

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 1 of 83

[1- Upcoming Events](#)

[2- Friendly Fellows & Daisies 4-H Club](#)

[2- RoseHill Women's Gathering Ad](#)

[3- Notice of Garbage Pickup](#)

[4- NSU Women's Basketball](#)

[5- NSU Men's Basketball](#)

[6- Names Released in McCook County Double](#)

[Fatal Crash](#)

[7- GHS Boys' Basketball](#)

[8- GHS Girls' Basketball](#)

[9- Sunday Extras](#)

[27- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)

[28- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column](#)

[29- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column](#)

[30- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)

[32- EarthTalk - Cruise Industry](#)

[33- SD Search Light: Noem fills one of two empty seats in Legislature](#)

[34- SD SearchLight: Native American lawmaker finds little support in quest to reconcile the races](#)

[36- Weather Pages](#)

[41- Daily Devotional](#)

[42- Subscription Form](#)

[43- Lottery Numbers](#)

[44- News from the Associated Press](#)

Sunday, Feb. 11

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

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

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m. (Milestones 1st and 4th grade); Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 6 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m. and at Zion, 11 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship Conde, 8:30 a.m.; and at Groton, 10:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.; Caring Team, 9:45 a.m.; Sunday School (sings in worship), 10:30 a.m.

AAU Wrestling at Groton Area

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

“If you're having fun,
that's when the best
memories are built.”

-Simone Biles



Monday, Feb. 12

Senior Menu: Autumn soup, peas, chicken salad on croissant, cinnamon apple sauce.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: Chicken patty, sweet potato fries.

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Boys Junior High Basketball: Sisseton at Groton Area: 7th at 5 p.m., 8th at 6 p.m.

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

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

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

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

© 2024 Groton Daily Independent

Friendly Fellows & Daisies 4-H Club

The Friendly Fellows and Daisies 4-H Club met February 4, 2024 at Claremont Methodist Church. The meeting was called to order by Logan Warrington. The American flag pledge was led by Ashlynn Warrington, and the 4-H flag pledge was led by Blake Pauli. The roll call topic for the meeting was Favorite US President. There were no communications to report. The Treasurer's report was read by Hudson Eichler. The Secretary's report was read by Adeline Kotzer. Parker Zoellner made a motion to approve the Secretary's report and it was seconded by Trey Smith and the motion carried. Old business was talking about the fun night at Allevery. Hudson Eichler made a motion to approve the old business, and Arthur Eichler seconded the motion, which carried. New Business was discussing the Newshound, Ski Trip, Fruit Fundraiser, and Project Day. Ashlynn Warrington made a motion to approve the new business, Arthur Eichler seconded the motion, and it was approved by the members. Other businesses that were discussed were the judging kit on purchasing the best bun option and a new 4-H fundraiser. Parker Zoellner made the motion to approve other business, Hudson Eichler seconded the motion, and it carried. Talks were given by Logan Warrington on the bills approved through 4-H legislation. Parker Zoellner gave a talk on preparing for a 4-H horse show. Hudson Eichler gave a talk on his basketball experience. The members then practiced judging using the judging kit of purchasing the best hot dog buns. Lunch was served by the Eichler family.

Submitted by: Parker Zoellner, Club Reporter



ROSEHILL
CHURCH

Women's Gathering

IF: 2024

IF2024.COM

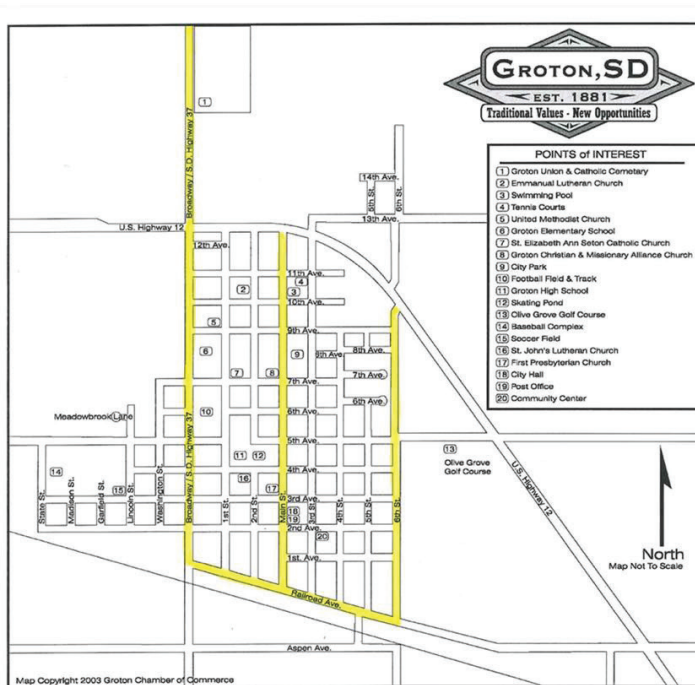


12099 Rose Hill Road
Langford, South Dakota

February 23, 2024 | 6 - 10 pm

February 24, 2024 | 9 am - 4:30 pm

Notice of Garbage Pickup- Effective the week of February 12th



To help preserve our streets, Groton residents are asked to bring their garbage to the following locations until further notice:

Railroad Avenue, Main Street, Sixth Street, & Highway 37

Residents of the Broadway Mobile Home Park need to take their garbage to **Highway 37**.

Residents north of 13th Avenue (Olson and Jacobson Developments) need to bring their garbage to the **Bus Barns**.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated during the spring thaw.

Please bring your garbage bags and/or cans to these locations for Tuesday pickup!

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 4 of 83

NSU Women's Basketball

Wolves Run Away with the Win Against the Golden Eagles to Close the Weekend

Aberdeen, S.D. – An early lead by the Northern State women's basketball team paved the way, taking down Minnesota Crookston, 85-54. The Win saw four Wolves hit double figures along with the team notching two new season highs with 55 rebounds and 58 points in the paint.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 85, UMC 54

Records: NSU 17-7 (13-5 NSIC), UMC 9-15 (6-12 NSIC)

Attendance: 2554

HOW IT HAPPENED

Northern State racked-up 29 points in the first quarter, 17 in the second, 22 in the third, and 17 in the fourth; out-scoring Bemidji State by 17 in the first quarter

The Wolves shot well in the contest, shooting 45.5 % from the floor, 16.7 % from the 3-point arc, and 78.6 % from the free throw line

They grabbed 55 rebounds and 58 points in the paint for a new team season high, along with 32 bench points, 18 points off of turnovers, and 17 second chance points

Rianna Fillipi and Madelyn Bragg both notched 14 points each along with nine and seven rebounds respectively

In addition, Fillipi dished out a team lead of six assists while Bragg shot 85.7 % from the floor

Brynn Alfson grabbed her third double-double of the season with 12 points and 12 rebounds in the win
Off the bench, Deontee Smith tallied ten points, four rebounds, and three assists

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Rianna Fillipi: 14 points, 9 rebounds, 6 assists

Madelyn Bragg: 14 points, 7 rebounds, 85.7 FG %

Brynn Alfson: 12 points, 12 rebounds

Deontee Smith: 10 points, 4 rebounds, 3 assists (career-high)

UP NEXT

Northern State ends their final homestretch against Winona State and Minnesota. Tip-off times are set for 5:30 p.m. on Friday, February 16th against the Warriors and 4 p.m. on Saturday, February 17th against the Mavericks from Wachs Arena.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 5 of 83

NSU Men's Basketball

Wolves Solidify Their Win in the Second Half

Aberdeen, S.D. – The Northern State University men's basketball team took down Minnesota Crookston 83-68 to close out the weekend. Wolves were down by one point at half time but responded with a strong lead in the second to out-score the Golden Eagles by 15 points total.

THE QUICK DEATAILS

Final Score: NSU 83, UMC 68

Records: NSU 10-14 (NSIC 8-10), UMC 6-18 (NSIC 3-15)

Attendance: 2,589

HOW IT HAPPENED

Northern scored 34 points in the first half and 49 points in the second to Minn. Crookston's 35 and 33 points

The Wolves shot 50.9% from the floor, 34.8% from the 3-point arc, and 85% from the foul line

Wolves out-rebounded the Golden Eagles 32-3 , tallied twelve assists, eight three-pointers were made, six blocks, and five steals

Jacksen Moni was the point leader with 29 points, hitting 8-15 from the floor, 12-13 from the foul line, and 10 rebounds

Josh Dilling shot 22 points for the wolves hitting 8-15 from the floor, and 3-6 from the 3-point line

Andrew Bergan rounded out the double figure scorers for the Wolves with 12 points

NORHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Jacksen Moni: 29 points, 53.3 field goal %, 10 rebounds, 5 assists

Josh Dilling: 22 points, 53.3 field goal %, 5 assists

Andrew Bergan: 12 points, 2 assists, 1 rebound

UP NEXT

Northern State will host Winona State and Minnesota State on February 16th and 17th in Wachs Arena. Fridays match against the Warriors will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday against the Mavericks at 6 p.m.

Names Released in McCook County Double Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle double fatal crash

Where: SD Hwy 38, Mile marker 331, 1 mile west of Salem, SD

When: 11:03 a.m., Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Driver 1: Gerald Eugene Snoozy, Male, 72, from Dell Rapids, SD, Fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 1991 GMC Pickup

Seat Belt Used: No

Driver 2: Gilbert Leslie Schuchardt, Male, 77, from Spencer, SD, Fatal injuries

Vehicle 2: 1994 Oldsmobile Cutlass

Seat Belt Used: No

McCook County, S.D.- Two people died late Wednesday morning in a two-vehicle crash in McCook County.

Preliminary crash information indicates 72-year-old Gerald E. Snoozy of Dell Rapids, SD, was driving a 1991 GMC pickup headed westbound on SD Hwy 38. Gilbert L. Schuchardt, 77, of Spencer, SD was the driver of an eastbound 1994 Oldsmobile Cutlass. The vehicles collided in the westbound lane near mile post 331.

The drivers of both vehicles sustained fatal injuries and both were not wearing seatbelts. There were no passengers in either vehicle.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating the crash. All information released so far is only preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

###

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 7 of 83

GHS Boys' Basketball

Groton Area boys beat Mobridge-Pollock

Groton Area's boys basketball team teamed up for hot shooting and tough defense to send Mobridge-Pollock home with a 78-39 loss. Groton Area scored 31 points off of Mobridge-Pollock's 29 turnovers while Mobridge-Pollock scored 11 points off of Groton Area's 11 turnovers.

Jacob Zak and Keegen Tracy teamed for 14 first quarter points as Groton Area took a 20-13 lead at the end of the first quarter. Groton Area scored 10 straight points in the second quarter with the help of two three-pointers by Tracy and one by Lane Tietz to take a 40-23 lead at halftime. Groton Area took a 54-33 lead at the end of the third quarter. Lane Tietz and Zak both had two three-pointers apiece in the fourth quarter as Groton Area went on for the win.

Jacob Zak led Groton Area with 22 points, three rebounds, six assists, five steals and two blocks. Lane Tietz had 17 points, four rebounds, six assists and two steals. Keegen Tracy had 12 points, three rebounds, six assists and two steals. Ryder Johnson had seven points, five rebounds, one assist, three steals and one block. Logan Ringgenberg had six points, three rebounds, one assist and one steal. Gage Sippel had four points and three rebounds. Logan Warrington had three points, Turner Thompson had three points and one assist, Blake Pauli and Colby Dunker each had two points, Jayden Schwan had one assist and one steal.

Three-Pointers: Zak - 2, Tietz - 3, Tracy - 2, Thompson - 1.

Groton Area made 23 of 42 two-pointers for 55 percent, eight of 17 three-pointers for 47 percent, eight of 12 free throws for 67 percent, 22 rebounds, 22 assists, 14 steals, 15 team fouls and three block shots.

Michael Wald led Mobridge-Pollock with 10 points followed by Shane Henderson with eight, Easton Eisemann had seven, Kale Knudson and Simon Fried each had five points and Jackson Eisemann and Kellen Pfitzer each had two points.

Mobridge-Pollock made 15 of 30 field goals for 50 percent, seven of 11 free throws for 63 percent, had 25 rebounds, six assists, eight steals and one block.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 64-20, leading at the quarterstops at 15-3, 27-6 and 46-13.

Karson Zak led Groton Area with 16 points followed by Gage Sippel and Easton Weber with 10 each, Kassen Keough and Logan Warrington each had eight points, Turner Thompson had six, Jace Johnson had three and Jayden Schwan and Ryder Schelle each had two points.

Three-Pointers: Zak - 4, Keough - 2, Weber - 2, Johnson - 1.

Kellen Pfitzer led Mobridge-Pollock with nine points while Easton Eisemann and Peter Fried each had four points and Deuce Fisher added three points.

Mobridge-Pollock won the eighth grade game, 51-44. Mobridge-Pollock led, 19-14, after the first quarter and the game was tied at 26 at halftime. Mobridge-Pollock reclaimed the lead after the third quarter, 38-32.

Ryder Schelle led Groton Area with 12 points, Jace Johnson eight, Asher Johnson seven, Jordan Schwan six, Anthony Gilmore four, Ethan Kroll of ur and Alex Abeln two.

Dylan Fjeldheim and Kyson Good Shield led Mobridge-Pollock with 18 points apiece while Trueth Crow Ghost had 12 and Brayden Stambach three.

Groton Area won the seventh grade game, 52-26, leading at the quarterstops at 18-8, 33-13 and 47-17.

Asher Johnson led Groton Area with 21 points, Jordan Schwan had 13, Anthony Gilmore had 11, Zach Fliehs four, Sam Crank two and Wes Morehouse one.

Jesse Schmidt led Mobridge-Pollock with 11 points while Kadin Kuehl had seven, Tanner Loesch three and Colt Schmeichel and Kyle Wessel each had two points.

The games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM. Varsity game sponsors were Agtegra, Avantara Groton, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, BK Custom Ts & More, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Krueger Brothers, Locke Electric, The MeatHouse of Andover, Rix Farms/R&M Farms and Spanier Harvesting and Trucking. Paul Kosel did the play-by-play with Jeslyn Kosel operating the camera. The junior varsity game sponsor was Craig and Jodi Sterhagen. The junior high games had an anonymous sponsor (only second half of 7th grade game and full eighth grade available in the archives).

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 8 of 83

GHS Girls' Basketball

Mobridge-Pollock edges past Lady Tigers

Mobridge-Pollock made seven of eight free throws in the fourth quarter to pull away from Groton Area, 41-33, in girls basketball action played Saturday in Groton.

The first quarter was tied twice with four lead changes as Groton Area took a 10-9 lead after the first quarter. Mobridge-Pollock scored the first six points of the second quarter and led it at halftime, 17-12. Mobridge-Pollock opened up a seven-point lead in the second quarter, 19-12. Sydney Leicht powered in two three-pointers to spark a Tiger rally and the Tigers took a 25-23 lead. Mobridge-Pollock countered and led, 26-25, after the third quarter.

Groton Area tied the game at 28, but then the visiting Tigers would score eight straight points to take a 36-28 lead in the fourth quarter and would go on for the win.

Leicht led Groton Area with 11 points, two rebounds and one steal. Taryn Traphagen had six points. Jerica Locke had five points, eight rebounds, five assists and two steals. Kennedy Hansen had three points, one steal and one block. Jaedyn Penning had two points, six rebounds, two assists and two steals. Brooklyn Hansen had two points, two rebounds and one steal. Rylee Dunker had two points, five rebounds and one assist. Faith Traphagen had two points, three rebounds and one steal. Laila Roberts had one assist.

Groton Area made eight of 22 two-pointers for 36 percent, five of 27 three-pointers for 19 percent, two of three free throws for 67 percent, had 26 rebounds, 19 turnovers, nine assists, eight steals, 16 team fouls and one block.

Charley Henderson and Heidi Olson led the Mobridge-Pollock Tigers with 12 points apiece, Katy Kemnitz had eight, Tegan Konold had three and adding two points apiece were Reagan Weisbeck, Jack Netterville and Faith Heil.

Mobridge-Pollock made 12 of 40 field goals for 30 percent, 15 of 20 free throws for 75 percent, had 16 turnovers and 12 team fouls.

Mobridge-Pollock won the junior varsity game in overtime, 40-36. Mobridge-Pollock led, 13-6, after the first quarter and 19-18 at half time. The lead then changed hands four times in the third quarter before the visiting Tigers scored 12 unanswered points to lead it at the end of the third quarter, 35-24. Groton Area rallied in the fourth quarter, holding Mobridge-Pollock scoreless. Laila Roberts made two free throws with 55 seconds left in the fourth quarter to tie the game at 35. Jacy Netterville made a three-pointer and two free throws in the overtime to lift the visiting Tigers to the win.

Laila Roberts led Groton Area with eight points followed by Taryn Traphagen with seven, Kennedy Hansen and Talli Wright each had five points, McKenna Tietz had four, Faith Traphagen three, Mia Crank two and Kella Tracy had one point.

Three-Pointers: Taryn Traphagen - 1, Kennedy Hansen - 1.

Jacy Netterville led Mobridge-Pollock with 18 points followed by Cheyenne Rath with eight, Brooke Bain five, Shayla Rath five, Jayda Thompson two and Ellie Kemnitz one.

Groton Area won the C game, 38-30. Kella Tracy had 13 points, McKenna Tietz eight, Sydney Locke seven, Emerlee Jones four, Avery Crank two and Estella Sanchez one.

The games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM. Varsity game sponsors were Agtegra, Avantara Groton, Bary Keith at Harr Motors, BK Custom Ts & More, Bierman Farm Service, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Krueger Brothers, Locke Electric, The MeatHouse of Andover, Rix Farms/R&M Farms and Spanier Harvesting and Trucking. Shane Clark did the play-by-play with Jeslyn Kosel operating the camera. The junior varsity and C games were sponsored by Tom and Lindsey Tietz.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 9 of 83



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

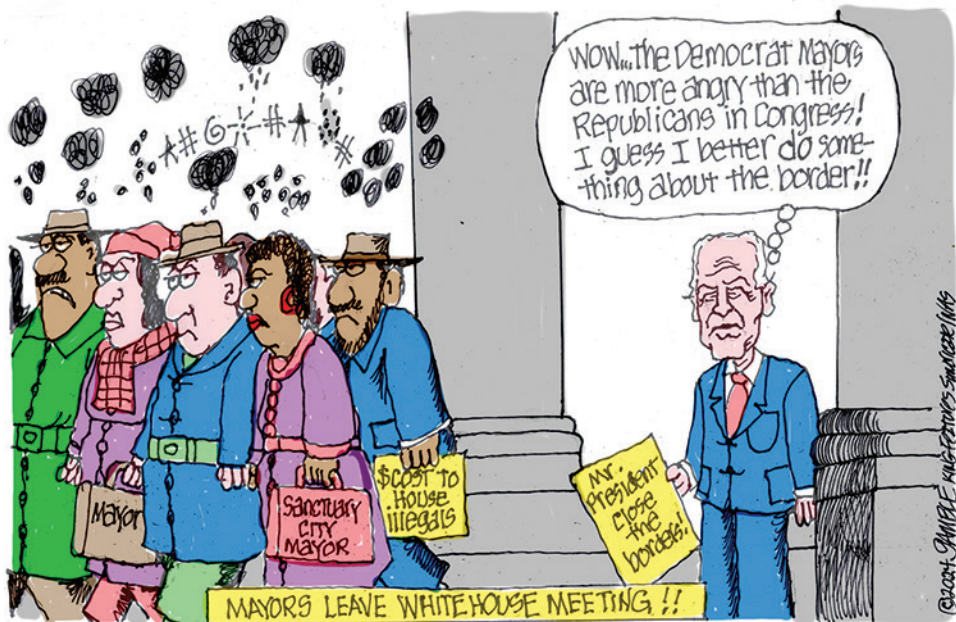
*For thus says the High and Lofty One
Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
“I dwell in the high and holy place,
With him who has a contrite and humble spirit,
To revive the spirit of the humble,
And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

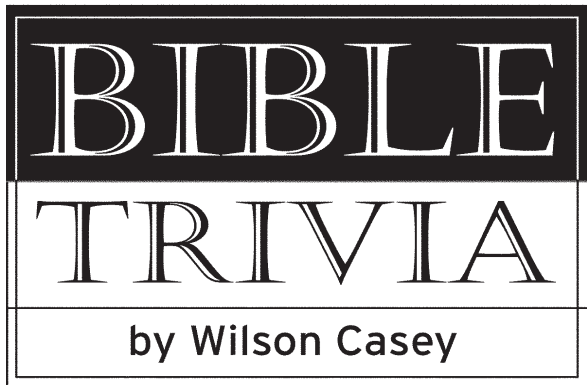
ISAIAH 57:15-19

Detail of “Landscape with Sunset” by Herman van Swanevelt (1655)



© 2024 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.





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

2. From 1 John 3:18, “Let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in ...”?
Hope, Abundance, Touch, Truth

3. In Proverbs 10:12, “Hatred stirreth up strifes, but love covereth all ...”?
Sins, Beings, Creation, Enemies

4. Which Old Testament book reads like a love story?
Ruth, Daniel, Habakkuk, Song of Solomon

5. Where does one find the phrase “God is love”?
Genesis, Nehemiah, Hebrews, 1 John

6. From Hebrews 13:4, what is honorable in all?
Love, Trust, Marriage, Worship

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Truth, 3) Sins, 4) Song of Solomon, 5) 1 John (4:8, 16), 6) Marriage

Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit www.TriviaGuy.com.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 11 of 83

FLASH GORDON

FLASH, DOCTOR ZARKOV, AND ME -- DALE ARDEN.

IN ONE DAY, WE WENT FROM TOTAL STRANGERS TO THE ONLY HUMANS ON AN ENTIRE PLANET.

WE DIDN'T KNOW THE CUSTOMS, THE POLITICS, OR EVEN WHERE OUR NEXT MEAL WAS COMING FROM.

ALL WE HAD WAS EACH OTHER.

MING II IS DEAD, AND IT'S UP TO ME AND DR. ZARKOV TO FIGURE OUT WHO DID IT...

AURA, PROTECTING HER NEW THRONE?

BARIN, PROTECTING HIS NEW WIFE?

FLASH -- WHO THEY PUT IN JAIL FOR IT?

NO. FLASH DOESN'T LIE. NOT TO US.

BUT... WHAT IF FLASH DOESN'T KNOW HE DID IT?

WHAT IF SOMEONE TOOK OVER HIS MIND?

LIKE AZURA, THE WITCH-QUEEN.

SHE'S DONE IT BEFORE...

BUT WE NEED MORE DATA BEFORE WE ACCUSE ANYBODY. I GO GET PRINCE RONAL'S TAKE...

...WHILE HIS WIFE, QUEEN FRIA, STONEWALLS A COUPLE SKY CITY AMBASSADORS BELOW.

ON MY WAY OUT, I CATCH PRINCE VULTAN ARGUING WITH A HOODED MAN. I CAN'T HEAR THEM -- EXCEPT WHEN VULTAN YELLS:

YOU CAN'T JUST KILL WHOEVER YOU LIKE!

THAT'S GENERAL TAHL.

AZURA'S RIGHT-HAND MAN...

DAN SCHVADE 2-11-24

NEXT: I GOT A BONE TO PICK

©2024 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

IF YOUR HEAD RAISES ON THE BACKSWING, IT WILL USUALLY DROP ON THE DOWNSWING, LOWERING YOUR CLUBHEAD ARC JUST ENOUGH TO CAUSE A "FAT" HIT.

AMONG BETTER GOLFERS, FAT SHOTS ARE ALSO CAUSED BY THE HEAD MOVING EXCESSIVELY BACKWARD AND DOWNWARD IN REACTION TO THE LEGS DRIVING TARGETWARDS EARLY IN THE DOWNSWING.

THE ANSWER IS TO AVOID EXTREMES IN ANY PART OF THE ACTION.

©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



Sudden Foot Pain After a Concert Becomes Debilitating

DEAR DR. ROACH: My daughter and her friend went to a concert and had to climb stairs. They ended up walking about 2.5 miles in total. After returning home, my daughter had severe pain in both of her feet and was unable to stand or walk on them. She said it felt like someone was crushing them.

The pain did not get better, so she went to the emergency room a few days later. A doctor there performed an X-ray and said that the pain was due to bunions, although they did not even look at her feet. She also saw a foot specialist who told her that the diagnosis was neuropathy of the feet and recommended Neurontin for pain. He asked her if she has diabetes, but she does not. They told my daughter that she will have to live in pain for the rest of her life.

The doctor recommended getting some tests done on her nerves at the hospital, but she doesn't have money to pay for these tests. What can be done to help her? How is it possible that the pain started so suddenly? She is in constant pain and is unable to walk. — *K.B.*

ANSWER: "Neuropathy" is not a diagnosis; it's a name for a diverse group of diseases that cause damage to the nerves, specifically signifying the nerves in the brain and spinal cord or those outside of them.

The recommendation of getting nerve testing done is correct. This does sound like neuropathy from the little bit of information I have, although neuropathies do not typically begin with exercise the way you described. I have seen several cases where muscles have become

terribly inflamed and even break down after a period of unusually strenuous exertion (this usually gets better with time), but I would have expected the doctors to make that diagnosis.

There is a compressive neuropathy in the foot (tarsal tunnel syndrome) where the nerve is damaged by pressure from muscles, bones and connective tissue, but this happening to both feet at the same time would be surprising. Metabolic neuropathies, like B12 deficiency, cause symptoms on both sides but do not begin suddenly. I'd be worried about her lower spine.

I don't know what your daughter's financial situation is, whether she might be eligible for Medicaid or the Affordable Care Act, or whether there is a free medical clinic near you. I have had many patients make just enough money that they don't qualify for Medicaid, but are unable to afford commercial insurance and don't get it through work.

DEAR DR. ROACH: What is your opinion of laser therapy for joint pain? What are the risks and benefits? — *M.J.*

ANSWER: Low-level laser therapy, sometimes called cold laser, is thought to improve circulation, lessen inflammation and decrease pain sensitivity when applied to the skin over a joint with osteoarthritis, such as the knee.

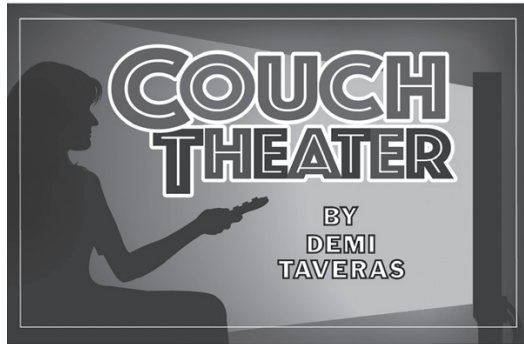
In several reviews of small studies, laser treatment provides a modest benefit in decreasing pain, disability and stiffness when compared to a treatment that appeared the same to the participant but did not use the same kind of laser. (In the most stringent studies, even the person using the laser didn't know whether it was set to the effective treatment or not.) Muscle strength was also increased. In these studies, no adverse effects were noted.

However, this therapy is still regarded as experimental, so it is not usually covered by insurance. Generally, insurance companies will cover treatments once enough evidence accumulates to prove them effective.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 13 of 83



Donald Glover, left, and Maya Erskine star in "Mr. & Mrs. Smith." Courtesy of Amazon Prime Video

"The Marvels" (PG-13) -- After an underwhelming run at the box office, "The Marvels" starring Brie Larson, Teyonah Parris and Iman Vellani is out now on streaming! Larson reprises her role as Captain Marvel, who finds herself facing a new enemy from a different world called Kree. This enemy, Dar-Benn, discovers a Quantum Band that

makes traveling through space quick and easy. In creating a new jump point with the Quantum Band, Dar-Benn links Captain Marvel's powers to none other than Kamala Khan, Ms. Marvel herself (Vellani), and an astronaut named Monica Rambeau (Parris). The trio, who now get inconveniently transported to different locations any time they use their powers, must band together to stop Dar-Benn from exacting revenge on their home worlds. (Disney+)

"Past Lives" (PG-13) -- This semi-autobiographical romantic-drama directed by Celine Song was recently nominated for Best Picture and Best Original Screenplay at the Oscars -- an incredible feat for Song's directorial debut. Starring "The Morning Show's" Greta Lee and "Leto's" Teo Yoo, the film follows Na Young and Hae Sung, two South Korean 12-year-olds who have crushes on each other but are forced apart after Na Young's family moves to Canada. They virtually reunite 12 years later, seemingly drawn together due to their inexplicable connection, but the different lives they lead continue to take precedence over their budding relationship. "Past Lives" perfectly encompasses the joy and sorrow that comes with knowing you found the right person, just not at the right time. Out now. (Paramount+)

"Mr. & Mrs. Smith" (TV-MA) -- This spy comedy series is based on the iconic 2005 film of the same name starring Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie but puts a quirkier spin on the original story. Donald Glover ("Atlanta") portrays John Smith, opposite Maya Erskine's Jane Smith. The two strangers are spies who adapt their respective identities in order to impersonate a married couple while they complete a high-risk mission every week. And aren't real feelings bound to get involved when two lonely people are put in an enticing arranged marriage? The series features a handful of actors we know and love, including Sarah Paulson, Paul Dano, Alexander Skarsgard, Eiza Gonzalez and Ron Perlman. All episodes are available now. (Amazon Prime Video)

"The Pod Generation" (PG-13) -- In this sci-fi romantic-comedy, Alvy and Rachel Novy are a married couple in a futuristic version of New York who wish to grow their family, but with Rachel's bustling career and a promotion on the way, the timing isn't right for her to have the child herself. However, her company gives her another option: a stipend to conceive a child through the sleek, high-tech Pegazus Womb Center. There, babies are conceived, grown and even birthed through an artificial womb called a pod. If Rachel can convince Alvy to put aside his beliefs to try the technology, the couple can finally begin a life of parenthood. Emilia Clarke ("Game of Thrones") and Chiwetel Ejiofor ("Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness") lead the film, out on Feb. 16. (Hulu)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 14 of 83



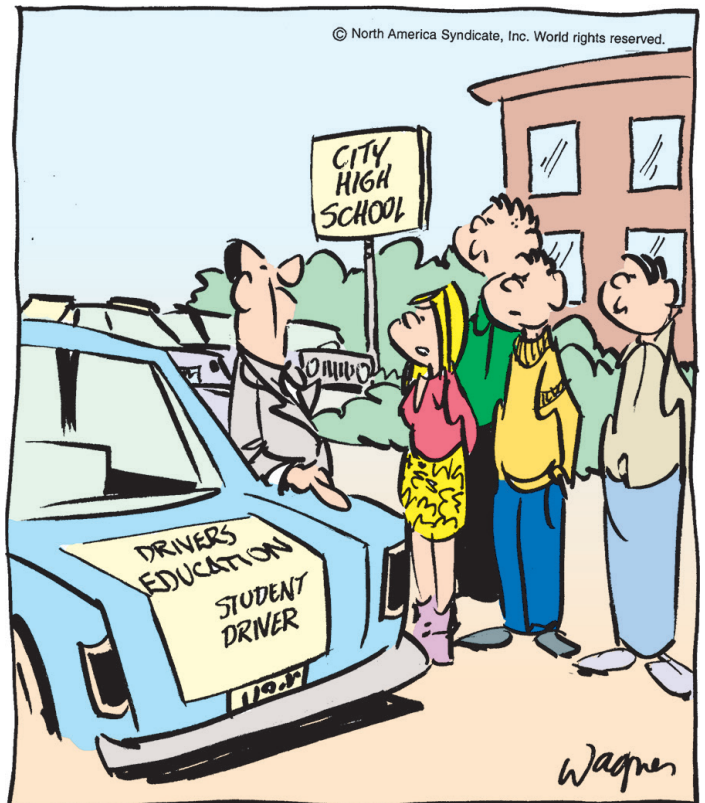
1. Who originally released "Working My Way Back to You"?
2. What kind of music did Bill Deal and the Rhondels play?
3. Who released "The Wash"?
4. Who was first to release "California Dreamin'"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "I tried so hard, my dear, to show that you're my every dream, Yet you're afraid each thing I do is just some evil scheme."

Answers

1. The Four Seasons, in 1966. Some think the melody sounds a lot like their "Let's Hang On."
2. The large group was mostly known for soul-flavored beach song covers, such as The Tams song "I've Been Hurt."
3. Brenda and the Tabulations on their "Dry Your Eyes" album in 1967. The song was picked up in 2011 to be used in a body wash commercial.
4. Although written by two members of The Mamas & the Papas, it was first released by Barry McGuire in 1966 with M&P singing background vocals.
5. "Cold, Cold Heart," written and released by Hank Williams in 1951. Legend says that Williams wrote the song after visiting his wife Audrey in the hospital where she was extremely cold to him, blaming him for her situation.

(c) 2024 King Features Syndicate

GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}



"Then you'll just have to learn to drive an uncool car."

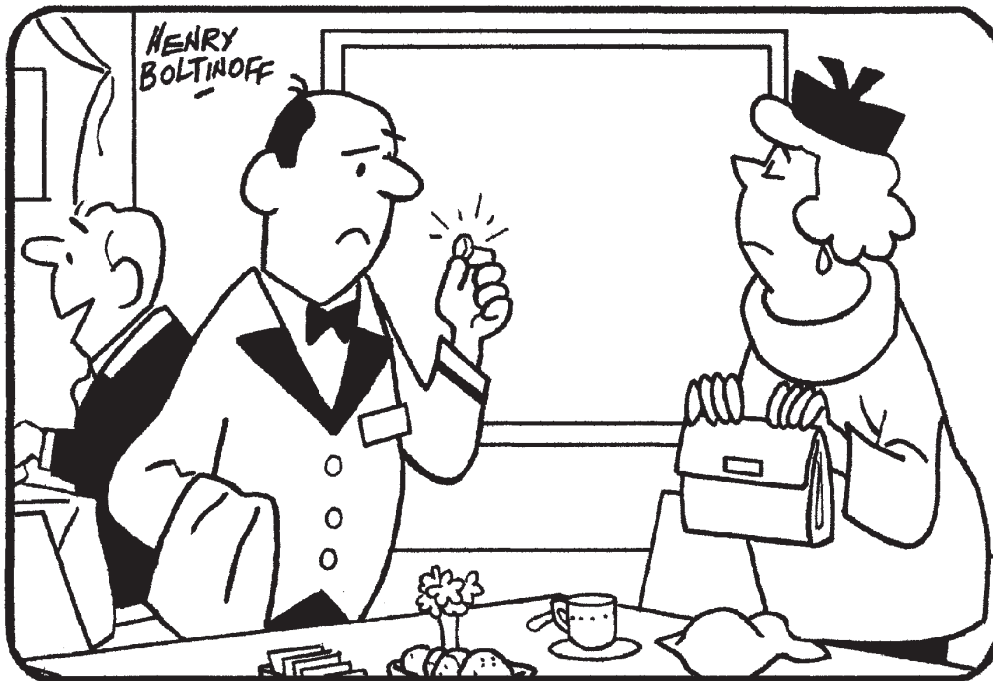
Just Like Cats & Dogs ^{by Dave T. Phipps}



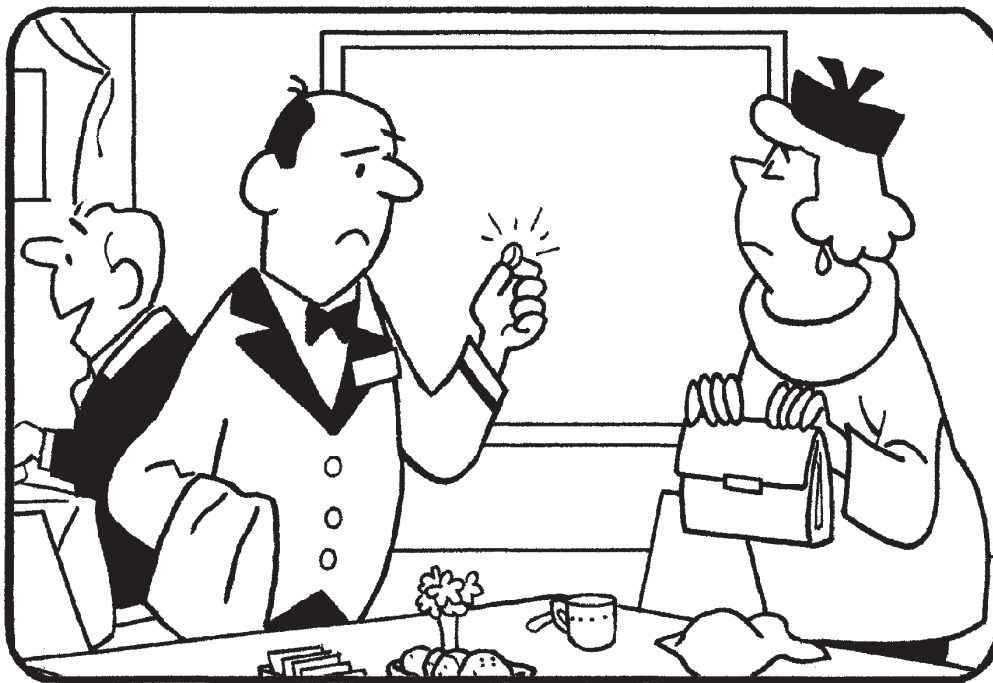
©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Differences: 1. Purse is different. 2. Arm is moved. 3. Label is different. 4. Hair is different. 5. Saucer is missing. 6. Nametag is higher.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 16 of 83



* From L.D.W. in Illinois: "When I have a recipe, I put all the ingredients on the counter, and as I use each one, I put it away. My daughter and daughter-in-law like the idea, as they at one time or another forget an item." I like that one, too, L.D.W. A well-prepared cook makes a delicious meal.

* "To wrap a baby gift in unforgettable gift wrap, circle the announcement in the paper with a colorful marker, then use the newsprint to wrap your package. It has always gotten rave reviews from recipients." -- R.L. in Virginia

* Another reason to get the newspaper: Crushed newspaper makes a great rag for shining windows in your home and in the car. No lint left behind!

* "When thickening soup, don't overlook instant potato mix. It's perfect for making a thin broth into a nice, thick stew sauce, and it's pretty cheap. It only takes a couple of tablespoons." -- I.F. in Utah

* Want delicious fried chicken crust but not the dripping oil? Baste chicken pieces with mayonnaise, then dredge in crushed cracker crumbs mixed with a bit of flour. Bake and enjoy.

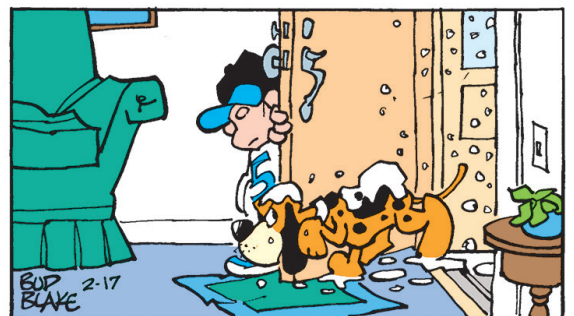
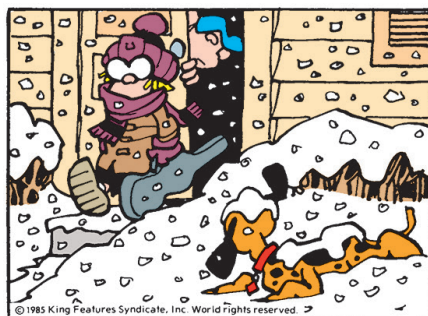
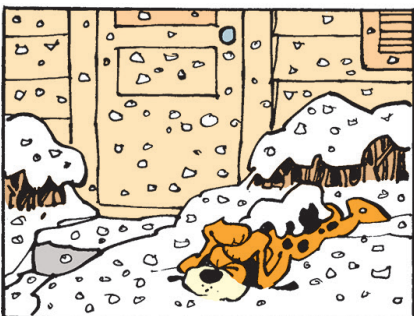
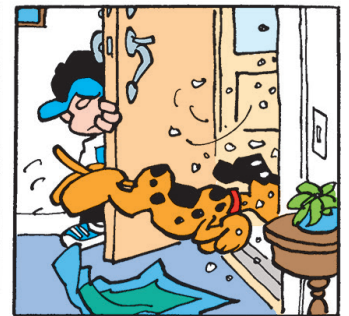
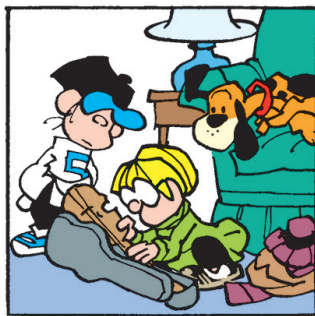
* If your plastic food containers develop an unpleasant odor, never fear: Scrub with a paste of baking soda and lemon juice. Rinse and air-dry.

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

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



© 1985 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World Rights reserved

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 17 of 83

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 "Kapow!"
- 4 React in horror
- 8 Pitcher Nolan
- 12 Flamenco cheer
- 13 Genesis shepherd
- 14 Spanish greeting
- 15 Squealer
- 16 Drive- -- window
- 17 "-- the picture!"
- 18 2014 biopic about actress Kelly
- 21 Rowing tool
- 22 Expert
- 23 Japanese verse
- 26 Glutton
- 27 Ultramodernist
- 30 Rhine feeder
- 31 Golf prop
- 32 Basketball tactic
- 33 Tibetan beast
- 34 4, on a phone
- 35 Dollar divisions
- 36 Observe
- 37 Texter's chuckle
- 38 Where something is created
- 45 QB Tony
- 46 Ocho --,

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

- Jamaica
- Hollywood's Thurman
- Country singer Jackson
- Gaelic
- Fuel stat
- Partner
- Bump into
- Sound from a hot wok
- Lowly worker
- Fruit-filled dessert
- Horned beast
- Meditative practice
- Mr. Guinness
- Post-WWII alliance
- Pepsi rival
- URL ending
- Stable diet?
- Small battery
- Annoy
- JFK Library architect
- Convent resident
- Tolkien creature
- Approves
- Math statement
- Sub shop
- "My word!"
- Waist-cinching garment
- Tea biscuit
- Unfettered
- Baby carriage
- "Damn Yankees" role
- Latin 101 word
- Blaze
- Periodontist's concern
- Rapscallions
- Kvetches

DOWN

- 1 McEnroe's rival
- 2 Winged
- 3 Transcending (Pref.)
- 4 Fancy cake
- 5 Loathe

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 18 of 83

— King Crossword —

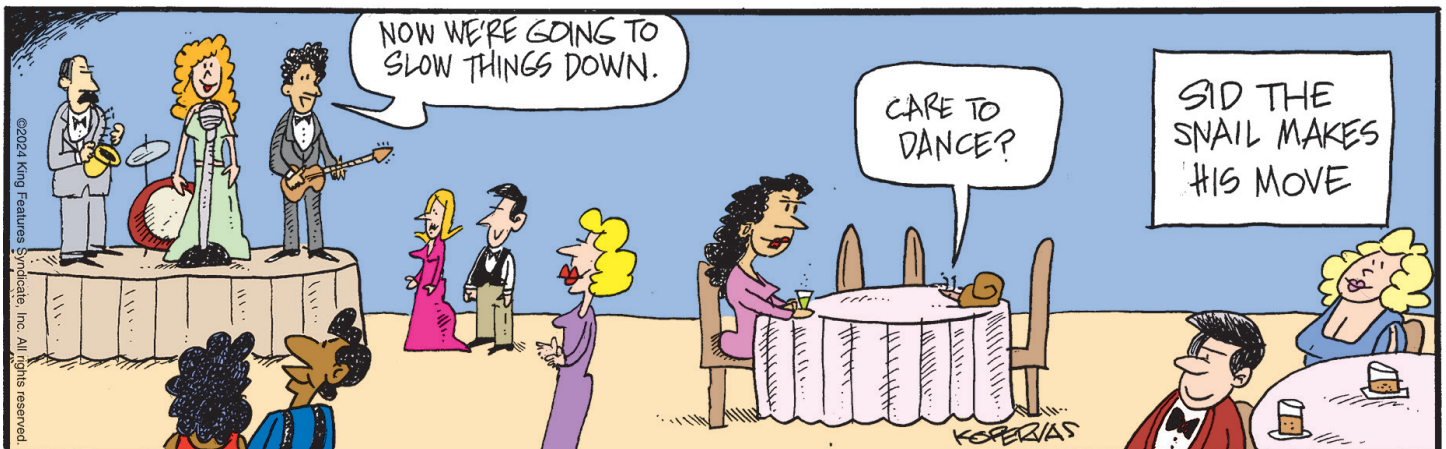
Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

B	A	M		G	A	S	P		R	Y	A	N
O	L	E		A	B	E	L		H	O	L	A
R	A	T		T	H	R	U		I	G	E	T
G	R	A	C	E	O	F	M	O	N	A	C	O
			O	A	R		P	R	O			
H	A	I	K	U		P	I	G		N	E	O
A	A	R	E		T	E	E		D	U	N	K
Y	A	K		G	H	I		C	E	N	T	S
			S	E	E		L	O	L			
P	L	A	C	E	O	F	O	R	I	G	I	N
R	O	M	O		R	I	O	S		U	M	A
A	L	A	N		E	R	S	E		M	P	G
M	A	T	E		M	E	E	T		S	S	S

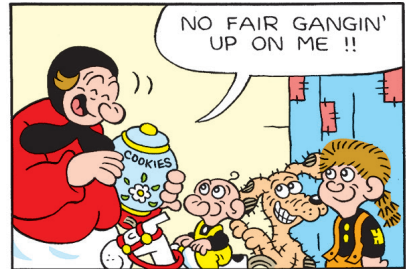
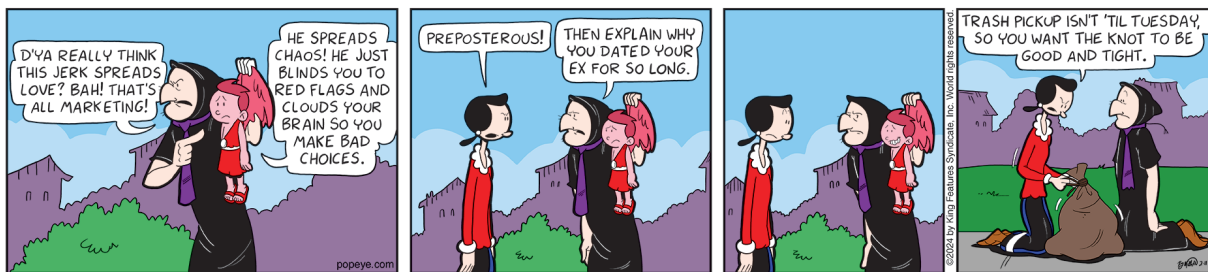
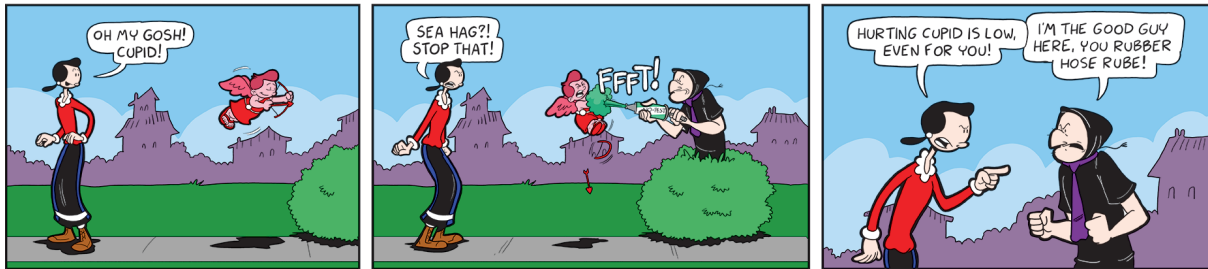
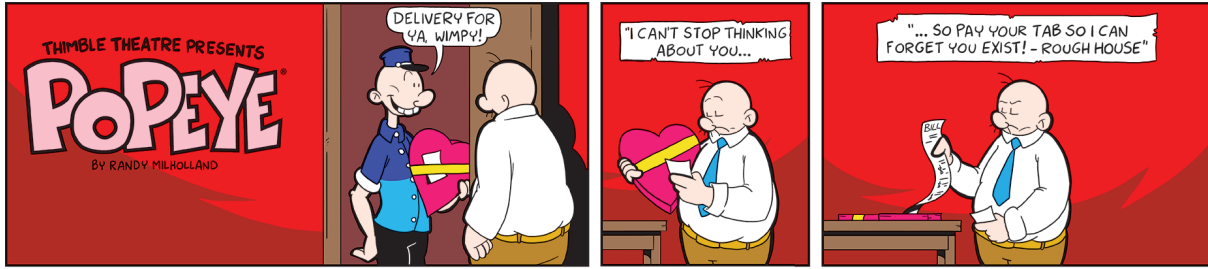
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



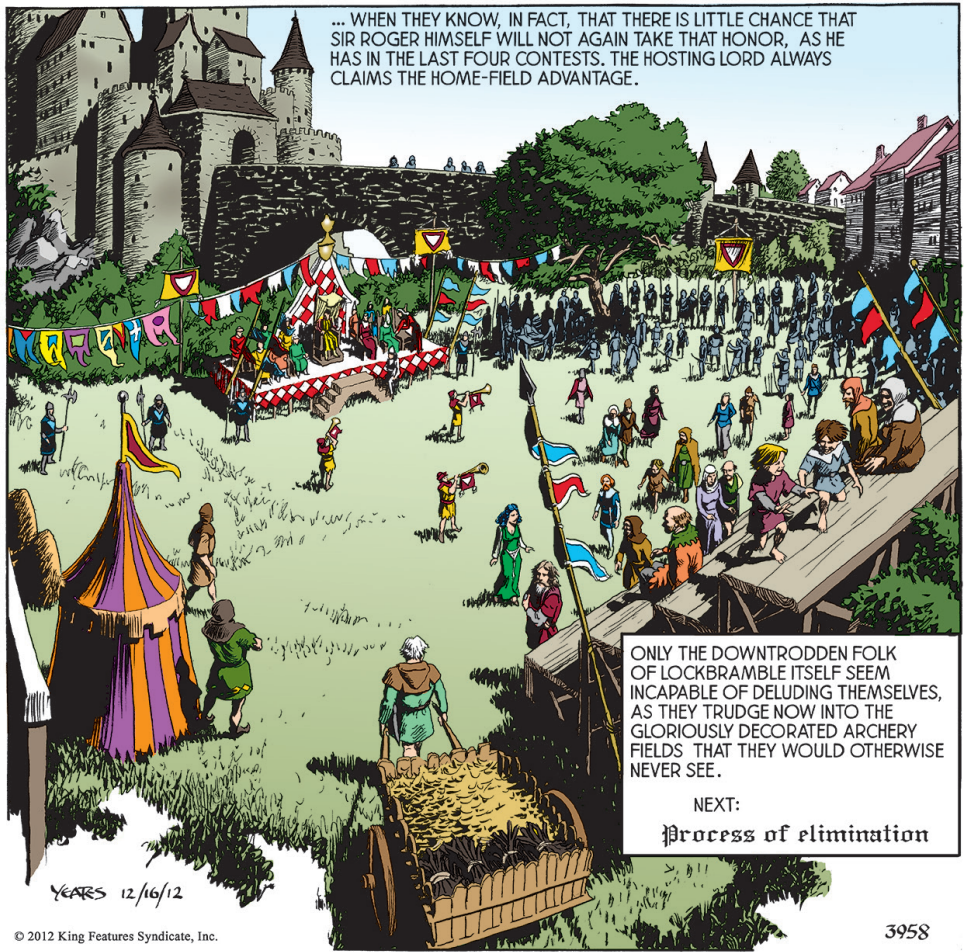
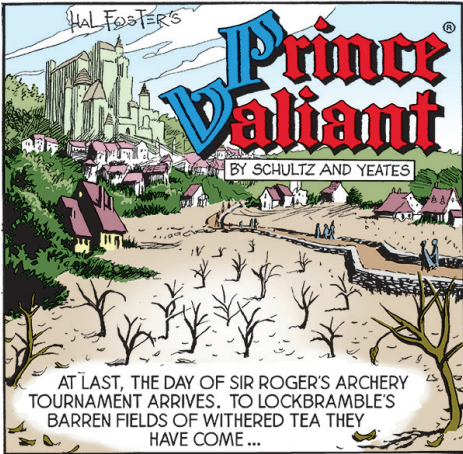
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 19 of 83



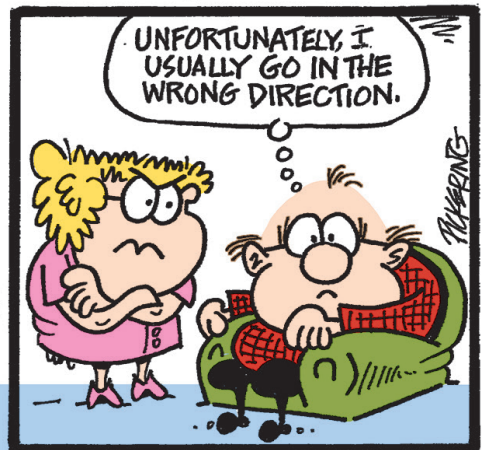
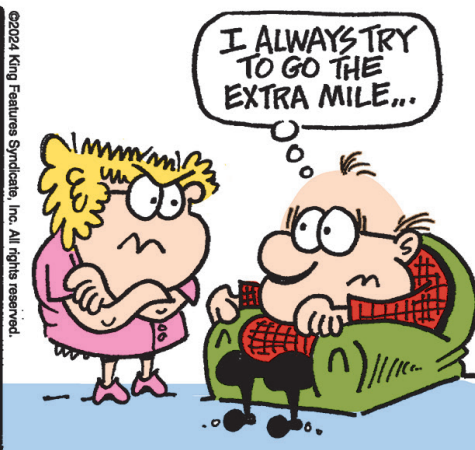
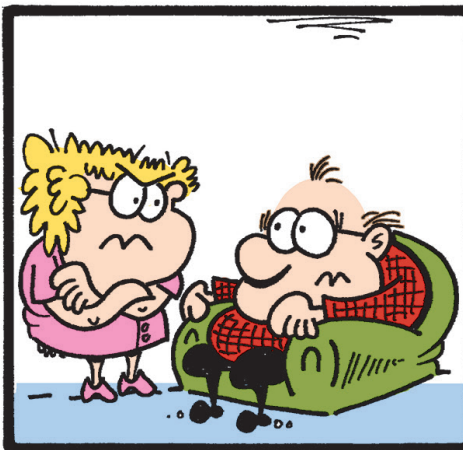
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 20 of 83



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

How to Get Financial Help

A survey released last month indicated that consumer sentiment was higher than it's been in quite a while, since the summer of 2021. This is supposed to be a good thing.

The first thing I needed to do was look up the definition of "consumer sentiment." It's how we feel about the state of the economy and our own finances, how positive we are about short-term and long-term economic growth. According to the survey, that positivity occurred everywhere, and income, education, age and location didn't matter.

I'm guessing they didn't survey participants in my area. However, I did. In one of my informal polls of local friends and acquaintances, I learned that:

-- Going to the grocery store is still an experience filled with tension and anxiety. We never know what prices will be this week, whether we'll be able to buy what we need and stick to a budget or whether we'll need to have soup and sandwiches for dinner three times this week instead of two.

-- Going to the food bank is still embarrassing, but we do it anyway, usually before making a trip to the grocery store and planning meals around what we get from the food bank.

Then there are basic expenses like utilities and transportation ...

If this describes your situation, consider looking into the National Council On Aging Benefits CheckUp. Every year billions of government dollars aren't claimed, mostly because seniors don't know about it. Specifically, there is money out there to help us pay for groceries, utilities, prescriptions, etc.

To get help, call the Benefits CheckUp helpline at 800-794-6559. You can also go online directly to benefitscheckup.org to see if you're eligible for any of the help. You don't need to sign up. You will still be shown a list of help options. I ended up with a list of over 80 programs.

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 22 of 83

1. What college athletic conference produced both the men's and women's NCAA soccer champions in 2021?

2. Name the brothers, known for their violent style of play, who were teammates on the Montreal Canadiens in the 1920s and died within days of each other in 1956.

3. What NASCAR driver had 40 wins in his Cup Series career from 1981-2013 and finished second in the standings five times without winning a season championship?

4. What pro golfer from Australia portrayed comic-strip boxer Joe Palooka in 11 films from 1946-51?

5. On Sept. 7, 2021, what Tampa Bay Rays rookie reached base safely for the 37th consecutive game, passing Mickey Mantle's 36-game on-base streak for a player age 20 or younger?

6. Name the Canadian men's figure skater who won silver medals at the 1994 Lillehammer and 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics.

7. In what Nintendo Entertainment System video game included basketball teams named the New York Eagles, Los Angeles Breakers, Boston Frogs and Chicago Ox?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. The ACC, with Clemson (men) and Florida State (women).

2. Sprague and Odie Cleghorn.

3. Mark Martin.

4. Joe Kirkwood Jr.

5. Wander Franco.

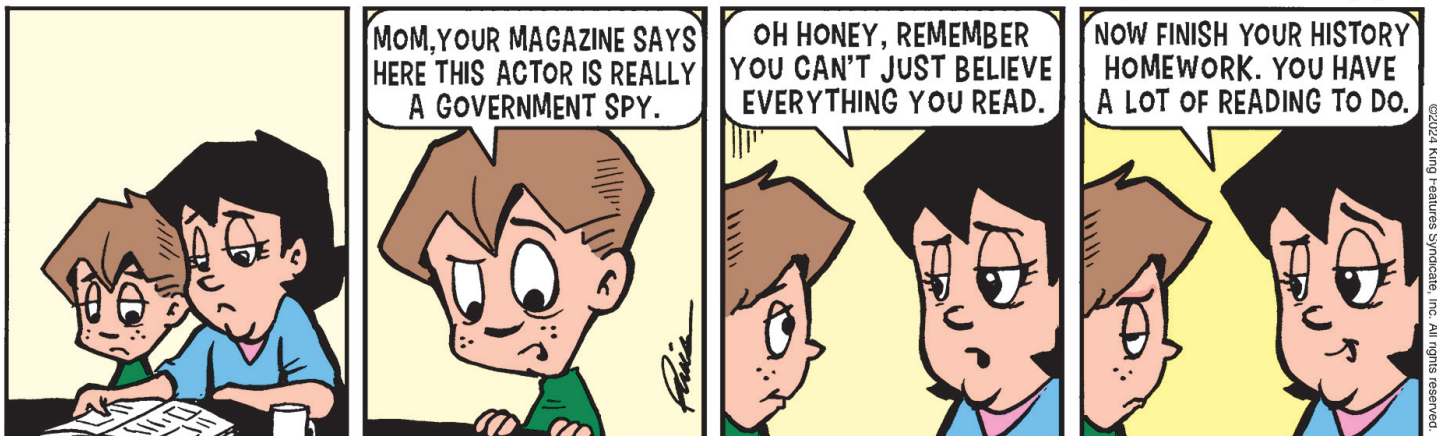
6. Elvis Stojko.

7. "Double Dribble."

(c) 2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





Is Pet Sitting a Profitable Career?

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I'm a high school student and I'm thinking about what kind of career I'd like to have after I graduate three years from now. I'm not sure college is for me, and I like being around pets -- my family has two dogs and a cat, and I have a flop-eared rabbit. I've heard that pet sitting is a good business to be in. Is this true? Can I do that instead of college? -- Caryn H., Fort Walton Beach, Florida

DEAR CARYN: Pet sitting is a huge and growing market, because almost every owner is going to need someone to watch their pet at some point. So,

it's certainly worth considering as a career. You can start your own pet-sitting business or go to work for someone else.

This is a job that requires responsibility and self-discipline, because people are entrusting you with their pets. You have to show up at the agreed-upon time, follow the owners' instructions to the letter, and make sure their pets remain happy and healthy. If dog-walking is part of the job, you've got to keep them under control and away from conflicts with other dogs. You've got to stay healthy, because a sick day is not an option unless you have someone to cover for you.

Start by visiting the websites of two major pet-sitting organizations: Pet Sitters International (petsit.com) and the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (petsitters.org). They offer resources, certifications and more. Talk to your parents and your school guidance counselor about your interest. They'll support you and help you explore this career option.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

blood pressure, play the sound of running water to, er, drown out your business, and automatically open and shut so you won't have to touch anything.

* Prior to the adoption of standard time zones in 1883, each city or town set its own local time based on the sun's position.

* Six years after Hall of Fame pitcher Gaylord Perry stated, "They'll put a man on the moon before I hit a home run," he struck the only one of his career just hours after Neil Armstrong stepped onto the lunar surface.

* Actor George Reeves, who played Superman in the 1950s, once had to deflect a young fan who wanted to test his "invulnerability" by bringing a pistol to a live appearance. Reeves convinced the boy to hand over his gun by warning him that a bystander might be hurt by bullets that bounced off his Superman suit.

* A 2018 study found that wearing a necktie can reduce the blood flow to your brain by up to 7.5%.

Thought for the Day: "Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein." -- H. Jackson Brown Jr.

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

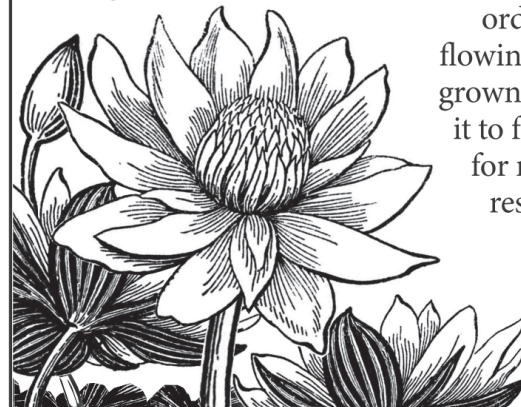
* Researchers have developed an algorithm that transforms complex data into musical sounds.

* In 2003, Marvel successfully argued in a U.S. court that mutants were "nonhuman creatures" and, therefore, toys, in order to save on taxes, since X-Men action figures were being imported as dolls but toys have a lower tariff.

* An ostrich can run faster than a horse.

* Seventy-five percent of Japanese homes boast a high-tech toilet, the latest models of which eliminate the need for toilet paper, keep you warm, check your

The Garden Bug



The lotus plant can grow as tall as 6 feet in lakes and large ponds, while miniature varieties grow happily in a free-standing bowl on your

The lotus flower patio. It needs 6 hours of direct sunlight each day in

order to flower. Do not place it in flowing water or in a fountain; if it is grown in a pot or bowl, do not allow it to freeze. The lotus has been used for millenia as a symbol of beauty, resilience, and transformation in architectural motifs, artwork, textiles and religious settings.

- Brenda Weaver

Sources: bloomnation.com, bluelotusfarm.com



by Freddy Groves

Double Benefits for Education

Per a Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General (VAOIG) report, veterans who are enrolled at the same time in two different education programs are receiving housing allowance benefits from both.

The two programs are the Post-9/11 GI Bill and VET TEC. Oddly enough, there's no prohibition against the double payments because the way that the VET TEC program was established isn't the same as other education programs (such as the Montgomery GI Bill)

that specifically ban dual benefits. In other programs, a veteran must choose between one set of benefits or the other.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill program consists of three or four years of benefits that include books and supplies, tuition and a housing allowance.

The VET TEC program focuses on high-tech training through specific providers. Benefits include the cost of classes and a housing allowance.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) took 30 random veterans to study and determined that all of them received dual housing allowance benefits, averaging \$3,100.

They were also able to identify 249 veterans whose training and education programs overlapped, and calculated how many days that included and how much in housing benefits were paid. In the first example in the OIG report, the veteran received over \$12,000 for 105 overlapping days. In the second example, the veteran received nearly \$11,000 for 58 overlapping days.

The VBA tried, says the report, to halt the dual housing payments. They were informed by attorneys that it wouldn't be "veteran-friendly" to reduce benefits and that no laws were being broken in paying the dual benefits. Only in other programs was the veteran required to only pick one program for benefits.

Congress stepped in with bill amendments to continue the VET TEC program past the end of the pilot period (the five-year pilot will end in April 2024), but according to the OIG report, the bills don't prevent "the concurrent receipt of educational benefits, including monthly housing allowance payments."

If you'd like to read the whole report, go to <http://tinyurl.com/43z96am2>.

(c) 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 26 of 83

Wishing Well®

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

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

©2024 King Features Syndicate



1. TELEVISION: Which popular Netflix series features groups of teens nicknamed "Kooks" and "Pogues"?
2. HISTORY: When did Facebook launch?
3. MUSIC: Which pop music singer had hits with songs like "Changes" and "Let's Dance"?
4. GEOGRAPHY: What country possesses the Isle of Wight?
5. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of peacocks called?
6. AD SLOGANS: Which company's advertising slogan is "the ultimate driving machine"?
7. LANGUAGE: What is the Latin phrase often shortened to "i.e."?
8. MYTHOLOGY: What is the name of the maze that confined the Minotaur?
9. MOVIES: Which movie has the tagline, "Mischief. Mayhem. Soap."?
10. LITERATURE: Shakespeare is believed to have written approximately how many plays?

Answers

1. "Outer Banks."
2. 2004.
3. David Bowie.
4. England.
5. An ostentation or a pride.
6. BMW.
7. Id est (that is).
8. The Labyrinth.
9. "Fight Club."
10. 37.

© 2024 King Features Synd., Inc.

South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Supporting Second Chances

As I travel the state, the biggest challenge that I hear about is a shortage of workers. We've been taking action to fill open jobs. But for some folks, their past mistakes stand in the way of the career of their dreams.

During my State of the State Address, I discussed South Dakotans' Freedom to Get a Second Chance. Specifically, I talked about legislation that I was working on with my Department of Labor and Regulation to provide second-chance licensing opportunities. I am proud that our legislature has now overwhelmingly passed that bipartisan bill, SB 57. And I have signed the bill into law. Photos from the bill signing can be found [here](#).

For South Dakotans who get involved in drugs or another aspect of crime, that should not have to be the final word. Their punishment should match their crime, but they should also have the opportunity to rehabilitate and become better, more capable members of our society.

When individuals are ready to reenter society, we want them to have the opportunity to build a career so that they can provide for themselves and their families.

Last year, I worked with legislators and signed a bill to enhance workforce Freedom in South Dakota. That bill recognizes out-of-state licenses for nearly every profession. It cut unnecessary government red tape, making it easier for those moving to South Dakota to get to work right away.

This year's second-chance licensing bill builds on that concept and applies it to a different population. It creates a set of standards to consider criminal histories and any possible rehabilitation by applicants and licensees. With this bill, we're removing barriers preventing individuals from entering the workforce.

This important piece of legislation means that someone who made a dumb decision or a mistake in the past can still get a professional license for the job of their dreams today. It also means that individuals in our prison system can rehabilitate and successfully reenter our society, their community, and the workforce to create a better life for themselves.

I don't think one, or even two, bad decisions should define someone for the rest of their life. And this bill gives people hope that they can still achieve the American Dream.

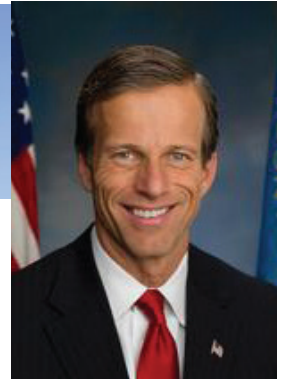
We need more plumbers, more electricians, more welders, and an unrelated criminal past shouldn't stop qualified applicants from filling these roles.

This isn't all we're doing when it comes to second chances. Late last year, I spoke at a graduation for the Sixth Circuit Problem-Solving Court. Eight graduates, all of whom had been sober for a year or more, stood up and shared their stories and their hopes and dreams for the future. In fact, more than 150 South Dakotans graduated from this initiative last year. This is a rigorous program that includes five phases and requires frequent alcohol and drug testing. It's a proven strategy that reduces recidivism, saves taxpayer dollars in the long-run, and restores hope and dignity for these individuals.

The people that I met at that graduation ceremony inspired me, they touched my heart. And I know there are so many people in our state that are just like them – that just need a second chance.

In South Dakota, everyone has the Freedom to Get a Second Chance.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Ending Iran's Reign of Terror

Since Hamas attacked Israel in October, the Middle East has grown increasingly unstable. Militia groups have attacked U.S. troops approximately 170 times, injuring a number of Americans and, tragically, killing three soldiers late last month. Houthi militants are regularly attacking commercial shipping and U.S. Navy vessels in the Red Sea, and two Navy SEALs were recently lost at sea off the coast of Somalia during a dangerous nighttime raid to interdict missile parts being shipped to the Houthis.

What these attacks have in common is that the groups committing them are financed, armed, and supported by Iran. This recent campaign of terror is just one part of Iran's record of driving unrest, instability, and violence in the Middle East that goes back decades. Iran is the largest state sponsor of terrorism, operating through a network of proxies across the region. President Biden inherited a maximum pressure campaign intended to keep Iran in check, but throughout his presidency he has yielded to misguided policies that have emboldened the Iranian regime.

President Biden has a history of weakness and appeasement when it comes to Iran. Against the warnings of Republicans and Israel, the Biden administration attempted to revive the flawed nuclear deal negotiated under the Obama administration, which included sweeping sanctions relief. The Biden administration also attempted to unfreeze \$6 billion in Iranian assets as part of a deal to free American prisoners, which would have provided Iran with a windfall to fund its proxies. Not to mention the president's disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan – on a timeline announced to our enemies – that seriously dented the world's perception of America's resolve.

As Iran-backed groups have launched attacks on U.S. troops and American allies, the White House has responded mostly with half-measures and a weak posture that is neither deterring or degrading Iran and its proxies. The United States does not seek war, but we must be willing to assert our national interests, including the safety of our troops and freedom of maritime navigation. While the president has recently taken more forceful action, which was overdue, he is going to have to demonstrate sustained resolve in order to bring an end to Iran's terror campaign in the Middle East. We cannot allow Iran to control or cut off shipping routes through their Houthi proxies. We cannot allow Iran to continue to enable Hamas and Hezbollah's attacks against Israel. And we most certainly cannot tolerate attacks on our troops and the loss of American lives.

These recent attacks are a reminder of the very real dangers our servicemembers face. We owe them and their families a debt of gratitude for their bravery and the sacrifices they make to serve our country. I specifically want to commend the men and women of the 28th Bomb Wing that participated in the February 2 retaliatory strikes against 85 targets in Iraq and Syria. The 28th Bomb Wing, which is based at Ellsworth Air Force Base but had a contingent operating out of a base in Texas while our airfield was temporarily closed, flew B-1 bombers to the Middle East on a single marathon flight, taking off from U.S. soil, executing the mission, and returning back to base without interruption.

The ability to generate combat power capable of striking anywhere on the map is a testament to the professionalism and determination of the 28th Bomb Wing's aircrews and maintainers. And it underscores the importance of preserving this capability now and well into the future. Later this decade, the B-21 Raider will make Ellsworth its first home as it ushers in a new era of American air power. Until that sixth-generation bomber is fielded, we need to continue full support for programs like the B-1.

The United States can't solve every problem or bring peace to every conflict, but we can be a powerful force for good, if we're willing to lead. There will always be evil actors in the world who are bent on aggression and violence. Failure to demonstrate strength risks more serious consequences for our national security both now and long into the future.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 29 of 83



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



South Dakota IS a Border State

Every state is a border state. South Dakota is no exception.

While on a drug trafficking trip, an illegal immigrant and his companion, both from Central America, carjacked and kidnapped an FBI employee outside of Red Shirt in West River. One of the men had re-entered our country after being deported. President Biden's open border policies have allowed illegal immigrants to enter and re-enter our country and commit heinous crimes. Unfortunately, this isn't the only time South Dakota has seen crime like this.

The effects of the border crisis are hitting way too close to home for many in South Dakota who are more than 1,000 miles from the southern border. We've seen increases in violent crimes, fentanyl overdoses, and illegal immigrants flooding cities that don't have capacity to house them.

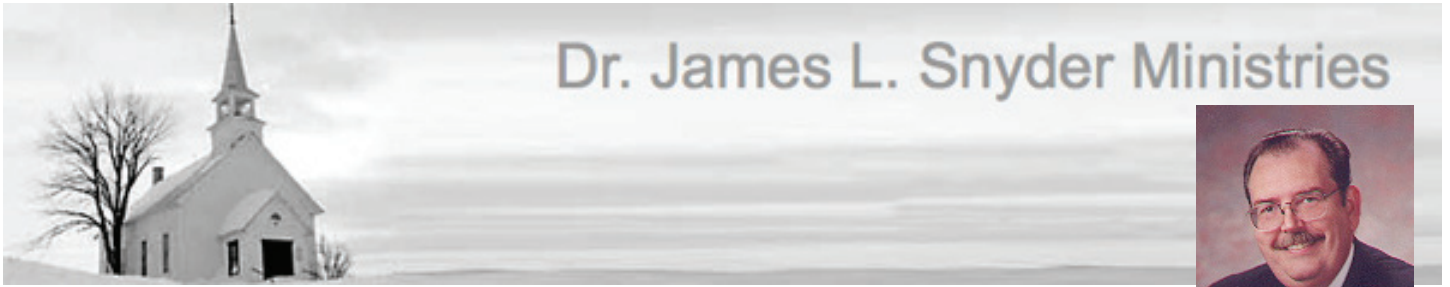
In the past three years, more than 7 million people have crossed the southern border illegally. The situation has worsened almost every month. This is the direct result of having open borders. This is a major problem, but we already know what some solutions are, like Trump's effective Remain in Mexico policy which I support. If President Biden put it in place today, illegal border crossings would decrease by 70-80 percent almost immediately.

I've voted over 70 times for stronger border policies since I came to Congress. I've worked on and helped draft legislation that includes some of the strongest border policies ever brought before the House. These policies would stop the flow of illegal immigrants, restart construction of the border wall, hire more Border Patrol agents, and improve technology along the border. I voted in support of the Secure the Border Act, HALT Fentanyl Act, POLICE Act, Schools Not Shelters Act, and more.

I've been to the border and know how disastrous the situation is. The Senate and President Biden need to enact these bills the House has passed – and they need to do it soon. You can't have a safe and secure nation if you don't have safe and secure borders.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 30 of 83



Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



Idiots Make Me Look Good, So Says the Boss

Often, I get agitated by people I call "idiots." I don't have an inclusive definition for what an idiot really is; I just use the word carelessly.

Especially is this true when I'm out in the neighborhood driving around. Sometimes, I'm in such a nervous frenzy when I get home, I have to sit down and drink some coffee. Often it takes 3 cups of coffee just to get my nerves to where they need to be.

Normally, I am a relatively cool, collected kind of person. Not much upsets me, and I don't get mad very easily. But driving a vehicle out in the world today is sometimes more than I can handle.

I'm not sure if it's just my age, but I don't remember so many idiots driving when I was younger. Thinking about this for a moment, I wonder if somebody thought I was an idiot when driving?

Often, on some of these trips, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage will be along. Some driver will do something rather stupid, cut in front of me, and I will utter, "What's wrong with that idiot?"

I can't remember how often we drove past an accident, which probably resulted from some idiot driving as idiots drive.

When it comes to idiots out on the highway, there is no gender, racial, or age difference. It seems that idiots come in all flavors.

Occasionally, while driving down the highway, along comes a motorcycle weaving in and out and passing us. Sitting in the seat of that motorcycle is some old geezer laughing and giggling. I wonder if he forgot his meds that morning or maybe there was something more than coffee in his coffee that morning?

One thing is sure: they drive like idiots. I wonder if there is a training school for idiots?

One time while driving, we had a conversation that went along the line of me asking The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, "How do these idiots get a driver's license?"

Looking at me once, she said something to the effect, "Those idiots get a driver's license the same way you get yours."

I don't know what she meant by that, and I never asked her to explain.

Another place idiots are sure to show up is in places like Wal-Mart. My warning is, you better watch where you walk in Wal-Mart. How those cashiers deal with all those idiots is above my pay scale.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 31 of 83

Recently, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I spent the day traveling for some errands we had to do, and boy, the idiots were out in full force. Several times, we came close to having an accident. The fact that we got home safe was a real miracle.

During that drive, I was a little more agitated by these idiots than ever before. I just complained from one end to the other end about all these idiots and why they did so many stupid things.

At the height of my ranting, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said, "Instead of ranting about these idiots, you should be thankful for them."

"What? Why would I ever be thankful for some idiot?" That was a strange remark even for her.

I saw the smile on her face, and I think I heard her chuckle, but I'm not quite sure about that. Then she said something even stranger. "Just think about it. All of these idiots on the road make you look good."

I had to stop and think about that one. I never thought of it like that, and it took me quite a while to process it.

As the silence lengthened, she then said, "If it wasn't for all of these idiots driving like they do, nobody would recognize what a wonderful driver you are. For that you should be thankful."

At this point, I wondered if she was complimenting me or setting me up for something else. I have learned through the years that she knows how to control a situation.

"After all," she said, "you've only had one accident in your life and that was when some idiot ran into you."

I had to think about that for a moment, and then I recalled that accident about ten years ago. I was driving down the main street, and somebody pulled out from the side street without stopping and collided with me. That person at the time was on her cell phone and didn't see me.

"And think about this," she continued. "If it wasn't for idiots driving on the road what in the world would lawyers do to make money?" Believe me that thought never crossed my mind, and I had to admit that she had something there.

Sometimes, I think all of these idiots out there are a hazard to real life. But then, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage had a point. These idiots make the rest of us look normal. Nobody would recognize how good we are in our driving skills if it wasn't for them.

Let me just say, "Thank you idiots."

Recently I ran across a Bible verse that troubled me. It was Proverbs 26:4, "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him."

To answer an idiot I have to come down to his level, which makes me an idiot. I have a higher standard to live by; it is the Word of God.

Enable GingerCannot connect to Ginger Check your internet connection
or reload the browserDisable in this text fieldRephraseRephrase current sentence

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Has the cruise industry cleaned up its act regarding its environmental footprint in recent years?
-- M.B., Seattle, WA

Cruise ships are a big part of the marine shipping sector that is responsible for close to three percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. No doubt, as much as these big boats might recycle or use less harmful cleaning spray in guest rooms, they are still big polluters. And the consumers that keep filling up more and bigger boats—the cruise industry is the fastest-growing sector in travel—are part of the problem, given that the federal government doesn't seem interested in forcing the industry to clean itself up.

Indeed, if you care about the planet, you might want to reconsider those plans to take a cruise on your next vacation. A recent study by the non-profit Friends of the Earth found that a cruise-goer emits eight times more greenhouse gas emissions per day than a land-based vacationer.

And if you thought flying was bad for your carbon footprint, consider this: "Even accounting for emissions from an equivalent-night hotel stay at a four-star U.S. hotel, a passenger on a cruise ship emits about two times more carbon dioxide (CO₂) than someone who flies and rents a hotel," reports Bryan Comer of the International Council on Clean Transportation.

That said, several cruise operators have made strides in their sustainability efforts. Recycling and on-board waste processing used to be rare on cruise ships but nowadays are standard across the industry. Many ships now use green tech like solar panels, exhaust scrubbers, cooking oil conversion systems, energy efficient appliances and LED lighting. And some are reducing and limiting engine noise so as not to disturb marine life while also steering clear of sensitive and/or marine breeding grounds.

Another way some cruise lines are going green is by transitioning their fleets to run on liquified natural gas (LNG)—otherwise known as methane—as a way to cut back on CO₂ emissions. But just because LNG burns cleaner than conventional marine petroleum products doesn't mean it's all that green. "While this reduces direct air pollution emissions, the types of engines that cruise ships use leak unburned methane into the atmosphere," adds Comer. "This is called 'methane slip' and the life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions from these engines end up being higher than using low-sulfur marine gas oil."

Cruise Lines International Association, a trade group representing 50 cruise companies, would like to see its members achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Environmental leaders argue that to reach this goal, the industry's focus should be on zero-emissions energy technologies—next generation batteries, hydrogen fuel cells—not on swapping some carbon-emitting fuels for others slightly less harmful.

Some cruise lines may be more eco-friendly than others, but as of now cruising is still one of the dirtiest vacation choices one can make. In lieu of government regulation to force the cruise industry to clean up its act—which doesn't seem forthcoming—the best thing green groups can do is educate the public about the environmental perils of cruising in hopes that consumer pressure will force change.



Some cruise lines may be more eco-friendly than others, but as of now cruising is still one of the dirtiest vacation choices one can make.

Credit: Pexels.com.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Noem fills one of two empty seats in Legislature

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - FEBRUARY 10, 2024 10:53 AM

One day after a state Supreme Court opinion clarified the constitutional ban on legislative conflicts of interest, Gov. Kristi Noem announced the appointment of Republican former legislator Kristin "Kris" Conzet to an empty Rapid City seat in the state House of Representatives.

Noem said the appointment is effective immediately. The Legislature is already more than halfway through its 38-day annual lawmaking session at the Capitol in Pierre. A seat in the state Senate remains empty, but Noem has pledged to fill that seat soon.

The appointment ends an unusually long and winding vacancy. Republican Rep. Jess Olson resigned from her District 34 House seat in November, citing health reasons. Noem postponed appointing a replacement for Olson and for a Senate seat vacated earlier last year. Republican Jessica Castleberry resigned from the Senate seat after Noem accused her of violating a constitutional prohibition against legislators having contracts with state government (Castleberry's child care business received federal pandemic aid through a state program).

The Castleberry situation sparked controversy and questions about the meaning of the state constitution's conflict of interest provisions. Noem sought and waited for a state Supreme Court advisory opinion clarifying the provisions, and the court issued that opinion Friday.

In the meantime, Republican Rep. Becky Drury relocated her residence, resigned her seat in District 32 and received an appointment by Noem to Olson's former seat in District 34.

Conzet's appointment is to Drury's former seat in District 32. Both districts include Rapid City or nearby areas. Conzet will serve the remainder of the term this year, but the seat will be up for election along with all other legislative seats in the November general election.

"I am happy to appoint Kris to this role," Noem said in a news release. "She has a robust background of public service, and I look forward to working with her as District 32's new representative."

Conzet previously served in the House from 2010 to 2018.

"Drawing from my previous legislative experience," said a statement from Conzet, "I am confident in my ability to serve effectively, even with the limited time remaining in this year's legislative session."

Noem's news release added that "Conzet is a strong conservative," saying she previously voted in favor of gun rights and anti-abortion legislation.

Conzet has degrees in English and mass communications from the University of South Dakota.

COMMENTARY

Native American lawmaker finds little support in quest to reconcile the races

DANA HESS

In 1990, Gov. George Mickelson proclaimed a century of racial reconciliation in South Dakota. Given recent events, it just might take that long.

Gov. Kristi Noem managed to anger Native American legislators when she asserted that the state's reservations were strongholds for Mexican drug cartels. She smoothed over some of those hurt feelings in a special meeting with Native American lawmakers the next day, but her diplomacy did not reach as far as the reservations.

For her remarks connecting the reservations to Mexican drug cartels, she has, once again, been barred from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation by the Oglala Sioux Tribe. She was banished from the reservation in 2019 for her backing of legislation that would have interfered with the tribe's ability to protest the Keystone XL pipeline.

Certainly there are drug problems on the reservations, but having the governor make such a stark connection between the tribes and the cartels isn't going to help the reservations attract jobs or industry. That's not the kind of quote from the governor that they'll want to highlight on their economic development brochures.

The current lack of racial reconciliation goes beyond the governor's often rocky relationship with the tribes. In their own way, legislators are pushing aside the needs of tribes as they defeat bills aimed at helping Native Americans.

A case in point is the work of Sen. Shawn Bordeaux, a Democrat from Mission. During the current session, Bordeaux is the main sponsor of 19 bills that have a Native American connection. On 16 of those bills, he is the sole sponsor. It's as if he is on a one-man quest to make sure that lawmakers at least have to think about the reservations.

Bordeaux withdrew one of the bills for which he is the sole sponsor. The other 15 have all been sent to the 41st day of the 38-day session, a common method for dispensing with legislation that's deemed unworthy of taking the next step to the Senate floor. The three bills that Bordeaux is prime-sponsoring with cosponsors are still pending. They would allow the use of tribal identification cards when registering to vote, support the erecting of a code talker memorial on the Capitol grounds, and call on federal officials to investigate the medals awarded to soldiers for the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre.

Bordeaux didn't dream up this legislation over the summer. He's in his first term in the Senate and brought many of the same bills multiple times during his eight years in the House. Call him tenacious, call him stubborn — Bordeaux seems to believe he has some answers to the question about how to reconcile the races.

Take Senate Bill 154 calling for the establishment of a Commission on Truth and Reconciliation. The commission would, among other things, take testimony on past government policies that involve Native American tribes, identify policies that impact Native Americans and provide recommendations on how to begin the healing process.

Speaking in opposition to the bill was someone from the state Department of Tribal Relations who said the bill would needlessly grow government. Healing, the spokesperson said, was not a government function. Someone should probably alert the state Departments of Health and Human Services about that fact. The Senate State Affairs Committee sent SB 154 to the 41st day on an 8-1 vote.

The same committee disposed of SB 143, which would have created a Commission on Indian Affairs. The commission, as imagined by Bordeaux, would have representatives from all nine of South Dakota's tribes who would pay their own expenses to meet four times a year with the secretary of the Department of Tribal Relations. They would work on improving services to American Indians and promote communication and relations between the state and the nine tribes.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 35 of 83

David Flute, the secretary of the Department of Tribal Relations, testified against the bill, saying it would infringe on the duties of tribally elected officials and add a layer of bureaucracy to state government.

That was good enough for Sen. Michael Rohl, an Aberdeen Republican who made the motion to send the bill to the 41st day. Rohl is the co-chairman of the Legislature's State-Tribal Relations Committee, and he said this would just get in the way of their work.

Among other bills, Bordeaux sought to exempt tribal members from camping fees and hunting and fishing license fees. A reasonable enough request since this was all originally tribal land and tribal resources. Both bills were relegated to the 41st day by the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

Bordeaux earned praise for SB 159, which would have prohibited school districts from using team names that are derogatory toward Native Americans and their culture. Senate Education Committee members said it was Bordeaux repeatedly bringing this issue to the Legislature that helped so many school districts realize that their team names were offensive to Native Americans. When the praise for Bordeaux ended, the committee sent the bill to the 41st day.

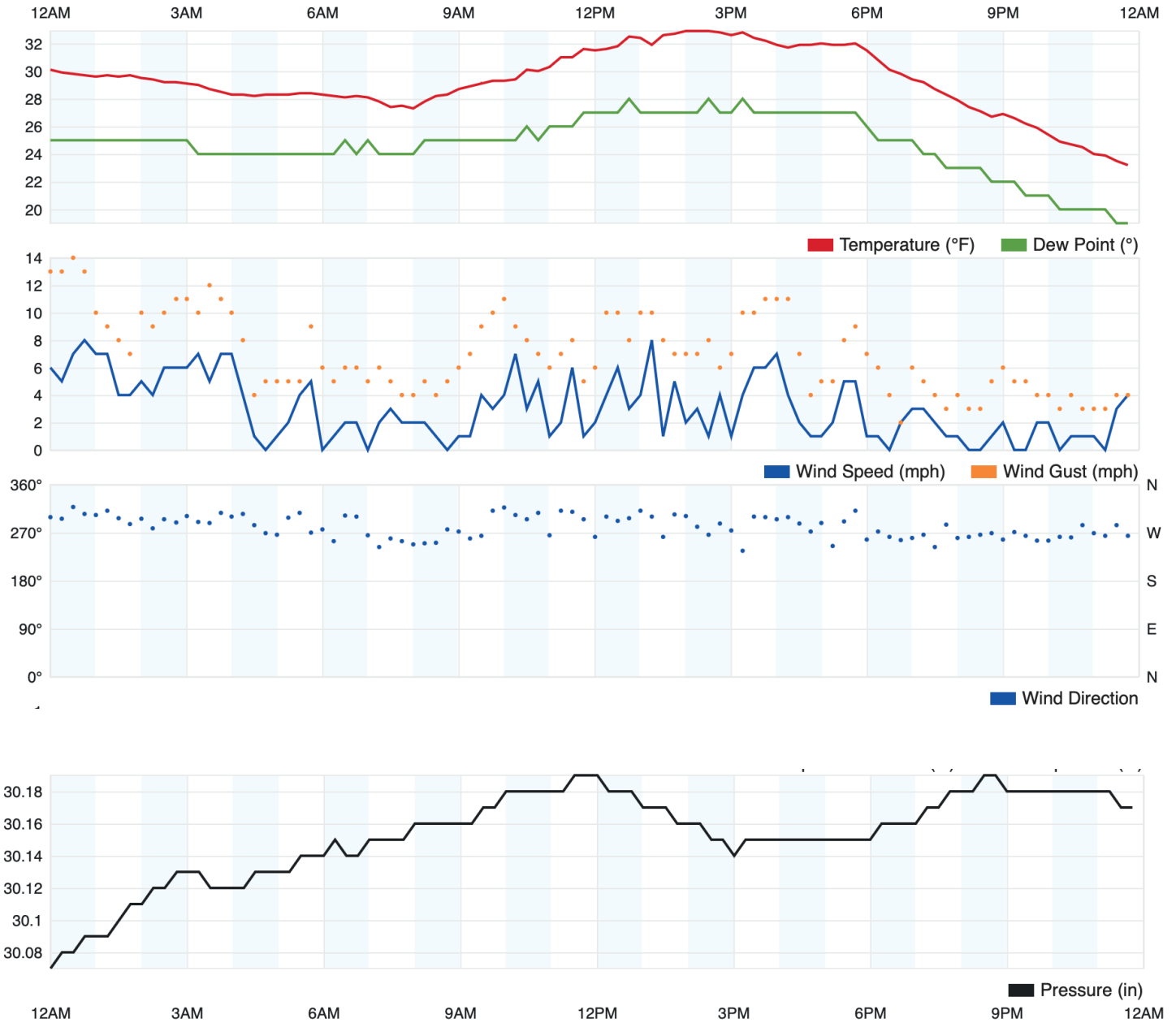
Gov. Mickelson declared a century of reconciliation in 1990. Now a third of that century has passed and, as a state, we're no closer to reconciliation than we were when his airplane crashed. The nine tribes in South Dakota live on reservations that take up almost half the state. Yet, from the actions of the governor and the Legislature, it seems that the needs of the state's Native Americans are best relegated to the 41st day.

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.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 36 of 83

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

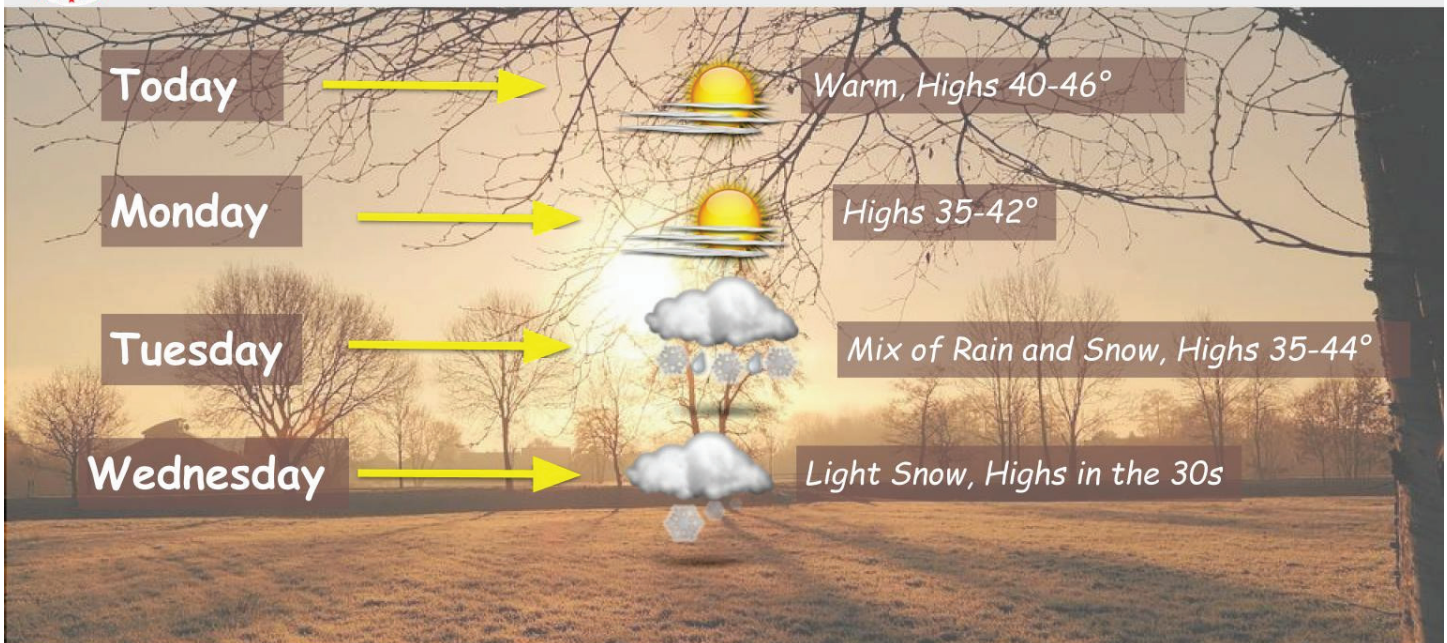
Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 37 of 83

Sun Feb 11	Mon Feb 12	Tue Feb 13	Wed Feb 14	Thu Feb 15	Fri Feb 16	Sat Feb 17
42°F 24°F	37°F 22°F	39°F 25°F	33°F 23°F	26°F 14°F	20°F 13°F	23°F 15°F
S 16 MPH	W 7 MPH	ESE 8 MPH 20%	WNW 11 MPH 20%	NW 16 MPH	NNW 13 MPH	W 15 MPH



4-Day Outlook

February 11, 2024
4:50 AM



NWS National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Dry and mild conditions will start the week. Weak low pressure then brings 15-30% chances for light rain and snow Monday night through Wednesday. Light snow accumulations of less than an inch are possible.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 38 of 83

These images indicate the observed maximum temperature departure from normal for January and so far into February. The smaller number on top of each day is the observed high and bottom number is our average, with the large number being the difference between the two.

The end of January and so far into February have been quite warm! (Up to 26° above average in Aberdeen on Feb 7th)! Also, check out the couple of weeks we had the arctic outbreak back in January! At one point it was 27 degrees below normal! (Jan 14).

January 2024

Observed Maximum Temperature Departure from Normal (°F)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 27° +3° 24°	2 36° +12° 24°	3 30° +6° 24°	4 30° +6° 24°	5 35° +11° 24°	6 29° +6° 23°
7 15° -8° 23°	8 16° -7° 23°	9 23° 0° 23°	10 25° +2° 23°	11 6° -17° 23°	12 1° -22° 23°	13 -5° -28° 23°
14 -4° -27° 23°	15 -1° -24° 23°	16 10° -13° 23°	17 17° -6° 23°	18 5° -18° 23°	19 6° -17° 23°	20 5° -18° 23°
21 24° 0° 24°	22 26° +2° 24°	23 30° +6° 24°	24 32° +8° 24°	25 31° +7° 24°	26 31° +7° 24°	27 40° +16° 24°
28 37° +13° 24°	29 46° +22° 24°	30 43° +18° 25°	31 48° +23° 25°			

NWS Aberdeen - Aberdeen Airport

February 2024

Observed Maximum Temperature Departure from Normal (°F)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 47° +22° 25°	2 40° +15° 25°	3 44° +19° 25°
4 37° +11° 26°	5 38° +12° 26°	6 38° +12° 26°	7 52° +26° 26°	8 41° +14° 27°	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

NWS Aberdeen - Aberdeen Airport

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 39 of 83

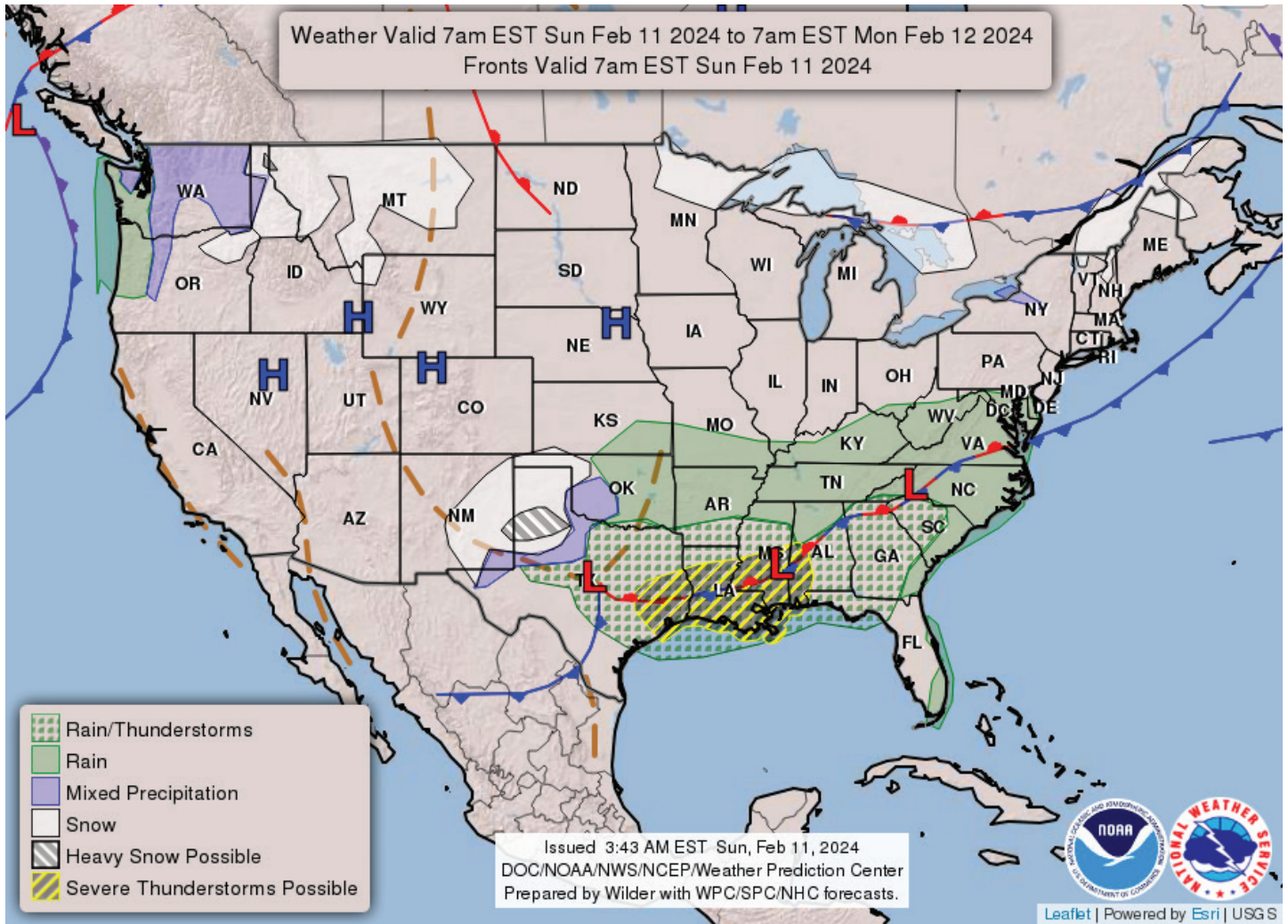
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 33 °F at 1:54 PM
Low Temp: 24 °F at 11:29 PM
Wind: 16 mph at 12:37 AM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 10 hours, 15 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 58 in 2005
Record Low: -35 in 1988
Average High: 27
Average Low: 5
Average Precip in Feb.: 0.22
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.07
Average Precip to date: 0.77
Precip Year to Date: 0.07
Sunset Tonight: 5:54:34 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:37:09 am



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 40 of 83

Today in Weather History

February 11, 2002: High winds of 35 to 45 mph gusting to 60 to 65 mph affected central and northeast South Dakota and west-central Minnesota through the afternoon and into the evening hours. The high winds caused some spotty tree and roof damage, along with a few power outages. In addition, a few downed power lines in Aberdeen resulted in a short power outage for some people. Some wind gusts included 55 mph at Wheaton, 58 mph at McLaughlin, 59 mph at Pierre, 61 mph at Sisseton and Aberdeen, 62 mph at Mobridge, and 63 mph at Graceville, Minnesota.

1895: The low temperature was 11 degrees below zero at Moline, Illinois, marking the last of 16 consecutive days on which the low temperature was at or below zero. During the first 11 days of February, Moline's highest temperature was only 13 degrees above zero. Their current average high temperature for early February is in the lower 30s.

1899 - Perhaps the greatest of all arctic outbreaks commenced on this date. The temperature plunged to 61 degrees below zero in Montana. At the same time a "Great Eastern Blizzard" left a blanket of snow from Georgia to New Hampshire. The state of Virginia took the brunt of the storm, with snowfall totals averaging 30 to 40 inches. (David Ludlum)

1935: The lowest recorded temperature on the continent of Africa occurred on this date in 1935. A bitterly cold 11 degrees below zero was registered at the Atlas Mountains village of Ifrane, Morocco.

1962: A powerful F3 tornado struck Holstebro in Denmark, causing devastating damage. More than 100 houses were severely damaged or destroyed, making this event the most devastating tornado in Denmark's history. The tornado could have been a low-end F4.

1983: Called the "Megalopolitan blockbuster snowstorm," this major snowstorm impacted the Mid-Atlantic and southern New England. Snowfall up to 25 inches fell at Allentown, Pennsylvania. Snowfall amount of 35 inches occurred in parts of the Blue Ridge Mountains of West Virginia at Glen Cary. Windsor Locks, Connecticut, recorded a record 19 inches in 12 hours. A ship sunk off the Virginia/Maryland coast, killing 33. There were 46 total storm-related fatalities. New 24-hour snowfall records were set in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Allentown, Pennsylvania, and Hartford, Connecticut. Five inches of snow in one hour was recorded at Allentown and Hartford.

1987 - Denver, CO, reported only their third occurrence of record of a thunderstorm in February. Ten cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Huron SD reported February temperatures averaging 19 degrees above normal. Williston ND reported readings averaging 24 degrees above normal for the month. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Bitter cold air gripped the north central U.S. Morning lows of 35 degrees below zero at Aberdeen SD, Bismarck ND and International Falls MN were records for the date. Bemidji MN was, officially, the cold spot in the nation with a low of 39 degrees below zero, however, a reading of 42 degrees below zero was reported at Gettysburg SD. In the Northern High Plains Region, Baker MT warmed from 27 degrees below zero to 40 above. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - While much of the continental U.S. enjoyed sunshine and seasonable temperatures, a strong weather system over the Hawaiian Islands deluged Honolulu with 2.5 inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - A winter storm produced up to ten inches of snow in Vermont, and up to nine inches of snow in Aroostook County of northeastern Maine. A three day snowstorm began to overspread Oregon, and the winter storm produced 29 inches of snow at Bennett Pass. Mild weather continued in the central U.S. La Crosse WI reported a record forty-seven consecutive days with temperatures above normal. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2004 - North Dakota Governor John Hoeven declares a snow emergency as winds gusting over 70 mph along with heavy snow produces low visibilities and drifts up to 20 feet in northwestern North Dakota. Amtrak train service is interrupted in the region. The Weather Doctor

2006 - Snowfall records fell in Philadelphia and Allentown, Pennsylvania, Bridgeport and Hartford, Connecticut, Newark, New Jersey, and Worcester and Boston, Massachusetts. The highest total reported was 30.2 inches at Fairfield, CT. New York City set a record one-day snowfall record of 26.9 inches in Central Park.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 41 of 83

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

WHERE'S THE PICCOLO?

Sir Michael Costa was a celebrated and successful conductor in England. He was recognized by others for the demands he placed on musicians to be accurate and to perform with excellence. In fact, many resented him for his adherence to high musical standards.

On one occasion, during a rehearsal of a large choir and orchestra, he brought the music to an abrupt stop. The musicians were puzzled until he shouted, "Where's the piccolo? I can't hear the piccolo."

With all of the musicians playing as loudly as they could, and the choir singing as loudly as it could, the piccolo player thought to himself, "My instrument is so small, and the sound it makes is so insignificant, it won't be missed." But to Costa, the sound of one small, seemingly insignificant instrument, was essential to complete the harmony for the concert to be acceptable.

Paul, writing to the church at Corinth, said, "Now, all of you together are Christ's body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it." Here we find him emphasizing the significance, obligation, and responsibility that each of us has to use our talents and skills to do the work of Christ through our church and its various activities.

One of the dangers of comparing ourselves to others is that we come out looking as small as a piccolo. Remember, the Conductor needs us to play our part to complete His concert.

Prayer: Lord, we each play our part in Your symphony of grace. May we realize that if we do not play our role and play it well, Your Kingdom will be incomplete. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27



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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 42 of 83

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

- Black & White \$48.99/year
- Colored \$79.88/year
- Colored \$42.60/6 months
- E-Weekly* \$31.95/year

* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent

www.397news.com

Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- 1 Month \$15.98
- 3 Months..... \$26.63
- 6 Months..... \$31.95
- 9 Months..... \$42.60
- 12 Months..... \$53.25

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail _____

Password _____

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

paypal.me/paperpaul



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 43 of 83



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
02.09.24

17 22 29 46 69 1

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$425,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 02.10.24

1 3 18 21 42 8

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,950,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 02.10.24

13 15 27 31 40 12

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 40 Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 02.10.24

4 7 23 29 33

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$48,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 02.10.24

12 15 32 50 64 15

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 02.10.24

27 28 34 37 44 8

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$270,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 44 of 83

News from the  Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Christian 78, Sully Buttes 54
Belle Fourche 52, Kadoka 45
Bridgewater-Emery 64, Platte-Geddes 50
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 85, Wakpala 53
Colome 71, Flandreau Indian 36
DeSmet 63, Hills-Beaver Creek, Minn. 45
Dell Rapids St Mary 59, Gregory 53
Douglas 62, Red Cloud 49
Edgemont 55, Lower Brule 51
Elkton-Lake Benton 63, Garretson 55
Flandreau 50, Clark-Willow Lake 31
Freeman 55, Lower Brule 51
Groton 78, Mobridge-Pollock 39
Hamlin 81, Viborg-Hurley 39
Harrisburg 59, Rapid City Stevens 52
Howard 53, Parkston 48
Iroquois-Lake Preston 69, Arlington 63
Lakota Tech 68, Crazy Horse 55
Lead-Deadwood 82, Redfield 51
Lemmon High School 65, New Underwood 60
Leola-Frederick High School 77, Webster 58
Madison 80, Canton 74
Marty 90, Bennett County 71
McCook Central-Montrose 55, Corsica/Stickney 48
Milbank 63, Tri-Valley 48
North Central 65, Herreid-Selby 59, OT
Philip 49, Centerville 44
Potter County 59, Kimball-White Lake 41
Sioux Valley 72, Parker 37
St Francis 76, Lyman 73
St Thomas More 49, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 38
Todd County 49, Miller 48
Upton, Wyo. 55, Little Wound 39
White River 58, Canistota 50
Yankton 64, Rapid City Central 34

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Roncalli 51, Warner 35
Belle Fourche 55, Hanson 40
Brandon Valley 69, Sioux Falls Lincoln 24
Bridgewater-Emery 37, Menno 25
Canton 68, Madison 48
Chester 62, Colman-Egan 39

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 45 of 83

Corsica/Stickney 48, Freeman Academy-Marion 13
Flandreau 65, Clark-Willow Lake 33
Garretson 66, Elkton-Lake Benton 60
Gayville-Volin High School 50, Marty 17
Herreid-Selby 44, Waubay/Summit 36, 40T
Highmore-Harrold 42, Langford 28
Ipswich 43, Waverly-South Shore 29
Jones County 46, Wolsey-Wessington 43
Lemmon High School 55, New Underwood 30
Little Wound 61, Lead-Deadwood 38
Miller 61, Todd County 47
Mobridge-Pollock 41, Groton 33
Parkston 50, Bon Homme 44
Potter County 61, Pine Ridge 10
Rapid City Central 58, Yankton 40
Rapid City Stevens 66, Harrisburg 61, OT
Red Cloud 73, Douglas 38
Sioux Falls Christian 41, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 30
Sioux Valley 83, Parker 50
St Francis 59, Flandreau Indian 38
Sully Buttes 43, Lower Brule 40
Tri-Valley 65, Milbank 54
Webster 61, Leola-Frederick High School 53
Wessington Springs 49, Hitchcock-Tulare 35
Wilmot 60, Tiospa Zina 31

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

Appel scores 25, South Dakota State takes down Oral Roberts 83-72

By The Associated Press undefined

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Luke Appel scored 25 points as South Dakota State beat Oral Roberts 83-72 on Saturday night.

Appel shot 10 of 16 from the field and 3 for 4 from the line for the Jackrabbits (14-11, 7-3 Summit League). Zeke Mayo added 19 points while shooting 7 for 14 (3 for 6 from 3-point range) and 2 of 3 from the free throw line, and they also had five assists. Charlie Easley had 18 points and shot 6 for 9, including 4 for 6 from beyond the arc.

The Golden Eagles (11-13, 5-6) were led in scoring by Issac McBride, who finished with 24 points. Kareem Thompson added 14 points, five assists and four steals for Oral Roberts. In addition, Jailen Bedford had 12 points, eight rebounds and four assists.

Russia launches 45 drones in mass barrage of Ukraine as Kyiv continues war cabinet reshuffle

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian forces launched 45 drones over Ukraine Sunday in a five-and-a-half-hour barrage, officials said, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy continued the reshuffle of his war cabinet as the war enters its third year.

In a statement, the Ukrainian air force said it had shot down 40 of the Iranian-made Shahed drones over nine different regions, including on the outskirts of the country's capital, Kyiv.

The five-and-a-half-hour attack targeted agricultural facilities and coastal infrastructure, officials for

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 46 of 83

Ukraine's southern defense forces wrote on Telegram. They said that a strike in the Mykolaiv region had injured one person, sparking a fire and damaging nearby residential buildings.

Another person was injured in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region when a blaze broke out due to falling debris from a destroyed drone, said the head of the region's military administration, Serhiy Lysak.

The strikes come as Zelenskyy continues his shakeup of military commanders in a bid to maintain momentum against attacking Russian forces.

Kyiv announced Sunday that former deputy defense minister Lt. Gen. Alexander Pavlyuk would become the new commander of Ukraine's ground forces. The post was previously held by Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, who was named Thursday as the replacement for Ukraine's outgoing military chief, Gen. Valerii Zaluzhnyi.

New presidential decrees also named Yurii Sodol, the former head of Ukraine's marine corps, as the new commander of Ukraine's combined forces; Brig. Gen. Ihor Skibiuk as commander of Ukraine's air assault forces; and Maj. Gen. Ihor Plahuta as commander of Ukraine's territorial defense forces.

Incoming commander-in-chief Syrskyi has signaled that his immediate goals include improving troop rotation at the front lines and harnessing the power of new technology at a time when Kyiv's forces are largely on the defensive.

Ukraine's military intelligence service said Sunday that attacking Russian forces had been found using Starlink terminals to aid their attack. It released what it said was a recording of an intercepted conversation between two Russian soldiers as proof.

Starlink terminals, which use a series of satellites run by Elon Musk's company Space X to provide high-speed communications, have been vital in giving Ukraine's military an edge over invading Russian troops.

In a statement last week, Space X said last week that it "does not do business of any kind with the Russian government or its military".

However, Western tech components have regularly been found among Russia's arsenal as Moscow has become more skilled at evading sanctions, often importing goods via third countries.

In a statement on Telegram Saturday, Zelenskyy said that he hoped to "reboot" the upper levels of Ukraine's armed forces with experienced combat commanders.

"Now, people who are well-known in the army and who themselves know well what the army needs are taking on new responsibilities," he said.

Iran marks the 45th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution as tensions grip the wider Middle East

By AMIR VAHDAT Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran marked Sunday the 45th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution amid tensions gripping the wider Middle East over Israel's continued war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Thousands of Iranians marched through major streets and squares decorated with flags, balloons and banners with revolutionary and religious slogans.

In Tehran, crowds waved Iranian flags, chanted slogans, and carried placards with the traditional "Death to America" and "Death to Israel" written on them. Some burned U.S. and Israeli flags, a common practice in pro-government rallies.

Processions started out from several points, converging at Azadi Square in the capital. State TV showed crowds in many cities and towns, claiming that "millions participated in the rallies" across the country.

The military displayed a range of its missiles, including the Qassem Soleimani and Sejil ballistic missiles, the Simorgh satellite carrier and drones at the square where people took selfies with them.

During the celebrations, a paratrooper jumped from a plane while displaying a Palestinian flag.

Many high-ranking Iranian officials attended the celebrations in Tehran, including hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi.

He addressed the crowds in Azadi Square and called on the United Nations — in a speech broadcast by state TV — to expel "the Zionist regime," as the crowds chanted: "Death to Israel." Raisi also said, "the

bombing of Gaza has to be stopped as soon as possible.”

The commander of the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps General Mohammad Salami and Gen. Esmail Ghaani, the head of the expeditionary force of Iran’s paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, also took part in the celebrations, while the head of the Judiciary body, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei, was at the rally in the central city of Isfahan.

There was a heavy security presence in the major cities across the country.

The anniversary came a month after a deadly attack by the extremist Islamic State group in the central city of Kerman that left at least 95 people dead during the commemoration for prominent Iranian general Qassem Soleimani whom the U.S. killed in a 2020 drone strike.

Iran has tried to blame the U.S. and Israel for the attack as the Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip continued. The Islamic Republic launched missile attacks on Iraq and Syria. It then struck alleged anti-Iran Sunni militant group Jaish al-Adl targets in nuclear-armed Pakistan, which responded with its own strikes on Iran, further raising tensions in a region inflamed by the Israel-Hamas war.

Earlier in January a drone attack killed three U.S. troops in Jordan which an umbrella group for Iran-backed factions known as the Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed. The U.S. said it held Tehran responsible. Iran threatened to “decisively respond” to any U.S. attack on the Islamic Republic.

The Islamic Revolution began with widespread unrest in Iran over the rule of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The shah, terminally and secretly ill with cancer, fled the country in January 1979. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini then returned from exile and the government fell on Feb. 11, 1979, after days of mass demonstrations and confrontations between protesters and security forces.

Egypt threatens to suspend key peace treaty if Israel pushes into Gaza border town, officials say

By NAJIB JOBAIN and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Egypt is threatening to suspend its peace treaty with Israel if Israeli troops are sent into the densely populated Gaza border town of Rafah, and says fighting there could force the closure of the territory’s main aid supply route, two Egyptian officials and a Western diplomat said Sunday.

The threat to suspend the Camp David Accords, a cornerstone of regional stability for nearly a half-century, came after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said sending troops into Rafah was necessary to win the four-month-old war against the Palestinian militant group Hamas.

Over half of Gaza’s population of 2.3 million have fled to Rafah to escape fighting in other areas, and are packed into sprawling tent camps and U.N.-run shelters near the border. Egypt fears a mass influx of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees who may never be allowed to return.

The stand-off between Israel and Egypt, two close U.S. allies, comes as aid groups warn that an offensive in Rafah would worsen the already catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, where around 80% of residents have fled their homes and where the U.N. says a quarter of the population faces starvation.

UNCLEAR WHERE CIVILIANS WOULD GO

Netanyahu, in an interview with ABC News “This Week with George Stephanopoulos,” suggested civilians in Rafah could flee north, saying there are “plenty of areas” that have been cleared by the army. He said Israel is developing a “detailed plan” to relocate them.

But the offensive has caused widespread destruction, particularly in northern Gaza, and heavy fighting is still taking place in central Gaza and the southern city of Khan Younis. A ground operation in Rafah could also force the closure of its crossing, cutting off one of the only avenues for delivering badly needed food and medical supplies.

All three officials confirmed Egypt’s threats, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief reporters on the sensitive negotiations. Qatar, Saudi Arabia and other countries have also warned of severe repercussions if Israel goes into Rafah.

“An Israeli offensive on Rafah would lead to an unspeakable humanitarian catastrophe and grave tensions with Egypt,” European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell wrote on X.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 48 of 83

Israel and Egypt had fought five wars before signing the Camp David Accords, a landmark peace treaty brokered by then-U.S. President Jimmy Carter in the late 1970s. The treaty includes several provisions governing the deployment of forces on both sides of the border.

Egypt has heavily fortified its border with Gaza, carving out a 5-kilometer (3-mile) buffer zone and erecting concrete walls above and below ground. It has denied Israeli allegations that Hamas still operates smuggling tunnels beneath the border, saying Egyptian forces have full control on their side.

But Egyptian officials fear that if the border is breached, the military would be unable to stop a tide of people fleeing into the Sinai Peninsula.

The United Nations says Rafah, which is normally home to less than 300,000 people, now hosts 1.4 million more who fled fighting elsewhere and is "severely overcrowded."

Netanyahu said Hamas still has four battalions there. "Those who say that under no circumstances should we enter Rafah are basically saying lose the war, keep Hamas there," he told ABC News.

PALESTINIAN TOLL MOUNTS

Israel has ordered much of Gaza's population to flee south with evacuation orders covering two-thirds of the territory, even as it regularly carries out airstrikes in all areas, including Rafah. Airstrikes on the town in recent days have killed dozens of Palestinians, including women and children.

Gaza's Health Ministry said Sunday that the bodies of 112 people killed across the territory have been brought to hospitals in the past 24 hours, as well as 173 wounded people. The fatalities brought the death toll in the strip to 28,176 since the start of the war. The ministry does not distinguish between civilians and fighters but says most of those killed were women and children.

The war began with Hamas' attack into southern Israel on Oct. 7, when Palestinian militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted around 250. Over 100 hostages were released in November during a weeklong cease-fire in exchange for 240 Palestinian prisoners.

Hamas has said it won't release any more unless Israel ends its offensive and withdraws from the territory. It has also demanded the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, including senior militants serving life sentences.

Netanyahu has vehemently ruled out both demands, saying Israel will fight on until "total victory" and the return of all the captives.

'They are shooting at us.' A fleeing Gaza family is killed along with the medics sent to find them

By The Associated Press undefined

JERUSALEM (AP) — The sound of gunfire crackled over the phone as the teenage girl hid in the car and spoke. An Israeli tank was near the vehicle as she and her family were trying to heed Israel's call to evacuate their home in Gaza.

Israeli troops were firing on the car, the teen said in terrified calls to her relatives and to emergency services. Everyone in the vehicle was killed except her and her 5-year-old female cousin, Hind, she said.

"They are shooting at us," 15-year-old Layan told the Palestinian Red Crescent. "The tank is next to me." And then there was a burst of gunfire. She screamed and fell silent.

That call on Jan. 29 began a desperate rescue attempt by medics with the Palestinian Red Crescent, one of many during the war in Gaza. But when the organization sent an ambulance, the crew vanished, with no contact.

On Saturday, 12 day after the call, the ambulance was finally discovered, blackened and destroyed.

The two medics were dead. The Palestinian Red Crescent accused Israeli forces of targeting the ambulance as it pulled up near the family's vehicle. The organization said it had coordinated the journey with Israeli forces as in the past.

The family car was found as well with six bodies inside, including Hind and Layan's.

There was no immediate comment from Israel.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 49 of 83

Movement around the tiny enclave carries deadly risk as Israel presses its ground and air offensive. Earlier this week, Israel's prime minister announced plans for a ground invasion of the cramped southern city of Rafah and said well over a million people would need to move.

The Health Ministry in Gaza says about two-thirds of more than 28,000 people killed since the start of the war have been children and women. The ministry does not distinguish in its count between civilians and combatants.

Israel says it strikes Hamas targets and holds Hamas responsible for civilian casualties because the militants fight from civilian areas.

The Hamada family was among more than 80% of Gaza's population evacuating their homes. On Jan. 29, near a gas station in Gaza City, in an area designated by Israel as a combat zone, the family encountered a tank.

The circumstances of the shooting remain unclear.

But in a frantic call to her father's brother, Omar, the teen Layan said troops were firing on them in the car, Omar told the AP. Her great-uncle Bashar Hamada, his wife and two of their children were killed. Layan, a third, was wounded.

She pleaded with him to send an ambulance. He connected her with the Palestinian Red Crescent office in Ramallah, which hoped to instruct her how to save herself and anyone else alive.

It was too late.

The Palestinian Red Crescent dispatched an ambulance after Layan went silent. Hours later, it lost contact with the medics, Yousef Zeino and Ahmed al-Madhoun, as they arrived at the scene.

For days, the organization shared the story of Hind, her family and the missing medics on social media — even posting audio of the phone call with Layan — in a plea for help.

On Saturday, after Israeli troops withdrew from the area and civilians told the Palestinian Red Crescent about the bodies, it shared video of the ambulance, crumpled and burned. Nearby was a car said to be the family's, smashed and riddled with bullet holes.

American allies worry the US is growing less dependable, whether Trump or Biden wins

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — As chances rise of a Joe Biden-Donald Trump rematch in the U.S. presidential election race, America's allies are bracing for a bumpy ride.

Many worry that a second term for Trump would be an earthquake, but tremors already abound — and concerns are rising that the U.S. could grow less dependable regardless of who wins. With a divided electorate and gridlock in Congress, the next American president could easily become consumed by manifold challenges at home — before even beginning to address flashpoints around the world from Ukraine to the Middle East.

French President Emmanuel Macron's recent verdict was blunt: America's "first priority is itself."

The first Trump administration stress-tested the bonds between the U.S. and its allies, particularly in Europe. Trump derided the leaders of some friendly nations, including Germany's Angela Merkel and Britain's Theresa May, while praising authoritarians such as Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Russian leader Vladimir Putin. He has called China's Xi Jinping "brilliant" and Hungary's Viktor Orbán "a great leader."

In campaign speeches, Trump remains skeptical of organizations such as NATO, often lamenting the billions the U.S. spends on the military alliance whose support has been critical to Ukraine's fight against Russia's invasion.

He said at a rally on Saturday that, as president, he'd warned NATO allies he would encourage Russia "to do whatever the hell they want" to countries that didn't pay their way in the alliance. Trump also wrote on his social media network that in future the U.S. should end all foreign aid donations and replace them with loans.

Biden, meanwhile, has made support for Ukraine a key priority and moral imperative. But Biden's asser-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 50 of 83

tion after his election in 2020 that "America is back" on the global stage has not been entirely borne out. Congressional Republicans have stalled more military aid for Ukraine, while America's influence has been unable to contain conflict in the Middle East.

Thomas Gift, director of the Centre on U.S. Politics at University College London, said that whoever wins the presidential race, the direction of travel will be the same – toward a multipolar planet in which the United States is no longer "the indisputable world superpower."

Most allied leaders refrain from commenting directly on the U.S. election, sticking to the line that it's for Americans to pick their leader.

They are conscious that they will have to work with the eventual winner, whoever it is — and behind the scenes, governments will be doing the "backroom work" of quietly establishing links with the contenders' political teams, said Richard Dalton, a former senior British diplomat.

But many of America's European NATO allies are worried that with or without Trump, the U.S. is becoming less reliable. Some have started to talk openly about the need for members to ramp up military spending, and to plan for an alliance without the United States.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said he was "currently on the phone a lot with my colleagues and asking them to do more" to support Ukraine. Germany is the second-largest donor of military aid to Kyiv, behind the U.S., but Scholz recently told *Die Zeit* that the country couldn't fill any gap on its own if "the U.S.A. ceased to be a supporter."

Russia, meanwhile, is busy bolstering ties with China, Iran and North Korea and trying to chip away at Ukraine's international support.

Macron also suggested American attention was focused far from Europe. If Washington's top priority is the U.S., he said its second is China.

"This is also why I want a stronger Europe, that knows how to protect itself and isn't dependent on others," Macron said at a January news conference.

Trump does have supporters in Europe, notably pro-Russia populists such as Hungary's Orbán. But former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson raised some eyebrows when he argued recently that "a Trump presidency could be just what the world needs."

Johnson is a strong supporter of Ukraine in its struggle against Russian invasion, whereas Trump has frequently praised Putin and said he'd end the war within 24 hours. However, Johnson said in a *Daily Mail* column that he didn't believe Trump would "ditch the Ukrainians," but instead would help Ukraine win the war, leaving the West stronger "and the world more stable."

Bronwen Maddox, director of the international affairs think tank Chatham House, said arguments like that underestimate "how destabilizing" Trump has been, and likely would continue to be if reelected.

"For those who say his first term did not do much damage to international order, one answer is that he took the U.S. out of the JCPOA, the deal to curb Iran's nuclear program. Iran's acceleration of its work since then has left it a threshold nuclear weapon state," she said during a recent speech on the year ahead.

Biden was a critic of Trump's Iran policy but hasn't managed to rebuild bridges with Tehran, which continues to flex its muscles across the region.

Dalton, a former U.K. ambassador to Iran, said prospects for the Middle East would be "slightly worse" under Trump than Biden. But he said divergence on the region's main tensions — the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Iran's ambitions — would be limited.

"No U.S. administration is going to make a serious effort to resolve differences with Iran through diplomacy," Dalton told *The Associated Press*. "That ship sailed quite some time ago."

Palestinians and their supporters, meanwhile, implore Biden to temper U.S. support for Israel as the civilian death toll from the war in Gaza climbs. But hard-liners in Israel argue the U.S. is already restraining the offensive against Hamas too much.

Itamar Ben-Gvir, Israel's far-right national security minister, recently said Biden was not giving Israel his "full backing" and that "if Trump was in power, the U.S. conduct would be completely different."

Much like its allies, America's rivals are not openly expressing a preference for the election outcome.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 51 of 83

Trump developed a strong rapport with Turkey's Erdogan, calling them "very good friends" during a 2019 meeting at the White House.

Yet Turkey-U.S. relations were fraught during his tenure. The Trump administration removed Turkey from its F-35 fighter jet project over Ankara's decision to purchase Russian-made missile defense systems, while Trump himself threatened to ruin Turkey's economy.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told CBS in January that he doesn't "believe there will be any difference" between a Trump and a Biden presidency. He argued that Russia-U.S. relations have been going downhill since George W. Bush's administration.

China, where leaders' initial warmth toward Trump soured into tit-for-tat tariffs and rising tensions, little changed under Biden, who continued his predecessor's tough stance toward the United States' strategic rival.

Zhao Minghao, a professor of international relations at Fudan University in Shanghai, said that for China, the two candidates were like "two 'bowls of poison.'"

Gift, from University College London, said the move to a more fractured world is "going to happen regardless of whether Donald Trump or Joe Biden is elected."

"It's just sort of a reality," he said.

First lady questions whether special counsel referenced son's death to score political points

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — First lady Jill Biden said in an email to campaign donors on Saturday she didn't know what the special counsel was trying to achieve when he suggested President Joe Biden could not remember when his oldest son died.

"We should give everyone grace, and I can't imagine someone would try to use our son's death to score political points," she wrote. "If you've experienced a loss like that, you know that you don't measure it in years -- you measure it in grief."

It was an emphatic defense of her husband in a note to supporters as Biden's team worked to alleviate Democratic concerns over the alarms raised by a special counsel about Biden's age and memory, in a report determining that Biden would not be charged with any criminal activity for possessing classified documents after he left office.

Special Counsel Robert Hur, a Republican former U.S. attorney appointed by Donald Trump, found the president should not face charges for retaining the documents, and described as a hypothetical defense that the 81-year-old president could show his memory was "hazy," "fuzzy," "faulty," "poor" and having "significant limitations," and added that during an interview with investigators that Biden couldn't recall "even within years" when his oldest son Beau had died.

"Believe me, like anyone who has lost a child, Beau and his death never leave him," Jill Biden said.

It was an unusually personal observation for a special counsel investigating the president's handling of classified documents. Beau Biden died in 2015 from a brain tumor. It's something that Biden speaks of regularly, and cites as both a reason why he didn't run in 2016 and a later motivator for his successful 2020 run.

"May 30th is a day forever etched on our hearts," Jill Biden said in a note to supporters about the day Beau Biden died. "It shattered me, it shattered our family. ... What helped me, and what helped Joe, was to find purpose. That's what keeps Joe going, serving you and the country we love."

The references to Beau Biden in Hur's report enraged the president, who later said: "How in the hell dare he raise that?"

Biden mentioned that he had sat for five hours of interviews with Hur's team over two days on Oct. 8 and 9, "even though Israel had just been attacked on October 7th and I was in the middle of handling an international crisis."

Voters have been concerned about his age. In an August poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for

Public Affairs, 77% of U.S. adults said Biden is too old to be effective for four more years. It was one of the rare sources of bipartisan agreement during a politically polarized era, with 89% of Republicans and 69% of Democrats saying Biden's age is a problem.

"Joe is 81, that's true, but he's 81 doing more in an hour than most people do in a day. Joe has wisdom, empathy, and vision," Jill Biden said. "His age, with his experience and expertise, is an incredible asset and he proves it every day."

Indonesia's president, who mingles with people and listens to Metallica, still popular in last term

By NINIEK KARMINI Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Joko Widodo's phenomenal rise from a riverside slum, where he grew up, to the presidency of Indonesia spotlighted how far the world's third-largest democracy had veered from a brutal authoritarian era a decade ago.

With his second and final five-year term ending in October, Widodo — regarded by some as Asia's Barack Obama — is leaving a legacy of impressive economic growth and an ambitious array of infrastructure projects topped by a \$33 billion plan to relocate Indonesia's congested capital to the frontier island of Borneo.

Dismissed as a political lightweight by rivals when he first won the presidency in 2014, Widodo built a reputation as a soft-spoken reformer who promised to fight poverty and inequalities by exploiting Indonesia's abundant resources and tourism draw to propel its economy, the largest in Southeast Asia. He served as mayor of Solo city, where he was born to a working-class family in illegally built shacks along a river, then became governor of the capital, Jakarta, before clinching his first presidential term.

Widodo was the first Indonesian president to emerge outside the political and military elite. But critics say he thrived on political compromises, became beholden to political party supporters and accommodated ex-generals who served under the late authoritarian leader Suharto. His pragmatic deals cushioned opposition to his leadership but also threatened Indonesia's fragile democracy that sprang a commoner like him, the son of a wood seller, to power.

Forging political compromises in the world's largest archipelago nation with deep religious, ethnic and economic divides has been a constant struggle even by past leaders.

Widodo was widely criticized when he appointed Prabowo Subianto — his main challenger in two presidential elections — as defense minister in 2019, after winning his second term.

"I am aware that there are people calling me stupid, dumb, ignorant, a pharaoh, a fool," Widodo said in his state of the nation address last year. "What breaks my heart is that the polite culture and noble character of this nation seem to have ebbed away. Freedom and democracy are used to vent malice and slander."

A special forces general accused of committing human rights atrocities in the Suharto era, Subianto is now the frontrunner in the Feb. 14 elections. His vice-presidential running mate is Widodo's eldest son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, who is the mayor of Surakarta, Widodo's hometown in Central Java province.

Widodo's son did not meet the age requirement of 40 for his candidacy but the Constitutional Court — headed by the president's brother-in-law — made an exception in a ruling last year.

A group of critics was considering an impeachment complaint against Widodo but legal experts said the chances of it succeeding are slim. He's still popular and parliament is dominated by his allies.

Also known as Jokowi, Widodo, now 62, nurtured an image of an Indonesian everyman with a soft spot for the underclass and down-to-earth lifestyle that resonated with a wide base of ordinary voters.

He often mingled with working-class crowds in cheap sneakers and rolled-up sleeves to check on their concerns. He took selfies with hordes of journalists and is one of the biggest fans of Metallica, the American heavy metal band whose concerts in the Indonesian capital he watched when he was the Jakarta governor.

Widodo has enjoyed consistently high approval ratings of over 70% in recent months, an impressive feat in the final years of a decadelong presidency. It also makes him a powerful election endorser, a kingmaker, despite legal restrictions against the practice. Opponents have accused him of covertly using his clout to

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 53 of 83

back his son and Subianto to create a new political dynasty.

He has laughed off the accusations and called on Indonesians to help the next leaders press on with reforms to foster economic growth.

Widodo's flagship projects centered on linking the nation of more than 17,000 islands with bridges, a high-speed train, toll roads, ports and airports.

"Jokowi is not a perfect leader, but still he's the best leader we've ever had," said Dwi Mustikarini, a Jakarta resident, "He made Indonesia better and was respected by world leaders, but unfortunately, his political ambition to create a dynasty was like an obstacle for him to ending his reign with a soft landing."

Aiming to generate more revenues and job opportunities, Widodo banned the export of selected raw materials like nickel ore and encouraged their local processing to get better prices in foreign markets.

In a bid to lure investors and tourists and spur growth and employment beyond traffic-choked and overcrowded destinations like Jakarta, he launched one of the most ambitious and controversial projects of his presidency: relocating the capital about 2,000 kilometers (1,240 miles) away to Borneo, a vast region of lush tropical rainforests where orangutans roam.

In mid-2022, despite warnings from environmental activists of massive deforestation and protests by Indigenous communities, construction of the new capital began. It is envisioned as a futuristic green city about twice the size of New York. A grand inauguration is planned on Aug. 17 coinciding with Indonesia's Independence Day, but authorities say the final stages of the city won't likely be completed until 2045.

Under Widodo, Indonesia saw a period of remarkable growth averaging 5% annually, except in 2020, when the economy contracted due to the coronavirus pandemic.

His economic roadmap, called "Golden Indonesia 2045," projects Indonesia becoming one of the world's top five economies with GDP of up to \$9 trillion, exactly a century after it won independence from Dutch colonizers.

That could be achieved if future leaders would muster the courage to make "difficult and unpopular decisions" and gain the support of different sectors, Widodo said in his speech last year. He warned that squandering the opportunity could bring Indonesia back to instability.

Largely focused on domestic issues, the Bahasa-speaking Widodo also played a role on the world stage, where he often spoke through an interpreter and at times appeared uncomfortable with formalities and protocol.

In 2022, he became the first Asian leader to visit Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv and later Russian leader Vladimir Putin in Moscow to help encourage the two enemies to start a dialogue.

Later that year, he hosted a summit of the G20 leading rich and developing nations. In a delicate balancing act, he met President Joe Biden in the White House for talks on boosting defense cooperation after meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping in China to expand trade and investment.

Asked by journalists what he would do when he steps down, Widodo said he plans to return to his family in his hometown, where his political journey began, and play an active role in protecting the environment.

"That's the plan," Widodo told Bloomberg Television in a recent interview. "But sometimes, plans can change."

This small New York village made guns for 200 years. What happens when Remington leaves?

By MICHAEL HILL Associated Press

ILION, N.Y. (AP) — Remington began here two centuries ago and generations of workers have turned out rifles and shotguns at the massive firearms factory in the middle of this blue-collar village in the heart of New York's Mohawk Valley.

Now residents of Iliion are bracing for Remington's exit, ending an era that began when Eliphalet Remington forged his first rifle barrel nearby in 1816.

The nation's oldest gun-maker recently announced plans to shutter the factory in the company's original home early next month, citing the steep cost of running the historic plant. Remington is consolidating its

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 54 of 83

operations in Georgia, a state the company says is friendlier to the firearms industry.

The company's recent history has been marked by a lawsuit after the Sandy Hook school massacre and bankruptcy filings that led to new ownership of the Iliion plant, where the workforce has dwindled from about 1,300 workers more than a decade ago to around 300.

But the move still stings for the village of 7,600 people, who face the prospect of a dramatic revenue loss and a vacant, sprawling factory.

"When Remington leaves, it's not going to be like a facility leaving, it's going to be like part of your family has moved off," said Jim Conover, who started at Remington in 1964 packing guns and retired 40 years later as a production manager.

Gun-making dominates and defines Iliion. It's entwined with the town the way car production is with Detroit.

Mayor John Stephens meets with village board members under a seal portraying Eliphalet Remington holding a long gun. The four-story, brick plant by Armory Street and Remington Avenue looms over the community about 55 miles (90 kilometers) east of Syracuse.

Everyone knows someone who worked at the plant. For some families, jobs there are practically a birth-right. Conover's father and sons also worked at the plant. Furnace operator and technician Frank "Rusty" Brown still clocked in there this year with family members.

"My mom worked there. My dad worked there. My wife works there with me now. My daughter works there with me now. My second daughter works there with me now. And my son-in-law works there," said Brown, president of the United Mine Workers of America Local 717. "So it's a double-hit for me and my wife: two of us out of a job."

The current owners of Remington Firearms, RemArms, blamed "production inefficiencies" for the plant closure in a Nov. 30 letter to union officials. They cited the high cost of maintaining and insuring about 1 million square feet (92,903 square meters) of space in multiple buildings, many dating to World War I.

RemArms added that Georgia offered an environment that better "supports and welcomes the firearms industry."

CEO Ken D'Arcy also said in a news release that the industry was concerned about the "legislative environment" in New York.

Some believe Remington is primarily shifting to the South to reduce labor and operational costs.

But in a stretch of upstate New York where support for gun rights tends to be strong, some Republican elected officials seized on the company's comment about Georgia. They linked the plant closure to gun control measures championed by New York City-area Democrats in recent years.

Remington is not the first firearms maker to commit to a more gun-friendly state.

Smith & Wesson opened its new Tennessee headquarters in October after being based in Springfield, Massachusetts, since 1852. In announcing the move in 2021, company officials criticized proposed state legislation they said would prohibit them from manufacturing certain weapons.

RemArms, which bought the firearms business in 2020, did not respond to emails and calls seeking comment.

The company said in its letter to the union it expected to end facility operations around March 4. The company previously announced in 2021 it was moving its headquarters to LaGrange, Georgia, and would open a factory and research operation there.

The days of traffic jams in Iliion every afternoon when day shifts let out are long gone. Empty spaces dominate the factory's big parking lot. Nearby businesses delivering lunches to the plant, like Franco's Pizza, already have seen orders dramatically fall.

"They've been dwindling down," Franco's owner Daniel Mendez said. "This is not necessarily going to put us out of business, but it does hurt."

With a fraction of its past workforce, Remington leaves Iliion with more of a whimper than a bang.

Stephens believes the remaining workers will be able to find other work in the area. But he also estimates the plant's loss could cost the village almost \$1 million annually, including utility payments and taxes.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 55 of 83

Local officials hope the plant site can host a mix of manufacturing, retail and residential units. But its fate remains unclear. It was listed for sale last month for \$10 million.

"Things can become an eyesore quickly," said Michael Disotelle, historian at Iliion's public library. "And the being in the center of the village like that, you can't just let it go."

The present factory site dates to 1828, when Eliphalet Remington located his operations along the recently opened Erie Canal. Though guns historically have been Iliion's prime product, Remington also made typewriters, sewing machines and other consumer items.

Cerberus Capital Management purchased Remington Arms in 2007, placing it in the same corporate family as Bushmaster Firearms and other gun companies. Bushmaster Firearms moved manufacturing operations to Iliion for a time in 2011.

Remington Outdoor Co. and its subsidiaries filed for bankruptcy protection in 2018, citing slumping sales as well as legal and financial pressure after the Sandy Hook school shooting that killed 20 first graders and six adults. A Bushmaster AR-15-style rifle was used in the massacre.

Family members of victims and a survivor of the shooting who filed a 2015 lawsuit against Remington settled in 2022 for \$73 million.

A second bankruptcy filing was made in July 2020. Within months, 545 workers at the Iliion plant were laid off.

The company's assets were divided at auction. A judge approved Vista Outdoor's \$81.4 million bid for Remington's ammunition and accessories businesses. The Iliion plant went to a group of investors called the Roundhill Group as part of a \$13 million bid.

After months of union negotiations, the firearms plant reopened in the spring of 2021. If RemArms sticks to its March closure timetable, the restart in Iliion will have lasted just under three years.

The mayor said there will be hard decisions ahead, but he's confident the site will be used again. And while Remington might leave, he said the connection can never be totally severed.

"Even when they are finally 100% no longer involved in the Village of Iliion in any way, shape or form, we're still going to be known for this," Stephens said. "You can't erase history."

As Super Bowl approaches, game-time guacamole affected by fewer avocado shipments from Mexico

By MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — As the Super Bowl approaches, there could be problems for guacamole, a favorite game-time food in America: A lack of rain and warmer temperatures has resulted in fewer avocados being shipped from Mexico.

The western state of Michoacan, which supplies almost 90% of the creamy textured fruit for the big game, has suffered a hotter, drier climate that has led to a lack of water in growing areas.

Lakes in the state are literally drying up: Desperate avocado growers send tanker trucks down to suck up the last water, or divert streams, to feed their thirsty orchards, sparking conflicts. The state received about half the rain it normally gets last year, and reservoirs are at about 40% of capacity, with no rain in sight for months.

Meanwhile, some growers are illegally cutting down pine forests that feed the water system to plant more avocados. To top it all off, a nother American obsession — tequila — is starting to cause problems too.

The whole situation is not good for avocados. Last year, avocado exports from Michoacan for the Super Bowl grew by 20% to 140,000 tons. This year, that number actually declined by 2,000 tons, despite increased planting; meaning fewer of the creamy textured fruit in U.S. produce departments. Alejandro Méndez, the state secretary of the environment, estimates 30% of avocado orchards in Michoacan are now water-stressed.

Something's got to give, and with consumers demanding more environmentally conscious produce, state officials are finally putting together a sustainable certification program.

The certification program would presumably result in growers improving their water use, enabling them

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 56 of 83

to offer consumers both greener avocados and more of them.

Coming soon to a grocery store near you: fruit with a sticker saying something like "this avocado wasn't grown on deforested land," or "this avocado used water responsibly."

Officials are still working on a catchy slogan for the greener avocados. But given that it's coming from the same people who brought you years of Super Bowl ads about avocados from Mexico, a catchy slogan is highly likely.

"The idea is that there is going to be a certification sticker with a QR code that you can scan with your telephone, and that link will take you to a page with a satellite photo of the orchard ... and the forest associated with the orchard," said Méndez.

Because they use more water than pine forests, growers will have to contribute to a fund that ensures several acres of forest are preserved for each acre of orchard.

"So with that orchard, you can be assured the dollar you paid for this avocado is going to preserve this piece of forest," said Méndez, who estimates about 70% of the orchards in place before 2011 were planted on old farmland, not forests. But the remaining 30% give the rest a bad name, he complains.

The decision to act comes not a moment too soon. The Center for Biological Diversity said Thursday that more than 28,000 people have signed an online petition calling on grocery chains to adopt more sustainable avocado-sourcing policies.

"Many people in Mexico have lost their forests and water because of the 304 million pounds of avocados we'll be eating on Super Bowl Sunday," said Stephanie Feldstein, the center's director for population and sustainability. "Our obsession with avocados has a horrific hidden cost. It's time for grocery chains to take responsibility and make sure they're not buying avocados grown in deforested areas."

Up to now, there hasn't been much consumers could do. There are few certified sustainable avocados available year round on the market, and if you want guacamole, there's not much else you can use. That's despite all the news coverage about how avocado growers and packers have to pay protection money to drug cartels.

Julio Santoyo, a front-line anti-logging activist in Villa Madero, Michoacan, says he's taking a wait-and-see attitude toward the new certification program. Until then, Super Bowl this year — like every year — was "a kick in the pants," he said.

"The growth in illegal orchards continues unabated," Santoyo said. "We assume that more than half of the avocados consumed around the Super Bowl are from illegal planting.

"Up to now, the Mexican government has not taken practical steps to certify environmentally sustainable avocado production," he said.

The crisis is clear in the once heavily forested, lake-dotted state. Lake Cuitzeo, Mexico's second largest, was once a vast sheet of water reflecting blue skies near the state capital; it is now about 60% dry, exposing kilometers (miles) of dry ground and grass.

And poor Michoacan faces new threats from U.S. consumers: Part of the state next to neighboring Jalisco is certified to grow the blue Weber agave, the only plant from which true tequila can be distilled.

While agave likes drier, hotter, poorer soils than avocados, growers are still cutting down native scrub and low, thorny woods to plant the spikey-leafed seedlings, whose barrel-like centers will later be cooked down and fermented.

It's a relatively new problem, fed by rising demand for tequila.

"In the last two years, the price for a kilo of agave went up a lot, it went up to almost 35 or 40 pesos per kilo (about a dollar per pound)," Méndez said.

"We have 50 million agave plants," he said. "It's grown a lot, and we have started to see deforestation as well in that area."

The economy of this Palestinian village depended on Israel. Then the checkpoint closed

By JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

NILIN, West Bank (AP) — Count the rings of the gnarled olive trees dotting Mohammed Mousa's land in the West Bank village of Nilin: They've been here centuries, far before the Palestinian family's livelihood came to depend on the whims of Israeli occupation.

When Israel established a checkpoint near the Mousas' land a decade ago, the family converted their ancestral farm into a parking lot for Palestinian workers entering Israel.

But the lot has been empty since Oct. 7, when Hamas militants attacked Israel from the Gaza Strip, and Israel, fearing more attacks, barred Palestinian workers from the West Bank from entering Israel.

In the fifth month of the war, the family is out of savings, running up debt at supermarkets and selling heirlooms to put food on the table.

"I've sold my mother's gold, my phone, my bicycle," Mousa said. "There's nothing more to sell."

Israel's campaign in Gaza has killed more than 28,000 Palestinians, unleashed an unimaginable humanitarian crisis and decimated the strip's economy. But Israel's near-complete severance of economic ties with the West Bank also has had serious repercussions for Palestinians there.

Economists and Palestinian officials say the territory faces a dire economic crisis that also weakens the Palestinian Authority, which administers autonomous pockets in the West Bank. Under interim peace deals from a generation ago, the self-rule government was meant to expand and eventually run a future Palestinian state.

The fallout from Israel's decision is felt keenly in Nilin. Before October, over 10,000 Palestinian workers crossed the checkpoint there daily, heading to Israeli construction sites and farms. Israeli shoppers used the crossing to enter the West Bank.

An estimated 200,000 Palestinians worked in Israel and Israeli settlements before the war, according to the Israeli workers' hotline Kav LaOved. The jobs pay much higher wages than what is available in the West Bank.

The checkpoint gate is now bolted shut, eyed by armed Israeli guards in a watchtower nearby.

Alaa Mousa, 38, who grew up in Nilin as part of the extended Mousa family, crossed the checkpoint every day for 10 years to work at a construction site in Israel. After Oct. 7, he looked for similar work in the West Bank but said no one was hiring. With two children to feed, he now relies on the goodwill of nearby supermarkets.

But those shops, with signs in both Arabic and Hebrew, are struggling, too. Nilin's streets used to teem with Israelis from nearby towns and settlements seeking cheaper prices for everything from groceries to auto repairs.

Ahmad Srour, who staffs his family's supermarket, said prices went up by 30% because of an increase in transportation and supplier costs. He said sales are down 70%.

"We don't know how much longer we can keep the doors open," said Srour, who has watched four neighboring stores close since October. "We've been here since 1996, but we've never seen anything like this."

A third of the village's 6,400 residents used to work in Israel, and all lost their jobs after Oct. 7, according to municipality official Nidal Khawaja. A fifth of the village's university students have delayed their semesters, unable to pay tuition. The town's commercial revenue has dropped 40%.

What's true in Nilin is true across the West Bank, where a third of workers are now unemployed, up from 13% before the war, according to the World Bank. Salaries for government employees have been slashed, and intermittent closures of military checkpoints have stifled commerce.

Israel operates 400 checkpoints in the territory, the Palestinian Economic Ministry said, turning what should be short supply trips into hourslong journeys. When the checkpoints are closed, they can also prevent the passage of trucks. Israel says the restrictions are meant as a security measure.

The Palestinian economy in the West Bank contracted by over a fifth in the last quarter of 2023, accord-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 58 of 83

ing to the Palestinian economic ministry. A third of businesses in the territory either closed or reduced production and a third of jobs were lost. Daily losses run to \$25 million.

"The question isn't if there is a crisis," said Khawaja, the official from Nilin. "The crisis is already here."

The crisis is compounded by the inability of the territory's largest employer, the Palestinian Authority, to pay full salaries. Under interim peace accords in the 1990s, Israel collects tax revenues on behalf of the Palestinians, transferring them to the Palestinian Authority, which uses them in part to pay wages. Since October, Israel's far-right finance minister, Bezalel Smotrich, has held up transfers to Gaza, prompting the Palestinian Authority to refuse to accept any of the money.

The U.S. has repeatedly urged Israel to release funds, to no avail.

Last week, the PA said it would transfer 60% of December salaries to workers — over a month late.

"If the crisis in the Palestinian Authority's finances continues, it will lead to the collapse of the Palestinian Authority," Palestinian Economic Minister Khalid Al-Esseily told The Associated Press.

"If paying salaries is the essential remaining *raison d'être* of the Palestinian Authority, then it may as well collapse, as the situation calls for far more than that from it," said Khalidi.

The crisis comes as the U.S. doubles down on calls for a "revitalized PA" to govern a post-war Palestinian state, starting with the West Bank and Gaza.

Though Israeli officials have said workers from Gaza will never again enter Israel, Israeli media reported last week that officials are considering a program to allow workers over the age of 45 from the West Bank to return to Israel.

The government also has allowed some 8,000 Palestinians to return to work in Israeli settlements. But the future of the labor arrangement remains uncertain.

The lack of Palestinian workers also has hit Israel. Israel's Finance Ministry said in December that the economy was losing \$830 million a month as a result. As of December, half the construction sites in Israel had shut down.

"The industry is at a complete freeze," Raul Sargo, head of the Israeli Builders Association, told Israel's parliament in December. "There is no immediate alternative. The state accustomed us to Palestinian workers."

Back in Nilin, Mohammed Mousa spoke of a time — before the checkpoint, before the parking lot — when his land wasn't fallow.

There, his family raised chickens and pressed olives into oil. That ended when checkpoint clashes erupted between Israeli security forces and Palestinians, sending clouds of tear gas over the family's land.

A demolition order for the chicken coop, which Israel says he built illegally, is pending in court. Weeds now poke through the parking lot's dusty grounds where his farm used to be.

"I hope the war in Gaza finishes. That's my first wish," he said. "Then, I hope the parking comes back."

Gaza mediators and others warn Israel of disaster if it launches a ground invasion on crowded Rafah

By NAJIB JOBAIN, SAMY MAGDY and CARA ANNA Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israel's neighbors and key mediators warned Saturday of disaster and repercussions if its military launches a ground invasion in Gaza's southern city of Rafah, where Israel says remaining Hamas strongholds are located — along with over half the besieged territory's population.

Israeli airstrikes killed at least 44 Palestinians — including more than a dozen children — in Rafah, hours after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he asked the military to plan for the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of people ahead of an invasion. He gave no details or timeline.

The announcement set off panic. More than half of Gaza's 2.3 million people are packed into Rafah, which borders Egypt. Many fled there after following Israeli evacuation orders that now cover two-thirds of the territory following the Oct. 7 Hamas attack that sparked the war. It's not clear where they could go next.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said any Israeli ground offensive on Rafah would have "disastrous consequences," and asserted that Israel aims to eventually force the Palestinians out of their land.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 59 of 83

Egypt has warned that any movement of Palestinians into Egypt would threaten the four-decade-old peace treaty between Israel and Egypt.

Another mediator, Qatar, also warned of disaster, and Saudi Arabia warned of "very serious repercussions." There's even increasing friction between Netanyahu and the United States, whose officials have said a Rafah invasion with no plan for civilians there would lead to disaster.

"The people in Gaza cannot disappear into thin air," German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said on X, adding that an Israeli offensive on Rafah would be a "humanitarian catastrophe in the making."

Netanyahu has previously said it is impossible to eliminate Hamas while leaving four Hamas battalions in Rafah.

Despite the wave of criticism, he said he was determined to go ahead.

"Those who say that under no circumstances should we enter Rafah are basically saying lose the war, keep Hamas there," he told ABC News "This Week with George Stephanopoulos" in comments that aired Saturday.

When asked where the civilians should go, Netanyahu said: "You know, the areas that we've cleared north of Rafah, plenty of areas there. But we are working out a detailed plan to do so."

Israel has carried out almost daily airstrikes in Rafah, a rare entry point for Gaza's badly needed food and medical supplies, during its current ground combat in Khan Younis just to the north.

Overnight into Saturday, three airstrikes on homes in the Rafah area killed 28 people, according to a health official and Associated Press journalists who saw bodies arriving at hospitals. Each strike killed multiple members of a family, including a total of 10 children, the youngest 3 months old.

Fadel al-Ghannam said one strike tore his loved ones to shreds. He lost his son, daughter-in-law and four grandchildren. He fears even worse with a ground invasion of Rafah, and said the world's silence has enabled Israel to proceed.

Later on Saturday, an Israeli airstrike on a home in Rafah killed at least 11 people, including three children, according to Ahmed al-Soufi, head of Rafah municipality.

"This is what Netanyahu targets — the civilians," said a neighbor, Samir Abu Loulya. Two other strikes in Rafah killed two policemen and three senior officers in the civil police, according to city officials.

In Khan Younis, Israeli forces opened fire at Nasser Hospital, the area's largest, killing at least two people and wounding five, according to the medical charity Doctors Without Borders. Israeli tanks reached the hospital gates Saturday morning, Ahmed Maghrabi, a physician there, said in a Facebook post.

Health Ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qidra said hospital staff are no longer able to move between buildings because of the intense fire. He said 450 patients and 10,000 displaced people are sheltering there.

The Israeli military said troops were not operating inside the hospital but called the surrounding area "an active combat zone."

Israel's army chief, Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi, said more than 2,000 Hamas fighters in Khan Younis had been killed in airstrikes and ground combat, but the offensive in the city was far from over.

GAZA DEATH TOLL TOPS 28,000

Israel declared war after several thousand Hamas militants burst across the border into southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing about 1,200 people and taking 250 others hostage. Not all are still alive.

The Gaza Health Ministry said the bodies of 117 people killed in Israeli airstrikes were brought to hospitals over the past 24 hours, raising the overall death toll from the offensive to 28,064, mostly women and children. The ministry said more than 67,000 people have been wounded.

Israel holds Hamas responsible for civilian deaths because it fights from within civilian areas, but U.S. officials have called for more surgical strikes. President Joe Biden has said Israel's response is "over the top."

The United Nations says the city that's normally home to less than 300,000 people now hosts 1.4 million others who fled fighting elsewhere and is "severely overcrowded." Roughly 80% of Gaza's people have been displaced.

ELSEWHERE IN GAZA

On Saturday, Israel's military said it had discovered tunnels underneath the main headquarters of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees in Gaza City, alleging that Hamas militants used the space.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 60 of 83

An Israeli airstrike on the central town of Deir al-Balah killed five people and wounded about 10 others, according to hospital officials and AP journalists.

In the Tel al-Hawa neighborhood of Gaza City, two medics from the Palestinian Red Crescent were found dead in a destroyed ambulance after going missing 12 days ago. They had tried to rescue 5-year-old Hind Rajab, who had been traveling with family to heed evacuation orders.

The PRC previously released a recording of a call from Hind's cousin saying the car had come under fire and only she and Hind survived. The cousin went silent mid-call. Hind later died.

The PRC said the rescue mission was coordinated with Israel's military, which had no comment.

Trump says he warned NATO ally: Spend more on defense or Russia can 'do whatever the hell they want'

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Republican front-runner Donald Trump said Saturday that, as president, he warned NATO allies that he "would encourage" Russia "to do whatever the hell they want" to countries that are "delinquent" as he ramped up his attacks on foreign aid and longstanding international alliances.

Speaking at a rally in Conway, South Carolina, Trump recounted a story he has told before about an unidentified NATO member who confronted him over his threat not to defend members who fail to meet the trans-Atlantic alliance's defense spending targets.

But this time, Trump went further, saying had told the member that he would, in fact, "encourage" Russia to do as it wishes in that case.

"You didn't pay? You're delinquent?" Trump recounted saying. "No I would not protect you. In fact, I would encourage them to do whatever the hell they want. You gotta pay. You gotta pay your bills."

NATO allies agreed in 2014, after Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, to halt the spending cuts they had made after the Cold War and move toward spending 2% of their GDPs on defense by 2024.

White House spokesperson Andrew Bates responded, saying that: "Encouraging invasions of our closest allies by murderous regimes is appalling and unhinged – and it endangers American national security, global stability, and our economy at home."

Trump's comments come as Ukraine remains mired in its efforts to stave off Russia's 2022 invasion and as Republicans in Congress have become increasingly skeptical of providing additional aid money to the country as it struggles with stalled counteroffensives and weapons shortfalls.

They also come as Trump and his team are increasingly confident he will lock up the nomination in the coming weeks following commanding victories in the first votes of the 2024 Republican nominating calendar.

Earlier Saturday, Trump called for the end of foreign aid "WITHOUT 'STRINGS' ATTACHED," arguing that the U.S. should dramatically curtail the way it provides money.

"FROM THIS POINT FORWARD, ARE YOU LISTENING U.S. SENATE(?), NO MONEY IN THE FORM OF FOREIGN AID SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ANY COUNTRY UNLESS IT IS DONE AS A LOAN, NOT JUST A GIVE-AWAY," Trump wrote on his social media network in all-caps letters.

Trump went on to say the money could be loaned "ON EXTRAORDINARILY GOOD TERMS," with no interest and no date for repayment. But he said that, "IF THE COUNTRY WE ARE HELPING EVER TURNS AGAINST US, OR STRIKES IT RICH SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE, THE LOAN WILL BE PAID OFF AND THE MONEY RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES."

During his 2016 campaign, Trump alarmed Western allies by warning that the United States, under his leadership, might abandon its NATO treaty commitments and only come to the defense of countries that meet the alliance's guidelines by committing 2 percent of their gross domestic products to military spending.

Trump, as president, eventually endorsed NATO's Article 5 mutual defense clause, which states that an armed attack against one or more of its members shall be considered an attack against all members. But he often depicted NATO allies as leeches on the U.S. military and openly questioned the value of the military alliance that has defined American foreign policy for decades.

As of 2022, NATO reported that seven of what are now 31 NATO member countries were meeting that

obligation — up from three in 2014. Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine has spurred additional military spending by some NATO members.

Trump has often tried to take credit for that increase, and bragged again Saturday that, as a result of his threats, "hundreds of billions of dollars came into NATO"— even though countries do not pay NATO directly.

Haley challenges Trump on her home turf in South Carolina as the Republican primary looms

By MICHELLE L. PRICE, MEG KINNARD and JAMES POLLARD Associated Press

CONWAY, S.C. (AP) — With two weeks to go before the South Carolina Republican primary, Nikki Haley is challenging Donald Trump on her home turf while the former president is turning to his familiar playbook of personal attacks as he tries to quash his last major rival for the nomination.

Trump, turning his campaign focus to the southern state days after an easy victory in Nevada, revved up a huge crowd of supporters at a Saturday afternoon rally in Conway, near Myrtle Beach, by touting his time in office, repeating his false claims that the 2020 election he lost was rigged, maligning a news media he sees as biased against him and lobbing attacks on Haley, her husband and President Joe Biden.

In his rally speech, Trump insulted Haley by using his derisive nickname for her, "Birdbrain," and lavished praise on South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster, who endorsed him early. Trump claimed that he selected Haley to serve as his ambassador to the United Nations in 2017 and represent America on the world stage only because he was motivated to make McMaster — her second-in-command — the governor of South Carolina.

"She did a job. She was fine. She was OK. But I didn't put her there because I wanted her there at the United Nations," he said. "I wanted to take your lieutenant governor, who is right here, and make him governor."

"I wanted him because I felt he deserved it," Trump added

Trump, who has long been the front-runner in the GOP presidential race, won three states in a row and is looking to use South Carolina's Feb. 24 primary to close out Haley's chances and turn his focus fully on an expected rematch with Biden in the general election.

Haley skipped the Nevada caucuses, condemning the contest as rigged for Trump, and has instead focused on South Carolina, kicking off a two-week bus tour across the state where she served as governor from 2011 to 2017.

Speaking to about a couple hundred people gathered outside a historic opera house in Newberry, Haley on Saturday portrayed Trump as an erratic and self-absorbed figure not focused on the American people.

She pointed to the way he flexed his influence over the Republican Party this past week, successfully pressuring GOP lawmakers in Washington to reject a bipartisan border security deal and publicly pressed Republican National Committee Chair Ronna McDaniel to consider leaving her job.

"What is happening?" Haley said. "On that day of all those losses, he had his fingerprints all over it," she added.

Haley reprised her questions of Trump's mental fitness, an attack she has sharpened since a Jan. 19 speech in which he repeatedly confused her with former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. Haley, 52, has called throughout her campaign for mental competency tests for politicians, a way to contrast with 77-year-old Trump and 81-year-old Biden.

"Why do we have to have someone in their 80s run for office?" she asked. "Why can't they let go of their power?"

A person in the crowd shouted out: "Because they're grumpy old men!"

"They are grumpy old men," Haley said.

Haley continued the argument when speaking to reporters afterward, citing a report released Thursday by the special counsel investigating Biden's possession of classified documents. The report described Biden's memory as "poor."

"American can do better than two 80-year-olds for president," Haley said.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 62 of 83

Bob Pollard, a retired firefighter, said he cannot support Trump because "he's a maniac," adding that Trump's campaign, in which he speaks frequently of "retribution" and his personal grievances, has "turned into a personal vendetta."

Harlie O'Connell, a longtime South Carolina resident who backs Haley, said she plans to support the eventual GOP nominee but prefers it is someone younger.

"It's just time for some fresh blood," O'Connell said.

Her husband, Mike O'Connell, drew a contrast between the candidates' approach to foreign policy and said he wants the U.S. to continue assisting Ukraine in its war with Russia, as Haley has pledged.

"We need to encourage friendships and not discourage them," he said of international relations.

Trump, in his remarks and a social media post on Saturday, criticized foreign aid generally and a plan in Congress to provide nearly \$100 billion in aid for Ukraine and Israel. He also repeated his praise for foreign strongmen, calling Russian President Vladimir Putin "very smart, very sharp," describing Hungary's nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán as "one of the toughest guys," and saying Chinese President Xi Jinping is smart because he "controls 1.4 billion people with an iron fist."

At another point in his speech, he escalated his years-old attacks on the NATO military alliance. Trump suggested that if one of the member countries was attacked by Russia but had not met its military spending goals under the alliance, not only would America not protect that military ally but Trump would encourage Russia "to do whatever the hell they want."

In one very personal attack, Trump repeatedly questioned why Haley's husband Michael Haley, who is deployed on a yearlong stint in Africa with the South Carolina Army National Guard, hasn't been on the campaign trail. Trump, whose own wife, Melania Trump, has not joined him as he campaigns, asked: "What happened to her husband? Where is he? He's gone. He knew. He knew."

Haley responded sharply in a post on X, saying: "Michael is deployed serving our country, something you know nothing about. Someone who continually disrespects the sacrifices of military families has no business being commander in chief."

Trump also ramped up his attacks on the media, maligning the press at least a half-dozen times, with the crowd registering their agreement with boos.

He wrapped up with an at times apocalyptic vision of the country, listing ills from dirty, crowded airports to looming nuclear war and, if he loses the election, predicting the stock market would crash like it did in 1929, touching off the Great Depression. He referred to his supporters who were prosecuted for their roles in the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol as "hostages" who have been "unfairly imprisoned for long periods of time."

He made his extended lament while speaking over an instrumental song that QAnon adherents have claimed as their anthem.

In Conway, people began lining up to see Trump hours before the doors opened to the arena where he was set to take the stage later.

Organizers set up outside screens for an overflow crowd to watch.

The city sits along the Grand Strand, a broad expanse of South Carolina's northern coast that is home to Myrtle Beach and Horry County, one of the most reliably conservative spots in the state and a central area of Trump's base of support in the state in his past campaigns.

Tim Carter, from nearby Murrells Inlet, said he had backed Trump since 2016 and would do so again this year.

"We're here to stand for Trump, get our economy better, shut our border down, more jobs for our people," said Carter, a pastor and military veteran who runs an addiction recovery ministry.

Cheryl Savage from Conway, who was waiting on the bleachers to hear from Trump, said the former president is "here to help us." Savage said she backed Haley during her first run for governor in 2010 but now feels she is hurting herself by staying in the race.

"He deserves a second term," Savage said, of Trump. "He did a fantastic job for four years."

Israel unveils tunnels underneath Gaza City headquarters of UN agency for Palestinian refugees

By ARIEL SCHALIT Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — The Israeli military says it has discovered tunnels underneath the main headquarters of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees in Gaza City, alleging that Hamas militants used the space as an electrical supply room.

The unveiling of the tunnels marked the latest chapter in Israel's campaign against the embattled agency, which it accuses of collaborating with Hamas.

Recent Israeli allegations that a dozen staff members participated in the Hamas attack on Israel Oct. 7 plunged the agency into a financial crisis, prompting major donor states to suspend their funding as well as twin investigations. The agency says that Israel has also frozen its bank account, embargoed aid shipments and canceled its tax benefits.

The army invited journalists to view the tunnel on Thursday.

It did not prove definitively that Hamas militants operated in the tunnels underneath the UNRWA facility, but it did show that at least a portion of the tunnel ran underneath the facility's courtyard. The military claimed that the headquarters supplied the tunnels with electricity.

UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said the agency had no knowledge of the facility's underground, but the findings merit an "independent inquiry," which the agency is unable to perform due to the ongoing war.

The headquarters, on the western edge of Gaza City, are now completely decimated. To locate the tunnel, forces repeated an Israeli tactic used elsewhere in the strip, overturning mounds of red earth to produce a crater-like hole giving way to a small tunnel entrance. The unearthed shaft led to an underground passageway that an Associated Press journalist estimated stretched for at least half a kilometer (quarter of a mile), with at least 10 doors.

At one point, journalists were able to gaze upward from the tunnel, through a hole, and make eye contact with soldiers standing in a courtyard within the UNRWA facility.

Inside one of the UNRWA buildings, journalists saw a room full of computers with wires stretching down into the ground. Soldiers then showed them a room in the underground tunnel where they claimed the wires connected.

That underground room bore a wall of electrical cabinets with multicolored buttons and was lined with dozens of cables. The military claimed the room served as a hub powering tunnel infrastructure in the area.

"Twenty meters above us is the UNRWA headquarters," said Lt. Col. Ido, whose last name was redacted by the military. "This is the electricity room, you can see all around here. The batteries, the electricity on walls, everything is conducted from here, all the energy for the tunnels which you walked through them are powered from here."

The Associated Press journalist could see the tunnel stretching beyond the area underneath the facility.

Hamas has acknowledged building hundreds of kilometers (miles) of tunnels across Gaza. One of the main objectives of the Israeli offensive has been to destroy that network, which it says is used by Hamas to move fighters, weapons and supplies throughout the territory. It accuses Hamas of using civilians as human shields and has exposed many tunnels running near mosques, schools and U.N. facilities.

Lazzarini said the agency was unaware what lay beneath it, saying he had visited the facility multiple times and did not recognize the electrical room. In a statement, Lazzarini wrote that UNRWA had conducted a regular quarterly inspection of the facility in September.

"UNRWA is a human development and humanitarian organization that does not have the military and security expertise nor the capacity to undertake military inspections of what is or might be under its premises," read the statement.

Also in the tunnel, journalists saw a small bathroom with a toilet and a faucet, a room with shelves and a room with two small vehicles in it that soldiers said the militants used to traverse the tunnel network. The military said Saturday night that the tunnel began at a UNRWA school, and was 700 meters (765

yards) long and 18 meters (20 yards) deep.

The military said forces uncovered rifles, ammunition, grenades, and explosives in the facility, claiming it has been used by Hamas militants. Lazzarini said the agency has not revisited the headquarters since staff evacuated Oct. 12, and is unaware of how the facility may have been used.

Israel has found similar primitive quarters in tunnels across Gaza over the course of its 4 month-long campaign in Gaza. The offensive was launched after Hamas militants attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing some 1,200 people and dragging 250 hostages back to Gaza. Since then, Israeli war planes and ground troops have killed over 27,000 Palestinians in the strip, unleashed a humanitarian catastrophe and wreaked widespread damage.

Leaving the facility, it was nearly impossible to identify one window left fully intact. Bullet holes pockmarked the walls. Shrapnel was everywhere, crumpled-up U.N. vehicles were perched precariously atop building debris. Dogs roamed the area.

"The Israeli army is occupying our biggest UNRWA headquarters," Touma said in response to Israeli allegations. "That's what's outrageous."

Taylor Swift reaches LAX in journey from Tokyo to Super Bowl, online sleuths say. Will she make it?

By MARIA SHERMAN and FOSTER KLUG Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Will she make it in time? Intrepid flight trackers online seem to think so.

On social media, fans of Taylor Swift and aviation journalists believe they've identified Swift's private jet, labeled "The Football Era." It arrived from Tokyo's Haneda Airport to Los Angeles' LAX airport just after 3:30 p.m. local time.

Her transportation plans onward to Las Vegas, where her boyfriend, NFL star tight end Travis Kelce, will play in Sunday's Super Bowl, have yet to be revealed.

Representatives for Swift and VistaJet, the world's only global private aviation company, did not immediately respond to AP's request for comment.

Swift's last song was still ringing in the ears of thousands of fans at the Tokyo Dome on Saturday night when the singer rushed to a private jet at Haneda airport, presumably embarking on an intensely scrutinized journey to see Kelce.

"We're all gonna go on a great adventure," Swift told the crowd earlier. She was speaking of the music, but it might also describe her race against time, which was to cross nine time zones and the international date line.

With a final bow at the end of her sold-out show, clad in a blue sequined outfit, the crowd screaming, strobe lights pulsing, confetti falling, Swift disappeared beneath the stage and her journey to the other side of the world began.

Her expected trip to see Kelce's Kansas City Chiefs play the San Francisco 49ers in Las Vegas has fired imaginations, and speculation, for weeks.

"I hope she can return in time. It's so romantic," said office worker Hitomi Takahashi, 29, who bought matching Taylor Swift sweatshirts with her friend and was taking photos just outside the Tokyo Dome.

About an hour after the end of the concert, AP journalists were near Haneda's private jet area when minivans drove up and someone went inside the gate area, as four to five people carrying large black umbrellas obstructed the view of the person.

There was plenty of evidence at the concert of the unique cultural phenomenon that is the Swift-Kelce relationship, a nexus of professional football and the huge star power of Swift. In addition to people wearing sequined dresses celebrating Swift, there were Kelce jerseys and hats and other Chiefs gear.

Some spent thousands of dollars to attend the pop superstar's concerts this week.

"Romeo, take me somewhere we can be alone," Swift sang.

She won't find that Sunday in Las Vegas when a sold-out crowd, not to mention millions around the world, will be watching her.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 65 of 83

To call the worldwide scrutiny of Swift's travels intense is an understatement.

Fans have tracked her jet. The planet-warming carbon emissions of her globe-trotting travels have been criticized. Officials have weighed in on her ability to park her jet at Las Vegas airports.

Even Japanese diplomats have gotten into the act. The Japanese Embassy in Washington posted on social media that she could make the Super Bowl in time, including in their statement three Swift song titles — "Speak Now", "Fearless" and "Red."

"If she departs Tokyo in the evening after her concert, she should comfortably arrive in Las Vegas before the Super Bowl begins," it said.

Takahashi, the fan at the Tokyo Dome, was aware of the criticism Swift has faced about her private jets but said the singer was being singled out unfairly.

"Many other people are flying on business, and she is here for her work. She faces a bashing because she is famous and stands out," Takahashi said.

Swift has been crisscrossing the globe this week.

Before coming to Asia, she attended the Grammys in Los Angeles, winning her 14th Grammy and a record-breaking fourth Album of the Year award for "Midnights." The show was watched by nearly 17 million people. She also made a surprise announcement that her next album is ready to drop in April.

Then the four concerts in Tokyo, and now the trip back to the States. She has followed Kelce for much of the Chiefs' season.

Swift is expected to fly to Australia later this week to continue her tour.

"This week is truly the best kind of chaos," she posted Wednesday on Instagram.

Jimmy Van Eaton, an early rock 'n' roll drummer who played at Sun Records, dies at 86

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — J.M. "Jimmy" Van Eaton, a pioneering rock 'n' roll drummer who played behind the likes of Jerry Lee Lewis and Billy Lee Riley at Sun Records in Memphis, Tennessee, died Friday at age 86, a family member said.

Van Eaton, a Memphis native who came to the famous record label as a teenager, died at his home in Alabama after dealing with health issues over the last year, The Commercial Appeal of Memphis reported, with a daughter, Terri Van Eaton Downing, confirming his death.

Van Eaton was known for his bluesy playing style that the newspaper said powered classic early-rock hits at Sun like "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" by Lewis and "Red Hot" by Riley. He also played with Bill Justis and Charlie Rich.

James Mack Van Eaton initially began playing trumpet in a school band, but he soon moved to drums, saying in a 2015 interview that "it was an instrument that intrigued me."

Van Eaton had his own rock 'n' roll band called The Echoes that would record a demo at the recording studio operated by Sam Phillips. His work there led him to connect with Riley and later Lewis.

"The hardest man to play with in the world was Jerry Lee. I told every musician to stay out of this man's way," Phillips told The Commercial Appeal in 2000. "The one exception was JM Van Eaton."

Van Eaton became a core of musicians that performed at Sun through the 1950s, the newspaper reported.

Van Eaton drifted away from the music business in the 1960s, but he resumed performing by the 1970s, particularly as interest in rockabilly grew following the death of Elvis Presley.

By the early 1980s, Van Eaton began four decades of working in the municipal bond business. But he also was part of the team that played the music for the film "Great Balls of Fire," about Lewis, and he put out a solo album in the late 1990s. He was a member of the Rockabilly Hall of Fame and Memphis Music Hall of Fame. He moved from Tennessee to Alabama a few years ago.

Other survivors of Van Eaton include another daughter, two sons and a stepson. His former wife, Deborah, said that private services will be held in the coming week, the newspaper said.

Southwest winter storm moves into New Mexico; up to foot of snow possible in northeast mountains

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — A series of slow-moving winter storms that wreaked havoc in Southern California and left 3 feet (91 centimeters) of snow in northern Arizona made its way Saturday into New Mexico, where a stretch of U.S. highway south of the Colorado line was closed and as much as a foot (30 cm) of snow was possible in some mountain areas.

A winter storm warning remained in effect for parts of north-central and northeast New Mexico until 5 a.m. Sunday. That included the Sante Fe area, where up to 14 inches (36 cm) of snow was possible in the mountains to the east and up to a half-foot (15 cm) in the upper elevations to the west, forecasters said.

National Park officials closed the Bandelier National Monument near Los Alamos, New Mexico Saturday afternoon "due to worsening weather." The city of Albuquerque closed most city parks, golf courses and recreation areas.

Most interstates and highways remained open, but a 40-mile (64-kilometer) stretch of U.S. Highway 64 south of the Colorado line was closed because of blowing snow in near-blizzard conditions, the New Mexico Department of Transportation said.

"Winter weather travel impacts will become widespread today and tonight, then linger over east-central and southeast areas on Sunday," the National Weather Service in Albuquerque said Saturday afternoon. It said travel would be difficult to impossible Saturday night into Sunday along some stretches of I-25 and likely affected along the I-40 corridor from Albuquerque east to the Texas line.

The storm system slowly moved out of California early Wednesday after days of wind, record rain and heavy snowfall that caused power outages, street flooding and hundreds of destructive mudslides around Los Angeles. It dumped 3 feet (91 cm) of snow over three days in Flagstaff, Arizona, closing long stretches of interstate before tracking east on Friday.

Hungary's president resigns over a pardon to a man convicted in a child sexual abuse case

By JUSTIN SPIKE Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Hungary's conservative president resigned Saturday amid public outcry over a pardon she granted to a man convicted as an accomplice in a child sexual abuse case, a decision that unleashed an unprecedented political scandal for the long-serving nationalist government.

Katalin Novák, 46, announced in a televised message that she would step down from the presidency, an office she has held since 2022. Her decision came after more than a week of public outrage after it was revealed that she issued a presidential pardon in April 2023 to a man convicted of hiding a string of child sexual abuses in a state-run children's home.

"I issued a pardon that caused bewilderment and unrest for many people," Novák said on Saturday. "I made a mistake."

Novák's resignation came as a rare episode of political turmoil for Hungary's nationalist governing party Fidesz, which has ruled with a constitutional majority since 2010. Under the leadership of populist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, Fidesz has been accused of dismantling democratic institutions and rigging the electoral system and media in its favor.

Novák, a key Orbán ally and a former vice president of Fidesz, served as the minister for families until her appointment to the presidency. She has been outspoken in advocating for traditional family values and the protection of children.

She was the first female president in Hungary's history, and the youngest person to ever hold the office.

But her term came to an end after she pardoned a man sentenced in 2018 to more than three years in prison. He was found guilty of pressuring victims to retract their claims of sexual abuse by the institution's director, who was sentenced to eight years for abusing at least 10 children between 2004 and 2016.

"I decided in favor of clemency in April of last year in the belief that the convict did not abuse the vul-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 67 of 83

nerability of the children entrusted to him. I made a mistake," Novák said Saturday. "I apologize to those I have hurt and to any victims who may have felt I am not standing up for them.

"As head of state, I am addressing you for the last time today. I resign from the office of president of the republic," she said.

Also implicated was Judit Varga, another key Fidesz figure who was minister of justice at the time and endorsed the pardon. Varga was expected to lead the list of European Parliament candidates from Fidesz when elections are held this summer.

But in a Facebook post on Saturday, Varga announced that she would take political responsibility and "retire from public life, resigning my seat as a member of parliament and also as leader of the EP list."

At the presidential headquarters in Budapest on Saturday evening, around 200 people gathered in what was originally planned as a protest to call on Novák to resign.

After her announcement, attendees said they were happy, but that it wasn't enough to fundamentally change Orbán's system of governance.

"I'm glad that she resigned but I think things aren't solved this way. She's not the main criminal, you've got to look all the way to the top," said Anna Bujna.

Erzsébet Szapunczay, another attendee, said she was "very, very happy" with Novák's resignation, but that "she should have resigned from the first moment, like many people in this government, because she's not alone.

"Her resignation was correct, because this way she saves herself from even more people hating her and being outraged that she represented this country until now," she said.

Orbán's Fidesz enjoys the highest level of support among Hungary's political parties, and a fragmented opposition has contributed to his winning four straight election victories.

His government, considered the most friendly to the Kremlin in the European Union, has been criticized within the bloc for holding up key decisions such as support for Ukraine and admitting Sweden into the NATO military alliance.

On Saturday, the head of Fidesz's parliamentary delegation, Máté Kocsis, said in a statement that Novák and Varga had made a "responsible decision," and that the party was grateful for their work.

'We've lost both engines,' pilot said before private jet crashed onto Florida interstate, killing 2

By SARA CLINE Associated Press

A pilot and co-pilot were identified as the two killed in a fiery plane crash on a Florida highway, law enforcement officials said Saturday afternoon.

The Collier County Sheriff's Office identified Edward Daniel Murphy, a 50-year-old pilot and co-pilot Ian Frederick Hofmann, 65, as the deceased. The three survivors were crew member Sydney Ann Bosmans, 23, and passengers Aaron Baker, 35, and Audra Green, 23, both of Columbus, Ohio. The three were taken to a local hospital for injuries. Their conditions are unknown.

Moments before the private jet slammed into a Florida highway, the pilot had calmly told an airport controller that the aircraft "was not going to make the runway" because it had lost both engines.

The jet, with five people aboard, was bound for the airport in Naples when it tried to make an emergency landing on Interstate 75 on Friday afternoon. But witnesses say it collided with a vehicle — the wing of the plane dragging a car before slamming into a wall. An explosion followed, with flames and black smoke rising from the scene.

Two people were killed, according to the Collier County Sheriff's Office.

Federal authorities have launched an investigation into the crash near Naples, just north of where the interstate heads east toward Fort Lauderdale along what is known as Alligator Alley.

The plane had taken off from an airport at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, about 1 p.m. It was scheduled to land in Naples around the time of the crash, Naples Airport Authority spokesperson Robin King said, when pilot contacted the tower requesting an emergency landing.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 68 of 83

"Got that. Emergency. Clear to land. Runway. Two. Three," the air traffic controller responded to the pilot, in audio obtained by The Associated Press.

"We're clear to land, but we're not gonna make the runway. We've lost both engines," the pilot calmly replied.

The tower lost contact, and then airport workers saw the smoke from the interstate just a few miles away, King said.

King said they sent fire trucks with special foam to the scene, and three of the five people on board were taken from the wreckage alive.

Brianna Walker saw the wing of the plane drag the car in front of hers and slam into the wall.

"It's seconds that separated us from the car in front of us," she said. "The wing pulverized this one car."

Walker and her friend spotted the plane moments before it hit the highway, allowing her friend to pull over before the crash.

"The plane was over our heads by inches," she said. "It took a hard right and skid across the highway."

According to the FlightAware aircraft tracker, the plane was operated by Hop-a-Jet Worldwide Charter based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The aircraft had been scheduled to fly back to Fort Lauderdale on Friday afternoon.

Hop-a-Jet said Friday night that it had "received confirmed reports of an accident involving one of our leased aircraft near Naples" and would send a team to the crash site, the Naples Daily News reported.

"Our immediate concern is for the well-being of our passengers, crew members, and their families," the statement said. It didn't contain details of the crash.

A spokesperson for Ohio State University said the aircraft is not affiliated with the university, and they had no further information about it.

Federal authorities said a preliminary report about the cause of the crash can be expected in 30 days.

An Israeli drone strike in Lebanon kills 2 in one of the deepest hits inside the country in weeks

By BASSEM MROUE and ABDULRAHMAN ZEYAD Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — An Israeli drone struck a car near Lebanon's southern port city of Sidon on Saturday, killing at least two people and wounding two others, security officials said.

The strike came as tensions across the Middle East grow with the Israel-Hamas war, a drone attack last month that killed three U.S. troops in northeastern Jordan near the Syrian border, and attacks by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels on vessels passing through the Red Sea.

The drone strike near the coastal town of Jadra took place about 60 kilometers (37 miles) from the Israeli border, making it one of the farthest inside Lebanon since violence erupted along the Lebanon-Israel border on Oct. 8, a day after Hamas' attack in southern Israel.

An Israeli security official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, said the target of the strike in Sidon was Hamas official Basel Saleh, who was "injured to an unknown extent." The official said Saleh was responsible for enlistment of new Hamas recruits in Gaza and the West Bank.

Two Lebanese security officials said the strike damaged a car and killed two people, including one on a motorcycle. They spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Lebanese troops cordoned off the area.

Drone strikes in Lebanon blamed on Israel have so far killed several officials from Hezbollah as well as the Palestinian militant group Hamas. The previous farthest strike was the Jan. 2 attack that killed top Hamas official Saleh Aroui in Beirut.

On Saturday night, Israeli forces shelled the southern Lebanese border village of Houla, killing one person and wounding nine as they left a mosque after prayers, state-run National News Agency reported. The agency said that in addition to the artillery shelling, a drone fired a missile toward the mosque. Children were among the wounded, the agency said.

The attacks in Lebanon came as Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian met in Beirut with

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 69 of 83

Lebanese leaders including the country's caretaker prime minister, parliament speaker and the head of the militant Hezbollah group.

Amirabdollahian said that if the United States wants to bring stability to the region again, it should work on forcing Israel to end its military operations in the Gaza Strip.

He told reporters after meeting his counterpart Abdallah Bouhabib that after four months of war, Israel and its backers had not achieved "anything tangible."

In an apparent reference to attacks by Iran-backed fighters in Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, Amirabdollahian said that "if American wants calm to prevail in the region, then the mechanism and the solution is to stop the genocide, crimes and the war against Gaza and the West Bank."

He blasted Washington, saying the U.S. is working on two tracks, one of which is sending weapons to Israel "and participating in the genocide in Gaza" and at the same time speaking about reaching a political solution to the war.

The U.S. Central Command announced Saturday that the U.S. military conducted self-defense strikes against two mobile unmanned surface vessels, four anti-ship cruise missiles, and one mobile land attack cruise missile that were prepared to launch against ships in the Red Sea from Yemen.

The military said the missiles and an unmanned vessel in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen presented an imminent threat to U.S. Navy ships and merchant vessels in the region.

Since November, the rebels have repeatedly targeted ships in the Red Sea over Israel's offensive in Gaza, imperiling a key route for trade between Asia, the Mideast and Europe. However, many of the vessels attacked have tenuous or no clear links to Israel.

The Houthis' media office said the U.S.-led coalition launched three airstrikes on Salif district in the Red Sea province of Hodeida on Saturday.

In response, the U.S. and Britain launched several airstrikes on Houthi-held areas across Yemen, including the rebel-held capital of Sanaa.

The Houthis held a mass funeral in Sanaa Saturday for 17 of their fighters who they said were killed in strikes by the U.S.-led coalition, according to the Houthi-run SABA news agency.

The report didn't say when and where the fighters were killed.

In Syria, Israeli airstrikes hit several sites on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus, the Syrian military said Saturday.

The strikes came from the direction of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, Syrian state news agency SANA reported, citing an unnamed military official. It added that air defenses shot down some and those that landed resulted in "some material losses."

Britain-based war monitor the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said one of the strikes hit a residential building west of the capital. It reported three unidentified people were killed. Earlier it said casualties could be "figures of non-Syrian nationalities." The observatory said Saturday's assault was the 10th apparent Israeli strike on Syrian territory since the beginning of the year.

There was no immediate comment from Israel.

Presumed Israeli strikes in Syria in the past have killed high-ranking figures with Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard and allied groups. In December, a strike on a Damascus neighborhood killed a high-ranking Iranian general, Seyed Razi Mousavi, a longtime adviser to the Revolutionary Guard in Syria.

Tensions have also flared elsewhere in the region. A U.S. airstrike in Baghdad Wednesday killed a commander of Kataib Hezbollah, one of the most powerful armed groups in Iraq, as part of Washington's retaliation for the killing of three U.S. troops in Jordan last month.

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq, an umbrella group of Iran-backed militias that has launched numerous attacks on U.S. forces in Iraq and Syria, issued a call Friday for fighters to join its ranks to drive "occupying forces" out of the country.

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has conducted about 170 attacks on bases with U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria over the last four months, saying they were due to Washington's support of Israel in its war in Gaza and that it aims to expel U.S. forces from the region.

Iraqi and U.S. officials launched formal talks last month to wind down the presence of U.S.-led coalition

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 70 of 83

forces in Iraq, but the talks were paused following the strike in Jordan attributed to the Islamic Resistance in Iraq. Officials from both countries announced Thursday that the talks will resume, with the next meeting set for Sunday.

Chiefs and 49ers have high-profile offenses, but defense should decide the Super Bowl winner

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The Chiefs go as far as Patrick Mahomes takes them. The 49ers have Christian McCaffrey, Deebo Samuel, George Kittle and a star-studded group surrounding Brock Purdy.

This Super Bowl will come down to the other side of the ball.

Defense wins the Vince Lombardi Trophy on Sunday.

Kansas City is seeking to become the NFL's first repeat champion in 19 years. San Francisco is aiming for a record-tying sixth Super Bowl title.

Mahomes, Travis Kelce and coach Andy Reid get most of the attention on the Chiefs (14-6), but defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo's unit deserves plenty of credit for carrying the team during various points of the season when the offense was inconsistent and out of sync.

All-Pros Chris Jones and Trent McDuffie along with George Karlaftis, L'Jarius Sneed and others stepped up, giving the Chiefs their best defense of Mahomes' era.

They'll need to do it for one more game against a versatile, dynamic offense.

The 49ers (14-5) also have a formidable defense led by Nick Bosa, All-Pro Fred Warner, Javon Hargrave and Charvarius Ward. They've struggled in the postseason, especially making third-down stops.

They have to be better against Mahomes and the Chiefs to have a shot to win.

WHEN THE 49ERS HAVE THE BALL

The 49ers had the league's third-ranked rushing attack behind McCaffrey and fourth-ranked passing offense behind Purdy. The Chiefs gave up the second-fewest points (17.3), were fourth against the pass and 18th against the run.

McCaffrey, tight end Kittle, left tackle Trent Williams and fullback Kyle Juszczyk were All-Pros. Brandon Aiyuk was a second-team All-Pro. Samuel is a versatile, do-everything player.

The 49ers have plenty of weapons, and coach Kyle Shanahan is known for finding innovative ways to use them and keep defenses off balance. He's facing a master tactician in Spagnuolo.

It'll be a chess match.

Spagnuolo has a penchant for blitzing. Purdy excelled against it.

The 49ers have to block Jones, who can be a game-wrecker. McDuffie is a shutdown slot cornerback and Sneed allowed only one receiver all season to have more than 50 yards receiving in a game so Purdy has a tough task.

He led the NFL with a 113.0 passer rating on 4,280 yards, 31 TDs, 11 picks and a 69.4% completion rate. McCaffrey led the NFL with 1,459 yards rushing and had 14 rushing TDs for San Francisco. He also had 564 yards receiving for seven scores.

Kittle had 65 catches for 1,020 yards and six TDs. Aiyuk led the way with 75 receptions for 1,342 yards and seven scores. Samuel had 1,117 yards from scrimmage.

A wild card for San Francisco's offense is Purdy's surprising mobility. His scrambling was a major factor as he led comeback wins against the Lions and Packers in the playoffs.

The Chiefs shut down two-time MVP Lamar Jackson, the best running QB in the NFL, so they'll be ready for Purdy.

WHEN THE CHIEFS HAVE THE BALL

The Chiefs had the league's sixth-ranked passing offense behind Mahomes and 19th-ranked rushing attack. The 49ers were 14th against the pass and third against the run, but they have allowed 13 of 25 third-down conversions in the playoffs.

Mahomes is a brilliant playmaker who finds unique ways to make big plays when it seems nothing is avail-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 71 of 83

able. The two-time NFL and Super Bowl MVP threw for 4,183 yards with 27 touchdowns, a career-high 14 interceptions and career-low 92.6 passer rating. His receivers dropped 44 passes, the most in the league.

The Chiefs' offense runs through Mahomes and Kelce. Without a deep threat — Tyreek Hill was traded to Miami two years ago — Reid has turned the passing offense into a shorter, carve-up attack.

Rashee Rice has the ability to turn screens into big plays and veteran Marquez Valdes-Scantling has averaged 21.6 yards per catch in the playoffs.

Kelce had 93 catches for 984 yards and five TDs in the regular season and he has taken his game to another level in the playoffs, with 23 catches for 262 yards and three scores in three games. Rice had 79 receptions for 938 yards and seven TDs in the regular season.

The Chiefs have to use running back Isiah Pacheco to balance the offense. He ran for 935 yards and seven TDs in the regular season, and he has 254 yards and three scores in the playoffs.

Reid is one of the NFL's most creative coaches, and he's willing to add new wrinkles in the biggest games. Kansas City again won't have All-Pro left guard Joe Thuney and the offensive line has a big challenge protecting Mahomes from Bosa, Hargrave and the rest of San Francisco's pass rush.

Warner and Dre Greenlaw can control of the middle of the field and limit some of Kelce's opportunities, forcing the Chiefs to attack outside.

Mahomes can always make plays with his legs. He scrambled for 26 first downs in the regular season. Playing on an injured ankle in last year's Super Bowl, he had a big scramble on Kansas City's go-ahead drive in a comeback win over Philadelphia.

If the 49ers bring the heat and turn up the pressure like Tampa Bay did against Mahomes in the Super Bowl three years ago, that could be trouble for the Chiefs.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Niners rookie kicker Jake Moody was 21 of 25 on field goals in the regular season, but he's looked shaky in the playoffs, with two misses in five tries. His longest field goal was 57 yards.

Chiefs kicker Harrison Butker made 33 of 35 field goals in the regular season, including all five from beyond 50 yards. He hasn't missed in the playoffs, making seven field goals and seven extra points. Butker's 27-yard field goal with 8 seconds left gave the Chiefs a 38-35 win over Philadelphia in last season's Super Bowl.

San Francisco punter Mitch Wishnowsky had a 42.7-yard net average. Kansas City's Tommy Townsend had a 41.9-yard net average.

The Chiefs use Mecole Hardman and Richie James for returns. Hardman had the longest punt return at 50 yards and James had the longest kick return at 31.

The 49ers will sometimes use Samuel on kick returns, with Ray-Ray McCloud getting most of the returns on punts and kicks.

COACHING

Shanahan is 8-3 in the playoffs and 0-2 in Super Bowls, including one as an assistant. His 49ers blew a lead against the Chiefs in this game four years ago and he was offensive coordinator for Atlanta when the Falcons blew a 28-3 lead against Tom Brady and the Patriots in Super Bowl 51.

Reid is a likely future Hall of Famer. He already has two Super Bowl rings and is the winningest coach in the history of the Chiefs and Eagles.

INTANGIBLES

The 49ers initially were 2 1/2 favorites, but the line dropped to 1 1/2 on Saturday, according to FanDuel Sportsbook. They've been favored in every game this season. The Chiefs have embraced the underdog role in the playoffs, going on the road to beat Buffalo and Baltimore.

Reid and Mahomes are chasing Bill Belichick and Brady. They've got to win four more Super Bowls to match them.

Republicans have a plan to take the Senate.

A hard-right Montana lawmaker could crash the party

By MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — Montana Republicans gathered in a hotel ballroom this weekend aiming to unite ahead of the 2024 election and defeat three-term incumbent Democrat U.S. Sen. Jon Tester. Yet before the party even got underway it was crashed by conservative U.S. Rep. Matt Rosendale, who jumped into the race in defiance of GOP leaders.

Rosendale's move laid bare deep fissures within the Montana GOP at a time when Republicans can ill afford it. Toppling Tester is a key part of their strategy to take control of the narrowly divided Senate in the November election by targeting vulnerable Democratic seats in Montana, Ohio and West Virginia.

Outside observers and even some Republicans say an intraparty skirmish leading up to Montana's June primary could undermine those hopes.

Senate Republican leaders — including Sen. Steve Daines of Montana, who leads the National Republican Senatorial Committee — are backing a former U.S. Navy SEAL over Rosendale, who is viewed as too divisive to appeal to the state's large contingent of independent voters.

Rosendale's entry into the Senate contest capped months of speculation that the hard-right lawmaker wanted a rematch six years after losing to Tester in 2018.

"I've won two elections since then," Rosendale, 63, told reporters after filing paperwork on Friday to formally enter the race. "And the most important thing is that my name I.D. and my trust factor is elevated dramatically. People know who I am."

A large group of conservative state lawmakers showed up for Rosendale's filing and boisterously cheered him on, underscoring his grassroots support in the state.

A few hours later and several blocks away, Montana Gov. Greg Gianforte took the stage in a Helena hotel ballroom to pump up former SEAL and political newcomer Tim Sheehy as the party's best chance to beat Tester. Behind the Republican governor was a poster with the state GOP slogan, "We're better, together!"

As Gianforte's speech concluded a buzz ran through the crowd: Former President Donald Trump had just endorsed Sheehy in a social media post. "He probably heard my speech," Gianforte quipped as an aide told him of the endorsement.

Rosendale, who Trump backed in 2018 and again in 2020, responded to the setback by reaffirming his fealty to the former president. "I love President Trump," he said when asked about the endorsement.

Rosendale was among eight conservative lawmakers who ousted House Speaker Kevin McCarthy last year. He suggested during the event in Helena that he hopes to do the same to Republican Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, who Rosendale derided as part of a "uni-party" of Republican and Democrat leaders controlling legislation in Congress.

Sheehy, 38, founded an aerial firefighting company in Belgrade, Montana, that is heavily dependent on federal government contracts. He said in an interview that he decided to enter politics following the chaotic American withdrawal from Afghanistan.

His lack of political experience is a plus, he said, because it means he hasn't "been contaminated by years in politics."

"Americans in Montana specifically are really tired of the same people in Washington going back and forth over and over," he said. "I bring a fresh perspective. I've been a small business owner, a job creator for over 400 jobs."

The federal contracts that helped pay for many of those jobs irk Rosendale's supporters.

"I see a pretty significant conflict when your livelihood is determined by government contracts," said Theresa Manzella, a Republican state senator and chairperson of the Montana Freedom Caucus, a group of conservative lawmakers politically aligned with Rosendale.

But state Rep. George Nikolakakos argued that nominating Rosendale would play into the Democrats' hands.

"Rosendale had his chance in '18 and lost," said Nikolakakos, a Republican representing a swing district

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 73 of 83

in Great Falls. "I would say that the people who are going to choose Rosendale and the people who want Rosendale to be the nominee are the Democrats."

Those Democrats are egging on the division in the GOP Senate race, hopeful it will drain Republican funds and alienate independent voters before the general election. The state Democratic Party responded to Rosendale's announcement by declaring that the Republican primary would be "a bloody brawl."

Tester, 67, is a farmer and former state lawmaker who was first elected to the Senate in 2006 in an upset victory over a three-term Republican incumbent. The moderate lawmaker won his next two contests also by narrow margins, including a 3.5-percentage-point victory over Rosendale.

Montana has politically veered sharply right since Tester first took office, leaving him increasingly vulnerable with each election cycle.

Trump beat Biden by 16 percentage points in Montana four years ago and Tester is now the only Democrat holding statewide office there — an abrupt flip from last decade when Republicans faced a similar situation.

The candidates and outside political groups already have spent more than \$18 million on advertising in the Senate campaign's early months. That will quickly ramp up between now and the November election with an additional \$95 million in advertising reserved, according to AdImpact, a firm that tracks political advertising.

The heady pace of spending also puts the race on track to be among the most expensive political contests in Montana history, rivaling a 2020 matchup between Daines and then-Gov. Steve Bullock in which more than \$118 million was spent.

Republican lawmakers are backing dozens of bills targeting diversity efforts on campus and elsewhere

By MICHAEL GOLDBERG Associated Press/Report for America

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Diversity initiatives would be defunded or banned from universities and other public institutions under a slate of bills pending in Republican-led legislatures, with some lawmakers counting on the issue resonating with voters in this election year.

Already this year, Republican lawmakers have proposed about 50 bills in 20 states that would restrict initiatives on diversity, equity and inclusion — known as DEI — or require their public disclosure, according to an Associated Press analysis using the bill-tracking software Plural.

This is the second year Republican-led state governments have targeted DEI. This year's bills, as well as executive orders and internal agency directives, again focus heavily on higher education. But the legislation also would limit DEI in K-12 schools, state government, contracting and pension investments. Some bills would bar financial institutions from discriminating against those who refuse to participate in DEI programs.

Meanwhile, Democrats have filed about two dozen bills in 11 states that would require or promote DEI initiatives. The bills cover a broad spectrum, including measures to reverse Florida's recent ban on DEI in higher education and measures to require DEI considerations in K-12 school curricula in Washington state.

The Supreme Court's June decision ending affirmative action at universities has created a new legal landscape around diversity programs in the workplace and civil society.

But DEI's emergence as a political rallying cry has its roots on campus, with Republican opponents saying the programs are discriminatory and promote left-wing ideology. Democratic supporters say the programs are necessary for ensuring institutions meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations.

Republican Oklahoma Sen. Rob Standridge, who has authored four bills aiming to hollow out DEI programs in the state, said it has become a salient campaign theme.

"I think it's become more of a political thing," Standridge said. "In other words, people are using it in their campaigns in a positive way. So now all of a sudden, maybe the people that didn't care before are like, well, wait a minute, I can use this on a flier next year. And Trump brings light to it, too."

The organizations that help power the conservative agenda say DEI's emergence at the center of political debate makes their crusade against it ripe for expansion.

"This has opened a window of opportunity, and we don't want the window to close," Mike Gonzalez, a

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 74 of 83

fellow at powerful conservative think tank The Heritage Foundation, said in an interview. "We want to meet this window with a robust policy agenda."

In South Carolina, Rep. Josiah Magnuson, who introduced legislation to restrict DEI, said the issue reflects a growing sentiment among Republican lawmakers that ideologies disfavored by conservatives grow with the help of campus bureaucracies.

"We're finding that our colleges and universities were kind of off the rails, and we need to rein them back in," Magnuson said. "And so I think that's another thing that's providing a growing impetus to get our state universities under control."

Not all Republicans are unified about which government approach is best suited to eliminate DEI.

In Oklahoma, Republican Gov. Kevin Stitt signed an executive order in December barring state agencies and universities from spending money on the programs. Standridge said it's not clear what authority the order would have because Oklahoma's universities are regulated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, not the governor's office.

"I appreciate the executive order but, arguably, it doesn't really have the authority to force the schools to do anything," Standridge said. "I ran several bills thinking maybe the moderates that are in control of the Senate would allow us to do something against DEI."

For Washington state Sen. Marko Liias, DEI is crucial to serving a diverse society. Liias introduced a bill in the Democratic-controlled Legislature in 2023 to weave DEI concepts into the state's K-12 learning standards. The bill, which is up for consideration again in 2024, is designed to meet the needs of a diversifying student population, he said.

"I think the opposition is organized around a political agenda, whereas I'm trying to respond to a diverse community that I represent and the experiences that they're bringing to me," Liias said. "So it's sort of reality versus theory, what's happening in our families and schools versus an agenda driven by national foundations. That's the divide."

Republican-led Florida and Texas were the first states to adopt broad-based laws banning DEI efforts in higher education. Since then, other state leaders have followed.

"The idea to study how much we were spending on DEI came from me seeing what other states were doing. Specifically, Ron DeSantis in Florida," said Mississippi State Auditor Shad White, a Republican.

In a 2023 report, White said Mississippi's public universities are spending millions on DEI programs instead of student scholarships.

In the opening weeks of Mississippi's 2024 session, Rep. Becky Currie introduced a bill that would implement sweeping bans on not only DEI offices but also on funding campus activities deemed "social activism." The bill has been referred to a House committee. Currie declined to be interviewed.

Utah Gov. Spencer Cox signed a bill into law on Jan. 30 that makes the state the latest to prohibit diversity training, hiring and inclusion programs at universities and in state government. Cox has called using diversity statements in hiring "bordering on evil."

Republican legislators in Wisconsin brokered a narrowly approved deal with regents in December for the state's public university system to limit diversity positions at its two dozen campuses. Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, a Republican, later said he had only just begun to remove "cancerous DEI practices" and requested a review of diversity initiatives across state government.

The crackdown on DEI is part of the same legislative project as the earlier movement to restrict the academic and legal ideas termed critical race theory, said Jonathan Butcher, a research fellow in education policy for The Heritage Foundation.

Critical race theory is a way of thinking about America's history based on the idea that racism is systemic in the nation's institutions.

"There is no separation. DEI is the application of critical race theory. DEI officers are the administrative control panels that are putting critical race theory into place," Butcher said.

Rep. Fentrice Driskell, Florida's Democratic House minority leader, thinks the ideological motive behind restricting DEI is intertwined with an economic agenda that downplays the role of identity in exacerbating inequality.

"It's a flashpoint because the conservatives like to talk about meritocracy as their vision for a society where everybody can advance," Driskell said. "Real life is actually more complicated than that. And that is what DEI programs are there to solve."

Russian drone strike on Kharkiv, Ukraine's 2nd largest city, kills 7

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A Russian drone strike on Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city, killed seven people overnight, including three children, Kharkiv region governor Oleh Syniehubov reported Saturday. Three others sustained injuries, according to the officials.

He said at least 10 drones were launched at Kharkiv, eight of which were shot down. Civilian infrastructure in the Nemyshlyan district of the city was hit, causing a massive fire that burned down 15 private houses, he said.

Syniehubov said that an oil depot was hit, causing the fuel to leak out, which prompted the fire. In a Facebook post, Serhii Bolvinov, head of the investigative department of the National Police, cited a local resident as seeing "a true hell: first the fuel flowed, then everything caught fire."

Bolvinov said a family of five — including children aged 7, 4 and nine months — burned alive, trapped in their house as the fire raged. Two other adults were killed by the blaze in another house that burned down, he said.

Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said more than 50 people had been evacuated and that emergency workers had contained the blaze by Saturday morning.

In an online statement, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy offered his condolences to the relatives of all the victims and said that "terror can't remain unpunished. Terror can't remain without a fair response. Terrorists must lose this war they had started. Russia must be held accountable for every life it ruined and destroyed."

The Ukrainian air force said air defense systems destroyed 23 out of 31 Iranian Shahed drones launched by Russia overnight. The drones primarily targeted the northeastern Kharkiv region and the southern province of Odesa, the statement said.

Odesa regional governor Oleh Kiper said four people were injured there by the overnight drone attacks.

The attacks came in three waves, he said. The first targeted the regional capital — the port city of Odesa. All nine drones were shot down, but the debris damaged port infrastructure and injured one person.

The second and the third waves targeted port infrastructure in the Danube river area, Kiper said. A total of 12 drones were shot down and three people were injured.

Romania's Ministry of National Defense said on Saturday that Russia carried out overnight drone attacks on Ukraine's river ports of Ismail and Reni, near the border with Romania.

The ministry said that an F-16 jet of the Turkish Air Force was deployed from a Romanian airbase around 1:15 a.m. to carry out "reconnaissance missions" in national airspace to monitor the situation. Text alerts were also issued to residents in two counties adjacent to the attacks.

NATO member Romania has discovered drone debris on its territory several times before, following sustained attacks on Ukraine's port infrastructure as Moscow attempted to disrupt Kyiv's ability to export grain and other produce to world markets.

The Russian Defense Ministry, in the meantime, accused Ukraine of targeting Russia's civilian transport vessels in the Black Sea with sea drones on Friday evening. One such drone was destroyed, the ministry said, and others were jammed, with no damage to the ships.

The ministry didn't say how many sea drones were used or how many ships were targeted. There was no immediate comment from Kyiv's officials on the alleged attack.

How Biden and his allies are pushing back against a special counsel's claims about his memory

By STEVE PEOPLES, ZEKE MILLER and SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's Democratic allies are launching an aggressive defense against a special counsel's explosive claims that the 81-year-old president couldn't remember major milestones in his life, trying to diminish the significance of the prosecutor's allegations that Biden was too forgetful to be charged for mishandling classified material.

Biden set the angry tone hours after special counsel Robert Hur's report was released, dismissing the report's conclusions about his memory and insisting he hadn't forgotten the year his son Beau died, as Hur claimed. Democrats on Capitol Hill and around the country quickly followed.

"Republicans saying that Biden is old is the least surprising thing in American politics," Sen. Brian Schatz, D-Hawaii, said. "It's all they've got."

Democrats plan to answer the widespread questions about the 81-year-old president's age and readiness by affirming that Biden is capable of being commander in chief and trying to discredit people who portray him as enfeebled. Key to that strategy is drawing a contrast with former President Donald Trump, the heavy Republican front-runner who is himself 77 and has also confused names and facts while also facing four indictments and multiple multimillion-dollar civil judgments.

The signs of support are crucial for Biden as he prepares for what could be a tight election against Trump. Even before the report's release, fears were mounting that the coalition that helped elect Biden in 2020 was fraying, making it all the more important for Biden to keep as many supporters as possible firmly on his side.

The Biden campaign circulated talking points to allies that were obtained by The Associated Press. The talking points refer to Hur, a U.S. attorney during the Trump administration, as a "MAGA-appointed attorney who doesn't have a case so he decided to lob personal attacks against the president." That's a reference to "Make America Great Again," Trump's political movement.

The talking points also stressed that Hur is "a lawyer — not a doctor — so people should take his legal conclusions and ignore his political opinions."

The White House has also noted Biden cooperated with Hur, who declined to charge him with unlawfully retaining classified documents, while Trump faces an indictment in Florida after the FBI seized records from his Mar-a-Lago residence.

"The way that the president's demeanor in that report was characterized could not be more wrong on the facts and clearly politically motivated, gratuitous," Vice President Kamala Harris said Friday. "I will say that when it comes to the role and responsibility of a prosecutor in a situation like that, we should expect that there would be a higher level of integrity than what we saw."

Indignation spread into South Carolina, where Biden scored a commanding victory in the first-in-the-nation Democratic primary on Feb. 3, which was designed by his campaign to project clear strength. Some saw Biden's forceful response to the special counsel as a promising sign.

"I truly believe this is bringing the best out in the president. It's showing that he's a fighter," said LaJoia Broughton, a 42-year-old small-business owner in Columbia who voted for Biden in the primary.

Biden aides say they do not expect the president or his campaign to take on the age question more directly. They can't make Biden any younger, and note that attacks on the president over his age were also persistent four years ago, when Trump labeled him "Sleepy Joe."

Instead, they intend to draw on the blueprint of the 2020 campaign and argue many voters won't want a repeat of Trump's turbulent time in the White House. They also plan to highlight Biden's accomplishments and an economy that continues to show strength.

"The president has said that age is a fair question on voters' minds, but if you're an independent or persuadable voter across this country and you're worried about your kid facing gun violence while going to school, the prospect a national abortion ban, or the future of our democracy, you may think about the president's age, but at the end of the day the choice is easy," said Kate Berner, a former deputy commu-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 77 of 83

communications director in the Biden White House. "Donald Trump is on the wrong side of all of those issues." Some Democrats weren't so optimistic.

"This is a distraction. When you're running a presidential campaign, you don't like distractions," said Jim Messina, who led former President Barack Obama's last campaign.

Messina compared the special counsel's report to the announcement in October 2016 by then-FBI Director James Comey that he was further investigating Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton's handling of classified emails when she was secretary of state. Comey's announcement, which came 11 days before the election, has been blamed for helping Trump beat Clinton.

In this case, this week's report comes nine months before Election Day, Nov. 5.

"There's just so much time to get through all this," Messina said. "Trump has all the trials coming up. I'd be surprised if this was an issue in a month."

Still, Trump's allies were emboldened this week.

Beyond celebrating the release of the special counsel's embarrassing descriptions of Biden, Trump won a new trove of delegates in Nevada's Thursday caucuses, where he ran unopposed.

"We all already know that Joe Biden is senile. What's being lost is that Joe Biden is a criminal who put American national security at risk," Donald Trump Jr. wrote in one of many messages highlighting the new report.

Barry Goodman, a Biden fundraiser from Michigan, said he's had some donors "take a wait and see approach" about supporting Biden, even before the special counsel's announcement.

"They wanted to see if someone else would get in or whether Trump would drop out — but no one else is getting in," Goodman said. "Of everyone I talk to, some are more excited than others."

Still, Goodman said the report did nothing to shake his support for Biden.

Trav Robertson, a former South Carolina Democratic Party chairman, described the report as an obvious political liability for Biden. But he directed blame squarely at Attorney General Merrick Garland for allowing the report to include comments about the president's age, memory and cognitive function.

"Merrick Garland not doing his job only allowed a Trump appointee to feed a political narrative to deflect from Trump," Robertson said, adding, "Donald Trump can't lift a glass of water to his lips without using both hands because he's old."

Indeed, Biden's allies were eager to highlight a perceived double standard as Biden's gaffes get far more attention than those of other leading politicians.

Trump repeatedly confused former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Republican rival Nikki Haley in recent weeks. Biden didn't help himself, of course, by referring to the Egyptian leader as the president of Mexico late Thursday.

"There's a clear unfairness there that people feel," Rep. Dan Goldman, D-N.Y., a former U.S. attorney, said of the focus on Biden's gaffes, describing the special counsel's assessment of Biden's mental health as "improper," "inappropriate" and "shameful."

Rep. Robert Garcia, D-Calif., noted that even House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., also recently confused Iran with Israel.

"Who cares?" Garcia said of the gaffes. "The president is going to win. I'm very confident in that. Most importantly, he's going to be running against a 91-time indicted criminal."

It's not just Purdy. Several late picks and undrafted players make an impact for Chiefs and 49ers

By NOAH TRISTER AP Sports Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — If you're the last player picked in the NFL draft, at least you get a nickname — Mr. Irrelevant — and a certain amount of fanfare.

When you're taken a little bit earlier, you're just a normal seventh-round selection.

"I had no idea where I was going. If you had told me I went undrafted, I would be like: 'Makes sense, sure. I got it,'" said Kansas City guard Nick Allegretti, who was taken in the seventh round in 2019. "We

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 78 of 83

didn't win a whole lot of games when I was in college, but I had confidence in myself."

Brock Purdy's journey from Mr. Irrelevant to Super Bowl starting quarterback is one of the main subplots of this year's game, but a handful of other late draft picks — and players who weren't drafted at all — have made contributions to the Chiefs and San Francisco 49ers. All of them are reminders that you can build a memorable NFL career no matter how long it takes someone to choose you.

Allegretti was drafted with the 216th pick overall. The Illinois product is now in his fifth season with the Chiefs, having already won two Super Bowls. He's played an important role this postseason, replacing injured All-Pro Joe Thuney for the AFC championship game.

Kansas City took running back Isiah Pacheco in 2022 with the 251st pick — 11 spots ahead of where the 49ers picked Purdy. Over two seasons, Pacheco has rushed for 1,765 yards and 12 touchdowns.

There's a school of thought that once you reach the latest stages of the draft, it's better not to be picked. Then you're a free agent and can shop around for the best situation.

But joining Kansas City and playing alongside Patrick Mahomes has worked out nicely for Pacheco.

"Being a seventh-round draft pick shaped me as a player knowing I was wanted," he said. "It didn't matter where you came from, just having an opportunity and making the best out of it."

Even for an undrafted player, there's always hope. Kurt Warner, for example, was the MVP of Super Bowl 34.

Jake Brendel came into the league undrafted out of UCLA. Now in his eighth NFL season, he's San Francisco's starting center.

"My first goal when I was a kid was just to get to college, and once I got to college, I was like, 'I'm pretty good at this. I could probably make it in the NFL,'" Brendel said. "Once I got in the NFL, it was, 'Let's get a multiyear deal.' That happened last year, and I was like, 'Let's rearrange my goals a little bit and see if we can get a Super Bowl.'"

San Francisco safety Tashaun Gipson has waited even longer. After 174 starts — regular season and play-offs — with five teams over 12 seasons, he's finally in a Super Bowl. Being undrafted has stuck with him.

"I think it meant the world. Honestly, I wouldn't trade my path to the National Football League. I think it made me who I am today. It made me have a chip on my shoulder," he said. "I don't think I ever got relaxed one moment, and it just kept me grounded as crazy as that may sound. I think that's probably paid the biggest dividends to be the man I am right now."

Gipson is a big reason the 49ers are in the Super Bowl. He forced a fumble in the NFC championship game that was crucial to San Francisco's comeback against Detroit.

But in truth, he's been good enough to reach a stage like this for a while. He just needed the right team.

That's true for a lot of players, particularly those who are undrafted or taken late. It's all about finding a good situation.

"I knew all I wanted was an opportunity, an opportunity to get somewhere," Allegretti said. "The fact I got an opportunity in Kansas City's been incredible — the organization, coach (Andy) Reid, (offensive line) coach (Andy) Heck. Awesome men to play for."

Here's how to bet legally on the Super Bowl

By WAYNE PARRY Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — More people in the U.S. than ever before are expected to bet on this year's Super Bowl, including novice bettors attracted to the game due to the possible attendance of pop star Taylor Swift, whose boyfriend Travis Kelce will be among the players.

With sports betting ads blitzing the airwaves with come-ons and promotions, things might be a bit confusing, especially for first-time bettors or those who don't fully understand how things work.

Here is a guide to betting on Sunday's game between the Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers. We will deal here only with legal options from sportsbooks approved and regulated by government authorities in the U.S. This includes making bets in person at a casino or racetrack (call before you go; not every casino or track offers sports betting), or setting up an account from a computer or smartphone

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 79 of 83

with online bookmakers.

And please keep in mind that this is supposed to be a fun form of entertainment, so only bet what you can afford to lose. Information about help with a gambling problem is included below.

WHAT IS A POINT SPREAD? OVER/UNDER WHAT?

Two of the most popular bets are on the point spread (the number of points by which a team must win the game in order for the bet to be a winner) and the total, also known as the over/under (the total number of points scored by both teams).

Contrary to popular belief, the point spread is not a consensus on how many points oddsmakers think one team will win by. Rather, it is a number designed to generate as close to an equal number of bets on both sides as possible. That way, the oddsmakers are guaranteed a profit through a cut of the action, called the vigorish, or "vig." (Many books call it "the price.") Most sportsbooks will keep 10% or more of a winning bet before paying you the rest, but they keep 100% of all losing bets. Prices on Super Bowl bets can vary significantly, so it pays to shop around to get the lowest price you can before making a bet.

Beating the spread is known as "covering." For the favored 49ers to cover their spread of 2.5 points, they must win the game by 3 or more points. Conversely, underdog Kansas City can cover by either winning the game outright, or losing by less than 3 points. (Odds and point totals are as of Friday from FanDuel Sportsbook, the official odds provider for The Associated Press. They could change before game time.)

Don't want to bother with points and just pick the winner? That's called the money line. A bet on the 49ers to just win the game, regardless of the score, comes with less of a prize. You will have to bet \$130 of your own money just to win \$100. (Of course you get your original \$130 back as part of the \$230 payout.) A money line bet on Kansas City, however, will win \$110 on a \$100 bet, for a total payout of \$210.

If you believe the game will be a high-scoring affair, you might want to make a bet on the total, currently 47.5 points. That means if you bet the over, both teams combined must score at least 48 points for your bet to win. If it doesn't, people who bet the under will win.

CAN I MAKE MY OWN ODDS?

Yes. There are alternatives, but they can be costly. You can pick your own spread or total to improve your chance of winning, but the further your pick deviates from the sportsbook's number, the less it will pay if you win. You also can choose a harder-to-reach number for a higher potential payout, such as betting that the 49ers will win by 20 points, but that's a very risky strategy.

Sportsbooks are also aggressively pushing combination bets, known as parlays, in which two or more outcomes must be accurately predicted. This can include the point spread, the total points scored and whether a particular player reaches or falls short of a statistical milestone. The payouts for parlays are bigger, but for good reason: They're riskier bets. Every element of a parlay has to win or else the entire bet is a loser. It's not surprising that parlay bets are among sportsbooks' biggest money makers.

WHAT ELSE CAN I BET ON?

If this sounds like a lot to take in, there are much simpler ways to bet on the game, including some aimed at the casual fan or even someone who knows nothing at all about football. A perennial favorite is betting on the coin flip at the start of the game to determine which team can choose to get the ball first. There are only two choices: heads or tails, and it comes before the game even starts for those impatient to know whether their bet is a winner. You can even bet on which color of Gatorade the winning coach will be doused in at the game's conclusion.

This is what's called a proposition or "prop" bet. It involves betting on whether a particular event will or won't happen during the game, and there is a vast array to choose from. They can be disarmingly simple, such as guessing which team will get the ball first, whether the first score of the game will be a touchdown or a field goal, and whether or not the game will go into overtime.

Prop bets based on a particular player's performance are always popular during the Super Bowl. You can bet on whether Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes will pass for over or under 262.5 yards, how many catches his favorite target, tight end Kelce, will have (over or under 6.5) and how many rushing yards 49ers running back Christian McCaffrey will gain (over or under 89.5).

CAN I BET WHILE THE GAME IS BEING PLAYED?

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 80 of 83

People with online sportsbook accounts can bet on ever-changing outcome odds as the game is being played; live-betting is the fastest-growing segment of sports betting. For instance, the game starts with the 49ers favored by 2.5 points, but say Kansas City scores two quick touchdowns to take a 14-0 lead. The in-game odds will change to reflect the current situation, and you can now bet on whether Kansas City will win by 14 or more points, or whether the 49ers will lose by less than that. Or say 49ers receiver Deebo Samuel is being shut down by Chiefs defenders and appears unlikely to eclipse his pregame receiving yards total of 58.5 yards. Bettors can wager on whether he will or won't eclipse a lower number.

A word of caution, though: The number of these in-game bets and the rapidity with which odds change can be dangerous for those with a gambling problem, and many experts fear they could even tip a casual gambler toward becoming one with a problem. Some good advice: Set a budget in advance of money you can afford to lose, and stick to it. Look at betting on the game as a form of entertainment and not as a way to gain money that you need. If things head south, don't make additional bets to try to win back what you've lost. This is one of the quickest ways gamblers dig themselves a deep hole, and losses can rapidly pile up.

WHAT IF I THINK I MIGHT HAVE A GAMBLING PROBLEM?

Betting on the Super Bowl is supposed to be fun, and for most people, it is. But for others, compulsive gambling is a serious problem. For help, call 800-GAMBLER or visit www.gamblersanonymous.org.

Here's how to beat the hype and overcome loneliness on Valentine's Day

By LEANNE ITALIE AP Lifestyles Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Elise Plessis hasn't been in a long-term relationship for 26 years. It's by choice, yet she still suffers FOMO when Valentine's Day rolls around.

"I'm the singleton of the family and the friend group," said the 53-year-old Plessis, who lives in Manitoba, Canada. "Valentine's Day makes me feel hopeless, like a loser who can't find anyone who wants me."

But she won't be sitting at home cursing her fate, self-imposed after she tired of "toxic" hookup culture. Instead, Plessis plans to do what loneliness researchers and psychologists advise: She'll be helping others as a way to get out of her own head.

In her case, she'll be helping others find love. She became a certified matchmaker last year and has organized a speed-dating event ahead of Valentine's Day.

"I figure if I can't find love, it's the least I can do," Plessis said.

Valentine's Day is one of those holidays that haters call "forced," commercialized and downright expensive to pull off if expectations are to be met. This year, the day of romance that has grown into a celebration of all-around love and friendship is the first since the U.S. surgeon general issued a public health advisory last spring declaring loneliness and isolation an "epidemic" with dire consequences.

Dr. Vivek Murthy, the country's top public health watchdog, warned that widespread loneliness poses health risks as deadly as smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day. It costs the health industry billions of dollars a year, he said.

About half of U.S. adults say they've experienced loneliness, he said. The problem has been stewing since well before the pandemic, worsening in recent years.

"It's like hunger or thirst. It's a feeling the body sends us when something we need for survival is missing," Murthy told The Associated Press at the time. "Millions of people in America are struggling in the shadows, and that's not right."

Like Valentine's Day, loneliness has become big business, complete with an outpouring of books offering up self help and data. The season is a windfall for dating apps and websites cashing in on users looking to make it over the hump emotionally intact.

We have Valentine's Day gift guides, and some for those who despise the holiday. We have recipes touted as perfect for the occasion, tips for choosing just the right flowers that won't kill a recipient's pet, and store shelves overflowing with Valentine's cards. And thanks to a storyline on "Parks and Recreation,"

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 81 of 83

the couples holiday has expanded to Galentine's Day (Feb. 13) for singles and friends.

TRY A SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE

David Sbarra, a psychology professor at the University of Arizona in Tucson, studies loneliness and social isolation. He's among data crunchers who consider the idea of loneliness as a deadly epidemic a tad overblown. But he's confident about where Valentine's Day can take the chronically lonely.

"You can make a very clear argument that it exacerbates the experience of psychological distress among people who are already lonely," he said.

"So a simple way of saying it would be that people are looking at and monitoring themselves being socially isolated instead of shifting their perception toward opportunities to reengage, and then pursuing that. Who can I go out with? What can I do? How can I serve others? Who can I text, call? That's very important," Sbarra said.

Those are the things 27-year-old Tori Mattei in New York has discovered on her own over the last four years of singlehood. She's been dating since two back-to-back, long-term relationships ended.

"Because I've been single for a while, I feel like I kind of set a goal for myself to go on a certain amount of dates just so I still feel like I can do it and don't feel awkward or nervous," she said. "I've gone on a lot of first dates in the past couple of years. Not a lot of second dates."

Valentine's Day was a big deal in her relationships. Sometimes it was a cozy night in. There were usually gifts of flowers, perfume or jewelry.

"I definitely felt appreciated," Mattei said.

She lives alone in Manhattan, as opposed to lots of friends who have roommates. Many of her friends are in relationships.

"At certain times, I enjoy being alone and having my peace and quiet. But on days like Valentine's Day or even things like the Super Bowl, I have to make a little bit extra effort to not feel lonely," Mattei said. "I have to make sure I make plans for myself. It just takes one sad day that you feel lonely to make it seem like you're always lonely."

SEEK REAL-LIFE CONNECTION

Mattei doesn't consider herself a Valentine's Day hater.

"I just dislike the pressure of making it romantic when really, if somebody handed me a rose on the street, that would make my day. Like, that's all it takes," she said.

Her best advice for making it through Valentine's Day is as sweet as those candy conversation hearts that circulate this time of year.

"Show love to somebody. I love giving other people a gift, putting a smile on their face. And if you can't think of someone that you want to show love to, then show love to yourself. Buy yourself candy. I buy myself flowers very frequently. I love the way they look. I don't care that I bought them for myself," Mattei said.

Dr. Jeremy Nobel, who wrote "Project UnLonely: Healing Our Crisis of Disconnection," agrees with all of the above. Loneliness, he said, comes in many forms, from physical isolation to rejection based on difference.

"I think the science is quite clear that loneliness does increase risk of early mortality," said Nobel, who teaches a course for medical students at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health to help them better recognize loneliness in patients.

LET YOUR CREATIVE JUICES FLOW

Through his Project UnLonely and Foundation for Art & Healing, Nobel has come up with programs that use the creative arts to raise awareness of the health challenges caused by loneliness and social isolation, including among young people.

On Valentine's Day, the project is offering a free Zoom coloring session for anyone who cares to sign up. Crayons, markers, colored pencils, oil pastels. The choice is yours.

"Loneliness is subjective," Nobel said — it's the gap between the social connections you want to have and the ones you do have. "Valentine's Day, it's the time to celebrate love and connection, which is fantastic unless you don't have that connection."

Psychotherapist Kelli Miller in Los Angeles works with couples and individuals and wrote "Love Hacks:

Simple Solutions to the Most Common Relationship Issues.” Valentine’s Day is a common trigger among her clients. If you don’t have the love you want, turn inward in search of joy, she urges.

“Take yourself to the theater. Take yourself to dinner. I know a lot of people don’t want to dine alone but sometimes just being around other human beings can help.”

Verbal gaffe or sign of trouble? Mixing up names like Biden and Trump have done is pretty common

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Any parent who’s ever called one of their children by the other’s name — or even the family pet’s name — likely could empathize when President Joe Biden mixed up the names of French leaders Macron and Mitterrand.

The human brain has trouble pulling names out of stuffed memory banks on cue. But when are those and other verbal stumbles normal, and when might they be a sign of cognitive trouble?

“When I see somebody make a flub on TV, I’m really not all that concerned,” said well-known aging researcher S. Jay Olshansky of the University of Illinois at Chicago. “What science will tell you about flubs is that they’re perfectly normal, and they are exacerbated by stress for sure.”

Biden, 81, has a decadeslong history of verbal gaffes. But they’re getting new attention after a special counsel this past week decided Biden shouldn’t face criminal charges for his handling of classified documents — while describing him as an old man with trouble remembering dates, even the date his son Beau died.

That prompted a visibly angry Biden to lash out from the White House, saying, “My memory is fine.” As for his son’s 2015 death from brain cancer, “Frankly, when I was asked the question, I thought to myself, it wasn’t any of their damn business,” Biden said.

Biden is not the only candidate making verbal slips. Former President Donald Trump, Biden’s likely opponent in the November presidential election, has also. Last month the 77-year-old Trump confused his major opponent for the GOP nomination, former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, with former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

Health experts caution that neither verbal gaffes nor a lawyer’s opinions can reveal whether someone is having cognitive trouble. That takes medical testing.

But certain glitches are common at any age.

“To easily recall names, right in the moment, is the hardest thing for us to do accurately,” said Dr. Eric Lenze of Washington University in St. Louis, a geriatric psychiatrist who evaluates cognition in older adults.

Some studies have suggested that everyday “misnaming” may occur when the brain has names stored by category — like your family members or perhaps in Biden’s case, world leaders he’s long known — and grabs the wrong one. Or the miss may be phonetic, as the names of France’s current president, Emmanuel Macron, and former President Francois Mitterrand both begin with “M.” Mitterrand died in 1996.

As for dates, emotion may tag certain memories but not run-of-the-mill ones, such as the special counsel’s questions about when Biden handled a box of documents.

“Attaching a calendar date to an event is not really something that the human brain does at any age,” Lenze said. It’s “not like a spreadsheet.”

Whether it’s a name, date or something else, memory also can be affected by stress and distractions — if someone’s thinking about more than one thing, Olshansky said. And while everybody’s had an “it’s on the tip of my tongue” lapse, flubs by presidents, or would-be presidents, tend to be caught on TV.

Olshansky watches recordings of his presentations at science meetings and “there isn’t a single time I don’t make a mistake,” he said. “I’m 69 years old, which I do not consider to be old, but I made the same mistakes when I was 39.”

It’s reasonable for people to wonder if leaders in their 70s and 80s remain sharp, Lenze said. What’s reassuring is if overall, what someone says is overall accurate despite a verbal gaffe.

Some cognitive aging is normal, including delay in memory retrieval. People’s brains age differently, and heart health, blood pressure and physical activity play a role in brain health.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2023 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 232 ~ 83 of 83

And while Trump often brags about passing a screening-style memory test several years ago, Lenze said the best assessment includes rigorous neuropsychological testing.

Today in History: February 11, Nelson Mandela freed after 27 years

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, Feb. 11, the 42nd day of 2024. There are 324 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 11, 1990, South African Black activist Nelson Mandela was freed after 27 years in captivity.

On this date:

In 660 B.C., tradition holds that Japan was founded as Jimmu ascended the throne as the country's first emperor.

In 1847, American inventor Thomas Alva Edison was born in Milan, Ohio.

In 1937, a six-week-old sit-down strike against General Motors ended, with the company agreeing to recognize the United Automobile Workers Union.

In 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Josef Stalin signed the Yalta Agreement, in which Stalin agreed to declare war against Imperial Japan following Nazi Germany's capitulation.

In 1963, American author and poet Sylvia Plath was found dead in her London flat, a suicide; she was 30.

In 1975, Margaret Thatcher was elected leader of Britain's opposition Conservative Party.

In 1979, followers of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (hoh-MAY'-nee) seized power in Iran.

In 2006, Vice President Dick Cheney accidentally shot and wounded Harry Whittington, a companion during a weekend quail-hunting trip in Texas.

In 2008, the Pentagon charged Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (HAH'-leed shayk moh-HAH'-med) and five other detainees at Guantanamo Bay with murder and war crimes in connection with the Sept. 11 attacks.

In 2011, Egypt exploded with joy after pro-democracy protesters brought down President Hosni Mubarak, whose resignation ended three decades of authoritarian rule.

In 2012, singing superstar Whitney Houston was found dead in a hotel room bathtub in Beverly Hills, California on the eve of the Grammy Awards at age 48.

In 2013, with a few words in Latin, Pope Benedict XVI did what no pope had done in more than half a millennium: announced his resignation. The bombshell came during a routine morning meeting of Vatican cardinals. (The 85-year-old pontiff was succeeded by Pope Francis.)

In 2018, a Russian passenger plane crashed into a snowy field six minutes after taking off from Moscow, killing all 65 passengers and six crew members.

In 2020, the World Health Organization gave the official name of COVID-19 to the disease caused by the coronavirus that had emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

In 2021, at the Senate impeachment trial of former President Donald Trump, Democrats asserted that Trump had incited an attack on the U.S. Capitol, put his own vice president in danger and expressed solidarity with rioters who sought to overturn the 2020 election in his name.

In 2023, rescue crews pulled more survivors, including entire families, from toppled buildings despite diminishing hopes as the death toll of the magnitude-7.8 earthquake that struck a border region of Turkey and Syria five days earlier surpassed 28,000. (It would eventually reach more than 50,000.)

Today's birthdays: Gospel singer Jimmy Carter is 92. Actor Tina Louise is 90. Bandleader Sergio Mendes is 83. Actor Philip Anglim is 72. Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush is 71. Actor Catherine Hickland is 68. Rock musician David Uosikkinen (The Hooters) is 68. Actor Carey Lowell is 63. Singer Sheryl Crow is 62. Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin is 60. Actor Jennifer Aniston is 55. Actor Damian Lewis is 53. Actor Marisa Petroni is 52. Singer D'Angelo is 50. Actor Brice Beckham is 48. Rock vocalist Mike Shinoda (Linkin Park) is 47. Singer-actor Brandy is 45. Country musician Jon Jones (The Eli Young Band) is 44. Actor Matthew Lawrence is 44. R&B singer Kelly Rowland is 43. Actor Natalie Dormer is 42. Singer Aubrey O'Day is 40. Actor Q'orianka Kilcher is 34. Actor Taylor Lautner is 32.