

Groton Daily Independent

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Tuesday, Jan. 16

Senior Menu: Hamburger cabbage roll hot dish, corn, pears, muffin.

School Breakfast: Scones.

School Lunch: Hot digs, chips.

Boys Junior High Basketball at Milbank in the elementary gym (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.)

JH Boys Wrestling at Simmons Middle School.

Girls and Boys Varsity Wrestling at Groton Area with Clark/Willow Lake and Hamlin, 6 p.m.

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

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

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

Wednesday, Jan. 17

Senior Menu: Beef/broccoli stir fry rice, cauliflower, five cup salad, whole wheat bread

School Breakfast: Cereal

School Lunch: Loaded baked potato soup.

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Confirmation, 6 p.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Communion at Rosewood Court, 10 a.m.; Confirmation, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.

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

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

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"Many of our fears are tissue-paper thin, and a single courageous step would carry us clear through them."

BRENDAN FRANCIS



Service Notice: Larry Schelle

Mass of Christian Burial for Larry Schelle, 87, of Groton will be 2:00 p.m., Friday, January 19th at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church. Father Gregory Tschakert will officiate. Burial will follow in Union Cemetery, Groton under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held at the church on Friday beginning at noon.

Larry passed away January 14, 2024 at Avantara Groton.

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1440

In partnership with **smartasset**[™]

Former President Donald Trump won the Republican caucus in the Hawkeye State yesterday, garnering 51% of the votes after caucus-goers faced icy temperatures and cast their ballots for the first test of the 2024 presidential primary season. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis came in second place (21.2%), ahead of former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley (19.1%). Entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy (7.7%) ended his campaign and endorsed Trump. See full results here.

German farmers continued weeklong protests in Berlin yesterday, with over 10,000 protesters and roughly 5,000 tractors blocking roads in the city's center. The protests stem from government plans first announced in December to end several farming subsidies to help fill a funding gap in this year's federal budget.

The 75th Primetime Emmy Awards, hosted by actor and comedian Anthony Anderson, returned last night after being postponed four months due to last year's Hollywood writers and actors strikes.

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Miss Colorado Madison Marsh becomes first active-duty service member to be crowned Miss America in the pageant's 102-year history.

FC Barcelona's Aitana Bonmati and Inter Miami star Lionel Messi win FIFA Best Awards for top female and male soccer players.

NFL Divisional Round bracket and schedule set after wild-card weekend wraps. Kansas City Chiefs and Miami Dolphins wild-card matchup on Peacock sets US record for most-streamed live event with 23 million viewers.

Science & Technology

NASA and Lockheed Martin reveal the experimental X-59, a "quiet" supersonic jet capable of traveling at 1.4 times the speed of sound without creating a sonic boom.

Apple to drop blood oxygen sensor from flagship Apple Watch models, reports suggest, in effort to avoid import ban.

Pacific coast kelp forests are at least 32 million years old, more than twice as old as previously thought; findings reverse theories on how the region's coastal ecosystems evolved.

Business & Markets

Annual World Economic Forum kicks off in the small ski resort town of Davos, Switzerland, hosting government leaders, multinational CEOs, and global financiers.

Uber shuts down alcohol delivery service Drizly, which the rideshare company bought three years ago for \$1.1B.

Boeing announces changes to quality control process for 737 Max production line after midair blowout of door plug on 737 Max 9 model earlier this month; changes include increased inspections and independent third-party assessment.

Politics & World Affairs

Houthi militants fire ballistic missile, strike US-owned ship off the coast of Yemen as tensions continue to escalate in the Red Sea. Iran's Revolutionary Guards launch strikes in northern Iraq and Syria, killing at least four people.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, 70, released from hospital after spending two weeks there for complications arising from a Dec. 22 surgery to treat prostate cancer.

Pacific island nation of Nauru cuts diplomatic ties with Taiwan in favor of China, reducing the number of countries Taiwan shares full diplomatic relations with to 12.

Why 1440? The printing press was invented around the year 1440, spreading knowledge to the masses and changing the course of history. More facts: In every day, there are 1,440 minutes. We're here to make each one count.

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Weekly Vikings Recap - Wild Card Round

By Jack & Duane Kolsrud

Buffalo Bills 31 - Pittsburgh Steelers 17

After having their game moved from Sunday to Monday due to severe winter weather, the Buffalo Bills finally got to face off against the Pittsburgh Steelers on Monday afternoon. In typical Bills' fashion, the Bills relied heavily on both Josh Allen's arm and legs as he accounted for four total touchdowns, one of which was an impressive 52-yard rushing touchdown that gave the Bills a 21-0 lead. Unsurprisingly, the Steelers did not go without a fight, but their comeback fell short as the Bills will now move on to face the defending Super Bowl Champions, the Kansas City Chiefs, next week.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers 32 - Philadelphia Eagles 9

In the final game of the Wild Card Round, the defending NFC Champion, Philadelphia Eagles, traveled to Tampa Bay to face the Buccaneers. The game was pretty much all Buccaneers from start to finish as they dominated both sides of the ball, outgaining the Eagles by 151 total yards of offense. The Eagles, who coming into the game had lost five of their last six games, seemed to be completely out of sync the entire game. No play was more evident of that than when they got stuffed on their patented "brotherly shove" on a two-point attempt conversion attempt in the first half. The Buccaneers will now head to Detroit next week for the divisional round.

Coming up on GDILIVE.COM

Groton Area
Tigers



Tuesday, Jan. 16

JH BB at Milbank, 4 p.m.

Wrestling in Groton

with Dalton Locke, 6 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 18

Milbank Varsity Games

Girls at 6:30 p.m.

Boys at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 20

Great Plains Lutheran

Girls Varsity at 3:30 p.m.

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BIG Idea – Finalists

Back row: (From left to right) Morgan Haselhorst, Warner (3rd Place); Hunter Reede, Milbank; Carter Simon, Groton; Dallas Stoltenberg, Northwestern (1st Place); Corbin Tople, Centerville (Hometown Business Winner); Grant Schlueter, Tri-Valley (Makers Winner)

Front row: (From left to right) Jersey Deibert-McPartland and Brooklyn Bossly, Warner (3rd Place); Kasen Bender, Watertown;; Kiara Tulowetzke, Watertown; Augustus Sieh, Leola (2nd Place); Cullen Pollard, Centerville (Hometown Business Winner)

Not Pictured: Bennett Gordon, Sturgis (Ag Innovation Winner); Emersen Mead, Dakota Valley (Marketing Design Winner) and Jaidryn Rice, Webster (Photo by Elizabeth Varin, Northern State University)

Winners announced for Big Idea Competition

The 2023 BIG Idea Competition marked a milestone with new opportunities for high school students. A record breaking total of 365 entries were received involving 443 students from 77 schools. For a second year in a row, a separate virtual competition was held for finalists outside of South Dakota. These were judged by a separate judging panel and separate prizes awarded. The 2023 event wrapped up Wednesday, December 6, at Northern State University (NSU) with the Awards Ceremony. Winners from both competitions were announced along with five special category awards. A total of \$50,000 in cash and scholarships was awarded. The livestream link for the event can be found on the BIG Idea facebook page (@BIGIdeaSD).

Dallas Stoltenberg of Northwestern High School took first place in the South Dakota competition with Stoltenberg Tailgate Seating, a business that uses the tailgates of old vehicles to make a unique bench to provide a vintage look to a property or retain memories of the vehicle for the owner. His prize includes \$1,000 cash prize, a \$2,500 scholarship to NSU and a \$2,500 scholarship to the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

Second place went to Clean Car Detailing Co by Augustus Sieh from Leola High School, a mobile car detailing business which provides interior and exterior car cleaning services for busy people who want to maintain their vehicle. Second place prizes include \$500 cash, \$2,000 NSU scholarship, and \$1,000 South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

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Third place was awarded to Paw's Who Cares by Warner High School students Morgan Haselhorst, Brooklyn Bossly and Jersey Deibert-McPartland. Paw's Who Care will use sheltered animals from the Human Society to engage with residents of nursing homes for several hours a day to improve the well-being of both the humans and animals. Third place prizes include \$250 cash, \$1,500 NSU scholarship and \$1,000 South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

The 5 remaining finalists (Carter Simon of Groton Area, Hunter Reed of Milbank, Kiara Tulowetzke of Watertown, Karen Bender of Watertown and Jaidryn Rice of Webster) will receive \$100 cash and \$1,000 scholarships to Northern State University, and the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

Taking first place in the Out-of-State Competition is Extentek LLC by Nir Pechuk of Davidson Academy Online in Nevada. Extentek makes and sells a device that assists visually impaired people pour liquids into containers without overflowing. The second place winner was ReactGlove, by Omar Reyes, Ary Dhanani, and Saheb Hibber from The Awty International School in Texas. The product is a glove that counteracts hand tremors in users with Parkinson's disease. Mental Metrics was the third place winner and presented by Abigail Hsu from Newark Academy in New Jersey. Abby's idea is a smart wristband and application that teenagers, doctors and parents can use to instantaneously track adolescent mental health. Mental Metrics also won the Wellness Award which provides a \$500 cash prize and \$500 scholarship from NSU. This year's Wellness Category, sponsored by Sanford Health, had a total of 76 qualifying entries.

Your Acai by Emersen Mead of Dakota Valley High School won the Marketing Design portion of the competition. Emersen submitted an ad for her business where customers can create customizable Acai bowls with a variety of fresh healthy toppings. The award is sponsored by McQuillen Creative Group which donates \$500 cash and Northern State University donates a \$500 scholarship as well. There were 212 entries judged in this category.

Hello Ag by Bennett Gordon of Sturgis Brown High School won this year's Ag Innovation for his business which promotes agri-tourism opportunities across the country. The award is sponsored by the South Dakota Agricultural Foundation which donates \$500 cash and Northern State University donates a \$500 scholarship as well. This year, 23 entries were submitted in this category.

C & C Spaw's Pet Grooming by Corbin Tople and Cullen Pollard from Centerville High School won this year's Hometown Business award. The award is sponsored by the South Dakota Retailers Association which donates \$500 cash and Northern State University donates a \$500 scholarship as well. A total of 136 entries were submitted in this category.

ArrowX by Grant Schlueter from Tri-Valley High School won this year's new Makers award for his business that creates trackable arrows that will help hunters retrieve their arrow and their prey. The award is sponsored by Blackout Industries which donates \$500 cash and Northern State University donates a \$500 scholarship as well. This year, 48 entries were submitted in this category.

During the Awards Ceremony, attendees heard an inspiring message from John T. Meyer on eight rules to be "Better Every Day". The Partners in Business Award is sponsored by Angelhaus to reward the networking and mentorship experiences teachers have incorporated into their classroom. This year's recipients of the Partners in Business award are Shelli Eide at Centerville High School, Pam Lane at Warner and Shauna Severson at Frederick High School. A full list of finalists, category winners and honorable mention entries can be found at www.bigideasd.com.

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That's Life by Tony Bender: Let's go to the movies

Hello friends and survivors! Hopefully, everyone is dug out, thawed, and power is restored. Like many of you, I've spent a lot of time hunkered down in recent weeks. By my calculations, we have enough food and wine to survive well into June. Of 2035. We ran on generator for a few days during the ice storm. Enough to keep the house heated and the television on, so I watched a few movies...

Oppenheimer: I know many readers are ahead of me on these movies, but there are others like me who live 100 miles from a theater, who wait for the hits to start streaming at home. I'm a history buff, so I found this story compelling and insightful. As much as you think you know about history, a good biopic can be thought-provoking. I came to the conclusion that the Manhattan Project was unavoidable. The Bomb was coming one way or another. Better to be in American hands, not that our track record is unimpeachable. The big question was did it have to be dropped? The narrative suggests, yes, that Japan would have fought an invasion to the last man. Then there's the context... the country had been fighting for four years and was weary. Imagine though, being Harry S. Truman, and having to make that decision.

Barbie: Well, Gus the Wonder Pug and I dressed in frilly pink things and settled in to see what had so riled old, white misogynists. Yes, it's a view of American patriarchy, but it's more sly than accusatory, mocking observations of the gauntlet women must run in society. Any movie with Margot Robbie and Will Ferrell is worth a shot. Robbie, arguably, is this generation's thespian genius. Incredible range. It's hard to pull your eyes from the screen because it's so entertainingly shot—alternating between a comic book universe to the real world—and the characters are cheerfully obtuse and funny.

Asteroid City: A Wes Anderson film, so you know it will be a different universe. Like "Barbie," it features a palette of color offset by black and white scenes. It's got a decidedly 50's feel with a long list of recognizable actors including a brilliantly deadpan Scarlett Johansson. Tom Hanks is droll—everyone is, and it's one of those movies that kept me thinking for days afterward. I'm definitely going to watch it again.

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood: I know, this one's been out there for a while, but I had to watch it again. First of all, it's a buddy flick with Leonardo DiCaprio, funny and vulnerable, and Brad Pitt, who exudes cool and a little homicidal mystery. It's centered around the Manson murders, and Margot Robbie (again) plays an endearing Sharon Tate. I won't spoil it for those of you who haven't seen it, other than to say it has a redemptive theme. Highlights include DiCaprio, a washed up TV cowboy, struggling through a guest appearance on another series, and Pitt's macho stuntman character ending up in a tussle with Bruce Lee. Quentin Tarantino is one of the best directors of our time, and this is one of his best. It's got heart.

And some oldies: OK, I couldn't flip past the "Blues Brothers." I'm sure I saw it in the theaters forever ago, and countless times since, but, hey, it's Belushi and Aykroyd. They're on a mission from God. A musical farce that reminded me how much I miss John Belushi.

I don't find a lot of "family movies" particularly intriguing, but some of them, like "The Sandlot," are iconic. A lesser relative, but still funny as heck, is "Rookie of the Year," the story of 12-year-old kid whose arm suddenly develops major league powers and he's recruited to save the iconic Chicago Cubs from evil forces, and there are always evil forces lurking in such stories. John Candy provides levity—interrupting the other levity—as the announcer. Daniel Stern directs and stars as a brain-addled pitching coach. Gary Busey, who before he fell off his motorcycle, was a poor man's Nick Nolte, is terrific as fading pitcher.

And just for the heck of it, another Saturday Night Live spinoff, "Tommy Boy." Chris Farley, of course, plays the title character. David Spade is the straight man. It was never going to win an Academy Award, but it never aspired to. It's here to give you 97 minutes of silliness and a feel-good reunion with that lost big goof, Chris Farley.

© Tony Bender, 2024



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

COMMENTARY

Republicans give three cheers for the Electoral College — again by DANA HESS

Lawmaking is a pretty straightforward business. A well-written law lacks ambiguity. If it's done right, there's no need to read between the lines to figure out what legislators really meant. That's not the case with concurrent resolutions, which are meant to offer a snapshot of what lawmakers are thinking about an issue. Since they don't have the weight of law, it's OK if resolutions say one thing yet mean another.

Take House Concurrent Resolution 6001, which has already flown through both chambers in this young legislative session. It's titled "Supporting the Electoral College." The resolution lives up to its title in the first paragraphs, extolling the virtues of the Electoral College, its balance between rural and urban interests, its preservation of the constitutional separation of powers and its endorsement by the Founding Fathers.

After six paragraphs of love for the Electoral College, HCR 6001 reveals its true nature. At this point it starts to talk some smack about the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

When enough states have signed on to the compact so that their combined Electoral College votes tally 270 — the total needed for a candidate to be elected president — they will cast their Electoral College votes for the candidate that has received the most votes nationwide. Compact backers say they are attempting to fulfill the pledge of one person, one vote.

Proponents of the compact say it treats each vote equally instead of giving more weight to votes cast in states with a larger tally of electoral votes. Since all votes would be treated equally, in theory the compact would keep candidates from concentrating all their visits and their advertising dollars on so-called "battleground" states.

There are questions about the constitutionality of the compact. Currently 16 states and the District of Columbia have signed up, representing 205 electoral votes, which translates to 38% of the Electoral College and 76% of the 270 votes needed to elect a president.

While the compact may need more legal scrutiny, it's apparent that the Electoral College has a few loopholes of its own. Donald Trump's attempt to game the system with slates of fake electors shows that the Electoral College may not be as secure as HCR 6001 would have us believe.

Under the current system, a presidential candidate need not win the popular vote as long as the candidate accrues enough votes in the Electoral College. In other words, if the candidate wins the right states, there's no need to worry about winning the popular vote.

It shouldn't be any surprise that the sponsors of HCR 6001 are Republicans. In recent history it's their presidential candidates, after all, that keep getting elected through the Electoral College while losing the popular vote. George W. Bush did it in 2000. Trump did it in 2016, winning the Electoral College vote while losing the popular vote to Hilary Clinton by more than 2.8 million votes. It's easy to see why Republicans have sponsored a measure that says Electoral College good, National Popular Vote Interstate Compact bad.

Not only that, they have said the same thing before. HCR 6001 is sponsored by Rep. Tina Mulally of Rapid City. She sponsored a remarkably similar resolution, HCR 6003, in 2020. It had the same title. It started out singing the praises of the Electoral College. It ended voicing its disapproval of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

The 2020 version proved to be popular with legislators, passing in the House 61-5 and being endorsed in the Senate on a vote of 31-3. This raises a question: If this love letter to the Electoral College was approved in 2020, why bring it back to life in 2024?

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Asked about her reasons for a legislative resurrection, Mulally said that she was bringing the resolution back because in 2023 the Legislature experienced an approximately 40% turnover. This raises the question of Mulally's priorities. Is she in Pierre to educate her colleagues or to work for the betterment of the people who elected her?

Obviously, the Republican super-majority in the Legislature didn't have any concerns about traveling over familiar ground. The resolution was endorsed 60-2 in the House one day and 26-3 in the Senate the next day. Both chambers waived assigning the resolution to committees and just voted on it, perhaps to save time. Because time, in a legislative session, is in short supply.

During the 2023 session, lawmakers dealt with more than 500 pieces of legislation. Lawmakers promised to get off to a fast start in 2024, and they have. However, with the tremendous press of work that legislators face in each session, it seems like overkill to devote even more time to a resolution that does not have the weight of law and protests a compact that at this point is far from becoming the law of the land.

Dana Hess spent more than 25 years in South Dakota journalism, editing newspapers in Redfield, Milbank and Pierre. He's retired and lives in Brookings, working occasionally as a freelance writer.

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GT
Groton Area
Tigers

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

Any interest in any of
these basketball games on
GDILIVE.COM?
They are \$25 each.

Milbank Girls JV
Milbank Boys JV
Great Plains Lutheran Girls C
Great Plains Lutheran Girls JV
Northwestern Girls JV
Webster Boys C
Webster Boys JV
Webster Girls JV
Florence/Henry Girls JV
Deuel Girls JV
Vermillion Boys JV
Redfield Boys C Game
Redfield Girls JV Game
Mobridge-Pollock Boys C Game
Mobridge-Pollock Girls C Game
Mobridge-Pollock Boys JV Game
Mobridge-Poolock Girls JV Game
Dakota Valley Boys JV
Dakota Valley Girls JV

COMMENTARY

The lessons of Martin Luther King Jr.'s life should give us hope today

by JANICE ELLIS

As we remember and reflect on the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., there are valuable lessons that should give us hope that we can overcome what we face today in a divided and teetering America.

If we, like King, truly believe that the words of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence are meant for all Americans, then zealously embrace them and put them into practice by letting them govern and guide our actions in both our public and private lives.

That fundamental belief inspired and motivated King and lit the path he chose to fix policies and practices to make life in America as it was intended to be.

This was made abundantly clear in his "I Have a Dream" speech during the historic march on Washington in the summer of 1963: "When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

King did not ignore, nor seek to discredit or dismantle, the basic tenets of our democratic republic. He embraced them instead.

When you hear the words and see the actions today of some of our elected officials at every level of government, do you sense that they, like King, are using our fundamental governing documents as guides?

If we, like King, seek to bring about change through dialogue — and when dialogue fails use sustained peaceful protest — then we have chosen a proven and effective strategy.

What would King have thought about what happened in our nation's Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, which was in stark contrast with what happened during the march on Washington in 1963?

Even though another momentous document — the Emancipation Proclamation signed 100 years before King led the Civil Rights movement — had failed to deliver on its promises, King still believed in its purpose and its power.

More importantly, he firmly believed that resorting to violence and hatred was not the way to get the country to honor its promises when it came to racial equality.

In that same speech, King said: "In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence."

Would he be discouraged by growing advocacy and tolerance of acts of racial hatred and violence — committed by young and older Americans alike?

If we, like King, still have faith in America's promises, despite her imperfections and failures, and faith in the decency and goodwill of the majority of our fellow Americans, we will continue to rise and protect this nation and work to make our way of life better.

No matter how long it takes. No matter how strong the opposition is.

King began his fight to gain equal rights for Blacks, poor whites and other disenfranchised groups years before the March on Washington. He continued the fight until his assassination in 1968 at the young age of 39.

We will never know how long he would have stayed the course, working for equal justice, equal opportunity, equality in housing, employment and education to become standard practice, ingrained in the fabric of American life.

But he let us know how deeply his beliefs and faith ran: "I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and "live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.""

If he were alive, what would he think about the status today of all people of color, all disenfranchised

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groups?

Would he be perplexed by how leaders in both political parties have continually failed for decades to pass meaningful policies on how to manage the immigration crisis?

He would have reasons to wonder whether the inscription at the bottom of the Statue of Liberty — “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore” — has lost its meaning.

On a broader scale, what would he think about some of our elected officials’ lack of belief in principles, laws and institutions that have made America? Would he be dismayed by the bold dismissal of democratic values and norms — even the blatant denial and distortion of defining periods in the nation’s history?

Martin Luther King Jr.’s life and work stood for more than the fight for civil rights. King fought for the fulfillment and realization of America’s principles, values and promises.

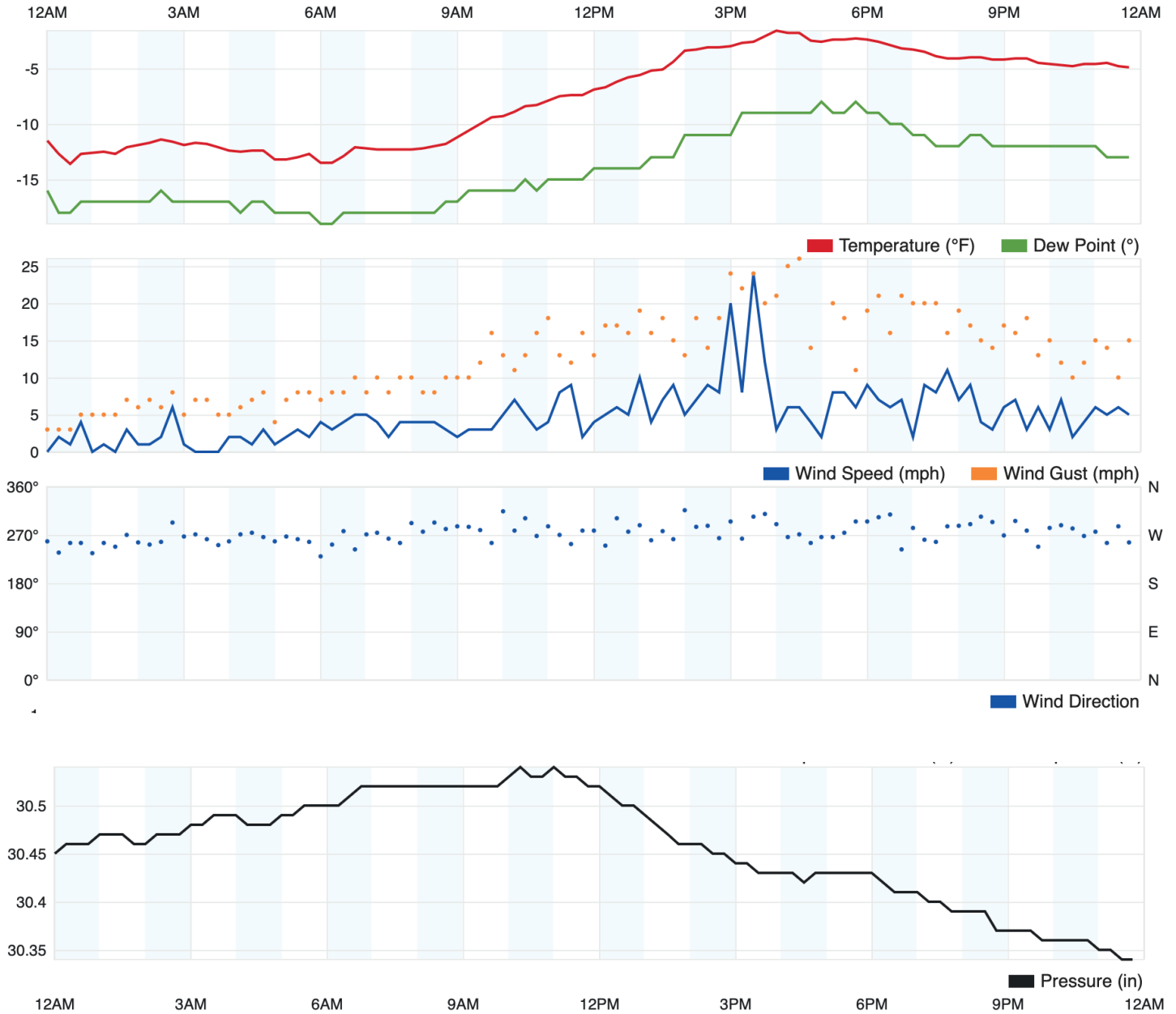
What are we willing to stand for during these challenging times we are facing?

Janice Ellis has lived and worked in Missouri for more than three decades, analyzing educational, political, social and economic issues across race, ethnicity, age and socioeconomic status. Her commentary has appeared in The Kansas City Star, community newspapers, on radio and now online. She is the author of two award-winning books: “From Liberty to Magnolia: In Search of the American Dream” (2018) and “Shaping Public Opinion: How Real Advocacy Journalism™ Should be Practiced” (2021). Ellis holds a Ph.D. in communication arts, and two master of arts degrees, one in communications arts and a second in political science, all from the University of Wisconsin.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20	Jan 21	Jan 22
7°F	8°F	4°F	2°F	10°F	24°F	32°F
-7°F	-5°F	-7°F	-13°F	5°F	18°F	22°F
WSW	W	N	NW	SSE	S	S
18 MPH	11 MPH	16 MPH	12 MPH	17 MPH	19 MPH	12 MPH
		30%				



Arctic Outbreak continues this Morning

January 16, 2024

3:55 AM

Key Messages

- Wind chills of -25 to -40 degrees this morning will warm to -10 to -25 degrees this afternoon
- Some rural areas could see some blowing snow as winds gust to 25 to 35 mph through the day today

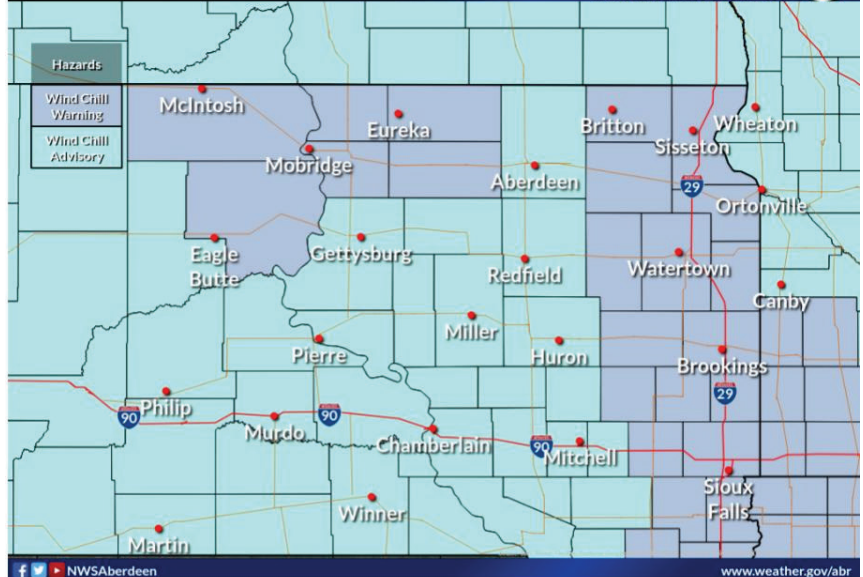
NEW

What Has Changed

- All headlines expire at noon CST

Wind Chill Headlines

Weather Forecast Office
Aberdeen, SD
Issued Jan 16, 2024 3:18 AM CST



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Wind chills will still be very cold to dangerous this morning, but warm some this afternoon. All headlines expire at noon CST.

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Dangerously Cold Wind Chills

January 16, 2024
3:58 AM



Hazards:

Wind chill values will range from -25 to -40 degrees through this morning and -10 to -25 degrees this afternoon



Timing & Duration:

Very cold to dangerous wind chills this morning



Impacts:

Exposed skin may freeze in a matter of minutes. Bring your pets inside!

	Minimum Wind Chill Forecast (°F)														Minimum	
	1/16 Tue							1/17 Wed								
	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm		9pm
Aberdeen	-28	-36	-32	-16	-12	-18	-17	-17	-20	-22	-21	-10	-7	-10	-13	-36
Britton	-33	-36	-34	-22	-17	-22	-22	-24	-25	-25	-25	-13	-13	-15	-17	-36
Brookings	-32	-31	-29	-20	-17	-17	-17	-18	-18	-18	-17	-9	-8	-9	-12	-32
Chamberlain	-25	-24	-20	-8	0	-2	-2	-1	-2	-2	1	5	5	2	-1	-25
Clark	-36	-41	-37	-25	-19	-24	-27	-27	-26	-28	-26	-15	-13	-15	-16	-41
Eagle Butte	-34	-35	-33	-16	-6	-8	-7	-8	-9	-10	-10	-2	-1	-5	-9	-35
Ellendale	-31	-36	-34	-20	-16	-18	-19	-21	-21	-21	-21	-12	-10	-14	-16	-36
Eureka	-34	-38	-37	-20	-10	-16	-18	-21	-21	-23	-22	-11	-11	-13	-15	-38
Gettysburg	-34	-37	-36	-17	-8	-14	-9	-14	-13	-17	-17	-8	-5	-9	-11	-37
Huron	-27	-26	-24	-14	-9	-9	-10	-10	-9	-9	-9	-4	-4	-7	-9	-27
Kennebec	-26	-35	-34	-12	-5	-8	-7	-7	-7	-9	-8	5	5	2	-1	-35
McIntosh	-36	-37	-35	-17	-9	-15	-14	-15	-14	-16	-18	-10	-7	-11	-14	-37
Milbank	-30	-35	-32	-20	-17	-19	-18	-19	-20	-21	-19	-9	-9	-13	-15	-35
Miller	-31	-35	-32	-16	-9	-12	-8	-7	-9	-12	-12	-3	-3	-6	-10	-35
Mobridge	-29	-35	-32	-13	-5	-11	-11	-12	-11	-15	-16	-5	-3	-6	-9	-35
Murdo	-27	-36	-34	-14	-3	-5	1	1	-2	-8	-6	4	6	1	-4	-36
Pierre	-25	-27	-27	-8	0	-3	0	-1	-2	-6	-5	4	7	4	-1	-27
Redfield	-26	-36	-34	-17	-13	-20	-17	-16	-17	-22	-19	-7	-6	-10	-12	-36
Sisseton	-30	-35	-32	-22	-19	-20	-20	-22	-22	-22	-20	-14	-12	-15	-17	-35
Watertown	-34	-40	-37	-25	-22	-25	-24	-25	-27	-27	-23	-15	-12	-15	-17	-40
Webster	-36	-40	-39	-26	-22	-23	-25	-26	-28	-27	-25	-17	-16	-18	-19	-40
Wheaton	-29	-33	-30	-20	-17	-19	-20	-20	-21	-21	-21	-15	-12	-15	-17	-33

Created: 3 am CST Tue 1/16/2024 | Values are minimums over the period beginning at the time shown.



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Don't Forget about Pets During Cold Weather

Make sure they have a warm dry place with plenty of food and water



weather.gov/winter



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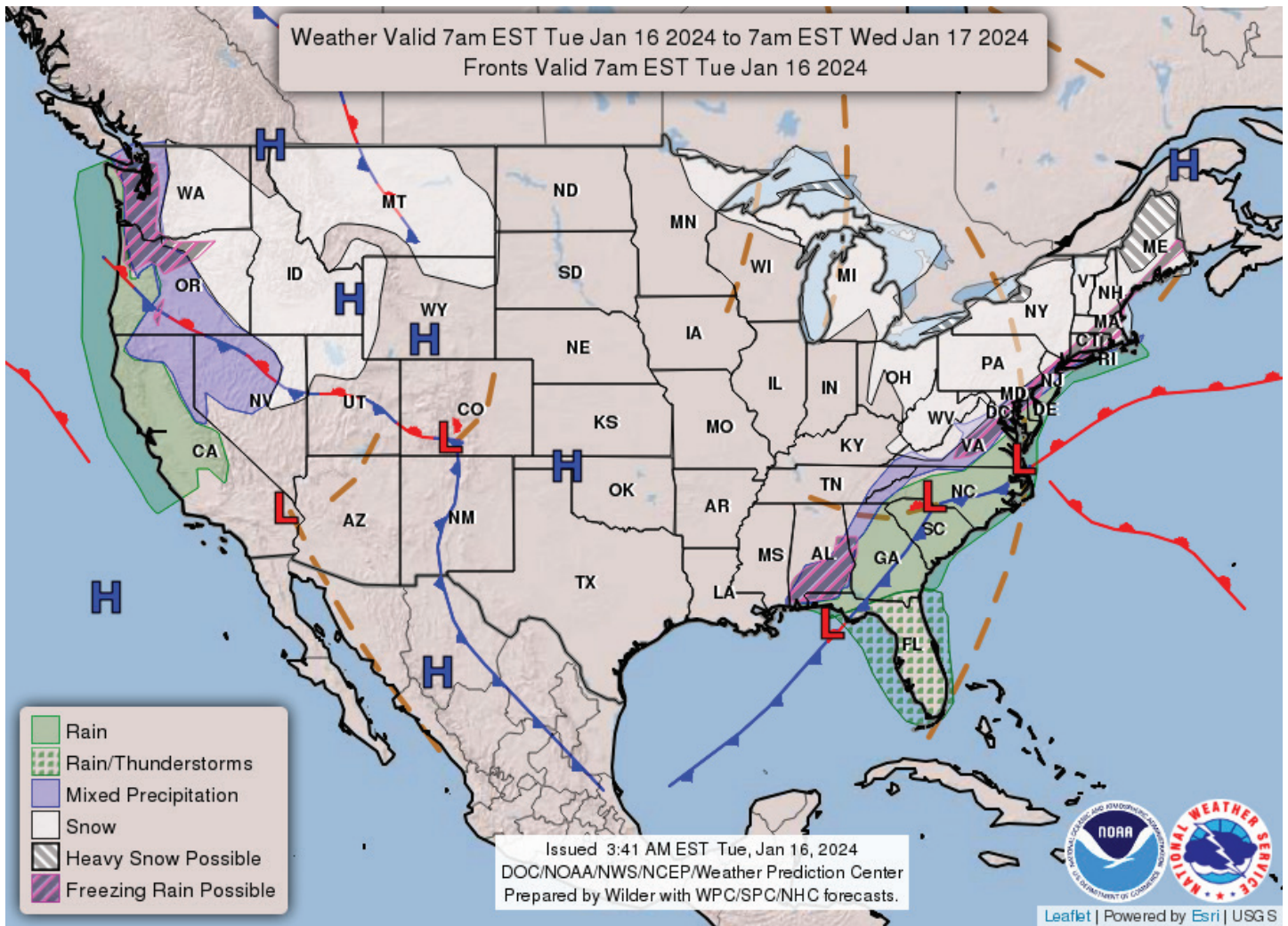
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: -1 °F at 3:54 PM
Low Temp: -14 °F at 12:29 AM
Wind: 18 mph at 12:20 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 49 in 1942
Record Low: -30 in 2005
Average High: 23
Average Low: 1
Average Precip in Jan.: 0.31
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.31
Precip Year to Date: 0.00
Sunset Tonight: 5:17:56 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:05:34 am

Day length: 9 hours, 11 minutes



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Today in Weather History

January 16, 1967: In Minnesota, a fast-moving blizzard brought winds over 75 mph. The snowfall was light to moderate, with extensive blowing and drifting snow. Visibility was near zero for an extended time. Temperatures fell rapidly during the storm, and by the morning of the 18th, many record lows temperatures were set. Many vehicles went into the ditch. Thousands of motorists and schoolchildren found shelter wherever they could as travel was halted. A Wheaton man froze to death. In South Dakota, rain followed by a sudden drop in temperatures of nearly 30 degrees in 2 hours resulted in widespread freezing rain and significant icing on roads and trees. Strong winds of 35 to 45 mph with gusts to 75 mph along with the ice halted most travel. The wind and icing also caused the toppling of a 270-foot radio tower near Aberdeen.

January 16, 1997: An intense Arctic High brought widespread blizzard conditions and dangerous wind chills of 40 to 70 below to central and northeast South Dakota and west-central Minnesota. One to 3 inches of snow fell on top of the already deep snowpack of 2 to 5 feet. The blizzard winds brought another round of widespread heavy drifting, blocking area roads and highways. Many area schools were closed once again to add to their large number of days missed for the winter season. Fortunately, this blizzard was short-lived compared to previous blizzards, and the people were better prepared.

January 16, 2014: A strong area of high-pressure building into the region behind an Arctic cold front brought high winds to central and north-central South Dakota during the early morning hours of the 16th. Some of the strongest wind gusts include; 69 mph near Whitlocks Bay; 68 mph near Bullhead; 67 mph near Trail City; 66 mph in Foster Bay; 65 mph near Mellette and in Presho; 64 mph near Harrold and in Murdo; and 63 mph in Pierre, Reliance, and Miranda. The strong winds diminished during the late afternoon hours of the 16th. A clipper system passing across the region brought light snowfall and powerful northwest winds gusting more than 70 mph at times resulting in blizzard conditions. The highest wind gusts include; 76 mph at the Brown County Landfill, 69 mph in Aberdeen and Cravens Corner, 52 mph near Webster, and 52 mph in Sisseton. Blizzard conditions ended during the late afternoon hours. A no travel advisory was issued in Grant, Codington, Hamlin, and Spink Counties due to low visibilities. The blizzard led to the cancellation of several area activities and schools and nearly impossible travel conditions.

1831 - A great snowstorm raged from Georgia to Maine. Snowfall totals greater than 30 inches were reported from Pennsylvania across southern New England. (David Ludlum)

1964 - Fort Worth, TX, received 7.5 inches of snow, and Dallas reported a foot of snow. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A winter storm produced a total of 61 inches of snow at Rye CO, and wind gusts to 100 mph in Utah. The storm then spread heavy snow from the Texas panhandle to Indiana. Tulia TX received 16 inches of snow, and up to 14 inches was reported in western Oklahoma. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A small storm in the western U.S. produced a foot of snow and wind gusts to 70 mph in the Lake Tahoe Basin of Nevada. Showers and thunderstorms produced 2.28 inches of rain at Brownsville TX, their third highest total for any day in January. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Strong chinook winds plagued much of the state of Wyoming. Winds gusted to 80 mph at Cody, and wind gusts to 100 mph were reported in eastern and northwestern Wyoming. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Heavy snow fell across the Prince Williams Sound area and the Susitna Valley of southern Alaska. Valdez was buried under 64.9 inches of snow in less than two days, including a record 47.5 inches in 24 hours. Up to 44 inches of snow was reported in the Susitna Valley. The heavy snow blocked roads, closed schools, and sank half a dozen vessels in the harbor. (Storm Data)

2008: An area of low pressure brought snow, sleet, and freezing rain across northern Georgia. Three to four inches was a typical amount reported from many of the northeast Georgia counties

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

FORGIVENESS

It was the new pastor's first opportunity to visit the sixth grade boys' Sunday school class. He knew the lesson they were about to study was on forgiveness. He looked around the class and recognized Danny who lived in his neighborhood.

"Danny," he said, looking at him and smiling, "do you think you could forgive a boy if he hit you?"

"Oh, yes Sir," he said proudly, "I know I could - especially if he was bigger than me."

It's interesting to think about whom we are willing to forgive or not forgive. Perhaps we even have an established criterion. It seems as though there are some individuals whom we forgive easily and quickly - no matter what they have said or done to us. Then, there are some we do not want to forgive - now or ever - some whom we want to "get even" no matter how long it takes.

How unlike Jesus. When He was teaching His disciples to pray, He said, "...forgive us our sins just as we have forgiven - not "might" or "should" - but, those who have sinned against us.

Jesus offered no criteria when it comes to forgiving. Forgiving others is the sign of a heart that understands, accepts, and appreciates the forgiveness of God. If we are slow or refuse to forgive others, we do not understand the true meaning of forgiveness and do not realize all that God has done for us. The more we understand God's forgiveness, the more forgiving we will be.

Prayer: We know, Father, that when we forgive others we have an understanding of Your forgiveness and mercy. May we forgive others as You have forgiven us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. Matthew 6:12



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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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 01.12.24

19 34 35 45 67 7

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$208,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 22 Mins 58 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 01.15.24

28 29 38 41 52 8

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$2,400,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 37 Mins 58 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 01.15.24

3 12 14 25 39 9

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 52 Mins 58 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 01.13.24

15 23 29 30 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$21,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 52 Mins 58 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 01.15.24

6 16 23 60 62 17

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 21 Mins 58 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 01.15.24

13 30 35 49 59 4

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$102,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 21 Mins 58 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the Associated Press

Monday's Scores

The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

Hankinson, N.D. 58, Sisseton 48

West Central 54, Baltic 49

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=

Bison vs. Timber Lake, ppd.

Britton-Hecla vs. Waubay/Summit, ppd.

Flandreau Indian vs. St. Francis Indian, ppd.

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=

Beresford vs. Madison, ppd.

Britton-Hecla vs. Waubay/Summit, ppd.

Estelline-Hendricks vs. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, ppd.

Flandreau Indian vs. St. Francis Indian, ppd.

Sisseton vs. Hankinson, N.D., ccd.

South Border, N.D. vs. Herreid-Selby, ppd.

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

Dangerously cold temps blast much of the US, keeping schools closed and flights grounded

By CAROLYN THOMPSON, MATTHEW BROWN and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Dangerously cold temperatures affected much of the Rockies, Great Plains and Midwest on Tuesday, with wind chills below minus 30 degrees (minus 34.4 Celsius) in many parts of the central U.S.

More than 85,000 U.S. homes and businesses were without power early Tuesday, the bulk of them in Oregon after widespread outages that started Saturday. Portland General Electric warned that the threat of freezing rain Tuesday could delay restoration efforts. Transportation officials urged residents to avoid travel as roads were expected to be hazardously slick with ice that could weigh down trees and power lines, causing them to fall.

Classes were canceled Tuesday for students in Portland and other major cities including Chicago — home to the nation's fourth-largest public school district — Denver, Dallas, and Fort Worth, Texas.

The storms and frigid temperatures affected everything from air travel to NFL playoff games to Iowa's presidential caucuses, and were also the cause of several deaths around the country.

At least four people in the Portland area died, including two people from suspected hypothermia. Another man was killed after a tree fell on his house and a woman died in a fire that spread from an open-flame stove after a tree fell onto an RV.

In Wisconsin, the deaths of three homeless people in the Milwaukee area were under investigation, with hypothermia the likely cause, officials said.

Freezing rain and sleet was expected continue across portions of the Southeast into Tuesday morning. Winter storm warnings were in effect for Lawrence, Limestone and Madison counties in Alabama and in Franklin County in Tennessee, southeast Arkansas, northeast Louisiana and much of northern, central and southwestern Mississippi.

Monday night saw temperatures drop as low as 10 degrees (minus 12.2 C) in Olive Branch, Mississippi, and Jackson, Tennessee.

Frigid temperatures in the Northeast didn't stop fans from heading out to cheer on the Buffalo Bills at a snow covered Highmark Stadium in Orchard Park, New York. The Bills beat the Pittsburgh Steelers on Monday in an AFC wild-card playoff game that was delayed 27 1/2 hours because of a storm that dumped more than 2 feet (61 centimeters) of snow on the region.

And voters handed former President Donald Trump a win Monday night in the coldest first-in-the-nation Iowa caucuses on record. Temperatures dipped to minus 3 degrees (minus 19.4 C) in Des Moines, with the wind chill making it feel far colder.

Air travelers across the country experienced delays and cancellations. The flight tracking service FlightAware reported about 2,900 cancellations Monday within, into or out of the United States.

Temperatures are expected to moderate midweek but a new surge of colder air is forecast to drop south over the Northern Plains and Midwest, reaching the Deep South by the end of the week.

Iraq recalls ambassador, summons Iran's chargé d'affaires over strikes in Irbil

By SALAR SALIM and OMAR ALBAM Associated Press

IRBIL, Iraq (AP) — Iraq recalled its ambassador from Tehran for consultations and summoned Iran's chargé d'affaires in Baghdad on Tuesday in protest over Iranian strikes on northern Iraq that killed several civilians overnight, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry said.

The Iranian attack was "a blatant violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Iraq, strongly contradicts the principles of good neighborliness and international law, and threatens the security of the region," it said in a statement.

Iran fired missiles late Monday at what it said were Israeli "spy headquarters" in an upscale neighborhood near the sprawling U.S. Consulate compound in Irbil, the seat of Iraq's northern semi-autonomous Kurdish region, and at targets linked to the extremist Islamic State group in northern Syria.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard said in a statement Tuesday that it launched four Kheibar missiles at IS positions in Idlib in Syria and 11 precision ballistic missiles at the Kurdish region in northern Iraq, where it said it hit a center of Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency. Iraqi officials denied that the building was related to Mossad.

"There is no reason for these attacks and there is no excuse," Masrour Barzani, prime minister of the Kurdish region, said in a news conference in Davos, where he was attending the World Economic Forum on Tuesday. "These attacks should not remain without a response."

The strikes came at a time of heightened tensions in the region and fears of a wider spillover of the ongoing war in Gaza.

They also came after the Islamic State group claimed responsibility earlier this month for two suicide bombings targeting a commemoration for an Iranian general slain in a 2020 U.S. drone strike. The attack in Kerman killed at least 84 people and wounded 284 others at the ceremony honoring Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

Last month, Iran accused Israel of killing a high-ranking Iranian general, Seyed Razi Mousavi, in an air-strike on a Damascus neighborhood.

It was unclear whether the strikes in Syria had, in fact, hit any targets associated with the Islamic State group.

Mounir al-Mustafa, deputy director of the civil defense in northwest Syria, also known as the White Helmets, said one of the strikes in Idlib targeted a medical clinic that was no longer operating in the village of Talteta in northwest Idlib province. Two civilians suffered minor injuries, he said.

Sami al-Qassim, who lives near the targeted site, said the clinic was empty and there were no militant activities in the area.

The strike in Irbil killed at least four people, among them Peshraw Dizayi, a prominent local businessman

with a portfolio that included real estate and security services companies, along with members of his family. The United States condemned what State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller described as "Iran's reckless missile strikes."

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani said in a statement that the strikes in Iraq and Syria were "in line with the resolute defense of the country's sovereignty and security, countering terrorism, and part of the Islamic Republic's punishment against those who threaten the country's security."

He said that Iran in "a precise and targeted operation, identified the headquarters of the criminals and targeted them with accurate and precision-guided projectiles."

A few hundred demonstrators gathered in Irbil on Tuesday to protest the attacks.

Dangerously cold temps blast much of the US, keeping schools closed and flights grounded

By CAROLYN THOMPSON, MATTHEW BROWN and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press
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Live updates | Qatari premier warns of massive destruction, says 'Gaza is not there anymore'

By The Associated Press undefined

Qatar's prime minister warned on Tuesday of the massive destruction inflicted by Israel's offensive on Gaza and criticized the Israeli defense minister's rejection of a cease-fire in the battered enclave.

The war, sparked by Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel, has also triggered a humanitarian catastrophe that has displaced most of Gaza's 2.3 million population and pushed more than a quarter into starvation, according to the United Nations.

More than 100 days into the conflict, Palestinian authorities say the death toll in the coastal territory has passed 24,000. In Israel, Hamas' Oct. 7 attack killed around 1,200 people and saw some 250 others taken hostage by the militants.

Currently:

- Houthi rebels strike a U.S.-owned ship off the coast of Yemen in the Gulf of Aden, raising tensions.
- U.N. agency chiefs say Gaza needs more aid to arrive faster, warning of famine and disease.
- Iran strikes targets in northern Iraq and Syria as regional tensions escalate.
- Palestinian ambassador to the U.N. calls on Non-Aligned Movement to pressure Israel to enforce a cease-fire.
- Find more of AP's coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war>.

Here's the latest:

QATAR'S PRIME MINISTER SPEAKS OF GAZA'S DESTRUCTION: 'GAZA IS NOT THERE ANY MORE.'

JERUSALEM — Qatar's prime minister offered stinging criticism of Israel and the international community on Tuesday over the ongoing Israeli war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, who also serves as Qatar's foreign minister, said a two-state solution was required to end the conflict and warned that Hamas' Oct. 7 attack and the Israeli response showed the region could not go back to the way it was before.

"Gaza is not there anymore. I mean, there is nothing over there," he said, speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. "It's carpet bombing everywhere."

He also brought up the ongoing tensions in the West Bank, which has seen Palestinians killed as well by Israeli security forces, and urged for an end to Palestinian divisions.

"We cannot have a two-state solution without having a government and politicians in Israel who believe in coexisting together side by side peacefully and we cannot have all this ongoing without ending this war," he said.

He warned that a military confrontation in the Mideast waterways "will not contain" the attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels who on Monday fired a missile, striking a U.S.-owned ship just off the coast of Yemen in the Gulf of Aden.

"What we have right now in the region is a recipe of escalation everywhere," Sheikh Mohammed added.

ISRAEL SAYS ROCKETS FIRED FROM GAZA, REPORTEDLY ONE OF THE STRONGEST BOMBARDMENTS IN MORE THAN A WEEK

TEL AVIV — Israel says a barrage of at least 25 rockets was launched on Tuesday from the Gaza Strip toward southern Israel, damaging a store. It was one of the strongest bombardments from Gaza in more than a week.

It came a day after Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said the Israeli army was expanding military control from northern Gaza toward other parts of the strip.

Hamas has continued to fire rockets at Israel throughout the war, even as Israel says it is dismantling Hamas's military capabilities in ever-expanding areas of Gaza. Israeli Channel 12 TV said the rockets on Tuesday were launched from the central Gaza town of Bureij.

In the area of Beit Lahia in northern Gaza, Israeli troops located approximately 100 rocket set-installations and 60 ready-to-use rockets, the military said, claiming its forces killed dozens of militants during the activity.

At a news conference on Monday, Gallant said he expects military operations in southern Gaza to "end

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soon" but gave no timeframe. He spoke a day after the White House called on Israel to curtail its offensive.

Gallant said Israel is still targeting Hamas' leaders, calling them the "head of the snake" and said they are believed to be hiding in Khan Younis, the southern city where the offensive has been focused in recent weeks.

He stressed that military pressure is the only way to win the release of the more than 100 hostages still in Hamas captivity. "Only from a position of strength can we ensure the release of hostages," he said.

EXCHANGE OF FIRE ALONG ISRAEL-EGYPT BORDER KILLS 1 IN EGYPT, INJURES AN ISRAELI SOLDIER
JERUSALEM — Israel said one of its troops was "slightly injured" in an exchange of fire along the country's border with Egypt, which Cairo attributed to drug smuggling. One person in Egypt was killed.

The statement from the Israeli military late on Monday said the fighting happened near the Nitzana border crossing with Egypt on the Sinai Peninsula, and that there were 20 armed suspects. The Israelis and the suspects exchanged fire, with Israel saying "hits were identified" among the suspects, without elaborating.

The Israeli soldier who was hit "was evacuated to a hospital to receive medical treatment and her family has been informed," the military said.

The Israeli military did not identify the suspects. An Egyptian military statement on Tuesday described the suspects involved as trying to smuggle drugs. It said one person was killed and six people were arrested afterwards.

Egypt and Israel have had a peace deal since 1979, but Israel's monthslong war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip has strained ties.

UN CHIEF WARNS OF STARVATION AND DISEASES IN GAZA AS AID STAGGERS

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. secretary-general says Gaza faces "the long shadow of starvation" and the risk of disease outbreaks because of barriers to delivering vital aid.

Antonio Guterres did not mention Israel by name in his remarks Monday, but blamed the inability to meet Gaza's growing humanitarian needs on widespread bombardment, barriers to entering the territory and restrictions on distribution inside of it – all under Israel's control.

He said he was "deeply troubled by the clear violation of international humanitarian law that we are witnessing."

Israeli officials have denied hindering aid delivery, saying the U.N. needs to provide more workers and trucks.

But Guterres said the U.N. and its partners "cannot effectively deliver humanitarian aid while Gaza is under such heavy, widespread and unrelenting bombardment." He pointed to the deaths of 152 U.N. staffers in Gaza since the start of the war, "the largest single loss of life in the history of our organization."

He called for an immediate humanitarian cease-fire and the release of all hostages captured by Hamas in its Oct. 7 rampage into southern Israel, which triggered the war.

Zelenskyy takes center stage in Davos as he tries to rally support for Ukraine's fight

By JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is headlining a frenzied first full day of the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in the Swiss ski resort of Davos, where top officials from the United States, the European Union, China, the Middle East and beyond also will be prominent Tuesday.

Zelenskyy will endeavor to keep his country's long and largely stalemated defense against Russia on the minds of political leaders, just as Israel's war with Hamas, which passed the 100-day mark this week, has siphoned off much of the world's attention and sparked concerns about a wider conflict in the Middle East.

Tuesday's activities got rolling with a dizzying array of subjects in rooms at the Davos conference center, where discussions tackled issues as diverse as innovation in Europe, the economic impact of generative AI, corporate support for clean technologies and high interest rates.

Conversations with the prime ministers of Qatar and Jordan will bookend the day's most visible events,

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with speeches by Chinese Premier Li Qiang, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan in between. Sullivan, asked by The Associated Press whether he would meet with China's delegation at Davos as he headed into talks with Zelenskyy and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, said he wasn't.

Qatar's prime minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, said the world concentrating on the attacks on ships in the Red Sea by Yemen's Houthi rebels — which have spurred retaliatory strikes by the U.S. and Britain — was "focusing on the symptoms and not treating the real issue" of Israel's war on Hamas.

"We should focus on the main conflict in Gaza. And as soon as it's defused, I believe everything else will be defused," he said, adding that a two-state solution was required to end the conflict.

Sheikh Mohammed also warned a military confrontation "will not contain" the Houthi attacks.

"I think that what we have right now in the region is a recipe of escalation everywhere," he added.

Zelenskyy, once reticent about leaving his war-torn country, has recently gone on a whirlwind tour to try to rally support for Ukraine's cause against Russia amid donor fatigue in the West and concerns that former U.S. President Donald Trump — who touted having good relations with Russian President Vladimir Putin — might return to the White House next year following his commanding win Monday in the Iowa caucuses.

It is Zelenskyy's first trip to Davos as president after speaking by video in previous years, and he's drawn the attention of media and others trying to grab a word from him — while he's surrounded by a large contingent of security.

He hopes to parlay the high visibility of the event into a bully pulpit to showcase Ukraine's pressing needs, and allies will be lining up: Corporate chiefs and officials like von der Leyen learned what support was needed to help Ukraine rebuild at an invitation-only "CEOs for Ukraine" session.

"It's time for us, for Ukrainian companies, for international companies to rebuild (the) Ukrainian economy," Maxim Timchenko, CEO of Ukrainian energy company DTEK said after the session. "To rely on ourselves. To build a future for Ukraine."

He said it was "very important" for both Ukrainian companies and international businesses to hear Zelenskyy say that the government would "do everything possible with reforms, change in our country, creating conditions so that businesses will come and invest."

A day earlier, Zelenskyy made a stop in Switzerland's capital, Bern, where President Viola Amherd pledged her country would start working with Ukraine to help organize a "peace summit" for Ukraine.

The theme of the meeting in Davos is "rebuilding trust," and it comes as that sentiment has been fraying globally: Wars in the Middle East and Europe have increasingly split the world into different camps.

While the geopolitical situation has oozed gloom, businesses appear more hopeful — in part from prospects that artificial intelligence can help boost productivity. Leading Western stock indexes shot up in 2023, and falling inflation raised hopes of a decline in interest rates.

AI is a major topic over the week in Davos, with a key talk by Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella — whose company has invested billions in ChatGPT maker OpenAI — among the sessions planned Tuesday.

With 'God's-eye view,' secretive surveillance flights keep close watch on Russia and Ukraine

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

ABOARD A FRENCH AIR FORCE AWACS (AP) — Off in the distance, Ukraine, fighting for its survival. Seen from up here, in the cockpit of a French air force surveillance plane flying over neighboring Romania, the snow-dusted landscapes look deceptively peaceful.

The dead from Russia's war, the shattered Ukrainian towns and mangled battlefields, aren't visible to the naked eye through the clouds.

But French military technicians riding farther back in the aircraft, monitoring screens that display the word "secret" when idle, have a far more penetrating view. With a powerful radar that rotates six times every minute on the fuselage and a bellyful of surveillance gear, the plane can spot missile launches, airborne

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bombing runs and other military activity in the conflict.

As the second anniversary of Russia's Feb. 24, 2022, invasion of Ukraine nears, The Associated Press obtained rare and exclusive access aboard the giant Airborne Warning and Control System, or AWACS, aircraft. With 26 military personnel and an AP journalist aboard, it flew a 10-hour reconnaissance mission from central France to Romanian airspace and back, peering with electronic eyes across southern Ukraine and the Black Sea to Russian-occupied Crimea and beyond.

Circling on auto-pilot at 34,000 feet (10 kilometers), the plane with a proud cockerel painted on its tail fed intelligence in real time to ground-based commanders.

Its mission for NATO on the eastern flank of the 31-nation military alliance also, in effect, drew a do-not-cross line in European skies.

The plane's sustained presence high above eastern Romania — seeing and also being seen by Russian forces — signaled how intensely NATO is watching its borders and Russia, ready if necessary to act should Russian aggression threaten to extend beyond Ukraine.

SHIELDS FOR NATO, PIECES OF AVIATION HISTORY

Regular surveillance flights, together with fighter patrols, ground-based radar, missile batteries and other hardware at NATO's disposal, form what the commander of France's AWACS squadron described as "a shield" against any potential spill-over.

The "ultimate goal is, of course, no conflict and deterrence," said the commander, a lieutenant colonel named Richard. Because of French security concerns, the AP was only able to identify him and other military personnel by their ranks and first names.

"We need to show that we have the shield, show to the other countries that NATO is collective defense," he continued. "We have the ability to detect everywhere. And we are not here for a conflict. We are here to show that we are present and ready."

France's four AWACS are among a variety of surveillance aircraft, including unmanned UAV drones, that gather intelligence for NATO and its member nations. Lt. Col. Richard said the French E-3F-type AWACS see for hundreds of kilometers (miles) with their distinctive black-and-white rooftop radar domes, although he wouldn't be precise.

E-3s are modified Boeing 707s. The 707 first flew in 1957 but stopped carrying passengers commercially in 2013, so E-3s are also flying examples of aviation history.

"We can detect aircraft, we can detect UAVs, we can detect missiles and we can detect ships. That's true, for sure, in Ukraine, especially when we are at the border," Lt. Col. Richard said.

As the plane loitered and scanned, the crew detected a distant Russian AWACS above the Sea of Azov, many hundreds of kilometers away on the Crimean Peninsula's eastern side. The Russian aircraft also seemingly spotted the French AWACS: Sensors along the fuselage picked up Russian radar signals.

"We know that they see us, they know that we see them. Let's say that it's some kind of a dialogue between them and us," the French co-pilot, Major Romain, said.

HAWK-EYED AWACS ON CALL TO SAFEGUARD THE OLYMPICS

NATO also has its own fleet of 14 AWACS, also E-3s. They can detect low-flying targets within 400 kilometers (250 miles) and higher-flying targets another 120 kilometers (75 miles) beyond that, the alliance says. It says one AWACS can surveil an area the size of Poland; three can cover all of central Europe.

Able to fly for 12 hours without refueling, French AWACS aren't limited to surveillance, communications and air-traffic control missions for NATO. They expect to be deployed as part of the massive security operation for the Paris Olympics, providing additional radar surveillance with what Lt. Col. Richard called their "God's-eye view."

Russian pilots have at times made clear that they don't like being watched.

In 2022, a Russian fighter jet released a missile near a British air force RC-135 Rivet Joint surveillance aircraft that was flying in international airspace over the Black Sea, Britain's government said. The U.S. government released video in March 2023 of a Russian fighter jet dumping fuel on a U.S. Air Force surveillance drone. The drone crashed into the Black Sea.

Rivet Joints are particularly capable spy planes, and Russian authorities "really hate" their ability to snoop on the Ukraine war, said Justin Bronk, a researcher at the Royal United Services Institute defense think tank in London.

As well as gathering "real-time intelligence that theoretically could be shared with Ukrainian partners," the planes also furnish "fantastic" insight about "how Russian forces actually operate in a real war," Bronk said in a phone interview.

"So of course, the Russians are furious," he said.

IN THE SKIES, REGULAR ENCOUNTERS

NATO also scrambles fighter jets to scope Russian flights. It says allied aircraft took to the skies more than 500 times in 2022 to intercept Russian aircraft that ventured close to NATO airspace. The number of such encounters dropped to more than 300 in 2023, according to the Brussels-headquartered alliance.

The strengthening of Ukrainian air defenses with Western weaponry may partly explain the decrease, with shoot-downs seemingly making Russian pilots warier. NATO observed reduced activity by manned Russian flights over the western Black Sea last year. NATO says "the vast majority of aerial encounters between NATO and Russian jets were safe and professional" and that Russian incursions into NATO airspace were rare and generally short.

Aboard the French flight, the co-pilot, Major Romain, said Russian planes haven't intercepted a French AWACS "for a long time" and that if they did, French pilots would try to defuse any tension.

"Our orders are to be, let's say, passive," he said. "For a civilian, let's say 'polite.'"

Ex-President Donald Trump set to face jury over sex abuse and defamation claims

By LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — After a big victory in the Iowa caucus, former President Donald Trump is expected in court Tuesday to face another legal challenge: a trial to determine how much more he owes the writer E. Jean Carroll for denying that he sexually assaulted her in the 1990s and accusing her of lying about her claims.

Jury selection begins Tuesday morning at a federal court in Manhattan. Opening arguments could take place by afternoon in what is essentially a second penalty phase of a legal fight Carroll has already won.

In May, a different jury awarded Carroll \$5 million after concluding that Trump sexually abused her in a department store dressing room in spring 1996, then defamed her in 2022 by claiming she made it up after she revealed it publicly in a 2019 memoir. The jury said Carroll hadn't proven that Trump raped her.

One issue that wasn't decided in that first trial was how much Trump owed for comments he made about Carroll while he was still president.

Determining that dollar amount will be the new jury's only job.

Judge Lewis A. Kaplan ruled last year that the new jury didn't need to decide anew whether Carroll was sexually abused or whether Trump's remarks about her were defamatory since those subjects were covered in the first trial.

Trump is expected at the trial Tuesday, though his plans for the rest of the week have become unclear since his mother-in-law's funeral was scheduled for Thursday. The trial is expected to last several days.

He has said he wants to testify, but if he does there will be strict limits on what he can talk about. He did not attend last year's trial, saying recently that his lawyer advised against it.

Because the trial is supposed to be focused only on how much Trump owes Carroll, the judge has warned Trump and his lawyers that they cannot say things to jurors that he has said on the campaign trail or elsewhere, like claiming she lied about him to promote her memoir.

Kaplan also banned them from saying anything about Carroll's "past romantic relationships, sexual disposition, and prior sexual experiences," from suggesting Trump didn't sexually abuse Carroll or from implying she was motivated by "a political agenda, financial interests, mental illness, or otherwise."

They are also banned, the judge said, from advancing any argument inconsistent with the court's ruling

that "Mr. Trump, with actual malice, lied about sexually assaulting Ms. Carroll."

Those restrictions don't apply outside of the presence of the jury. That has left Trump free to continue posting on social media about all of the above topics — something he has done repeatedly in recent days — although each fresh denial comes with the possibility of increasing damages he must pay.

Kaplan rejected Trump's request to delay the trial a week, although he said he would let Trump testify as late as Monday even if the trial is otherwise ready for closing arguments by Thursday.

Carroll, 80, plans to testify about the damage to her career and reputation that resulted from Trump's public statements. She seeks \$10 million in compensatory damages and millions more in punitive damages.

Trump, 77, is appealing the findings of last year's jury and has continued to maintain that he doesn't know Carroll, that he never met her at the Bergdorf Goodman store in midtown Manhattan in spring 1996 and that Carroll made up her claims to sell her book and for political reasons.

Regardless of his losses in court, Trump leads all Republicans in presidential primary polls and plans to spend plenty of time in court fighting the civil cases and four criminal cases against him, saying, "In a way, I guess you consider it part of the campaign."

Emmy Moments: 'Succession' succeeds, 'The Bear' eats it up, and a show wraps on time, thanks to Mom

By JOCELYN NOVECK and MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writers

So it be, so it is, as Cousin Greg would say: "Succession" had a fittingly successful sendoff at the Emmys, the addictive saga of the roiling Roy family dynasty winning best drama for a third time and five more awards, including three top acting prizes.

But "Succession" was not the only show to make a ludicrously capacious haul. "The Bear" had a bearish night indeed, fully dominating the comedy category in its first season, winning the top prize and three acting awards.

And the chaotic, darkly humorous "Beef" was the other big victor, winning best limited series, with leads Steven Yeun and Ali Wong becoming the first Asian Americans to win in their categories. Also making history: star Quinta Brunson of "Abbott Elementary," the first Black winner in her category since 1981.

It was not a night of upsets, with most predictions holding. But it was not without pleasant surprises, including a series of cast reunions of beloved shows — some more effective than others — like "The Sopranos," "Cheers," "Grey's Anatomy," "Ally McBeal" and more. Natasha Lyonne and Tracee Ellis Ross filled their mouths with bonbons in a throwback to the classic "I Love Lucy" candy assembly line scene.

There was a lot of kid talk on the podium, with John Oliver beseeching the crowd to tell him where to buy Pokemon cards for his kids, Sarah Snook of "Succession" paying tribute to her own newborn daughter, and her costar Kieran Culkin actually telling his wife he wanted more kids.

Hopefully those kids will be as nice to their mama as host Anthony Anderson, who knew just how to delegate, giving Mom Doris a key job.

For details, and other notable moments of the night, read on:

A SMOOTH HOST...

Anderson had said before the show that the pressure was off. He meant because he wasn't nominated this year, but he could also have meant that his hosting gig had to go more smoothly than that of Jo Koy at the Golden Globes. Indeed it did, perhaps partly because Anderson wasn't trying to roast any celebrities. Plugging into the nostalgia theme of the show's 75th anniversary, Anderson began with his own version of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," hanging up his coat, sitting at a piano and singing themes for TV classics, like "Good Times" and "The Facts of Life." Anderson then asked winners to keep their speeches tight, and introduced his secret weapon.

...AND HIS MAMA!

"When you see my Mama coming, just thank Jesus and your family and wrap it up," the host said. And indeed, Doris Bowman, in the front seats, made appearances throughout the night, the human equivalent

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of play-off music. Bowman illustrated her power early, interrupting her own son's opening monologue by telling him. "Time's up, baby." Then she certainly seemed to keep winner Jennifer Coolidge in check. Oliver tried to test the new system after winning best scripted variety show: "I'm not leaving without being played off by Anthony Anderson's mom. So I'm going to start reading off the names of the Liverpool football team." When she popped up, he quickly said: "I'd like to thank Jesus and my family. Thank you."

A CLASS REUNION YEAR

Lorraine Bracco and Michael Imperioli from "The Sopranos" celebrated the 25th anniversary of the show's premiere with a moment in a therapist's office. The cast of "Ally McBeal" had a dancing reunion amid bathroom stalls. Some "Grey's Anatomy" cast members — including Ellen Pompeo, Katherine Heigl and Chandra Wilson, but no Sandra Oh and no McDreamy! — gathered in a hospital room for a victory lap as the longest medical drama in TV history. Anderson honored "Game of Thrones" wearing a massive fur-lined cloak. And "Cheers" drew cheers with a reunion of stars Ted Danson, Kelsey Grammer, Rhea Perlman, John Ratzenberger and George Wendt, who was greeted by his signature "Norm!" scream. Also appearing: Rob Reiner and Sally Struthers, the surviving cast members of "All in the Family," and the casts of "Martin" and "It's Only Sunny in Philadelphia."

'SUCCESION' COMES OUT ON TOP

It was a seemingly endless succession of "Succession" winners trooping to the stage on a final triumphant night for the HBO drama. Matthew Macfadyen, who played "human grease stain" Tom Wamsbrians, as he described his character at the Globes, won best supporting actor for a second time and kept his speech to thanking Snook and "my other onscreen wife," Nicholas Braun, who played hapless Cousin Greg: "Acting with you has been one of the most wonderful things in my career." Snook, winning best actress as the very, very complicated Shiv Roy, spoke about how being pregnant helped her acting because it sent the hormones flowing, and told her recently arrived baby daughter: "It's all for you, from here on out." Kieran Culkin, in an emotional speech, thanked his wife, Jazz, for two amazing kids, and threw in a tiny request: "And Jazz, I want more. You said maybe, if I win!"

A BIG BEAR HUG, ER, KISS

Could "The Bear" replicate its success from the Golden Globes? Yes, chef, with Jeremy Allen White and Ayo Edebiri winning for best actor and best supporting actress in a comedy, and Ebon Moss-Bachrach winning a supporting actor award. Onstage, Moss-Bachrach gave costar Matty Matheson a comically long kiss before Matheson saluted the show, which dramatizes the sacrifices people in the restaurant business make: "I just love restaurants so much. The good, the bad. It's rough. We're all broken inside and every single day we gotta show up and cook and make people feel good by eating something and sitting at a table. It's really beautiful."

BURNETT HAILS "PROGRESS"

Big-name actors became fanboys and fangirls in the presence of Carol Burnett, 90, the first woman to host a variety show. A standing ovation greeted the veteran comedienne, who had an immediate zinger: "A lot has changed in the last 46 years. For the better. Progress has been made and it truly warms my heart to see how men are doing in comedy," the seven-time Emmy-winner said. Christina Applegate introduced Burnett by saying she has only one picture of herself framed — with Burnett. "She is more important to me than any of you," Applegate said.

BRUNSON'S HISTORIC WIN

Another star awed by Burnett was the woman who received her prize from her: Brunson, the "Abbott Elementary" star and writer who won best actress in a comedy series, the first Black winner in the category since Isabel Sanford won in Norman Lear's classic "The Jeffersons" in 1981. "I am so happy to be able to live my dream and act out comedy," said Brunson, a previous winner for writing the show. The first hour of the Emmys — held on Martin Luther King Jr. Day — saw three Black women win major awards: Brunson, Edebiri and Niecy Nash-Betts, who won best supporting actress in a limited series for "Dahmer — Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story."

THANKING THE PERSON WHO BELIEVED IN YOU

Many award winners thank the person who first believed in them. Nash-Betts did, too — with blazing

honesty — and it was herself. “I’m a winner, baby!” she said. “And you know who I wanna thank? Me, for believing in me and doing what they said I could not do. I want to say to myself, in front of all you beautiful people — Go girl, with your bad self. You did that.”

On the Netflix show, Nash-Betts played a neighbor of the serial killer whose complaints to authorities about his behavior go unheeded. “I accept this award on behalf of every Black and brown woman who has gone unheard yet overpoliced, like Glenda Cleveland, like Sandra Bland, like Breonna Taylor,” she said. “As an artist, my job is to speak truth to power and baby, I’m gonna do it until the day I die. Mama, I won!”

Iran strikes targets in northern Iraq and Syria as regional tensions escalate

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and SALAR SALIM Associated Press

IRBIL, Iraq (AP) — Iran fired missiles late Monday at what it claimed were Israeli “spy headquarters” near the U.S. Consulate in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil, and at targets linked to the extremist group Islamic State in northern Syria.

Four civilians were killed and six injured after missiles hit an upscale area near the consulate in Irbil, the seat of Iraq’s semi-autonomous Kurdish region, according to the security council of the Kurdish regional government.

Iran’s Revolutionary Guards said in a statement that it had hit a headquarters of Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, in the Kurdish region of Iraq. Another statement said it had fired a number of ballistic missiles at “terrorist operations,” including Islamic State targets, in Syria and destroyed them.

Israel did not immediately acknowledge the attack in Irbil and its embassy in Washington did not return a request for comment on the Iranian allegation regarding the Mossad.

The strikes come at a time of heightened tensions in the region and fears of a wider spillover of the ongoing war in Gaza.

Since the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war on Oct. 7, Iranian-backed militias in Iraq have launched near-daily drone attacks on bases housing U.S. forces in Iraq and Syria, which the groups have said was in retaliation for Washington’s support of Israel, and in an attempt to force U.S. troops to leave the region.

The United States strongly condemns “Iran’s reckless missile strikes” in Irbil, said State Department spokesman Matthew Miller. He said the attacks “undermine Iraq’s stability.”

A U.S. defense official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details that had not been made public said the U.S. tracked the missiles, which hit in northern Iraq and northern Syria, and no U.S. facilities were struck or damaged in the attacks. The official said initial indications were that the strikes were “reckless and imprecise.”

However, the full extent of the damage from the strikes could not be independently assessed.

An Iraqi security official said Irbil was targeted with “several” ballistic missiles but did not give further details. An official with an Iranian-backed Iraqi militia said 10 missiles fell in the area near the U.S. Consulate. He said the missiles were launched by Iran’s Revolutionary Guards. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity.

Peshraw Dizayi, a prominent local businessman with a portfolio that included real estate and security services companies, was killed in one of the Irbil strikes along with members of his family, according to a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, by Mashan al-Jabouri, a former Iraqi member of parliament. Al-Jabouri said that one of the missiles had fallen on Dizayi’s “palace, next to my house, which is under construction on the road to the Salah al-Din resort.”

Other regional political figures also confirmed Dizayi’s death.

In 2022, Iran claimed responsibility for a missile barrage that struck in the same area near the sprawling U.S. Consulate complex in Irbil, saying it was retaliation for an Israeli strike in Syria that killed two members of its Revolutionary Guard.

Iran’s strike in northern Syria late Monday came after the Islamic State group claimed responsibility earlier this month for two suicide bombings targeting a commemoration for an Iranian general slain in a 2020 U.S. drone strike. The attack in Kerman killed at least 84 people and wounded an additional 284 at

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a ceremony honoring Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

Last month, Iran accused Israel of killing a high-ranking Iranian general, Seyed Razi Mousavi, in an air-strike on a Damascus neighborhood.

Trump notches a commanding win in the Iowa caucuses as DeSantis edges Haley for second place

By STEVE PEOPLES, THOMAS BEAUMONT and HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press
DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Former President Donald Trump scored a record-setting win in the Iowa caucuses on Monday with his rivals languishing far behind, a victory that affirmed his grip on the 2024 Republican presidential nomination.

In what was the lowest-turnout caucus in a quarter-century, participants endured life-threatening cold and dangerous driving conditions to meet in hundreds of schools, churches and community centers across the state. But those who ventured out delivered a roughly 30-point win for Trump that smashed the record for a contested Iowa Republican caucus with a margin of victory exceeding Bob Dole's nearly 13-percentage-point victory in 1988.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis finished a distant second, just ahead of former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley. The results left Trump with a tighter grip on the GOP nomination, though it could take several more months for anyone to formally become the party's standard bearer. The magnitude of Trump's victory, however, posed significant questions for both DeSantis and Haley. Neither candidate appeared poised to exit the race, though they leave Iowa struggling to claim making much progress in trying to become Trump's strongest challenger.

Having repeatedly vowed vengeance against his political opponents in recent months, Trump offered a message of unity in his victory speech.

"We want to come together, whether it's Republican or Democrat or liberal or conservative," he said. "We're going to come together. It's going to happen soon."

The GOP contest moves swiftly to New Hampshire, which will hold the first-in-the-nation primary on Jan. 23. A shrinking field will compete there after conservative entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy suspended his campaign after a disappointing fourth place finish and endorsed Trump.

DeSantis first heads to South Carolina on Tuesday, a conservative stronghold where the Feb. 24 contest could prove pivotal. He will head later in the day New Hampshire.

"Because of your support, in spite of all of what they threw at us, we got our ticket punched out of Iowa," DeSantis told supporters.

Haley plans to compete vigorously in New Hampshire, where she hopes to be more successful with the state's independent voters.

"When you look at how well we're doing in New Hampshire and in South Carolina and beyond, I can safely say tonight Iowa made this Republican primary a two-person race," she said.

In a preview of a remarkable balancing act Trump may have to manage in the months ahead, he was expected to be in court in New York on Tuesday. A jury is poised to consider whether he should pay additional damages to a columnist who last year won a \$5 million jury award against Trump for sex abuse and defamation. It's just one of multiple legal challenges facing the former president.

After visiting the court, Trump will fly to New Hampshire to hold a rally Tuesday evening.

Trump has made courtroom visits a part of his campaign — heading to court voluntarily twice last week while his opponents campaigned in Iowa — in a strategy designed to portray him as a victim of a politicized legal system. Among Republican voters, at least, the approach is working.

The Associated Press declared Trump the winner at 7:31 p.m. CST based on an analysis of early returns as well as results of AP VoteCast, of more than 1,500 voters who said they planned to take part in the caucuses. Both showed Trump with an insurmountable lead.

Initial results from eight counties showed Trump with far more than half of the total votes counted as of 7:31 p.m., with the rest of the field trailing far behind. These counties included rural areas that are

demographically and politically similar to a large number of counties that had yet to report.

The Associated Press determined at 11:17 p.m. CST that DeSantis finished a distant second to Trump. With an estimated 10% of ballots remaining to be counted, DeSantis led Haley by approximately 2,300 votes, or about 2 percentage points. With votes reported in all but one of Iowa's 99 counties, Haley wasn't doing well enough anywhere to catch DeSantis, based on the number of outstanding votes.

Trump showed significant strength among Iowa's urban, small-town and rural communities, according to AP VoteCast. He also performed well with evangelical Christians and those without a college degree. And a majority of caucusgoers said they identify with Trump's "Make America Great Again" movement.

One relative weakness for Trump comes in the suburbs, where only about 4 in 10 supported him.

Iowa has been an uneven predictor of who will ultimately lead Republicans into the general election. George W. Bush's 2000 victory was the last time a Republican candidate won in Iowa and went on to become the party's nominee.

But Trump's success tells a remarkable story of a Republican Party unwilling or unable to move on from a flawed front-runner. He lost to Biden in 2020 after fueling near-constant chaos while in the White House, culminating with his supporters carrying out a deadly attack on the U.S. Capitol. In total, he faces 91 felony charges across four criminal cases.

The U.S. Supreme Court is weighing whether states have the ability to block Trump from the ballot for his role in sparking the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the Capitol. And he's facing criminal trials in Washington and Atlanta for his efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

Trump has increasingly echoed authoritarian leaders and framed his campaign as one of retribution. He has spoken openly about using the power of government to pursue his political enemies. He has repeatedly harnessed rhetoric once used by Adolf Hitler to argue that immigrants entering the U.S. illegally are "poisoning the blood of our country." And he recently shared a word cloud last week to his social media account highlighting "revenge," "power" and "dictatorship."

Trump's legal challenges appear to have done little damage to his reputation. Many of his supporters view the charges through a political lens.

About three-quarters of Iowans responding to AP VoteCast said the charges against Trump are political attempts to undermine him, rather than legitimate attempts to investigate important issues.

"God called us to do that to support Trump," said 64-year-old David Lage, donning a captain's hat at Trump's victory party.

North Korea will no longer pursue reconciliation with South because of hostility, Kim Jong Un says

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country would no longer pursue reconciliation with South Korea and called for rewriting the North's constitution to eliminate the idea of shared statehood between the war-divided countries, state media said Tuesday.

The historic step to discard a decades-long pursuit of a peaceful unification, which was based on a sense of national homogeneity shared by both Koreas, comes amid heightened tensions where the pace of both Kim's weapons development and the South's military exercises with the United States have intensified in a tit-for-tat.

Some experts say Kim could be aiming to diminishing South Korea's voice in regional security matters and communicate more clearly that he would seek to deal directly with the United States over the nuclear standoff, which has deepened amid disagreements over the stringent U.S.-led sanctions over his growing nuclear weapons program.

Declaring the South as a permanent adversary, not as a potential partner for reconciliation, could also be part of efforts to improve the credibility of Kim's escalatory nuclear doctrine, which authorizes the military to launch preemptive nuclear attacks against adversaries if it perceives the leadership in Pyongyang as

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under threat.

The North Korean steps come as Kim has been actively boosting his partnerships with Moscow and Beijing as he attempts to break out of diplomatic isolation and increase his leverage by joining a united front against Washington.

North Korea also abolished the key government agencies that had been tasked with managing relations with South Korea during a meeting of the country's rubber-stamp parliament on Monday, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said.

The Supreme People's Assembly said the two Koreas are locked in an "acute confrontation" and that it would be a serious mistake for the North to regard the South as a partner in diplomacy.

"The Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Country, the National Economic Cooperation Bureau and the (Diamond Mountain) International Tourism Administration, tools which existed for (North-South) dialogue, negotiations and cooperation, are abolished," the assembly said in a statement.

During his speech, Kim blamed South Korea and the United States for raising tensions in the region, citing their expanded joint military exercises, deployments of U.S. strategic military assets, and their trilateral security cooperation with Japan as turning the Korean Peninsula into a dangerous war-risk zone, KCNA said.

Kim said it has become impossible for the North to pursue reconciliation and a peaceful reunification with the South, which he described as "top-class stooges" of outside powers that are obsessed with confrontational maneuvers.

He called for the assembly to rewrite the North's constitution to define South Korea as the North's "primary foe and invariable principal enemy." The new constitution should specify North Korea would pursue "occupying, subjugating and reclaiming" South Korea as part of the North's territory if another war erupts on the Korean Peninsula, Kim said.

He also ordered the removal of past symbols of inter-Korean reconciliation, to "completely eliminate such concepts as 'reunification,' 'reconciliation' and 'fellow countrymen' from the national history of our republic."

He specifically demanded cutting off cross-border railway sections and tearing down a monument in Pyongyang honoring a pursuit for reunification, which Kim described as an eyesore.

"It is the final conclusion drawn from the bitter history of the inter-Korean relations that we cannot go along the road of national restoration and reunification together," he said.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol during a Cabinet meeting in Seoul said Kim's comments show the "anti-national and anti-historical" nature of the government in Pyongyang. Yoon said the South was maintaining firm defense readiness and would punish the North "multiple times hard" if it provokes it.

"(The North's) fake peace tactic that threatened us to choose between 'war' and 'peace' no longer works," Yoon said.

In his speech at the assembly, Kim reiterated that the North has no intention to unilaterally start a war, but has no intentions to avoid one either. Citing his growing military nuclear program, he said a nuclear conflict in the Korean Peninsula would end South Korea's existence and bring "unimaginable disaster and defeat to the United States."

Kim had made similar remarks during a year-end ruling party meeting, saying ties between the Koreas have become "fixed into the relations between two states hostile to each other." At a political conference last week, he defined South Korea as the North's "principal enemy" and threatened to annihilate it if provoked.

The assembly said North Korea's government would take "practical measures" to implement the decision to abolish the agencies handling dialogue and cooperation with the South.

The National Committee for Peaceful Reunification has been North Korea's main agency handling inter-Korean affairs since its establishment in 1961.

The National Economic Cooperation Bureau and the Diamond Mountain International Tourism Administration had been set to handle joint economic and tourism projects between the Koreas during a brief period of reconciliation in the 2000s.

Such projects, including a jointly operated factory park in the North Korean border town of Kaesong

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and South Korean tours to the North's Diamond Mountain resort, have been halted for years as relations between the rivals worsened over North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

Those activities are currently banned under U.N. Security Council resolutions against the North that have tightened since 2016 as Kim accelerated his nuclear and missile tests.

Kim has further vowed to expand his nuclear arsenal and severed virtually all cooperation with the South. He has dialed up his weapons demonstrations to a record pace since the start of 2022, using the distraction created by Russia's war on Ukraine to expand his military capabilities.

There's also growing international concern over an alleged arms cooperation deal between North Korea and Russia. The United States and South Korea say North Korea has provided Russia with arms, including artillery and missiles, to help its fight in Ukraine.

MLK Jr. holiday celebrations include acts of service and parades, but some take a political turn

By JEFF MARTIN and JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Communities across the nation celebrated the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on Monday with acts of service, prayer services and parades. But with the November presidential election as a backdrop, some events took on an overtly political turn.

In King's hometown of Atlanta, several speakers at the 56th annual commemorative service at the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, where King served as pastor, touched on the divisive partisan climate in the United States.

Former U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney, who served on the House committee that investigated the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the Capitol, had harsh words for Trump, whom she did not mention by name. On that day, Trump's supporters tried to block Congress from counting the Electoral College votes that would affirm Joe Biden's victory in the 2020 presidential race.

"A former president refuses to acknowledge that he lost, and he has convinced millions that our elections and our democracy no longer work," she said. "He threatens the foundations of our nation and everything Dr. King persevered to save."

She also criticized some religious leaders in the way they seemed to worship Trump, not God.

U.S. Sen. Raphael Warnock, the longtime senior pastor of Ebenezer, told the audience, "You better stand up and vote!" to rousing applause. "If your vote didn't count, why are folks trying so hard to keep you from voting? Stand and use your voice. Stand up and use your vote. Speak up!"

Bernice King, the daughter of the late civil rights leader, warned that "our humanity is literally under attack." But she noted that her father's legacy of nonviolence taught the world that "we can defeat injustice, ignorance and hold people accountable at the same time without seeking to destroy, diminish, demean or cancel them."

Speaking at the MLK Day at the Dome rally at the South Carolina Statehouse, Vice President Kamala Harris said young people two or three generations removed from King have seen their freedoms shrink — from laws restricting voting to bans on abortions and the ever-present threat of gun violence, especially in schools.

"They even try to erase, overlook and rewrite the ugly parts of our past. For example, the Civil War — which must I really have to say was about slavery?" Harris said.

Harris also used her speech at the event — which started in 2000 to pressure the state to remove the Confederate flag from atop the Capitol dome — to urge the younger generation to regain those rights lost through voting and action.

"Generation after generation on the fields of Gettysburg, in the schools of Little Rock, on the grounds of this Statehouse, on the streets of Ferguson and on the floor of the Tennessee House of Representatives — we the people have always fought to make the promise of freedom real," Harris said.

In Philadelphia, President Joe Biden marked Martin Luther King Jr. Day by volunteering at Philabundance, a nonprofit food bank. He stuffed donation boxes with apples and struck up casual chatter with workers

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at the organization, where he volunteered for the third time as president or president-elect to mark the January day of service.

The 29th annual Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service is billed as the first and largest King day of service in the nation. Volunteer activities included preparing care packages for victims of gun violence and distributing voter information packets.

Also in the city, the Philadelphia MLK Association held its annual tapping of the Liberty Bell on Independence Mall, and the National Constitution Center offered free admission with a slate of civil rights era events and a school supply drive.

In Washington, Martin Luther King III participated in a wreath-laying event at his father's memorial.

In Wisconsin, Gov. Tony Evers, at a noontime ceremony in the state Capitol rotunda, said the holiday is an opportunity to recommit to addressing health disparities, fully funding public schools and providing affordable housing, child care and transportation.

Doing that "we can build the sort of future we all want to see for our state," the Democratic former educator said.

In Los Angeles, thousands gathered for the annual Kingdom Day Parade, with the theme "Can't Stop, Won't Stop, Going to the Promised Land." LA Mayor Karen Bass urged Angelenos to honor King's legacy by taking care of vulnerable communities, including the homeless.

"The inequality is staggering, with more than 70% of unhoused Angelenos being people of color. While we celebrate the legacy of Dr. King today, we must recommit to confronting this crisis of our time," Bass said in a statement.

Meanwhile, a dangerously cold winter storm was limiting some planned activities. The National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis announced that it would be closed on Monday because of icy roads but would still hold a virtual celebration in honor of King's birthday. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park on the Tennessee-North Carolina border was also closed, canceling a campground cleanup event.

Also canceled because of weather was the Martin Luther King Gymnastics Invitational set for Monday at Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

The historic meet was to include Fisk, Brown, Iowa State, Rutgers, Talladega (Ala.) and William & Mary. The competition aimed to feature the only African American women head coaches in the sport for the first time ever.

Observed federally since 1986, the holiday occurs on the third Monday of January, which this year happens to be King's actual birthday. Born in 1929, the slain civil rights leader would have been 95. This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act and King's Nobel Peace Prize.

Most Trump supporters in Iowa caucuses say they knew they'd support him all along, AP VoteCast shows

By JOSH BOAK and LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In some ways, Iowa's Republican caucuses were practically over before they began, with Donald Trump cultivating a deep network of support over three presidential runs.

About 7 in 10 Iowans who caucused for Trump on Monday night said they have known all along that they would support a man who has remade the Republican Party through his "Make America Great Again" political movement. Trump was carried to victory by the majority of caucusgoers who say they back it, a sign of his growing influence in a state that denied him a victory eight years ago.

His chief challengers — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley and biotech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy — tried to carve out their own coalitions. But none could match the demographic edges enjoyed by Trump in this year's first presidential contest, according to the findings from AP VoteCast. Ramaswamy said he is suspending his campaign after a disappointing finish in the caucuses.

Trump performed strongly in small town and rural communities, where about 6 in 10 caucusgoers said they live. He won with white evangelical Christians, who are nearly half of the caucusgoers. He excelled among those without a college degree.

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If there is a reason for pause in his Iowa success, it is that many of the must-win states in the November general election are more urban, more suburban, more racially diverse and have slightly more college graduates as a percentage of their adult population than does Iowa.

AP VoteCast is a survey of more than 1,500 voters who said they planned to take part in the caucuses. The survey is conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

HOW TRUMP WON IN IOWA

The 77-year-old Trump entered Iowa as the caucus favorite, and AP VoteCast showed why he has become a juggernaut among GOP voters in the state.

The demographics favored him, but so did the issues that people prioritized: immigration and the economy.

Among the roughly 4 in 10 Iowa caucusgoers who identified immigration as the most important issue for the nation, about 6 in 10 back Trump. Those participating in the caucuses agreed with his hard-line stance on finding ways to limit immigration.

About 9 in 10 back building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, with about 7 in 10 expressing strong support for the idea first championed by Trump during his 2016 campaign. The vast majority, about three-quarters, say immigrants hurt the United States, an indication there is a desire to reduce overall immigration levels.

About one-third of caucusgoers prioritized the economy. Of those who did, about half support Trump.

DESANTIS' DISTANT SECOND

The key for DeSantis earning a second-place finish was conservatives, who favored him over Haley even though they liked Trump most of all. About 7 in 10 Iowans who caucused define themselves as conservatives. A majority of caucusgoers favor a ban on abortion after six weeks of pregnancy, and DeSantis performed slightly better than Haley among that group.

Haley finished narrowly behind DeSantis. She was the top candidate of the most anti-Trump Republicans in the state, including those who believe the former president did something illegal in one of the pending criminal cases against him. She was also the top choice for those Republican caucusgoers who voted for Biden in the 2020 election. But she faced headwinds in a state that largely saw itself as loyal to Trump and his agenda.

DeSantis performs best among the caucusgoers dissatisfied with Trump but who said they would ultimately vote for him in the general election.

Most Iowa caucusgoers for either Haley or DeSantis say they would be dissatisfied with Trump as their party's nominee. But unlike DeSantis' backers, two-thirds of Haley's caucusgoers say they would not ultimately vote for Trump in the general election.

POTENTIAL WEAKNESSES FOR TRUMP

Iowa also exposed some national vulnerabilities for Trump, who lost his 2020 reelection bid to Democrat Joe Biden.

The suburbs are a relative weakness for Trump. That's a key challenge because AP VoteCast showed nearly half of voters in the 2020 general election said they lived in the suburbs. Only about one-third of Iowa Republicans in the suburbs support him. Still, neither of his closest rivals best Trump in the suburbs: about 3 in 10 Iowa caucusgoers in the suburbs also supported both Haley and DeSantis, respectively.

Nor does Trump have as much appeal with college graduates. About 2 in 10 of Trump's Iowa backers hold a college degree, compared with roughly half of those who backed DeSantis and slightly more than that for Haley.

And there are Trump's legal troubles.

He was indicted multiple times in 2023 and faces the risk of one or more criminal convictions. But that appears so far to have done little damage to his standing with Republican voters.

Still, about one-quarter say Trump has done something illegal when it comes to at least one of the legal cases he is facing: his role in the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol, his alleged attempts to interfere in the vote count in the 2020 presidential election or the discovery of classified documents at his Florida home that were supposed to be in government custody.

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NO TO THE STATUS QUO

Caucusgoers are giving Republicans the green light to dramatically alter how the federal government operates. Some showed an exhaustion with what they perceive to be politics as usual and a distrust of government institutions.

For many, they are envisioning something of a demolition project for how the country runs. About 3 in 10 say they are seeking a complete and total upheaval. About an additional 6 in 10 caucusgoers say they want substantial changes.

The vast majority of caucusgoers trust Iowa elections, but about 4 in 10 are not too confident or not at all confident in the integrity of elections nationwide. Nearly 6 in 10 have little to no confidence in the American legal system.

AP VoteCast is a survey of the American electorate conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research for AP and Fox News. The survey of 1,597 voters was conducted for eight days, concluding as the caucuses begin. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. The survey combines a random sample of registered voters drawn from state voter files and self-identified registered voters selected from nonprobability online panels. The margin of sampling error for voters is estimated to be plus or minus 3.4 percentage points. Find more details about AP VoteCast's methodology at <https://ap.org/votecast>.

Why AP called Iowa for Trump: Race call explained

By ROBERT YOON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Donald Trump scored the first victory of the 2024 presidential primary season Monday with a sweeping and broad-based win in the Iowa Republican caucuses. The Associated Press declared the former president the winner based on an analysis of initial returns as well as results of AP VoteCast, a survey of voters who planned to caucus on Monday night. Both showed Trump with an insurmountable lead.

Initial results from eight counties showed Trump with far more than half of the total votes counted as of 8:31 pm. ET, significantly ahead of the rest of the field. These counties included rural areas that are demographically and politically similar to the large number of counties that had yet to report.

The Associated Press has also determined that Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis will finish in a distant second, ahead of former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley. With an estimated 10% of ballots remaining to be counted, DeSantis led Haley by approximately 2,300 votes or about 2 percentage points. With votes reported in all but one of Iowa's 99 counties, Haley isn't doing well enough anywhere to catch DeSantis, based on the number of outstanding votes.

In traditional primaries, AP does not declare a winner in any race before the last polls are scheduled to close in the contest. It's sometimes possible to declare a winner in those races immediately after polls close before any vote results are released. AP does so only when its VoteCast survey of voters and other evidence, including the history of a state's elections, details about ballots cast before Election Day and pre-election polling, provide overwhelming evidence of who has won.

The Iowa caucuses are different. There are no "polls" and no fixed time when all the voting ends. Instead, there is an 8 p.m. ET deadline for caucus voters to arrive at their location, at which point deliberations among caucusgoers begin behind closed doors. Some caucus sites might complete their business in a few minutes, while others can take some time to determine the outcome.

For that reason, AP followed its past practice and did not make a "poll close" declaration of the winner on Monday night. Instead, AP reviewed returns from caucus sites across Iowa and declared Trump the winner only after those results, along with VoteCast and other evidence, made it unquestionably clear he had won.

This is the same approach AP has followed in declaring winners in past Iowa caucuses. In 2020, when Trump sought reelection, AP declared the former president the caucus winner at 8:25 p.m. ET. Declarations have taken longer in more closely contested races. In 2016, AP was not able to name Texas Sen.

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Ted Cruz the winner over Trump until 10:26 p.m. ET.

AP VoteCast is a comprehensive survey of both voters and nonvoters that provides a detailed snapshot of the electorate and helps explain who voted, what issues they care about, how they feel about the candidates and why they voted the way they did.

AP VoteCast found Trump had sizable leads among both men and women, as well as every age group and geographic region throughout the state. The survey found that Trump was favored by about 6 in 10 white evangelical caucusgoers. Polls showed that they were a relatively weak group of backers for Trump in Iowa in 2016.

Trump is significantly outperforming his second-place 2016 caucus finish, when he received 24% of the vote, compared with 28% for Cruz. That year, Trump placed third in some of the state's most populous counties, including Dallas, Johnson, Polk, Scott and Story, all of which were carried by Florida Sen. Marco Rubio. This year, he was either leading or running much more competitively in those counties.

Trump leads GOP rightward march and other takeaways from the Iowa caucuses

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI and BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump's iron grip on the Republican Party has been clear since the day he announced he would make another run for the White House 14 months ago. It can be seen in the party's ideological shift even further to the right on cultural issues and, especially, on immigration policy.

Iowa Republicans were a clear reflection of that on Monday night, delivering the former president an emphatic victory. They channeled his anger, and his view that basically everything President Joe Biden has done has been a "disaster." About 9 in 10 voters said they want upheaval or substantial change in how the government operates, according to AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 1,500 voters who said they planned to take part in the caucuses.

As clear-cut as his win was, though, Iowa has not historically played the role of kingmaker in the Republican nominating process. New Hampshire's voters don't take their cues from Iowa.

Here are some key takeaways:

AN INCUMBENT CAMPAIGN

This was the least suspenseful Iowa caucus in modern memory because Trump has essentially been running as an incumbent president. He's convinced many Republicans he didn't really lose the 2020 election to Biden, repeatedly making false claims, and has dominated the race the way someone still in office does.

He traveled sparingly to the state, holding a modest number of rallies. He spurned candidate debates. He chose to appear at court hearings as a defendant in his legal cases in New York and Washington rather than speak to Iowa voters in the final days before the voting.

The former president, who remains the party's dominant favorite, clearly wants to move on to the general election as quickly as possible. But Iowa winnows the field more than it determines the winner.

TWISTS AND TURNS AHEAD

Inevitable can be a dangerous word, especially in New Hampshire, which holds its primary in eight days.

New Hampshire has famously delivered upsets in both parties. Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley quipped that New Hampshire "corrects" Iowa. Bush felt New Hampshire's sting in 2000 when Senator John McCain defeated him. So did former vice president Walter Mondale when Senator Gary Hart of Colorado scored an upset in the Democratic race in 1984.

With its more moderate, educated electorate, New Hampshire presents Trump's rivals with possibly their best opportunity to slow his march. Haley is hoping for a win there or at least a very strong showing, as is Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who edged Haley out for second place in Iowa but trailed Trump by about 30 points.

After that comes a weird political lull — with the next major competitive race in South Carolina on Feb. 24.

But plenty can happen during that time. The U.S. Supreme Court on Feb. 8 is scheduled to hear arguments in a case challenging whether a constitutional clause banning those who "engaged in insurrection"

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from holding office applies to Trump. The high court may also weigh in on whether presidential immunity protects Trump from federal charges for trying to overturn his 2020 election loss.

The criminal trial, in that case, is scheduled to start on March 5 — Super Tuesday — when 14 states vote in the presidential nominating process. Trump's strength among Republican voters is beyond dispute, but the road is long and could be bumpy.

IT'S NOT THE ECONOMY

Iowans had something on their minds, but it wasn't jobs, taxes or business regulations.

About 4 in 10 caucus-goers said immigration was their top issue, compared to 1 in 3 picking the economy, according to VoteCast. Other priorities like foreign policy, energy and abortion ranked even lower.

Indeed, about two-thirds of caucusgoers said they felt their finances were holding steady or improving. But the voters still want major changes — 3 in 10 want a total upheaval of how the federal government runs while another 6 in 10 want substantial changes. Additionally, Trump faces multiple criminal charges, 6 in 10 caucusgoers don't have confidence in the U.S. legal system.

It adds up to a portrait of a slice of the electorate eager to challenge core democratic institutions in the U.S.

DESANTIS' DISMAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Flush with more than \$100 million in cash and fresh off a blowout reelection victory, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis entered the 2024 Republican presidential contest projecting himself as the heir to a MAGA political brand that a diminished Trump could no longer effectively carry.

Reality soon intruded.

Eight months and tens of millions of dollars later, DeSantis posed little threat to the former president in Iowa. Still, he vowed to continue his campaign and said he had "punched his ticket" out of Iowa with his second-place finish.

Despite more than \$55 million in pro-DeSantis advertising spending, the Florida governor only narrowly bested Haley.

DeSantis has been dogged by negative stories about profligate spending, including DeSantis' preference for flying private planes.

His next challenge will be whether donors will continue to support him.

THE EDUCATION DIVIDE

More than half of Haley's voters had at least a college degree and roughly half of DeSantis' did, according to VoteCast. But only about 2 in 10 of Trump's did.

Education has been a major dividing line among white voters during the Trump era. Iowa confirms what polling has indicated during the primary — that the education divide is also splitting the GOP.

That hints at a possible weakness for Trump in November, should he be the nominee. A greater share of the voting public has at least a bachelor's degree now than in 2016, and that share rises every year as degrees become more popular.

Another indication of vulnerability for Trump came in the suburbs, which tend to have the highest levels of education. Only about 4 in 10 caucusgoers there supported him. The suburbs were pivotal in Biden's 2020 victory over Trump.

RAMASWAMY PUNCHED HIMSELF OUT

Abrasive, often grating and very online — Vivek Ramaswamy's quixotic bid for the White House has come across as a millennial distillation of Trump's Make America Great Again political movement.

Ramaswamy rapped along to verses of Eminem, delighted in trolling his rivals and often sought to out-Trump Trump with his brash rhetoric. That performative aspect helped the wealthy 38-year-old entrepreneur gain considerable attention in the early days of the Republican White House contest.

But it also proved to wear thin, perhaps summed up best when former New Jersey governor Chris Christie called him the "most obnoxious blowhard in America" during a debate.

As returns from Iowa's caucus posted, Ramaswamy seemed unlikely to reach double digits, and he suspended his campaign.

Josh Allen, Bills dispatch Steelers 31-17 in playoff game delayed a day by snow. Chiefs up next

By JOHN WAWROW AP Sports Writer

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP) — It made no difference to Josh Allen what day or time the Buffalo Bills faced the Pittsburgh Steelers.

The AFC wild-card playoff game could've been played Sunday as scheduled, in the midst of a lake-effect storm that dumped more than 2 feet of snow on the region, and the Bills were going to be ready.

They proved that on Monday, when Allen threw three touchdown passes and scored on a franchise playoff-record 52-yard touchdown run as Buffalo beat Pittsburgh 31-17 in a game that was postponed by 27 1/2 hours.

"People keep saying that's what we wanted. We had no call in that," Allen said about the postponement. "We would have played yesterday, would have played Saturday would have played Friday, it wouldn't have mattered. We would have come out here and played when we were told to play."

The game turned into a celebration of the elements. Snow blanketed a majority of the seats inside Highmark Stadium when the gates opened and was put to good use by fans, who tossed handfuls into the air like confetti to celebrate.

"We put on a show in the snow," left tackle Dion Dawkins said. "We're here. We got one more week."

The second-seeded Bills (12-6), who closed the regular season with five straight wins, advance to host Patrick Mahomes and the No. 3 seed Kansas City Chiefs in the divisional round on Sunday night. Buffalo and its fans have longed for a home playoff game against the Chiefs after their 2020 and '21 seasons ended with playoff losses at Kansas City.

"We're a step behind already," Allen said, noting the Chiefs will have two more days of rest after beating Miami on Saturday. "It's going to take a team effort. We know the type of team that they are, obviously the type of quarterback that they have in Pat over there."

Buffalo led 21-0 before Pittsburgh scored on three straight possessions to get within 24-17. Allen then sealed the win, throwing a 17-yard touchdown pass to Khalil Shakir with 6:27 remaining. Shakir caught the pass at the 10 over the middle, slipped Minkah Fitzpatrick's tackle attempt with a spin move, and outraced the rest of the Steelers defenders into the end zone.

"Dude hit me and I was able to just stay up and make a play from there," Shakir said. "But that comes down to (Allen) getting the ball, putting it right on the money and giving me an opportunity to make a play."

Allen finished 21 of 30 for 203 yards and ran for 74 yards on eight carries, becoming the first quarterback in NFL playoff history to throw three or more TD passes while rushing for 70 or more yards and a score. He didn't have a turnover for just the fourth time this season.

Mason Rudolph threw two touchdown passes with an interception in his first playoff start for the Steelers (10-8), but Pittsburgh was too inconsistent on either side of the ball to keep up with Allen and the Bills. The Steelers lost their fifth straight playoff game; the franchise's most recent postseason victory was exactly seven years ago.

Missed tackles, two turnovers that led to 14 points for Buffalo and the Bills' ability to bottle up the Steelers' running attack contributed to the loss.

"I'm appreciative of the efforts. But it's not mystical. We didn't do what was required to win tonight," Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said. "Can't come into an environment like this with a playoff-caliber team and turn the ball over like that and expect to be competitive."

Asked about his future in Pittsburgh after completing his 17th season — all of them with a record of .500 or better — Tomlin smirked and walked away.

"When we got it down to seven points, I thought we were going to make a run. It comes back to the defense," veteran defensive tackle Cam Heyward said. "There were chances. We didn't capitalize. That was probably the biggest outlier in the game."

The elements didn't play much of a factor. Though temperatures were in the teens, the skies were clear and there was only a slight breeze blowing in off Lake Erie.

The Bills asserted themselves at the start.

Allen's 9-yard touchdown pass to Dawson Knox capped an 80-yard opening drive. After Buffalo linebacker Terrel Bernard recovered receiver George Pickens' fumble at the Pittsburgh 29, Allen threw a TD pass to Dalton Kincaid on the next play.

Allen's touchdown run came after cornerback Kaiir Elam intercepted Rudolph's pass intended for Diontae Johnson in the end zone.

The Steelers finally capitalized on one of the Bills' few errors of the half, when coach Sean McDermott elected to attempt a 49-yard field goal into the wind with a little more than two minutes left.

Montravius Adams blocked Tyler Bass' low kick. The ball squirted some 20 yards into Bills territory and was recovered by Nick Herbig at Buffalo's 33. The Steelers scored five plays later on Rudolph's 10-yard TD pass to Johnson.

The Bills overcame a rash of injuries to their defense. Bernard was ruled out after twisting his right ankle and starting nickelback Taron Johnson did not return after being evaluated for a concussion. The Bills began the game without cornerback Rasul Douglas (knee) and linebacker Tyrel Dodson (shoulder).

"We've got a resilient group," Allen said of a team that was 6-6 after an overtime loss to Philadelphia on Nov. 26. "The veteran leadership that we have, I really think it's unmatched in the league."

Wave of transgender slayings in Mexico spurs anger and protests by LGBTQ+ community

MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Authorities in Mexico said at least three transgender people were killed in the first two weeks of 2024, and rights groups were investigating two additional such cases. The slayings marked a violent start to the year in a country where the LGBTQ+ community is often targeted.

The latest death came on Sunday, when transgender activist and politician Samantha Gómez Fonseca was shot multiple times and slain inside a car in the south of Mexico City, according to local prosecutors.

The killings spurred outrage among members of the LGBTQ+ community who protested in Mexico City's main thoroughway on Monday.

Around 100 people marched chanting: "Samantha listen, we're fighting for you" and carrying signs reading "your hate speech kills." Another group of protesters earlier in the day spray painted the words "trans lives matter" on the walls of Mexico's National Palace.

Fonseca, the activist and politician slain on Sunday, originally intended to march alongside other activists to call for greater acceptance of transgender people in society. After her death, the march quickly turned into a call for justice and for more comprehensive laws around hate crimes.

Paulina Carrazco, a 41-year-old trans woman among the marchers, said it felt like "the violence was knocking on our front door."

"We are scared, but with that fear we're going to keep fighting," Carrazco said. "We're going to do everything in our power so the next generations won't have to live in fear."

Gay and transgender populations are regularly attacked and killed in Mexico, a nation marked by its "macho" and highly religious population. The brutality of some of the attacks is meant to send a message to Queer people that they are not welcome in society.

Over the past six years, the rights group Letra S has documented at least 513 targeted killings of LGBTQ+ people in Mexico. Just last year, the violent death of one of the most recognizable LGBTQ+ figured in Mexico, Ociel Baena, sparked a similar wave of outrage and protests.

Some like 55-year-old Xomalia Ramírez said the violence was a partly consequence of comments made by Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador last week when he described a transgender congresswoman as "man dressed as a woman."

While López Obrador later apologized, marchers like Ramírez, a transgender woman from the southern state of Oaxaca, said it was too little too late.

Ramírez said women like her struggle to find work and when they do, their gender identity is regularly

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ignored. Working as a Spanish teacher, she said her bosses force her to wear men's clothes to work.

"If I want to work, I have to disguise myself as a man," Ramírez said. "If I don't, I won't eat."

"These comments by the president have created transphobia and resulted in hate crimes against the trans community," Ramírez added.

Last week, a transgender activist, Miriam Nohemí Ríos, was shot to death while working in her business in the central Mexican state of Michoacán.

On Saturday, authorities in the central state of Jalisco said they found a transgender person's body lying in a ravine with gunshot wounds.

Two other cases, were not immediately confirmed by law enforcement, but were registered by rights groups who said they often struggle to get details from officials in their efforts to document hate crimes.

One transgender woman known as "Ivonne" was slain alongside her partner in the southern state of Veracruz, according to the National Observatory of Hate Crimes Against LGBTI people.

Meanwhile, Letra S. documented the killing of transgender stylist Gaby Ortiz, whose body was found in the Hidalgo state. Local media, citing local authorities, said her body was found on the side of the road next to "a threatening message" written on a piece of cardboard.

Law enforcement said they would investigate the violent deaths but the activists said they doubted anything would come of the cases. Due to high levels of corruption and overall disfunction in Mexico's government, around 99% of crimes in Mexico go unsolved.

"It's very likely that cases like this will end in impunity," said Jair Martínez, an analyst for Letra S.

Arctic freeze continues to blast huge swaths of the US with sub-zero temperatures

By CAROLYN THOMPSON, MATTHEW BROWN and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Brutally cold temperatures and dangerous wind chills stayed put across much of the U.S. Monday, promising the coldest temperatures ever for Iowa's presidential nominating contest, holding up travelers, and testing the mettle of NFL fans in Buffalo for a playoff game that was delayed a day by wind-whipped snow.

About 150 million Americans were under a windchill warning or advisory for dangerous cold and wind, said Zack Taylor, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in College Park, Maryland, as an Arctic air mass spilled south and eastward across the U.S.

Sunday morning saw temperatures as low as minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 6.7 degrees Celsius) to minus 40 F (minus 40 C) in northern and northeast Montana. Saco, Montana, dropped to minus 51 F (minus 26 C). Subzero lows reached as far south as Kansas, Missouri, Illinois and parts of Indiana, Taylor said.

About 110,000 U.S. homes and businesses were without power late Monday, the bulk of them in Oregon after widespread outages that started Saturday. Portland General Electric warned that strong winds forecast for Monday and threat of an ice storm Tuesday could delay restoration efforts.

Classes were cancelled Tuesday for students in major cities including Chicago — the nation's fourth-largest public school district — Denver, Dallas, Fort Worth and Portland.

The storm was blamed for at least four weekend deaths around Portland, including two people who died of suspected hypothermia. Another man was killed after a tree fell on his house and a woman died in a fire that spread from an open-flame stove after a tree fell onto an RV.

Three deaths of homeless people were under investigation in the Milwaukee area. They likely died from hypothermia, officials said. A 64-year-old man was found dead under a bridge Friday, a 69-year-old man was pronounced dead after being found in a vehicle on Saturday and on Monday a 40-year-old man was found dead near railroad tracks, the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office said.

In Utah, where almost four feet (1.2 meters) of snow fell in the mountains over a 24-hour period, a snowmobiler was struck and killed Sunday night by a semitrailer about 70 miles (113 kilometers) southeast of Salt Lake City, according to the Utah Highway Patrol. The victim was attempting to cross U.S. Highway 40.

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In Wyoming, a backcountry skier was killed after triggering a 50-foot (15-meter) wide avalanche. The victim was swept into a gully and through brush and trees, then remained buried for about fifteen minutes before being found by a companion in the mountains south of Alpine, Wyoming, on Sunday afternoon, according to the Bridger-Teton Avalanche Center.

It marked the third U.S. avalanche fatality in recent days, following a Wednesday accident at a California ski resort that killed one person and injured three others, and another that killed a person on Thursday in the Idaho backcountry near the Montana border.

Swirling snow and avalanche dangers prompted numerous road closures across the Rocky Mountains. East of the resort community of Vail, Colorado, officials closed a 20-mile (32-kilometer) stretch of Interstate 70, the primary east-west highway through the state.

Crews on Monday continued clearing snow after a weekend avalanche briefly trapped the occupants of 10 cars and shut down the road over Berthoud Pass in central Colorado. Kaitlyn Punzalan was in a car with her husband and some friends heading home to Denver when they were caught in the slide.

"My friend was driving my car and all of a sudden he goes - 'Ah, avalanche!' And we just look up and see all of this snow coming down towards us," Punzalan told KUSA-TV. She said it took them about an hour to dig out, with help from others who were on the road. No injuries were reported.

The Buffalo Bills renewed their call for shovelers at Highmark Stadium in Orchard Park, New York, on Monday morning to dig out from more than a foot and a half of snow that fell through a blustery weekend.

Crews had the turf cleared by midmorning. Citizen shovelers working for \$20 an hour worked in temperatures in the teens to clear seats for fans ahead of the 4:30 p.m. game.

At first glance it was a daunting task, Bob Isaacs of Buffalo acknowledged a few hours after arriving at 7:30 a.m. He considered his work a contribution to the team.

"You got to remember you're a Bills fan. It's all part of the deal," he said.

Neighboring towns saw even higher snow totals, with 41 inches in Hamburg and Angola.

Presidential campaigns were expecting the cold and dangerous travel conditions to hamper turnout for the Iowa caucuses, the opening contest in the monthslong Republican presidential primary. Voting was set to begin Monday night.

Transportation officials in Portland, Oregon, urged residents to avoid travel all day Tuesday as a forecast of up to half an inch of freezing rain could make roads hazardously slick with ice and weigh down trees and power lines, causing them to fall.

Multnomah County, home to Portland, said it served a record number of people — 1,136 — at a record number of 12 overnight emergency weather shelters on Sunday night as low temperatures hit 17 degrees (minus 8.3 Celsius), according to the National Weather Service. The county estimated it needed 100 additional volunteers to respond to the high demand in a city that has thousands of homeless people living on its streets.

"As we head into day five of the weather emergency ... the real limitation for us right now is staffing," said Dan Field, director of the joint county-city homelessness office. "We have to have enough people to keep the doors open of the emergency shelters."

Air travelers across the country experienced delays and cancellations. The flight tracking service FlightAware reported about 2,900 cancellations Monday within, into or out of the United States.

Freeze warnings were issued by the National Weather Service across the Deep South. Mississippi forecasters warned of a "long duration freeze" that would last in some locations until Thursday.

Highs of 15 or 20 degrees F (minus 9 to 6.7 degrees C) were expected across Oklahoma, Arkansas, northern Texas and western Tennessee. Louisiana and Alabama also had freeze warnings.

The winter storm was affecting travel across the central Appalachian region, with areas of Tennessee seeing as much as 8 inches of snow. The Tennessee legislature canceled its meetings for the week.

The snow was expected to continue accumulating through early Tuesday with bitter cold wind chills.

With the potential for record low temperatures in Texas, the state's electrical grid operator asked consumers to conserve energy. About 11,000 Texas customers were without power Monday, according to

poweroutage.us.

Light snow was expected through the Mid-Atlantic and the Northeast through Monday and Tuesday, Taylor said, including 2 to 3 inches of snow forecasted for Washington, D.C. — what would be the most snowfall in a day in the nation's capital in at least two years.

Another round of cold air was expected in coming days to drop south into the Northern Plains and Midwest before reaching the Deep South by the end of the week.

Parents want district to improve security more after deadly Iowa school shooting

By JACK DURA Associated Press

Several parents in an Iowa town where a deadly school shooting took place earlier this month told school officials on Monday they want more preventative measures and transparency as the school board plans for students' return.

Their comments came during a Perry school board meeting, the day after the death of Principal Dan Marburger, who was critically injured in the shooting.

Grace Castro criticized the school district's policies, saying that "lives were lost due to our lack of preventative measures." She suggested the installation of metal detectors at schools' entrances and a temporary remote learning option at the same time, and enforcement of a clear-bag policy as "the absolute least you can do."

Her comments echoed what many other many other parents — including some of the victims' families — have been saying on the Perry Facebook page since the district first announced its reopening plan last week.

Mark Drahos also asked the board for more preventative measures. But he noted that school officials won't be able to please everybody. He said he discussed ideas with a school board member, including a single-point entry to buildings, a no-bag policy and additional security such as hall monitors.

Joseph Swanson said, "I understand the solution to this problem is not an easy fix if it even can truly be fixed. But an enhancement of security measures and mental health well-being needs to be addressed."

Monday's meeting had been postponed from Sunday because of Marburger's death.

His body will be escorted back to Perry on Tuesday from where he had been hospitalized in Des Moines. His family has encouraged community members to line the route to welcome him back home. Funeral services are pending.

The attack began in the shared middle and high school cafeteria, where students were eating breakfast before class on their first day back from winter break. The shooting continued outside the cafeteria, but it was contained to the north end of the joint middle and high school building.

Sixth-grader Ahmir Jolliff, 11, was killed, and seven others were wounded, including Marburger, two other school staff members and four students.

The Iowa Department of Public Safety said Marburger "acted selflessly and placed himself in harm's way in an apparent effort to protect his students." Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds ordered all flags lowered to half-staff in honor of Marburger until sunset on the day of his funeral and interment. She also encouraged people, business, schools and local governments to do the same.

The district's reopening plan is on hold until further notice both because of the parent concerns about safety and security and because of Marburger's death. School officials are seeking the expertise of law enforcement and safety experts, according to a school district Facebook post on Monday. The district plans to have uniformed officers on site as students transition back to school. The district continues to offer counseling services. Middle and high school students' extracurricular competitions resume Tuesday as the district begins to ease back into its normal schedule.

The last injured student was released from the hospital Sunday, so everyone who was injured in the shooting, with the exception of Marburger, has now been able to return home to Perry, according to Facebook posts of victims' family members.

The 17-year-old student who opened fire died from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot. Authorities said the suspect, identified as Dylan Butler, had a pump-action shotgun and a small-caliber handgun. Authorities also found and rendered safe a rudimentary, improvised explosive device in his belongings.

An obituary for Butler that was published in the local newspaper Friday said Dylan loved the outdoors and had a great sense of humor. He was a picky eater who favored macaroni and cheese, pizza and buffalo wings. The article didn't make any mention of the shooting but said the family plans a private burial. Many members of the Perry community have taken the unexpected step of offering their condolences to Butler's family since the shooting.

In comments read aloud on her behalf at the school board meeting, Ahmir Jolliff's mother, Erica Jolliff, asked that Butler not be referred to as a school shooter or a murderer.

"He has a name, and it is Dylan. By not treating him as a person, allowing bullying and calling him names rather than Dylan potentially triggered the events that happened on Jan. 4," she said. She also called on the school district to review the events from start to finish and come up with safety procedures to ensure other shootings don't happen.

UN agency chiefs say Gaza needs more aid to arrive faster, warning of famine and disease

By NAJIB JOBAIN, SAMY MAGDY and TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Gaza urgently needs more aid or its desperate population will suffer widespread famine and disease, the heads of three major U.N. agencies warned Monday, as authorities in the enclave reported that the death toll in the Israel-Hamas war had surpassed 24,000.

While the U.N. agency chiefs did not directly point a finger at Israel, they said aid delivery is hobbled by the opening of too few border crossings, a slow vetting process for trucks and goods going into Gaza, and continuing fighting throughout the territory — all of which Israel plays a deciding factor in.

Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza, sparked by the militant group's Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel, has prompted unprecedented destruction in the tiny coastal enclave and triggered a humanitarian catastrophe that has displaced most of Gaza's 2.3 million population and pushed more than a quarter into starvation, according to the U.N.

It has also stoked regional tensions, with Iran-backed groups in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen carrying out strikes in support of the Palestinians. A missile fired by Yemen's Houthi rebels hit an American-owned cargo ship on Monday, days after U.S.-led strikes against the group over its attacks on international shipping.

In Gaza, civilians have grown desperate. Footage shared online by Al Jazeera showed hundreds of people rushing toward what appeared to be an aid truck in what the news outlet said was Gaza City. The Associated Press couldn't independently verify the video and it wasn't clear when it was filmed.

The World Food Program, UNICEF and the World Health Organization said Monday that new entry routes need to be opened to Gaza, more trucks need to be allowed in each day, and aid workers and those seeking aid need to be allowed to move around safely.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said U.N. agencies and their partners "cannot effectively deliver humanitarian aid while Gaza is under such heavy, widespread and unrelenting bombardment." He said the deaths of 152 U.N. staffers in Gaza since the start of the war is "the largest single loss of life in the history of our organization."

DEATH TOLL RISES

The Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza said Monday that the bodies of 132 people killed in Israeli strikes were brought to Gaza hospitals over the past day, raising the death toll from the start of the war to 24,100.

The ministry, which doesn't distinguish between fighters and noncombatants in its tally, says two-thirds of those killed in the war were women and children. Israel says its forces have killed roughly 8,000 militants, without providing evidence.

Israel blames Hamas for the high Palestinian death toll, saying its fighters make use of civilian buildings, and launch attacks from densely populated urban areas.

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On Monday, the military said its forces and aircraft targeted militants in the second-largest city Khan Younis in southern Gaza, a current focus of the ground offensive, as well as in northern Gaza, where the Israeli military says it continues to expand its control.

A day after the White House said it was time Israel to curtail its military offensive, Israel Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said the intense offensive in southern Gaza will soon be scaled back once Israel takes military control of the area.

In Israel, a woman was killed and 12 other people were wounded in a car-ramming and stabbing attack in a suburb of Tel Aviv that police said was carried out by at least two Palestinians. They were later arrested. The suspects stole three different cars and attempted to run down pedestrians, police said.

Hamas praised the attack, but neither it nor other Palestinian armed groups claimed responsibility for it.

Palestinians have carried out a number of attacks against Israelis since the start of the war, mainly in Jerusalem or the occupied West Bank. Around 350 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces in the West Bank, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry, mostly in confrontations during Israeli arrest raids or violent protests.

HAMAS SAYS 2 HOSTAGES KILLED IN AIRSTRIKES

The war began on Oct. 7, when a Hamas-led surprise attack into Israel killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians. The militants captured around 250 people and are still holding nearly half of them after releasing more than 100 in exchange for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel during a November cease-fire.

Hamas released a video late Monday showing three hostages – Noa Argamani, 26, Yossi Sharabi, 53, and Itay Svirsky, 38. It includes brief individual statements from all three, likely speaking under duress, in which they call on Israel to halt the war and say they have little food and water and are in danger from Israeli airstrikes.

Later in the video, Argamani says separate airstrikes killed Sharabi and Svirsky and that she herself was wounded. Footage then shows what appear to be the bodies of Sharabi and Svirsky.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, the Israeli military spokesman, said the army had told the families of Svirsky and another hostage that it was “very concerned” over whether they were still alive. He said Israel had struck a building near where the hostages were being held but did not know their location at the time.

Gallant, Israel’s defense minister, said Monday that military pressure is the only way to win the release of the remaining hostages, and he ruled out a cease-fire.

UNPRECEDENTED HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

The fighting, now in its 101st day, has set off an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Gaza, which was already struggling from a lengthy blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt after Hamas took power in 2007.

The crisis has been especially severe in northern Gaza: The U.N. said Sunday that less than a quarter of aid convoys have reached their destinations in the north in January, because Israeli authorities denied most access. Israeli officials had no immediate comment.

The U.N. agencies said they want access to the Israeli port of Ashdod, located about 40 kilometers (24 miles) north of Gaza, which they say would allow larger amounts of aid to be shipped in and then sent directly to northern Gaza, much of which Israel leveled in the opening weeks of the war.

Israel has blamed the U.N. and other groups for the problems with aid delivery.

Moshe Tetro, an official with COGAT, an Israeli military body in charge of civilian Palestinian affairs, said last week that aid delivery would be more streamlined if the U.N. provided more workers to receive and pack the supplies. He said more trucks were needed to transfer the aid to Israel for security checks and that the working hours at the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt needed to be extended.

Israel sealed off Gaza after Hamas’ Oct. 7 attack. It relented after its top ally, the U.S., pressed it to loosen its restrictions. The U.S., as well as the U.N., have continued to push Israel to ease the flow of aid.

Palestinian ambassador to UN calls on Non-Aligned Movement to pressure Israel to enforce cease-fire

By RISDEL KASASIRA Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — The Palestinian ambassador to the U.N. called on the members of the Non-Aligned Movement in Kampala, Uganda, to put pressure on Israel to implement a cease-fire in Gaza after 100 days of war with militant Palestinian group Hamas.

Rayid Mansour addressed in his opening speech the 120 members, convening throughout this week, that despite the U.N. General Assembly and the Security Council's resolutions, a cease-fire remained elusive.

The Non-Aligned Movement, formed during the collapse of the colonial systems and at the height of the Cold War, has played a key part in decolonization processes, according to its website.

Mansour claimed that Israel was leading an apartheid of the Palestinians in the ongoing war that broke out on Oct. 7 when Hamas suddenly attacked the south of Israel, killing some 1,200 people, and taking 250 others hostage. Israel retaliated by pounding the Gaza Strip, killing nearly 24,000 people and displacing about 80% of the population.

"We are still under this colonial occupation by Israel and we see genocide committed on our people, particularly in the Gaza Strip," he said.

He said the Palestinians were grateful to South Africa for launching a case against Israel at the International Court for Justice. "We are the last kids around the block. All of you accomplished your national independence and you put an end to colonialism."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has previously said Israel will pursue its war against Hamas until victory and will not be stopped by anyone, including the ICJ.

Israel adamantly denies allegations of genocide in Gaza, saying it makes every effort to avoid harming civilians, and rejects allegations of apartheid as an attack on its very legitimacy.

At least 30 of the movement's members are expected to attend the heads of states' meeting at the end of the weeklong deliberations. Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni will take over as president the Azerbaijan's Ilham Aliyev for the next three years.

Austin is released from hospital after complications from prostate cancer surgery he kept secret

By LOLITA C. BALDOR and TARA COPP Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was released from the hospital on Monday, after spending two weeks there to treat complications from surgery for prostate cancer he kept secret from senior Biden administration leaders and staff for weeks.

Austin will be working from home as he recovers, and his doctors said he "progressed well throughout his stay and his strength is rebounding." They said in a statement the cancer was treated early and his prognosis is "excellent."

In a statement, Austin expressed thanks to the medical staff and said that "as I continue to recuperate and perform my duties from home, I'm eager to fully recover and return as quickly as possible to the Pentagon."

Austin, 70, was admitted to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Dec. 22 and underwent surgery to treat the cancer, which was detected earlier in the month during a routine screening. He developed an infection a week later and was hospitalized Jan. 1 and admitted to intensive care.

Dr. John Maddox, the trauma medical director, and Dr. Gregory Chesnut, the director of the Center for Prostate Disease Research at Walter Reed, said that during Austin's hospitalization he underwent medical tests and was treated for lingering leg pain. They said he has physical therapy to do but there are no plans for further cancer treatment other than regular checks.

President Joe Biden and senior administration officials were not told about Austin's hospitalization until Jan. 4, and Austin kept the cancer diagnosis secret until Jan. 9. Biden has said Austin's failure to tell him

about the hospitalization was a lapse in judgment, but the Democratic president insists he still has confidence in his Pentagon chief.

During Austin's time at Walter Reed, the U.S. launched a series of military strikes late last week on the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen, targeting dozens of locations linked to their campaign of assaults on commercial shipping in the Red Sea. Working from his hospital bed, Austin juggled calls with senior military leaders, including Gen. Erik Kurilla, head of U.S. Central Command, and White House meetings to review, order and ultimately watch the strikes unfold over secure video.

The lack of transparency about Austin's hospitalization, however, has triggered administration and Defense Department reviews on the procedures for notifying the White House and others if a Cabinet member must transfer decision-making authorities to a deputy, as Austin did during his initial surgery and a portion of his latest hospital stay. And the White House chief of staff ordered Cabinet members to notify his office if they ever can't perform their duties.

Austin's secrecy also drew criticism from Congress members on both sides of the political aisle, and Rep. Mike Rogers, an Alabama Republican who is chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said he has opened a formal inquiry into the matter. Others openly called for Austin to resign, but the White House has said the Pentagon chief's job is safe.

It is still unclear when Austin will return to his office in the Pentagon or how his cancer treatment will affect his job, travel and other public engagements going forward. Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks has been taking on some of his day-to-day duties as he recovers.

Ukraine says it shot down 2 Russian command and control aircraft in a significant blow to Moscow

By ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The Ukrainian air force shot down a Russian early warning and control plane that can spot targets up to 650 kilometers (400 miles) away and a key command center aircraft that relays information to troops on the ground in a significant blow for the Kremlin's forces, Ukraine's military chief said Monday.

The planes are fundamental tools in helping orchestrate Russian battlefield movements in Ukraine. Shooting them down, if confirmed, would be a landmark feat for Ukraine in the almost two-year war, as fighting along the front line is largely bogged down in trench and artillery warfare.

Russia has largely ensured its air dominance during the war, as Ukraine fights with its fleet of Soviet-era warplanes against Moscow's more modern aircraft.

Gen. Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian armed forces, didn't say how the two aircraft — a Beriev A-50 and an Il-22 — were brought down, but Ukraine has received sophisticated air defense systems from its Western allies.

Zaluzhnyi also did not say where the interceptions occurred, though he attached a video to his social media post with an airplane tracker showing two targets disappearing above the Azov Sea, which lies between Ukraine and Russia, north of the Crimea Peninsula and the Black Sea.

There was no immediate official comment from Moscow. Russian war bloggers said both planes had come under friendly fire, though they presented no evidence of that. They claimed the Il-22 was damaged but made a successful landing.

The A-50, which is topped with a large radar, typically carries a crew of 15. The Russian air force reportedly has been operating a fleet of nine such aircraft.

A February 2023 drone attack at an airfield in Belarus damaged a parked A-50, but Russian and Belarusian officials described the damage as minor.

The Il-22 is an airborne command post. It oversees military operations and sends radio signals to troops on the front line. The Russian air force reportedly has a dozen such planes.

Ukraine is eager to impress its Western supporters with its ability in deploying the advanced weapons it has received.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was due to meet Swiss President Viola Amherd in Bern later Monday before attending the World Economic Forum in Davos on Tuesday.

Ukrainian officials are striving to keep world attention on the war amid concerns that the conflict is slipping down the list of global priorities.

The United Nations appealed Monday for \$4.2 billion to help people in Ukraine and displaced outside the country this year.

Martin Griffiths, the U.N.'s humanitarian chief, acknowledged that "the competition for funding is getting greater" because of crises elsewhere, including the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

Russia, meanwhile, was looking to deepen its ties with North Korea, whose foreign minister began a three-day visit to Moscow on Monday.

The Kremlin is eager to replenish its weapons stockpiles. It has in recent times turned to Iran and North Korea for supplies.

Pyongyang has likely supplied several types of missiles to Russia to support its war in Ukraine, along with its widely reported shipments of ammunition and shells, the U.S. and its allies have alleged.

Russian and Iranian defense and foreign ministers spoke by phone Monday to discuss bilateral military and military technical cooperation and regional security issues, according to official statements. They noted that the two countries are preparing to sign a landmark cooperation treaty.

Ukraine is also determined to build up its stocks for a protracted conflict and is "dramatically expanding" its domestic manufacturing capacity for military items, a U.S. think tank said.

Ukraine is well-positioned to succeed in its plans to make up for any shortfall in Western-supplied weaponry, the Institute for the Study of War said.

"Ukraine is heavily industrialized, with a highly educated and technically sophisticated population," the think tank said late Sunday. "It had a massive arms industry during the Soviet period and continued to be a significant arms exporter after independence."

Soccer player returns to warm welcome in Israel following detention in Turkey

By SUZAN FRASER Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Israeli soccer player Sagiv Jehezkel returned to Israel on Monday evening to a cheering crowd, hours after he was briefly detained in Turkey for allegedly inciting hatred after he expressed solidarity with hostages being held by Hamas in Gaza during a top-flight league game.

Jehezkel landed in Israel in a small plane and was draped in an Israeli flag upon disembarking. Dozens of fans mobbed him as he left the airport, cheering, singing, and waving flags.

"There's nowhere like Israel in the world," Jehezkel told reporters. "I'm very happy to be here, and I couldn't wait to arrive."

The Antalyaspor player was released from custody following questioning by police and court officials, a Turkish official said. It was not immediately clear if he was released pending a trial or if the accusations against him were dropped. Court officials in the Mediterranean coastal city of Antalya couldn't immediately be reached for comment.

The player left Turkey of his own will and there was no decision to deport him, the official said on condition of anonymity in line with government regulations.

Earlier, Turkish media reports said that the player was released pending a trial for inciting hatred. The reports later moved away from that storyline, without providing an explanation.

Jehezkel had been detained for questioning late Sunday after he displayed a bandage on his wrist with the words "100 Days 7.10" — in reference to Oct. 7, the day Hamas attacked Israel and the hostages were abducted — next to a Star of David.

The 28-year-old who plays for the Israeli national team told police he was simply calling for an end to the war.

Justice Minister Yilmaz Tunc said late Sunday that Jehezkel was under investigation for "openly inciting

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the public to hatred and hostility." Tunc tweeted that Jehezkel had engaged in "an ugly gesture in support of the Israeli massacre in Gaza."

The gesture was deemed to be provocative in Turkey where there is widespread public opposition to Israel's military actions in Gaza and overwhelming support for the Palestinians.

Antalyaspor suspended Jehezkel from the team and announced that it was speaking to the club's lawyers about the possibility of terminating his contract.

During his questioning by police, the player denied accusations that he engaged in a provocative act, the private DHA news agency reported.

"I am not pro-war," DHA quoted him as telling police. "I want this 100-day process to come to an end. I want the war to end."

Jehezkel continued: "I have never engaged in anything related to politics since my arrival. I have never disrespected anyone since the day I arrived. The point I wanted to draw attention to was (the need) for an end of the war."

The Turkish Football Federation condemned what it said was a gesture that "disturbed the conscience" of the Turkish public.

Jehezkel's detention, meanwhile, sparked outrage in Israel.

Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz called on the international community and sports groups to take steps against Turkey and its "political use of violence and threats against athletes."

"Whoever arrests a football player for a show of solidarity with 136 captives who are more than 100 days with the terrorists of a murderous terrorist organization, represents a culture of murder and hate," he said.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant called Jehezkel's detention "scandalous."

"In its actions, Turkey serves as Hamas' executive arm," he tweeted.

In a related incident, Istanbul's top league side Basaksehir announced Monday that it has launched a disciplinary inquiry into its Israeli player, Eden Karzev, after he posted a message on social media marking the hostages' 100 days in captivity with the hashtag "BringThemHomeNow."

The world could get its first trillionaire within 10 years, anti-poverty group Oxfam says

By PAN PYLAS and MASHA MACPHERSON Associated Press

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP) — The world could have its first trillionaire within a decade, anti-poverty organization Oxfam International said Monday in its annual assessment of global inequalities timed to the gathering of political and business elites at the Swiss ski resort of Davos.

Oxfam, which for years has been trying to highlight the growing disparities between the super-rich and the bulk of the global population during the World Economic Forum's annual meeting, reckons the gap has been "supercharged" since the coronavirus pandemic.

The group said the fortunes of the five richest men — Tesla CEO Elon Musk, Bernard Arnault and his family of luxury company LVMH, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, Oracle founder Larry Ellison and investment guru Warren Buffett — have spiked by 114% in real terms since 2020, when the world was reeling from the pandemic.

Oxfam's interim executive director said the report showed that the world is entering a "decade of division."

"We have the top five billionaires, they have doubled their wealth. On the other hand, almost 5 billion people have become poorer," Amitabh Behar said in an interview in Davos, Switzerland, where the forum's annual meeting takes place this week.

"Very soon, Oxfam predicts that we will have a trillionaire within a decade," Behar said, referring to a person who has a thousand billion dollars. "Whereas to fight poverty, we need more than 200 years."

If someone does reach that trillion-dollar milestone — and it could be someone not even on any list of richest people right now — he or she would have the same value as oil-rich Saudi Arabia.

John D. Rockefeller of Standard Oil fame is widely considered to have become the world's first billionaire in 1916.

Currently, Musk is the richest man on the planet, with a personal fortune of just under \$250 billion, according to Oxfam, which used figures from Forbes.

By contrast, the organization said nearly 5 billion people have been made poorer since the pandemic, with many of the world's developing nations unable to provide the financial support that richer nations could during lockdowns.

In addition, Oxfam said Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, which sent energy and food costs soaring, disproportionately hit the poorest nations.

With Brazil hosting this year's Group of 20 summit of leading industrial and developing nations, it was a "good time for Oxfam to raise awareness" about inequalities, said Max Lawson, Oxfam's head of inequality policy.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has put issues that concern the developing world at the heart of the G20 agenda.

Oxfam said measures that should be considered in an "inequality-busting" agenda include the permanent taxation of the wealthiest in every country, more effective taxation of big corporations and a renewed drive against tax avoidance.

To calculate the top five richest billionaires, Oxfam used figures from Forbes as of November 2023. Their total wealth then was \$869 billion, up from \$340 billion in March 2020, a nominal increase of 155%.

For the bottom 60% of the global population, Oxfam used figures from the UBS Global Wealth Report 2023 and from the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Databook 2019. Both used the same methodology.

Flight school owner, student pilot among dead in Massachusetts small plane crash

BOSTON (AP) — The owner of a flight school and a student pilot were among three people who died in a small plane crash in a remote, wooded area of Massachusetts over the weekend, state police said Monday.

Fredrika Ballard, 53, of Southwick, Massachusetts, owned the Fly Lugu Flight School while William Hampton, 68, of Indian Orchard, Massachusetts, was a flight instructor. Chad Davidson, 29, of Woodstock, Connecticut, was a student pilot on the flight that crashed Sunday. They were the only occupants.

No one could be reached at Fly Lugu for comment.

The twin-engine Beechcraft Baron 55, which took off from Barnes Airport in Westfield at approximately 11:06 a.m. Sunday crashed near Leyden, Massachusetts. Authorities began searching the crash site in Leyden Wildlife Management Area near Greenfield around 11:30 a.m. after several dog walkers reported seeing a plane crash.

All three passengers were found dead inside the plane by the Greenfield Firefighters and American Medical Response paramedics.

Federal Aviation Administration Aviation inspectors responded to the crash site Sunday and a National Transportation Safety Board investigator was expected to arrive Monday, state police said.

State police said the crash remains under investigation.

Biden and the Democrats raise \$97 million to close out 2023 after a December fundraising blitz

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden and the Democratic National Committee said they raised more than \$97 million in the final three months of last year, boosted by a star-studded December fundraising blitz that came even as the political world's attention shifted to the start of the 2024 Republican presidential primary.

The Biden campaign said Monday that it took in \$235 million from its launch last April until the end of 2023 and finished the year with \$117 million in cash on hand — which it said was the highest total amassed

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by any Democratic candidate at this point in the cycle. More than 520,000 donors made 926,000-plus contributions in the quarter, it said.

"This historic haul — proudly powered by strong and growing grassroots enthusiasm — sends a clear message," Julie Chavez Rodriguez, the manager of Biden's reelection campaign, said in a statement. "Our democracy and hard-fought basic rights and freedoms are on the line in 2024, and these numbers prove that the American people know the stakes."

The president has made defending democracy a centerpiece of his reelection bid and repeatedly decried Donald Trump and his "Make America Great Again" movement as posing dire threats to the nation's founding principals. The GOP primary begins with Iowa's caucus on Monday with Trump as the early front-runner — and the Biden campaign noted that he and his top primary competitors have already spent \$100 million on advertising in the leadoff primary state alone.

Biden traveled to Pennsylvania on Friday and stopped at three stores to make the case that his policies have helped grow the economy and spur small business. It was a change from the set speeches he usually gives, meant to highlight ways his economic plans have ensured strong employment — even while triggering inflation that worries voters.

Meanwhile, Trump and his top primary rivals, including former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, made final weekend appeals to would-be caucusgoers as temperatures in Iowa turned frigid.

Since the Biden campaign's launch, nearly 1 million supporters have made more than 2.3 million contributions, and 97% of all its fourth-quarter 2023 donations were under \$200, with the average contribution totaling \$41.88, it announced. Those totals include donations to Biden's political operation and to a network of joint fundraising arrangements with the national and state Democratic parties.

Biden's campaign said December was his strongest fundraising month to date, exceeding a record it said was previously set in November. That helped last year's final quarter outpace the period from July through September, when Biden and his party reported raising \$71-plus million.

The campaign said the president has held 110 fundraisers since launching, including 39 in last year's fourth quarter alone. That included a string of fundraisers before the Christmas holidays that took him to Boston for a trio of events, one of which featured singer-songwriter James Taylor, and three days in California for gatherings with the likes of Steven Spielberg and Barbra Streisand.

That fundraising push came after Biden, who frequently calls himself the "most pro-union" president in U.S. history, previously staying away from raising money in Los Angeles for months during the writers and actors strikes. It was meant to quiet some donors who had privately grumbled that the president wasn't doing enough to stock his campaign coffers ahead of November's election, which is likely to be hard-fought and close.

Even with so much travel focused on fundraising, however, Biden campaign officials had tried to manage expectations. They said in December that they hoped to raise roughly \$67 million for 2023's fourth quarter — which would be consistent with the end-of-the-off-year totals from previous Democratic candidates.

Instead, Biden's latest haul outpaced that of President Barack Obama, who with the DNC raised an un-inflation adjusted \$68 million in the final three months of 2011, ahead of his successful reelection the following year. Trump's campaign announced raising \$46 million in the last quarter of 2019 and had \$102.7 million on hand ahead of a 2020 race it eventually lost to Biden — though its combined war chest with the Republican National Committee at the time was far more formidable.

Hamas fights with a patchwork of weapons built by Iran, China, Russia and North Korea

By MICHAEL BIESECKER Associated Press

Iranian sniper rifles. AK-47 assault rifles from China and Russia. North Korean- and Bulgarian-built rocket-propelled grenades. Anti-tank rockets secretly cobbled together in Gaza.

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An Associated Press analysis of more than 150 videos and photos taken in the three months of combat since Hamas launched its Oct. 7 surprise attack on Israel shows the militant group has amassed a diverse patchwork arsenal of weapons from around the world – much of it smuggled past a 17-year blockade that was aimed at stopping just such a military buildup.

Those weapons have proved deadly during weeks of intense urban warfare in Gaza, where Hamas fighters are typically armed only with what they can carry and employ hit-and-run tactics against lopsided Israeli advantages in arms and technology. Hamas propaganda videos posted over the past few weeks appear to show the shootings of Israeli soldiers recorded through the scopes of sniper rifles.

“We are searching everywhere for weapons, for political support, for money,” Hamas spokesman Ghazi Hamad recently said in an interview with the AP, declining to discuss specifically who has been providing its weapons or how they were snuck into Gaza.

Experts who reviewed the images for AP were able to identify distinguishing features and markings that show where many of the weapons wielded by Hamas fighters were manufactured. But such an analysis does not provide evidence of whether they were provided by the governments of those countries or purchased in a thriving Middle East black market, with weapons and components listed for sale on social media in such war-torn countries as Iraq, Libya and Syria.

What is clear, however, is that many of the images show Hamas militants toting weapons that appear to be relatively new, evidence the group has found ways of getting arms past the air-and-sea blockade of the Gaza Strip — possibly by boat, through tunnels or concealed in shipments of food and other goods.

“The majority of their arms are of Russian, Chinese or Iranian origin, but North Korean weapons and those produced in former Warsaw Pact countries are also present in the arsenal,” said N.R. Jenzen-Jones, an expert in military arms who is director of the Australian-based Armament Research Services.

Despite the buildup, Israel maintains a massive advantage, with a powerful array of modern tanks, artillery, helicopter gunships and an air force of U.S.-made fighter jets. Israel’s military says it has killed more than 7,000 Hamas militants, compared to the deaths of at least 510 of its own soldiers, more than 330 of whom were killed in Hamas’ initial attack. The Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza says more than 23,000 Palestinians have died in the fighting, though it does not differentiate between civilians and combatants.

Imagery reviewed by the AP showed a Hamas arsenal featuring weapons ranging from small arms and machine guns to shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles and craft-produced anti-tank projectiles.

Among the most distinctive is the oversized AM-50 Sayyad (Arabic for “hunter”), an Iranian-made a sniper rifle that fires a .50- caliber round powerful enough to punch through up to an inch of steel. It has previously been spotted on battlefields in Yemen, Syria, and in the hands of Shia militias in Iraq.

Hamas fighters have also been seen carrying an array of Soviet-era weapons that have been copied and manufactured in Iran and China. They include variants of the Russian-designed 9M32 Strela, a portable heat-seeking anti-aircraft missile system.

Jenzen-Jones said a grip stock on one of the missile launchers a fighter was seen holding is distinctive to a variant manufactured in China and used by the Iranian military and its allies, including Hezbollah in Lebanon, a group closely aligned with Hamas.

Weapons recovered from Hamas fighters by the Israel Defense Forces include what appear to be Italian-designed TC/6 anti-tank mines. However, Seán Moorhouse, a former British Army officer and explosive ordinance disposal expert, said it too had been copied by Iran’s arms industry.

The Israel Defense Forces and U.S. officials have long accused Iran of supplying money, training and weapons to Hamas and allied militants in Gaza, including the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Iranian representatives at the United Nations did not respond to emails from the AP about whether their government supplied weapons to Hamas, including AM-50 Sayyad sniper rifles. However, a week after AP sought comment, Hamas posted a video purporting to show militants in Gaza using machining equipment to make their own copies of the rifle.

Master gunsmith Don Fraley reviewed that Dec. 20 video and said it would be nearly impossible for Hamas to manufacture a safe and accurate .50-caliber sniper rifle with the rudimentary equipment shown.

“You’re going to have to be a rock star at machine shop work. And I didn’t see any of that,” said Fraley,

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a former U.S. Army Special Forces soldier and sniper for the Kentucky State Police. "These folks are just trying to cover their tracks."

An Israeli military official familiar with Hamas' arsenal said the group uses a combination of smuggled "off-the-shelf" weaponry, including AK-47s, RPGs and anti-aircraft missiles, as well as a large collection of home-grown weapons often made with easily accessible civilian materials.

For instance, the official said, the group uses lathes to shape metal into rockets and mortars, and fits them with explosives manufactured from fertilizers. Other home-made weapons include a launcher capable of firing 14 rockets simultaneously and the "Zuwari" drone, an explosives-laden aircraft that was used to strike Israeli observation towers and knock out cameras on Oct. 7.

"There is a huge military/defense industry inside the Gaza Strip," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity under military briefing rules.

The official said most of the smuggled weapons are believed to have been brought in through Egypt and are generally easy to purchase and did not need to be supplied by the country of origin.

One such weapon seen in the hands of Hamas fighters is a version of Chinese machine guns known as the Type 80, a model that has also been copied by the Iranians and renamed as the PKM-T80.

Jonathan Ferguson, the curator of firearms at the Royal Armouries Museum in England, said from what he could see from the photos and videos, versions of the gun made in China and Iran were so similar as to be indistinguishable.

Ferguson was also able to identify a rocket-propelled grenade with marks showing it was made in Bulgaria. AP previously reported Hamas used RPGs with a distinctive red stripe indicating they were made in North Korea.

Among the more sophisticated Hamas home-grown weapons is a copy of a Russian anti-tank rocket called the PG-7VR, which is specifically designed to defeat reactive-armor systems like those used on Israel's Merkava Mark VI main battle tanks. Such tanks are covered with explosive-filed plates that explode outwards to disrupt incoming projectiles.

In propaganda videos posted in October, masked militants are seen assembling a version of the Russian rocket that Hamas has renamed the Al-Yasin 105, in honor of the group's founder killed in an Israeli air strike in 2004. While the original Russian version can melt through up to two feet of steel armor, experts say it's not clear whether the home-brewed explosives in the Hamas knock-off are as potent.

Hamas has posted multiple videos of fighters firing the rockets at Israeli tanks and armored personal carriers. Those videos are typically cut off after the warhead explodes, making it impossible to independently verify whether the target was destroyed.

Also, in a tactic borrowed from the battlefields of Ukraine, Hamas appears to have obtained or copied Iranian-designed drones that pack warheads that explode when crashed into their targets. Off-the-shelf, Chinese-made quadcopter drones have also been adapted to drop explosives on tanks and troops.

"The availability of commercial off-the-shelf unmanned aerial vehicles, these light consumer drones, has radically changed warfare in recent years," Jenzen-Jones said. "We've seen them, obviously, in Syria, in Yemen, in Iraq, in Ukraine, and now in Gaza."

At Davos, conflict, climate change and AI get top billing as leaders converge for elite meeting

By JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP) — The Earth is heating up, as is conflict in the Middle East. The world economy and Ukraine's defense against Russia are sputtering along. Artificial intelligence could upend all our lives.

The to-do list of global priorities has grown for this year's edition of the World Economic Forum gabfest of business, political and other elites in the Alpine snows of Davos, Switzerland. It gets going in earnest Tuesday and runs through Friday.

Over 60 heads of state and government, including Israeli President Isaac Herzog and Ukrainian President

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Volodymyr Zelenskyy will be heading to town to hold both public appearances and closed-door talks. They'll be among more than 2,800 attendees, including academics, artists and international organization leaders.

The gathering is mostly high-minded ambition — think business innovation, aims for peace-making and security cooperation, or life-changing improvements in health care — and a venue for decision-makers in an array of fields and industries to connect.

It is also regularly panned by critics as an emblem of the yawning gap between rich and poor: Young Swiss Socialists staged a rally Sunday to blast the forum and brand attendees as “the richest and most powerful, who are responsible for today’s wars and crises.”

“Davos is easily mocked. But in current times it is hard to get people together to talk in a room on shared global issues and the value of face-to-face conversations is very real, as the COVID-19 pandemic showed,” Bronwen Maddox, director of the Chatham House think tank, said in an email.

Here’s what to watch for at the annual Davos gathering:

MESSY MIDEAST

While Davos is generally big picture, regional conflict can cast a long shadow — like the war in Ukraine did a year ago, prompting organizers to exclude any Russian delegation.

This year, Israel’s three-month war with Hamas in Gaza, plus U.S. and British airstrikes on Houthi militants in Yemen who have fired missiles into Red Sea shipping lanes, are looming large.

Herzog, the Israeli president, whose job is more ceremonial than is Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s, will be on hand for a Davos session Thursday, and the prime ministers of Qatar, Jordan and Lebanon also will be attending.

A “humanitarian briefing on Gaza” session gets a half-hour slot Tuesday.

WHITHER AI?

A testament to how technology has taken a large and growing slice of attention in Davos, the theme of artificial intelligence “as a driving force for the economy and society” will get about 30 separate sessions.

The dizzying emergence of OpenAI’s ChatGPT over a year ago and rivals since then have elevated the power, promise and portent of artificial intelligence into greater public view. OpenAI chief Sam Altman will be in Davos along with top executives from Microsoft, which helped bankroll his company’s rise.

AI in education, transparency about the technology, its ethics and impact on creativity are all part of the menu — and the Davos Promenade is swimming in advertisements and displays pointing to the new technology.

Forum organizers warned last week that the threat posed by misinformation generated by AI, such as through the creation of synthetic content, is the world’s greatest short-term threat.

AND WHITHER DEMOCRACIES?

Such misinformation could surge this year, and one session explores the threat of “bots and plots” on democracies.

Forum organizers say elections in countries whose populations together total 4.2 billion people will take place this year, and many will be contested. (Few doubt whether Russian President Vladimir Putin will get a new term.)

It comes against the backdrop of talk about a new Cold War, the widening rift between dictatorships — or at least autocracies — and democratic countries.

Back-to-back addresses Tuesday by Chinese Premier Li Qiang and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will highlight the contrast. President Joe Biden’s national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, gives a speech later in the day.

French President Emmanuel Macron and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will speak Wednesday, as will Argentina’s new president, Javier Milei, a libertarian who has already announced plans to slash the government workforce.

Davos corridors were already abuzz about whether former U.S. President Donald Trump — who made two trips to Davos during his term — could be inaugurated again around this time next year following the outcome of November’s election.

Biden was once a regular at Davos, but has not attended as president.

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TRYING AGAIN TO SAVE THE PLANET

Of all the lofty hopes in Davos, the perennial one of late has been the search for creative and promising ways to fight climate change.

This year is no different: Top climate scientists from around the world reported this month that average global temperatures last year obliterated the record highs — raising the urgency level.

John Kerry, who is stepping down as Biden's climate adviser, takes part in a panel discussion on a U.S.-backed initiative that aims to draw the private sector into development of low-carbon technologies.

"I would like — on the climate side — the WEF annual meeting to demonstrate that we've got some concrete building blocks in the works for rebuilding trust," said Arunabha Ghosh, CEO of the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, an Indian think tank.

Ghosh, who is expected to lead a panel Wednesday that includes Kerry, pointed to the need for investment to flow to the Global South, "where the action is" in fighting climate change, as well as bringing emerging markets and developing countries more into global value chains.

He also suggested richer countries should shirk protectionist impulses that could lock out developing countries.

"If we use climate action as a way to raise protectionist barriers, I think we'll have another reason for trust to get degraded," Ghosh said.

Election results tell you who won and lost. AP VoteCast tells you why

By ROBERT YOON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When the dust settles from Monday's first-in-the-nation Iowa caucuses, the returns will reveal who had Republican caucusgoers' vote, but they won't shed much light on the types of people who voted or what was on their minds as they cast their ballots. That's where AP VoteCast comes in.

Launched in 2018, AP VoteCast is a comprehensive survey of both voters and nonvoters that aims to tell the story behind the election results. Conducted for The Associated Press and Fox News by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, it's a detailed snapshot of the American electorate that helps explain who voted, who didn't vote, what issues they care about, how they feel about the candidates and why they voted the way they did.

It's also a powerful resource that the AP analyzes, along with vote results and other election data, to help declare winners on election nights in contests across the country.

How does AP VoteCast work?

AP VoteCast uses a combination of methods — mail, phone and online interviews — to reach voters and capture their opinions about the candidates and the election regardless of whether they vote in-person on or before Election Day or by mail-in ballot.

The first step in the process is to find people to participate in the survey. A random sample of registered voters is contacted through the mail and invited to take the survey online or by phone. Some voters are also contacted by phone if they do not respond to the initial invitation to take part in the survey.

Besides the survey of a random sample of eligible registered voters, AP VoteCast also collects data by conducting interviews with additional voters recruited through online panels. This helps give AP VoteCast a broader reach and additional depth. The composition of panels is carefully calibrated to mirror that of the random sample survey to make sure that key demographic and ideological groups are not over- or underrepresented.

The interviews begin several days before Election Day and conclude as polls close. In primaries and caucuses, those who take the survey more than two days out are contacted again just before the election and asked to retake the survey to reflect how late-breaking developments in the campaign might affect their thinking. For example, Iowa voters who completed the survey before former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie withdrew from the 2024 GOP presidential race will be contacted and asked to take the survey again to capture their latest views.

What does AP VoteCast tell us?

Voters are asked a standard set of demographic questions, such as their age, sex, race and ethnicity,

education level and the type of neighborhood they live in. They're also asked to share their views on what they look for in a candidate, what they think about the candidates on the ballot and what they believe are the key issues facing the country, such as abortion, crime, the economy, health care and immigration.

While voters are also asked who they're voting for in the election, the AP doesn't use this information to report an overall horse race result or to replace vote totals. But the survey results do provide valuable insight into how specific groups voted. For example, in the 2020 presidential election, AP VoteCast results showed that white men favored Donald Trump, while women with college degrees favored Joe Biden. It showed that voters who thought the economy was the top issue preferred Trump, a Republican, while those who thought health care was the top issue supported Biden, a Democrat.

Which candidates are included in AP VoteCast?

The AP VoteCast survey generally includes all major active candidates who are on the ballot. In the case of the Iowa Republican caucuses, where there is no set list of candidates, the survey includes Christie, who was still in the race when the survey began but dropped out shortly after, along with Ron DeSantis, Nikki Haley, Asa Hutchinson, Vivek Ramaswamy and Trump. Respondents also are given the option to indicate their support for a different candidate not specifically mentioned in the survey.

What's the difference between AP VoteCast and an exit poll?

Although it serves a similar purpose, AP VoteCast is not an exit poll, which relies largely on in-person interviews with voters conducted outside of select polling places after they've cast their ballots. Prior to the launch of AP VoteCast in 2018, the AP worked with other major news organizations to conduct Election Day exit polls.

AP VoteCast was created in part to reflect significant changes over the years in how people vote, from a world where most voters cast their ballots by showing up at the polls on Election Day to one where a growing number cast their ballots before Election Day.

In 1972, for example, 95% of voters nationwide cast a ballot in-person on the day of the election. Since then, the number of voters who cast their ballots before Election Day has steadily grown, especially in the last few elections. In 2018, roughly 43% of voters cast their ballots before the November general election. In 2020, in the thick of the coronavirus pandemic, the number shot up to 70%. In the 2022 midterms, 51% of voters cast pre-Election Day ballots.

Where can I get more information about AP VoteCast?

AP VoteCast results from the Iowa GOP caucuses will be available Monday night on the AP's caucus results homepage.

A detailed description of the methodology used in AP VoteCast is also available.

Fueled by unprecedented border crossings, a record 3 million cases clog US immigration courts

By GIOVANNA DELL'ORTO Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Eight months after crossing the Rio Grande into the United States, a couple in their 20s sat in an immigration court in Miami with their three young children. Through an interpreter, they asked a judge to give them more time to find an attorney to file for asylum and not be deported back to Honduras, where gangs threatened them.

Judge Christina Martyak agreed to a three-month extension, referred Aarón Rodríguez and Cindy Baneza to free legal aid provided by the Catholic Archdiocese of Miami in the same courthouse — and their case remains one of the unprecedented 3 million currently pending in immigration courts around the United States.

Fueled by record-breaking increases in migrants who seek asylum after being apprehended for crossing the border illegally, the court backlog has grown by more than 1 million over the last fiscal year and it's now triple what it was in 2019, according to government data compiled by Syracuse University's Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse.

Judges, attorneys and migrant advocates worry that's rendering an already strained system unworkable,

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as it often takes several years to grant asylum-seekers a new stable life and to deport those with no right to remain in the country.

"Sometimes hope already sinks," said Mayra Cruz after her case was also granted an extension by Martyak because the Peruvian migrant doesn't have an attorney.

"But here I've felt a bit safer," added Cruz, who said she had to flee with only the clothes on her back with her partner and their children after repeated threats from gangs.

About 261,000 cases of migrants placed in removal proceedings are pending in the Miami court — the largest docket in the country. That's about the same as were pending nationwide a dozen years ago, said Syracuse University professor Austin Kocher.

The backlog includes migrants who have been in the United States for decades and were apprehended on unrelated charges, but most are new asylum seekers who declare a fear of persecution if they are sent back, he added.

Backlogged courts, administered by the Justice Department, often get little attention in immigration debates, including in current Senate negotiations over the Biden administration's \$110 billion proposal that links aid for Ukraine and Israel to asylum and other border policy changes.

When migrants are apprehended by U.S. authorities at the border, many are released with a record of their detention and instructions to appear in court in the city where they are headed. That information is passed on from the Department of Homeland Security to the Justice Department, whose Executive Office for Immigration Review runs the courts, so that an initial hearing can be scheduled.

"They're just being released without any idea of what comes next," said Randy McGrorty, executive director of Catholic Legal Services for the Archdiocese of Miami, which has seen hundreds of thousands of migrants join its diaspora communities.

So many migrants go to them for advice that, in the last couple of years, they've largely switched to teaching how to self-petition and represent themselves before judges.

"We help them understand what judges want, and we help judges with efficiency and preserving fundamental rights," said Miguel Mora, a Catholic Legal Services supervising attorney in Miami.

Advocates say that most migrants ask for individual legal representation, something that's becoming increasingly rare given the huge numbers, and how to get work permits, which migrants can apply for 150 days after filing their asylum application.

It's a vicious cycle — without regular work, most can't afford even a low-cost lawyer, so their cases can take even longer.

"We don't have the money," Rodríguez, 23, told Judge Martyak, who had already granted him an extension for having no attorney at a previous hearing, as his partner rocked the stroller where their U.S.-born baby slept. They fled Honduras after the gang that had killed the father of Baneza's oldest child threatened further violence unless they started paying from the meager profits of their tortilla shop.

"We were left with no other option than get out of the country," Rodríguez told The Associated Press. "We've already had three court appearances. Time is helping. We're getting a little bit oriented."

But the slow-moving process also means it takes years for asylum-seekers to be able to reunite with families they left behind and integrate fully in American society, said Karen Musalo, an attorney and professor who leads the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies at the University of California in San Francisco.

Time also doesn't help with the backlog, even though government records show judges completed far more cases in the last year than ever before, because their dockets keep growing so fast. Their average caseload is now 5,000 per judge, said Mimi Tsankov, president of the National Association of Immigration Judges.

She cited estimates that doubling the current number of judges to about 1,400 might solve the current backlog by 2032. In the new budget request, the Executive Office for Immigration Review is requesting funds from Congress to hire 150 new judges and support staff, said its press secretary, Kathryn Mattingly.

Experts like retired judge Paul Schmidt, who also served as government immigration counsel while the last major reform was enacted nearly forty years ago, say the broken system can only be fixed with major policy changes. An example would be allowing most asylum cases to be solved administratively or through

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streamlined processes instead of litigated in courts.

"The situation has gotten progressively worse since the Obama administration, when it really started getting out of hand," said Schmidt, who in 2016, his last year on the bench, was scheduling cases seven years out.

In the mid-2010s, families and children from Central America seeking asylum became the majority of illegal crossers at the U.S. southern border. In response, the Obama administration as well as the Trump and Biden administrations started prioritizing some categories of cases they want solved faster to reflect enforcement priorities.

But courts are ineffective deterrents to people desperate to flee their countries, and judges say shuffling cases around only adds to the chaos as they wade through dozens if not hundreds of cases a day.

At the courthouse in Miami last week, one judge went looking for a Haitian family who hadn't shown up, then granted an order of deportation in absentia, just as she had for a Colombian family who also failed to appear at their hearing immediately before.

Another judge found that a Cuban mother, then a Venezuelan man had applied for other forms of protection special to their countries and dismissed their cases, telling them they were done with the court. The woman broke into grateful tears. The man, who had come more than 200 miles for the minutes-long hearing, mumbled "God bless you" in Spanish.

And a steady stream of migrants went to find Catholic Legal Services — one couple directed there by the judge to figure out how to present in court their video of the gang murder that had forced them to flee.

Today in History: January 16

Caesar Augustus declared Roman emperor

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 16, the 16th day of 2024. There are 350 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 16, 27 B.C., Caesar Augustus was declared the first Emperor of the Roman Empire by the Senate. On this date:

In 1865, Union Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman decreed that 400,000 acres of land in the South would be divided into 40-acre lots and given to former slaves. (The order, later revoked by President Andrew Johnson, is believed to have inspired the expression, "Forty acres and a mule.")

In 1912, a day before reaching the South Pole, British explorer Robert Scott and his expedition found evidence that Roald Amundsen of Norway and his team had gotten there ahead of them.

In 1919, pianist and statesman Ignacy Jan Paderewski (pah-dehr-EHF'-skee) became the first premier of the newly created Republic of Poland.

In 1920, Prohibition began in the United States as the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution took effect, one year to the day after its ratification. (It was later repealed by the 21st Amendment.)

In 1942, actor Carole Lombard, 33, her mother, Elizabeth, and 20 other people were killed when their plane crashed near Las Vegas, Nevada, while en route to California from a war-bond promotion tour.

In 1989, three days of rioting began in Miami when a police officer fatally shot Clement Lloyd, a Black motorcyclist, causing a crash that also claimed the life of Lloyd's passenger, Allan Blanchard. (The officer, William Lozano, was convicted of manslaughter, but then was acquitted in a retrial.)

In 1991, the White House announced the start of Operation Desert Storm to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. (Allied forces prevailed on Feb. 28, 1991.)

In 2002, Richard Reid was indicted in Boston on federal charges alleging he'd tried to blow up a U.S.-bound jetliner with explosives hidden in his shoes. (Reid later pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life in prison.)

In 2003, the space shuttle Columbia blasted off for what turned out to be its last flight; on board was Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon (ee-LAHN' rah-MOHN'). (The mission ended in tragedy on Feb. 1, when the shuttle broke up during its return descent, killing all seven crew members.)

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In 2017, former NASA astronaut Eugene Cernan, to date the last man to walk on the moon, died in Houston at age 82.

In 2020, the first impeachment trial of President Donald Trump opened in the Senate, with senators standing and swearing an oath of "impartial justice." Trump, who denounced the proceedings as a "hoax," would later be acquitted on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

In 2013, Pauline Friedman Phillips, better known as advice columnist Dear Abby, died in Minneapolis at age 94.

In 2018, authorities in Denmark charged inventor Peter Madsen with killing Swedish journalist Kim Wall during a trip on his private submarine. (Madsen was later convicted and sentenced to life in prison.)

In 2023, Italy's No. 1 fugitive, convicted Mafia boss Matteo Messina Denaro, was arrested at a private clinic in Palermo, Sicily, after three decades on the run.

Today's birthdays: Author William Kennedy is 96. Author-editor Norman Podhoretz is 94. Opera singer Marilyn Horne is 90. Hall of Fame auto racer A.J. Foyt is 89. Singer Barbara Lynn is 82. Country singer Ronnie Milsap is 81. Country singer Jim Stafford is 80. Talk show host Dr. Laura Schlessinger is 77. Movie director John Carpenter is 76. Actor-dancer-choreographer Debbie Allen is 74. R&B singer Maxine Jones (En Vogue) is 65. Singer Sade (shah-DAY') is 65. Pop/rock singer-songwriter Jill Sobule is 65. Rock musician Paul Webb (Talk Talk) is 62. Actor David Chokachi (CHOH'-kuh-chee) is 56. Former Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta is 55. Actor-writer-director Josh Evans is 53. Actor-comedian Jonathan Mangum is 53. Actor Richard T. Jones is 52. Actor Josie Davis is 51. Model Kate Moss is 50. Actor-playwright Lin-Manuel Miranda is 44. Country musician James Young (The Eli Young Band) is 44. Rock musician Nick Valensi (The Strokes) is 43. Actor Renee Felice Smith is 39. NFL quarterback Joe Flacco is 39. Actor Yvonne Zima ("The Young and the Restless") is 35.