, and that's more of the common carrier-type model, and that's all coming at us now.

Powell: One way to think about it is we're designing the system for 18 million tons. We don't have 18 million tons in our contracts.

So we'll do an open season, like any other pipeline would. And so if you can get your product to the pipeline, and get your product off the pipeline, and it meets our quality spec, we'll transport it.

Does that mean you're unable to say no to a customer looking to use liquid carbon for oil-well extraction, by injecting it underground to make the oil flow better?

Powell: We can [say no], because we can't get it off the pipeline. We're sequestering it 80 or 90 miles southeast of the oil and gas production areas in North Dakota. So we don't have a way to get it there.

Now, if a company wanted to build a pipeline and take it from us, and move it up there, that's something we would have to entertain.

But right now we're partnered with ethanol. They want to sequester it because it benefits them to do that. And that's our business model.

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

## **COMMENTARY**

### **Open primaries: Advocating for fair and competitive elections**

**JOE KIRBY**

South Dakota has a closed primary election system which discourages competition, encourages hyper partisanship and excludes hundreds of thousands of voters from a meaningful role in our elections. But it doesn't have to be this way. Luckily, there is an alternative election system available for voters to consider next November.

South Dakotans who show up for a primary election get a Republican or Democrat ballot, depending on their registration. Only half of the voters are registered as Republican (and that number is inflated by non-Republicans willing to sign up as Republicans so they can have a meaningful vote in the primary). The vote in that closed primary is all-important because that party controls all statewide offices and over 90%

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of the Legislature. Candidates advancing from the Republican primary usually sail through the November general election.

There's a lot to not like about that system. First of all, it's not fair. Only those who vote in the pivotal Republican primary have a say in who will represent them and run the state. The other half are, in effect, disenfranchised.

Second, the system is not competitive. Candidates of lesser merit can slip in the back door without a competitive election. A shocking 21 of 35 state senators were "voted" into office last time without a competitive election.

Third, it encourages and rewards hyper-partisanship. Elected officials deviating from the party line risk expulsion by their own party in the next primary. There is a growing consensus that this system needs an overhaul.

South Dakota Open Primaries is a non-partisan statewide group poised to do just that. We are dedicated to reshaping our election system to make it fairer and more competitive. We are working hard to gather 37,500 valid signatures to be filed by May 2024. In fact, we already have well over half the number we need. South Dakotans have been receptive to this idea once they hear our proposal.

Our initiative calls for one open primary election where all registered voters would have an equal opportunity to vote. It would cover the three congressional offices, the governor, the Legislature and county offices. It would be a South Dakota primary, not a Republican or Democrat primary. All voters would get the same ballot. Candidates of all affiliations would compete in the primary, with the top two advancing to the general election. Here's an example of how it might play out.

In a single South Dakota June primary, all candidates for governor would run against each other: Let's say three Republicans, two Democrats and an independent. All registered voters would get to vote in the primary, with the two most popular candidates advancing to what could be a competitive November general election.

But the most critical point, and it is worth emphasizing, is that all South Dakota voters would get to vote in the open primary, leaving no one sidelined during this publicly funded election.

State officials project an additional 50,000 South Dakotans would vote in an open primary. That's a significant enhancement in voter involvement. And we think the number will be even larger. Moreover, we anticipate heightened competition as more individuals consider entering public service, free from the constraints of partisan politics.

There are currently 150,000 independent or unaffiliated voters in South Dakota. That's over a quarter of the state's registered voters. Many have disengaged from the highly charged partisanship that characterizes today's politics. Open primaries would empower them with a meaningful role in the political process.

There's a lot to like about open primaries: increased voter turnout, more candidates, more competition and less hyper partisanship.

However, resistance is expected from those benefiting from the existing unfair system, reluctant to relinquish control. On the other hand, several Republican party leaders have told us they see open primaries as a solution to the challenges they face with radical factions of the party. And it is important to note that the two political parties do fine in open primary states.

South Dakota Open Primaries is well on the way to giving voters a chance to adopt a fairer, more competitive election system. We are actively collecting signatures around the state, aiming for a filing by May 2024 to place the measure on ballots for the Nov. 5, 2024, general election.

*Joe Kirby, of Sioux Falls, formerly led Western Surety Company and worked as an accountant and lawyer. He helped lead a successful effort to modernize Sioux Falls city government in the 1990s and continues to advocate for government reform.*

## Ahead of climate conference, U.S. House panel tussles over curbs on emissions

BY: JACOB FISCHLER - NOVEMBER 29, 2023 4:39 PM

Republicans on a U.S. House panel argued Wednesday against aggressive moves to meet carbon reduction goals, saying U.S. fossil fuel companies are working to make their products cleaner.

Democrats on the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on the Environment, Manufacturing and Critical Minerals countered that to achieve further reductions, federal policies should be continued to encourage the development of renewable energy and consumer products such as electric vehicles.

Coming the day before the 28th annual United Nations climate conference was set to begin, members of the panel battled over the U.S. role in curbing emissions. The conference is often a venue for world leaders to discuss global solutions to climate change. President Joe Biden is not scheduled to attend this year's conference.

Republicans argued that the United States was not as problematic for emissions as countries like China and should be allowed to continue developing cleaner uses of oil and gas, downplaying the need to transition away from those fuels.

U.S. fossil fuel companies have produced more energy in recent years while cutting emissions, several Republicans on the panel said.

Subcommittee Chairman Bill Johnson, an Ohio Republican, criticized Biden and congressional Democrats for demanding "a radical reordering of American society and a reduced standard of living" to meet climate goals.

"Becoming more prosperous and secure as a nation is possible while also decreasing emissions," Johnson said. "We've proven it. We've done it. We don't have to throw the baby out with the bathwater."

But Democrats said that progress on environmental goals, including air pollution, was achieved because of federal policies.

Subcommittee ranking Democrat Paul Tonko of New York said U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations and other federal policies drove major reductions in automotive emissions, and particulate matter, ozone and sulfur dioxide in the atmosphere.

"Innovation is often not possible without a mix of carrots and sticks," he said. "There are countless examples of EPA rules playing a driving factor in emissions reductions."

### Standards and goals

Karl Hausker, a senior fellow with the World Resources Institute, an international environmental nonprofit, said the government's role in developing a regulatory framework for industry was helpful in pushing the private sector to meet high standards.

"When we collectively decide to attack an environmental problem and reduce it, we set standards, we set performance goals and then the incredible scientific and engineering talent of the United States comes into play," Hausker said.

Frank Pallone, a New Jersey Democrat who is the ranking member of the full committee, said Republicans promoted a "polluters-over-people agenda," and sought to undermine climate programs in recent infrastructure and climate laws and by opposing regulations.

Democrats also rejected the idea that fossil-fuel primacy was responsible for a growing economy. Federal spending and tax breaks to encourage renewable energy production, as envisioned in Democrats' climate and policy law last year, would have several positive impacts on the economy, Pallone said.

"These policies are already creating new jobs, cutting costs for working families and advancing home-grown clean energy — all while tackling the climate crisis," he said.

### Ceding to China

Members of each party disagreed about how best to counter Chinese influence on energy production. Republicans argued that transitioning to renewable energy sources such as wind and solar would benefit China, which produces many of the parts needed for renewable energy products.

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"This forced transition will leave our economy dangerously dependent upon supply chains from China and make energy less affordable, less reliable for Americans," committee Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers, a Washington Republican, said.

China has poor environmental and labor standards and "does not share our concerns about climate change risks, nor our value of environmental stewardship," Rodgers said.

"Moving to 100% wind, solar and battery-powered energy, as some have proposed will cede our energy future to China, and could have perverse effects on increasing emissions," she added. "We should instead be working to build on our remarkable legacy."

China emits more greenhouse gases than the rest of the developed world, and its emissions increased this year, Mariannette Miller-Meeks, an Iowa Republican, said. She criticized Biden administration policies that she said would promote Chinese industry.

"It's problematic that the Biden administration is continually turning to the Chinese Communist Party to produce energy components," she said.

Democrats countered that the world would be well served by a U.S. leadership role on climate.

"We need to demonstrate our nation's commitment to standing with our allies in the fight against climate change," Pallone said. "We're out of time for denialism and obstruction. The science on climate change is indisputable."

The agreement the U.S. and China reached this year on reduction targets for greenhouse gases was the first time China committed to reducing its emissions, Pallone added.

Rep. Debbie Dingell, a Michigan Democrat, said the U.S. was in danger of falling behind developing economies, such as China's, if it cedes leadership in industries like electric vehicle and clean energy manufacturing.

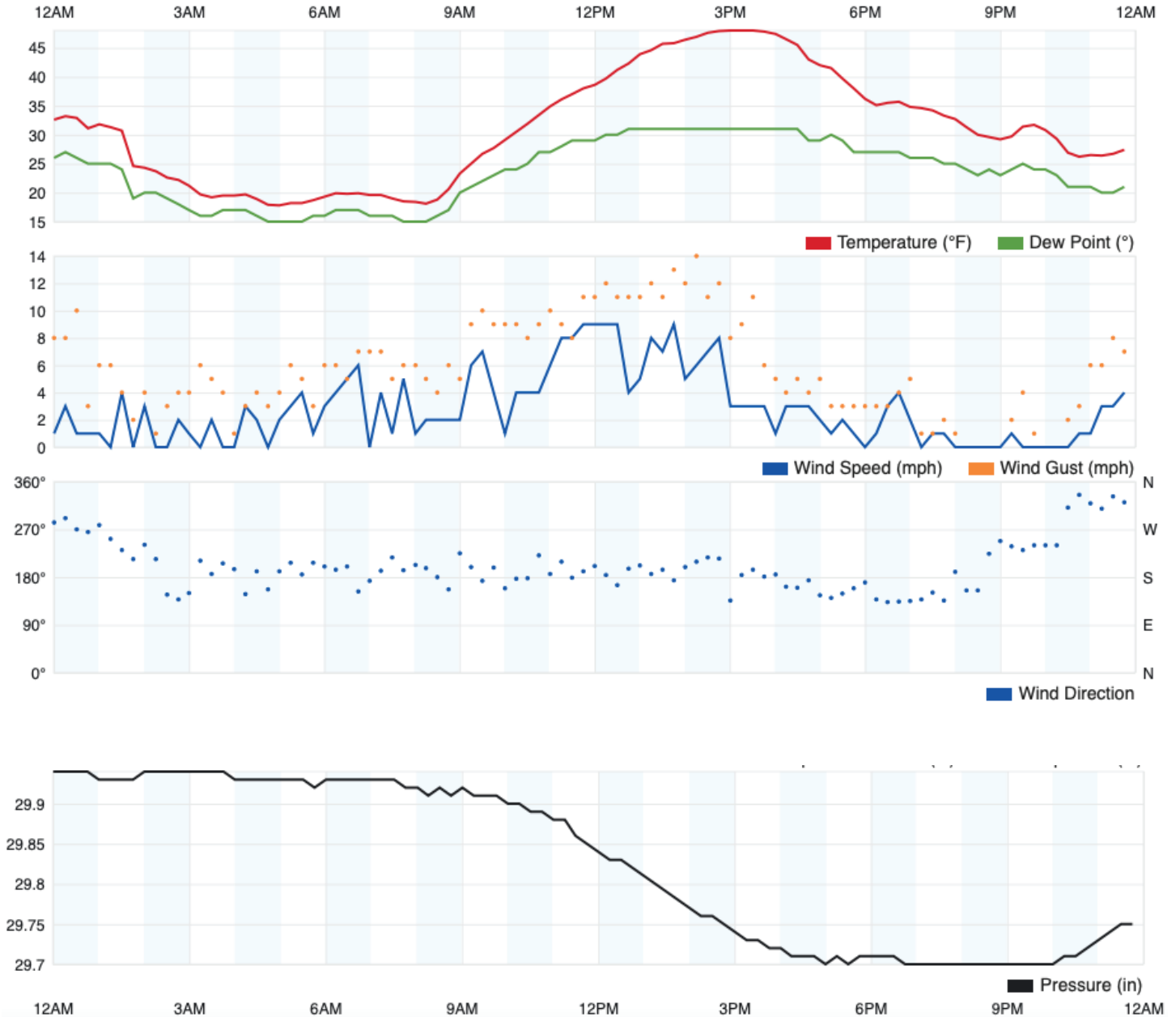
"If we sit back and do nothing, what is the danger of letting countries like China lead?" asked Dingell, adding she would "never let them."

*Jacob covers federal policy as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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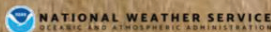
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Thu Nov 30	Fri Dec 1	Sat Dec 2	Sun Dec 3	Mon Dec 4	Tue Dec 5	Wed Dec 6
36°F 17°F	34°F 24°F	37°F 20°F	40°F 20°F	42°F 24°F	41°F 28°F	49°F 32°F
NNW 9 MPH	SSW 5 MPH	SE 11 MPH	SSW 8 MPH	NW 9 MPH	W 12 MPH	S 12 MPH

## Mainly Dry Start to December

Today Nov 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Friday Dec 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2023	Saturday Dec 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2023	Sunday Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2023	Monday Dec 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Mostly sunny with near normal temperatures  Increasing clouds tonight	Mostly cloudy start to December	Temperatures starting to trend above normal	Northwest winds of 15-25 mph in central SD	15-20% Chance of Rain/Snow Showers
HI: 32-38 F LO: 10-19 F	HI: 30-37 F LO: 17-23 F	HI: 33-40 F LO: 17-22 F	HI: 35-44 F LO: 15-22 F	HI: 38-51 F LO: 21-27 F

November 30, 2023 3:43 AM



Temperatures today will be near normal (30s) with a mostly sunny sky. As we head into December, temperatures will trend back above normal this weekend into early next week. Normal high temperatures for early December are in the 30s.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 48 °F at 3:20 PM

Low Temp: 18 °F at 5:01 AM

Wind: 14 mph at 2:12 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 9 hours, 4 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 66 in 1995

Record Low: -27 in 1964

Average High: 35

Average Low: 13

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.74

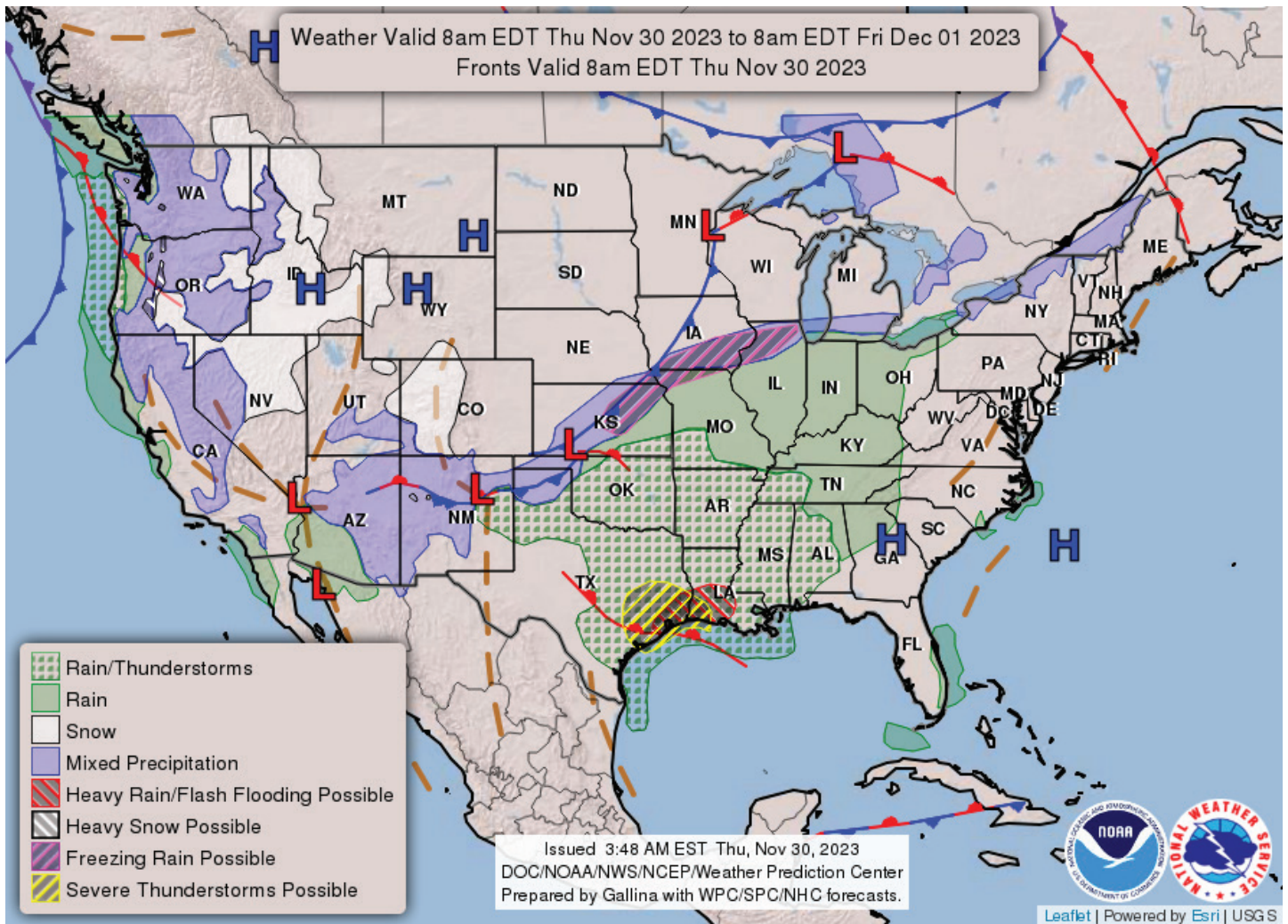
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.19

Average Precip to date: 21.21

Precip Year to Date: 23.17

Sunset Tonight: 4:53:06 PM

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:48:59 AM



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## Today in Weather History

November 30, 1981: A two-day winter storm, beginning as rain, changing to freezing rain and then to snow, completely paralyzed the eastern half of South Dakota, as well as west central Minnesota Monday, November 30 through Tuesday, December 1, 1981. Snow accumulations of between eight and twelve inches were common in South Dakota. Wind with gusts to near 50 mph whipped the snow into blizzard conditions. The Governor of South Dakota closed east-west Interstate 90 to all traffic. Hundreds of motorists were stranded. One person died during snow removal after the storm. Some storm total snowfall amounts included 8 inches at Kennebec, 7 inches at Pierre and Faulkton, 4 inches at Aberdeen, and 2 inches at Watertown. The winter precipitation was caused by a storm center that moved from Kansas Monday through Iowa Monday night and into Wisconsin Tuesday morning, December 1st. The same storm produced heavy snow and blizzard conditions over a large area of the central Plains. Travel was especially difficult because of the snow. Many roads were impassible and motorists were forced to find shelter.

November 30, 1991: The third major winter storm of the season moved from the central plains to eastern South Dakota. The storm generally dropped between 4 and 8 inches of snow over the eastern third of South Dakota from the 28th to the 30th. New snow accumulations of 2 to 5 inches occurred over most of the rest of the state. Some specific snow reports across the area included Aberdeen with 2 inches and Watertown with 3 inches. Five inches fell at Clear Lake and 3 inches fell near Summit. Strong winds developed after the snow fell, producing widespread blowing and drifting snow, especially across the northeast corner of South Dakota.

November 30, 2000: Heavy snow of 6 to 12 inches fell across a large part of northern South Dakota and into western Big Stone County in Minnesota, causing travel problems and school closings. Several accidents also occurred due to the slippery roads. Some snowfall amounts included 6 inches at Milbank and Ortonville; 8 inches at McLaughlin, Ipswich, Summit, and Mellette; 9 inches northwest of Britton, Clear Lake, and Pollock; 10 inches at Leola and Faulkton; 11 inches at Aberdeen and Webster; and 12 inches at Houghton.

1875 - A severe early season cold wave set November records in the northeastern U.S. The temperature dipped to 5 above zero at New York City, 2 below at Boston MA, and 13 below at Eastport ME. (David Ludlum)

1925: An extremely rare late November hurricane began to affect the west coast of Florida as it strengthened during the day. The storm made landfall very early on December 1st south of Tampa Bay, weakened to a tropical storm as it crossed central Florida, and exited around St. Augustine. The storm regained Hurricane strength off Jacksonville late on the 1st. Heavy rain continued over northeast Florida on the 2nd. Gale force winds were reported from the Keys to Jacksonville and over 50 people lost their lives, mostly on ships at sea. Damage along the coast south of Jacksonville was heavy and excessive rain and wind seriously damaged citrus and truck crops.

1957 - Lee slope winds enhanced by Hurricane Nina gusted to 82 mph at Honolulu, Hawaii, a record wind gust for that location. Wainiha, on the island of Kauai, was deluged with 20.42 inches of rain, and 35 foot waves pounded some Kauai beaches, even though the eye of the hurricane was never within 120 miles of the islands. (30th-1st) (The Weather Channel)

1967 - A record November snowstorm struck the Washington D.C. area. It produced up to a foot of snow in a 12 hour period. (David Ludlum)

1976 - MacLeod Harbor, AK, reported a precipitation total for November of 70.99 inches, which established a state record for any month of the year. (The National Weather Summary)

1987 - Showers produced heavy rain in the northeastern U.S. Up to three inches of rain drenched the Brandywine Creek Basin of Pennsylvania, and rainfall totals in Vermont ranged up to two inches at Dorsett. Snow fell heavily across Upper Michigan as gale force winds prevailed over Lake Superior. A storm moving into the northwestern U.S. produced gale force winds along the northern and central Pacific coast. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Snow in the Upper Great Lakes Region pushed the precipitation total for the month at Marquette, MI, past their previous November record of 7.67 inches. Santa Anna winds in southern California gusted to 75 mph at Laguna Peak. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### AS BIG AS WE MAKE IT!

Herb had been dating Liz for about a year. He was deeply in love with her and finally decided that he would ask her to marry him. So, he went to a jewelry store and used all of his hard-earned savings to purchase an engagement ring for her.

Unfortunately, the rings were more expensive than he imagined, and he had little money to spend and had to settle for one with a small diamond.

One evening he took her to dinner, and after they ordered their meal, with a shy, trembling voice, he asked, "Liz, will you marry me?"

"Oh yes, of course, I will," said Liz.

With tears in his eyes, he presented the ring to her and said, "Liz, I'm sorry, so sorry that the diamond is not as big as I wanted it to be or as large as my love."

"Oh my," said Liz, "that doesn't matter. The diamond is as big as we make it!"

How very true! Value is always in the eye of the beholder, isn't it?

We often substitute "things" for thoughtfulness or gifts with goodness. We even confuse large with lovely or big with beauty. Often we substitute spending time with someone by offering them a present instead of ourselves.

When we give something to someone, especially to God, the cost of the item is not, in the final analysis, what matters most. What matters most is our attitude and reason for giving.

Prayer: May we realize, Lord, that giving reflects the sincerity of our heart, not the size of the gift. May we also show our love by what we do as well as what we give. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly. Colossians 3:14-25



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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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.28.23

27 37 42 59 61 11

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$355,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 20  
DRAW: Mins 26 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.29.23

9 22 24 37 47 10

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$2,550,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 35  
DRAW: Mins 26 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.29.23

16 33 38 39 47 10

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 16 Hrs 50 Mins  
DRAW: 26 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.29.23

7 8 14 20 30

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$73,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 50  
DRAW: Mins 26 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.29.23

9 13 16 30 36 23

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 19  
DRAW: Mins 26 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.29.23

6 47 50 61 68 4

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$400,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 19  
DRAW: Mins 26 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### **North Dakota State extends new scholarship brought amid worries about Minnesota tuition program**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota State University announced Wednesday that it's extending a new scholarship brought about due to neighboring Minnesota's program to cover tuition for income-eligible residents, beginning next year.

North Dakota higher education leaders are worried about losing Minnesota students. Earlier this month, North Dakota State announced its new Tuition Award Program, which is similar to Minnesota's North Star Promise program. Both programs begin in fall 2024. The university has extended the scholarship to a second year.

The North Star Promise program will cover undergraduate tuition and fees at the state's public post-secondary schools and tribal colleges for Minnesota residents whose family income is under \$80,000, after they have used other sources of financial aid, such as grants and scholarships.

North Dakota State's new scholarship is for Minnesota and North Dakota first-year students who are eligible for the federal Pell Grant and whose family income is \$80,000 or less. Returning, second-year students will be considered for one year of the scholarship in the 2024-25 school year.

The scholarship will cover eligible students' tuition and fees after other aid is used. The NDSU Foundation is covering the cost of the new scholarship, estimated to be \$3.5 million for its first year.

North Dakota State University President David Cook has spoken of "catastrophic implications" due to North Star Promise. The university is the top out-of-state choice for first-year Minnesota students, who make up nearly half the school's student body.

About 15,000 to 20,000 Minnesotans could use North Star Promise in its first year, according to Minnesota's Office of Higher Education.

About 1,400 Minnesota students at five schools in eastern North Dakota might be eligible for the Minnesota program, according to the North Dakota University System.

### **Inheritance money in dispute after death of woman who made millions off sale of T-rex remains**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — For years, the massive mostly-intact dinosaur skeleton that came to be known as Sue the T-rex was at the center of a legal battle. The latest dispute involves who inherits what's left of the money created by the sale of Sue.

Fossil hunters discovered the skeleton in 1990 on property owned by Maurice and Darlene Williams that sits on the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota. Because of the location on the reservation, the discovery led to years of court battles over ownership rights.

Eventually, the couple was able to claim the rights, and they made \$7.6 million from the auction of Sue — now on display at Chicago's Field Museum. The museum's website says that at more than 40 feet (12.2 meters) long and 13 feet (4 meters) tall at the hip, Sue is the largest Tyrannosaurus rex specimen discovered and the most complete.

Maurice Williams died in 2011. Darlene Williams later moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where she died in December 2020. The couple had four children and three of the siblings are involved in a court dispute over the estate, KELO-TV reported.

At the center of the dispute: Darlene Williams had two wills, according to records filed in Lincoln County, South Dakota. The first one, signed in 2017, included all of her children and grandchildren, and listed daughter Sandra Williams Luther as the person in charge of settling the estate and making sure the will was carried out.

But a second will dated Nov. 25, 2020 — less than three weeks before Darlene Williams died — desig-

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nated Luther as the sole heir and executor. The document also cited Darlene Williams as saying that she had lived with her children at odds for too long, and she hoped that in her death they would find peace and become a family again.

Another daughter, Jacqueline Schwartz, questioned whether the second will was legal. She said her mother was critically ill and in hospice care when she signed the document without witnesses in the room due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Schwartz also contested the sale of her mother's home in Spearfish, South Dakota, two weeks before her death. Court records show that \$225,000 in proceeds went to Darlene Williams' son, Carson Williams. No trial date has been set.

## **OPEC+ suppliers struggle to agree on cuts to oil production even as prices tumble**

By COURTNEY BONNELL and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The OPEC oil cartel led by Saudi Arabia and allied producers including Russia will try to agree Thursday on cuts to the amount of crude they send to the world, with prices having tumbled lately despite their efforts to prop them up.

That's been a good thing for U.S. drivers, who have been able to fill their gas tanks for less money in recent months and whose costs at the pump can be sensitive to moves by the OPEC+ coalition. But it's bad news for OPEC+ countries whose oil income props up their economies and who have faced setbacks in keeping prices up despite initial fears that the Israel-Hamas war could affect oil flows.

Now, they are struggling to come to a consensus on production cuts, analysts say, on the same day the U.N. climate conference kicks off in the United Arab Emirates, an OPEC member.

The group postponed its meeting originally set for Sunday by four days, indicating that a new agreement will prove to be challenging, said Jorge Leon, senior vice president of oil market research for Rystad Energy.

"Despite the challenges, we still expect OPEC+ to reach an agreement to reduce production," he said in an analyst note. That's because "every member country acknowledges the need to reduce output to support prices into 2024."

The question is how to split it among the 23 member countries, some of whom already accepted lower production targets at the last OPEC+ meeting in Vienna in June.

Another big question is whether Saudi Arabia and Russia will extend their additional voluntary cuts of 1 million barrels per day and 300,000 barrels per day, respectively, into 2024.

Russia wants more oil revenue as it faces Western sanctions but seeks to pour energy earnings into its war chest against Ukraine. The Saudis have to earn nearly \$86 per barrel to meet their planned spending goals, according to the latest estimate from the International Monetary Fund.

The Saudis are trying to fund an ambitious overhaul of the kingdom's economy, reduce its dependence on oil and create jobs for a young population.

But the international benchmark Brent crude has stayed in the low- to mid-\$80 range in recent weeks, reflecting concerns about oversupply in a weakening global economy, which could weigh on the thirst for oil for travel and industry.

Early Thursday, Brent rose 8 cents to \$82.96 a barrel, while U.S. crude rose by 11 cents to \$77.97 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Lower oil prices have allowed U.S. gas prices to fall or stay steady since Sept. 19, AAA said. Gas is averaging just below \$3.25 a gallon, the motor club said, down about 7% from a month ago.

But that's still higher than when President Joe Biden took office in January 2021, when prices were averaging about \$2.40 a gallon. High inflation has been a political challenge for Biden going into the 2024 election, prompting him to say Monday that efforts to improve supply chains and reduce price pressures are a priority.

White House national security spokesman John Kirby declined to address the possibility of OPEC+ reducing oil production.

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"The president is going to keep focusing, as he has been, on a healthy global market that's properly balanced and that can continue to bring the price of gasoline down here in the United States," Kirby told reporters at a briefing Monday.

U.S. oil production has hit records as OPEC+ has cut back, with producers outside the group expected to keep leading global growth in oil supply next year, the International Energy Agency said in its November oil report.

For instance, daily production in the U.S. averaged 13 million barrels a day in August, an increase of more than 1 million barrels from a year ago, according to the latest monthly figures from the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Now, the risk is growing that Saudi Arabia's production cuts could reduce OPEC's influence over oil supplies as other countries boost their output.

"The kingdom is balancing the desire to keep prices high by limiting supply with the knowledge that doing so will lead to a further drop in overall market share," Leon said.

Meanwhile, fears the conflict between Israel and Hamas might spread throughout the region, creating a shock to the oil market, have not materialized, with the IEA noting that "there has been no material impact on oil supply flows from the war."

## Global leaders pay tribute to Henry Kissinger, but his record also draws criticism

By FOSTER KLUG and GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Global leaders paid tribute to former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on Thursday, but there was also sharp criticism of the man who remained an influential figure decades after his official service as one of the most powerful diplomats in American history.

Kissinger, who died Wednesday at 100, drew praise as a skilled defender of U.S. interests. On social media, though, he was widely called a war criminal who left lasting damage throughout the world.

"America has lost one of the most dependable and distinctive voices" on foreign affairs, said former President George W. Bush, striking a tone shared by many high-level officials past and present.

"I have long admired the man who fled the Nazis as a young boy from a Jewish family, then fought them in the United States Army," Bush said in a statement. "When he later became Secretary of State, his appointment as a former refugee said as much about his greatness as it did America's greatness."

Kissinger served two presidents, Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, and dominated foreign policy as the United States withdrew from Vietnam and established ties with China.

In China, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin called Kissinger an "old friend and good friend of the Chinese people, and a pioneer and builder of China-U.S. relations."

Many on social media in China mourned his passing. State broadcaster CCTV shared on social media an old segment showing Kissinger's first secret visit to China in 1971, when he broached the possibility of establishing U.S.-China relations and met then-Premier Zhou Enlai.

Kissinger exerted uncommon influence on global affairs long after he left office. In July, for instance, he met Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Beijing while U.S.-Chinese relations were at a low point.

Criticism of Kissinger, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in negotiating a cease-fire in Vietnam in 1973, was especially strong on social media, where many posted celebratory videos in reaction to his death.

A Rolling Stone magazine headline said, "Henry Kissinger, war criminal beloved by America's ruling class, finally dies."

"Henry Kissinger's bombing campaign likely killed hundreds of thousands of Cambodians — and set (a) path for the ravages of the Khmer Rouge," Sophal Ear, a scholar at Arizona State University who studies Cambodia's political economy, wrote on The Conversation.

"The cluster bombs dropped on Cambodia under Kissinger's watch continue to destroy the lives of any man, woman or child who happens across them," Sophal Ear wrote.

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The head of the independent Documentation Center of Cambodia, Youk Chhang, described Kissinger's legacy as "controversial." Well over half of the population was born after the Khmer Rouge were ousted in 1979 and Kissinger left government, so there is not much awareness among Cambodians about his record, he said.

Kissinger initiated the Paris negotiations that ultimately provided a face-saving means to get the United States out of a costly war in Vietnam.

Nixon's daughters, Tricia Nixon Cox and Julie Nixon Eisenhower, said their father and Kissinger enjoyed "a partnership that produced a generation of peace for our nation."

"Dr. Kissinger played an important role in the historic opening to the People's Republic of China and in advancing détente with the Soviet Union, bold initiatives which initiated the beginning of the end of the Cold War," the Nixon daughters said in a statement. "His 'shuttle diplomacy' to the Middle East helped to advance the relaxation of tensions in that troubled region of the world," the Nixon daughters said in a statement.

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair said he was "in awe" of Kissinger.

"Of course, like anyone who has confronted the most difficult problems of international politics, he was criticized at times, even denounced," Blair said. But I believe he was always motivated not from a coarse 'realpolitik,' but from a genuine love of the free world and the need to protect it. He was a problem solver, whether in respect of the Cold War, the Middle East or China and its rise."

Israeli President Isaac Herzog said as he met U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Tel Aviv that Kissinger "laid the cornerstone of the peace agreement, which (was) later signed with Egypt, and so many other processes around the world I admire."

Blinken said Kissinger "really set the standard for everyone who followed in this job" and that he was "very privileged to get his counsel many times, including as recently as about a month ago."

"Few people were better students of history," he said. "Even fewer people did more to shape history than Henry Kissinger."

Russian President Vladimir Putin said in a message to Kissinger's wife that he was "a wise and far-sighted statesman" and his name "is inextricably linked with a pragmatic foreign policy line, which at one time made it possible to achieve detente in international tensions and reach the most important Soviet-American agreements that contributed to the strengthening of global security."

French President Emmanuel Macron wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, that "Henry Kissinger was a giant of history. His century of ideas and of diplomacy had a lasting influence on his time and on our world."

Leaders of Kissinger's native Germany paid tribute to the former diplomat, a Jew who fled Nazi rule with his family in his teens.

"His commitment to the transatlantic friendship between the USA and Germany was significant, and he always remained close to his German homeland," Chancellor Olaf Scholz wrote on X.

In a message of condolences to Kissinger's family, President Frank-Walter Steinmeier wrote that "with his détente and disarmament policy, Henry Kissinger laid the foundation for the end of the Cold War and the democratic transition in eastern Europe" which led to Germany's reunification.

## Japan suspends its Osprey flights after the fatal crash of a US Air Force aircraft

By MARI YAMAGUCHI and TARA COPP Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan suspended flights by its Osprey aircraft Thursday, officials said, the day after a U.S. Air Force Osprey based in Japan crashed into the sea during a training mission.

Tokyo has also asked the U.S. military to ground all Ospreys operating in Japan except for those searching for victims of the crash.

A senior Defense Ministry official, Taro Yamato, told a parliamentary hearing that Japan has suspended flights of Ospreys beginning Thursday until details of the crash and safety are confirmed.

The U.S.-made Osprey is a hybrid aircraft that takes off and lands like a helicopter but can rotate its



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propellers forward and cruise much faster, like an airplane, during flight.

Ministry officials said a planned training flight Thursday at the Metabaru army camp in the Saga prefecture in southern Japan was canceled as part of the grounding of all 14 Japanese-owned Ospreys deployed at Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force bases.

Japan also asked the U.S. military to fly Ospreys deployed in Japan only after "their safety is confirmed," except for the purpose of joining the ongoing search and rescue operations at the crash site, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters. One U.S. Osprey has joined the rescue operation since the crash, Japanese defense officials said.

The U.S. Osprey crashed Wednesday off Japan's southern coast, killing at least one of the eight crew members. The cause of the crash and the status of the seven others on board were not immediately known.

The coast guard, as well as Japanese troops, searched through the night, and on Thursday the coast guard started using sonar to search underwater for the broken aircraft that might have sunk to the sea bottom, at a depth of about 30 meters (100 feet).

Ospreys have had a number of crashes, including in Japan, where they are used at U.S. and Japanese military bases. In Okinawa, where about half of the 50,000 American troops are based, Gov. Denny Tamaki had said he would ask the U.S. military to suspend all Osprey flights in Japan.

Japanese coast guard spokesperson Kazuo Ogawa said the coast guard received an emergency call Wednesday afternoon from a fishing boat near the crash site off Yakushima, an island south of Kagoshima on the southern main island of Kyushu.

Coast guard aircraft and patrol boats found one male crew member, who was later pronounced dead by a doctor, Ogawa said. They also found debris believed to be from the aircraft and an empty inflatable life raft about 1 kilometer (half a mile) off the eastern coast of Yakushima, he said.

NHK public television and other news outlets reported that the aircraft had requested an emergency landing at the Yakushima airport about five minutes before it was lost from radar.

NHK quoted a Yakushima resident as saying he saw the aircraft turn upside down, with fire coming from one of its engines, and then an explosion before it fell into the sea.

Defense Ministry officials on Thursday refused to confirm the sequence of events or witness account, citing discussions with the U.S. side.

U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command said the CV-22B Osprey was from Yokota Air Base and assigned to the 353rd Special Operations Wing.

Ogawa said the aircraft had departed from the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in Yamaguchi prefecture and crashed on its way to Kadena Air Base on Okinawa.

Yokota Air Base is home to U.S. Forces Japan and the Fifth Air Force. Six CV-22 Ospreys have been deployed at Yokota, including the one that crashed.

Last year, Air Force Special Operations Command ordered a temporary stand-down of its Osprey fleet following back-to-back safety incidents where the Osprey clutch slipped, causing an uneven distribution of power to its rotors.

The Marine Corps and Navy have reported similar clutch slips, and each service has worked to address the issue in their aircraft, however clutch failure was also cited in a 2022 fatal U.S. Marine Corps Osprey crash that killed five.

According to the investigation of that crash, "dual hard clutch engagement" led to engine failure.

Separately, a U.S. Marine Corps Osprey with 23 Marines aboard crashed on a northern Australian island in August, killing three Marines and critically injuring at least five others who were taking part in a multinational training exercise.

## **A friendship forged over 7 weeks of captivity lives on as freed women are reunited**

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — In the depths of captivity, they formed an unlikely but prized friendship. And reunited in a video call this week, the bond between a recently freed Israeli mother and daughter and a Thai woman who had been held hostage alongside them filled an Israeli hospital room with unbridled joy.

"Both of us give you a big hug," Danielle Aloni, one of dozens snatched by Hamas militants from a kibbutz in southern Israel on Oct. 7, told her friend Nutthawaree Munkan, an agricultural worker who was seized the same day and held captive in the Gaza Strip. "I love you and I told you while we were there that we are family."

Aloni, 45, spoke in Hebrew in a five minute video of the Wednesday meeting released by Israel's Foreign Ministry. Nutthawaree, speaking from the hospital, replied in Thai — and with a flurry of air kisses and a wide smile that required no translation at all.

With her partner — another freed captive — looking on and a Thai-speaking Israeli psychologist assisting with the conversation, Nutthawaree waved at the screen as Aloni's 5-year-old daughter, Emilia, sang to her. Nutthawaree, holding a small Israeli flag, counted to 10 on her fingers as Emilia recited her numbers in the Thai that Nutthawaree had taught her during the seven weeks they spent as hostages.

It was not clear where Aloni and her daughter were speaking from, but they had already been discharged from the hospital and had returned to their home.

When Hamas militants stormed into Israeli villages and towns just across the Gaza border, Aloni and her daughter were visiting her sister's family at a kibbutz, Nir Oz. A quarter of the community's 400 residents were either kidnapped or killed.

In all, some 1,200 Israelis were killed and about 240 hostages were taken to Gaza. Nearly 40 Thai agricultural workers were slain and another three dozen were kidnapped.

According to the Israeli daily Haaretz, Nutthawaree, 35, came to Israel in search of employment. While working on a farm in the community of Mivtachim, she met her partner, Bunthom Phankong. Both were taken captive on Oct. 7.

The Thai hostages are being released in conjunction with the cease-fire deal between Israel and Hamas that has seen Israelis traded for Palestinian prisoners.

Nutthawaree, Bunthom, Aloni and her daughter were all released on Friday, the first day of the truce. Details of their time in captivity were not available and it was not clear if Nutthawaree and the Alonis spent the entire time together.

But on Wednesday, for a few minutes at least, the trauma of their shared ordeal was set aside.

"At the first opportunity, we will come to Thailand. What joy to see her like this," Danielle Aloni said as psychologist Daniel Porat translated her words into Thai.

"She says that you are also beautiful and Emilia is beautiful," the psychologist told Aloni on Nutthawaree's behalf. "She misses you a lot."

## **Truce in Gaza extended at last minute as talks over remaining Hamas captives get tougher**

By MELANIE LIDMAN, NAJIB JOBAIN and KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel and Hamas on Thursday agreed to extend their cease-fire by another day, just minutes before it was set to expire. The truce in Gaza appeared increasingly tenuous as most women and children held by the militants have already been released in swaps for Palestinian prisoners.

As word of the extension came Thursday morning, gunmen opened fire on people waiting for buses where a main highway from Tel Aviv enters Jerusalem, killing at least three people and wounding several others, according to police.

Police said the two attackers were killed. It was unclear if the attack was carried out by a Palestinian

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militant group or individuals acting on their own, or if it would have any impact on the truce in Gaza.

International pressure has mounted for the cease-fire to continue as long as possible after nearly eight weeks of Israeli bombardment and a ground campaign in Gaza that have killed thousands of Palestinians, uprooted three quarters of the population of 2.3 million and led to a humanitarian crisis.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who is on his third visit to the region since the start of the war, said "my heart goes out" to the victims of the Jerusalem attack. Blinken is expected to press for further extensions of the truce and the release of more hostages.

"This process is producing results. It's important, and we hope that it can continue," he said.

Qatar, which has played a key role in mediating with Hamas, said the truce was being extended under the same terms as in the past, with Hamas releasing 10 Israeli hostages per day in exchange for Israel's release of 30 Palestinian prisoners.

The announcement followed a last-minute standoff, with Hamas saying Israel had rejected a proposed list that included seven living captives and the remains of three who the group said were killed in Israeli airstrikes. Israel later said Hamas submitted an improved list, paving the way for the extension.

The talks appear to be growing tougher, with Hamas having already freed most of the women and children captured during the deadly Oct. 7 attack on Israel that triggered the war. The militants are expected to make greater demands in return for freeing men and soldiers.

Israel says it will maintain the truce until Hamas stops releasing captives, at which point it will resume its offensive aimed at eliminating the group. With Israeli troops holding much of northern Gaza, a ground invasion south — where most of Gaza's population is now concentrated — will likely bring an escalating cost in Palestinian lives and destruction.

The Biden administration has told Israel that if it launches an offensive in the south, it must operate with far greater precision.

## INCREASINGLY TENSE HOSTAGE TALKS

The plight of the captives and shock from Hamas' Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel have galvanized Israeli support for the war. But Netanyahu is under pressure to bring the hostages home and could find it difficult to resume the offensive if there's a prospect of more releases.

The initial truce, which began on Friday and had already been extended once, calls for the release of women and children. Israeli officials say Gaza militants still hold around 20 women, who would all be released in a few days if the swaps continue at the current rate.

After that, keeping the truce going depends on tougher negotiations over the release of around 126 men Israel says are held captive, including several dozen soldiers.

For men — and especially soldiers — Hamas is expected to push for comparable releases of Palestinian men or prominent detainees, a deal Israel may resist.

So far, most Palestinians released have been teenagers accused of throwing stones and firebombs during confrontations with Israeli forces. Several were women convicted by Israeli military courts of attempting to attack soldiers. Palestinians have celebrated the release of people they see as having resisted Israel's decades-long military occupation of lands they want for a future state.

An Israeli official involved in hostage negotiations said talks on a further extension for release of civilian males and soldiers were still preliminary, and that a deal would not be considered until all the women and children are out. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because negotiations were ongoing.

With Wednesday's releases, a total of 73 Israelis, including dual nationals, have been freed during the six-day truce, most of whom appear physically well but shaken. Another 24 hostages — 23 Thais and one Filipino — have also been released. Before the cease-fire, Hamas released four hostages, and the Israeli army rescued one. Two others were found dead in Gaza.

Hamas and other Palestinian militants killed over 1,200 people in the Oct. 7 attack, mostly civilians, and captured around 240.

Israel's bombardment and ground invasion in Gaza have killed more than 13,300 Palestinians, roughly two-thirds of them women and minors, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza, which does

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not differentiate between civilians and combatants.

The toll is likely much higher, as officials have only sporadically updated the count since Nov. 11 due to the breakdown of services in the north. The ministry says thousands more people are missing and feared dead under the rubble.

Israel says 77 of its soldiers have been killed in the ground offensive. It claims to have killed thousands of militants, without providing evidence.

## IN GAZA, AN ANXIOUS RESPITE

For Palestinians in Gaza, the truce's calm has been overwhelmed by the search for aid and by horror at the extent of destruction.

In the north, residents described entire residential blocks as leveled in Gaza City and surrounding areas. The smell of decomposing bodies trapped under collapsed buildings fills the air, said Mohammed Mattar, a 29-year-old resident of Gaza City who along with other volunteers searches for the dead under rubble or left in the streets.

In the south, the truce has allowed more aid to be delivered from Egypt, up to 200 trucks a day. But aid officials say it is not enough, given that most now depend on outside aid. Overwhelmed U.N.-run shelters house over 1 million displaced people, with many sleeping outside in cold, rainy weather.

At a distribution center in Rafah, large crowds line up daily for bags of flour but supplies run out quickly. "Every day, we come here ... we spend money on transportation to get here, just to go home with nothing," said one woman in line, Nawal Abu Namous.

## Truce in Israel-Hamas war extended by a day, minutes before it was set to expire

By WAFAA SHURAF, JACK JEFFERY and MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel and Hamas on Thursday agreed to extend a temporary truce by another day minutes before it was set to expire, said Qatar, which has been mediating between the two sides.

Negotiations on extending it came down to the wire, with last-minute disagreements over the hostages to be freed by Hamas in exchange for another day of a halt in fighting.

Word of the extension came just as the truce was to expire at 7 a.m. (0500 GMT) Thursday. The Qatari Foreign Ministry said the truce was being extended under the same terms as in the past, under which Hamas has released 10 Israeli hostages per day in exchange for the release of 30 Palestinian prisoners.

The announcement followed a last-minute standoff earlier Thursday, with Hamas saying Israel had rejected a proposed list that included seven living captives and the remains of three who the group said were killed in previous Israeli airstrikes. Israel later said Hamas submitted an improved list, paving the way for the extension.

Negotiators had been working into Thursday to hammer out details for a further extension of the truce. The expectation had been to extend the pause in fighting for at least another day or two, with the focus on releasing women and children.

The talks appear to be growing tougher as most of the women and children held by Hamas are freed, as the militants are expected to seek greater releases in return for freeing men and soldiers.

International pressure has mounted for the cease-fire to continue as long as possible after nearly eight weeks of Israeli bombardment and a ground campaign in Gaza that has killed thousands of Palestinians, uprooted three quarters of the population of 2.3 million and led to a humanitarian crisis. Israel has welcomed the release of dozens of hostages in recent days and says it will maintain the truce if Hamas keeps freeing captives.

Still, Netanyahu underscored on Wednesday that Israel will resume its campaign to eliminate Hamas, which has ruled Gaza for 16 years and orchestrated the deadly attack on Israel that triggered the war.

"After this phase of returning our abductees is exhausted, will Israel return to fighting? So my answer is an unequivocal yes," he said. "There is no way we are not going back to fighting until the end."

He spoke ahead of a visit to the region by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to press for further

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extensions of the truce and hostage releases. Blinken arrived in Israel late Wednesday.

So far, the Israeli onslaught in Gaza seems to have had little effect on Hamas' rule, evidenced by its ability to conduct complex negotiations, enforce the cease-fire among other armed groups, and orchestrate the release of hostages. Hamas leaders, including Yehya Sinwar, have likely relocated to the south.

With Israeli troops holding much of northern Gaza, a ground invasion south will likely bring an escalating cost in Palestinian lives and destruction.

Most of Gaza's population is now crammed into the south. The truce has brought them relief from bombardment, but the days of calm have been taken up in a frenzied rush to obtain supplies to feed their families as aid enters in greater, but still insufficient, amounts.

The United States, Israel's main ally, has shown greater reticence over the impact of the war in Gaza. The Biden administration has told Israel that if it launches an offensive in the south, it must operate with far greater precision.

Late Wednesday, the Israeli military said a group of 10 Israeli women and children and four Thai nationals were returned to Israel and taken to hospitals to be reunited with their families. Two Russian-Israeli women were freed by Hamas in a separate release.

Hours later, Israel freed more Palestinian prisoners, expected to number 30 under the terms of the truce deal.

In the West Bank, Israeli troops killed two Palestinian boys — an 8-year-old and a 15-year-old — during a raid on the town of Jenin, Palestinian health officials said. Security footage showed a group of boys in the street who start to run, except for one who falls to the ground, bleeding.

The Israeli military said its troops fired on people who threw explosives at them but did not specify if it was referring to the boys, who are not seen throwing anything. Separately, the military said its troops killed two Islamic Jihad militants during the raid.

## ISRAEL'S HOSTAGE DILEMMA

The plight of the captives and shock from Hamas' Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel have galvanized Israeli support for the war. But Netanyahu is under pressure to bring the hostages home and could find it difficult to resume the offensive if there's a prospect for more releases.

Since the initial truce began on Friday, both sides have been releasing women and children. Israeli officials say Gaza militants still hold around 20 women, who would all be released in a few days if the swaps continue at the current rate.

After that, keeping the truce going depends on tougher negotiations over the release of around 126 men Israel says are held captive, including several dozen soldiers.

For men — and especially soldiers — Hamas is expected to push for comparable releases of Palestinian men or prominent detainees, a deal Israel may resist.

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Hamas kidnapped some 240 people during the attack on southern Israel that began the war, including babies, children, women, soldiers, older adults and Thai farm laborers. It killed over 1,200 people in the Oct. 7 attack, mostly civilians.

Israel's bombardment and ground invasion in Gaza have killed more than 13,300 Palestinians, roughly two-thirds of them women and minors, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza, which does not differentiate between civilians and combatants.

The toll is likely much higher, as officials have only sporadically updated the count since Nov. 11 due to the breakdown of services in the north. The ministry says thousands more people are missing and feared

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dead under the rubble.

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## PALESTINIANS WELCOME FREED PRISONERS

In the West Bank city of Ramallah, a crowd gathered before dawn Thursday to receive the latest group of freed prisoners.

Most prominent among them was Ahed Tamimi, a 22-year-old activist who gained worldwide fame in 2017 after a video of her slapping an Israeli soldier went viral on social media.

Israeli troops arrested her on Nov. 6 at her West Bank home for "incitement to terrorism" on her Instagram account. Her mother said Tamimi's account had been hacked.

As soon as she got off the Red Cross bus, Tamimi was surrounded by a crowd of supporters and family members. A woman stopping Tamimi to kiss her and pushes her curly mane of hair aside her face.

"I want you to show them your beautiful face. I want you to be strong," the woman is heard saying.

"Of course, I am always strong," Tamimi responded.

Tamimi was then whisked away by relatives in a family car toward her home in the West Bank village of Nabi Saleh.

So far, most Palestinians released have been teenagers accused of throwing stones and firebombs during confrontations with Israeli forces. Several were women convicted by Israeli military courts of attempting to attack soldiers. Under the truce deal, three prisoners were released for every Israeli hostage.

Palestinians have celebrated the release of people they see as having resisted Israel's decades-long military occupation of lands they want for a future state.

## TENSE CALM IN GAZA

For Palestinians in Gaza, the truce's calm has been overwhelmed by the search for aid and by horror at the extent of destruction.

In the north, residents described entire residential blocks as leveled in Gaza City and surrounding areas. The smell of decomposing bodies trapped under collapsed buildings fills the air, said Mohammed Mattar, a 29-year-old resident of Gaza City who along with other volunteers searches for the dead under rubble or left in the streets.

In the south, the truce has allowed more aid to be delivered from Egypt, up to 200 trucks a day. But aid officials say it is not enough, given that most now depend on outside aid. Overwhelmed U.N.-run shelters house over 1 million displaced people, with many sleeping outside in cold, rainy weather.

At a distribution center in Rafah, large crowds line up daily for bags of flour but supplies run out quickly. "Every day, we come here ... we spend money on transportation to get here, just to go home with nothing," said one woman in line, Nawal Abu Namous.

The head of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said some 111,000 people have respiratory infections and 75,000 have diarrhea, more than half of them under 5 years old.

"We want this war to stop," said Omar al-Darawi, who works at the overwhelmed Al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital in central Gaza.

## South Koreans want their own nukes. That could roil one of the world's most dangerous regions

By FOSTER KLUG Associated Press

CHEORWON, South Korea (AP) — To the steady rat-tat-tat of machine guns and exploding bursts of smoke, amphibious tanks slice across a lake not far from the big green mountains that stand along the world's most heavily armed border.

Dozens of South Korean and U.S. combat engineers build a pontoon bridge to ferry tanks and armored vehicles across the water, all within easy range of North Korean artillery.

For seven decades, the allies have staged annual drills like this recent one to deter aggression from North Korea, whose 1950 surprise invasion of South Korea started a war that has technically yet to end.

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The alliance with the United States has allowed South Korea to build a powerful democracy, its citizens confident that Washington would protect them if Pyongyang ever acted on its dream of unifying the Korean Peninsula under its own rule.

Until now.

With dozens of nukes in North Korea's burgeoning arsenal, repeated threats to launch them at its enemies, and a stream of tests of powerful missiles designed to pinpoint target a U.S. city with a nuclear strike, a growing number of South Koreans are losing faith in America's vow to back its longtime ally.

The fear is this: That a U.S. president would hesitate to use nuclear weapons to defend the South from a North Korean attack knowing that Pyongyang could kill millions of Americans with atomic retaliation.

Frequent polls show a strong majority of South Koreans — between 70% and 80% in some surveys — support their nation acquiring atomic weapons or urging Washington to bring back the tactical nuclear weapons it removed from the South in the early 1990s.

It reflects a surprising erosion of trust between nations that like to call their alliance an unshakable cornerstone of America's military presence in the region.

"I think one day they can abandon us and go their own way if that better serves their national interests," Kim Bang-rak, a 76-year-old security guard in Seoul, said of the United States. "If North Korea bombs us, we should bomb them equally in retaliation, so it would be better for us to have nukes."

Underscoring those fears: Just hours before the U.S.-South Korean tank drills began in Cheorwon, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw two ballistic missile test launches meant to simulate "scorched earth" nuclear strikes on South Korean command centers and airfields.

At the heart of South Korean unease is a broader debate over who gets to have nuclear weapons, a question that has anguished nations since two U.S. nuclear bombs flattened Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

The sharp rise in support for South Korean nuclear weapons is not occurring in a vacuum. Nonproliferation experts say a vibrant global nuclear arms race shows little sign of slowing.

Nine countries — the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel — spent nearly \$83 billion in 2022 on nuclear weapons, according to a recent report by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. That's an increase of \$2.5 billion from 2021, with the United States alone spending \$43.7 billion.

How South Korea deals with the nuclear question could have major implications for Asia's future, potentially jeopardizing the U.S.-South Korean alliance and threatening a delicate nuclear balance that has so far kept an uneasy peace in a dangerous region.

Ironclad. That's how the United States has long described its commitment to South Korea should a war begin. U.S. officials are adamant that any attack on Seoul by North Korea's 1.2 million-member military would be met with an overwhelming response.

The United States, bound by treaty to defend Seoul and Tokyo, stations 28,500 troops in South Korea and another 56,000 in Japan. Tens of thousands of Americans live in greater Seoul, a sprawling area of 24 million people about an hour's drive from the inter-Korean border.

"The ironclad commitment is not just words; it's a reality. We've got thousands of troops right there," Gen. Mark Milley, who was then the top U.S. military officer, recently told reporters in Tokyo. An attack, said the now-retired Milley, "would spell the end of North Korea."

Asked about the South Korean public's support for creating its own nuclear force, Milley said, "The United States would prefer nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. We think they're inherently dangerous, obviously. And we have extended our nuclear umbrella to both Japan and South Korea."

South Korean Defense Minister Shin Wonsik said recently that he and his U.S. counterpart signed a document in which Washington agreed to mobilize its full range of military capabilities, including nuclear, to defend the South from a North Korean nuclear attack.

Many in Seoul, however, would prefer nuclear weapons of their own.

North Korea's only advantage over the South's high-tech military is nuclear bombs, Kim Taeil, a recent

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university graduate, said in an interview.

"So if South Korea gets nuclear weapons, we'll secure an advantageous position where North Korea can't rival us."

While the idea of South Korea pursuing its own nukes has been around for decades, it was rarely mentioned in public by senior government officials. That changed in January when conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol said that his nation could "acquire our own nukes if the situation gets worse."

"It would not take long," he said, while also raising the possibility of requesting that the United States reintroduce nuclear weapons into South Korea.

At an April summit in Washington, Yoon and President Joe Biden took steps to address such South Korean worries. The result was the Washington Declaration, in which Seoul pledged to remain in the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a nonnuclear weapons state, and the United States said it would strengthen consultations on nuclear planning with its ally. It also said it would send more nuclear assets to the Korean Peninsula as a show of force.

Not long after the meeting, the USS Kentucky became the first nuclear-armed U.S. submarine to visit South Korea since the 1980s.

Opponents of South Korea obtaining nuclear weapons said they hope the declaration will reassure a nervous public.

"No one can tell 100% for sure" whether a U.S. president would order nuclear strikes to defend Seoul if it meant the destruction of an American city, Wi Sung-lac, a former South Korean nuclear envoy, said in an interview at his Seoul office.

That's why the greater consultations called for between the allies in the Washington Declaration are needed to "manage the situation (so) we can tone down public anger and frustration," he said.

Part of the worry in Seoul can be traced to the presidency of Donald Trump — and to his possible reelection in 2024.

Trump, as president, repeatedly suggested that the alliance, far from "ironclad," was transactional. Even as he sought closer ties with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, Trump demanded South Korea pay billions more to keep American troops on its soil and questioned the need for U.S. military exercises with South Korea, calling them "very provocative" and "tremendously expensive."

"No matter how strong of a security commitment President Biden makes now, if someone who espouses isolationism and an America-first policy becomes the next U.S. president, Biden's current commitment can become a mere scrap of paper overnight," Cheong Seong-Chang, an analyst at the private Sejong Institute in South Korea, said in an interview.

South Korean support for nuclear bombs can also be linked to North Korea's extraordinary weapons advancements and to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

North Korea first tested an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the U.S. mainland in 2017. While the North is still working to overcome technological hurdles with its ICBMs, the weapons have fundamentally changed the region's security calculus.

One of the poorest countries on Earth, North Korea may now have an arsenal of 60 nuclear weapons and has declared that it is deploying "tactical" missiles along the Korean border, implying its intent to arm them with lower-yield nuclear weapons.

While the Koreas have avoided major conflict since the end of the Korean War in 1953, deadly skirmishes and attacks in recent years have killed dozens.

If future violence escalates, some observers believe that North Korea, outmatched by U.S. and South Korean firepower and fearing for the safety of its leadership, could resort to using a tactical nuclear bomb.

"There is probably no conventional-only scenario in Korea anymore," according to Robert Kelly, a political science professor at Pusan National University in the South. "North Korea would rapidly lose a conventional conflict. Pyongyang knows this, dramatically raising the likelihood it will use nuclear weapons first, at least tactically."



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Russia's war against Ukraine may also be showing South Koreans that even friendly nations may hesitate to fully help a country battling a nuclear-armed enemy. Kim's visit earlier this year to Russia, where he met President Vladimir Putin and toured weapons facilities, has raised fears that North Korea could receive technology that would boost its nuclear program.

"We absolutely need nuclear weapons. Basically, peace can be maintained only when we have equal power to (our enemy's)," Kim Joung-hyun, a 46-year-old office worker in Seoul, said. "If you look at the Russian-Ukraine war, Ukraine can't handle the Russian invasion on its own, other than begging for weapons from other countries."

Opponents of a nuclear-armed South Korea point out that the strong public support for nukes likely doesn't calculate the high costs, nor the damage to ties with ally Washington and to crucial trade with neighbor China. Seoul going nuclear could lead to sanctions targeting South Korea's export-dependent economy.

There's also concern it could encourage sometimes-rival Tokyo to consider developing its own atomic weapons program.

Some are pushing for a less drastic solution to South Korea's unique security worries.

"We don't have other options except inviting American tactical nukes to the Korean Peninsula," Cheon Seong-whun, a former presidential adviser to a past conservative government, said in an interview. This, he said, would allow South Korea to use those weapons if North Korea uses its tactical nukes, but wouldn't harm the alliance with Washington.

John Bolton, Trump's national security adviser from 2018 to 2019, has written that redeploying U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea would also "buy valuable time for Seoul and Washington to evaluate fully the implications of South Korea becoming a nuclear-weapons state."

The Washington Declaration and follow-up high-level meetings between the allies have reassured many in Seoul, according to Richard Lawless, a former senior U.S. State Department and Central Intelligence Agency official dealing with nuclear proliferation in Asia.

"The (South Korean) nuclear option genie is not yet back in the bottle, but it is being successfully contained," he told The Associated Press via email.

Still, Lawless said, there remains "the deeply felt conviction among some senior politicians and among many in the populace" that the only real way to deter nuclear-armed North Korea is for South Korea to have its own nuclear weapons capability. "That concern is now mostly below the waves, but it remains and would be awakened with some passion."

However the debate ends up, many in Seoul, on all sides of the issue, share another strong conviction.

"There's a 100% certainty that the North Korean threat will grow," said Cheon, the former presidential adviser. "North Korea will definitely not stay silent."

## **Haley and DeSantis are relying more on outside campaign groups with time running out to stop Trump**

By STEVE PEOPLES, THOMAS BEAUMONT and HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley are increasingly outsourcing central parts of their campaigns, drawing on the growing urgency of Donald Trump opponents to find a single alternative to the former president.

Struggling to energize his campaign, DeSantis this week privately encouraged his donor network to support a newly formed super PAC that's taking over advertising responsibilities. That's after a leadership shakeup at the pro-DeSantis super PAC that for months has been handling the bulk of both his advertising and his get-out-the-vote operation.

At the same time, Haley's self-described "scrappy" political campaign, which has never enjoyed the same level of funding or manpower as DeSantis' operation, won the support of the the Koch network, the largest conservative grassroots organization in the nation. By week's end, scores of Koch-backed activists

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are expected to begin advocating on Haley's behalf at the doorsteps of tens of thousands of Republican primary voters.

The extraordinary reliance on independent groups for the two Republicans who increasingly appear to be Trump's closest challengers is testing the practical and legal limits of modern-day presidential campaigns. And with less than two months before the Iowa caucuses, neither candidate has shown the ability to disrupt Trump as he appears on a glide path to another presidential nomination.

"Personally, I'd rather see that all of this is put together under a campaign so that the candidate has responsibility for everything. But this is just the way the game is played today," said Bob Vander Plaats, a well-known Iowa evangelical leader who has endorsed DeSantis. "If that's the way you get your big money in, that's the way you get your big money in."

DeSantis has relied on outside support perhaps more than any major candidate since the U.S. Supreme Court in 2010 paved the way for super PACs, which are committees that can raise unlimited amounts of money without having to disclose their donors. Federal law prohibits candidates and their formal campaigns from coordinating directly with super PACs.

DeSantis publicly committed to visiting all of Iowa's 99 counties, a traditional measure of commitment to the first state in the GOP calendar.

Never Back Down, the original super PAC supporting him, followed suit. While DeSantis will visit Jasper County — his 99th — with a campaign event Saturday, Never Back Down has chauffeured him to 92 of the other counties, according to the super PAC's schedule.

The super PAC has also paid for the bulk of his TV ads and almost all of his organizing. And as DeSantis has struggled to meet initial expectations and fallen in national polls, both the campaign and Never Back Down have overhauled their strategies without DeSantis being able to direct all of the resources supporting him.

During the first week of August, DeSantis traveled to more than a dozen Iowa counties on the bus chartered by Never Back Down with the super PAC's top tactician, David Polyansky, on board. They traveled together for hours over the course of three days covering more than 200 miles.

On Aug. 8, the DeSantis campaign announced a staff shakeup, replacing its campaign manager and hiring Polyansky from the super PAC to serve as deputy campaign manager. Polyansky is an Iowa campaign veteran who has worked on several presidential campaigns in the state.

DeSantis spokesman Andrew Romeo said it was "totally false" to assert that DeSantis coordinated any campaign strategy with the super PAC.

In the memo to donors this week, DeSantis' campaign manager James Uthmeier promoted both Never Back Down and a new pro-DeSantis super PAC, Fight Right, noting that 100% of Fight Right's proceeds would be spent on television advertising.

"As Donald Trump and Nikki Haley work side-by-side spending tens of millions of dollars to attack Ron DeSantis, Fight Right's emergence provides welcomed air support," Uthmeier wrote in the memo obtained by The Associated Press. "In the final push for the Iowa Caucus victory, this campaign will proudly fight alongside NBD's impressive ground game, and Fight Right's television team, to show the people of Iowa that this is a time for choosing, and Ron DeSantis is the candidate that can WIN!"

Such language may not technically violate campaign finance laws that prevent direct coordination, but they may violate their common sense interpretation, said Shanna Ports, an attorney with the Campaign Legal Center, a Washington-based nonpartisan watchdog group.

"When we see this kind of activity, there are some alarm bells that go off," Ports said. "This does blur the lines between the campaign and the super PACs, particularly when you see super PACs taking on traditional campaign functions."

Haley, too, is leaning heavily on outside groups to run traditional campaign functions — particularly her door-to-door canvassing operation, which is critical in Iowa and New Hampshire.

Haley's team privately acknowledges that they need help on the ground in early primary states, where DeSantis and Trump have much larger operations. It also remains unclear whether she has the funding

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to challenge Trump or DeSantis should the nomination fight go deep into the spring.

The Haley campaign announced last month that it was planning to invest \$10 million in a massive advertising campaign across Iowa and New Hampshire. As of Wednesday night, the Haley campaign has reserved just \$4.7 million in advertising, according to AdImpact, a media tracking firm.

When asked about the discrepancy, spokesperson Nachama Soloveichik said the full \$10 million investment "will come."

The Koch network's support could fill in some of the campaign's gaps.

Just days after their endorsement, the Kochs have already begun initial conversations with the pro-Haley super PAC known as the SFA Fund on how best to coordinate their efforts. While campaigns and outside groups cannot coordinate legally, outside groups can coordinate amongst each other.

In a conference call this week, the Koch network's political lieutenant, Emily Seidel, outlined plans to boost Haley's primary and general election prospects with strategic advertising investments, mailers and voter contacts through the group's network of thousands of conservative activists. Meanwhile, the pro-Haley SFA Fund is focusing largely on television ads.

Americans for Prosperity, the Kochs' political arm, has 10 full-time staffers in Iowa and a much larger network of volunteers, according to state director Drew Klein. He said he expects teams of roughly 100 activists to be knocking doors on Haley's behalf by the end of the week.

Just six weeks before the first primary votes are cast, Trump's foes acknowledge they are running out of time. For now, Haley appears to be winning new interest from donors and voters open to a Trump alternative.

She drew the largest crowd of her campaign Monday with about 2,500 people at a town hall in her native South Carolina. On Wednesday, more than 100 people packed into a small taproom to see her in New Hampshire, some straining around rustic wood posts and beams to catch a glimpse.

Haley, who spoke for roughly 40 minutes then took questions for less than 15, did not mention either her endorsement this week from Americans for Prosperity or her recent momentum in early-state polls.

When she opened by asking how many were seeing her for the first time, nearly every hand shot up. "Where have y'all been?" she quipped.

## A look at what to expect as latest UN climate talks get under way in oil-rich UAE

By JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The Middle East plays host to its second straight U.N. climate conference over the next two weeks, with countries hoping to agree on new ways to keep the planet from heating too much by the end of the century. Distractions abound, most notably war between Israel and Hamas.

Dubai in the United Arab Emirates will welcome thousands of attendees for the 28th "Conference of the Parties" of the U.N. climate conference from Thursday until Dec. 12, amid lingering doubt about how far the oil-rich country will go to help end a climate crisis driven largely by fossil fuel use.

Here's a look at the backdrop, stakes and challenges ahead at COP28.

### WHAT'S HAPPENED SINCE THE LAST ONE

The world has gotten hotter since last year's conference in Egypt. Some experts say 2023 is already the hottest year ever recorded. The northern hemisphere had record highs this summer, and Brazil — where it's not summer yet — this month saw all-time high heat and humidity.

"Practically the whole world is experiencing heat waves," said Petteri Taalas, the head of the U.N. weather agency, earlier this month.

Signs are growing that the world — especially developing countries — is increasingly ill-prepared: This year's monsoon season in India caused nearly \$1.5 billion in property damage. Tropical storm Daniel in September caused deadly floods in Libya. Last month, Hurricane Otis pummeled Mexico, raising fears that the government would spend more money to rebuild than to help people cope.

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Even if bouts of extreme cold return – like one currently in northern Europe – the overall trend lines point to growing average global temperatures.

## WHAT ARE THE STAKES OF THIS COP

Few experts and policymakers expect a big breakthrough this year.

Burning fossil fuels that sends carbon into the atmosphere remains the main cause of global warming, and production continues to grow. Climate campaigners say efforts to develop wind, solar and other alternative energies are not going fast enough.

The Paris climate accord of 2015 set a target to cap the rise of global temperatures at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) since the start of the industrial era – and the world is so far falling far short.

Many experts say to meet that target, production of carbon in the atmosphere must peak next year and drop by nearly half by 2030.

Western countries are among those promoting ambitions to triple capacity for renewable energies and double energy efficiency by that year. Advocacy groups say that's trimming around the edges and avoiding the main issue: Reducing the burning of coal, oil and gas.

One debate will be about "down" or "out": Whether countries agree to phase down use of fossil fuels, as some wish, or phase them out entirely – a lofty goal of climate campaigners that's unlikely to get serious consideration in the Gulf country.

Global warming has vast implications: It can upend local economies, worsen weather patterns, drive people to migrate, and cause havoc for Indigenous peoples who want to retain their traditional cultures, among many other impacts.

Another challenge in Dubai will be to drum up funds for poorer nations to prepare for, respond to, and cope with climate-related catastrophes. Last year, the creation of a "loss and damage fund" was a big achievement — but finding out how to fill it has been tricky.

## WHO'S COMING

King Charles join Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. climate czar John Kerry, and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz at what organizers say is the largest COP ever. Pope Francis had planned to attend but canceled on doctor's orders as he recovers from respiratory issues.

Sultan al-Jaber, the head of the Abu Dhabi national oil company who is presiding over COP28, will be scrutinized over his country's clear interest in oil and its calls for renewable-energy transition. Many want to know if oil-rich Gulf states will pony up more money to help developing countries adapt to climate change and switch to greener technologies.

Governments from developing nations want help to battle the fallout from warming that hits them especially hard and has arisen through no or little fault of their own.

Rich-world countries will try to score political points in the global community in an increasingly polarized world, whether by providing handouts or sharing know-how from their economic engines to needy nations – without forgetting their constituencies back home.

Climate campaigners want to hold those wealthy-nation decision-makers to account for any lofty but unfulfilled past pledges they made -- and press for greater ambitions to change the way we live from Tokyo to Tegucigalpa to Timbuktu.

## WHAT CHALLENGES AWAIT

Hopes at every COP run head-on into reality.

Like last year, when Russia's war in Ukraine weighed in the background of efforts to fight climate change, this year many eyes are elsewhere in the Middle East — on Israel's military campaign in Gaza after the devastating Hamas attack in Israel last month.

One challenge will be reviving attention on climate matters, which often fade after heat waves subside.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in recent days traveled to Antarctica to highlight concerns about melting ice. Many companies lean into COP28: U.S. agribusiness company Cargill, for example, announced this week an "accelerated commitment" to end deforestation — critics said it hadn't done enough — in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay.

Developing countries want to benefit from the luxuries that the rich world has long enjoyed — often by

churning out huge amounts of carbon. Purchases of gas-guzzling SUVs and bigger cars are growing across the globe, even as electric vehicles make greater inroads.

Inflationary pressures that have driven up the cost of living in recent months have made purchases of cleaner — often costlier — technologies less attractive, and many consumers have demanded lower gasoline prices. Many countries continue to subsidize fuel costs to limit the pinch on pocketbooks.

## **Henry Kissinger was a trusted confidant to President Nixon until the bitter, bizarre end**

By NANCY BENAC Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — All these years later, the scene still is almost too bizarre to imagine: a tearful president and his perplexed aide, neither very religious, kneeling in prayer on the floor of a White House bedroom in the waning hours of a shattered presidency.

Until the embittered end, Henry Kissinger was one of the trusted few of a distrusting Richard Nixon. That trust, combined with Kissinger's intellectual heft and deft manipulation of power, made him a pivotal player in a tense period in American history, a giant of U.S. foreign policy and a fixture in international relations for decades to come.

The German-born diplomat who got the U.S. out of Vietnam after bloody, costly years of delay and into China in a sudden burst of secret diplomacy died Wednesday. He was 100.

With his brusque yet commanding public presence and behind-the-scenes maneuvers, Kissinger exerted extraordinary influence on global affairs under Presidents Nixon and Gerald Ford.

His power grew during the turmoil of Watergate, when the politically attuned diplomat took on a role akin to co-president to the discredited Nixon.

"No doubt my vanity was piqued," Kissinger later wrote of his expanding influence during Watergate. "But the dominant emotion was a premonition of catastrophe."

Ford, in awarding Kissinger the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977, called him a brilliant negotiator who "wielded America's great power with wisdom and compassion in the service of peace."

A Jew who fled Nazi Germany with his family in his teens and never lost his accent, Kissinger in his later years cultivated the reputation of respected elder statesman, giving speeches, offering advice to Republican and Democratic presidents alike and managing a lucrative global consulting business as he traveled the world.

He turned up in Donald Trump's White House on multiple occasions. Initially, he told "PBS NewsHour" last year, he had some sympathy with Trump's views about America's national interests. But he lost enthusiasm as Trump became "so centrally focused on one person" — himself — and turned issues into confrontations.

"At the end," he said, "for an American president to challenge the constitutional system and to try to overthrow the constitutional system is a grave matter. And I find no excuse for that."

Never without his detractors, Kissinger after he left government was dogged by critics who argued that he should be called to account for his policies on Southeast Asia and support of repressive regimes in Latin America. He had to think twice before traveling to certain countries to be sure that he would not be summoned by judges seeking to question him about Nixon-era actions.

For eight restless years — first as national security adviser, later as secretary of state, and for a time in the middle holding both titles — Kissinger ranged across the breadth of major foreign policy issues. He conducted the first "shuttle diplomacy" in the quest for Middle East peace. He used secret negotiations to restore ties between the United States and China, ending decades of isolation and mutual hostility.

He initiated the Paris talks that ultimately provided a face-saving means — a "decent interval," he called it — to get the United States out of Vietnam. Two years later, Saigon fell to the communists, leaving a bitter taste among former U.S. allies who blamed Nixon, Kissinger and Congress for abandoning them.

And he pursued a policy of detente with the Soviet Union that led to arms control agreements and raised the possibility that the tensions of the Cold War and its nuclear threat did not have to last forever.

Historian Robert Dallek, in a 2011 interview, singled out as Kissinger's signature achievement his work

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with Nixon to create "a culture of peace, a set of conditions that could reduce the prospect of nuclear war."

His failings, added Dallek, were that he was "too egotistical, too convinced of his own brilliance."

Kissinger was a practitioner of realpolitik — using diplomacy to achieve practical objectives rather than advance lofty ideals. Supporters said his pragmatic bent served U.S. interests; critics saw a Machiavellian approach that ran counter to democratic ideals.

He was faulted for authorizing telephone wiretaps of reporters and his own National Security Council staff to plug news leaks in Nixon's White House. He was denounced on college campuses for the bombing and allied invasion of Cambodia in April 1970, intended to destroy North Vietnamese supply lines to communist forces in South Vietnam.

That "incursion," as Nixon and Kissinger called it, was blamed by some for contributing to Cambodia's fall into the hands of Khmer Rouge insurgents, who later slaughtered some 2 million Cambodians.

Nixon sent mixed messages about Kissinger's influence.

Biographer Walter Isaacson wrote that Kissinger sputtered with rage after Nixon, in his 1977 interviews with David Frost, played down Kissinger's role. But when Nixon heard of Kissinger's displeasure, Isaacson wrote, the ex-president scrawled a conciliatory letter to Kissinger friend Susan Mary Alsop, saying that "without Henry's creative ideas and diplomatic skill, we would never have succeeded with our China initiative, the Soviet SALT I agreement, the Vietnam Peace Agreement and the progress toward reducing tensions in the Middle East."

Historian Stanley Kutler said in a 2011 interview that while Nixon ran his own foreign policy shop, "Henry Kissinger was always a willing accomplice and an enabler of the politicization of decisions in foreign policy. Certainly the decision on when and whether to end the war in Vietnam was done with a domestic political calculus in mind."

Kissinger, for his part, made it his mission to debunk what he referred to in 2007 as a "prevalent myth" — that he and Nixon had settled in 1972 for peace terms that had been available in 1969 and thus had needlessly prolonged the war at the cost of tens of thousands of American lives.

He insisted that the only way to speed up the withdrawal of U.S. troops "was to overthrow the government" of South Vietnam.

"That we weren't willing to do," he said at a 2010 forum on Vietnam at the State Department. "Was that a mistake? I don't think so."

But historian Jeffrey Kimball, who wrote "The Vietnam War Files: Uncovering the Secret History of Nixon-Era Strategy," concluded that Kissinger's record "is one of persisting in a deadlocked war for the sake of appearances — i.e. salvaging an elusive and false U.S. credibility."

Kissinger was pudgy and messy but incongruously acquired a reputation as a ladies' man in the staid Nixon administration. Kissinger, who divorced his first wife in 1964, called women "a diversion, a hobby." Hollywood executives were eager to set him up with starlets, whom Kissinger squired to premieres and showy restaurants, according to Isaacson. Jill St. John was a frequent companion. Others he dated included Shirley MacLaine, Marlo Thomas, Candice Bergen and Liv Ullmann.

In a poll of Playboy Club Bunnies in 1972, the man whom Newsweek dubbed "Super-K" finished first as "the man I would most like to go out on a date with."

Kissinger's explanation: "Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac."

Nixon at first found Kissinger's image as a swinger amusing, but later tired of it. Chief of staff H.R. Haldean in 1971 issued a memo stating that "in seating at State Dinners, the President feels that Henry should not always be put next to the most glamorous woman. ... It's starting to cause unfavorable talk that serves no useful purpose."

It turned out that Kissinger's real love interest was Nancy Maginnes, a tall, glamorous researcher for Nelson Rockefeller whom he dated for years before they married in 1974.

Gallup found he was the most admired man in America in 1972 and in 1973, the year he won the Nobel Prize with Le Duc Tho, North Vietnam's chief negotiator, for the accord under which America pulled out of South Vietnam. (Tho declined the award.)

And yet Kissinger was reviled by many Americans for his conduct of wartime diplomacy. When Columbia

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University proposed to give Kissinger a teaching post after he left government in 1977, the idea drew such strong protest among students and faculty that the job never materialized. He was still a lightning rod decades later: In 2015, an appearance by the 91-year-old Kissinger before the Senate Armed Services Committee was disrupted by protesters demanding his arrest for war crimes and calling out his actions in Southeast Asia, Chile and beyond.

Kissinger was smart, self-deprecating, a master at cultivating the right people. He also was arrogant, hot-tempered and manipulative.

His brother, Walter, was said to have been asked why he had no accent when Henry did. "Sometimes I listened," Walter replied.

Kissinger told colleagues at the White House he was the one person who kept Nixon, "that drunken lunatic," from doing things that would "blow up the world," according to Isaacson, who wrote the 1992 biography "Kissinger."

The two men shared an ambivalent personal relationship, Kissinger writing in his memoirs that "deep down one could never be certain that what one found so disturbing in Nixon might not also be a reflection of some suppressed flaw within oneself."

Ford, in a 2004 interview with The Washington Post published after his death in 2006, said Kissinger had "the thinnest skin of any public figure I ever knew." He said Kissinger routinely would threaten to resign after receiving critical press coverage, and Ford would literally have to hold his hand and tell him, "Now, Henry, you've got the nation's future in your hands and you can't leave us now."

"I often thought, maybe I should say: 'Okay, Henry. Goodbye,'" Ford said with a laugh.

"I think he was a super secretary of state," Ford added, "but Henry in his mind never made a mistake, so whatever policies there were that he implemented, in retrospect he would defend."

Kissinger wasn't one to anguish over past decisions.

In 2002, as protesters in London staged a demonstration against his appearance at a business convention there, Kissinger told the audience that "no one can say that he served in an administration that did not make mistakes. The decisions made in high office are usually 51-49 decisions so it is quite possible that mistakes were made."

At age 99, in the summer of 2022, he was still out on tour for his latest book on leadership. Asked in July by ABC's George Stephanopoulos whether he wished he could take back any of his decisions, Kissinger demurred, saying: "I've been thinking about these problems all my life. It's my hobby as well as my occupation. And so the recommendations I made were the best of which I was then capable."

Even then, he had mixed thoughts on Nixon's record, saying "his foreign policy has held up and he was quite effective in domestic policy" while allowing that the disgraced president had "permitted himself to be involved in a number of steps that were inappropriate for a president."

Nixon-era tapes and documents lay bare the calculations of Kissinger and others within the suspicious and secretive Nixon White House.

In a taped 1973 conversation, Kissinger, the first Jewish secretary of state, is dismissive of pleas to push the Soviet Union to allow Jews to emigrate.

"The emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union is not an objective of American foreign policy," Kissinger tells Nixon. "And if they put Jews into gas chambers in the Soviet Union, it is not an American concern. Maybe a humanitarian concern."

After the tape came out in December 2010, Kissinger released a statement saying his comments should be taken "in the context of the time," when Jewish emigration was dealt with separately from foreign policy.

Other documents confirmed Kissinger's and Nixon's support for the 1973 coup that deposed Chile's Marxist president and ushered in 17 years of dictatorship.

In one telephone exchange, Kissinger harrumphs that if the coup had happened "in the Eisenhower period we would be heroes." Nixon responds, "Well, we didn't — as you know — our hand doesn't show on this one though." Kissinger: "We didn't do it. I mean, we helped them."

In other declassified transcripts, Kissinger plays down concern over Chile's human rights record, even as the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet was torturing and killing thousands of opponents. Meeting with

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Chile's ambassador in September 1975, Kissinger joked that U.S. officials focusing on human rights violations had "a vocation for the ministry." And in a June 1976 meeting with Pinochet himself, Kissinger gently encouraged the dictator to release more prisoners while stressing that "we are sympathetic with what you are trying to do here."

Peter Kornbluh, author of "The Pinochet File," which summarized some of the more than 25,000 U.S. declassified documents, says the records related to Kissinger "paint a picture of a U.S. foreign policymaker for whom morality was not an issue."

Asked to describe his approach to foreign policy, Kissinger told The New York Times in 2011, "I try to understand, without pessimism or optimism, the world in which I find myself."

But he added: "When one has practiced diplomacy for much of one's adult life, one always runs the danger that one doesn't set the goals high enough. Others will have to judge that, but that's how I would define myself without a specific label. But there are certainly lots of people who are defining me, so there is no shortage of adjectives and even of epithets."

Heinz Alfred Kissinger was born in the Bavarian city of Fuerth on May 27, 1923, the son of a schoolteacher who lost his job because of anti-Jewish discrimination. Kissinger's family left Nazi Germany in 1938 and settled in a Jewish neighborhood in upper Manhattan, where Heinz changed his name to Henry.

The young Kissinger studied accounting in night school and worked days in a cousin's shaving brush factory, falling "under the spell of Joe DiMaggio" from the 55-cent bleacher seats at Yankee Stadium in his spare time. Drafted during World War II, he was assigned to Army counterintelligence and worked on reorganizing municipal governments in occupied Germany.

After his military service, Kissinger went to Harvard, where his doctoral thesis argued that the foremost objective of diplomacy was "stability based on an equilibrium of forces."

His belief in the importance of stability above all other considerations would endure for a lifetime.

Early on, Kissinger's 1957 book "Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy" established his reputation as an expert on global diplomacy, and he was tapped to be a consultant to the Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

In 1968, Kissinger offered himself as speechwriter and adviser to Nelson Rockefeller, who was competing for the Republican presidential nomination. When Nixon won the election, he invited Kissinger to be his national security adviser. Kissinger took the job, although he'd "spent 12 years of my life trying to keep him from becoming president," he later recalled.

From the start, Kissinger and Nixon maneuvered to keep control over foreign policy in their hands — and away from Secretary of State William Rogers and the State Department career diplomats, whom they both scorned.

In plotting Vietnam strategy, they together, until the last hours, kept from Rogers and Defense Secretary Melvin Laird the decision to invade Cambodia.

Former defense official Townsend Hoopes later said of Kissinger: "In a more open and discursive administration, he would have been only one of several competing advisers with his influence correspondingly diluted. Under Nixon, he became the principal keeper of the keys — the adviser, spokesman and negotiator on all major foreign policies."

During his 39 months as secretary of state between 1973 and 1977, Kissinger flew hundreds of thousands of miles, conferring with world leaders and trying to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The naturally serious Kissinger learned the value of humor and became skilled at deflating himself. He could easily be drawn into reminiscences of playing soccer as a boy in Germany, and he styled himself a "rabid fan" of baseball.

The onetime Manhattan schoolboy playfully, correctly and without hesitation once ticked off the New York Giants' wartime lineup at a reporter's request on the way to baseball's All-Star game.

In 1972, asked how fame had changed his life, Kissinger replied, "Now, when I'm boring at a party, people think it's their fault."

A year earlier, armed with a hat and sunglasses in case he needed them, Kissinger feigned a stomach



illness during a visit to Pakistan and vanished on a secret trip to Beijing that laid the groundwork for Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972. Kissinger, in his memoirs, recalled his secret trip to China as "a truly extraordinary event, both novel and moving, both unusual and overwhelming," that restored "the innocence of the years when each day was a precious adventure in defining the meaning of life."

One of the strangest moments in Kissinger's life occurred on Aug. 7, 1974, the night before Nixon gave up his fight to retain the presidency. Nixon summoned Kissinger to the family quarters in the White House, and they spent 90 minutes together.

As Kissinger was leaving, Nixon steered him into the Lincoln Bedroom and suggested they kneel in prayer. And so they did — the Quaker-born Nixon, the Jewish-born Kissinger, on the floor, Nixon in tears about the unfairness of his fate. Returning to his office, Kissinger told his closest aides, "He is truly a tragic figure," Isaacson wrote.

After Democrat Jimmy Carter succeeded Ford, Kissinger served in government as an adviser, but he was viewed with suspicion by conservatives in Ronald Reagan's presidency.

In his life after government, the ex-diplomat's Kissinger Associates earned him millions as a statesman-for-hire who offered foreign policy advice and diplomatic introductions for private corporations that paid \$200,000 or more a year for his services.

In 2002, President George W. Bush selected Kissinger to lead an independent commission investigating the Sept. 11 terror attacks, saying he would bring "broad experience, clear thinking, and careful judgment" to the job. But Kissinger soon stepped down from the position rather than reveal his clients.

Long after he left government service, Kissinger was sought out for his opinions, and didn't hesitate to share them — in books, columns, speeches and media appearances.

In a 2010 speech, Kissinger said the wars in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan set a pattern that he predicted would end "because, in the future, the American public will insist on clarity of objectives and unambiguous definitions of attainability. Wars will be risked only for specific outcomes, not for abstractions, like nation-building and exit strategy."

Addressing the war in Iraq specifically, Kissinger told The New York Times a year later that Bush "wanted to turn Iraq into a showcase of the possibility of a democratic evolution inside the Arab world. That was a huge objective, and that argument was difficult to sustain."

As for his own politics, Kissinger in 2011 described himself as "on the Republican side," but not "right wing." He said the philosophy of the current GOP wasn't well-defined.

Although he had abandoned Jewish observances, Kissinger married Anneliese Fleischer in an Orthodox Jewish ceremony in 1949 to please his parents. He was 25, she 23, also a German refugee. They had two children, Elizabeth and David. They drifted apart, separated in 1962 and divorced two years later.

In September 2022, Kissinger made an appearance at the Nixon presidential library to accept an award and used the occasion to extol Nixon as "a president who combined vision and courage in an extraordinarily complex period."

As for how he personally would like to be remembered, Kissinger told the audience great leaders instead focus on where their countries need to go, adding, "what I would feel America needs most importantly, it's faith in a national future."

## Henry Kissinger, secretary of state under Presidents Nixon and Ford, dies at 100

By NANCY BENAC Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, the diplomat with the thick glasses and gravelly voice who dominated foreign policy as the United States extricated itself from Vietnam and broke down barriers with China, died Wednesday, his consulting firm said. He was 100.

With his gruff yet commanding presence and behind-the-scenes manipulation of power, Kissinger exerted uncommon influence on global affairs under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, earning both vilification and the Nobel Peace Prize. Decades later, his name still provoked impassioned debate over foreign

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policy landmarks long past.

Kissinger's power grew during the turmoil of Watergate, when the politically attuned diplomat assumed a role akin to co-president to the weakened Nixon.

"No doubt my vanity was piqued," Kissinger later wrote of his expanding influence. "But the dominant emotion was a premonition of catastrophe."

A Jew who fled Nazi Germany with his family in his teens, Kissinger in his later years cultivated the reputation of respected statesman, giving speeches, offering advice to Republicans and Democrats alike and managing a global consulting business. He turned up in President Donald Trump's White House on multiple occasions. But Nixon-era documents and tapes, as they trickled out over the years, brought revelations — many in Kissinger's own words — that sometimes cast him in a harsh light.

Never without his detractors, Kissinger after he left government was dogged by critics who argued that he should be called to account for his policies on Southeast Asia and support of repressive regimes in Latin America.

For eight restless years — first as national security adviser, later as secretary of state, and for a time in the middle holding both titles — Kissinger ranged across the breadth of major foreign policy issues. He conducted the first "shuttle diplomacy" in the quest for Middle East peace. He used secret channels to pursue ties between the United States and China, ending decades of isolation and mutual hostility.

He initiated the Paris negotiations that ultimately provided a face-saving means — a "decent interval," he called it — to get the United States out of a costly war in Vietnam. Two years later, Saigon fell to the communists.

And he pursued a policy of detente with the Soviet Union that led to arms control agreements and raised the possibility that the tensions of the Cold War and its nuclear threat did not have to last forever.

At age 99, he was still out on tour for his book on leadership. Asked in July 2022 interview with ABC whether he wished he could take back any of his decisions, Kissinger demurred, saying: "I've been thinking about these problems all my life. It's my hobby as well as my occupation. And so the recommendations I made were the best of which I was then capable."

Even then, he had mixed thoughts on Nixon's record, saying "his foreign policy has held up and he was quite effective in domestic policy" while allowing that the disgraced president had "permitted himself to be involved in a number of steps that were inappropriate for a president."

As Kissinger turned 100 in May 2023, his son David wrote in *The Washington Post* that his father's centenary "might have an air of inevitability for anyone familiar with his force of character and love of historical symbolism. Not only has he outlived most of his peers, eminent detractors and students, but he has also remained indefatigably active throughout his 90s."

Asked during a CBS interview in the leadup to his 100th birthday about those who view his conduct of foreign policy over the years as a kind of "criminality," Kissinger was nothing but dismissive.

"That's a reflection of their ignorance," Kissinger said. "It wasn't conceived that way. It wasn't conducted that way."

Kissinger continued his involvement in global affairs even in his last months. He met Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Beijing in July, as bilateral relations were at a low point. And 50 years after his shuttle diplomacy helped end the 1973 Mideast war, when Israel fended off a surprise attack from Egypt and Syria, Kissinger warned of the risks of that conflict repeating itself after Israel faced a surprise assault by Hamas on Oct. 7.

Tributes for Kissinger from prominent U.S. officials poured in immediately upon word of his death. Former President George W. Bush said the U.S. "lost one of the most dependable and distinctive voices on foreign affairs" and former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg said Kissinger was "endlessly generous with the wisdom gained over the course of an extraordinary life."

Kissinger's consulting firm said he died at his home in Connecticut.

Kissinger was a practitioner of *realpolitik* — using diplomacy to achieve practical objectives rather than advance lofty ideals. Supporters said his pragmatic bent served U.S. interests; critics saw a Machiavellian approach that ran counter to democratic ideals.

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He was castigated for authorizing telephone wiretaps of reporters and his own National Security Council staff to plug news leaks in Nixon's White House. He was denounced on college campuses for the bombing and allied invasion of Cambodia in April 1970, intended to destroy North Vietnamese supply lines to communist forces in South Vietnam.

That "incursion," as Nixon and Kissinger called it, was blamed by some for contributing to Cambodia's fall into the hands of Khmer Rouge insurgents who later slaughtered some 2 million Cambodians.

Kissinger, for his part, made it his mission to debunk what he referred to in 2007 as a "prevalent myth" — that he and Nixon had settled in 1972 for peace terms that had been available in 1969 and thus had needlessly prolonged the Vietnam War at the cost of tens of thousands of American lives.

He insisted that the only way to speed up the withdrawal would have been to agree to Hanoi's demands that the U.S. overthrow the South Vietnamese government and replace it with communist-dominated leadership.

Pudgy and messy, Kissinger incongruously acquired a reputation as a ladies' man in the staid Nixon administration. Kissinger, who had divorced his first wife in 1964, called women "a diversion, a hobby." Jill St. John was a frequent companion. But it turned out his real love interest was Nancy Maginnes, a researcher for Nelson Rockefeller whom he married in 1974.

In a 1972 poll of Playboy Club Bunnies, the man dubbed "Super-K" by Newsweek finished first as "the man I would most like to go out on a date with."

Kissinger's explanation: "Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac."

Yet Kissinger was reviled by many Americans for his conduct of wartime diplomacy. He was still a lightning rod decades later: In 2015, an appearance by the 91-year-old Kissinger before the Senate Armed Services Committee was disrupted by protesters demanding his arrest for war crimes and calling out his actions in Southeast Asia, Chile and beyond.

Heinz Alfred Kissinger was born in the Bavarian city of Fuerth on May 27, 1923, the son of a schoolteacher. His family left Nazi Germany in 1938 and settled in Manhattan, where Heinz changed his name to Henry.

Kissinger had two children, Elizabeth and David, from his first marriage.

## Iconic Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center illuminated in midst of pro-Palestinian protest

NEW YORK (AP) — The iconic Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center was lit by more than 50,000 multi-colored lights Wednesday night as crowds massed in New York City for the holiday tradition.

The massive tree — a 12 ton, 80-foot-tall Norway spruce from upstate New York — was illuminated in Rockefeller Center by about five miles (8 kilometers) of LED string lights and topped with a 900-pound star covered in 3 million gleaming crystals.

Mayor Eric Adams took part in the lighting before a cheering throng and a chorus sang "Joy to the World."

An opening night ceremony in Manhattan featured appearances by Cher, Barry Manilow and Kelly Clarkson, among others. The Radio City Rockettes also performed.

Starting in the 1930s, the Christmas tree tradition has drawn thousands of visitors to the city each year during the holiday season.

The tree will remain lit from 5 a.m. to midnight every day until Jan. 13. On Christmas day, it'll be lit 24 hours.

Police had warned of the potential for protesters to interrupt the event, as recent gatherings in New York have drawn activists seeking to bring attention to the Israel-Hamas war.

Videos posted to social media showed several hundred chanting pro-Palestinian protesters, many carrying Palestinian flags, crowded in front of the News Corp. building, not far from the tree site. The building houses Fox News, The Wall Street Journal and the New York Post. Footage from the scene showed a few protesters clashing with police outside the media company's building as they tried to push forward to the tree but they were held back by police and the lighting ceremony wasn't disrupted.

The demonstrators then turned around and marched away down Sixth Avenue.

Last week, a group of protesters carrying a banner that read "Free Palestine" briefly interrupted the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, blocking the front of parade floats on the street. They were eventually taken into custody and the parade continued.

## Daryl Hall accuses John Oates of 'ultimate partnership betrayal' in plan to sell stake in business

By JONATHAN MATTISE Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Daryl Hall has accused his longtime music partner John Oates of committing the "ultimate partnership betrayal" by planning to sell his share of the Hall & Oates duo's joint venture without the other's permission, Hall said in a court declaration supporting his lawsuit to keep the transaction paused.

In the declaration filed Wednesday in a Nashville chancery court, Hall also lamented the deterioration of his relationship with and trust in his musical partner of more than a half-century. The joint venture in question includes Hall & Oates trademarks, personal name and likeness rights, record royalty income and website and social media assets, the declaration states.

In his own court filing later Wednesday, Oates said that he was disappointed in Hall's "inflammatory, outlandish, and inaccurate statements about me," and argued that he had been trying for some time to enhance their business partnership.

A judge has issued a temporarily restraining order blocking the sale of Oates' share of Whole Oats Enterprises LLP to Primary Wave IP Investment Management LLC while legal proceedings and a previously initiated arbitration continue.

A court hearing is scheduled Thursday in the case. Hall is seeking further court action to keep the transaction on hold.

"While falsely contending over the last several months that the Oates Trust wanted to maintain ownership in WOE, John Oates and the Co-Trustees engaged in the ultimate partnership betrayal," Hall said in a declaration. "They surreptitiously sought to sell half of the WOE assets without obtaining my written approval."

Oates argued in his filings that the court should not extend the temporary restraining order, and he said he didn't want to publicly address details of business dealings that he considers "private matters." But in a rejoinder to the suggestion that he was the one causing a rift, he argued that Hall has been trying for years to be seen as an individual.

"Over the years, Daryl has consistently and publicly been adamant about being perceived as an individual rather than as part of a duo or group. Thus, he has insisted on our being known as 'Daryl Hall and John Oates,' rather than the more commonly known 'Hall & Oates,'" Oates' declaration said. "On this point I agree. I now must act with truthfulness and make decisions that are right for myself, my family, and my artistic future."

A Nashville chancery court judge issued the temporary restraining order on Nov. 16, the same day Hall filed his lawsuit, writing that Oates and others involved in his trust can't move to close the sale of their share until an arbitrator in a separately filed case weighs in on the deal, or until the judge's order expires — typically within 15 days, unless a judge extends the deadline. Hall's declaration was initially filed in the arbitration case.

The lawsuit contends that Hall opened an arbitration process on Nov. 9 against Oates and the other defendants in the lawsuit, Oates' wife, Aimee Oates, and Richard Flynn, in their roles as co-trustees of Oates' trust. Hall was seeking an order preventing them from selling their part in Whole Oats Enterprises to Primary Wave Music.

Primary Wave has already owned "significant interest" in Hall and Oates' song catalog for more than 15 years.

The lawsuit says Oates' team entered into a letter of intent with Primary Wave Music for the sale, and alleges further that the letter makes clear that the music duo's business agreement was disclosed to

Primary Wave Music in violation of a confidentiality provision. Additionally, Hall said in his declaration he would not approve such a sale and doesn't agree with Primary Wave's business model.

Hall said he was blindsided by Oates' plan to sell his part of Whole Oates Enterprises.

"I am deeply troubled by the deterioration of my relationship with, and trust in, John Oates," Hall said in the declaration.

Hall said in his declaration that the ordeal has unfolded while he's been on tour throughout the U.S. West Coast, Japan and Manila. Hall said he believes Oates timed the sale "to create the most harm to me."

Hall accused Oates of becoming "adversarial and aggressive instead of professional and courteous" toward him in the last several years. As part of a proposed "global divorce," Hall said he was entertaining Oates' idea to dissolve their touring entity and a separate partnership related to their musical compositions and publishing, while Hall raised the idea of dissolving Whole Oats Enterprises.

Daryl Hall and John Oates got their start as Temple University students before signing with Atlantic Records in 1972. In the decades since, they have achieved six platinum albums and many more Top 10 singles with their unique approach to blue-eyed soul. Hall & Oates was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2014 and the duo's latest album, "Home for Christmas," was released in 2006. The pair continued to perform as of last year.

"We have this incredibly good problem of having so many hits," Oates told The Associated Press in 2021, just before resuming a national tour that had been delayed because of the coronavirus pandemic. "Believe me, it's not a chore to play those songs because they are really great."

## **Senator: White House not seeking conditions on military aid to Israel, despite earlier Biden comment**

By SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — National security adviser Jake Sullivan told lawmakers this week that the White House is not seeking to place conditions on U.S. military assistance to Israel, days after President Joe Biden signaled openness to the notion that was being pushed by some Democrats as the civilian death toll in Gaza from Israel's war against Hamas climbed.

Sen. Chris Van Hollen, who was among the senators who met privately with Sullivan on Tuesday, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that Sullivan "made it clear that the White House is not asking for any conditionality in aid. So I want to leave that very clear." A second person directly familiar with the meeting confirmed the account.

Sullivan met with about a dozen Democratic senators to discuss their questions about how the administration would ensure that any U.S. weapons provided to Israel are used in accord with U.S. law. The meeting was held via a teleconference in which Sullivan was at the White House and senators were in a classified room on Capitol Hill. It came as some progressive lawmakers concerned about the civilian toll have suggested that the U.S. place conditions on the types of military assistance and how it could be used by Israeli forces against Hamas targets.

Last week, Biden told reporters that conditioning military aid to Israel was a "worthwhile thought." But he suggested that had he done so earlier, it would have been more difficult to secure the release of hostages held by Hamas.

Van Hollen, who has been one of the most vocal senators raising concerns about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, also noted that Biden has been pushing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in private, noting to him the rising humanitarian concerns among lawmakers who would otherwise be allies of Israel.

"The fact is that the president — in his conversations with the prime minister — has pointed to the fact that lots of friends of Israel on Capitol Hill are very concerned about the very high, unacceptably high levels of civilian casualties and the lack of more cooperation on the provision of humanitarian aid," Van Hollen said. "So our concerns have been communicated and useful, I think, to the president."

Van Hollen, D-Md., had spearheaded a letter signed by a majority of Senate Democrats earlier this month asking the administration how it would ensure Israel's use of weaponry complied with American law.

He and two other senators — Sen. Brian Schatz, D-Hawaii, and Armed Services Committee Chairman Jack Reed, D-R.I. — raised the issue again in a new statement Wednesday after their meeting with the White House, pointing to signals from the Netanyahu government that it intends to spread its ground offensive from north to south Gaza when the current cease-fire ends.

The White House had showed signs of edging away from Biden's comment on possibly conditioning future Israel military aid earlier this week. Asked directly on Monday if Biden was considering conditioning aid, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby appeared to hedge.

"What he also said, right after acknowledging that it was 'a worthwhile thought,' was that the approach he has chosen to take so far has produced results and outcomes," Kirby said.

He added: "The approach that we're taking with Israel and, quite frankly, with our partners in the region is working. It's getting aid in to people that need it. It's getting a pause in the fighting. It's getting hostages out. It's getting Americans out."

## Rosalynn Carter is eulogized before family and friends as husband Jimmy bears silent witness

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

PLAINS, Ga. (AP) — Her frail husband a silent witness, Rosalynn Carter was celebrated by her family and closest friends Wednesday in the same tiny town where she and Jimmy Carter were born, forever their home base as they climbed to the White House and traveled the world for humanitarian causes.

The former first lady, who died Nov. 19 at the age of 96, had her intimate funeral at Maranatha Baptist Church in Plains, where she and her husband spent decades welcoming guests and where a wooden cross Jimmy Carter fashioned in his woodshop is displayed. Earlier tributes were held in nearby Americus and in Atlanta.

The former president, now 99 and in hospice care, sat in a wheelchair next to Maranatha's front pew, wearing a dark suit and tie to say goodbye to his wife of 77 years.

Maranatha Pastor Tony Lowden said Rosalynn Carter "served every nation around the world" because she embraced the teachings of Jesus Christ and "took it outside the walls" of the church.

"She would say to you today, 'Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free,'" Lowden said, continuing in Rosalynn's voice as he described her competitive nature and her belief in salvation and an afterlife. "Jimmy tried to beat me here. I got here first. I won the prize. Tell him I beat him and I'm waiting on him."

"But," Lowden continued, "she would say 'don't stop — there's too many homeless people in the world. There's still too many people who don't have equal rights.' ... She would tell you don't stop. Become that virtuous woman. And men, if you're listening, make room for the virtuous woman."

The Carter family later accompanied her casket to the burial plot she'll one day share with her husband, who also attended a Tuesday memorial where two other presidents and all the living first ladies joined the extended Carter family before Wednesday's hometown funeral.

Vernita Sampson, a school bus driver and Plains native, drove a group of area high school students, all wearing Future Farmer of America jackets, to downtown Plains, where hundreds of people soaked up the history of the day and paid tribute to the former first lady along the motorcade route.

"They were people you could relate to, not this high standard where they were up here and, you know, we're all down there," said Sampson, 58. "We never get used to death, no matter who we are or how long you have lived. But knowing that her suffering is no longer and to celebrate that she did live a long life, a very happy and productive life, that gives you joy."

At the service, the mourning came with affectionate stories of her life and plenty of laughter.

"It occurs to me that dad got used to mom disagreeing with him because she was really good at it," son Jack Carter said. "And she became a partner in the true sense of the word, where they had equal footing."

Many family members, including the former president, wore leis to celebrate how much Rosalynn Carter loved living in Hawaii during the couple's Navy years and learning to hula dance while her husband was stationed there.

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Jimmy Carter met his future wife only a few days after his mother delivered her.

Coming from that town of about 600 — then and now — Rosalynn Carter changed lives across America and the developing world, mourners were told at her services this week. Jimmy Carter's closest political adviser and a political force in her own right, she advocated for better mental health care and underappreciated caregivers in millions of U.S. households. Traveling overseas, she fought disease, famine and the abuse of women and girls.

Even so, she never stopped being the small-town Southerner whose cooking repertoire leaned heavily on mayonnaise and pimento cheese, Jason Carter said as he told endearing stories about his grandmother.

The tributes covered the range of Rosalynn Carter's life.

Events in Atlanta reflected her grandest chapters. Mourners viewed her casket at her husband's presidential library, steps from The Carter Center they co-founded after leaving the White House. Then she was honored at a service filled with the music of a symphony chorus, a majestic pipe organ and fellow Habitat for Humanity ambassadors Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood. President Joe Biden, former President Bill Clinton and the first ladies joined Jimmy Carter and their four children in the front row, in front of more than 1,000 congregants who wore suits, ties and dresses and filled an elegant Emory University church.

The proceedings Wednesday underscored her simpler constants. The sanctuary in Plains seats fewer people than the balcony at Glenn Memorial in Atlanta. Maranatha, tucked away at the edge of Plains where the town gives way to cotton fields, has no powerful organ, instead the cross her husband made and offering plates he turned on his lathe. Some congregants wore casual attire.

Yet her imprint went well beyond Plains.

Whenever she heard of suffering among her friends or neighbors, she would say, "Get me their phone numbers so that Jimmy and I can call them," Lowden said. But "Rosalynn Carter was someone who would look at children from Sudan or Cambodia and say 'That's my baby, too.'"

Several speakers addressed the former first lady's resilience, perhaps most evident when her husband was defeated by Ronald Reagan in 1980. "When they lost re-election, she thought the best part of her life was over," Josh Carter said of his grandmother. Then came The Carter Center and its work on human rights, "and she knew that was the best part of their life."

Elaine Larkin, who lives in nearby Ellaville, worked at the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers at the former first lady's alma mater, Georgia Southwestern State University.

"We had one meeting where some people kept saying 'RAHZ-lyn,'" Larkin recalled, rolling her eyes at the common mispronunciation as she awaited the motorcade. "She just sat there and smiled. And when she got up to leave she leaned over to me and said very quietly, 'Elaine, would you please tell them it's 'ROSE-lyn.'"

After the funeral, her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren walked alongside an SUV carrying Jimmy Carter as Rosalynn Carter was escorted for the last time through the town where she lived for more than 80 of her 96 years.

The motorcade passed holiday lights and decorations including a photo collage in front of the downtown tree featuring the "First Lady of Plains."

Her casket, topped with a spray of mixed flowers, was driven past the old high school where she was valedictorian during World War II, Plains Baptist Church where she and the former president were once outliers arguing for racial integration and the commercial district where she became Jimmy's indispensable partner in their peanut business. Then came the old train depot where she helped run the winning 1976 presidential campaign and Plains Methodist Church, where as an 18-year-old in 1946, she married young Navy Lt. Jimmy Carter.

The route ended in what locals call "the Carter compound," property that includes their one-story ranch house, the pond where she fished and security outposts for the Secret Service agents who protected her for 47 years.

Her grave is within view of the front porch of the home where the 39th American president still lives.

## US moves to protect wolverines as climate change melts their mountain refuges, threatens extinction

By MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — The North American wolverine will receive long-delayed threatened species protections under a Biden administration proposal released Wednesday in response to scientists' warnings that climate change will likely melt away the rare species' snowy mountain refuges and push them toward extinction.

Across most of the U.S., wolverines were wiped out by the early 1900s from unregulated trapping and poisoning campaigns. About 300 surviving animals in the contiguous U.S. live in fragmented, isolated groups at high elevations in the northern Rocky Mountains.

Wolverines join a growing number of animals, plants and insects — from polar bears in Alaska to crocodiles in southern Florida — that officials say are at growing risk as increasing temperatures bake the planet, altering snowfall patterns and raising sea levels.

In the coming decades, warming temperatures are expected to shrink the mountain snowpack wolverines rely on to dig dens where they birth and raise their young.

The decision Wednesday by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service follows more than two decades of disputes over the risks of climate change, and threats to the long-term survival of the elusive species. Officials wrote in the proposal that protections under the Endangered Species Act were needed "due primarily to the ongoing and increasing impacts of climate change and associated habitat degradation and fragmentation."

The animals resemble small bears and are the world's largest species of terrestrial weasels. Sometimes called "mountain devils," they thrive in harsh alpine environments.

Protections were rejected under former President Donald Trump. A federal judge in 2022 ordered the administration of President Joe Biden to make a final decision this week on whether to seek protections.

Protecting the wolverines' remaining habitat strongholds gives the animals a fighting chance, said former U.S. Forest Service research biologist Jeffrey Copeland.

Listing wolverines as threatened "means that we have not paid enough attention to this critter to give it what it needs," he said.

"It's a failure. But in this type of situation, it's the only tool that we have."

Republican lawmakers in Montana had urged the administration to delay its decision, claiming the scientists' estimates were too inaccurate to make a fair call about the dangers faced by wolverines. The lawmakers, led by hard-right conservative Rep. Matt Rosendale, warned that protections could lead to future restrictions on activities allowed in wolverine habitats, including snowmobiling and skiing.

Rosendale said Wednesday that he would seek to revoke threatened species status for wolverines at the earliest chance if it's finalized.

"Whether it's private property, state property or federal property, if we are limited on the use of that land based upon this status, that's a taking," he said. "Is the federal government going to compensate the state for lack of use on state-owned lands? .... I don't think so."

In September, government scientists conceded some uncertainty about how quickly mountain snowpacks could disappear every spring in areas with wolverines. They also said habitat loss due to climate change — combined with other problems such as increased development including houses and roads — will likely harm wolverine populations.

Habitat loss as a result of climate change and other stressors will likely "impact the viability of wolverines in the contiguous U.S. through the remainder of this century," they concluded.

Fish and Wildlife Service officials said in documents released Wednesday that they were "not concerned" about the effects of existing developments such as ski resorts since wolverines likely already avoid those areas. But winter recreation could hurt wolverines in the future, they said, as activities like backcountry skiing and snowmobiling have become more popular in some areas.

The scientists added that some of those losses could be offset if wolverines are able to recolonize areas such as California's Sierra Nevada and Colorado's Rocky Mountains.



Environmentalists have argued in multiple lawsuits against the Fish and Wildlife Service that wolverines face localized extinction from climate change, habitat fragmentation and low genetic diversity.

The proposal to protect them "gives the wolverine a fighting chance for survival," said Timothy Preso, an attorney for the group Earthjustice who's been part of that legal effort.

Another attorney said he had concerns that trapping would be allowed to continue for other species in areas where wolverines live. The Fish and Wildlife Service proposal would allow some accidental killing of wolverines as long as trappers report any captures within five days and use "best practices" to avoid the animals.

"I'm not sure that's possible. Wolverines are scavengers — they go everywhere and eat everything," said Matt Bishop with the Western Environmental Law Center.

Wolverine populations live in remote areas of Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and Washington state.

In recent years, individual animals have been documented in California, Utah, Colorado and Oregon. However, there's been "no evidence" that the animals are becoming established and breeding in those states, officials said in Wednesday's proposal.

The wildlife service received a petition to protect wolverines in 2000 and the agency recommended protections in 2010. President Barack Obama's administration proposed protections and later sought to withdraw them but was blocked by a federal judge who said in 2016 that the snow-dependent animals were "squarely in the path of climate change."

Protections were rejected in 2020 under Trump, based on research suggesting populations were expanding, not contracting. Federal wildlife officials at the time predicted enough snow would persist at high elevations for wolverines to den in mountain snowfields each spring.

They reversed course in a revised analysis published in September that said wolverines were "less secure than we described."

The animals require expansive wildlands, with home ranges for adult wolverines covering as much as 610 square miles (1,580 square kilometers), according to one study.

They also need protection from trapping, according to scientists. Wolverine populations in southwestern Canada plummeted by more than 40% over the past two decades due to overharvesting by trappers, which could have effects across the U.S. border, scientists said.

Wolverine trapping was once legal in states including Montana.

At least 10 wolverines have been accidentally captured in Montana since trapping was restricted in 2012. Three were killed and the others released unharmed. In Idaho, trappers have accidentally captured 11 wolverines since 1995, killing three.

## Arizona officials who refused to canvass election results indicted by grand jury

By TERRY TANG Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Officials in a rural Arizona county who delayed canvassing the 2022 general election results have been criminally charged, the state's top prosecutor said Wednesday.

A grand jury in Maricopa County Superior Court has indicted Cochise County supervisors Peggy Judd and Tom Crosby on one count each of conspiracy and interference of an election officer.

"The repeated attempts to undermine our democracy are unacceptable," Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes, a Democrat, said in a statement. "I took an oath to uphold the rule of law, and my office will continue to enforce Arizona's elections laws and support our election officials as they carry out the duties and responsibilities of their offices."

Dennis Wilenchik, an attorney for Crosby, called the indictment "nothing but political partisanship." In a statement, he promised a vigorous defense for what he called baseless charges.

"The conspiracy is solely based on an alleged 'agreement' to interfere that is nonexistent, as there was none," said Wilenchik, who also referred to the interference charge as "nonsensical."

Judd did not respond to requests via text and email for comment.

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Jane Montgomery, spokesperson for Cochise County, declined to comment. She confirmed both supervisors will be responsible for their own legal representation.

The indictment marks a rare instance of criminally prosecuting people connected to the vote canvassing being dragged out last year in six Arizona counties.

In December 2022, Cochise County certified election results only after a judge ruled Crosby and Judd, both Republicans, were breaking the law by refusing to sign off on the vote count by the deadline.

Crosby and Judd said they weren't satisfied that the machines used to tabulate ballots were properly certified for use in elections. This prompted lawsuits including one from then-Secretary of State Katie Hobbs, a Democrat.

After the judge's order, Judd joined Ann English, the lone Democrat on the three-member board, in voting to certify the election. Crosby did not attend that meeting.

Judd and Crosby both were subpoenaed to court earlier this month. English was not subpoenaed or indicted.

At the time, Judd and Crosby told The Associated Press they had no idea why they were being subpoenaed. Crosby was shocked.

"I don't feel like I broke a law. But, obviously the courts had different feelings," Judd said.

Last year, election results were certified without issue throughout most of the country. But in Arizona, the six counties hesitated to meet the certification deadline amid pressure from some Republicans. Democrats ended up winning U.S. Senate, governor and other statewide races in what has now become a swing state.

Arizona has been a hotbed of election conspiracies since President Joe Biden in 2020 became only the second Democrat in seven decades to win the state. There is concern that partisan election officials could interfere with the orderly counting and certification of votes in next year's presidential election, which is shaping up to be a rematch of the contentious 2020 contest.

\_\_\_ Associated Press writer Jonathan J. Cooper contributed to this report.

## Frances Sternhagen, Tony Award-winning actor who was familiar maternal face on TV, dies at 93

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Frances Sternhagen, the veteran character actor who won two Tony Awards and became a familiar maternal face to TV viewers later in life in such shows as "Cheers," "ER," "Sex and the City" and "The Closer," has died. She was 93.

Sternhagen died peacefully of natural causes Monday her son, John Carlin, said in a statement posted to Instagram on Wednesday. "Fly on, Frannie," he wrote. "The curtain goes down on a life so richly, passionately, humbly and generously lived." Sternhagen's publicist confirmed the death and said it occurred in New Rochelle, New York.

Sternhagen won a Tony for best featured actress in a play in 1974 for her role in Neil Simon's "The Good Doctor" and a second one in 1995 for a revival of "The Heiress." Her last turn on Broadway was in "Seascape" in 2005.

She was nominated for Tonys four other times, for starring or featured roles in "The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window," "Equus," "Angel" and "Morning's at Seven." In 2013, she played Edie Falco's mother in the off-Broadway play "The Madrid."

"I have been very fortunate," Sternhagen told the Daily Breeze of Torrance, California, in 2002. "And I think a lot of that is because I'm considered a character actor — which really means you can do a variety of things. It doesn't mean that you can't do leading parts, because I have. But you're not limited to playing yourself."

In a 2005 review of "Steel Magnolias," then-Associated Press drama critic Michael Kuchwara called Sternhagen "one of the treasures of New York theater, able to invest any role she plays with considerable sympathy. Here, she turns what could be a throwaway part into one that provides much laughter — and applause."

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She kept up a flourishing career while at the same time raising six children. She always said her family came first — commuting from her suburban home in New Rochelle while acting on Broadway — but admitted that touring and movie and TV work sometimes took her away from home.

"I remember telling my older daughter when she was about 13 that sometimes I felt terribly guilty that I wasn't home all the time," she told a Gale Group reporter. "And my daughter said, 'Oh, Mom, you would have been impossible if you were home all the time.' I'm sure she was right."

TV viewers knew her as played the rich grandmother of Dr. John Carter (Noah Wyle) in the long-running "ER." On "Cheers" she was the know-it-all mother of postman Cliff Clavin (John Ratzenberger). "She was just impossible and great fun to play," she told The New York Times. The role brought her two Emmy nominations.

More recently, she had a recurring role in "Sex and the City" as Bunny MacDougal, the strong-minded mother-in-law of Charlotte (Kristin Davis), which brought her her third Emmy nomination, and played Kyra Sedgwick's mother in "The Closer." Soap opera fans in the 1960s knew her in "Love of Life" as Toni Prentiss Davis, who carried a gun and went mad.

"I must say it's fun to play these snobby older ladies. It's always more fun to be obnoxious. I have known women like that, and I can imitate them, I guess," she told the Los Angeles Times in 2002.

Playwright Paul Rudnick on Wednesday called her "a wonderful actress, capable of the highest comedy and deeply moving drama." She was, he wrote on X, formerly Twitter, "an indelible presence."

In "Equus," opposite Anthony Hopkins and Peter Firth on Broadway in 1974, she originated the role of the mother of the troubled youth whose shocking act of violence against horses sets the drama in motion, earning her a Tony nod.

In 1979, she appeared in the original Broadway production of "On Golden Pond" in the role of Ethel Thayer that Katharine Hepburn won an Oscar for in the film version. "I feel very close to Ethel," Sternhagen told the Times. "She reminds me of my mother and I took to her immediately."

Sternhagen was one of three actors to handle the title role over the long off-Broadway run of "Driving Miss Daisy," another stage role that became an Oscar-winner on screen, this time for Jessica Tandy.

She made her film debut in "Up the Down Staircase" in 1967. Among her other movies: "Hospital," "Two People," "Fedora," "Bright Lights Big City," "Misery," "Doc Hollywood," "Raising Cain" and "Curtain Call."

Sternhagen was born in 1930, in Washington, D.C., where her father was a tax court judge. As a child she loved to perform — she recalled herself as "a shameful show-off" — but she never considered an acting career. She entered Vassar as a history major, but a friendly teacher suggested another direction: acting.

"Even though I was acting in college," she told the New York Daily News, "it hadn't occurred to me to major in drama." But when it was noted that she was doing "C" work in history, Sternhagen switched to drama.

After graduation she taught drama, modern dance and singing outside Boston, earning \$2,000 for the year before deciding to pursue work in the theater.

"I thought I would try it, see if I liked it, and then get out," she told the Times in 1981. "But you never get out. It's an addiction, because it touches your emotions, because it's where you want to live. ... I think those of us who can stay in it are just plain lucky."

She met her husband, actor Thomas A. Carlin, while appearing in a production in Maryland. He died of heart failure in 1991.

She didn't let her pregnancies interfere much with her work schedule, explaining that as an only child, "I always longed for a big family."

"I was lucky," she told the Times. "I usually didn't show a pregnancy until the sixth or seventh month. I was afraid to stop acting, because if I stopped I would never start again."

"I can't say it's been easy. There have been quite a number of things I haven't done. You make choices and have to stick with them."

She and Carlin had four sons, Paul, Tony, Peter and John, and two daughters, Amanda and Sarah. She also is survived by nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"A celebration of her remarkable career and life is planned for mid January, near her 94th birthday," said

a statement from her family. "We continue to be inspired by her love and life."

## Lawmakers can 'vote their conscience' on expelling Santos, House speaker says, but he has concerns

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Mike Johnson expressed reservations Wednesday about expelling Rep. George Santos from the House this week, but said he and other GOP leaders will not push colleagues to oppose removing the New York Republican from office. "We're going to allow people to vote their conscience," Johnson said.

Santos has survived two previous expulsion efforts in his first year in Congress and has said he will not seek reelection, but the hands-off approach this time could tip the scales against him. Support for ousting Santos has grown after a monthlong investigation by the House Ethics Committee found that Santos "sought to fraudulently exploit every aspect of his House candidacy for his own personal financial profit."

Johnson, R-La., said he has heard Republican lawmakers make forceful arguments on both sides. Some have argued that Santos should have his day in court before an expulsion vote occurs; that has been the precedent in the House so far. Others believe that some of the things Santos did are "infractions against the House itself" and deserving of expulsion.

"And so what we've said as the leadership team is we're going to allow people to vote their conscience I think is the only appropriate thing we can do," Johnson said. "We've not whipped the vote and we wouldn't. I trust that people will make that decision thoughtfully and in good faith. I personally have real reservations about doing this. I'm concerned about a precedent that may be set."

Lawmakers returned from their Thanksgiving break this week with competing expulsion resolutions brought to the floor — one from Democrats, the other from Republicans. The resolutions require leadership to bring them up for consideration within two days, though it is expected that Democrats would not seek a second vote if Johnson brings the Republican expulsion resolution to the floor first.

A vote on expulsion could occur as early as Thursday, though Johnson suggested it would slip to Friday.

In the history of the House, only five members have been expelled, which is the most serious form of punishment the House can exact on its members. Only two have been removed by their colleagues since the Civil War.

The Republican resolution is sponsored by Rep. Michael Guest of Mississippi, chairman of the House Ethics Committee. It states that the committee's investigation determined there was "substantial evidence" that Santos violated federal law and the rules of the House, namely by converting campaign funds to personal use and through systemic reporting errors in his 2020 and 2022 campaign's filings with the Federal Election Commission. It also noted Santos' lack of candor with investigators, saying he provided them with "misrepresentations and delay tactics."

"Given his egregious violations," Santos "is not fit to serve" in the House and should be expelled, according to the resolution.

Santos, who is facing 23 charges in federal court, defiantly rejected the committee's findings in remarks on the House floor shortly after the resolution from Guest was offered by Rep. Anthony D'Esposito, R-N.Y. Santos has pleaded not guilty.

"The process in which the Ethics Committee engaged was incomplete, irresponsible, and littered with hyperbole and littered with biased opinions," Santos said.

Some Republicans are holding out hope that Santos will resign before an expulsion vote. But he has been adamant that will not happen.

"To set the record straight and put this in the record, I will not be resigning," Santos said on Tuesday night.

Johnson's remarks came after a closed-door meeting among Republicans. There is division within the conference about how to deal with Santos. At least two-thirds of the members present and voting must vote for the resolution for Santos to be expelled.

Rep. Ralph Norman, R-S.C., said "let the people of New York deal with him."

"He's already said he's not running," Norman said. "Our priorities are misplaced by putting this at the top of the list, and even having a conversation about it. To me, as I told the rest of them, Americans deserve better."

Added Rep. Bob Good, R-Va.: "This is a terrible, dangerous precedent."

Rep. Byron Donalds, R-Fla., said he thinks that "if a member gets expelled, it's because they were convicted in a court of law."

An expulsion resolution voted on in early November failed by a vote of 179 for expulsion and 213 against, with 19 voting present. Many Republicans wanted to wait for the House Ethics Committee to complete its investigation before making such a decision about Santos.

Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-S.D., joined with most Republicans in voting against expulsion four weeks ago. But this time he will be a yes, he said.

"It's very clear this guy is a crook," Johnson said. "His presence is unbecoming of the House. I'll certainly vote to expel and I think it will be a pretty strong bipartisan vote."

Rep. Ken Buck, R-Colo., said he voted against expulsion previously because he believed Santos had not received due process to ensure he was treated fairly.

"I thought the Ethics Committee gave him that due process, and he didn't take advantage of it," Buck said. "And I think the allegations and the findings that they made are sufficient to vote for expulsion so I will be voting for expulsion."

Republicans hold a 222-213 majority in the House. If Santos is forced from Congress, New York law will require Democratic Gov. Kathy Hochul to call a special election for his seat.

The governor would have 10 days from the day Santos leaves office to issue a proclamation calling for an election, and then that election would have to take place between 70 days and 80 days from her proclamation.

More than a dozen candidates are already running for Santos' seat, including former Rep. Tom Suozzi, a Democrat who previously represented the district before an unsuccessful run for governor last year.

## **US Air Force Osprey crashes off Japan during training, killing at least one of the eight on board**

By MARI YAMAGUCHI and TARA COPP Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — A U.S. Air Force Osprey based in Japan crashed during a training mission Wednesday off of the country's southern coast, killing at least one of the eight crew members, the Japanese coast guard said.

The cause of the crash and the status of the seven others on board were not immediately known, Japanese coast guard spokesperson Kazuo Ogawa said.

The Osprey is a hybrid aircraft that takes off and lands like a helicopter, but during flight it can rotate its propellers forward and cruise much faster like an airplane.

Ospreys have had a number of accidents in the past, including in Japan, where they are deployed at U.S. and Japanese military bases. In Okinawa, where about half of the 50,000 American troops are based, Gov. Denny Tamaki told reporters Wednesday that he would ask the U.S. military to suspend all Osprey flights in Japan.

Ogawa said the coast guard received an emergency call Wednesday afternoon from a fishing boat near the crash site off Yakushima, an island south of Kagoshima on the southern main island of Kyushu.

Coast guard aircraft and patrol boats found one male crew member, who was later pronounced dead by a doctor at a nearby port, Ogawa said. They also found gray debris believed to be from the aircraft and an empty inflatable life raft in an area about 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) off the eastern coast of Yakushima, he said.

The coast guard said it planned to continue searching through the night.

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Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said the Osprey disappeared from radar a few minutes before the coast guard received the emergency call. The aircraft requested an emergency landing at the Yakushima airport about five minutes before it was lost from radar, NHK public television and other news outlets reported.

NHK quoted a Yakushima resident as saying he saw the aircraft turned upside down, with fire coming from one of its engines, and then an explosion before it fell to the sea.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he planned to seek a further explanation from the U.S. military, but he declined to say whether he would seek a temporary suspension of Osprey operations in Japan.

U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command said in a statement that the CV-22B Osprey was from Yokota Air Base and assigned to the 353rd Special Operations Wing.

Ogawa said the aircraft had departed from the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in Yamaguchi prefecture and crashed on its way to Kadena Air Base on Okinawa.

Japanese Vice Defense Minister Hiroyuki Miyazawa said it had attempted an emergency sea landing and quoted the U.S. military as saying its pilot "did everything possible until the last minute."

Yokota Air Base is home to U.S. Forces Japan and the Fifth Air Force. Six CV-22 Ospreys have been deployed at Yokota, including the one that crashed.

While the U.S. Marine Corps flies most of the Ospreys based in Japan, the Air Force also has some deployed there.

Last year, Air Force Special Operations Command ordered a temporary stand down of its Osprey fleet following back-to-back safety incidents where the Osprey clutch slipped, causing an uneven distribution of power to Osprey's rotors.

The Marine Corps and Navy have reported similar clutch slips, and each service has worked to address the issue in their aircraft, however clutch failure was also cited in a 2022 fatal U.S. Marine Corps Osprey crash that killed five.

According to the investigation of that crash, "dual hard clutch engagement" led to engine failure.

Separately, a U.S. Marine Corps Osprey with 23 Marines aboard crashed on a northern Australian island in August, killing three Marines and critically injuring at least five others who were onboard during a multinational training exercise.

## **Trump embraces the Jan. 6 rioters on the trail. In court, his lawyers hope to distance him from them**

By ERIC TUCKER and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump has embraced the rioters who attacked the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, as patriots, vowed to pardon a large portion of them if he wins a second term and even collaborated on a song with a group of jailed defendants.

In his election interference case in Washington, his lawyers are taking a different tack.

Despite losing a bid to strike from the indictment references to that day's violence, defense attorneys have made clear their strategy involves distancing the former president from the horde of rioters, whom they describe as "independent actors at the Capitol." At the same time, special counsel Jack Smith's team has signaled it will make the case that Trump is responsible for the chaos that unfolded, and point to Trump's continued support of the Jan. 6 defendants to help establish his criminal intent.

The competing arguments highlight the extent to which the riot serves as an inescapable backdrop in a landmark trial set to begin on March 4 in a courthouse just blocks away from the Capitol.

It also reflects a point of separation between Trump and his legal team in the case accusing the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination of conspiring to overturn his 2020 election loss. While Trump's glorification of Jan. 6 defendants may boost him politically as he vies to retake the White House in 2024, his lawyers' approach lays bare a concern that arguments linking him to the rioters could harm him in front of a jury.

Though Trump is not charged with inciting the riot, any success he hopes to have at trial may turn in

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part on his defense team's ability to neutralize, or at least minimize, the ghoulish images of the violence that prosecutors cite as a natural extension of the former president's repeated lies about a stolen election.

Much may depend as well on the evidence permitted by U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan. Trump's lawyers have signaled they will try to block prosecutors from presenting at trial evidence related to the actions of the rioters, who shattered windows, beat police officers, and sent lawmakers running into hiding.

"What's likely to happen here is for the judge to strike some type of reasonable balance, which will allow prosecutors to admit some portion of the evidence about the conduct and some of the violence that went on during that day, but will put some kinds of limits on just how far prosecutors can go in presenting evidence of violent conduct," said Robert Mintz, a defense attorney and former federal prosecutor in New Jersey who has followed the case.

Trump has denied any wrongdoing in the case, which he has characterized as politically motivated.

In separate civil cases seeking to hold Trump liable for the Capitol attack, his lawyers have argued he encouraged his supporters to peacefully protest the results of the election and never called for any violence. The federal appeals court in Washington is currently weighing whether Trump can be sued by lawmakers and police officers, who have accused him of inciting the riot.

Trump will stand trial in the same courthouse where roughly 1,200 of his supporters have been charged in the largest investigation in Justice Department history. More than 800 of them have pleaded guilty or been convicted at trial of federal crimes stemming from the riot, including seditious conspiracy and assaulting police officers. About two-thirds of those sentenced so far have received prison time.

The former president often speaks on the campaign trail about what he says is the mistreatment of those defendants, many of whom have argued in court that they were following his instructions to go to Washington and to the Capitol on Jan. 6. Judges and juries, however, have rejected the argument that rioters who said they were acting at Trump's direction can't be held responsible for their crimes.

At a recent rally in Houston, Trump took the stage to a song titled "Justice For All," featuring a choir of jailed Jan. 6 participants and Trump reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. He told the crowd: "I call them the J6 hostages, not prisoners."

In court, however, his lawyers argued that references to the rioters' conduct are irrelevant and that details of that day's violence would only prejudice the jury against their client because they "may wrongfully impute fault to President Trump for these actions." They are also seeking to force prosecutors to hand over to the defense statements by prosecutors in Jan. 6 rioters' cases they say undercut Smith's argument that Trump is responsible for the violence.

Judge Chutkan recently rejected Trump's bid to strike references to the riot from the indictment, saying he "has not satisfied his burden to clearly show that they are prejudicial."

Smith's team has previewed how prosecutors will make the case that Trump used the angry mob as "a tool" in his campaign to pressure then-Vice President Mike Pence and obstruct the certification of Biden's victory in a bid to desperate bid to subvert the will of voters.

Prosecutors have suggested they will show jurors the video of Trump's speech before the riot in which he urged the crowd to go to the Capitol and "fight like hell." They have also indicated they may seek to call rioters as witnesses, saying they will provide testimony that people who were at the Ellipse when Trump told them to "fight" went on to violently attack the Capitol. And they plan to highlight Trump's continued embrace of the rioters to make the case that he intended for the chaos at the Capitol that day.

"There is a robust public record of how rioters' actions at the Capitol on January 6 were extraordinarily violent and destructive, including attacks on law enforcement officers with flag poles, tasers, bear spray, and stolen riot shields and batons," Smith's team wrote in a recent court filing. "Despite this, the defendant has never wavered in his support of January 6 offenders."

Though it's easy to see why the defense team would push to limit such references, it's also clear why prosecutors would see his encouragement and supportive words for the rioters as incriminating evidence that speaks to a criminal intent about his desire to overturn an election he had lost, said Tim Belevetz, a Washington attorney and former Justice Department prosecutor.

"The charges in the indictment require proof that President Trump acted knowingly and corruptly to overturn the election results," he said, adding that from the Smith's team perspective, "the actions at the Capitol that day are relevant to his state of mind, his intent and motive," he said.

## **Humanoid robots are here, but they're a little awkward. Do we really need them?**

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

Building a robot that's both human-like and useful is a decades-old engineering dream inspired by popular science fiction.

While the latest artificial intelligence craze has sparked another wave of investments in the quest to build a humanoid, most of the current prototypes are clumsy and impractical, looking better in staged performances than in real life. That hasn't stopped a handful of startups from keeping at it.

"The intention is not to start from the beginning and say, 'Hey, we're trying to make a robot look like a person,'" said Jonathan Hurst, co-founder and chief robot officer at Agility Robotics. "We're trying to make robots that can operate in human spaces."

Do we even need humanoids? Hurst makes a point of describing Agility's warehouse robot Digit as human-centric, not humanoid, a distinction meant to emphasize what it does over what it's trying to be.

What it does, for now, is pick up tote bins and move them. Amazon announced in October it will begin testing Digits for use in its warehouses, and Agility opened an Oregon factory in September to mass produce them.

Digit has a head containing cameras, other sensors and animated eyes, and a torso that essentially works as its engine. It has two arms and two legs, but its legs are more bird-like than human, with an inverted knees appearance that resembles so-called digitigrade animals such as birds, cats and dogs that walk on their toes rather than on flat feet.

Rival robot-makers, like Figure AI, are taking a more purist approach on the idea that only true humanoids can effectively navigate workplaces, homes and a society built for humans. Figure also plans to start with a relatively simple use case, such as in a retail warehouse, but aims for a commercial robot that can be "iterated on like an iPhone" to perform multiple tasks to take up the work of humans as birth rates decline around the world.

"There's not enough people doing these jobs, so the market's massive," said Figure AI CEO Brett Adcock. "If we can just get humanoids to do work that humans are not wanting to do because there's a shortfall of humans, we can sell millions of humanoids, billions maybe."

At the moment, however, Adcock's firm doesn't have a prototype that's ready for market. Founded just over a year ago and after having raised tens of millions of dollars, it recently revealed a 38-second video of Figure walking through its test facility in Sunnyvale, California.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk is also trying to build a humanoid, called Optimus, through the electric car-maker's robotics division, but a hyped-up live demonstration last year of the robot's awkwardly halting steps didn't impress experts in the robotics field. Seemingly farther along is Tesla's Austin, Texas-based neighbor Aptironik, which unveiled its Apollo humanoid in an August video demonstration.

All the attention — and money — poured into making ungainly humanoid machines might make the whole enterprise seem like a futile hobby for wealthy technologists, but for some pioneers of legged robots it's all about what you learn along the way.

"Not only about their design and operation, but also about how people respond to them, and about the critical underlying technologies for mobility, dexterity, perception and intelligence," said Marc Raibert, the founder of Boston Dynamics, best known for its dog-like robots named Spot.

Raibert said sometimes the path of development is not along a straight line. Boston Dynamics, now a subsidiary of carmaker Hyundai, experimented with building a humanoid that could handle boxes.

"That led to development of a new robot that was not really a humanoid, but had several characteristics of a humanoid," he said via an emailed message. "But the changes resulted in a new robot that could handle



boxes faster, could work longer hours, and could operate in tight spaces, such as a truck. So humanoid research led to a useful non-humanoid robot."

Some startups aiming for human-like machines focused on improving the dexterity of robotic fingers before trying to get their robots to walk.

Walking is "not the hardest problem to solve in humanoid robotics," said Geordie Rose, co-founder and CEO of British Columbia, Canada-based startup Sanctuary AI. "The hardest problem is the problem of understanding the world and being able to manipulate it with your hands."

Sanctuary's newest and first bipedal robot, Phoenix, can stock shelves, unload delivery vehicles and operate a checkout, early steps toward what Rose sees as a much longer-term goal of getting robots to perceive the physical world to be able to reason about it in a way that resembles intelligence. Like other humanoids, it's meant to look endearing, because how it interacts with real people is a big part of its function.

"We want to be able to provide labor to the world, not just for one thing, but for everybody who needs it," Rose said. "The systems have to be able to think like people. So we could call that artificial general intelligence if you'd like. But what I mean more specifically is the systems have to be able to understand speech and they need to be able to convert the understanding of speech into action, which will satisfy job roles across the entire economy."

Agility's Digit robot caught Amazon's attention because it can walk and also move around in a way that could complement the e-commerce giant's existing fleet of vehicle-like robots that move large carts around its vast warehouses.

"The mobility aspect is more interesting than the actual form," said Tye Brady, Amazon's chief technologist for robotics, after the company showed it off at a media event in Seattle.

Right now, Digit is being tested to help with the repetitive task of picking up and moving empty totes. But just having it there is bound to resurrect some fears about robots taking people's jobs, a narrative Amazon is trying to prevent from taking hold.

Agility Robotics co-founder and CEO Damion Shelton said the warehouse robot is "just the first use case" of a new generation of robots he hopes will be embraced rather than feared as they prepare to enter businesses and homes.

"So in 10, 20 years, you're going to see these robots everywhere," Shelton said. "Forever more, human-centric robots like that are going to be part of human life. So that's pretty exciting."

## **Israel likens Hamas to the Islamic State group. But the comparison misses the mark in key ways**

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — It has become an Israeli mantra throughout the latest war in Gaza: Hamas is ISIS. Since the bloody Hamas attack on Oct. 7 that triggered the conflict, Israeli leaders and commanders have likened the Palestinian militant group to the Islamic State group in virtually every speech and public statement. They point to Hamas' slaughter of hundreds of civilians and compare their mission to defeat Hamas to the U.S.-led campaign to defeat IS in Iraq and Syria.

"Hamas is ISIS," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared just after the attack. "And just as the forces of civilization united to defeat ISIS, the forces of civilization must support Israel in defeating Hamas."

But in many ways, these comparisons miss the mark by ignoring the home-grown origins and base of support for Hamas in Palestinian society and by assuming that this deeply embedded movement can be stamped out like a brush fire.

These miscalculations may already have led to unrealistic expectations in Israel for victory. They also complicate fledgling efforts by the U.S. and other international mediators to end the war, which has devastated Gaza, displaced more than three-quarters of its population and killed over 13,300 Palestinians, according to health authorities in the Hamas-ruled territory.

Here is a closer look at the campaigns against these very different militant groups and what it could

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mean for Israel's ground invasion and the future of Gaza.

IS HAMAS THE SAME AS THE ISLAMIC STATE GROUP?

The violent images of Oct. 7 brought to mind the scenes of cruelty unleashed by the Islamic State group during its short self-declared caliphate in Iraq and Syria nearly a decade ago.

In an unprecedented attack, Hamas fighters burst into Israeli communities, killing entire families as they cowered in their homes, burning people alive and taking some 240 hostages, including older people and young children. Israeli authorities say at least 1,200 people were killed, some of whom were mutilated so badly they still have not been identified.

In a late October interview with a Lebanese TV station, Ghazi Hamad, a senior Hamas official, said the Oct. 7 rampage was just "the first time" and promised similar attacks in the future aimed at annihilating Israel.

"We must punish Israel and we will do this again and again," he told the Lebanese channel LBC.

While the Islamic State group also carried out gruesome killings, including beheading and setting live prisoners on fire, that is where many of the similarities end.

IS fighters were mostly Iraqi and Syrian, but the group also managed to attract thousands of recruits for its global jihadi movement from around the world, including Europe, Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and the former Soviet Union. These foreigners often did not speak the local language, were seen as outsiders and disliked by the local communities.

The group has also taken responsibility for a string of deadly attacks across Europe, including in Paris and Brussels.

In contrast, Hamas is an exclusively Palestinian movement. Its members are Palestinian and its ideology, albeit violent, is focused on liberating what it says is occupied land through the destruction of Israel. While branded a terrorist group by Israel and its Western allies, its deadly attacks have been focused on Israeli targets.

Hamas seized control of Gaza from the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority in 2007, a year after trouncing the PA's Fatah rulers in legislative elections.

During its 16 years of rule, Hamas built up a system of government that includes not only its military wing, but also tens of thousands of teachers, civil servants and police. The group also has significant support inside the West Bank and an exiled leadership spread out across the Arab world.

A U.S.-led coalition defeated IS in Iraq in 2017 and in Syria two years later, though the group still has thousands of fighters in sleeper cells in both countries.

Eradicating Hamas could be a much tougher task. Israel has already backed away from its initial pledges to wipe Hamas off the face of the earth. But given Hamas' deep roots, even its current goals of destroying the Hamas' military and governing capabilities in Gaza still may be too ambitious.

Michael Milshtein, an expert on Palestinian affairs at Tel Aviv University and former head of the Palestinian desk in Israel's military intelligence, said the comparisons of Hamas to IS work in a limited context but otherwise are misleading.

"I do think that the slogan is right when you are trying to express and reflect the brutality of Hamas," he said. "But of course we're speaking about different entities."

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF HAMAS?

Hamas was established during the first Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation in the late 1980s and has survived repeated assassinations of its top leaders and four previous wars with Israel since 2008.

While Israel claims to have inflicted heavy damage on the group during the latest war, much of its fighting force and network of tunnels appear to remain intact. Its exiled leadership maintains working relations with key countries like Egypt and Qatar.

Nathan Brown, an expert on Hamas, said he doesn't see "any way" in which Hamas can be eradicated. "By continually talking this way, the Israeli leadership is not just setting up expectations, but really I think digging themselves into a hole," he said. Israel has laid out its security demands for a postwar Gaza, but offered no plan for who might run the territory.

Brown, a political science professor at George Washington University, said that after a bruising war,

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Hamas may be forced to reinvent itself, perhaps by controlling local residents' committees or going back to being an underground militant group. But he said it will maintain some sort of presence, while remaining active in the West Bank and continuing to be a regional player.

"Hamas will be there," he said.

## CHALLENGE FOR US DIPLOMACY?

Israel's ambitious goals against Hamas have complicated the task of the U.S. as it works with Qatari and Egyptian mediators to end the war.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is expected in the region later this week to discuss, among other things, the principles for a postwar Gaza.

For now, Israel remains committed to its goals. Netanyahu has vowed to strike Hamas with Israel's "full force" as soon as the cease-fire expires. This would mean an expansion of Israel's ground offensive into southern Gaza – where the vast majority of the territory's population is now concentrated – setting the stage for a complicated and bloody operation.

The U.S., which initially backed Israel's war in Gaza, is now pressing Israel to avoid large-scale civilian casualties or mass displacement if the fighting resumes.

But with the war enjoying broad support among the Israeli public, Blinken faces a difficult task. Although diplomatic efforts are focused on extending the cease-fire, any formula to end the war would have to allow Israel to declare victory, even if Hamas remains intact.

Milshtein says toppling Hamas' government and destroying its army remain feasible objectives. But he believes there is a growing awareness among Israeli decision makers that "we cannot really make this organization vanish."

## Five journalists were shot in one day in Mexico, officials confirm

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's president said Wednesday that two of four news photographers who were shot Tuesday are in serious condition, as prosecutors confirmed that a fifth journalist was shot and wounded the same day.

The four photojournalists were shot near a military barracks in the southern Guerrero state after they returned from a crime scene. They had been covering one of the many homicides that occur on a near-daily basis in the violence-wracked city of Chilpancingo.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said "we must regret this," referring to the shooting, but did not offer any information on a possible motive in the attack.

Another shooting Tuesday in the neighboring state of Michoacan wounded reporter Maynor Ramón Ramírez, bringing the number of victims to five and marking one of the largest one-day tolls of media workers in a decade.

Ramírez suffered several gunshot wounds along with a companion in the city of Apatzingan, the newspaper ABC of Michoacan said,

The attacks came days after three journalists were abducted and held for days in Taxco, also in Guerrero state. They were later released, and there was no information on the motive for their abduction.

Guerrero has been the scene of deadly turf battles between around a dozen drug gangs and cartels. Michoacan has suffered similar turf battles between the Jalisco cartel and local gangs.

The shootings and abductions on Tuesday mark some of the largest mass attacks on reporters in one place in Mexico since one day in early 2012, when the bodies of three news photographers were found dumped in plastic bags in a canal in the Gulf coast city of Veracruz. Those killings were blamed on the once-powerful Zetas drug cartel.

Earlier this month, a photographer for a newspaper in the Mexican border city of Ciudad Juarez was found shot to death in his car. His death was the fifth instance of a journalist being killed in Mexico so far in 2023.

In the past five years alone, the Committee to Protect Journalists documented the killings of at least 54 journalists in Mexico.

## **A six-planet solar system in perfect synchrony has been found in the Milky Way**

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Astronomers have discovered a rare in-sync solar system with six planets moving like a grand cosmic orchestra, untouched by outside forces since their birth billions of years ago.

The find, announced Wednesday, can help explain how solar systems across the Milky Way galaxy came to be. This one is 100 light-years away in the constellation Coma Berenices. A light-year is 5.8 trillion miles.

A pair of planet-hunting satellites — NASA's TESS and the European Space Agency's Cheops — teamed up for the observations.

None of the planets in perfect synchrony are within the star's so-called habitable zone, which means little if any likelihood of life, at least as we know it.

"Here we have a golden target" for comparison, said Adrien Leleu of the University of Geneva, who was part of an international team that published the results in the journal *Nature*.

This star, known as HD 110067, may have even more planets. The six found so far are roughly two to three times the size of Earth, but with densities closer to the gas giants in our own solar system. Their orbits range from nine to 54 days, putting them closer to their star than Venus is to the sun and making them exceedingly hot.

As gas planets, they're believed to have solid cores made of rock, metal or ice, enveloped by thick layers of hydrogen, according to the scientists. More observations are needed to determine what's in their atmospheres.

This solar system is unique because all six planets move similar to a perfectly synchronized symphony, scientists said. In technical terms, it's known as resonance that's "precise, very orderly," said co-author Eric Pallé of the Institute of Astrophysics of the Canary Islands.

The innermost planet completes three orbits for every two by its closest neighbor. It's the same for the second- and third-closest planets, and the third- and fourth-closest planets.

The two outermost planets complete an orbit in 41 and 54.7 days, resulting in four orbits for every three. The innermost planet, meanwhile, completes six orbits in exactly the time the outermost completes one.

All solar systems, including our own, are thought to have started out like this one, according to the scientists. But it's estimated only 1-in-100 systems have retained that synchrony, and ours isn't one of them. Giant planets can throw things off-kilter. So can meteor bombardments, close encounters with neighboring stars and other disturbances.

While astronomers know of 40 to 50 in-sync solar systems, none have as many planets in such perfect step or as bright a star as this one, Pallé said.

The University of Bern's Hugh Osborn, who was part of the team, was "shocked and delighted" when the orbital periods of this star system's planets came close to what scientists predicted.

"My jaw was on the floor," he said. "That was a really nice moment."

## **Ukraine insists it sees no sign of NATO war fatigue even as fighting and weapons supplies stall**

By LORNE COOK and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba insisted on Wednesday that NATO allies are showing no sign of war fatigue and remain committed to helping Ukraine defend itself against Russia and take back occupied territory.

Speaking to The Associated Press, Kuleba also said that President Vladimir Putin is miscalculating if he sees any value in keeping his forces in Ukraine at least until presidential elections in the United States in a year's time, which could usher in a new administration.

"I heard a clear 'no' to any reference to fatigue, and I heard (a) clear 'yes' to increased support to Ukraine," Kuleba said after meeting NATO counterparts in Brussels. He said that some allies had made

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fresh offers of support, but he declined to provide details.

"They understand that in order for them to feel safe, in order for them not to end up in a situation where NATO's soldiers will have to fight, Ukraine has to win in this war," Kuleba said.

More than 650 days into the war, fighting between Russia and Ukraine has bogged down, with neither able to make significant gains. NATO believes that Russia has suffered around 300,000 casualties, but officials decline to speculate about the toll on Ukraine.

NATO as an organization does not provide military assistance to Ukraine, even though many members do on an individual basis and in groups. But supplying ammunition and equipment has become a challenge as national weapons stocks dwindle.

And the rhetoric has shifted. Six weeks ago, top NATO officials and ministers praised the slow but incremental gains that Ukraine's armed forces were making. This week, the country's mere survival was being hailed as a victory.

Still, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the allies are "determined to make sure that Ukraine has what it needs, including to take back territory." He said many NATO members want "to help Ukraine build a future force that can ensure deterrence, and ensure defense against aggression going forward."

Blinken said the only thing preventing an end to the war "is Vladimir Putin and the extent to which he believes that he can somehow outlast Ukraine, outlast his people," and Putin's refusal "to engage in any meaningful way in diplomacy or negotiations."

A senior U.S. official said that most, if not all, NATO allies do not believe Putin will agree to any kind of deal with Ukraine until after the U.S. election, and they approach their decisions on assistance to Ukraine with that in mind.

This means not only military aid but also reconstruction assistance, economic support and help with reforms to get Ukraine on a more sustainable path to NATO membership, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. He offered no specifics.

But Kuleba said that Putin is always holding out for something.

"He always waits for elections in another country to take place and for the new government and new leadership to change the attitude," Kuleba said, "and President Putin always failed, consistently failed, in his expectations."

He added: "There may be differences about the best ways to contain Russia, to deter Russia. But the understanding (at NATO) that Russia poses a threat is consensual, and I don't see that changing."

The United States and European Union are struggling to provide enough funds to keep Ukraine's war economy afloat. The money is being held up due to political infighting and convoluted decision-making.

But Ukraine is mostly focused on winning the ultimate security guarantee – what Kuleba described as "the mother of all decisions" – joining NATO and opening EU membership talks.

EU leaders will weigh that decision next month and the European Commission, which oversees the accession process, has said that talks should start soon, perhaps early in 2024. However, there is no consensus on allowing Ukraine to join NATO while the war continues.

Asked whether Ukraine intends to join both organizations with its occupied territories, including the Crimean Peninsula, Kuleba said that the whole country as it was internationally recognized in 1991 would be signing up.

"Otherwise, what was it all for?" he said. "We will win in the war. We will restore our territorial integrity."

The NATO meeting came a day after the wife of Ukraine's military intelligence chief was diagnosed with heavy metals poisoning. Marianna Budanova, the wife of Lt. Gen. Kyrylo Budanov, was undergoing treatment.

An official in the intelligence agency, known as GUR, said Wednesday that Budanova was poisoned with arsenic and mercury. The poisoning of several other GUR employees apart from Budanova was confirmed, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.

Kuleba said he had no firm information about who or what was behind it, but that "it makes sense to assume that it was an attempt on her life, because we know that Russia previously had tried to assassinate Budanov himself."

## Gay couple in Nepal becomes the 1st to officially register same-sex marriage in the country

By BINAJ GURUBACHARYA Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — A gay couple in Nepal on Wednesday became the first in the nation to receive official same-sex marriage status. The Himalayan nation is one of the first in Asia to allow it.

"After 23 years of struggle we got this historic achievement, and finally Maya and Surendra got their marriage registered at the local administration office," said Sunil Babu Pant, an openly gay former parliamentarian and leading LGBTQ+ rights activist.

Pant was present with Surendra Pandey and Maya Gurung when they registered their marriage at the Dorje village council office, located in the mountains west of the capital, Kathmandu.

Earlier this year, Nepal's supreme court issued an interim order enabling the registration of same-sex marriages for the first time.

Officials had initially refused to register the marriage. The couple and Pant filed cases with the Kathmandu District Court and High Court, but their pleas were rejected.

According to Pant, the Home Ministry this week made changes in the process enabling all local administration offices to register same-sex marriages.

"It was quite unexpected and it was a positive breeze for us," Pant said by phone from the village where the couple were expected to celebrate later Wednesday.

The couple married six years ago at a temple following Hindu tradition, with a priest conducting the rituals among friends and family. But they had no certificate showing their marriage was legal.

Nepal has undergone a transformation since a court decision in 2007 asked the government to make changes in favor of LGBTQ+ people. People who do not identify as female or male are now able to choose "third gender" on their passports and other government documents. The constitution adopted in 2015 also explicitly states there can be no discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

## In the US, Black survivors are nearly invisible in the Catholic clergy sexual abuse crisis

By TIFFANY STANLEY and LEA SKENE Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — As Charles Richardson gradually lost his eyesight to complications from diabetes, certain childhood memories haunted him even more.

The Catholic priest appeared vividly in his mind's eye — the one who promised him a spot on a travel basketball team, took him out for burgers and helped him with homework. The one, Richardson alleges, who sexually assaulted him for more than a year.

"I've been seeing him a lot lately," Richardson said.

As a Black middle schooler from Baltimore, Richardson started spending time with the Rev. Henry Zerhusen, a charismatic white cleric. It was the 1970s and Zerhusen's parish was a fixture in a neighborhood experiencing white flight and rapidly becoming majority-Black. Zerhusen welcomed his church's racial integration and implemented programs for struggling families, including Richardson's.

Black survivors like Richardson have been nearly invisible in the Catholic Church sexual abuse crisis — even in Baltimore, home to a historic Black Catholic community in the nation's oldest archdiocese. Cases of clergy abuse among African Americans are underreported, experts say, and the U.S. Catholic Church generally does not publicly track the race or ethnicity of victims. Without that data, the full scope of the abuse and its effects is unknown.

"Persons of color have suffered a long legacy of neglect and marginalization in the Catholic Church," said the Rev. Bryan Massingale, a Black Catholic priest and Fordham University professor whose research has focused on the issue. "We need to correct the idea that all or most of the victims of this abuse have been white and male."

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Earlier this year, the Maryland Attorney General's Office released a scathing report on child sex abuse within the Baltimore archdiocese. The report documents more than 600 abuse cases but leaves out any context about race. There are clues, however, in the names of priests and churches listed.

Out of 27 parishes in the archdiocese that have significant Black populations, at least 19 — 70% — previously had priests on staff accused of sexual abuse, according to an Associated Press analysis. For parishes that experienced demographic shifts, these abusers were in residence in the years after Black membership increased and white membership declined.

In 2013, Zerhusen faced accusations from another victim — the grandson of a woman who had worked at St. Ambrose. The archdiocese settled with the victim for \$32,500 and added Zerhusen to their list of credibly accused priests.

Christian Kendzierski, an archdiocese spokesperson, said he was just learning of Richardson's allegation about Zerhusen, who died in 2003, when contacted by the AP.

The last time Zerhusen abused him, Richardson said, he jumped out a stained-glass window to escape. He still bears scars that he attributes to the fall.

But the emotional scars have never healed. Until recently, he had never told his family about the assaults.

As Black men, "we have a reputation we have to carry with us, a façade," Richardson said. "Something like this is one of the worst things — to say you have been raped or touched by another man."

After the attorney general's report, Maryland lawmakers voted to repeal the statute of limitations for child victims to sue. At age 58, Richardson retained a lawyer and decided to go public.

Ray Kelly, chair of the pastoral council at St. Peter Claver, a Black Baltimore parish, said the archdiocese has failed to address racial disparities.

"The Americanized Catholic Church still sees the Black population as a perpetual charity case, so to speak," he said. "And the predators are going to go where the prey is — Black communities relying on the church for support."

Abuse also came from within Baltimore's Black community.

When he was ordained in 1974, Maurice Blackwell was a celebrated rarity: a homegrown Black priest. Since then, he has been accused of sexually abusing at least 10 boys under 18, most at majority-Black parishes.

Darrell Carter alleges he was one of Blackwell's victims. Now 63, he decided to sue under the new state law.

As a teen, Carter visited two of Blackwell's parishes looking for odd jobs. Instead, he said, Blackwell sexually abused him for four years and paid him \$25 each time. Carter said Blackwell brandished a gun and threatened to kill him if he told anyone.

Carter said he reported the abuse to the archdiocese several years later, but nothing came of it. The archdiocese said it received a report of Carter's abuse in 2019 and reported it to law enforcement. Blackwell didn't respond to recent messages seeking comment.

Of the abuse, Carter said, "There's not a day that goes by that I don't think about it."

In 2002, another of Blackwell's victims, Dontee Stokes, confronted and shot Blackwell after he refused to apologize. The shooting became a defining event in Baltimore's mishandling of clergy sex abuse claims, just as the scope of the crisis was breaking open in Boston.

Blackwell survived, and Stokes was later acquitted of attempted murder. He served 18 months of home detention for gun charges.

Stokes had reported the abuse nearly a decade before the shooting, but police never filed charges. Although the archdiocese found his claims credible, its leaders returned Blackwell to ministry. Blackwell was finally removed in 1998 after another victim came forward.

But it was only after the 2002 shooting that Blackwell was formally laicized and criminally charged. Despite being convicted of three counts of child sexual abuse, he was granted a new trial because of the "improper testimony about possible other victims," according to the attorney general's report. Prosecutors ultimately declined to retry him.

In 1990, not long before Blackwell was first publicly accused, Gloria Webster's daughter became suicidal

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and admitted she had been sexually abused by her white youth pastor, the Rev. Richard Deakin, starting when she was 13.

"It was like I was suing God," said Webster, who pursued criminal and civil charges against Deakin. "All my friends turned against me."

Meanwhile, Angelique Webster navigated the case between psychiatric hospitalizations. "I couldn't hide from it because it was there all the time," she said.

Deakin pleaded guilty to second-degree rape and child sex abuse, receiving no jailtime with a suspended sentence and probation. He later became a social worker at a Veterans Affairs facility in Pennsylvania. He didn't respond to a message seeking comment.

In 1993, the Websters settled out of court for \$2.7 million, a staggering sum for the archdiocese, where most settlements fall under \$100,000.

Survivors coming forward now will likely receive smaller settlements since the archdiocese declared bankruptcy.

But for his part, Richardson recently found solace in telling his daughter about the abuse: "A great weight has been lifted off my shoulders."

He's retired now, but Richardson recalled a moment that stood out during his career as a car salesman — when another clergy abuse victim walked into his dealership. That was sometime after Stokes had shot Blackwell, and Richardson recognized him from media coverage. Before selling him a car, Richardson told Stokes he was proud of him.

But he couldn't yet say what he really wanted to share: that it happened to him too. Now, he finally can.

## Today in History: November 30, actor Paul Walker dies in Porsche crash at age 40

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Nov. 30, the 334th day of 2023. There are 31 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 30, 2013, actor Paul Walker star of the "Fast & Furious" movie series, died with his friend, Roger W. Rodas, who was at the wheel of a Porsche sports car that crashed and burned north of Los Angeles. Walker was 40.

On this date:

In 1782, the United States and Britain signed preliminary peace articles in Paris for ending the Revolutionary War; the Treaty of Paris was signed in September 1783.

In 1803, Spain completed the process of ceding Louisiana to France, which had sold it to the United States.

In 1874, British statesman Sir Winston Churchill was born at Blenheim Palace in Woodstock, England.

In 1981, the United States and the Soviet Union opened negotiations in Geneva aimed at reducing nuclear weapons in Europe.

In 1982, the motion picture "Gandhi," starring Ben Kingsley as the Indian nationalist leader, had its world premiere in New Delhi.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the Brady Bill, which required a five-day waiting period for handgun purchases and background checks of prospective buyers.

In 2000, Al Gore's lawyers battled for his political survival in the Florida and U.S. Supreme Courts; meanwhile, GOP lawmakers in Tallahassee moved to award the presidency to George W. Bush in case the courts did not by appointing their own slate of electors.

In 2004, "Jeopardy!" fans saw Ken Jennings end his 74-game winning streak as he lost to real estate agent Nancy Zerg.

In 2010, the Obama administration announced that all 197 airlines that flew to the U.S. had begun collecting names, genders and birth dates of passengers so the government could check them against terror watch lists before they boarded flights.



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In 2011, an Arizona jury sentenced convicted "Baseline Killer" Mark Goudeau (goo-DOH') to death for killing nine people in the Phoenix area. (He remains on death row.)

In 2012, Israel approved the construction of 3,000 homes in Jewish settlements on occupied lands, drawing swift condemnation from the Palestinians a day after their successful bid for recognition by the United Nations.

In 2017, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi called on veteran Democratic congressman John Conyers to resign in the face of multiple accusations of sexual misconduct. (Conyers resigned five days later.)

In 2018, former President George H.W. Bush, a World War II hero who rose through the political ranks to the nation's highest office, died at his Houston home at the age of 94; his wife of more than 70 years, Barbara Bush, had died in April.

In 2020, two battleground states, Wisconsin and Arizona, certified their presidential election tallies in favor of Joe Biden, even as President Donald Trump's legal team continued to dispute the results.

In 2021, Ethan Crumbley, a 15-year-old sophomore, opened fire at a Michigan high school, killing four students and wounding seven other people.

In 2022, House Democrats elected Rep. Hakeem Jeffries to be the first Black American to head a major political party in Congress as long-serving Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her team stepped aside.

Today's Birthdays: Country singer-recording executive Jimmy Bowen is 86. Movie director Ridley Scott is 86. Screenwriter Geoffrey C. Ward is 83. Movie writer-director Terrence Malick is 80. Rock musician Roger Glover (Deep Purple) is 78. Playwright David Mamet (MA'-meht) is 76. Actor Mandy Patinkin is 71. Musician Shuggie Otis is 70. Country singer Jeannie Kendall is 69. Singer Billy Idol is 68. Historian Michael Beschloss is 68. Rock musician John Ashton (The Psychedelic Furs) is 66. Comedian Colin Mochrie is 66. Former football and baseball player Bo Jackson is 61. Rapper Jalil (Whodini) is 60. Actor-director Ben Stiller is 58. Rock musician Mike Stone is 54. Music producer Steve Aoki is 46. Singer Clay Aiken is 45. Actor Billy Lush is 42. Actor Elisha Cuthbert is 41. Actor Kaley Cuoco (KWOH'-koh) is 38. Model Chrissy Teigen is 38. Actor Christel Khalil is 36. Actor Rebecca Rittenhouse is 35. Actor Adelaide Clemens is 34. World chess champion Magnus Carlsen is 33. Actor Tyla Harris is 23.