

Groton Daily Independent

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Sunday, April 21

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.

Princess Prom, 4:30 p.m., GHS Gym **(will be livestreamed on GDILIVE.COM)**

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Sunday School 10:15 a.m.; Choir 6 p.m.

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

Monday, April 22

Senior Menu: Meatballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, Harvard beets, pineapple tidbits, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.

School Lunch: meatballs, mashed potatoes.

School Board meeting 7 p.m.

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

JH Track at Britton, 3:30 p.m.

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

Senior Citizen meet at the Groton Community Center with noon potluck

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

High School Baseball: JV vs. W-I-N at Northville, doubleheader, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 23

Senior Menu: Pork roast, mashed potatoes and gravy, broccoli and carrots peaches whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Breakfast sandwich.

School Lunch: Hamburgers, tri taters.

Track at Groton Area, 11 a.m.

Girls Golf at Milbank, 10 a.m.

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

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

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Olive Grove Annual Meeting, 7 p.m., Clubhouse

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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2024 Junior-Senior Prom ~ Under the City Lights



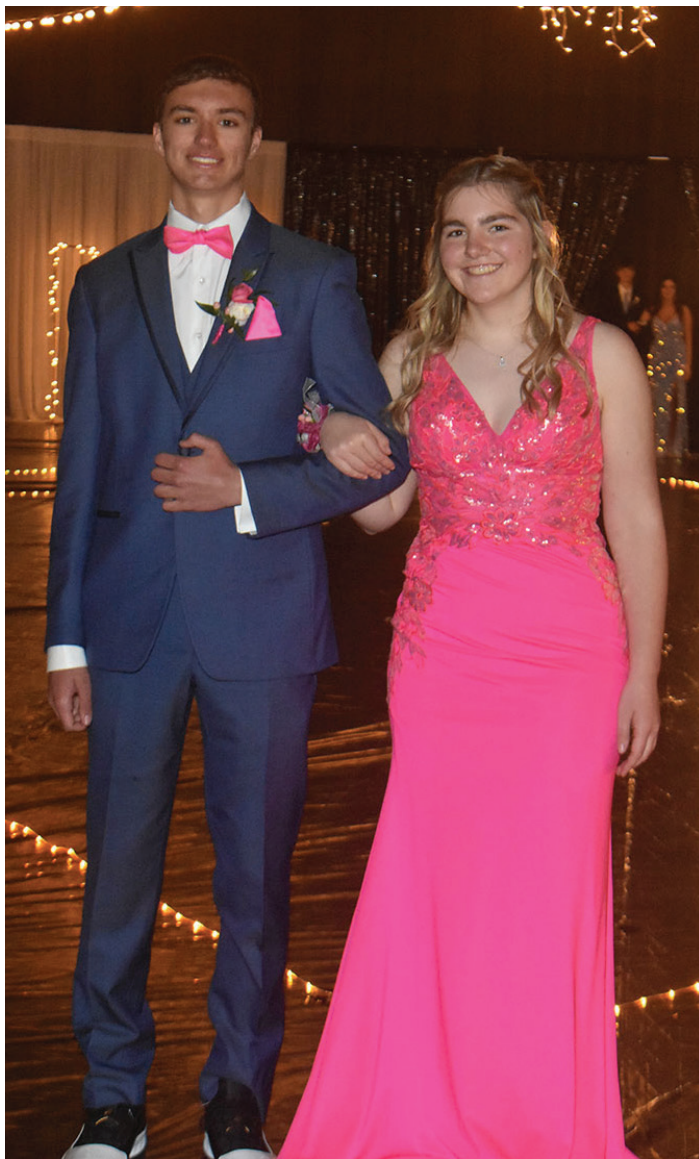
Junior Class President Gretchen Dinger escorted by Christian Ehresmann.



Senior Class President Hannah Monson escorted by Aeydon Johnson.

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Emily Clark escorted by Jayden Schwan.



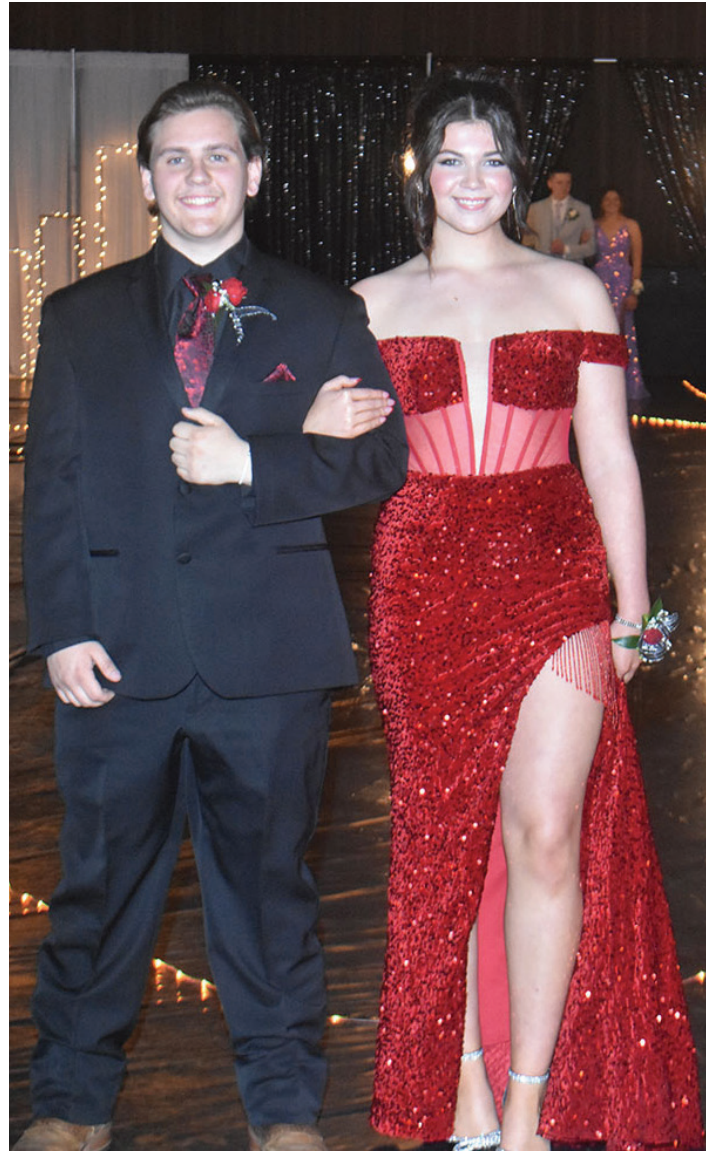
Shea Jandel escorted by Payton Mitchell.

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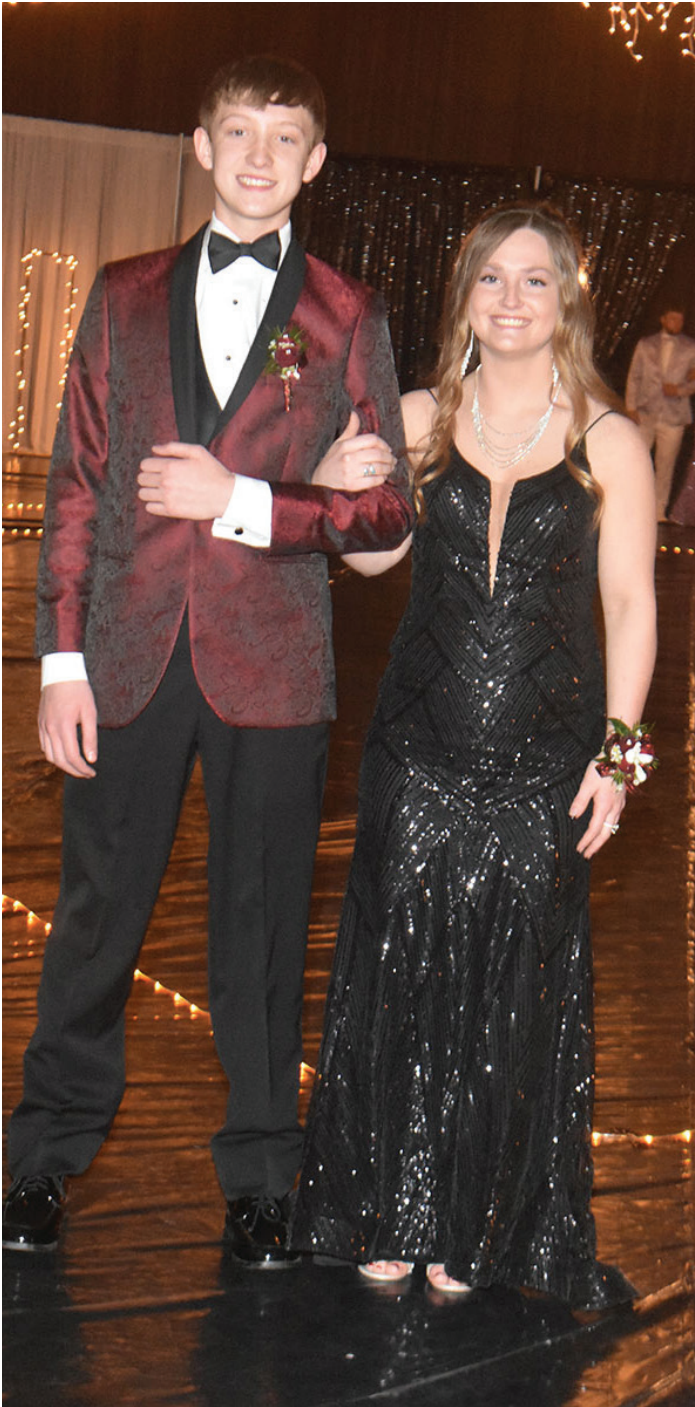
Claire Heinrich escorted by David VanVeen.



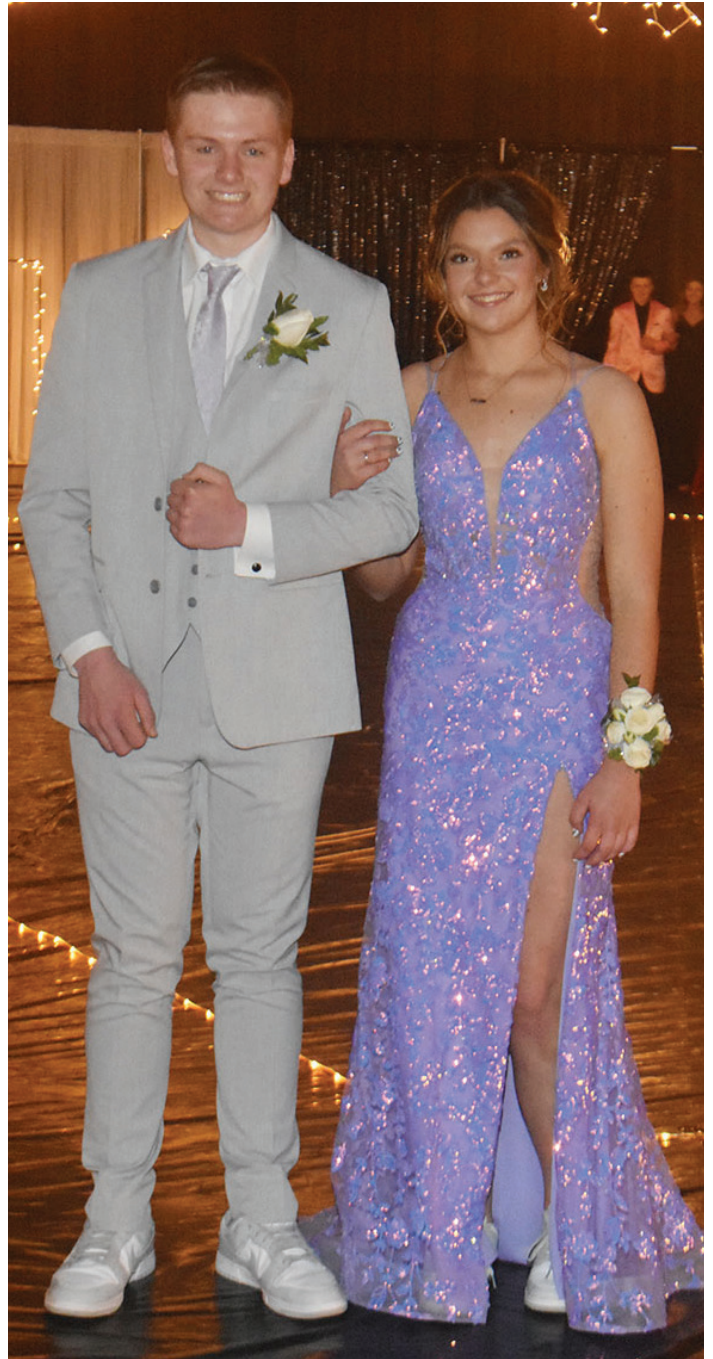
Paisley Bray escorted by Drew Thurston.

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Cadence Feist escorted by Blake Lord.



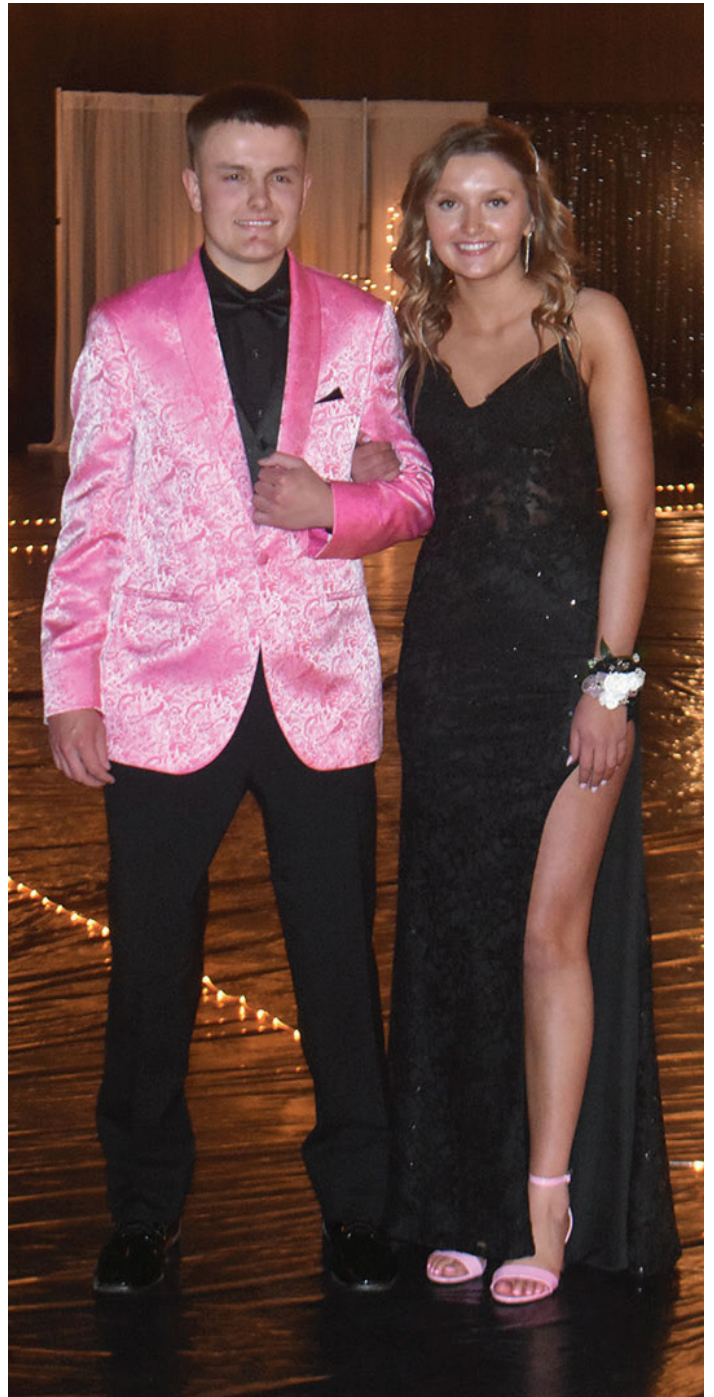
Ashley Johnson escorted by Logan Warrington.

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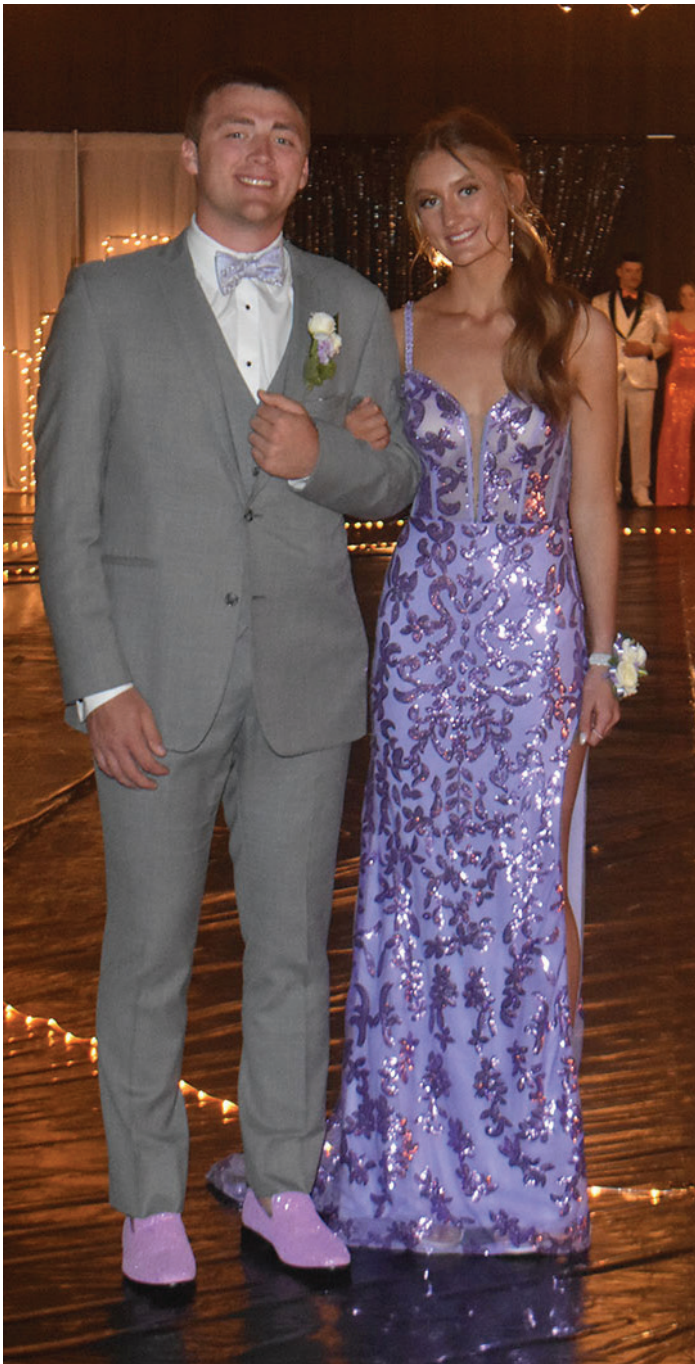
Carly Guthmiller escorted by Holden Sippel.



Sydney Leicht escorted by Dillon Abeln.

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Faith Traphagen escorted by Colby Dunker.



Ashlyn Sperry escorted by Michael Powers Dinger.

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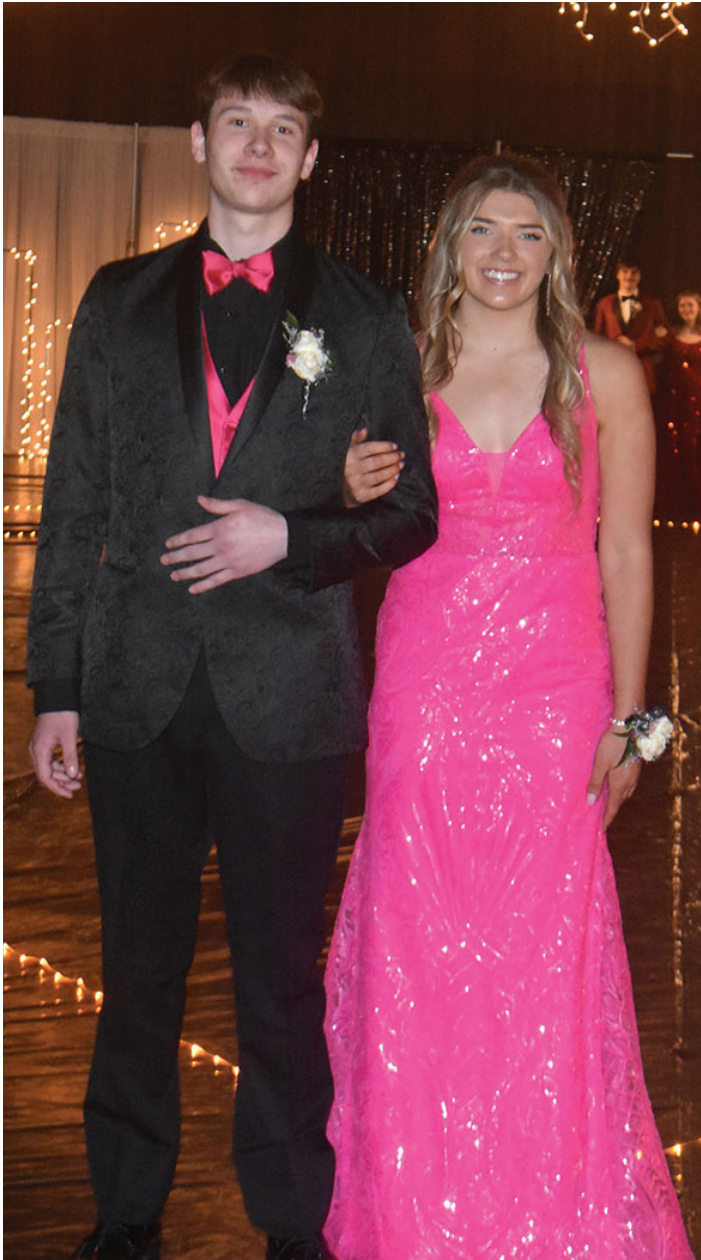
Addison Wade escorted by Tristan Kampa.



Hannah Sandness escorted by Kellen Antonsen.

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Rylee Dunker escorted by Turner Thompson.



Taryn Traphagen escorted by Blake Pauli.

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Cadance Tullis escorted by Jaeger Kampa.



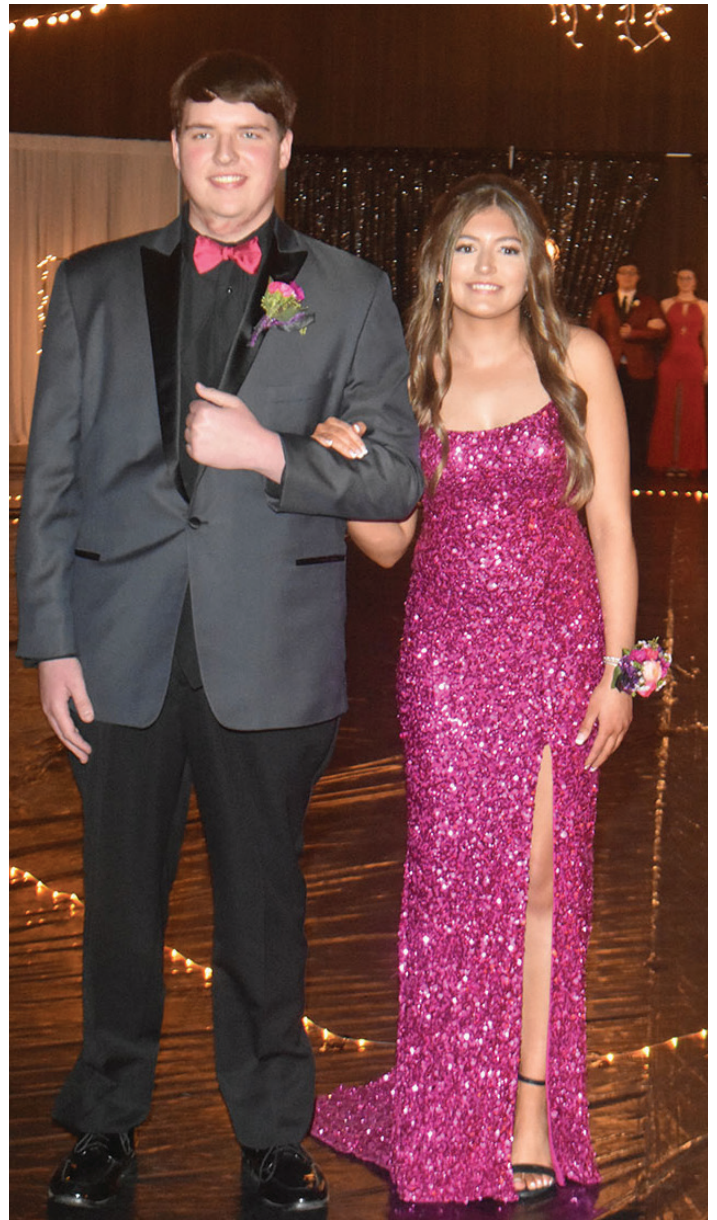
Anna Fjeldheim escorted by Korbin Kucker.

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Brooklyn Hansen escorted by Ryder Johnson.



Talli Wright escorted by Logan Pearson.

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Addison Evans escorted by Logan Ringgenberg.



Rebecca Poor escorted by Axel Warrington.

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Camryn Kurtz escorted by Gavin Kroll.



Anna Bisbee (right) and her friend, Mikayla Browning.

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Abby Jensen escorted by Jordan Grieben.



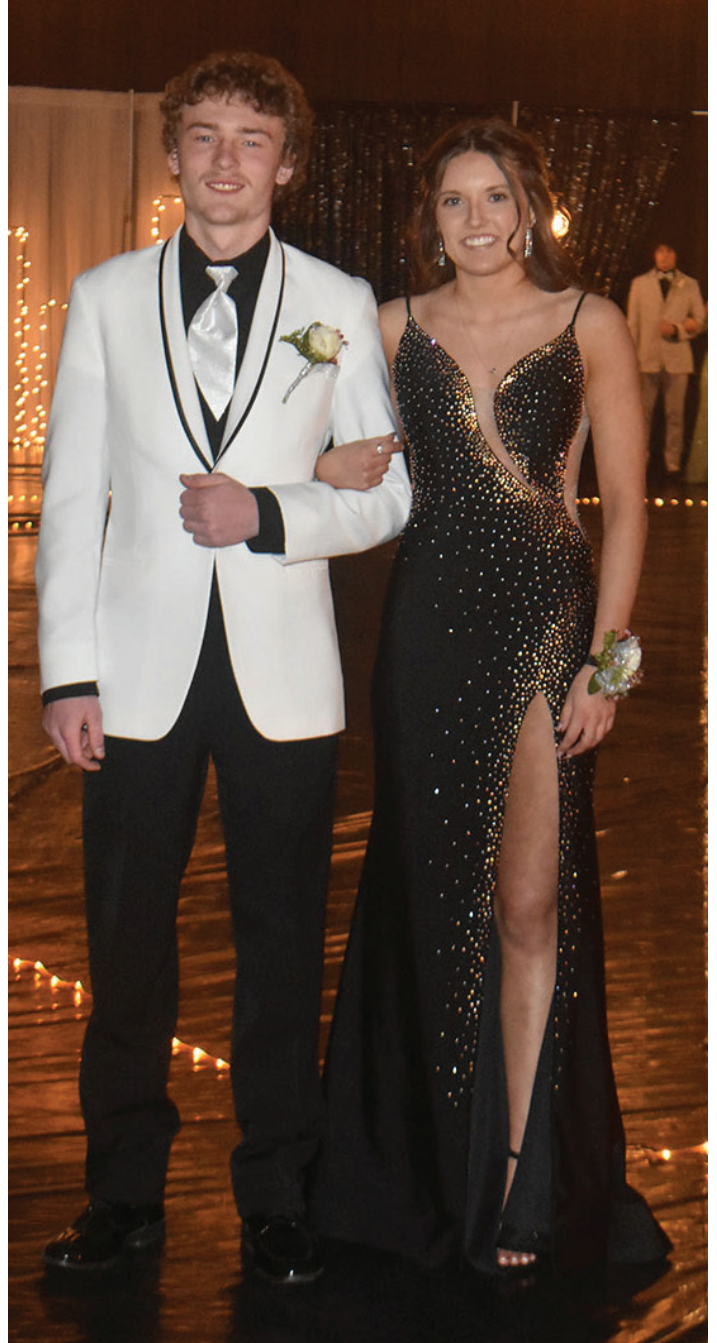
Karrah-Jo Johnson escorted by Daniel Feist.

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Laila Roberts escorted by Isaak Hunter.



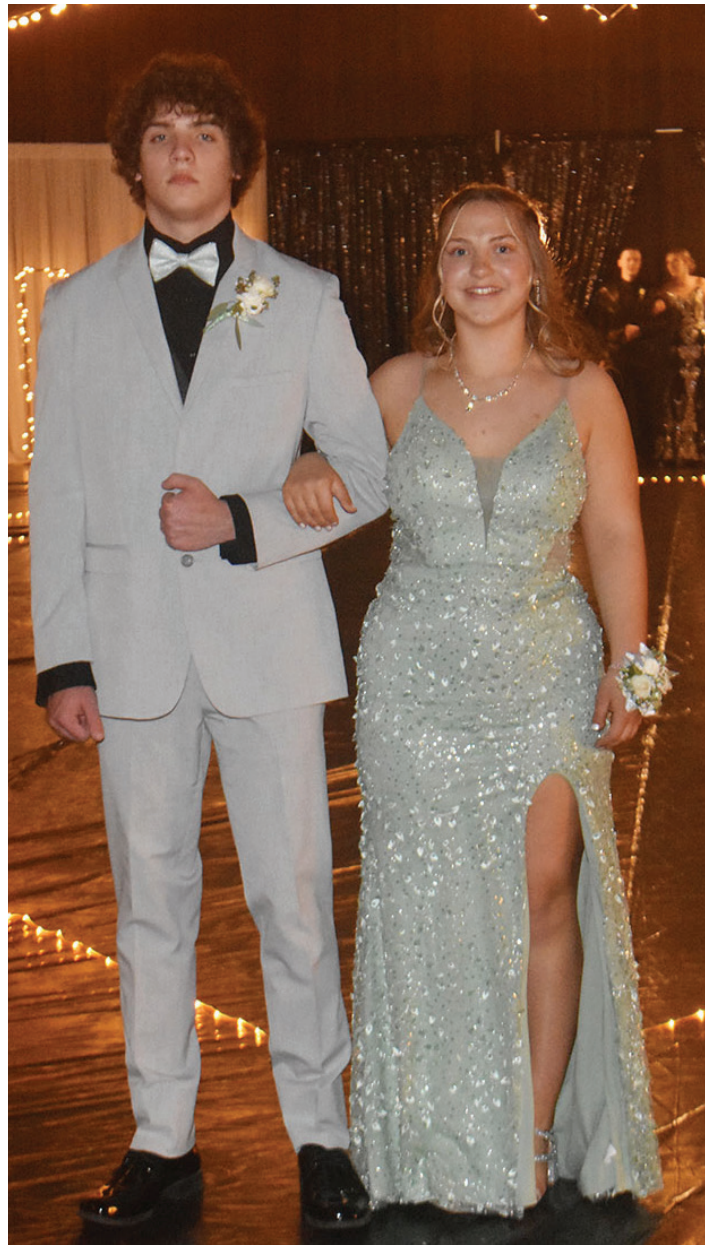
Kennedy Hansen escorted by Teylor Diegel.

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Karsyn Jangula escorted by Gavin Englund.



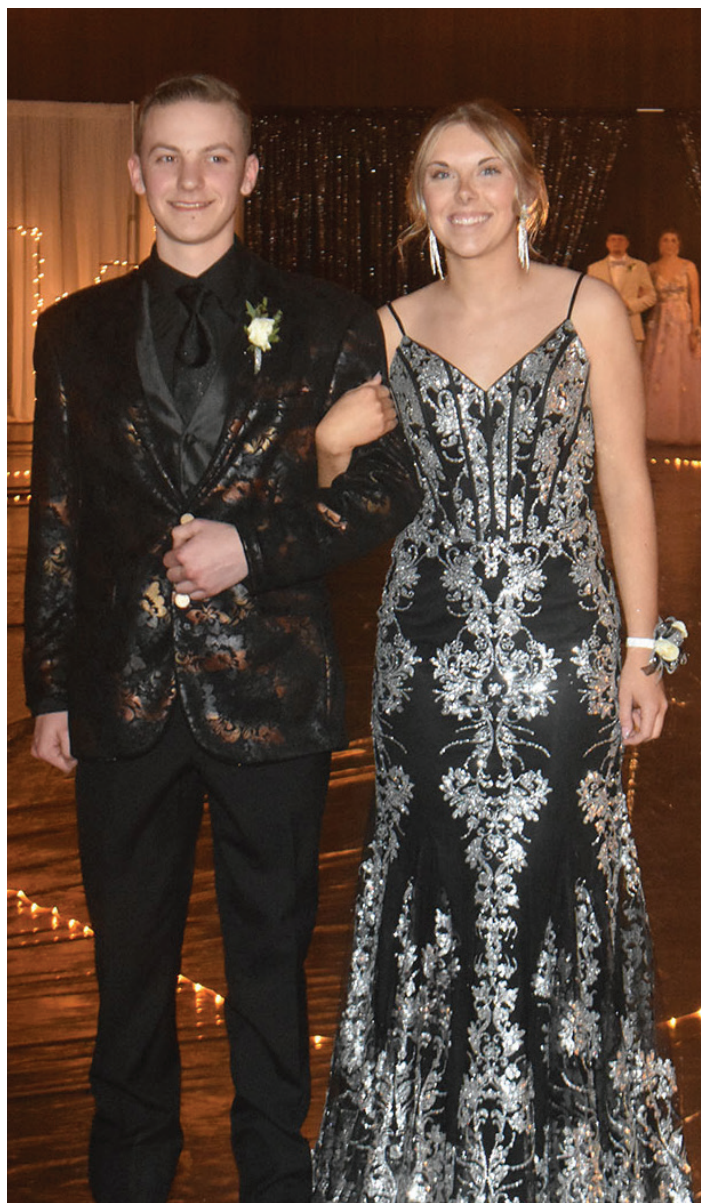
Carly Gilbert escorted by Easten Ekern.

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Morgan Sumption escorted by Braxton Imrie.



Emma Schinkel escorted by Layne Hanson.

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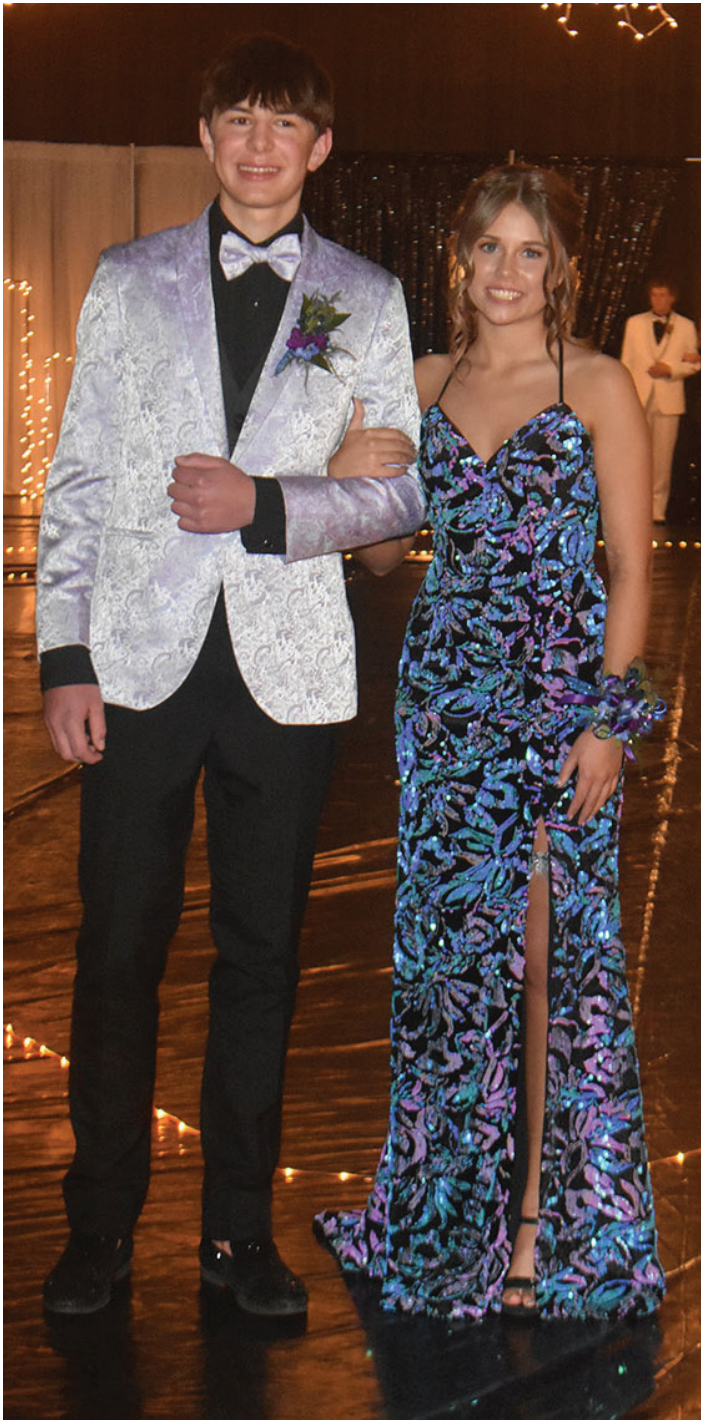
Taylor Thorstenson escorted by Kaden Kampa.



Ella Bray escorted by Nick Morris.

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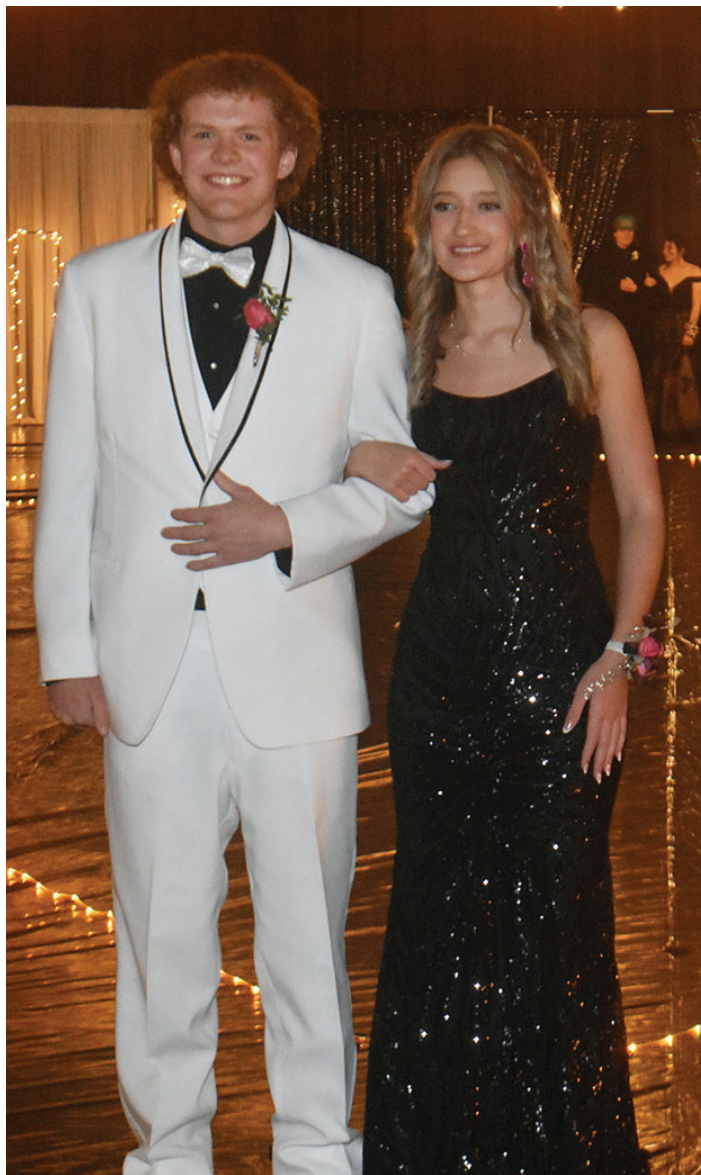
Jaydin Stiles escorted by Carter Simon.



Faith Flihs escorted by Alexzander Rupp.

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Brenna Imrie escorted by Caden McInerney.



Karlie McKane escorted by Tristin McGannon.

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Kayleigh McGannon escorted by Dreston Dennert.



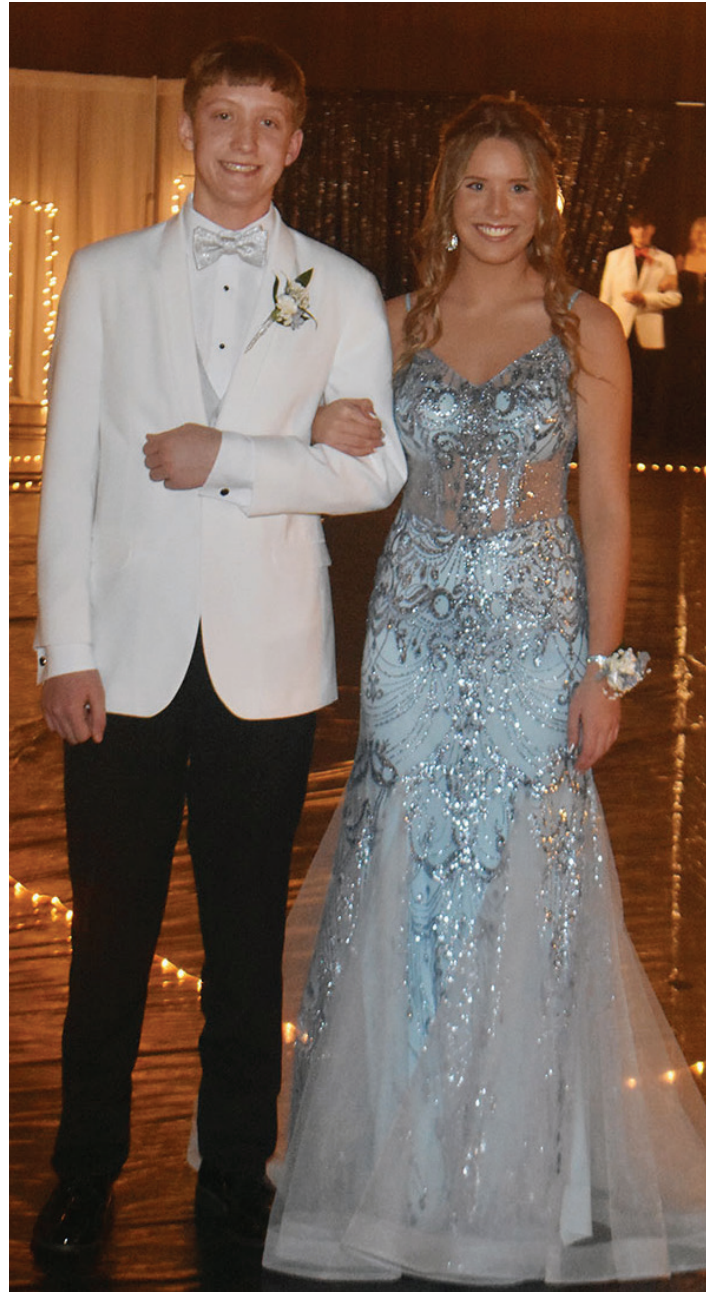
Sahrara Pardick escorted by Corbin Weismantel.

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Elizabeth Flihs escorted by Lane Tietz.



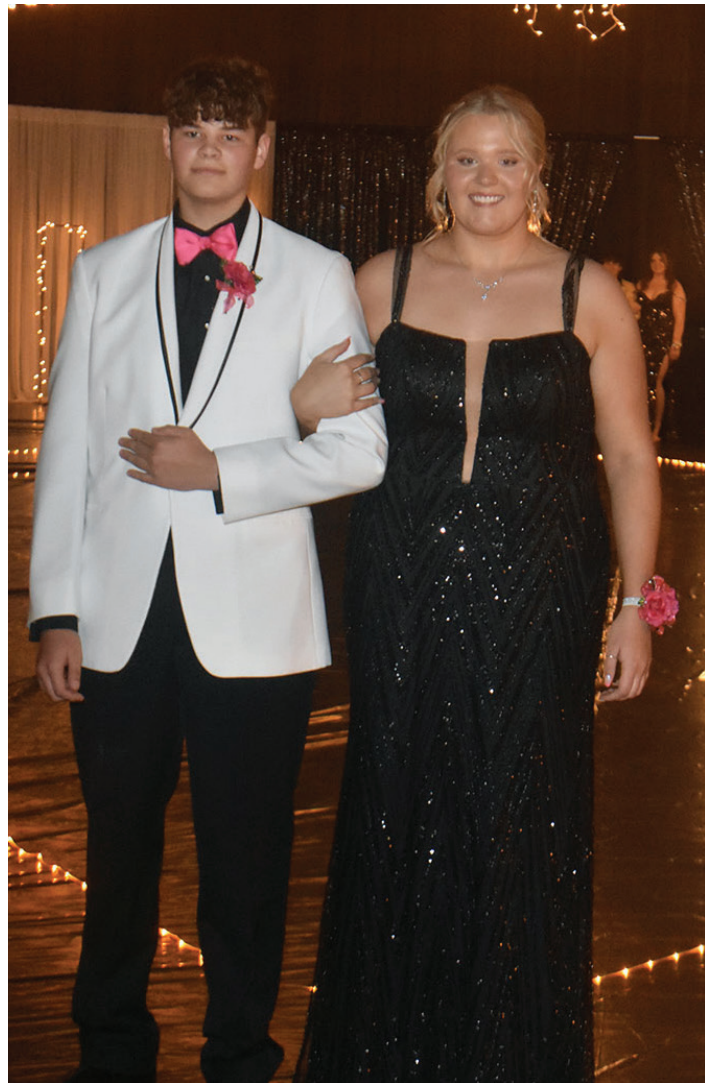
Lydia Meier escorted by Brody Lord.

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Kayla Lehr escorted by Kalen Godel.



Emma Kutter escorted by Cason Okroi.

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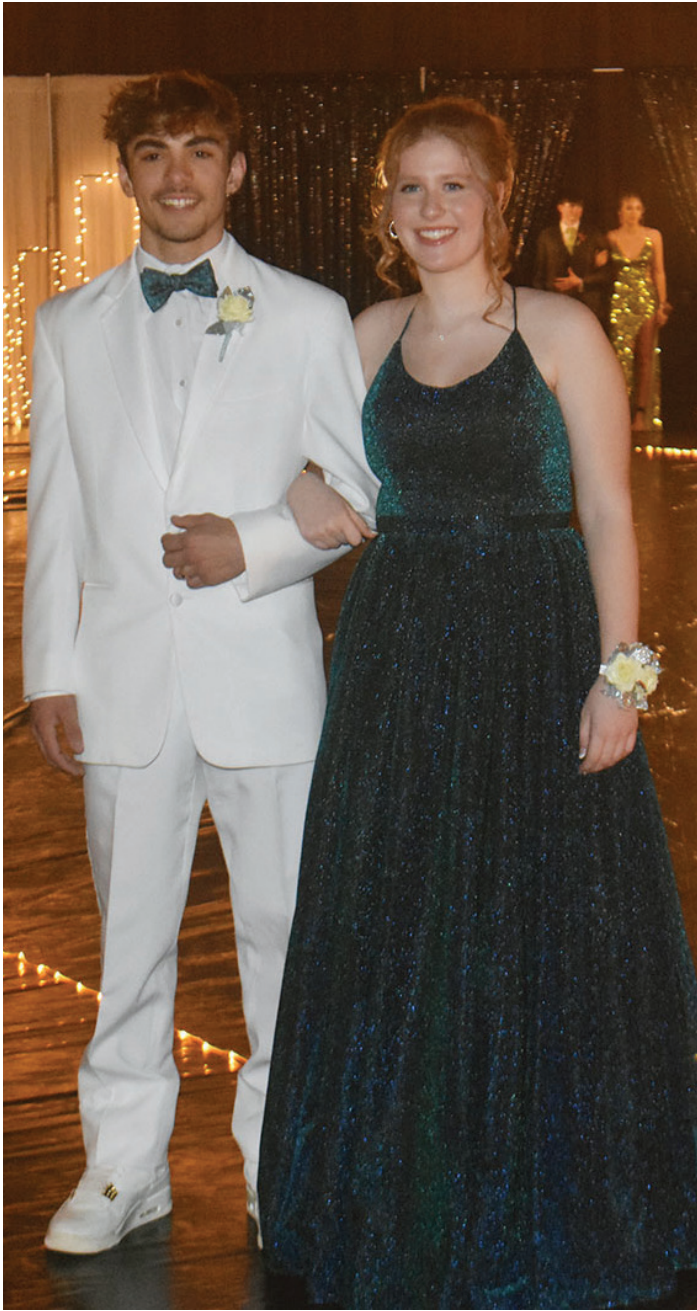
Ava Wienk escorted by Dylan Wald.



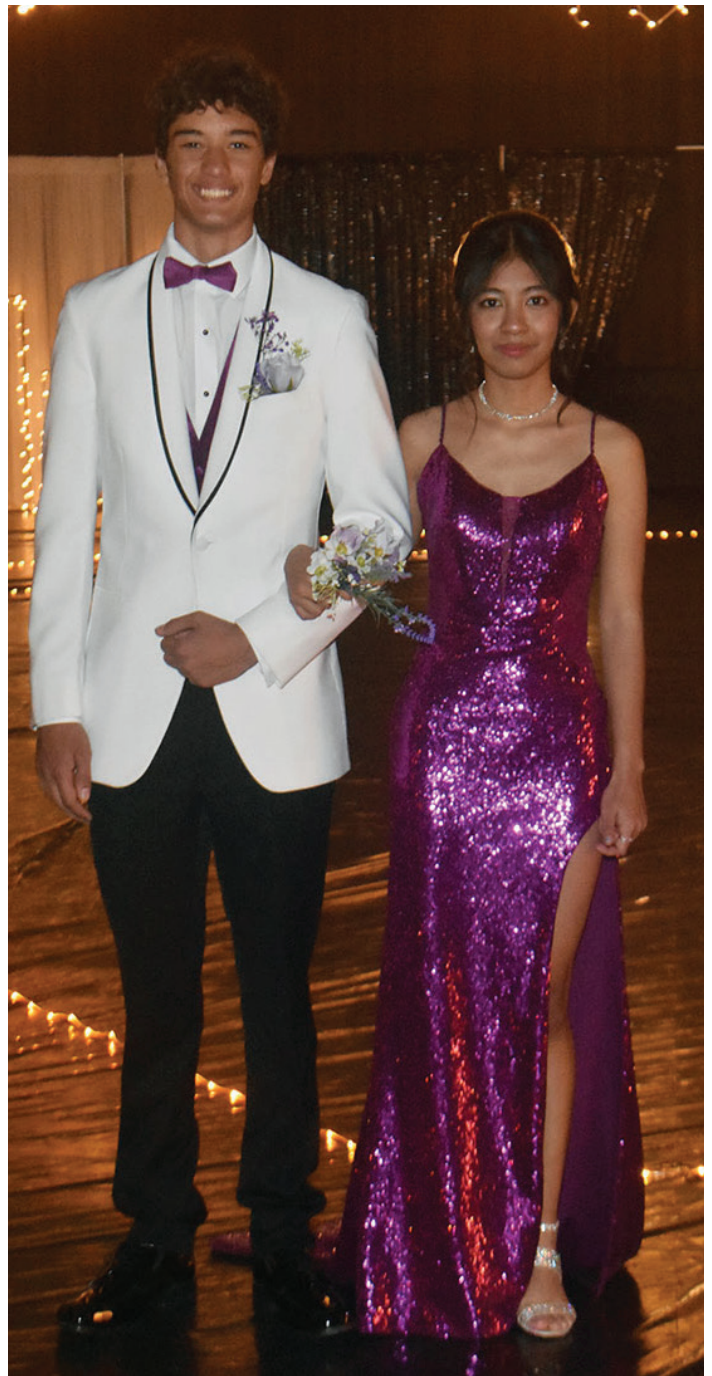
Emily Overacker escorted by Carson Herrick.

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Abby Yeadon escorted by Skyler Godel.



Divya Pelmelay escorted by Julian Rodriguez.

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Shaela McGannon escorted by Carter Williams.

**Storm Damage
To Your Roof?**



WITTE 
EXTERIORS LLC

Specializing in Asphalt and Wood Shingles

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Zack Witte ~ 605-695-7874

Webster, SD

No Contracts!

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Can the papyrus grow up without a marsh? Can the reeds flourish without water? While it is yet green and not cut down, it withers before any other plant. So are the paths of all who forget God...

JOB 8:11-13

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BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of 2 Kings (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From Acts 6, which one of the seven “deacons” did great wonders and miracles among the people? *Nicanor, Philip, Timon, Stephen*

3. What apostle was a disciple of John the Baptist when Jesus recruited him? *Andrew, Simon Peter, Thomas, James*

4. From Revelation 6, what color was the sun when it became like a sackcloth of hair? *Red, Black, White, Green*

5. Who was Saul of Tarsus waiting for while he fasted three days in Damascus? *Darius, Zenas, Ananias, Apollo*

6. From Isaiah 63:2, what color garments does the Lord wear? *Purple, Red, White, Gold*

ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Stephen, 3) Andrew, 4) Black, 5) Ananias, 6) Red

Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscribersite at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.

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We MINE!

It is fine work.
We are quite adept.

It is the purpose
we were BUILT for.

What a pleasant
thing to know.

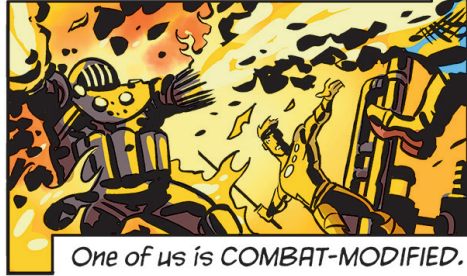
Four hours after initiating thermal drilling, we detect: INTRUDERS.

We have a PROGRAM for intruders.

Intruders are LIKEWISE modified. Disappointing!



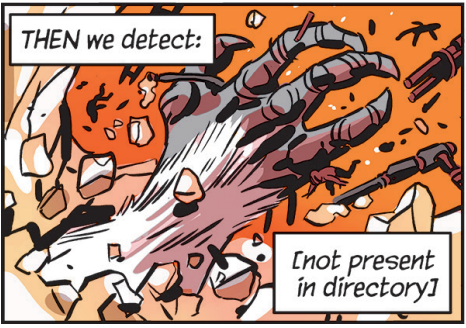
EXCITING!



One of us is COMBAT-MODIFIED.

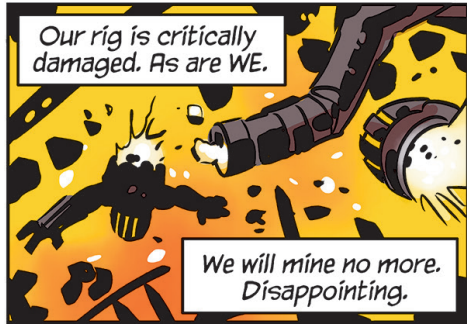


Then we detect:
SEISMIC DISTURBANCE.



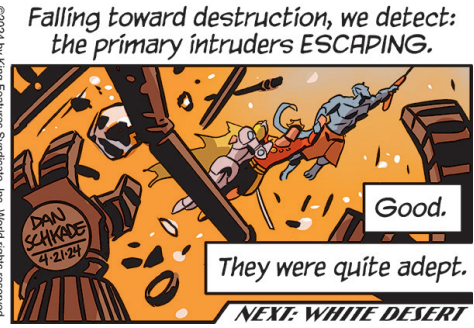
THEN we detect:

[not present
in directory]



Our rig is critically
damaged. As are WE.

We will mine no more.
Disappointing.



Falling toward destruction, we detect:
the primary intruders ESCAPING.

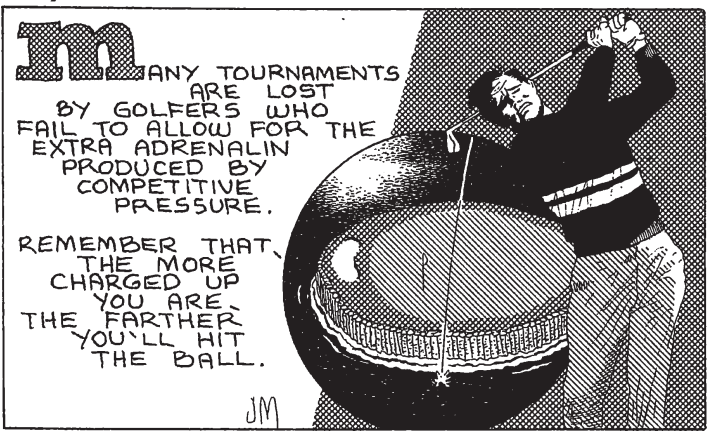
Good.

They were quite adept.

NEXT: WHITE DESERT

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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

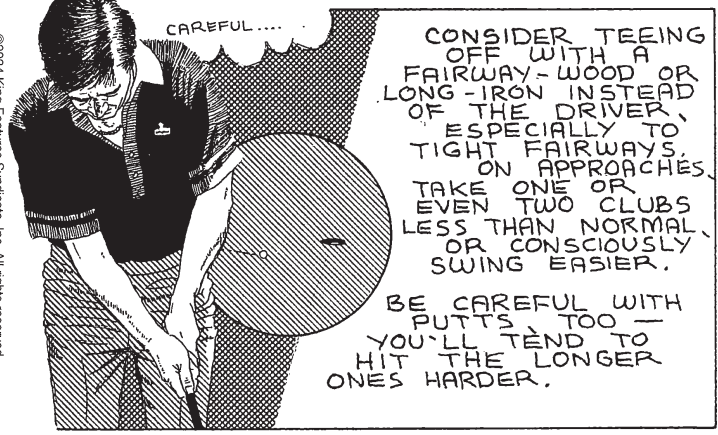


MANY TOURNAMENTS ARE LOST BY GOLFERS WHO FAIL TO ALLOW FOR THE EXTRA ADRENALIN PRODUCED BY COMPETITIVE PRAESSURE.

REMEMBER THAT, THE MORE CHARGED UP YOU ARE, THE FARTHER YOU'LL HIT THE BALL.

JM

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CAREFUL....

CONSIDER TEEING OFF WITH A FAIRWAY-WOOD OR LONG-IRON INSTEAD OF THE DRIVER, ESPECIALLY TO TIGHT FAIRWAYS, ON APPROACHES. TAKE ONE OR EVEN TWO CLUBS LESS THAN NORMAL, OR CONSCIOUSLY SWING EASIER.

BE CAREFUL WITH PUTTS, TOO — YOU'LL TEND TO HIT THE LONGER ONES HARDER.



Looking at the Causes Behind Mobility Issues

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am 79 and can move around without any problem. I walk five days a week, and my weight is normal. However, it seems to me that many people -- some younger than I am -- have mobility problems. I wonder what causes this problem. Is it lack of exercise, genes, weight, etc.? -- E.G.

ANSWER: Be very grateful that you can move around without a problem, as most people in their late 70s do have mobility issues. The most common reason is osteoarthritis, but there are many causes, such as neurological diseases, cardiovascular issues and other types of arthritis. While it is true that not exercising can lead to poor mobility, most of the time, it isn't a person's fault that they have difficulty with mobility. Arthritis can happen

to a person of any weight and at any level of exercise.

Exercise helps the vast majority of people improve their mobility, but there are exceptions. Many people with myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome are intolerant of exercise, and overdoing it can lead their condition to worsen. This syndrome has also been known as systemic exertion intolerance disease. Well-meaning physicians, friends and family might have recommended exercise to a patient, which could have caused them to have a flare-up.

Although being very overweight increases the risk of arthritis, having a normal weight doesn't prevent its development. Genetic influences are very complicated, but they also have a role in the development of osteoarthritis. Osteoarthritis can also come about as a result of significant trauma to a joint.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am an 80-year-old woman who recently had a right hip replacement. Shortly after surgery, I required around-the-clock oxygen support at home. I am able to go without supplemental oxygen all day and only occasionally use the spirometer. But how do I go about not needing oxygen at night? Is there something more I could be doing?

When I use the spirometer, I can bring the oxygen level up. Is this all I need to do when the oxygen level drops? -- S.R.

ANSWER: This is very concerning to me, and I am worried that something might have happened at the time of surgery. A sudden change in the ability to breathe or maintain your oxygen level at the time of joint replacement surgery is suspicious for a pulmonary embolism -- a blood clot to the lungs. With great care, the risk for this has decreased to about 1 in 200 people.

Pneumonia is always a concern after surgery, and in 80 year olds, the common symptoms of fever, cough, or shortness of breath are sometimes absent. You need an evaluation for both of these possibilities (and other less-common causes of post-operative low oxygen that I don't have the space to go into).

However, the fact that your oxygen level goes up when using the spirometer (a device that encourages deep inhalations) suggests part of the problem is a collapse of some of the tiny air sacs of the lung.

You should start with a visit to your regular doctor right away.

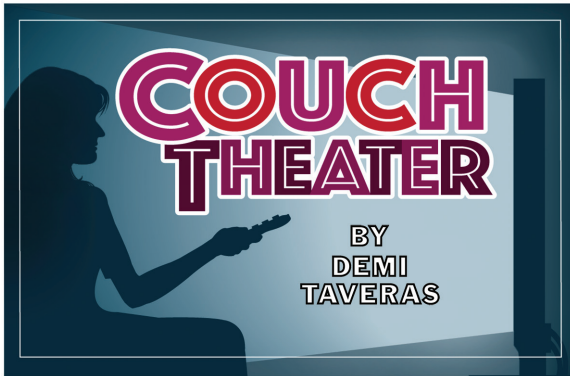
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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"Migration" (PG) -- From the animation studio Illumination, who brought us movies like the "Despicable Me" franchise and "The Super Mario Bros. Movie," comes a new animated experience about a family of ducks! Mack Mallard (Kumail Nanjiani) is an anxious father whose greatest fear is putting

his family in harm's way, but his wife, Pam (Elizabeth Banks), is desperate to see the world with their kids, Dax and Gwen. After much convincing and meeting another flock of ducks who are heading to Jamaica, Mack decides that it's time for the family to leave their pond for a much-needed adventurous voyage! Danny DeVito, Keegan-Michael Key and Awkwafina are just some of the actors who lend their voices to this amusing film fit for the whole family. Out now. (Peacock)

"Thank You, Goodnight: The Bon Jovi Story" (TV-MA) -- This four-part docuseries tells the story of one of the biggest rock-and-roll bands, Bon Jovi. Featuring personal videos, unreleased demos and rare photos that have never been seen, the series spans across 40 years, culminating at the point where front-man Jon Bon Jovi had to receive vocal cord surgery. It dives into the start of Bon Jovi as just a few kids in New Jersey and leads into their eventual skyrocket rise into global fame. Of course, interviews with the current and former members of the band are included, such as David Bryan, Tico Torres, Phil X, Hugh McDonald and Richie Sambora. But keep an eye out for another New Jersey local, Bruce Springsteen. Premieres April 26. (Hulu)

"Tiger" (PG) -- The latest Disney nature film is out now, and its focus is the ferocious, fast and majestic animal tiger. Taking place in the vast jungles of India, the documentary follows a young tigress named Ambar as she raises her family of cubs. Viewers can follow along this tiger family's journey toward survival in a challenging environment that is chock-full of "mysteries, surprises and dangers." Indian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas lends her soothing voice to serve as the narrator for "Tiger." The film is out now for all animal admirers to enjoy! (Disney+)

"Brandy Hellville & the Cult of Fashion" (TV-MA) -- It's quite the week for documentaries! The final selection for this week is an eye-opening, original documentary from HBO that explores the fast-fashion brand Brandy Melville. The clothing company took off thanks to the help of social media sites like Instagram and Tumblr, where thousands of teens would post pictures in Brandy Melville's clothes and instantly garner lots of attention from other teens worldwide. However, the company's practices are put under the microscope in this doc, due to allegations of discrimination and inappropriate behavior with minors that track back to the brand's founder and CEO Stephan Marsan. Out now. (Max)



"Thank You, Goodnight: The Bon Jovi Story" is a docuseries about one of the biggest rock bands of the past 40 years." Courtesy of Hulu

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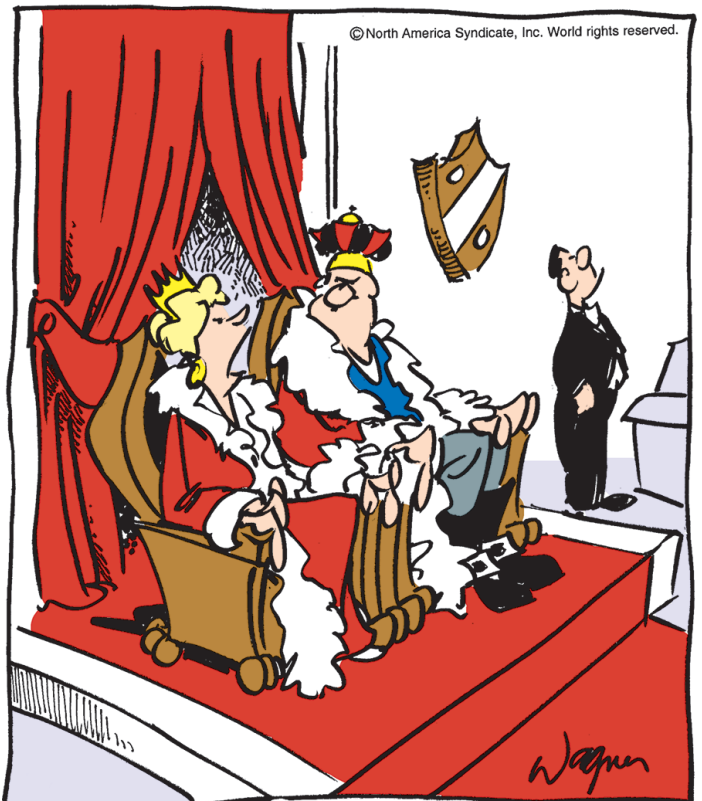


1. Name the three Chipmunks. Which one wanted the hula hoop for Christmas?
2. Which artist wrote and released "Honey Don't"?
3. Was there a real MacArthur Park, as in the song written by Jimmy Webb and recorded by Richard Harris?
4. What was the first release by Bread?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "If you want it you can have it, That's what you said, But I don't want the things that you leave behind."

Answers

1. Alvin, Simon and Theodore. It was Alvin who wanted the hula hoop. The animated singing trio was first created in 1958 with the novelty song "Christmas Don't Be Late."
 2. Carl Perkins in 1956. The song was issued as a b-side to "Blue Suede Shoes" and has been covered by dozens of artists over the years.
 3. Yes, in Los Angeles. The song includes all the things Webb saw around him when he was at the park, including cake left out in the rain.
 4. "Dismal Day," which got a fairly dismal response when it was released in 1969, only reaching No. 127 on the charts.
 5. "Heaven Help Me," by Deon Estus, in 1989. "Heaven" was a single from his only album, "Spell."
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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}



Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



"You were more fun when you were a prince!"

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

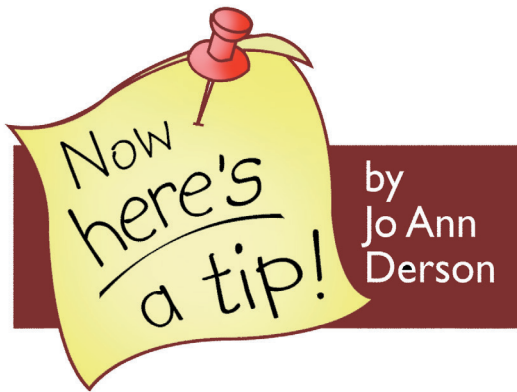


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Differences: 1. Paper is missing. 2. Foot is missing. 3. Collar is added. 4. Phone is moved. 5. Desk legs are longer. 6. Man is standing straighter.

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* It's tough to eat home-cooked meals as a single eater. Most recipes are geared for multiple portions, and you probably don't want to eat the same thing for five days straight. Try this: Get together with some friends and have a potluck. Each guest brings an entree and at least two side dishes, in extra-large portions, and his or her own leftovers containers. Split the food up amongst the guests, packaged as meals. Everyone can cook once and eat for a week.

* "If your baby gets very rashy on her backside, try to give her some 'air time' each day. Just an hour a day with no diaper has made a big difference in my baby girl's rash." -- H.P. in Illinois

* "Leftover dry erase calendars make good bingo card bases.

Cut out a five by five section, and use a permanent marker to fill the squares with small random numbers. Make matching call cards from the unused squares. Place the call cards in a sandwich baggie and the rest in a larger plastic bag. Include a couple dry erase markers, and you have a set that can be used anywhere (ours is in the car) over and over again." -- E.W. and S.D. in Oregon

* Did you have too much summer fun last year? Be ready to soothe that sunkissed skin this year with frozen aloe vera. Use an ice-cube tray to freeze aloe vera gel, and let the soothing begin!

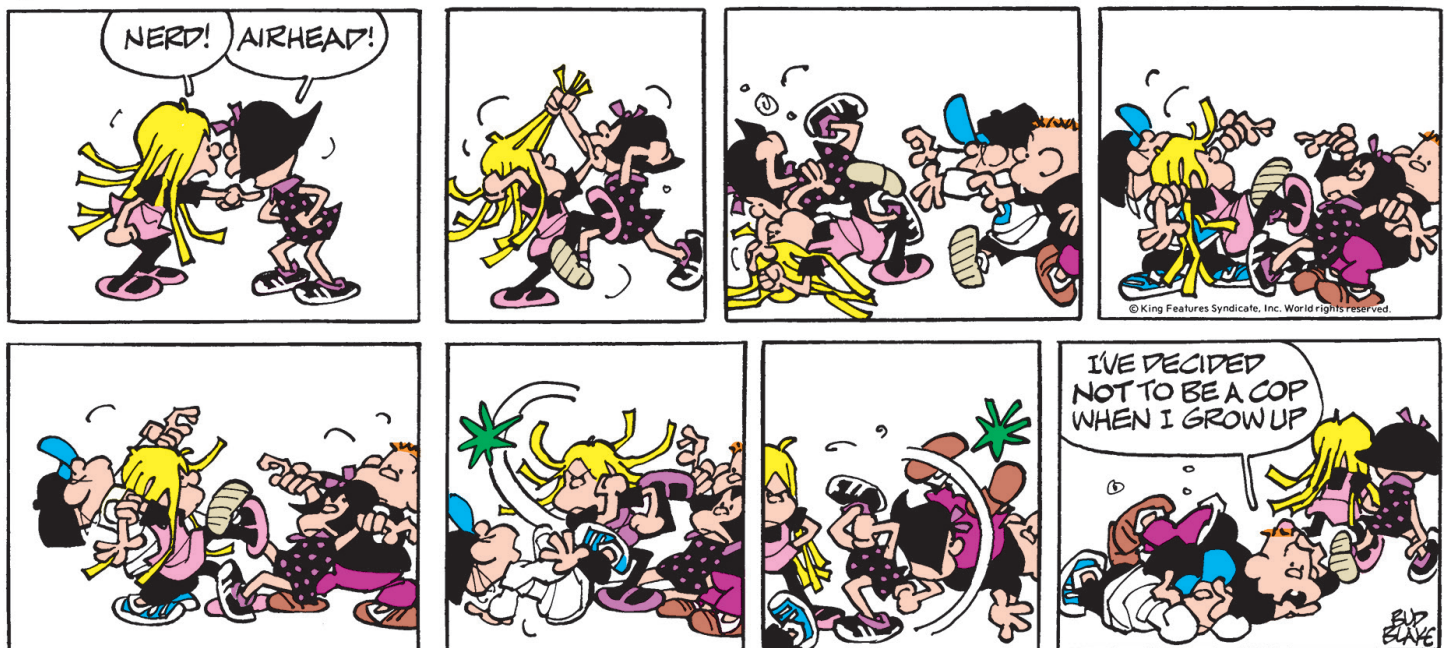
* Control kids' artwork with a digital photo album. Take photos of the best pictures of the month, then arrange them in a scrapbook template and print them out. Keep the pages in a three-ring binder. Label with the child's name.

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

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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 "House" actor Omar
- 5 Nick and Nora's dog
- 9 Mountain pass
- 12 Mend socks
- 13 "— to differ!"
- 14 Flamenco cheer
- 15 Marmaduke, for one
- 17 Allow
- 18 Realm
- 19 Protuberances
- 21 French article
- 22 Filled fully
- 24 Gear teeth
- 27 Understood
- 28 Hoodwink
- 31 Scary cry
- 32 Flying saucer
- 33 Perch
- 34 Attempt
- 36 Knock
- 37 School support orgs.
- 38 Object (to)
- 40 Battery size
- 41 Ibsen's Gabler
- 43 Golfer Sorenstam
- 47 Land in la mer
- 48 Bruce Springsteen hit
- 51 JFK regulator
- 52 "Her" actress Rooney

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		
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- 53 Taj Mahal site
- 54 Unwell
- 55 Melville mariner
- 56 Detergent
- DOWN**
- 1 Rim
- 2 Italian cheese, for short
- 3 Ready, as for surgery
- 4 Slowpokes
- 5 Staffer
- 6 Govt. loan agcy.
- 7 Toe count
- 8 Representative
- 9 Pricey powder
- 10 Sheltered
- 11 Favorites
- 16 Three, in Rome
- 20 British ref. work
- 22 To date
- 23 Perched on
- 24 "NCIS" ailer
- 25 Sound of delight
- 26 Bargain
- 27 Mentor
- 29 Zadora of "Hairspray"
- 30 Roswell visitors
- 35 Slugger Williams
- 37 Bamboo eaters
- 39 Molten rock
- 40 Some
- 41 LP player
- 42 Israeli airline
- 43 Basra resident
- 44 Shakespeare villain
- 45 Actress Sedgwick
- 46 Pronto
- 49 — -di-dah
- 50 Mouths (Lat.)

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— King Crossword —

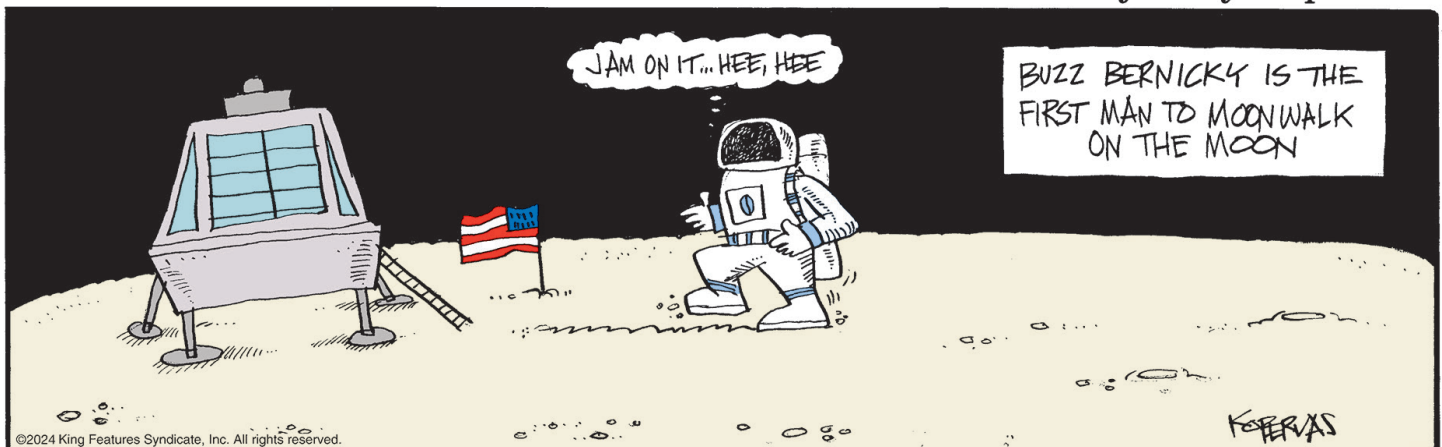
Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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B	O	O			U	F	O			S	I	T	
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F	A	A			M	A	R	A		A	G	R	A
I	L	L			A	H	A	B		S	O	A	P

Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS
POPEYE
 BY RANDY MILHOLLAND

THERE'S A FIGHT TOURNAMENT IN TOWN! YOU COULD WIN MONEY!

JUST 'CUZ I AM GOOD AT SOMETHING DOESN'T MEAN I GOTTA SULLY IT WITH MONEY, BRUTUS.

I'M NOT TALKIN' ABOUT THINGS YOU'RE GOOD AT, BLUTO. I'M TALKIN' ABOUT FIGHTING.

THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS
'ENUFFS FISTICUFFS!' PART 6

NOW THAT HE'S MADE COMBAT ILLEGAL IN SWEETHAVEN, PROF. KILPH IS SECRETLY RUNNING A FIGHTING TOURNAMENT IN HOPES OF TRAPPING POPEYE AND ARRESTING HIM.

IT LOOKS LIKE HALF OF THE TOWN SHOWED UP TO FIGHT!

POPEYE HAS TO BE AMONGST THEM!

SIR, IF I MAY SPEAK FREELY, THIS OBSESSION IS GOING TO BLOW UP IN YOUR FACE. YOU NEED TO STOP IT NOW.

I APPRECIATE YOUR CANDOR. ALSO, I'LL BE CUTTING YOUR SALARY IN HALF.

SPEAKING FREELY CERTAINLY IS EXPENSIVE.

TOTALLY ABANDONED FACTORY

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MEANWHILE....

POPEYE?!

I'M AFRAID YOU'RE MISTAKEN, PAPPY. THIS IS EL PUÑO VERDE, THE MASKED PUMMELER OF PUDDLEBURG.

ME BOY'S GOTSK A DISTINK JAWLINE! HOW'D YE GIT HIM INTO THIS MESS, WIMPY?

YOU IMPUGN MY CHARACTER, SIR. I SHALL EXPECT AN APOLOGY HAMBURGER.

POPEYE'S A GOODY-GOODY. HE DON'TSK BREAK NO LAW, SO YE MUSTA TRICKED 'EM!

FIFTY ON TH' GEEK IN GREEN.

BETS

WE LEAVES ME NO CHOICE BUT T'TAKE DECISIVE ACTION!

BARNEY GOOGLE AND
SNUFFY SMITH

MY PILLAR'S SORELY IN NEED OF MORE STUFFIN' !!

WHO'D LIKE TO DONATE ?!

I GAVE UP TRYIN' T'GIT LUKEY OUTTA BED EARLY IN TH' MORNIN' YEARS AGO !!

YEP !! SAME HERE WIF MY SNUFFY !!

I SWEAR IT'D TAKE A MAGGYTUDE SIX EARTHQUAKE T'GIT HIM OUT FROM UNDER THEM COVERS !!

JOHN ROSE

4-30

RUMBLE !! RRRUMBLE !!

I STAND KERRRECTED !!

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SIR ROGER, WHO HAS RUINED LOCKBRAMBLE, FLEES THE REBELLIOUS MOB INSPIRED BY RHODA RED HOOD. VAL AND GAWAIN GIVE CHASE, PURSUING HIM TO THE GUARDS' ENTRANCE UNDER THE CASTLE BRIDGE.



INSIDE THE GREAT BRIDGE, ROGER PLOTS HIS ESCAPE TO THE CASTLE STABLES AND OUT THE POSTERN GATE - BUT THEN HE HEARS THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS BELOW.

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"IT IS THOSE INTERLOPERS FROM CAMELOT!" HE HISSES TO BARMUS. "HERE, ON THESE DARK STAIRS, WE HAVE THE ADVANTAGE - WE MUST STOP THEM NOW!"



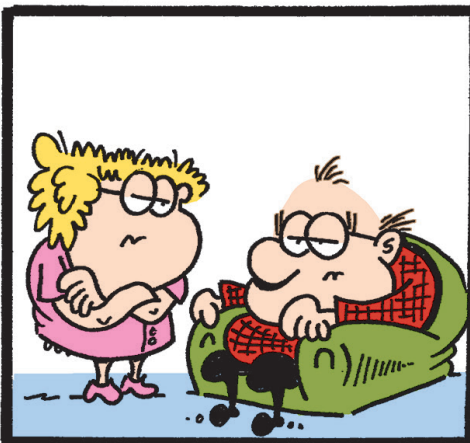
THEN VAL AND GAWAIN ARE UPON THEM - THE FOREMOST GUARD SWINGS QUICKLY BUT AWKWARDLY. VAL HAS FOUGHT IN NARROW PLACES BEFORE AND KNOWS THAT THE SHORT BLADE IS BETTER-SUITED HERE.

IN THE GLOOM ABOVE, VAL SPIES THE REARMOST FIGURE ABANDONING HIS FELLOWS - OF COURSE THAT WOULD BE SIR ROGER!

NEXT: Split decision

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Walking Is Beneficial

We need to move more. They call it an inactive lifestyle when we get very little exercise and do a lot of sitting. Whether we're sitting in front of a computer, or watching TV, or even riding in a car for long hours, sitting is sitting, and too much of it isn't good for us.

Here are just a few medical problems that can come from too much sitting around: diabetes, high blood pressure and osteoporosis. And stroke and high cholesterol and the list goes on.

Are you ready to get moving yet? It's easy to start. Walking can be one of the most beneficial forms of exercise, and the benefits can be life changing: stronger bones and muscles, lower blood sugar, improved quality of sleep and much more.

Ask your doctor how many steps you need to take each day and how many minutes of exercise you need per week because -- believe it or not -- there is a risk of too much exercise. The often-quoted 150 minutes of exercise per week or 10,000 steps per day might not apply to you.

If your doctor adheres to the standard advice (thousands of steps per day), fear not. The internet is loaded with suggestions and videos aimed at seniors, and it's a good place to start for walking ideas.

If you live in a building with an elevator, stop it one floor below where you normally get off. Walk up the rest of the way.

If you have a big box store near you, use the aisles as your personal track, or make a circuit of the store once or twice.

Leave your car at the other end of a parking lot.

If you're just now beginning a walking program, start small but set attainable goals. And as always, when you exercise, stay hydrated!

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1. Name the 2011 WNBA Rookie of the Year who won four championships from 2011-17 with the Minnesota Lynx.

2. What Kansas City Chiefs wide receiver caught the game-winning touchdown in overtime to seal the Chiefs' 25-22 victory over the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl LVIII?

3. What golf course on Long Island, New York, hosted the U.S. Open Championship in 1896, 1986, 1995, 2004 and 2018?

4. Tennis player Andre Agassi was married to what model/actress from 1997-99?

5. What motorsports track, site of the Formula 1 United States Grand Prix beginning in 2012, is located in Austin, Texas?

6. Who was head coach of the Oakland/Los Angeles Raiders when the team won Super Bowls XV and XVIII?

7. In the 1970s, sports figures Bob Uecker, Joe Frazier, John Madden, Boog Powell, Bubba Smith, Billy Martin and George Steinbrenner appeared in TV commercials for what brand of beer?



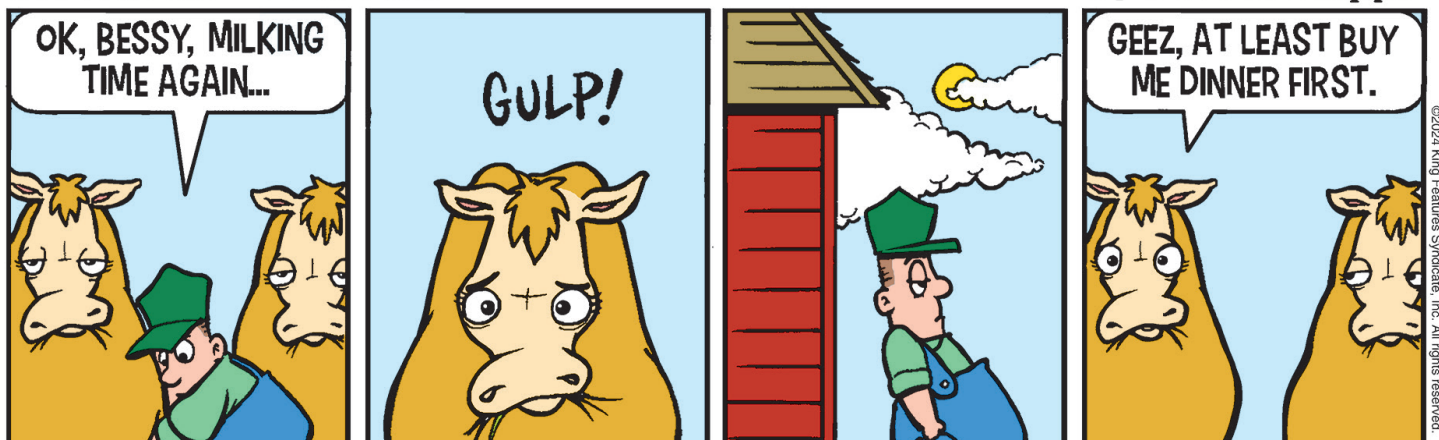
Answers

1. Maya Moore.
2. Mecole Hardman Jr.
3. Shinnecock Hills Golf Club.
4. Brooke Shields.
5. Circuit of the Americas.
6. Tom Flores.
7. Miller Lite.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





How to Greet Other Dogs on the Street

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I adopted a sweet but somewhat rambunctious little mutt, "Karla," who is about 13 months old. The problem is that she wants to jump and bark at other dogs when we're out for a walk. How can I calm her down? -- Jen in Duluth, Georgia

DEAR JEN: Reactivity is natural behavior for a puppy that loves to play with other dogs, but of course, it's not desirable behavior. Jumping and barking can trigger an aggressive response from some dogs, or stress out other dogs. It can scare humans.

Fortunately, it's a behavior that you can moderate with a specific, daily training regime that will teach Karla to

stay calm on the leash.

First, gather your tools: A sturdy leash that is about 5 feet long (no retractable leashes allowed), a harness and a pocketful of Karla's favorite treats, cut into tiny pieces. I recommend the harness over a collar because it allows you to strongly control Karla if she starts jumping, without risking an injury to her throat.

Next, teach and reinforce three crucial commands: sit, stay and heel. From the moment you put on Karla's harness and leash, to when you take them off at the end of the walk, she needs to follow your commands. Karla should sit calmly while you attach and remove the leash. During the walk, she should remain next to you, with a little slack in the leash. If she starts to tug ahead, stop, command her to sit and, once she sits, start off again, giving the command "heel."

Keep the training positive, and remember that it will take time and consistency. As she learns what you expect from her, Karla will become a great walking companion.

Readers, how do you keep your dog calm on a walk? Let us know at ask@pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

* The Aztec death whistle produces a horrifying sound sometimes described as "the scream of a thousand corpses."

* "Miracle" berries stop human taste buds from discerning sourness for about 30 minutes.

* Beginning in June of 1979, as Skylab's re-entry approached, many American newspapers jokingly proposed "Skylab insurance," which would pay their subscribers for death or injury caused by flying orbiter fragments.

* There's a territory in Costa Rica called Territorio de Zaguates, or Land of the Strays, which is basically a huge, no-kill dog shelter where one can hike for free with the canines.

* And while we're on the subject of dogs: "Dogfooding" is the term for using a company's product to gain the trust of customers. It's said a dog food company president ate a can of the firm's food in a shareholders meeting to demonstrate that "if it's good for me, it's good for your dog." We'll take his word for it, thank you.

* The fertilizer used by the tobacco industry is radioactive.


* In 1970, actor Bill Murray joked to a fellow airline passenger that he had two bombs in his bag. The jest backfired when U.S. marshals searched his luggage, discovered \$20,000 worth of marijuana, and arrested him.

* The Black Diamond is a rare (and expensive) apple, with its jet-black hue, sweeter-than-honey taste, and crispness unmatched by any other apple. But don't look for it in your local grocery store; you'll only find this gem in Tibet.

* De-scented skunks make great pets, similar to ferrets. They're extremely docile and can even learn tricks and be called by name.

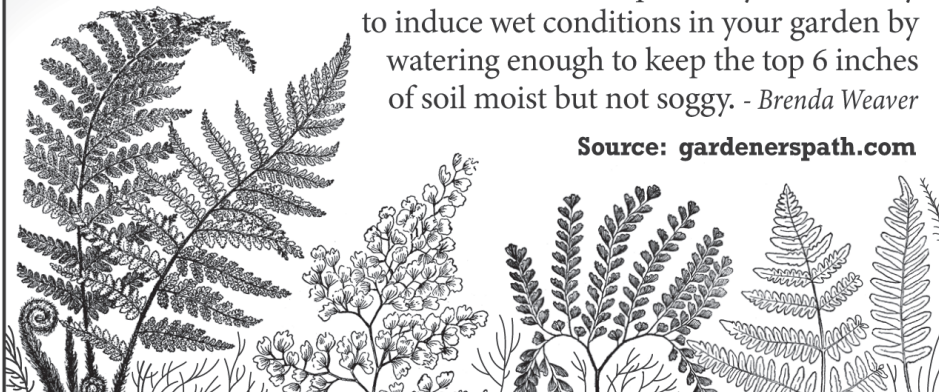
* Louis Chevrolet died bankrupt and poor working as a mechanic for the company he started.

Thought for the Day: "Don't spend time beating on a wall, hoping to turn it into a door." -- Coco Chanel
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Ferns generally prefer soil that is more acidic than alkaline, with lots of decaying organic matter and filtered light. Ferns prefer a highly moist environment, such as in a wetlands or along a water source, so if rain is infrequent in your area, try to induce wet conditions in your garden by watering enough to keep the top 6 inches of soil moist but not soggy. - Brenda Weaver

Source: gardenerspath.com





by Freddy Groves

Stolen Valor, Stolen Benefits

How, one wonders, does something like this happen? How does a civilian collect \$146,000 in VA benefits for allegedly having been wounded and held a prisoner of war in Iraq when he's never even served in the military?

It's one thing to walk around with fake military medals pinned to your chest or to tell tall tales in a bar, but how does all the rest slip by? And for so long?

The story: A civilian has been charged with taking education, health and disability benefits after he claimed to be a Marine who was wounded in combat and held as a prisoner of war in Iraq. He claimed to have been wounded in an IED (improvised explosive device) attack and was then captured. He claimed he'd been awarded the Purple Heart, Prisoner of War medal and several others.

To apply for all those benefits and cash, he would have needed a DD214 as well as other paperwork. To keep from delaying the handing out of benefits and cash, the VA lets veterans use their own documents when they submit applications.

Sometimes people lie and turn in fake documents. Over time he turned in a pile of those fake documents, including the DD214 and certificates for his stack of alleged medals.

But that's where this criminal's story should have fallen apart. I can see accepting a veteran's initial documents to get him started on the benefits, but to let the fraud go on for five long years? Surely someone could have looked up the details to verify the Purple Heart and prisoner of war status? Did no one bother to check to see if he'd even been in the military?

Eventually the criminal got greedy and applied for educational benefits on top of the cash he received each month for his alleged physical injuries, receiving monthly subsistence payments and payments to the university.

If that wasn't enough, he then applied for an increase in the disability payments.

How is it no one spotted this fraud long ago?

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Wishing Well®

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A	C	W	B	F	O	M	N	L	S	O	O	T
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R	U	S	A	I	K	L	Y	D	P	O	S	E
6	7	3	5	7	5	3	5	4	2	6	5	2
I	I	R	F	C	L	A	O	L	A	S	V	C
8	7	4	3	8	4	2	3	8	7	4	5	7
R	E	O	L	O	W	T	L	G	N	I	E	J
2	3	7	8	2	7	8	3	7	4	2	3	8
I	O	O	R	V	Y	E	P	E	N	E	T	S
3	4	7	3	4	3	4	3	6	8	4	6	4
I	T	D	O	U	N	I	S	S	S	T	F	I
8	4	6	4	6	8	6	8	6	8	6	8	8
I	O	U	N	L	S	D	M	A	A	Y	D	E

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.

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- LITERATURE: What are the names of the four sisters in "Little Women"?
- U.S. STATES: Which northeastern state has a desert?
- MOVIES: Which long-running movie series features the character Legolas?
- ANATOMY: What does the lacrimal gland produce?
- GEOGRAPHY: Ellesmere Island belongs to which nation?
- SCIENCE: Which of the human senses is most closely related to memory?
- LANGUAGE: What does the Latin phrase "ad meliora" mean?
- TELEVISION: Which TV sitcom features a mom named Rainbow Johnson?
- THEATER: Who wrote the play "A Little Night Music"?
- MUSIC: Which alternative rock band went by the name of The Warlocks before becoming famous?

Answers

- Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy.
- The 40-acre Desert of Maine.
- "The Lord of the Rings" and "The Hobbit" trilogies.
- Tears.
- Canada.
- Smell.
- "Toward better things."
- "Black-ish."
- Stephen Sondheim.
- The Grateful Dead.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

From a young age, my mom and dad taught me that the Bible teaches us to pray for the Holy Land of Israel. In the face of brazen and callous attacks from those hell bent on the inhalation of the Jews, I pray for God's chosen people even more today.

Israel has been the victim of many horrific attacks in the last six months – most recently by the nation of Iran. They are the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism and openly profess hatred for democracy, Freedom, and basic human rights.

I am calling on the Biden Administration to stand up for these shared principles and hold Iran accountable for their heinous acts.

Unfortunately and inexplicably, not everyone agrees.

Since the horrific terrorist attacks on Israel on October 7th, 2023, antisemitism has been on the rise around the world, including right here in the United States. We have seen antisemitic acts of hate in places of work, in kids' schools, and on college campuses. There has been footage of people cheering when the news broke that Iran attacked Israel. We have people chanting "Death to America" and "Death to Israel." People are burning the American flag and instead waving the flag of Hamas, a known terrorist organization.

Anti-Israel protestors have also blocked bridges and roads in major cities across the country – from blocking the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, to stopping traffic in New York City and Chicago. This is against the law, and these individuals should be held accountable.

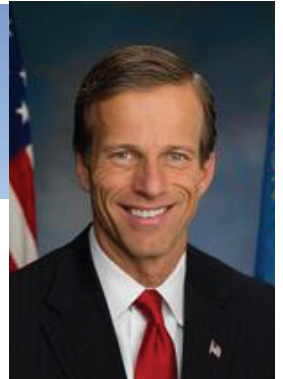
It's astounding how foolish these antisemitic, Anti-America "protestors" are. We are so deeply blessed to live in this great country. The reality is, if these ignorant people tried to voice a complaint that was at odds with any of the governments in the terrorist nations they support, they'd be tortured or killed. America uniquely affords us the Freedom of speech, the Freedom to practice any religion we want, and the Freedom to assemble and protest. But rather than appreciating those privileges, these protestors are burning Old Glory and opting instead to wave the flag of terrorists who would certainly never grant them the same Freedoms.

South Dakota proudly stands with Israel. We have never turned our back on the Holy Land, and we certainly are not going to start now. I was proud to sign historic legislation this session to stop antisemitic acts of hatred in our state. The bill clearly defines antisemitism and makes it easier to prove when discriminatory conduct is motivated by antisemitism. This important and impactful legislation will ensure the safety of Jewish people in our state and strengthen South Dakota's anti-discrimination laws.

Since signing that bill into law, my office has been inundated with antisemitic hatred and even violent threats. But we will stand firm. I hope that bill can serve as model legislation for other states. It's time for leaders to step up and do all that we can to protect our Jewish communities from the devastating hate we see happening across our country and around the world.

I hope you will join me in praying for Israel. I pray for the strength of God's chosen people. And I pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Senate Democrats Can't Sweep the Border Crisis Under the Rug

For the 22nd time in American history, the U.S. House of Representatives impeached a federal official: U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. The House put forward serious charges regarding the secretary's actions as a chief architect of the Biden administration's lax border security regime. The case deserved to be heard and decided on the merits, but the Senate was not given a chance to do so. Instead, Senate Democrats chose to rush to dismiss the charges without a trial.

Secretary Mayorkas and President Biden have presided over the worst border crisis on record: three successive years of record-breaking illegal immigration. If the current trajectory holds, we'll have yet another new record this year. While there are many factors that affect migrant flows, the current border crisis is the result of actions that this administration has taken or failed to take. Border security has been dismantled. Asylum and parole programs have been abused to effectively provide amnesty to hundreds of thousands of individuals. And we've seen the unfortunate effects of illegal drugs and criminals that have come across the border and wreaked havoc in communities nationwide.

In total, 7.6 million illegal immigrants have been encountered at the southern border. Another 1.8 million known gotaways, who evaded authorities at the border, have entered the country, in addition to those that weren't detected at all. It's the gotaways that the chief of Border Patrol says keep him up at night. In just the last six months, 75 individuals on the terrorist watch list were caught trying to cross the border illegally. How many dangerous individuals have entered without being caught?

The border crisis is a national security crisis caused by the actions of this administration. Many Americans are concerned about the situation at the border, and the American people deserve accountability on this issue. The House of Representatives put forward serious charges, and it should not have been too much to ask that the Senate take this matter seriously, examine the facts, and render a verdict. But instead Senate Democrats chose to sweep the charges under the rug to avoid confronting the border crisis and its causes.

While Democrats may have effectively made the charges disappear, they can't obscure the failures of Secretary Mayorkas and President Biden. Unfortunately, the border crisis continues, and its effects are far-reaching. Every state is effectively a border state. Cities far from the border are reeling from an influx of migrants. And deadly fentanyl continues to plague too many communities.

The president and Secretary Mayorkas have demonstrated their unwillingness to use their power to stem the flow of illegal immigration, and there appears to be no end in sight for this border crisis. There needs to be accountability for this crisis and its potentially dangerous consequences. My Republican colleagues and I will continue to hold the administration accountable and work to secure the border.

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



Great Faces, Great Places

BIG Update

Gas prices have increased more than 50% since President Biden took office. One way to combat the high prices is to allow more renewable fuel options at the pump. But without action from the EPA, South Dakotans can't access E15 ethanol in the summer months due to a D.C. Circuit Court decision on the Clean Air Act in July of 2021.

I recently urged the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to allow drivers cleaner, cheaper E15 fuel during the summer driving season. I'm pleased to share the EPA heeded our request and announced its waiver for the sale of E15 during summer months (June 1 – September 15). This is great news for consumers and ethanol producers. This decision will also bolster America's energy security by adding billions of gallons of ethanol to our fuel supply.

BIG News

Last weekend, Iran launched its first direct attack on Israel. Hundreds of drones and missiles were shot towards Israel. Thankfully, Israel and its allies were able to intercept almost all projectiles, minimizing damage and saving countless lives. President Biden and his Administration have failed to take a strong stance in support of our ally Israel, and even told them not to strike back. In September 2023, Biden released \$6 billion to Iran and just two months later, released another \$10 billion in sanctions, fueling their ability to strike Israel at this capacity.

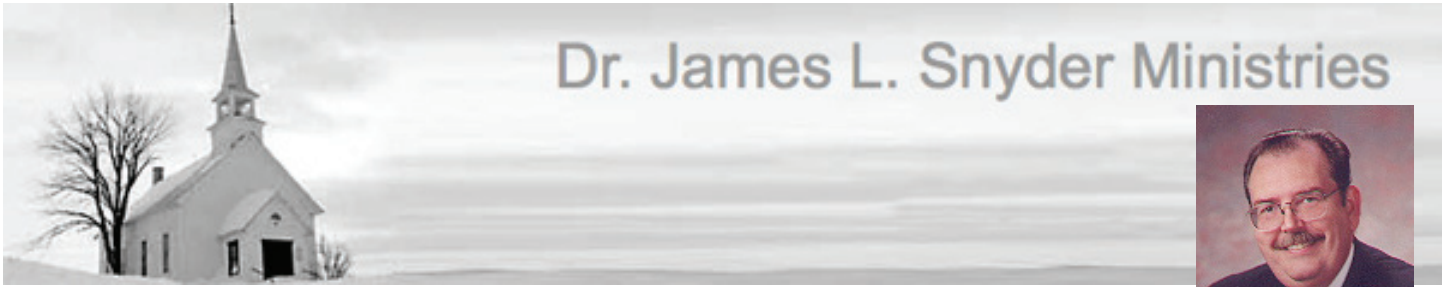
In stark contrast to the Administration's actions, Congress passed 17 bills in support of Israel and condemning Iran this week. Iran and their leaders must be held accountable, and America must stand with our ally, Israel..

BIG Idea

This week, I was joined by many health care professionals from Avera, American College of Surgeons, South Dakota Association of Health Care Organizations, Home Care Association of America, and more. Many of the groups discussed the unfair Medicare physician fee schedule. We discussed policy solutions like the Strengthening Medicare for Patients and Providers Act to adjust the reimbursements for inflation.

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Who Doesn't Like Baloney?

When I was young, my favorite sandwich was the baloney sandwich. Sometimes, with cheese and other things, but most importantly, baloney. I can't imagine what my childhood would have been like without those bologna sandwiches. Until I went to school, I thought my mother had invented the baloney sandwich.

My mother even prepared bologna sandwiches for my school lunch. Just about every boy in my class had baloney sandwiches for their lunch. I remember we would trade around and eat each other's baloney sandwiches. If there was a sandwich contest, nobody really won because the baloney sandwich is a reward in itself. It's hard to find a better lunch.

It's been a long time since I've had a simple baloney sandwich for lunch. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is a culinary expert specializing in making delicious meals. The simple baloney sandwich would not necessarily be on her menu.

Sometimes, the simple things in life are the best things.

We were talking about something the other night. I'm not sure if it was politics or sports, but I expressed my opinion as clearly as possible. When I was through, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage just looked at me momentarily and said, "You do know that you're full of baloney?"

At that point, I didn't know if she was complimenting or criticizing me. From my point of view, baloney would be a high compliment. I did not pursue that then, but just let it go. An important lesson I have learned is that there are times just to let things go. This was one of those times.

Last week, I thought about pulling a little prank on her. I don't know what I was thinking but I waited until she was in her craft room. I walked in and began looking around. Believe me, there is a lot to look at, and I'm not sure what I was looking at.

"What are you doing in here? Are you looking for something?"

Looking at her with a serious glare, I said, "I was just thinking that maybe I could come and help you organize your craft room. I have a lot of ideas of how you can make this a better organized craft room."

The fact that I was in the craft room was a project in itself. If I ever went in there alone, I probably would get lost and never be found until she came into the craft room herself. If there ever is a time when I seem to disappear, just look in her craft room.

I then began to tell her some of the things I would do to help reorganize her craft room.

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She just sat there staring at me with one of "her stares," and just let me go on talking.

When I finished, I looked at her, smiled, and said, "So, what do you think?"

"What do I think?" responded The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. "Let me tell you what I think. I think you are full of baloney. I do not need any help organizing my craft room, especially from you."

I graciously left the craft room smiling and headed for my easy chair to enjoy my prank.

For me to reorganize her craft room would've been so far over the moon that I was starting to think I really was full of baloney.

A few days later, I was working in my office, and she stepped in for a moment and began looking all around at my bookshelves. For a few moments, all she did was look around at my books. Then she said, "I think I can help you reorganize your office here."

At that point, I didn't really know what to say because I did not need any help reorganizing my books. I looked at her and said, "Do you think I'm full of baloney?"

She laughed at me and said, "Yes, I do think you're full of baloney." And then she left the office laughing and went back into the kitchen.

It's amazing that we both live in our own worlds. Her craft room is at one end of the house, and my office and library are at the other end of the house, and the twain never shall meet.

I had to think about that for some time because, after 53 years of marital bliss, we have never had a major conflict. Oh yes, there is the Apple Fritter and broccoli issue that still continues. But that's about as bad as it ever got.

I wouldn't say this to her, but I'm kind of thinking that might it might be that my baloney is one of the secrets of our good marriage. After all, what else is there?

The best celebration we could ever have, in my opinion, is a bologna sandwich lunch. That would make my day, but I'm not sure she could handle all that baloney. Then, of course, she's handled me for 53 years. If she can handle that much baloney, she can handle anything.

I then thought of a verse of scripture on this subject. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3).

Thinking of this, it occurred to me how important agreeing really is in all relationships. Yes, there are certain things to disagree about. But, the key is what do we really agree about. Those things we agree on will establish a relationship of unity.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What is “pre-bunking” when it comes to climate change? -- J.D., Albany, NY

The act of pre-bunking has grown in popularity, especially since the 2020 election. It is a way to combat misinformation by warning people about it before they encounter it online or in real life. It attempts to anticipate false claims and provide accurate information to counter them. The strategy comes from a branch of social psychology research called inoculation theory. The theory is similar to that of countering vaccination conspiracies. If you can learn more about a certain topic, you will be more prepared in the future to think critically about any information regarding said topic.



Pre-bunking — combating misinformation by warning people about it before they encounter it online or in real life — is increasingly being used by climate activists. Credit: Pexels.com,

Despite increasing physical and scientific evidence proving climate change, misinformation still spreads like wildfire. Politicians and conspiracy theorists consistently spread false information online and offline. While debunking misinformation is a commonly used tool it often doesn't work well enough to fully combat the issue. You also run the risk of giving misinformation credibility when you have to debunk it.

Pre-bunking focuses on targeting broader concepts rather than specific claims. When specific claims are targeted, it is hard to avoid triggering partisan or emotional reactions. In order to successfully utilize pre-bunking, you must first choose which lie to pre-bunk. Some misinformation is more dangerous than others, so it is important to choose the lie that will be most impactful to dispel. One of the most effective techniques is to then create a “truth sandwich.” Lead with the facts of the matter, then introduce the lie and why someone would lie about it. Lastly, end the sandwich with another fact.

Here's an example of a common claim and how to pre-bunk it: One claim is that the government was using wildfires as an excuse to increase climate regulations. To pre-bunk this claim first it must be explained that this theory is likely to circulate. Second, point out how conspiracy theorists used the same idea to claim that COVID-19 lockdowns were a government scheme to prepare people for climate lockdowns, an event that never happened. Last, show how government agencies often communicate openly about the reasoning behind climate regulations and how they are utilized to avoid the maximum damage.

How effective is pre-bunking really? Enough evidence supports the use of pre-bunking that Twitter and Google are both embracing the strategy on their platforms. At Google a team of academic psychologists have conducted experiments using 90-second videos explaining common misinformation tactics. The study found that showing people the videos made them better at spotting misinformation tactics, and less likely to circulate posts containing these tactics. Giving people the tools to spot and critique content online is crucial to fighting misinformation. Like anything else, pre-bunking isn't a guaranteed solution.

Misinformation isn't going to just disappear, but unless attempts are made to combat it, misinformation will only grow stronger.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Cannabis advocates hope 420 'holiday' pushes petition drive to success

Signature collections lagging as May 7 deadline approaches

BY: JOHN HULT - APRIL 20, 2024 6:00 AM

Cannabis advocates in South Dakota hope today's unofficial pot holiday and its associated concerts and dispensary discounts will improve the odds of getting recreational marijuana on the general election ballot in November.

April 20 is widely celebrated in the cannabis community as "420," and dispensaries in South Dakota are taking advantage of the date to offer special deals to medical marijuana patients.

The number began its evolution from an inside joke into an international code for pot culture after 1971. That was the year a group of high school kids in California began to meet at 4:20 p.m. after school to smoke marijuana. One of those students wound up working with the band The Grateful Dead, whose members and fans adopted the shorthand. The number eventually caught the attention of a reporter for the marijuana-centric High Times magazine, who put it in the publication and presented it to a wide audience.

Events double as petition drives

The events in South Dakota extend beyond dispensaries. Big's Bar in Sioux Falls will host its fourth annual 420 fest tonight, with music from local acts Tuff Roots and Denham. ICON Lounge will host comedian Sarah King that night, and the Hello Hi bar will host DJ Relic.

The events and dispensary discount sales will double as signature drives this year. South Dakotans for Better Marijuana Laws aims to collect 27,000 petition signatures in hopes of hitting the required 17,508 needed from registered voters to make the ballot. Signatures must be delivered to the Secretary of State's Office by May 7.

At last count, the group had 12,500 signatures, said Matthew Schweich, who leads the marijuana law advocacy group.

"I am a little nervous about our total signature count," Schweich told South Dakota Searchlight this week. "I think it's really important that supporters of cannabis reforms are not complacent. With less than three weekends to go, I'm hoping we can have a big weekend."

The group has held drive-through petition signing events, Schweich said, to bolster the work of its paid petition circulators.

Nearly every dispensary in the state also keeps signature sheets on hand. But Schweich said it's clear that not all of the 13,581 medical marijuana cardholders in the state have signed the petitions.

Schweich hopes this weekend will change that.

"The reason patients can go to these dispensaries this weekend and purchase cannabis that's safe and regulated is because of advocates," Schweich said, whose organization launched the website LegalizeSD.com to help its supporters find petition locations. "If you're going to enjoy the benefits of this excellent policy, it behooves you to support this work."

Dispensary owners have done more than make petitions available, according to Kittridge Jeffries, owner of Puffy's Dispensary shops in Rapid City and Sturgis.

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Jeffries and others collect signatures as volunteers for Grow South Dakota, another state-level marijuana reform group.

"We've been collecting like crazy," Jeffries said on Thursday, as he worked to get his shop "all pretty" for what he expects will be a busy weekend. "I've been putting a lot of miles on the car these last few weeks."

On Wednesday night, for example, Jeffries said he was out collecting signatures at "Stoner Bingo," a weekly game at Aby's bar in Rapid City. Aby's will host a special session of Stoner Bingo today in recognition of the pot holiday.

Jeffries is confident that the people of South Dakota will ultimately back recreational marijuana, which he said will keep the state from spending money to police adult pot use. Voters previously approved recreational and medical marijuana in 2020, but the recreational portion of the ballot measure was invalidated in court.

"I think the people in South Dakota have spoken about freedom, and when we talk about freedom, we're talking about adults over the age of 21 being able to use marijuana in small amounts in a fashion they see fit," Jeffries said. "It fits right in line with South Dakota values of being the freest state in the country."

Medical pot card company supporting events

Moe Branson's organization is also backing the weekend petition push in Sioux Falls and Rapid City. Branson is the CEO of My Marijuana Cards, which he said is responsible for 70% of the medical marijuana cards issued in South Dakota. The organization has storefronts in Sioux Falls and Rapid City and a satellite office in Yankton where patients with the appropriate medical paperwork can meet with a medical provider to determine their eligibility.

Some patients get rejected, but Branson said his company wants to work with people who might be eligible but lack the appropriate records. South Dakota's major health systems have not embraced the issuance of medical marijuana cards, so Branson said the company's role is important for patient access.

"Just in general, we're here to help patients get their medical marijuana cards and reduce the stigma by providing education and information, around not just the state program, but around cannabis writ large."

The company has used the whole week as a "patient appreciation week," Branson said, and its storefronts will have cookies – without cannabis in them – today alongside recreational petitions and information on marijuana.

"We can always see it as an opportunity to get additional patients set up, but we'll always have petitions out," Branson said.

The company also has a South Dakota-specific section of its website for the "fun holiday." Among its offerings: a list of "42 weed movies for 420" and a page on the history of 420.

Branson suspects it will take time, even if recreational marijuana makes the ballot and is passed by voters, before the substance and its associated culture goes mainstream in South Dakota.

South Dakota lawmakers have added new requirements for medical marijuana during every session since voters passed a medical marijuana initiative in 2020.

"South Dakota's an interesting state," Branson said. "A lot of it depends on what the government wants to do. It's really going to take changing the minds of politicians."

Marijuana is legal for recreational use in 24 states and the District of Columbia. Medical cannabis is legal in all but 12 states. The drug remains illegal on the federal level.

The recreational marijuana measure is one of eight circulating for potential inclusion on the Nov. 5 ballot, including high-profile measures seeking open primaries, abortion rights and a repeal of sales taxes on food. The Legislature has also exercised its right to place two measures on the ballot: one would replace references to male officeholders in the state constitution with neutral language, and the other would ask voters to lift a prohibition against work requirements for Medicaid expansion enrollees.

John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

Johnson of SD votes yes but U.S. House fails to pass border bill

Legislation, intended as incentive for some in GOP to support foreign aid, fails to gain two-thirds support

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA - APRIL 20, 2024 2:09 PM

WASHINGTON — The U.S. House Saturday failed to pass a border security bill that Republican leadership intended as an incentive for conservatives to support a foreign aid package for Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan.

The border bill, turned down on a 215-199 vote, was brought to the floor under a fast-track procedure known as suspension of the rules that requires a two-thirds majority for passage. The conservatives it was meant to appeal to slammed it as a “show vote.”

Five Democrats, Donald G. Davis of North Carolina, Jared Golden of Maine, Vicente Gonzalez of Texas, Mary Peltola of Alaska and Marie Gluesenkamp Perez of Washington, voted with all Republicans present — including South Dakota Republican Dusty Johnson — in favor of the bill.

The border security bill — nearly identical to legislation House Republicans passed last year — was an attempt by House Speaker Mike Johnson of Louisiana to quell growing hard-right dissatisfaction prompted by his support for the \$95 billion foreign aid package expected to pass Saturday with the help of Democrats.

The measure is separate and not part of a package of three supplemental funding bills containing aid for Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan as well as another so-called sidecar bill dealing with TikTok. The Senate will be able to clear the foreign aid package and ignore the border security bill that closely resembles another House-passed border bill the Senate has not acted on.

Rather than quell their unrest, Speaker Johnson’s move produced only more ire from hard-right members. Three Republicans — Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia, Thomas Massie of Kentucky and Paul Gosar of Arizona — are already backing a move to oust Johnson through a motion to vacate.

During Friday’s floor debate, Democrats argued that the bill, H.R. 3602, was a rehash of H.R. 2, a bill House Republicans passed last year that would reinstate Trump-era immigration policies such as the construction of the border wall. Both bills would also require asylum seekers to remain in Mexico.

Border bill return

Republicans were largely in favor of the border bill, but several referred to the vote as a “sham” and admitted the bill would not pass in the Senate, which Democrats control.

“House Republicans are trying again to make our Democrat colleagues and President Biden take this border crisis seriously,” Alabama’s Barry Moore said.

The top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, Jerry Nadler of New York, said the bill was a “foolhardy attempt to pass for a second time one of the most draconian immigration bills this Congress has ever seen. This rehashing of H.R. 2 is a joke.”

“Republicans have proven that they want the issue more than they want solutions,” he said. “So here we are, again, taking a virtually same draconian bill as before, knowing that if it actually passes the House it will surely go nowhere in the Senate.”

Nadler argued if Republicans were serious about addressing immigration at the southern border, they would have supported the bipartisan border bill in the Senate, instead of rejecting it.

Three senators — Oklahoma Republican James Lankford, Connecticut Democrat Chris Murphy and Arizona independent Kyrsten Sinema — spent months crafting a bill that would overhaul immigration policy at the request of Senate Republicans who insisted border security provisions should be included in the foreign aid package.

But congressional Republicans walked away from it early this year at the urging of GOP presumptive presidential nominee Donald Trump, who was not supportive of the bill because he is centering his reelection campaign on immigration.

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The chair of the House Judiciary Committee, Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio, argued that the bill "isn't quite H.R. 2."

The bill is nearly identical to H.R. 2, but removes the mandate for employers to verify a worker's immigration status and employment eligibility, and includes about \$9 billion in grant programs for border states.

"Let's take a step in the direction of fixing it and pass this legislation," Jordan said of the southern border.

A 'sham'

Washington state Democrat and chair of the Progressive Congressional Caucus Pramila Jayapal said the bill was pointless.

"The majority could barely pass this legislation last year," she said, referring to the party-line vote in 2023. "And now it's going to magically pass it in the House with a two-thirds majority? Give me a break. This bill is going nowhere, so let's just be clear about that."

Texas Republican Chip Roy agreed that the bill would not become law, and expressed his frustration that the GOP would not try to leverage foreign aid money for it.

"Republicans continue to campaign on securing the border and then refuse to use any leverage to actually secure the border," Roy said. "We should get it signed into law but the only way to force Democrats to do it is to use leverage."

Arizona Republican Rep. Andy Biggs also agreed with Roy and Democrats that "this is a show vote."

Pennsylvania's GOP Rep. Scott Perry echoed similar remarks, but said he would still vote for the bill even though it's "designed to fail."

"But I want everybody to know it's a sham," Perry said.

Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her areas of coverage include politics and policy, lobbying, elections and campaign finance.

Aid to Ukraine, Israel approved by U.S. House with support from Johnson of SD

South Dakota representative supports foreign-aid package and TikTok ban

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - APRIL 20, 2024 2:18 PM

WASHINGTON — Military and humanitarian aid could be on its way to Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan within weeks after the U.S. House took a series of overwhelmingly bipartisan votes Saturday to approve \$95 billion in emergency assistance — and the Senate appeared poised to agree.

The approval in a rare weekend session ended months of deadlock. House GOP leaders struggled with whether they should block or provide aid amid ongoing wars in Israel and Ukraine as well as mounting concerns about China's approach to Taiwan.

The decision to debate aid to Ukraine, and pass the bill with a majority of the yes votes coming from Democrats, presents a risk to Speaker Mike Johnson's leadership role in the party, amid rising anger from far-right party members.

The three bills — as well as a measure to ban the popular app TikTok unless Chinese owner ByteDance sells it — now go to the Senate as one package, where leaders hope to vote on the legislation as soon as Tuesday.

President Joe Biden, who sent a supplemental spending request to Congress asking for the aid six months ago, is expected to sign the bill once it reaches his desk.

House lawmakers supported \$60.84 billion in additional assistance for Ukraine on a 311-112 vote, while cheering and waving small Ukrainian flags on the floor. One lawmaker voted "present."

Members voted 366-58 to approve the \$26.38 billion Israel and humanitarian assistance bill.

The \$8.12 billion funding bill for the Indo-Pacific received backing on a 385-34 vote. One lawmaker voted "present."

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The 21st Century Peace Through Strength Act that includes the TikTok bill passed following a 360-58 vote. The three emergency spending bills will provide significant boosts in funding for the U.S. departments of Defense, Energy and State, which will use that money to help Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan as well as other allies.

South Dakota Republican Dusty Johnson voted in favor of all four bills.

"Our allies are at war and our southern border is wide open," he said in a news release. "We are less safe, and the world is less secure if America doesn't lead with strength. Everyone around the globe is looking to America's move to help bring geopolitical security and stability. We have to stand up to the bullies and terrorists in Iran, Russia, and China, and we must support our allies now. If we fail to do so, we risk putting more American boots on the ground abroad and we risk security at home and at our borders."

Ronald Reagan cited repeatedly

Far-right Republicans railed against the bills, and the decision by Speaker Mike Johnson, a Louisiana Republican, to hold a floor vote, while their colleagues in both parties said the funding would help protect democracies around the world, aid refugees fleeing war and bolster America's defense industrial base.

GOP lawmakers repeatedly referenced former President Ronald Reagan's "peace through strength" foreign policy strategy, choosing the party's long-held standard-bearer over the isolationism championed by other leaders.

House Appropriations Chairman Tom Cole, an Oklahoma Republican, said the last few years have "produced echoes of a dark time in world history" that began nearly a century ago.

"In the 1930s, evil regimes bent on aggression, domination and even genocide took their first steps down a dark road that would eventually lead to world war," Cole said. "Tragically, the democratic West turned inward then; standing idly by while fascist regimes began to take aggressive actions against their weaker neighbors."

"There was time then to put a stop to aggression," Cole added. "If only we had had the fortitude and the wherewithal to stand firmly on the side of freedom."

Actions today by China with respect to Taiwan, Iran's aggression toward Israel and Russia's invasion of Ukraine stand as a modern threat to democracy, leaving a choice for the United States and other democracies, Cole said.

"Peace through strength cannot be delivered through appeasement," Cole said. "We cannot wish our way to national security and we cannot thrust our heads into the sand while aggressive nations threaten their neighbors."

U.S. defense of democracy

Connecticut Rep. Rosa DeLauro, the top Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, said the emergency spending bills provided an opportunity for Congress to signal to the world that the United States defends democracies.

"We have a moment today to say 'No' to tyranny," DeLauro said. "We have a moment to take back the moral high ground for the United States and say, 'We do not walk away from an ally. We do not walk away from freedom. We do not walk away from human rights. We do not walk away from democracy.' That is not the United States of America."

Georgia Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, who is leading an effort to remove Johnson as speaker through a motion to vacate that so far has attracted two more backers, argued during debate that Congress should enact new border security and immigration policy instead of foreign aid.

"The federal government continues to fund the military industrial complex and this is a business model that requires Congress to continue to vote for money, to continue to fund foreign wars," Greene said.

"And this is a business model the American people do not support," Greene added. "They don't support a business model built on blood and murder and war in foreign countries, while this very government does nothing to secure our border."

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Biden wrote in a statement released after the vote that the bills would “deliver critical support to Israel and Ukraine; provide desperately needed humanitarian aid to Gaza, Sudan, Haiti, and other locations impacted by conflicts and natural disasters around the world; and bolster security and stability in the Indo-Pacific.”

“It comes at a moment of grave urgency, with Israel facing unprecedented attacks from Iran, and Ukraine under continued bombardment from Russia,” Biden wrote.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked the House for passing the assistance in a social media post.

“Democracy and freedom will always have global significance and will never fail as long as America helps to protect it,” Zelenskyy wrote. “The vital U.S. aid bill passed today by the House will keep the war from expanding, save thousands and thousands of lives, and help both of our nations to become stronger.”

How the Ukraine aid would be spent

Nearly \$48 billion of the \$60.84 billion total for the Ukraine aid bill would go to the U.S. Defense Department to provide weapons and supplies for Ukraine’s military, to replenish stockpiles of weapons and other equipment sent to Ukraine and to bolster U.S. Armed Forces European Command’s operations.

The U.S. State Department would receive nearly \$9.5 billion in forgivable economic loans to dispense, \$7.8 billion to send Ukraine defense equipment and \$2 billion for security assistance.

The U.S. Energy Department would get \$149 million “to prepare for and respond to potential nuclear and radiological incidents in Ukraine,” according to a summary of the bill.

Florida Republican Rep. Mario Díaz-Balart, chairman of the State-Foreign Operations spending panel, said that lawmakers had the choice to “turn our heads away, and hope to appease this great evil, or we can stand with our allies and confront this nefarious scourge.”

“History has taught us that appeasement does not work and it was attempted not that long ago,” Díaz-Balart said.

The Ukraine bill, he said, “requires a clear strategy from the administration that defines and prioritizes U.S. national security interests” and categorized the economic aid as a forgivable loan for the first time.

Ohio Democratic Rep. Marcy Kaptur, co-chair of the Ukraine Caucus, gave an impassioned speech advocating the United States as a defender of democracy around the world, rejecting calls from some lawmakers to stop support for Ukraine’s defense against Russia’s invasion.

“For those who may naively think America can sit on the sidelines and seek isolation, please know this old adage — If you take no interest in foreign affairs, foreign affairs will find you,” Kaptur said.

House Armed Services Chairman Mike Rogers, an Alabama Republican, urged support for aid to Ukraine, saying that “China, North Korea and Iran are eagerly aiding and abetting (Russian President Vladimir) Putin’s brutal invasion of Ukraine, because they know a Russian victory there will seriously undercut American credibility and deterrence and leave our allies exposed.”

“I fear Putin will use victory in Ukraine as a springboard to invade Eastern Europe,” Rogers said. “We can’t let that happen.”

House lawmakers voted overwhelmingly to reject amendments from Republican Reps. Victoria Spartz of Indiana, Greene and Kat Cammack of Florida.

Spartz’s proposal would have removed several sections from the bill. Greene’s would have zeroed out all the funding levels in the bill. And Cammack’s would have removed all non-military funding in the bill, like economic aid.

Funding for Israel

The \$26.38 billion Israel aid bill would direct \$13 billion of that to the U.S. Defense Department to provide that country with funding for the Iron Dome, David’s Sling and Iron Beam defense systems.

An additional \$9.15 billion would go to the U.S. State Department for humanitarian assistance in Gaza and other “vulnerable populations” with an additional \$3.6 billion for security assistance to Israel, according to a summary.

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Florida Democratic Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz said she has visited Israel three times since the Oct. 7 attack on Israel by Hamas, which killed more than 1,200 people and took hundreds hostage. Her visits bolstered her support for emergency spending for that country, she said.

"It is incomprehensible that the Israeli hostages captured on Simchat Torah are still in Hamas captivity as we approach Passover," she said. "I rise to finally provide long overdue aid to our ally Israel as she fights to defend herself against threats on multiple fronts."

Wisconsin Democratic Rep. Mark Pocan rebuked how Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has conducted the war in Gaza, saying that widespread bombings are "a collective punishment of all Palestinians in Gaza."

Pocan said that Netanyahu's decisions not to accept a two-state solution, his refusal to listen to U.S. warnings against invading Rafah and his decision to strike Iran after the White House urged against it, all mean that Netanyahu should no longer be trusted with offensive weapons.

"Enough is enough," Pocan said. "I support the people of Israel, who don't want bombs raining on them from extremists in Gaza, and the hostages must be released. I also support the Palestinians, who deserve human rights and dignity."

The deaths of 35,000 people so far in Gaza, a figure provided by health authorities in Gaza, and the possibility that thousands more civilians will die from starvation and disease is unacceptable, he said.

"We are better than that, so is Israel. I'm not sure Netanyahu is," Pocan said. "And that's why I can't vote to provide him with more unconditional offensive weapons today."

Indo-Pacific assistance

The \$8.12 billion bill for the Indo-Pacific would divvy up the funding to several entities, with \$5.6 billion going to the U.S. Defense Department for "integrated deterrence" and the submarine industrial base.

The U.S. State Department would receive \$2 billion in foreign military financing for allies in the region, according to a summary.

California Republican Rep. Young Kim spoke in support of providing additional support for Taiwan, saying that if Chinese leader Xi Jinping "is successful in his ambitions to take Taiwan, it will directly hurt our economy, our national security and our leadership globally."

"We need our allies and partners to trust us and our adversaries to respect us," Kim said. "This is about freedom versus authoritarianism. This is about maintaining a world order that is safe for future generations. History will judge this institution and our country based on how we vote today."

Virginia Democratic Rep. Don Beyer said the House was "finally doing the right thing" by approving the bills.

"Today moral courage and sound strategic thinking finally defeat the partisan cynicism and the political calculation of a small minority of this body who have held our national interest hostage," Beyer said.

TikTok divestment

The 21st Century Peace through Strength Act, a 184-page bill, bundles together numerous measures, including language that would ban the social media app TikTok unless Chinese owner ByteDance sells it amid national security concerns about that government having access to Americans' data.

Illinois Democratic Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, ranking member on the Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, said during debate that section of the bill wasn't about eliminating Americans' access to TikTok, but forcing its parent company to sell the site.

"It's not really about TikTok, it's about ByteDance, the company that owns TikTok and is indisputably controlled by the Chinese Communist Party," Krishnamoorthi said, noting this bill extends the time for divestment from six months to one year.

House Foreign Affairs Chairman Michael McCaul, a Texas Republican, said forcing the sale of TikTok would protect American children "from the malign influence of the Chinese Communist Party."

"It is a modern day Trojan horse of the CCP, used to surveil and exploit America's personal information,"

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McCaul said.

That bill also includes the Rebuilding Economic Prosperity and Opportunity for Ukrainians Act, or Repo Act, that would allow the United States "to confiscate Russian sovereign assets that have been frozen in the United States and transfer them to assist in Ukraine's reconstruction efforts," according to a summary.

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

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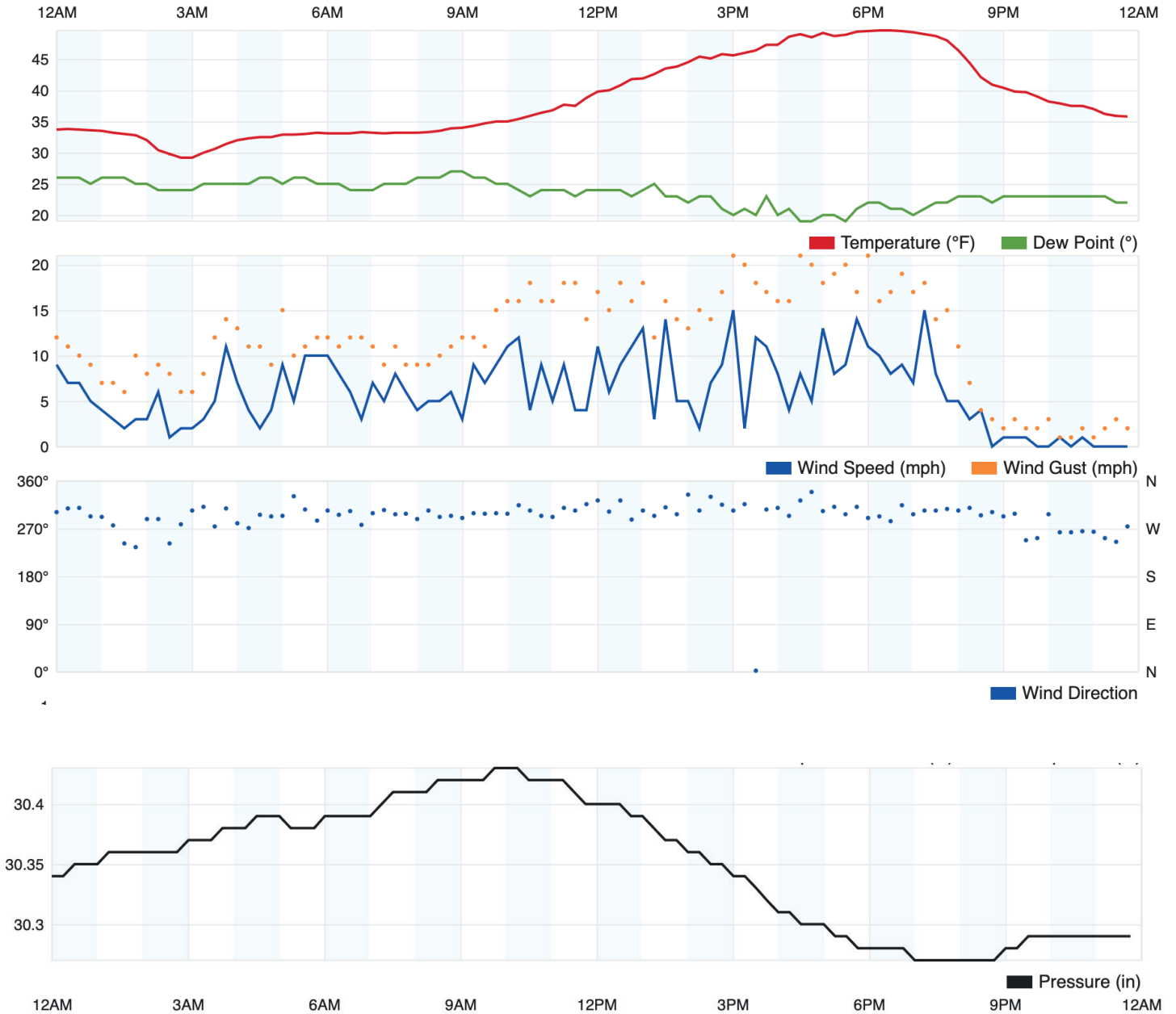
Living Heart Fitness Center

Exercise helps ease arthritis
pain and stiffness. - Mayo Clinic

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Sunny

High: 63 °F

Tonight



Increasing
Clouds

Low: 40 °F

Monday



Partly Sunny
then Mostly
Sunny and
Breezy

High: 66 °F

Monday
Night



Partly Cloudy
and Breezy

Low: 40 °F

Tuesday



Partly Sunny
and Breezy

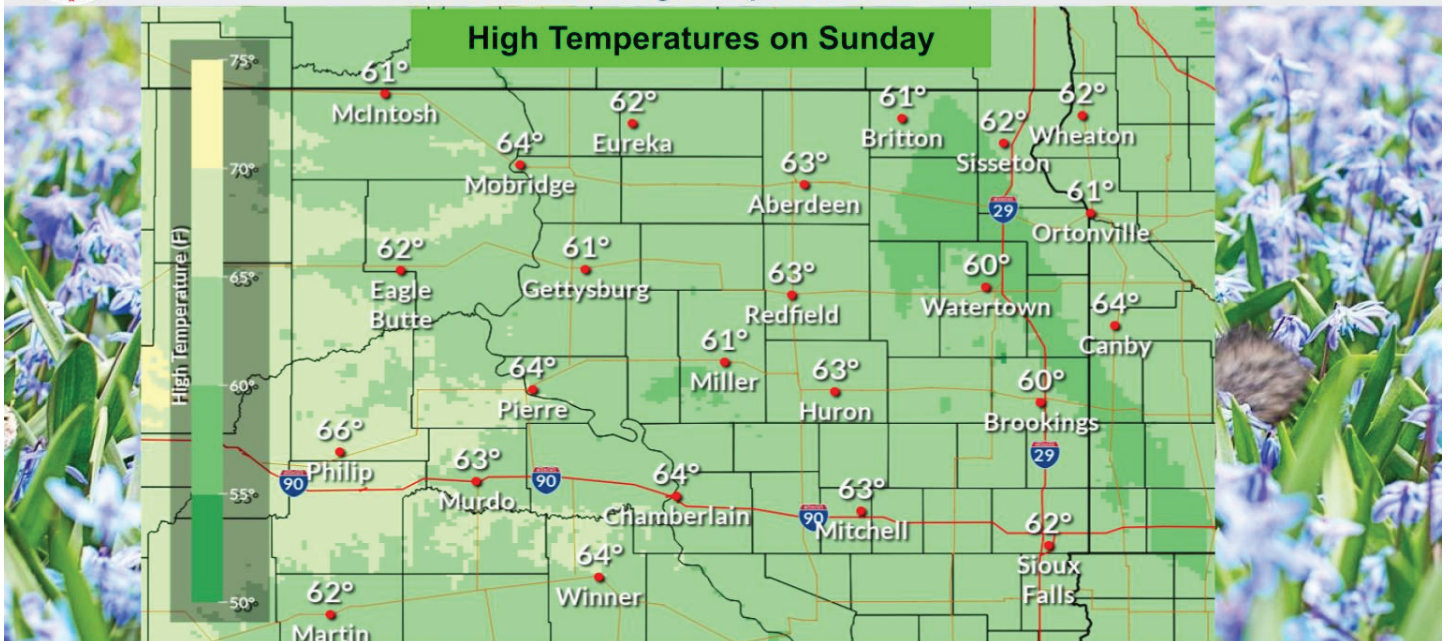
High: 58 °F



Warmer Temperatures on the Way

April 20, 2024
1:44 PM

Near to Above Average Temperatures this Week



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Warmer temperatures will move into the region starting on Sunday, with highs in the 50s and 60s. The warmer weather will remain throughout the work week.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 50 °F at 6:11 PM

Low Temp: 29 °F at 2:48 AM

Wind: 26 mph at 4:02 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 13 hours, 54 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 97 in 1980

Record Low: 16 in 1936

Average High: 60

Average Low: 33

Average Precip in April.: 1.12

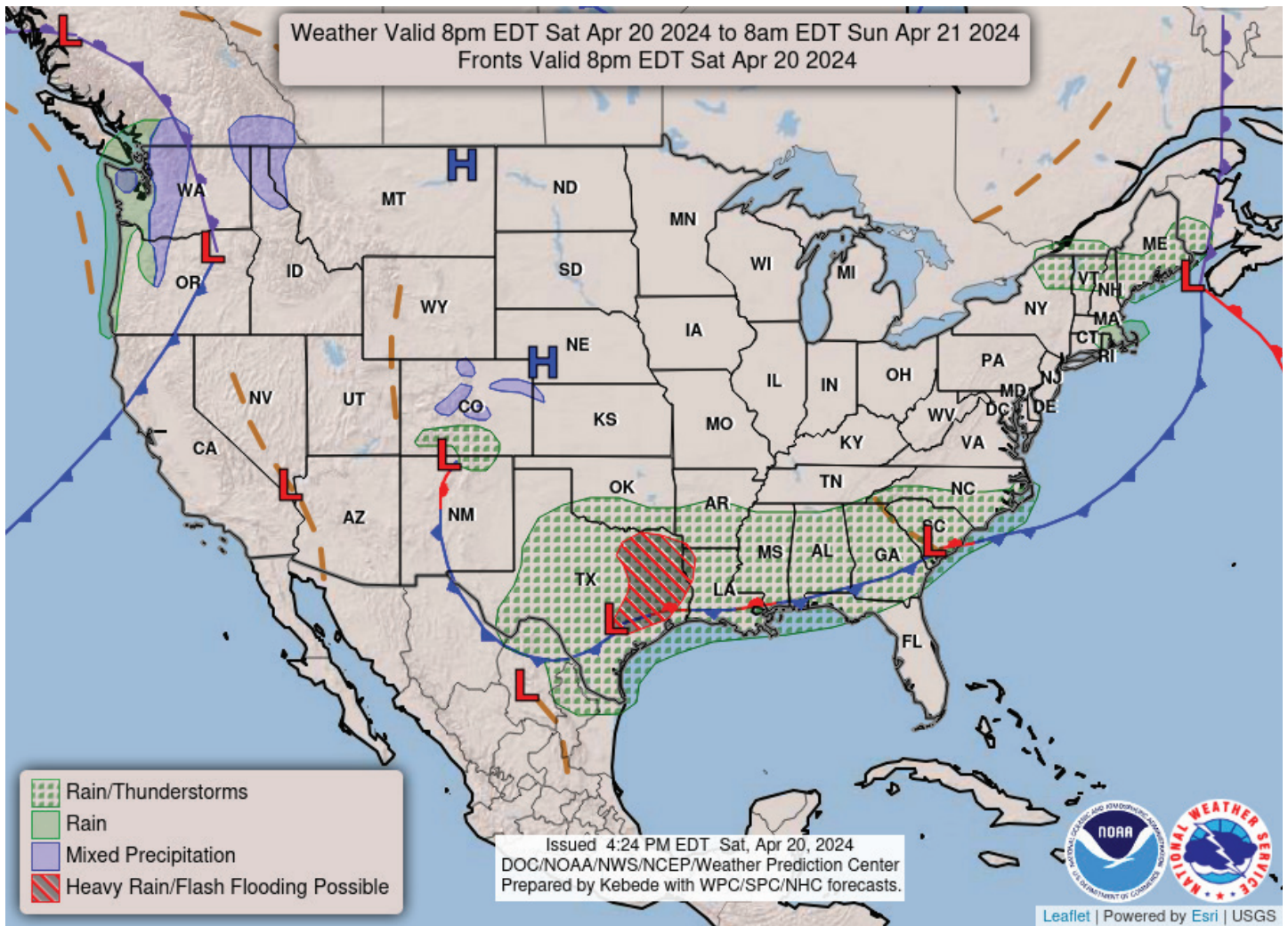
Precip to date in April: 2.34

Average Precip to date: 3.18

Precip Year to Date: 3.29

Sunset Tonight: 8:28:21 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:31:52 am



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Today in Weather History

April 21, 2007: Heavy rains of 2 to 2.50 inches caused flash flooding in and around Watertown. Many streets were flooded in town, along with several roads outside of town. A warm front extending across the region was the focus for heavy rain, along with severe weather, during the evening across far northeast South Dakota. Hail up to the size of quarters, along with heavy rains of over 2 inches, caused some flooding mainly in Codington and Hamlin counties.

1885: A tornado struck the town of Denison, Texas in 1883 that destroyed a church. The congregation rebuilt the church. On this date, a second tornado destroyed the newly rebuilt church.

1958 - Portions of Montana were in the midst of a spring snowburst. Snowfall amounts ranged up to 55 inches at Red Lodge, 61 inches at Nye Mine, and 72 inches at Mystic Lake. (David Ludlum)

1967 - Severe thunderstorms spawned 48 tornadoes in the Upper Midwest. Hardest hit was northern Illinois where sixteen tornadoes touched down during the afternoon and evening hours causing fifty million dollars damage. On that Friday afternoon tornadoes struck Belvidere IL, and the Chicago suburb of Oak Lawn, killing 57 persons. (David Ludlum)

1980 - The temperature at International Falls MN hit 90 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1987 - Unseasonably warm weather prevailed from the Gulf of Mexico to New England and the Great Lakes Region, with twenty-nine cities reporting record high temperatures for the date. Afternoon highs of 82 degrees at Caribou ME, 94 degrees at Mobile AL, 95 degrees at Monroe LA, and 93 degrees at New Orleans LA, were records for the month of April. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - After having had just twelve rainouts in the previous twenty-six years at Dodger Stadium, a third day of heavy rain in southern California rained out a double-header at Dodger Stadium which had been scheduled due to rainouts the previous two days. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - The temperature at Las Animas, CO, soared to 100 degrees to establish a state record for April. Twenty-two cities in the central and southwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Eight cities equalled or exceeded previous April records. (The Weather Channel) (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail in Oklahoma, and also caused some flash flooding in the state. Thunderstorms over the Southern High Plains produced golf ball size hail at Roswell NM and El Paso TX. Easterly winds and temperatures near zero produced wind chill readings as cold as 50 degrees below zero for the spring festival (Piuraagiaqta) outdoor events at Barrow AK. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2007 - The South Plains and Panhandle of West Texas were hit by an outbreak of severe thunderstorms. Between the hours of 5 and 6 pm, several thunderstorms developed across the western South Plains. Around 7 pm, a supercell produced a tornado which touched down around Fieldton (southwest of Olton) and then moved just south and east of Olton, doing damage to several structures and equipment. The thunderstorm continued to move northeast across northeast Lamb, northwest Hale, southeast Castro and southwest Swisher Counties, producing a long-lived tornado (along with hail up to the size of tennis balls). By 7:45 pm, the storm approached the town of Tulia in Swisher County. A tornado touchdown was reported in the town, causing major damage. The tornadic thunderstorm continued to move northeast across Swisher County over open country through about 8:30 pm. (NWS Lubbock, TX)

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

OLD ENOUGH TO DO AS I PLEASE

Tommy came home from school with a question mark all over his face. He and his friends had an intense discussion about decisions and lifestyles. As the family sat around the dinner table that evening, he looked at his Dad and asked, "How soon will I be old enough to do what I please?"

"I don't know," came the response. "Nobody has ever lived that long yet."

Freedom for the Christian is not doing as one pleases. It is freedom in Christ who gives us the power to do what pleases God. It is in Him and through Him and because of Him that we have the freedom to live a life free from sin and no longer be slaves to things that would destroy us or the guilt that would enslave us.

Think of it this way: A train pulling a long line of freight or passenger cars is only free as long as it remains on the tracks. Once it leaves the tracks it is no longer free because it has lost its path – the structure provided by the rails – that securely guides it.

So it is with Christians. As long as we stay in the Word – God's tracks – to keep us safely moving toward our destination – life with Him, we're safe.

Prayer: We thank You for Your Word, Father, that provides us the safety, security and structure that we need to live a life of freedom from sin. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. Romans 6:12-18



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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.19.24

19 30 34 46 58 3

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$202,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.20.24

6 11 14 15 31 5

All Star Bonus: 5x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$3,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.20.24

17 23 28 33 37 10

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 57 Mins 10 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.20.24

3 4 8 25 29

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$66,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.20.24

25 28 36 38 68 23

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

04.20.24

4 35 41 44 58 25

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$115,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

South Dakota man sentenced to nearly 90 years in prison for his baby son's 2021 death

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota judge on Friday sentenced a Sioux Falls man to nearly 90 years in prison in connection with the 2021 death of his baby son.

Second Circuit Court Judge Camela Theeler sentenced 24-year-old Dylan Castimore to 100 years with 10 years suspended and credit for over two years in jail, after he pleaded guilty in February to first-degree manslaughter and abuse or cruelty to a minor, the Argus Leader reported. The judge did not sentence him on the abuse charge.

Castimore also may not have contact with his son's mother, family or any children younger than 10 during his prison term.

"No matter what my sentence, I still have to live with myself," he said in court.

Eight-week-old Daxton Castimore died Nov. 27, 2021. An autopsy found his death was due to a skull fracture, with a lacerated liver a contributing factor in his death. He also had other injuries, including broken ribs, according to court documents.

Dylan Castimore initially faced murder and manslaughter charges and the potential of the death penalty in the case.

Israeli strikes on southern Gaza city of Rafah kill 18, mostly children, as US advances aid package

By MOHAMMAD JAHJOUH and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli strikes on the southern Gaza city of Rafah overnight killed 18 people, including 14 children, health officials said Sunday, as the United States was on track to approve billions of dollars of additional military aid to its close ally.

Israel has carried out near-daily air raids on Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's population of 2.3 million has sought refuge from fighting elsewhere. It has also vowed to expand its ground offensive to the city on the border with Egypt despite international calls for restraint, including from the U.S.

The House of Representatives approved a \$26 billion aid package on Saturday that includes around \$9 billion in humanitarian assistance for Gaza.

The first strike killed a man, his wife and their 3-year-old child, according to the nearby Kuwaiti Hospital, which received the bodies. The woman was pregnant, and the doctors managed to save the baby, the hospital said.

The second strike killed 13 children and two women, all from the same family, according to hospital records. An airstrike in Rafah the night before killed nine people, including six children.

The Israel-Hamas war has killed over 34,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, devastated Gaza's two largest cities and left a swath of destruction across the territory. Around 80% of the population have fled their homes to other parts of the besieged coastal enclave, which experts say is on the brink of famine.

The conflict, now in its seventh month, has sparked regional unrest pitting Israel and the U.S. against Iran and allied militant groups across the Middle East. Israel and Iran traded fire directly earlier this month, raising fears of all-out war between the longtime foes.

Tensions have also spiked in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Israeli troops killed two Palestinians who the military says attacked a checkpoint with a knife and a gun near the southern West Bank town of Hebron early Sunday. The Palestinian Health Ministry said the two killed were 18 and 19 years old, from the same family. No Israeli forces were wounded, the army said.

The Palestinian Red Crescent rescue service meanwhile said it has recovered a total of 14 bodies from

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an Israeli raid in the Nur Shams urban refugee camp in the West Bank that began late Thursday. Those killed include three militants from the Islamic Jihad group and a 15-year-old boy. The military says it killed 10 militants in the camp and arrested eight suspects. Nine Israeli soldiers and officers were wounded.

At least 469 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli soldiers and settlers in the West Bank since the start of the war in Gaza, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. Most have been killed during Israeli military arrest raids, which often trigger gunbattles, or in violent protests.

The war in Gaza was sparked by an unprecedented Oct. 7 raid into southern Israel in which Hamas and other militants killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted around 250 hostages. Israel says militants are still holding around 100 hostages and the remains of more than 30 others.

Thousands of Israelis have taken to the streets to call for new elections to replace Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and a deal with Hamas to release the hostages. Netanyahu has vowed to continue the war until Hamas is destroyed and all the hostages are returned.

The war has killed at least 34,049 Palestinians and wounded another 76,901, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. The ministry does not differentiate between combatants and civilians in its count but says at least two-thirds have been children and women. It also says the real toll is likely higher as many bodies are stuck beneath the rubble left by airstrikes or are in areas that are unreachable for medics.

Israel blames Hamas for civilian casualties because the militants fight in dense, residential neighborhoods, but the military rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children. The military says it has killed over 13,000 Hamas fighters, without providing evidence.

Voting begins for Maldives Parliament, watched by India and China vying for control of Indian Ocean

By MOHAMED SHARUHAN Associated Press

MALE, Maldives (AP) — Maldivians voted in parliamentary elections Sunday, in a ballot crucial for President Mohamed Muizzu, whose policies are keenly watched by India and China as they vie for influence in the archipelago nation.

Both countries are seeking a foothold in the Maldives, which has a strategic location in the Indian Ocean.

Muizzu's election as president last year sharpened the rivalry between India and China, with the new leader taking a pro-China stand and acting to remove Indian troops stationed on one of the country's islets.

Securing a majority in Parliament will be tough for Muizzu because some of his allies have fallen out and more parties entered the race.

Six political parties and independent groups are fielding 368 candidates for 93 seats in Parliament. That is six more seats than the previous Parliament following adjustments for population growth.

About 284,000 people were eligible to vote and tentative results were expected to be announced late Sunday.

Muizzu's election campaign theme for president was "India out," accusing his predecessor of compromising national sovereignty by giving India too much influence.

At least 75 Indian military personnel were stationed in the Maldives and their known activities were operating two aircraft donated by India and assisting in the rescue of people stranded or faced with calamities at sea. Muizzu has taken steps to have civilians take over those activities.

Relations strained further when Indian social media activists started a boycott campaign of Maldives tourism. That was in retaliation for three Maldivian deputy ministers making derogatory statements about Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for raising the idea of promoting tourism in Lakshadweep, India's own string of islands similar to the Maldives.

According to recent Maldives government statistics, the number of Indian tourists has fallen, dropping that country from being the top source of foreign visitors to No. 6.

Muizzu visited China earlier this year and negotiated an increase in the number of tourists and inbound flights from China.

In 2013, Maldives joined China's "Belt and Road" initiative meant to build ports and highways to expand trade — and China's influence — across Asia, Africa and Europe.

Unprecedented wave of narco-violence stuns Argentina city

By ISABEL DEBRE and ALMUDENA CALATRAVA Associated Press

ROSARIO, Argentina (AP) — The order to kill came from inside a federal prison near Argentina's capital. Unwitting authorities patched a call from drug traffickers tied to one of the country's most notorious gangs to collaborators on the outside. Hiring a 15-year-old hit man, they sealed the fate of a young father they didn't even know.

At a service station on March 9 in Rosario, the picturesque hometown of soccer star Lionel Messi, 25-year-old employee Bruno Bussanich was whistling to himself and checking the day's earnings just before he was shot three times from less than a foot away, surveillance footage shows. The assailant fled without taking a peso.

It was the fourth gang-related fatal shooting in Rosario in almost as many days. Authorities called it an unprecedented rampage in Argentina, which had never witnessed the extremes of drug cartel violence afflicting some other Latin American countries.

A handwritten letter was found near Bussanich's body, addressed to officials who want to curb the power drug kingpins wield from behind bars. "We don't want to negotiate anything. We want our rights," it says. "We will kill more innocent people."

Shaken residents interviewed by The Associated Press across Rosario described a sense of dread taking hold.

"Every time I go to work, I say goodbye to my father as if it were the last time," said 21-year-old Celeste Núñez, who also works at a gas station.

The string of killings offer an early test to the security agenda of populist President Javier Milei, who has tethered his political success to saving Argentina's tanking economy and eradicating narco-trafficking violence.

Since taking office Dec. 10, the right-wing leader has promised to prosecute gang members as terrorists and change the law to allow the army into crime-ridden streets for the first time since Argentina's brutal military dictatorship ended in 1983.

His law-and-order message has empowered the hardline governor of Santa Fe province, which includes Rosario, to clamp down on incarcerated criminal gangs that authorities say orchestrated 80% of shootings last year. Under the orders of Governor Maximiliano Pullaro, police have ramped up prison raids, seized thousands of smuggled cellphones and restricted visits.

"We are facing a group of narco-terrorists desperate to maintain power and impunity," Milei said after Bussanich was killed, announcing the deployment of federal forces in Rosario. "We will lock them up, isolate them, take back the streets."

Milei won 56% of the vote in Rosario, where residents praise his focus on a problem largely neglected by his predecessors. But some worry the government's combative approach traps them in the line of fire.

Gangs started their deadly retaliations just hours after Pullaro's security minister shared photos showing Argentine prisoners crammed together on the floor, heads pressed against each other's bare backs — a scene reminiscent of El Salvador President Nayib Bukele's harsh anti-gang crackdown.

"It's a war between the state and the drug traffickers," said Ezequiel, a 30-year-old employee at the gas station where Bussanich was killed. Ezequiel, who gave only his first name for fear of reprisals, said his mother has since begged him to quit. "We're the ones paying the price."

Even Milei's supporters have mixed feelings about the crackdown, including Germán Bussanich, the father of the slain gas station worker.

"They're putting on a show and we're facing the consequences," Bussanich told reporters.

A leafy city 300 kilometers (180 miles) northwest of Buenos Aires, Rosario is where revolutionary Ernesto "Che" Guevara was born, Messi first kicked a soccer ball and the Argentine flag was first raised in 1812. But it most recently won notoriety because its homicide numbers are five times the national average.

Tucked into a bend in the Paraná River, Rosario's port morphed into Argentina's drug trafficking hub as regional crackdowns pushed the narcotics trade south and criminals started squirreling away cocaine in shipping containers spirited down the river to markets abroad. Although Rosario never suffered the car bombs and police assassinations gripping Mexico, Colombia and most recently Ecuador, the splintering of

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street gangs has fueled bloodshed.

"It's not close to the violence in Mexico because we still have the deterrence capacity of the government in Argentina," said Marcelo Bergman, a social scientist at the National University of Tres de Febrero in Argentina. "But we need to keep an eye on Rosario because the major threats come not so much from big cartels but when these groups proliferate and diversify."

Drug traffickers keep a tight grip over Rosario's poor neighborhoods full of young men vulnerable to recruitment. One of them was Víctor Emanuel, a 17-year-old killed two years ago by rival gangsters in an area where street murals pay tribute to slain criminal leaders. No one was arrested.

"My neighbors know who's responsible," his mother, Gerónima Benítez, told the AP, her eyes shiny with tears. "I looked for help everywhere, I knocked on the doors of the judiciary, the government. No one answered."

A fearful existence is all Benítez has ever known. But now, for the first time in Argentina, warring drug traffickers are banding together and terrorizing parts of the city previously considered safe.

Imprisoned gang leaders in Latin America have long run criminal enterprises remotely with the help of corrupt guards. But according to an indictment unveiled last week, incarcerated gang bosses in Argentina have been passing instructions on how to kill random civilians via family visits and video calls.

Court documents say the bosses paid underage hit men up to \$450 to target four of the recent victims in Argentina's third-largest city. The killing of Bussanich, two taxi drivers and a bus driver in less than a week in March, federal prosecutors say, "shattered the peace of an entire society."

Street emptied. Schools closed. Bus drivers picketed. People were too terrified to leave their homes.

"This violence is on another level," 20-year-old Rodrigo Dominguez said from an intersection where a dangling banner demanded justice for another bus driver slain there weeks earlier. "You can't go outside."

Panic was still palpable in Rosario last week, as police swarmed the streets and normally bustling bars closed early for lack of customers. A diner managed by Messi's family, a draw for fans, reported quiet nights and less profit. Women in one neighborhood said they carry 22-caliber pistols. Analía Manso, 37, said she was too scared to send her children to school.

Pope Francis last month said he was praying for his countrymen in Rosario.

Assaults and public threats continue. This month, a sign appeared on a highway overpass warning Argentine Security Minister Patricia Bullrich that gangs would extend their offensive to Buenos Aires if the government doesn't back down.

Authorities have sought to reassure the public by sending hundreds of federal agents into Rosario. The AP spent a night with police last week as officers patrolled neighborhoods logging suspicious activity and setting up checkpoints.

Georgina Wilke, a 45-year-old Rosario officer in the explosives squad, said she welcomes federal intervention, including the military, to get crime under control. "We've been hit very hard," Wilke said.

Omar Pereira, the provincial secretary of public security, promised the efforts represent a shift from failed tactics of the past.

"There were always pacts, implicit or explicit, between the state and criminals," Pereira said, describing how authorities long looked the other way. "What's the idea of this government? There is no pact."

But experts are skeptical a tough-on-crime approach will stop drug traffickers from buying control over Argentina's police and prisons.

"Unless the government fixes its problems with corruption, the crackdown on prisons is unlikely to have any long-term effect," said Christopher Newton, an investigator at Colombia-based research organization InSight Crime.

For years, Rosario's 1.3 million residents have watched warily as presidents and their promises come and go while the violence endures.

"It's like a cancer that grows and grows," said Benítez from her home, its windows protected by wrought-iron bars.

"We, on the outside, live in prison," she said. "Those inside have everything."

8 shot including 2 men killed at a party with hundreds attending in Memphis park, police say

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Eight people were shot including two men who were killed at an unsanctioned public party in a Memphis city park Saturday night, police said.

Officers responded at 7:19 p.m. to a reported shooting, Memphis Police Department Chief Cerelyn Davis said during a news conference at the scene.

Two men were pronounced dead at the scene, Davis said.

The six surviving victims were transported to area hospitals and one was in critical condition at Regional One Health in Memphis, police said.

The shooting occurred at a block party in Orange Mound Park, which Davis said included an estimated 200 to 300 attendees but did not appear to have been issued a city permit.

At least two people are believed to have fired weapons during the shooting and police were examining video footage as part of the ongoing investigation, Davis said. There were no immediate arrests.

"In light of recent events, we stand together to denounce these senseless acts of violence," Davis said.

The Memphis police initially reported there were 16 people shot but revised the number in a social media post, noting the error appeared to have been a result of "several victims being reported multiple times."

Haitians scramble to survive, seeking food, water and safety as gang violence chokes the capital

By DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — As the sun sets, a burly man bellows into a megaphone while a curious crowd gathers around him. Next to him is a small cardboard box with several banknotes worth 10 Haitian gourdes — about 7 U.S. cents.

"Everyone give whatever they have!" the man shouts as he grabs the arms and hands of people entering a neighborhood in the capital of Port-au-Prince that has been targeted by violent gangs.

The community recently voted to buy a metal barricade and install it themselves to try to protect residents from the unrelenting violence that killed or injured more than 2,500 people in Haiti from January to March.

"Every day I wake up and find a dead body," said Nounè-Carme Manoune, an immigration officer.

Life in Port-au-Prince has become a game of survival, pushing Haitians to new limits as they scramble to stay safe and alive while gangs overwhelm the police and the government remains largely absent. Some are installing metal barricades. Others press hard on the gas while driving near gang-controlled areas. The few who can afford it stockpile water, food, money and medication, supplies of which have dwindled since the main international airport closed in early March. The country's biggest seaport is largely paralyzed by marauding gangs.

"People living in the capital are locked in, they have nowhere to go," Philippe Branchat, International Organization for Migration chief in Haiti, said in a recent statement. "The capital is surrounded by armed groups and danger. It is a city under siege."

Phones ping often with alerts reporting gunfire, kidnappings and fatal shootings, and some supermarkets have so many armed guards that they resemble small police stations.

Gang attacks used to occur only in certain areas, but now they can happen anywhere, any time. Staying home does not guarantee safety: One man playing with his daughter at home was shot in the back by a stray bullet. Others have been killed.

Schools and gas stations are shuttered, with fuel on the black market selling for \$9 a gallon, roughly three times the official price. Banks have prohibited customers from withdrawing more than \$100 a day, and checks that used to take three days to clear now take a month or more. Police officers have to wait weeks to be paid.

"Everyone is under stress," said Isidore Gédéon, a 38-year-old musician. "After the prison break, people don't trust anyone. The state doesn't have control."

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Gangs that control an estimated 80% of Port-au-Prince launched coordinated attacks on Feb. 29, targeting critical state infrastructure. They set fire to police stations, shot up the airport and stormed into Haiti's two biggest prisons, releasing more than 4,000 inmates.

At the time, Prime Minister Ariel Henry was visiting Kenya to push for the U.N.-backed deployment of a police force. Henry remains locked out of Haiti, and a transitional presidential council tasked with selecting the country's next prime minister and Cabinet could be sworn in as early as this week. Henry has pledged to resign once a new leader is installed.

Few believe this will end the crisis. It's not only the gangs unleashing violence; Haitians have embraced a vigilante movement known as "bwa kale," that has killed several hundred suspected gang members or their associates.

"There are certain communities I can't go to because everyone is scared of everyone," Gédéon said. "You could be innocent, and you end up dead."

More than 95,000 people have fled Port-au-Prince in one month alone as gangs raid communities, torching homes and killing people in territories controlled by their rivals.

Those who flee via bus to Haiti's southern and northern regions risk being gang-raped or killed as they pass through gang-controlled areas where gunmen have opened fire.

Violence in the capital has left some 160,000 people homeless, according to the IOM.

"This is hell," said Nelson Langlois, a producer and cameraman.

Langlois, his wife and three children spent two nights lying flat on the roof of their home as gangs raided the neighborhood.

"Time after time, we peered over to see when we could flee," he recalled.

Forced to split up because of the lack of shelter, Langlois is living in a Vodou temple and his wife and children are elsewhere in Port-au-Prince.

Like most people in the city, Langlois usually stays indoors. The days of pickup soccer games on dusty roads and the nights of drinking Prestige beer in bars with hip-hop, reggae or African music playing are long gone.

"It's an open-air prison," Langlois said.

The violence has also forced businesses, government agencies and schools to close, leaving scores of Haitians unemployed.

Manoune, the government immigration officer, said she has been earning money selling treated water since she has no work because deportations are stalled.

Meanwhile, Gédéon said he no longer plays the drums for a living, noting that bars and other venues are shuttered. He sells small plastic bags of water on the street and has become a handyman, installing fans and fixing appliances.

Even students are joining the workforce as the crisis deepens poverty across Haiti.

Sully, a 10th grader whose school closed nearly two months ago, stood on a street corner in the community of Pétion-Ville selling gasoline that he buys on the black market.

"You have to be careful," said Sully, who asked that his last name be withheld for safety. "During the morning it's safer."

He sells about five gallons a week, generating roughly \$40 for his family, but he cannot afford to join his classmates who are learning remotely.

"Online class is for people more fortunate than me, who have more money," Sully said.

The European Union last week announced the launch of a humanitarian air bridge from the Central American country of Panama to Haiti. Five flights have landed in the northern city of Cap-Haïtien, site of Haiti's sole functioning airport, bringing 62 tons of medicine, water, emergency shelter equipment and other essential supplies.

But there is no guarantee that critical items will reach those who most need them. Many Haitians remain trapped in their homes, unable to buy or look for food amid whizzing bullets.

Aid groups say nearly 2 million Haitians are on the verge of famine, more than 600,000 of them children. Nonetheless, people are finding ways to survive.

Back in the neighborhood where residents are installing a metal barricade, sparks fly as one man cuts metal while others shovel and mix cement. They are well underway, and hope to finish the project soon.

Others remain skeptical, citing reports of gangs jumping into loaders and other heavy equipment to tear down police stations and, more recently, metal barricades.

Hawaii lawmakers take aim at vacation rentals after Lahaina wildfire amplifies Maui housing crisis

By AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — A single mother of two, Amy Chadwick spent years scrimping and saving to buy a house in the town of Lahaina on the Hawaiian island of Maui. But after a devastating fire leveled Lahaina in August and reduced Chadwick's home to white dust, the cheapest rental she could find for her family and dogs cost \$10,000 a month.

Chadwick, a fine-dining server, moved to Florida where she could stretch her homeowners insurance dollars. She's worried Maui's exorbitant rental prices, driven in part by vacation rentals that hog a limited housing supply, will hollow out her tight-knit town.

Most people in Lahaina work for hotels, restaurants and tour companies and can't afford \$5,000 to \$10,000 a month in rent, she said.

"You're pushing out an entire community of service industry people. So no one's going to be able to support the tourism that you're putting ahead of your community," Chadwick said by phone from her new home in Satellite Beach on Florida's Space Coast. "Nothing good is going to come of it unless they take a serious stance, putting their foot down and really regulating these short-term rentals."

The Aug. 8 wildfire killed 101 people and destroyed housing for 6,200 families, amplifying Maui's already acute housing shortage and laying bare the enormous presence of vacation rentals in Lahaina. It reminded lawmakers that short-term rentals are an issue across Hawaii, prompting them to consider bills that would give counties the authority to phase them out.

Gov. Josh Green got so frustrated he blurted an expletive during a recent news conference.

"This fire uncovered a clear truth, which is we have too many short-term rentals owned by too many individuals on the mainland and it is b——t," Green said. "And our people deserve housing, here."

Vacation rentals are a popular alternative to hotels for those seeking kitchens, lower costs and opportunities to sample everyday island life. Supporters say they boost tourism, the state's biggest employer. Critics revile them for inflating housing costs, upending neighborhoods and contributing to the forces pushing locals and Native Hawaiians to leave Hawaii for less expensive states.

This migration has become a major concern in Lahaina. The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, a nonprofit, estimates at least 1,500 households — or a quarter of those who lost their homes — have left since the August wildfire.

The blaze burned single family homes and apartments in and around downtown, which is the core of Lahaina's residential housing. An analysis by the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization found a relatively low 7.5% of units there were vacation rentals as of February 2023.

Lahaina neighborhoods spared by the fire have a much higher ratio of vacation rentals: About half the housing in Napili, about 7 miles (11 kilometers) north of the burn zone, is short-term rentals.

Napili is where Chadwick thought she found a place to buy when she first went house hunting in 2016. But a Canadian woman secured it with a cash offer and turned it into a vacation rental.

Also outside the burn zone are dozens of short-term rental condominium buildings erected decades ago on land zoned for apartments.

In 1992, Maui County explicitly allowed owners in these buildings to rent units for less than 180 days at a time even without short-term rental permits. Since November, activists have occupied the beach in front of Lahaina's biggest hotels to push the mayor or governor to use their emergency powers to revoke this exemption.

Money is a powerful incentive for owners to rent to travelers: a 2016 report prepared for the state found

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a Honolulu vacation rental generates 3.5 times the revenue of a long-term rental.

State Rep. Luke Evslin, the Housing Committee chair, said Maui and Kauai counties have suffered net losses of residential housing in recent years thanks to a paucity of new construction and the conversion of so many homes to short-term rentals.

"Every alarm bell we have should be ringing when we're literally going backwards in our goal to provide more housing in Hawaii," he said.

In his own Kauai district, Evslin sees people leaving, becoming homeless or working three jobs to stay afloat.

The Democrat was one of 47 House members who co-sponsored one version of legislation that would allow short-term rentals to be phased out. One objective is to give counties more power after a U.S. judge in 2022 ruled Honolulu violated state law when it attempted to prohibit rentals for less than 90 days. Evslin said that decision left Hawaii's counties with limited tools, such as property taxes, to control vacation rentals.

Lawmakers also considered trying to boost Hawaii's housing supply by forcing counties to allow more houses to be built on individual lots. But they watered down the measure after local officials said they were already exploring the idea.

Short-term rental owners said a phase-out would violate their property rights and take their property without compensation, potentially pushing them into foreclosure. Some predicted legal challenges.

Alicia Humiston, president of the Rentals by Owner Awareness Association, said some areas in West Maui were designed for travelers and therefore lack schools and other infrastructure families need.

"This area in West Maui that is sort of like this resort apartment zone — that's all north of Lahaina — it was never built to be local living," Humiston said.

One housing advocate argues that just because a community allowed vacation rentals decades ago doesn't mean it still needs to now.

"We are not living in the 1990s or in the 1970s," said Sterling Higa, executive director of Housing Hawaii's Future. Counties "should have the authority to look at existing laws and reform them as necessary to provide for the public good."

Courtney Lazo, a real estate agent who is part of Lahaina Strong, the group occupying Kaanapali Beach, said tourists can stay in her hometown now but many locals can't.

"How do you expect a community to recover and heal and move forward when the people who make Lahaina, Lahaina, aren't even there anymore?" she said at a recent news conference as her voice quivered. "They're moving away."

Ecuadorians head to polls to toughen fight against gangs behind wave of violence

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — Ecuadorians head to the polls Sunday in a referendum touted by the country's fledgling leader as a way to crack down on criminal gangs behind a spiraling wave of violence.

The majority of 11 questions posed to voters focus on tightening security measures. Proposals include deploying the army in the fight against the gangs, loosening obstacles to extradition of accused criminals and lengthening prison sentences for convicted drug traffickers.

Ecuador, traditionally one of South America's most peaceful countries, has been rocked in recent year by a wave of violence, much of it spilling over from neighboring Colombia, the world's largest producer of cocaine. Last year, the country's homicide rate shot up to 40 deaths per 100,000, one of the highest in the region.

President Daniel Noboa has rallied popular support by confronting the gangs head on. That task became more urgent in January when masked gunmen, some on orders from imprisoned drug traffickers, terrorized residents and took control of a TV station while it was live on the air in an unprecedented show of force.

Following the rampage, the 36-year-old leader decreed an "internal armed conflict," enabling him to use emergency powers to deploy the army in pursuit of some 20 gangs now classified as "terrorists."

The referendum seeks to extend those powers and put them on firmer legal ground.

But in recalling the law-and-order policies of El Salvador's wildly popular President Nayib Bukele, a fellow millennial, they could also boost Noboa politically as he prepares to run for re-election next year.

Noboa, the scion of a wealthy banana exporting family, is serving the final 18 months of a presidential term left vacant when fellow conservative Guillermo Lasso resigned amid an investigation into alleged corruption by congress. He was elected following a shortened but bloody campaign that saw one of his top rivals brazenly assassinated while campaigning.

Key players: Who's who at Donald Trump's hush money criminal trial

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump's hush money criminal trial shifts to opening statements Monday, followed by the start of witness testimony. A jury of seven men and five women, plus six alternates, was picked last week.

The trial centers on allegations the former president falsified his company's internal records to obscure the true nature of reimbursement payments to his former fixer and lawyer Michael Cohen, who arranged hush money payments to bury negative stories about him during his 2016 presidential race.

The witnesses include a porn actor, a former tabloid publisher and Cohen, who went to federal prison for his role in the hush money matter and for other crimes, including lying to Congress. Prosecutor Joshua Steinglass forewarned prospective jurors that they have "what you might consider to be some baggage."

Here's a look at the key players in the historic first criminal trial of a former U.S. president:

DEFENDANT

DONALD TRUMP — The former president of the United States and the presumptive Republican nominee, who parlayed his success as reality television star and celebrity businessman and won the presidential election in 2016, becoming America's 45th president. The trial involves allegations that he falsified his company's records to hide the true nature of payments to Cohen, who helped bury negative stories about him during the 2016 presidential campaign. He's pleaded not guilty.

WITNESSES

MICHAEL COHEN — Trump's former lawyer and fixer. He was once a fierce Trump ally, but now he's a key prosecution witness against his former boss. Cohen worked for the Trump Organization from 2006 to 2017. He later went to federal prison after pleading guilty to campaign finance violations relating to the hush money arrangements and other, unrelated crimes.

STORMY DANIELS — The porn actor who received a \$130,000 payment from Cohen as part of his hush-money efforts. Cohen paid Daniels to keep quiet about what she says was a sexual encounter with Trump years earlier. Trump denies having sex with Daniels.

KAREN MCDUGAL — A former Playboy model who said she had a 10-month affair with Trump in the mid-2000s. She was paid \$150,000 in 2016 by the parent company of the National Enquirer for the rights to her story about the alleged relationship. Trump denies having sex with McDougal.

DAVID PECKER — The National Enquirer's former publisher and a longtime Trump friend. Prosecutors say he met with Trump and Cohen at Trump Tower in August 2015 and agreed to help Trump's campaign identify negative stories about him.

HOPE HICKS — Trump's former White House communications director. Prosecutors say she spoke with Trump by phone during a frenzied effort to keep allegations of his marital infidelity out of the press after the infamous "Access Hollywood" tape leaked weeks before the 2016 election. In the tape, from 2005, Trump boasted about grabbing women without permission.

PROSECUTORS

ALVIN BRAGG — A former civil rights lawyer and law professor, Bragg is a Democrat in his first term as Manhattan's district attorney. He inherited the Trump investigation when he took office in 2021. He oversaw the prosecution of Trump's company in an unrelated tax fraud case before moving to indict Trump last year.

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MATTHEW COLANGELO — A former high-ranking Justice Department official who was hired by Bragg in 2022 to lead the Trump investigation. They previously worked together on Trump-related matters at the New York attorney general's office.

JOSHUA STEINGLASS — A Manhattan prosecutor for more than 25 years, he has worked on some of the office's more high-profile cases, including the Trump Organization's tax fraud conviction in 2022, and cases involving violent crimes.

SUSAN HOFFINGER — The chief of the district attorney's Investigation Division, she returned to the office in 2022 after more than 20 years in private practice with her sister, Fran. She worked with Steinglass on the Trump Organization tax fraud prosecution.

TRUMP'S LAWYERS

TODD BLANCHE — A former federal prosecutor, Blanche previously represented Trump's former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, in a mortgage fraud case — and got it thrown out. Blanche successfully argued that the case, brought by the same prosecutor's office now taking on Trump, was too similar to one that landed Manafort in federal prison and therefore amounted to double jeopardy.

SUSAN NECHELES — A former Brooklyn prosecutor, Necheles is a respected New York City defense lawyer who represented Trump's company at its tax fraud trial last year. In the past she served as counsel to the late Genovese crime family underboss Venero Mangano, known as Benny Eggs, and defended John Gotti's lawyer, Bruce Cutler, in the early 90s.

EMIL BOVE — A star college lacrosse player, Bove was a veteran federal prosecutor in the Southern District of New York. He was involved in multiple high-profile prosecutions, including a drug-trafficking case against the former Honduran president's brother, a man who set off a pressure cooker device in Manhattan and a man who sent dozens of mail bombs to prominent targets across the country.

THE JUDGE

JUAN M. MERCHAN — The judge presiding over the case. He was also the judge in the Trump Organization's tax fraud trial in 2022 and is overseeing a border wall fraud case against longtime Trump ally Steve Bannon. Merchan has twice denied requests by Trump's lawyers that he step aside from the case. They contend he is biased because his daughter runs a political consulting firm that has worked for Democrats, including President Joe Biden. Merchan has said he is certain of his "ability to be fair and impartial."

The House passes billions in aid for Ukraine and Israel after months of struggle. Next is the Senate

By STEPHEN GROVES and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House swiftly approved \$95 billion in foreign aid for Ukraine, Israel and other U.S. allies in a rare Saturday session as Democrats and Republicans banded together after months of hard-right resistance over renewed American support for repelling Russia's invasion.

With an overwhelming vote, the \$61 billion in aid for Ukraine passed in a matter of minutes, a strong showing as American lawmakers race to deliver a fresh round of U.S. support to the war-torn ally. Many Democrats cheered on the House floor and waved blue-and-yellow flags of Ukraine.

Aid to Israel and the other allies also won approval by healthy margins, as did a measure to clamp down on the popular platform TikTok, with unique coalitions forming to push the separate bills forward. The whole package will go to the Senate, which could pass it as soon as Tuesday. President Joe Biden has promised to sign it immediately.

"We did our work here, and I think history will judge it well," said a weary Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., who risked his own job to marshal the package to passage.

Biden spoke separately with Johnson and Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries to thank them for "putting our national security first" by advancing the legislation, the White House said.

"I urge the Senate to quickly send this package to my desk so that I can sign it into law and we can quickly send weapons and equipment to Ukraine to meet their urgent battlefield needs," the president said.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine said he was "grateful" to both parties in the House and

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"personally Speaker Mike Johnson for the decision that keeps history on the right track," he said on X, formerly Twitter.

"Thank you, America!" he said.

The scene in Congress was a striking display of action after months of dysfunction and stalemate fueled by Republicans, who hold the majority but are deeply split over foreign aid, particularly for Ukraine. Johnson relied on Democrats to ensure the military and humanitarian funding — the first major package for Ukraine since December 2022 — won approval.

The morning opened with a somber and serious debate and an unusual sense of purpose as Republican and Democratic leaders united to urge quick approval, saying that would ensure the United States supported its allies and remained a leader on the world stage. The House's visitor galleries were crowded with onlookers.

"The eyes of the world are upon us, and history will judge what we do here and now," said Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee

Passage through the House cleared away the biggest hurdle to Biden's funding request, first made in October as Ukraine's military supplies began to run low.

The GOP-controlled House struggled for months over what to do, first demanding that any assistance for Ukraine be tied to policy changes at the U.S.-Mexico border, only to immediately reject a bipartisan Senate offer along those very lines.

Reaching an endgame has been an excruciating lift for Johnson that has tested both his resolve and his support among Republicans, with a small but growing number now openly urging his removal from the speaker's office. Yet congressional leaders cast the votes as a turning point in history — an urgent sacrifice as U.S. allies are beleaguered by wars and threats from continental Europe to the Middle East to the Indo-Pacific.

"Sometimes when you are living history, as we are today, you don't understand the significance of the actions of the votes that we make on this House floor, of the effect that it will have down the road," said New York Rep. Gregory Meeks, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. "This is a historic moment."

Opponents, particularly the hard-right Republicans from Johnson's majority, argued that the U.S. should focus on the home front, addressing domestic border security and the nation's rising debt load, and they warned against spending more money, which largely flows to American defense manufacturers, to produce weaponry used overseas.

Still, Congress has seen a stream of world leaders visit in recent months, from Zelenskyy to Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, all but pleading with lawmakers to approve the aid. Globally, the delay left many questioning America's commitment to its allies.

At stake has been one of Biden's top foreign policy priorities — halting Russian President Vladimir Putin's advance in Europe. After engaging in quiet talks with Johnson, the president quickly endorsed Johnson's plan, paving the way for Democrats to give their rare support to clear the procedural hurdles needed for a final vote.

"We have a responsibility, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans to defend democracy wherever it is at risk," Jeffries said during the debate.

While aid for Ukraine failed to win a majority of Republicans, several dozen progressive Democrats voted against the bill aiding Israel as they demanded an end to the bombardment of Gaza that has killed thousands of civilians. A group of roughly 20 hard-right Republicans voted against every portion of the aid package, including for allies like Israel and Taiwan that have traditionally enjoyed support from the GOP.

Some Republicans also angrily objected to their counterparts waving Ukrainian flags during the vote. Rep. Kat Cammack, a Florida Republican, said on X she was "infuriated" by the display and was working on legislation to prohibit the flags of foreign nations on the House floor.

At the same time, Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, has loomed large over the fight, weighing in from afar via social media statements and direct phone calls with lawmakers

as he tilts the GOP to a more isolationist stance with his "America First" brand of politics.

Ukraine's defense once enjoyed robust, bipartisan support in Congress, but as the war enters its third year, a majority of Republicans opposed further aid. Trump ally Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., offered an amendment to zero out the money, but it was rejected.

The ultraconservative House Freedom Caucus has derided the legislation as the "America Last" foreign wars package and urged lawmakers to defy Republican leadership and oppose it because the bills did not include border security measures.

Johnson's hold on the speaker's gavel has also grown more tenuous in recent days as three Republicans, led by Greene, supported a "motion to vacate" that can lead to a vote on removing the speaker. Egged on by far-right personalities, she is also being joined by a growing number of lawmakers including Reps. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., and Thomas Massie, R-Ky., who is urging Johnson to voluntarily step aside.

The package included several Republican priorities that Democrats endorsed, or at least are willing to accept. Those include proposals that allow the U.S. to seize frozen Russian central bank assets to rebuild Ukraine; impose sanctions on Iran, Russia, China and criminal organizations that traffic fentanyl; and legislation to require the China-based owner of the popular video app TikTok to sell its stake within a year or face a ban in the United States.

Still, the all-out push to get the bills through Congress is a reflection not only of politics, but realities on the ground in Ukraine. Top lawmakers on national security committees, who are privy to classified briefings, have grown gravely concerned about the tide of the war as Russia pummels Ukrainian forces beset by a shortage of troops and ammunition.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., announced the Senate would begin procedural votes on the package Tuesday, saying, "Our allies across the world have been waiting for this moment."

Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, as he prepared to overcome objections from his right flank next week, said, "The task before us is urgent. It is once again the Senate's turn to make history."

Young brother and sister dead, several hurt when vehicle crashes into Michigan birthday party

BERLIN TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP) — A young brother and sister died and several people were injured, some of them seriously, when a vehicle driven by a suspected drunken driver crashed into a young child's birthday party Saturday at a boat club, a Michigan sheriff said.

An 8-year-old girl and her 5-year-old brother died at the scene in the crash, when a 66-year-old woman drove 25 feet (7.6 meters) into the building about 3 p.m. at the Swan Creek Boat Club in Berlin Township, about 30 miles (48.2 kilometers) south of Detroit, Monroe County Sheriff Troy Goodnough said.

"The scene was described by the first responders as extremely chaotic, with high level of emotions of those directly involved and those who witnessed this horrific incident," he said.

Three children and six adults were taken to area hospitals by two helicopters or ambulances with life-threatening injuries, he said. Others injured were given first aid at the scene and some were taken to hospitals by private vehicles.

Goodnough did not identify the woman driving the vehicle but said she was taken into custody and held at the Monroe County Jail suspected of operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated causing death. She was cooperating with authorities and likely would face more charges as the investigation continues, he said.

Authorities were notified the woman may have been at a nearby tavern before the incident, Goodnough said, adding they closed the establishment and planned to execute a search warrant there as part of the investigation.

Trump cancels rally because of weather, proving the difficulty of balancing a trial and campaign

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP) — Donald Trump had to cancel his first planned rally since the start of his criminal hush money trial because of a storm Saturday evening in North Carolina, an added complication that highlights the difficulty the former president faces in juggling his legal troubles with his rematch against President Joe Biden.

Trump called into the rally site near the Wilmington airport less than an hour before he was scheduled to take the stage and apologized to a few thousand supporters who had gathered throughout the afternoon under initially sunny skies that later darkened with storm clouds.

Speaking from his private plane, Trump cited lightning and the incoming storm in explaining that he would not be landing. He pledged to reschedule a “bigger and better” event at the same location “as quick as possible.”

The planned rally in the critical battleground of North Carolina was to cap a week in which Trump spent four days in a Manhattan courtroom sitting silent during jury selection while Biden was able to hold multiple campaign events in Pennsylvania, another key state in the November election.

The cancellation denied Trump a fresh chance to amplify claims that his multiple pending indictments are an establishment conspiracy to take him down — and, by extension, squelch the voters who first elected him eight years ago.

Now, instead of commanding attention on his own terms at one of his signature mass rallies, his next public appearance is almost certainly going to be Monday, back at the defendant’s table for opening arguments in the first felony trial ever for an American president. And his campaign is left to decide when he next can be Trump the candidate instead of Trump the defendant.

“I’m devastated that this could happen but we want to keep everybody safe,” Trump said.

The assembled voters expressed frustrations with the turn of events but made clear they understood. Many of them had spent hours ahead of the rally holding prime seats, patronizing food trucks and perusing a row of tents selling Trump memorabilia, including T-shirts featuring the former president’s mug shot taken in Atlanta after his indictment on charges that he led a criminal conspiracy to overturn Biden’s 2020 victory.

“I’ve been with Donald Trump and I’m still with Donald Trump, but I’m disappointed he didn’t show up,” said Cheryl Lynn Johnson, who drove about two hours from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to attend what would have been her fourth Trump rally. “I’m mad at Mother Nature, but I stand behind Trump.”

Indeed, the audience was primed to validate Trump’s strategy to use his mandated court time to his advantage by folding the proceedings into the same populist, anti-establishment arguments that first fueled his rise eight years ago.

“It’s political persecution, and if it were anybody else he wouldn’t have to be dealing with it,” said Christian Armstrong, a 28-year-old firefighter who lives in Wilmington and was attending his first Trump rally.

LeeAnn Coleman, a 42-year-old who is in a family restaurant business, said, “It’s ludicrous that he’s having to do this at all,” rather than spend time focusing on “all the problems he wants to fix.”

Those arguments could have come from Trump himself.

“They want to keep me off the campaign trail,” the candidate-turned-defendant insisted earlier this week in Harlem, where he visited a neighborhood convenience store and addressed a throng of media outside after spending the day at his own jury selection. Rather than pursue violent criminals, he alleged, “They go after Trump.”

It is not clear when Trump’s next campaign appearance will be. His New York trial could last more than a month, severely curtailing his freedom to see voters, fundraise and make calls, and additional court proceedings could follow later in the year. Trump aides have promised weekend rallies and events on Wednesdays, the one weekday that Trump’s hush money trial is expected to be in recess. The former president’s campaign also has promised additional weeknight appearances around New York, like his trip to Harlem.

But there is no accounting for weather. The closest Trump came to assigning responsibility for the can-

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cellation was to mention “weather officials,” but he did not question the decision during his brief remarks.

Even with the cancellation, Trump’s choice of venue underscored the importance of North Carolina as a presidential battleground. Trump won here by less than 1.5 percentage points over Biden in 2020, the closest margin of any state Trump won. Saturday would have been the second time in as many months that Trump visited the state. Biden has traveled to North Carolina twice this year; Vice President Kamala Harris has been four times.

“The presidential race is going to run through North Carolina,” said Gov. Roy Cooper, a Democrat, in a recent interview.

North Carolina is one of seven states that both the Trump and Biden campaigns have said they will dedicate significant campaign resources to winning. Trump has insisted he will widen the map, even into his native New York, which is heavily Democratic. Most Republicans, though, agree that Trump will have a difficult path to an Electoral College majority if Biden were to win North Carolina’s 16 electoral votes. Trump tacitly acknowledged North Carolina’s status by tapping then-state Republican Chairman Michael Whatley to lead his effective takeover of the Republican National Committee.

Biden’s campaign has hired statewide North Carolina leadership and field organizers for offices across the state. That’s on top of state party staff that began an organizing program last year ahead of municipal races and looking to this year’s statewide contests, which include an open governor’s race. Cooper is legally barred from seeking a third term.

“We needed to build energy on the ground early,” said state Democratic Chairwoman Anderson Clayton, noting that the last Democratic presidential nominee to win North Carolina — Barack Obama in 2008 — had organized the state in a hotly contested primary campaign that ramped up the previous year.

Matt Mercer, spokesman for the North Carolina Republican Party, countered that Republicans have had veteran staffers on the ground since 2020, and now have a ticket with Trump and Mark Robinson, the Republican nominee for governor, that excites the GOP base. Trump has endorsed Robinson, the state’s first Black lieutenant governor, calling him “Martin Luther King on steroids.”

Robinson was set to be on stage with Trump in Wilmington.

Ahead of the scheduled rally, Democrats hammered the pairing for their opposition to abortion rights, calling them too extreme for North Carolina.

Cooper predicted Biden’s record — low unemployment, rising wages, stabilized inflation, infrastructure and green energy investments — and his support for abortion rights will resonate with a geographically and demographically diverse state.

“Joe Biden did more in his first two years than most presidents hope to do in two terms,” Cooper argued.

Mercer said Republicans will answer with a family-first message around the economy and public safety.

“Whether it’s with sky-high inflation, the open southern border or the migrant crime crisis,” he said, voters are “fed up” with Biden.

Trump lost an opportunity Saturday to make that case himself. But for voters like Matt Mazak, a 32-year-old who described himself as an independent, the verdict already is in.

“I want someone who is not going to go with the flow of D.C.,” Mazak said. “I’m not even saying Trump is the right answer. But he’s the best we’ve got.”

Autoworkers union celebrates breakthrough win in Tennessee and takes aim at more plants in the South

By DAVID KOENIG AP Business Writer

DALLAS (AP) — The United Auto Workers’ overwhelming election victory at a Volkswagen plant in Tennessee is giving the union hope that it can make broader inroads in the South, the least unionized part of the country.

The UAW won a stunning 73% of the vote at VW after losing elections in 2014 and 2019. It was the union’s first win in a Southern assembly plant owned by a foreign automaker.

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Union President Shawn Fain said the pundits all told him that the UAW couldn't win in the South.

"But you all said, 'Watch this,'" he told a cheering group of VW organizers at a union hall in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on Friday night, when the UAW victory was clear. "You guys are leading the way. We're going to carry this fight on to Mercedes and everywhere else."

However, the UAW is likely to face a tougher test as it tries to represent workers at two Mercedes-Benz plants in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. A five-day election is scheduled to start May 13, where the union's campaign has already become heated.

The UAW has accused the German carmaker of violating U.S. and German labor laws with aggressive anti-union tactics, which the company denies.

"They are going to have a much harder road in work sites where they are going to face aggressive management resistance and even community resistance than they faced in Chattanooga," said Harry Katz, a labor-relations professor at Cornell University. "VW management did not aggressively seek to avoid unionization. Mercedes is going to be a good test. It's the deeper South."

Late last year, the UAW announced a drive to represent nearly 150,000 workers at non-union factories largely in the South. The union is targeting U.S. plants run by Toyota, Honda, Hyundai, Nissan, Subaru, Mazda, Volkswagen, Mercedes, BMW and Volvo, along with factories operated by electric-vehicle makers Tesla, Rivian and Lucid.

The union's last defeat at VW in Chattanooga came at a low-water mark — in the middle of a federal investigation into bribery and embezzlement under a previous president.

Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University in Detroit who studies the UAW, said the union flipped the script by installing new leadership, touting the rich contracts it won last year from Detroit automakers after strikes at targeted factories, and exploiting a climate that is now more favorable to unions. He said the union was also adept at translating signed pro-union authorization cards into votes — partly by pushing for a quick election.

"Now the public and media eyes are going to be on Chattanooga and how quickly the UAW can translate this into a contract," he said. If the union can't quickly get a good contract, it risks losing some of the momentum it gained with Friday's election win, he said.

Unions in other industries are already moving ahead with organizing campaigns in the South and trying to learn from the UAW's playbook.

The Association of Flight Attendants, which has tried and failed to win over cabin crews at Atlanta-based Delta Air Lines, hopes to collect enough signatures to force another election at Delta by year end. The union's president, Sara Nelson, said she was not surprised at the UAW win after strikes that led to record contracts last year.

"I've been talking about this for a long time — that strikes and taking on the boss is going to spur organizing, and that's exactly what we saw here," Nelson said.

Nelson is trying to secure an industry-leading contract at United Airlines that she can use to court Delta crews. In the meantime, crews at startup Breeze Airways, many of whom live in the South, will vote next month whether to join her union.

The White House issued a statement from President Joe Biden congratulating the UAW. Biden — who joined a UAW picket line in Michigan during the union's strike against Ford, GM and Stellantis plants last year — praised the success of unions representing autoworkers, Hollywood actors and writers, health care workers and others in gaining better contracts.

"Together, these union wins have helped raise wages and demonstrate once again that the middle-class built America and that unions are still building and expanding the middle class for all workers," Biden said.

Biden criticized six Southern Republican governors, including Bill Lee of Tennessee, who told autoworkers this week that voting for union representation would jeopardize jobs.

Sharon Block, a law professor at Harvard University who worked for the Biden administration on labor and other issues, said the governors' warning rang hollow after nonunion Tesla revealed that it plans to lay off 10% of its workers after disappointing sales results. She said VW workers saw the governors' open letter as "an empty threat and a cynical ploy," and they ignored it.

"Workers for a long time have been told that you can't organize in the South. And many workers, even not in the South, may work in industries where they've been told for a long time you can't organize," Block said. "What the UAW showed last night is that we need to go and rethink all those negative statements."

An Israeli airstrike in Gaza's south kills at least 9 Palestinians in Rafah, including 6 children

By MOHAMMAD JAHJOUH and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — An Israeli airstrike on a house in Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah killed at least nine people, six of them children, hospital authorities said Saturday, as Israel pursued its nearly seven-month offensive in the besieged Palestinian territory.

Israel's war against the Islamic militant group Hamas has led to a dramatic escalation of tensions in the Middle East, notably between Israel and Iran in recent weeks. Now attention returns to Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's population of about 2.3 million people are sheltering, many displaced by fighting elsewhere.

Relatives sobbed and hugged children's shrouded bodies at al-Najjar hospital. "Hamza my beloved. Your hair looks so pretty," a mourning grandmother said.

The fatalities included Abdel-Fattah Sobhi Radwan, his wife Najlaa Ahmed Aweidah and their three children, his brother-in-law Ahmed Barhoum said. Barhoum lost his wife, Rawan Radwan, and their 5-year-old daughter, Alaa.

"This is a world devoid of all human values and morals," Barhoum told The Associated Press, crying as he cradled Alaa's body. "The only martyrs were women and children."

Israel has insisted for months that it plans a ground offensive into Rafah, where it says many remaining Hamas militants are holed up, despite calls for restraint from the international community including Israel's staunchest ally, the United States.

Some Palestinians left an area of Rafah near the border with Egypt on Saturday after receiving an evacuation alert from the Israeli army. "Guys, they will strike at 3:40. It is happening. What time is it now?" one said. Minutes later, a strike hit. It was not immediately known whether anyone was killed.

Also Saturday, an Israeli airstrike hit a house in the urban refugee camp of Bureji in central Gaza, killing at least one man and injuring two others, according to authorities at the al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital, where an AP journalist saw the casualties.

The war was sparked by an unprecedented Oct. 7 raid into southern Israel by Hamas and other militant groups that left about 1,200 people dead, the vast majority civilians, and saw about 250 kidnapped and taken into Gaza. Israel says about 130 hostages remain in Gaza, although more than 30 have died.

Frustration continues among many in Israel, and thousands of anti-government protesters in Tel Aviv again called for new elections and a deal to free remaining hostages. "We don't know what to do anymore, so we are here crying and shouting for help," said one protester, Iris Milnar.

The Palestinian death toll from the war is at least 34,049, with 76,901 wounded, the Gaza Health Ministry said, adding that the bodies of 37 people killed by Israeli strikes were taken to hospitals over the past 24 hours. The Hamas-run health authorities do not differentiate between combatants and civilians in their count but say at least two-thirds have been children and women.

Israel blames Hamas for civilian casualties, saying it embeds in the population.

The war has sent regional tensions spiraling. On Friday, Israel and archenemy Iran played down an apparent Israeli airstrike near a major air base and nuclear site in central Iran, indicating they were pulling back from what could have become all-out war. A week ago, Iran fired an unprecedented missile barrage on Israel after an alleged Israeli strike killed two Iranian generals at an Iranian consulate in Syria.

Israel continues to face off with Iran's proxies, frequently trading rocket and drone attacks across the Lebanese-Israeli border with the Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group. Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels have launched strikes against merchant ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden in what they call solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza.

Tensions also are high in the occupied West Bank.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said 12 bodies were taken Saturday from the Nur Sham urban refugee camp, raising the death toll to 13 since an Israeli military operation began in the area Thursday night. It said they were killed "as a result of the occupation's aggression."

The Islamic Jihad militant group confirmed the deaths of three members. Another killed was a 15-year-old boy. The Israeli army said its forces killed 10 militants in the camp and surrounding areas while eight suspects were arrested. Nine of its officers and soldiers were wounded, it said.

At least 469 Palestinians from east Jerusalem and the West Bank have been killed by Israeli fire since October, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry.

Elsewhere in the West Bank, the ministry said an ambulance driver was shot dead near Sawiya town while trying to reach Palestinians injured in clashes with Israeli settlers. The Palestinian Red Crescent said Mohammed Musa was shot in the chest. A wave of settler attacks began a week ago after an Israeli teen went missing and was found dead.

The House votes for possible TikTok ban in the US, but don't expect the app to go away anytime soon

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and HALELUYA HADERO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House passed legislation Saturday that would ban TikTok in the United States if the popular social media platform's China-based owner doesn't sell its stake within a year, but don't expect the app to go away anytime soon.

The decision by House Republicans to include TikTok as part of a larger foreign aid package, a priority for President Joe Biden with broad congressional support for Ukraine and Israel, fast-tracked the ban after an earlier version had stalled in the Senate. A standalone bill with a shorter, six-month selling deadline passed the House in March by an overwhelming bipartisan vote as both Democrats and Republicans voiced national security concerns about the app's owner, the Chinese technology firm ByteDance Ltd.

The modified measure, passed by a 360-58 vote, now goes to the Senate after negotiations that lengthened the timeline for the company to sell to nine months, with a possible additional three months if a sale is in progress.

Legal challenges could extend that timeline even further. The company has indicated that it would likely go to court to try and block the law if it passes, arguing it would deprive the app's millions of users of their First Amendment rights.

TikTok has lobbied hard against the legislation, pushing the app's 170 million U.S. users — many of whom are young — to call Congress and voice opposition. But the ferocity of the pushback angered lawmakers on Capitol Hill, where there is broad concern about Chinese threats to the U.S. and where few members use the platform themselves.

"We will not stop fighting and advocating for you," TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew said in a video that was posted on the platform last month and directed toward the app's users. "We will continue to do all we can, including exercising our legal rights, to protect this amazing platform that we have built with you."

The bill's quick path through Congress is extraordinary because it targets one company and because Congress has taken a hands-off approach to tech regulation for decades. Lawmakers had failed to act despite efforts to protect children online, safeguard users' privacy and make companies more liable for content posted on their platforms, among other measures. But the TikTok ban reflects widespread concerns from lawmakers about China.

Members of both parties, along with intelligence officials, have worried that Chinese authorities could force ByteDance to hand over American user data or direct the company to suppress or boost TikTok content favorable to its interests. TikTok has denied assertions that it could be used as a tool of the Chinese government and has said it has not shared U.S. user data with Chinese authorities.

The U.S. government has not publicly provided evidence that shows TikTok shared U.S. user data with the Chinese government or tinkered with the company's popular algorithm, which influences what Ameri-

cans see.

The company has good reason to think a legal challenge could be successful, having seen some success in previous legal fights over its operations in the U.S.. In November, a federal judge blocked a Montana law that would ban TikTok use across the state after the company and five content creators who use the platform sued.

In 2020, federal courts blocked an executive order issued by then-President Donald Trump to ban TikTok after the company sued on the grounds that the order violated free speech and due process rights. His administration brokered a deal that would have had U.S. corporations Oracle and Walmart take a large stake in TikTok. The sale never went through for a number of reasons; one was China, which imposed stricter export controls on its technology providers.

Dozens of states and the federal government have put in place TikTok bans on government devices. Texas' ban was challenged last year by The Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University, which argued in a lawsuit that the policy was impeding academic freedom because it extended to public universities. In December, a federal judge ruled in favor of the state.

Organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union have backed the app. "Congress cannot take away the rights of over 170 million Americans who use TikTok to express themselves, engage in political advocacy, and access information from around the world," said Jenna Leventoff, a lawyer for the group.

Since mid-March, TikTok has spent \$5 million on TV ads opposing the legislation, according to AdImpact, an advertising tracking firm. The ads have included a range of content creators, including a nun, extolling the positive impacts of the platform on their lives and arguing a ban would trample on the First Amendment. The company has also encouraged its users to contact Congress, and some lawmakers have received profanity-laced calls.

"It is unfortunate that the House of Representatives is using the cover of important foreign and humanitarian assistance to once again jam through a ban bill that would trample the free speech rights of 170 million Americans, devastate 7 million businesses, and shutter a platform that contributes \$24 billion to the U.S. economy, annually," said Alex Haurek, a spokesman for the company.

California Rep. Ro Khanna, a Democrat, voted against the legislation. He said he thinks there could have been less restrictive ways to go after the company that wouldn't result in a total ban or threaten free speech.

"I think it's not going to be well received," Khanna said. "It's a sign of the Beltway being out of touch with where voters are."

Nadya Okamoto, a content creator who has roughly 4 million followers on TikTok, said she has been having conversations with other creators who are experiencing "so much anger and anxiety" about the bill and how it's going to impact their lives. The 26-year-old, whose company "August" sells menstrual products and is known for her advocacy around destigmatizing menstrual periods, makes most of her income from TikTok.

"This is going to have real repercussions," she said.

Biden signs bill extending a key US surveillance program after divisions nearly forced it to lapse

By FARNOUSH AMIRI and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden on Saturday signed legislation reauthorizing a key U.S. surveillance law after divisions over whether the FBI should be restricted from using the program to search for Americans' data nearly forced the statute to lapse.

Barely missing its midnight deadline, the Senate had approved the bill by a 60-34 vote hours earlier with bipartisan support, extending for two years the program known as Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. Biden thanked congressional leaders for their work.

"In the nick of time, we are reauthorizing FISA right before it expires at midnight," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said when voting on final passage began 15 minutes before the deadline. "All day long, we persisted and we persisted in trying to reach a breakthrough and in the end, we have succeeded."

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U.S. officials have said the surveillance tool, first authorized in 2008 and renewed several times since then, is crucial in disrupting terrorist attacks, cyber intrusions, and foreign espionage and has also produced intelligence that the U.S. has relied on for specific operations, such as the 2022 killing of al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahri.

"If you miss a key piece of intelligence, you may miss some event overseas or put troops in harm's way," Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, the top Republican on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said. "You may miss a plot to harm the country here, domestically, or somewhere else. So in this particular case, there's real-life implications."

The proposal would renew the program, which permits the U.S. government to collect without a warrant the communications of non-Americans located outside the country to gather foreign intelligence. The reauthorization faced a long and bumpy road to final passage Friday after months of clashes between privacy advocates and national security hawks pushed consideration of the legislation to the brink of expiration.

Though the spy program was technically set to expire at midnight, the Biden administration had said it expected its authority to collect intelligence to remain operational for at least another year, thanks to an opinion earlier this month from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, which receives surveillance applications.

Still, officials had said that court approval shouldn't be a substitute for congressional authorization, especially since communications companies could cease cooperation with the government if the program is allowed to lapse.

Hours before the law was set to expire, U.S. officials were already scrambling after two major U.S. communication providers said they would stop complying with orders through the surveillance program, according to a person familiar with the matter, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private negotiations.

Attorney General Merrick Garland praised the reauthorization and reiterated how "indispensable" the tool is to the Justice Department.

"This reauthorization of Section 702 gives the United States the authority to continue to collect foreign intelligence information about non-U.S. persons located outside the United States, while at the same time codifying important reforms the Justice Department has adopted to ensure the protection of Americans' privacy and civil liberties," Garland said in a statement Saturday.

But despite the Biden administration's urging and classified briefings to senators this week on the crucial role they say the spy program plays in protecting national security, a group of progressive and conservative lawmakers who were agitating for further changes had refused to accept the version of the bill the House sent over last week.

The lawmakers had demanded that Schumer, D-N.Y., allow votes on amendments to the legislation that would seek to address what they see as civil liberty loopholes in the bill. In the end, Schumer was able to cut a deal that would allow critics to receive floor votes on their amendments in exchange for speeding up the process for passage.

The six amendments ultimately failed to garner the necessary support on the floor to be included in the final passage.

One of the major changes detractors had proposed centered around restricting the FBI's access to information about Americans through the program. Though the surveillance tool only targets non-Americans in other countries, it also collects communications of Americans when they are in contact with those targeted foreigners. Sen. Dick Durbin, the No. 2 Democrat in the chamber, had been pushing a proposal that would require U.S. officials to get a warrant before accessing American communications.

"If the government wants to spy on my private communications or the private communications of any American, they should be required to get approval from a judge, just as our Founding Fathers intended in writing the Constitution," Durbin said.

In the past year, U.S. officials have revealed a series of abuses and mistakes by FBI analysts in improperly querying the intelligence repository for information about Americans or others in the U.S., including a member of Congress and participants in the racial justice protests of 2020 and the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at

the U.S. Capitol.

But members on both the House and Senate intelligence committees as well as the Justice Department warned requiring a warrant would severely handicap officials from quickly responding to imminent national security threats.

"I think that is a risk that we cannot afford to take with the vast array of challenges our nation faces around the world," said Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va. chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Biden avoids a further Mideast spiral as Israel and Iran show restraint. But for how long?

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden can breathe a bit easier, at least for the moment, now that Israel and Iran appear to have stepped back from the brink of tipping the Middle East into all-out war.

Israel's retaliatory strikes on Iran and Syria caused limited damage. The restrained action came after Biden urged Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to temper its response to Iran's unprecedented direct attack on Israel last week and avoid an escalation of violence in the region. Iran's barrage of drones and missiles inflicted little damage and followed a suspected Israeli attack on the Iranian consulate in Damascus this month that killed two generals.

Iran's public response to the Israeli strikes Friday also was muted, raising hopes that Israel-Iran tensions — long carried out in the shadows with cyberattacks, assassinations and sabotage — will stay at a simmer.

The situation remains a delicate one for Biden as he gears up his reelection effort in the face of headwinds in the Middle East, Russia and the Indo-Pacific. All are testing the proposition he made to voters during his 2020 campaign that a Biden White House would bring a measure of calm and renewed respect for the United States on the world stage.

Foreign policy matters are not typically the top issue for American voters. This November is expected to be no different, with the economy and border security carrying greater resonance.

But public polling suggests that overseas concerns could have more relevance with voters than in any U.S. election since 2006, when voter dissatisfaction over the Iraq War was a major factor in the Republican Party losing 30 House and six Senate seats.

"We see this issue rising in saliency, and at the same time we're seeing voter appraisals of President Biden's handling of foreign affairs being quite negative," said Christopher Borick, director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion. "That combination is not a great one for Biden."

Biden has staked enormous political capital on his response to the Israel-Hamas war as well as his administration's backing of Ukraine as it fends off a Russian invasion.

The apparent de-escalation of tensions between Israel and Iran also comes as the House on Saturday approved \$95 billion in wartime aid for Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan, a measure that Biden has pushed for as Ukrainian forces run desperately short on arms.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., pushed the package forward after months of delay as he faced the threat of ouster by his party's right flank. The legislation now awaits a vote in the Senate. The new money would provide a surge of weaponry to the front lines, giving the White House renewed hope that Ukraine can right the ship after months of setbacks in the war.

Biden also has made bolstering relations in the Indo-Pacific a central focus of his foreign policy agenda, looking to win allies and build ties as China becomes a more formidable economic and military competitor.

But Republicans, including former President Donald Trump, have an argument to make that Biden's policies have contributed to the U.S. dealing with myriad global quandaries, said Richard Goldberg, a senior adviser at the Washington think tank Foundation for the Defense of Democracies.

Republicans have criticized Biden's unsuccessful efforts earlier in his term to revive a nuclear deal with Iran brokered by the Obama administration and abandoned by Trump, saying that would embolden Tehran. The agreement had provided Iran with billions in sanctions relief in exchange for the country agreeing to

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roll back its nuclear program.

GOP critics have sought to connect Russia's invasion of Ukraine to Biden's decision to withdraw from Afghanistan and they blame the Obama administration for not offering a strong enough response to Russian President Vladimir Putin's 2014 seizure of Crimea.

"You can make an intellectual case, a policy case of how we got from Point A to B to C to D and ended up in a world on fire," said Goldberg, a national security official in the Trump administration. "People may not care about how we got here, but they do care that we are here."

Polling suggests Americans' concerns about foreign policy issues are growing, and there are mixed signs of whether Biden's pitch as a steady foreign policy hand is resonating with voters.

About 4 in 10 U.S. adults named foreign policy topics in an open-ended question that asked people to share up to five issues for the government to work on in 2024, according to The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll published in January. That's about twice as many as mentioned the topic in an AP- NORC poll conducted in the previous year.

Further, about 47% of Americans said they believe Biden has hurt relations with other countries, according to an AP-NORC poll published this month. Similarly, 47% said the same about Trump.

Biden was flying high in the first six months of his presidency, with the American electorate largely approving of his performance and giving him high marks for his handling of the economy and the coronavirus pandemic. But the president saw his approval ratings tank in the aftermath of the chaotic withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan in August 2021 and they never fully recovered.

Now, Biden finds himself dealing with the uncertainty of two wars. Both could shadow him right up to Election Day.

With the Israel-Hamas war, Republicans pillory him as not being adequately supportive of Israel, and the left wing of his party harshly criticizes the president, who has shown displeasure with Netanyahu's prosecution of the war, for not doing more to force the Israelis to safeguard Palestinian lives.

After Israel's carefully calibrated strikes on Iran, Middle East tensions have entered a "gray area" that all parties must navigate carefully, said Aaron David Miller, an adviser on Middle East issues in Republican and Democratic administrations.

"Does what has occurred over the last 10 days strengthen each sides' risk-readiness or has it made them drop back from the brink and revert into risk aversion?" Miller said. "Israel and Iran got away with striking each other's territory without a major escalation. What conclusions do they draw from that? Is the conclusion that we might be able to do this again? Or is it we really dodged a bullet here and we have to be exceedingly careful."

Israel and Hamas appear far away from an agreement on a temporary cease-fire that would facilitate the release of remaining hostages in Hamas-controlled Gaza and help get aid into the territory. It's an agreement that Biden sees as essential to finding an endgame to the war.

CIA Director William Burns expressed disappointment this past week that Hamas has not yet accepted a proposal that Egyptian and Qatari negotiators had presented this month. He blamed the group for "standing in the way of innocent civilians in Gaza getting humanitarian relief that they so desperately need."

At the same time, the Biden administration has tried to demonstrate it is holding Israel accountable, imposing new penalties Friday on two entities accused of fundraising for extremist Israel settlers that were already under sanctions, as well as the founder of an organization whose members regularly assault Palestinians.

National security adviser Jake Sullivan and other administration officials met on Thursday with Israel's minister for strategic affairs, Ron Dermer, and national security adviser Tzachi Hanegbi. U.S. officials, according to the White House, reiterated Biden's concerns about Israel's plans to carry out an operation in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where some 1.5 million Palestinians have taken shelter.

Ross Baker, professor emeritus of political science at Rutgers University, said Biden may have temporarily benefited from Israeli-Iranian tensions driving attention away from the deprivation in Gaza.

"Sometimes salvation can come in unexpected ways," Baker said. "But the way ahead has no shortage of complications."

Record Store Day celebrates indie retail music sellers as they ride vinyl's popularity wave

By ANITA SNOW Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Special LP releases, live performances and at least one giant block party are scheduled around the U.S. Saturday as hundreds of shops celebrate Record Store Day during a surge of interest in vinyl and the day after the release of Taylor Swift's latest album.

There were no announced Record Store Day specials for the arrival of Swift's "The Tortured Poets Department" on Friday, but her fans always anxiously look forward to the new albums and accompanying collectible LPs.

In suburban strip malls and big city downtowns, indie record stores are often the first to recognize and promote emerging artists. Years before Swift was setting Grammy records and selling out concerts in Japan, Bull Moose Music in Portland, Maine, was giving away one of her autographed guitars in an enter-to-win contest.

"We were carrying her music before all the big stores. We always knew she would be a star," said Chris Brown of employee-owned Bull Moose and a co-founder of Record Store Day.

A wave of interest in physical records, especially LPs, has helped keep the independent stores going, Brown said. And LPs have gotten a huge boost from Swift, who has been dubbed the "Vinyl Queen" for releases of her work in limited physical record offerings with specialized content and striking covers.

The Recording Industry Association of America said in its 2023 year end report that revenues from vinyl records grew 10% to \$1.4 billion last year. That was the 17th consecutive year of growth and accounted for 71% of physical format revenues.

WHAT IS RECORD STORE DAY?

Record Store Day is a celebration of the estimated 1,400 independent record stores in the U.S. and thousands more worldwide that endure long after the demise of megastores like Tower Records.

While most people stream their music on services such as Spotify and Apple Music, old-school LPs remain popular for collectors who prefer the packaging and the listening experience of records.

"For me, records sound better than any CD," said Michael Iffland, a 70-year-old retiree who was considering some Beatles singles at the Tracks in Wax record store in Phoenix. "It's just cool having a record in your hand, looking at the cover graphics and listening to that wonderful sound."

HOW DID RECORD STORE DAY START?

Owners and employees of the independent stores came up with the idea at a gathering in 2007 as a way to draw attention to their unique culture on the third Saturday of April.

The first Record Store Day was on April 19, 2008, and cities around the U.S. later declared the celebration an official holiday, including New York City, Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

"For us, records have never gone out of style," said Waric Cameron, co-owner of Josey Records in Dallas.

"It's the biggest day of the year for us," added his business partner, Luke Sardello. "It's like the Super Bowl of record stores."

Jamal Alnasr, owner of Village Revival Records in New York's Greenwich Village, called Record Store Day "one of my biggest money growers of the year. People even camp outside the night before."

WHAT'S BEING PLANNED THIS YEAR?

Record Store Day is typically marked by special vinyl and CD releases and various promotional products and events featuring artists and labels. Metallica spent hours on the first Record Store Day meeting fans at Rasputin Music in the San Francisco Bay area.

Jesse "Boots Electric" Hughes of Eagles of Death Metal was declared a Record Store Day ambassador in 2009 and a string of other artists followed in subsequent years, including Ozzy Osbourne, Iggy Pop, Jack White, Fred Armisen, as well as Swift in 2022.

There were 387 planned releases announced for this year's Record Store Day.

Paramore, the event's 2024 ambassador, will have a pair of physical releases of the digital album that featured celebrity remixes from songs on its 2023 "This is Why" album.

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Rock band Pearl Jam will release 15,000 copies of a "Dark Matter" LP, with a ghostly black and yellow cover. Icelandic-American traditional pop singer Laufey will offer up 4,200 copies of "A Night at the Symphony," a live album recorded in Reykjavík with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra.

In some cases, the record itself will serve as a canvas. Death Cab for Cutie will release 2,500 copies of its "Live at the Showbox" on pink marble vinyl. Fleetwood Mac will have a limited edition of its hugely popular "Rumours," still a top seller since its 1977 release, with a photograph of the album cover featuring Stevie Nicks and Mick Fleetwood stamped on the vinyl.

"People get really excited and look forward to the releases," said Tracks in Wax owner Tim Stamper, who always orders a few. "It's more important for us than Christmas."

Jeff Maimon, 38, who was in the store on a visit from Chicago, said Record Store Day "was always a very special day. It's all about the excitement of standing outside and waiting in line to see what kind of specials you can get."

A giant block party with 14 live performances is planned Saturday at Vinyl Tap in Nashville, Tennessee, owner Todd Hedrick said. The performers will include Lzzy and Joe of Halestorm and The Watson Twins.

"We'll shut down the street, bring in five or six food trucks," along with about 25 vendors, Hedrick said.

"And it coincides with our other favorite holiday, 4/20," Hedrick added, referring to marijuana-oriented celebrations held annually on April 20.

WHAT ABOUT THE QUEEN OF VINYL?

Swift, who is credited by fans and record stores alike with igniting new interest in vinyl LPs, has not announced any special releases for this Record Store Day.

The hugely popular Swift set a new record this year when she won a fourth album of the year award at the Grammy Awards for "Midnights." She previously had been tied with Frank Sinatra, Stevie Wonder and Paul Simon with three albums.

Swift's re-recorded "1989 (Taylor's Version)" last year became the first album to sell more than 1 million vinyl LPs within a calendar year in the U.S. Her "Midnights" album in 2022 became the first major album release to have its vinyl sales outpace CDs since 1987.

Tennessee Volkswagen employees overwhelmingly vote to join United Auto Workers union

By KRISTIN M. HALL and TOM KRISHER Associated Press

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (AP) — Employees at a Volkswagen factory in Chattanooga, Tennessee, overwhelmingly voted to join the United Auto Workers union Friday in a historic first test of the UAW's renewed effort to organize nonunion factories.

The union wound up getting 2,628 votes, or 73% of the ballots cast, compared with only 985 who voted no in an election run by the National Labor Relations Board.

Both sides have five business days to file objections to the election, the NLRB said. If there are none, the election will be certified and VW and the union must "begin bargaining in good faith."

President Joe Biden, who backed the UAW and won its endorsement, said the union's win follows major union gains across the country including actors, port workers, Teamsters members, writers and health care workers.

"Together, these union wins have helped raise wages and demonstrate once again that the middle-class built America and that unions are still building and expanding the middle class for all workers," he said in a statement late Friday.

Twice in recent years, workers at the Chattanooga plant have rejected union membership in plantwide votes. Most recently, they handed the UAW a narrow defeat in 2019 as federal prosecutors were breaking up a bribery-and-embezzlement scandal at the union.

But this time, they voted convincingly for the UAW, which is operating under new leadership directly elected by members for the first time and basking in a successful confrontation with Detroit's major automakers.

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The union's pugnacious new president, Shawn Fain, was elected on a platform of cleaning up after the scandal and turning more confrontational with automakers. An emboldened Fain, backed by Biden, led the union in a series of strikes last fall against Detroit's automakers that resulted in lucrative new contracts.

The new contracts raised union wages by a substantial one-third, arming Fain and his organizers with enticing new offers to present to workers at Volkswagen and other companies.

Next up for a union vote are workers at Mercedes factories near Tuscaloosa, Alabama, who will vote on UAW representation in May.

Fain said he was not surprised by the size of the union's win Friday after the two previous losses.

"I think it's the reality of where we are and the times that we're in," he said Friday night. "Workers are fed up in being left behind."

The win, he said, will help the growing unionization effort in the rest of the country.

"This gives workers everywhere else the indication that it's OK," Fain said. "All we've heard for years is we can't win here, you can't do this in the South, and you can."

Worker Vicky Holloway of Chattanooga was among dozens of cheering workers celebrating at an electrical workers union hall near the VW plant. She said the overwhelming vote for the union came this time because her colleagues realized they could have better benefits and a voice in the workplace.

"Right now we have no say," said Holloway, who has worked at the plant for 13 years and was there for the union's previous losses. "It's like our opinions don't matter."

In a statement, Volkswagen thanked workers for voting and said 83.5% of the 4,300 production workers cast ballots in the election.

Six Southern governors, including Tennessee's Bill Lee, warned the workers in a joint statement this week that joining the UAW could cost them their jobs and threaten the region's economic progress.

But the overwhelming win is a warning to nonunion manufacturers, said Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University in Detroit who studies the union.

"This is going to send a powerful message to all of those companies that the UAW is knocking at the door, and if they want to remain nonunion, they've got to step up their game," Masters said.

He expects other nonunion automakers to become more aggressive at the plants, and that anti-union politicians will step up their efforts to fight the union.

Shortly after the Detroit contracts were ratified, Volkswagen and other nonunion companies handed their workers big pay raises.

Last fall, Volkswagen raised production worker pay by 11%, lifting top base wages to \$32.40 per hour, or just over \$67,000 per year. VW said its pay exceeds the median household income for the Chattanooga area, which was \$54,480 last May, according to the U.S. Labor Department.

But under the UAW contracts, top production workers at GM, for instance, now earn \$36 an hour, or about \$75,000 a year excluding benefits and profit sharing. By the end of the contract in 2028, top-scale GM workers would make over \$89,000.

The VW plant will be the first the UAW has represented at a foreign-owned automaking plant in the South. It will not, however, be the first union auto assembly plant in the South. The UAW represents workers at two Ford assembly plants in Kentucky and two GM factories in Tennessee and Texas, as well as some heavy-truck manufacturing plants.

Also, more than three decades ago, the UAW was at a Volkswagen factory in New Stanton, Pennsylvania, east of Pittsburgh. VW closed the plant that made small cars in the late 1980s.

Record numbers in the US are homeless.

Can cities fine them for sleeping in parks and on sidewalks?

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The most significant case in decades on homelessness has reached the Supreme Court as record numbers of people in America are without a permanent place to live.

The justices on Monday will consider a challenge to rulings from a California-based appeals court that

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found punishing people for sleeping outside when shelter space is lacking amounts to unconstitutional cruel and unusual punishment.

A political cross section of officials in the West and California, home to nearly one-third of the nation's homeless population, argue those decisions have restricted them from "common sense" measures intended to keep homeless encampments from taking over public parks and sidewalks.

Advocacy groups say the decisions provide essential legal protections, especially with an increasing number of people forced to sleep outdoors as the cost of housing soars.

The case before the Supreme Court comes from Grants Pass, a small city nestled in the mountains of southern Oregon, where rents are rising and there is just one overnight shelter for adults. As a growing number of tents clustered its parks, the city banned camping and set \$295 fines for people sleeping there.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals largely blocked the camping ban under its finding that it is unconstitutional to punish people for sleeping outside when there is not adequate shelter space. Grants Pass appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing the ruling left it few good options.

"It really has made it impossible for cities to address growing encampments, and they're unsafe, unhealthy and problematic for everyone, especially those who are experiencing homelessness," said lawyer Theane Evangelis, who is representing Grants Pass.

The city is also challenging a 2018 decision, known as *Martin v. Boise*, that first barred camping bans when shelter space is lacking. It was issued by the San Francisco-based 9th Circuit and applies to the nine Western states in its jurisdiction. The Supreme Court declined to take up a different challenge to the ruling in 2019, before the solidification of its current conservative majority.

If the decision is overturned, advocates say it would make it easier for cities deal with homelessness by arresting and fining people rather than helping them get shelter and housing.

"In Grants Pass and across America, homelessness has grown because more and more hardworking people struggle to pay rent, not because we lack ways to punish people sleeping outside," said Jesse Rabinowitz, campaign and communications director for the National Homeless Law Center. Local laws prohibiting sleeping in public spaces have increased at least 50% since 2006, he said.

The case comes after homelessness in the United States grew by 12%, to its highest reported level as soaring rents and a decline in coronavirus pandemic assistance combined to put housing out of reach for more people, according to federal data. Four in 10 people experiencing homelessness sleep outside, a federal report found.

More than 650,000 people are estimated to be homeless, the most since the country began using the yearly point-in-time survey in 2007. People of color, LGBTQ+ people and seniors are disproportionately affected, advocates said.

Two of four states with the country's largest homeless populations, Washington and California, are in the West. Officials in cities such as Los Angeles and San Francisco say they do not want to punish people simply because they are forced to sleep outside, but that cities need the power to keep growing encampments in check.

"I never want to criminalize homelessness, but I want to be able to encourage people to accept services and shelter," said Thien Ho, the district attorney in Sacramento, California, where homelessness has risen sharply in recent years.

San Francisco says it has been blocked from enforcing camping regulations because the city does not have enough shelter space for its full homeless population, something it estimates would cost \$1.5 billion to provide.

"These encampments frequently block sidewalks, prevent employees from cleaning public thoroughfares, and create health and safety risks for both the unhoused and the public at large," lawyers for the city wrote. City workers have also encountered knives, drug dealing and belligerent people at encampments, they said.

Several cities and Democratic California Gov. Gavin Newsom urged the high court to keep some legal protections in place while reining in "overreach" by lower courts. The *Martin v. Boise* ruling allows cities

to regulate and "sweep" encampments, but not enforce total bans in communities without enough beds in shelters.

The Justice Department also backed the idea that people shouldn't be punished for sleeping outside when they have no where else to go, but said the Grants Pass ruling should be tossed out because 9th Circuit went awry by not defining what it means to be "involuntarily homeless."

Evangelis, the lawyer for Grants Pass, argues that the Biden administration's position would not solve the problem for the Oregon city. "It would be impossible for cities to really address the homelessness crisis," she said.

Public encampments are not good places for people to live, said Ed Johnson, who represents people living outside in Grants Pass as director of litigation at the Oregon Law Center. But enforcement of camping bans often makes homelessness worse by requiring people to spend money on fines rather than housing or creating an arrest record that makes it harder to get an apartment. Public officials should focus instead on addressing shortages of affordable housing so people have places to live, he said.

"It's frustrating when people who have all the power throw up their hands and say, 'there's nothing we can do,'" he said. "People have to go somewhere."

The Supreme Court is expected to rule by the end of June.

The man who set himself on fire outside the courthouse where Trump is on trial dies of his injuries

NEW YORK (AP) — The man who doused himself in an accelerant and set himself on fire outside the courthouse where former President Donald Trump is on trial has died, police said.

The New York City Police Department told The Associated Press early Saturday that the man was declared dead by staff at an area hospital.

The man was in Collect Pond Park around 1:30 p.m. Friday when he took out pamphlets espousing conspiracy theories, tossed them around, then doused himself in an accelerant and set himself on fire, officials and witnesses said.

A large number of police officers were nearby when it happened. Some officers and bystanders rushed to the aid of the man, who was hospitalized in critical condition at the time.

The man, who police said recently traveled from Florida to New York, had not breached any security checkpoints to access the park.

The park outside the courthouse has been a gathering spot for protesters, journalists and gawkers throughout Trump's trial, which began with jury selection Monday.

Through Friday, the streets and sidewalks in the area around the courthouse were generally wide open and crowds have been small and largely orderly.

Authorities said they were also reviewing the security protocols, including whether to restrict access to the park. The side street where Trump enters and leaves the building is off limits.

"We may have to shut this area down," New York City Police Department Deputy Commissioner Kaz Daughtry said at a news conference outside the courthouse Friday, adding that officials would discuss the security plan soon.

Satellite image analyzed by AP shows damage after Iranian attack on Israeli desert air base

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — An Iranian attack on an Israeli desert air base last week as part of Tehran's unprecedented assault on the country damaged a taxiway, a satellite image analyzed by The Associated Press on Saturday shows.

The overall damage done to Nevatim air base in southern Israel was minor despite Iran launching hundreds of drones, ballistic missiles and cruise missiles. Israeli air defenses and fighter jets, backed by the

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U.S., the United Kingdom and neighboring Jordan, shot down the vast majority of the incoming fire.

But the Iranian attack last weekend showed Tehran's willingness to use its vast arsenal of ballistic missiles directly against Israel as tensions remain high across the wider Middle East over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. An apparent Israeli retaliatory attack Friday on Isfahan, Iran, and Tehran's low-key response to it suggest both countries want to dial back their long-running shadow war for now — though risks of a wider conflagration in the region remain.

The Planet Labs PBC image, taken Friday for the AP, shows fresh blacktop across a taxiway near hangars at the southern part of Nevatim air base, about 65 kilometers (40 miles) south of Jerusalem. The daily newspaper Haaretz, which published lower-resolution images of the site Thursday, identified the hangars nearby as housing C-130 cargo aircraft flown by transport squadrons.

The satellite image corresponds to footage earlier released by the Israeli military, which showed construction equipment working on the damaged taxiway. A hangar in the background of the video mirrors those seen nearby.

Other images released by the Israeli military showed a crater in the sand and damage under what appeared to be a wall that it said came from the Iranian attack. The little visible damage seen at the air base in the satellite image directly contradicts Iran's efforts to portray the attack as a great victory to a public alienated by the Islamic Republic's cratering economy and its heavy-handed crackdowns on dissent in recent years.

"This operation became a sign of the power of the Islamic Republic and its armed forces," Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said Friday. "It also showed the steely determination of our nation and our wise leader, the commander of all forces."

However, it does show Iran's arsenal has the ability to reach Israel, as the April 13 attack marked the first direct military assault on the country by a foreign nation since Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein launched Scud missiles at Israel in the 1991 Gulf War.

Trump was forced to listen silently as potential jurors offered their unvarnished assessments of him

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — He seems "selfish and self-serving," said one woman.

The way he carries himself in public "leaves something to be desired," said another.

His "negative rhetoric and bias," said another man, is what is "most harmful."

Over the past week, Donald Trump has been forced to sit inside a frigid New York courtroom and listen to a parade of potential jurors in his criminal hush money trial share their unvarnished assessments of him.

It's been a dramatic departure for the former president and presumptive 2024 GOP nominee, who is accustomed to spending his days in a cocoon of cheering crowds and constant adulation. Now a criminal defendant, Trump will instead spend the next several weeks subjected to strict rules that strip him of control over everything from what he is permitted to say to the temperature of the room.

"He's the object of derision. It's his nightmare. He can't control the script. He can't control the cinematography. He can't control what's being said about him. And the outcome could go in a direction he really doesn't want," said Tim O'Brien, a Trump biographer and critic.

While Trump is occasionally confronted by protesters, generally he lives a life sheltered from criticism. After leaving the White House, Trump moved to his Mar-a-Lago waterfront club in Palm Beach, Florida, where he is surrounded by dotting paid staff and dues-paying members who have shelled out tens of thousands of dollars to be near him.

Many days, Trump heads to his nearby golf course, where he is "swarmed by people wanting to shake his hand, take pictures of him, and tell him how amazing he is," said Stephanie Grisham, a longtime aide who broke with Trump after the storming of the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

When he returns to Mar-a-Lago in the afternoon, members lunching on the patio often stand and applaud. He receives the same standing ovation at dinner, which often ends with Trump playing DJ on his

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iPad, blasting favorites like "It's a Man's Man's Man's World" by James Brown.

Grisham, who spent long stretches traveling with Trump and at Mar-a-Lago during his 2016 campaign and as White House press secretary, described staff constantly serving as cheerleaders and telling Trump what he wanted to hear. To avoid angry outbursts, they requested motorcade routes that avoided protests and they left a stack of positive press clips every morning on the Resolute Desk in the Oval Office.

Now, Trump faces a trial that could result in felony convictions and possible prison time. And he will have to listen to more critics, without being able to punch back verbally — something he revels in doing.

Among the expected witnesses in the trial are his former lawyer and fixer, Michael Cohen, and the porn actor who alleged she had sex with him, Stormy Daniels. Both have savaged him in interviews and books as well as on social media.

Trump campaign spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said Trump proved during his first week in court that "he will remain defiant in the face of this unprecedented political lawfare" and said, "It is clear that his support from the American people will only grow as they watch Joe Biden, Alvin Bragg and the Democrats putting on this bogus show trial six months before the election." Bragg is the Manhattan district attorney.

New Yorkers who said they couldn't approach the case fairly were excused during jury selection. But one of the women with the harshest assessments of him will be among those who will determine his fate on 34 counts of falsifying business records.

"I don't like his persona, how he presents himself in public," said the woman, who has lived in upper Manhattan for the last 15 years. The woman said she didn't agree with some of Trump's politics, which she called "outrageous."

"He just seems very selfish and self-serving, so I don't really appreciate that in any public servant," she said, adding that while she doesn't "know him as a person," how he "portrays himself in public, it just seems to me it is not my cup of tea."

Trump's legal team took issue with her responses, but they were out of challenges by the time she was up for consideration.

Judge Juan Manuel Merchan has withheld the names of prospective jurors for safety concerns.

On Friday, one prospective juror, who said she had attended the 2017 Women's March protesting Trump's inauguration, complained of the influence he has over his base.

"I think his rhetoric at times enables people to feel as if they have permission to discriminate or act on their negative impulses," she said, citing people she has heard make homophobic or racist comments. Still, she said she didn't have strong feelings about the former president and wasn't sure of his current policy positions.

Another man said he'd grown up admiring the former president and business mogul's real estate portfolio and even thinking he might someday live in Trump Tower. But he had come to oppose Trump's "negative rhetoric and bias against people that he speaks about."

At other times, lawyers read aloud social media posts from prospective jurors mocking Trump and celebrating his defeats.

One prospective juror, an older white woman, was struck from the jury pool by the judge after Trump's legal team uncovered years-old social media posts that described Trump as a "racist, sexist" narcissist.

One of Trump's attorneys called the posts "vitriolic."

"She harbors a deep hatred for him," said the lawyer, Susan Necheles. "She said that 'I wouldn't believe Donald Trump if his tongue were notarized'" and that he was "anathema" to everything she was taught about love.

Confronted with the posts inside the courtroom, the juror said she understood why they'd be concerning to the defense, but her views had evolved. "Election policies can get pretty spicy and Mr. Trump can get pretty spicy," she said.

Merchan, the judge, also dismissed a man who in 2017 had shared a Facebook post celebrating the defeat of one of Trump's policies in court. "Get him out and lock him up!" it read in part.

Court rules require Trump to be present throughout the trial. He can't storm out of the courtroom like he did during a recent defamation trial. He is also barred by a gag order from attacking any of the jurors,

including on his Truth Social platform.

He has already been admonished by Merchan for audibly uttering something and gesturing while one juror was answering questions.

"I will not tolerate any jurors being intimidated in this courtroom," said Merchan, who previously warned Trump he could be sent to jail for engaging in disruptive behavior in court.

Trump's assessments in the courthouse weren't all bad, however, with a perhaps surprising number of potential jurors saying they had no strong opinions about one of the best known and most divisive men on the planet.

In fact, the process seemed to reveal more supporters than might be expected in a borough where President Joe Biden captured 87% of the vote in 2020.

One potential juror Thursday who spoke of Trump in glowing terms said he was "impressed" with Trump's career as a successful businessman.

"I mean he was our president, pretty amazing. He is a businessman in New York. He has forged his way, you know, he made kind of history in terms of like where he started and where he has become," said the man, who said he saw his own story similarly.

On Tuesday, another man expressed regret that he couldn't juggle the trial with his job.

"Your Honor, as much as I would love to serve for New York and one of our great presidents, I could not give up my job for six-plus weeks," he said.

Many said they had read his book "The Art of the Deal."

Even the woman who criticized his persona and ended up on the jury anyway acknowledged his appeal to voters.

"Sometimes the way he may carry himself in public leaves something to be desired. At the same time, I can relate to sometimes being a bit unfiltered," she said. "I see him speak to a lot of people in America. I think there is something to be said about that."

War, hostages, antisemitism:

A somber backdrop to this year's Passover observances

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

Passover is a major Jewish holiday, celebrated over seven or eight days each year, commemorating the exodus of ancient Israelites from slavery in Egypt, as recounted in the Bible. To many Jews, it symbolizes freedom and the birth of a Jewish nation.

This year, for many Jews, the holiday's mood will be somber due to the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza and the rise of antisemitic incidents elsewhere.

WHEN IS PASSOVER THIS YEAR?

Passover – known as Pesach in Hebrew -- begins on April 22. By tradition, it will be celebrated for seven days in Israel and for eight days by some Jews in the rest of the world.

WHAT ARE KEY PASSOVER RITUALS AND TRADITIONS?

For many Jews, Passover is a time to reunite with family and recount the exodus from Egypt at a meal called the Seder. Observant Jews avoid grains known as chametz, a reminder of the unleavened bread the Israelites ate when they fled Egypt quickly with no time for dough to rise. Cracker-like matzo is OK to eat; most breads, pastas, cakes and cookies are off-limits.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT THIS YEAR?

For many Israelis, it's hard to celebrate an occasion focused on freedom when some of their compatriots are still held hostage by Hamas in Gaza. The hostages' plight has reverberated worldwide, with some families in the Jewish diaspora asking rabbis to give them additional prayers for this year's Seder. Others have created a new Haggadah, the book read during the Seder, to reflect current realities.

Many Seder tables, in Israel and elsewhere, are expected to have empty seats, representing those killed or taken hostage on Oct. 7, as well as soldiers unable to return home for Passover.

There's also intense concern, in some countries, about a recent rise in antisemitic incidents.

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The U.S.-based Anti-Defamation League says it tallied 8,873 incidents of antisemitic assault, harassment and vandalism across the country in 2023 – up 140% from 2022 – with most of the incidents occurring after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israel. On Wednesday, the ADL and other Jewish organizations participated in A “Passover Without Fear” webinar, with FBI Director Christopher Wray and several security experts offering guidance on keeping the Passover season safe, secure and as welcoming as possible.

The event was hosted by the Secure Community Network, which provides security and safety resources to hundreds of Jewish organizations and institutions across North America.

“It is not a time for panic, but it is a time for continued vigilance,” said Wray, adding that the FBI was particularly concerned about the threat posed by “lone actors.”

WHAT ARE RABBIS AND SCHOLARS SAYING?

“The Seder is supposed to help us to relive past slavery and liberation from Egypt and to learn its lessons, but in 2024 it must also ask contemporary questions about the confusing and traumatic present and most important, generate hope for the future.” --- Noam Zion, emeritus member of the faculty of Jewish studies at the Hartman Institute in Jerusalem.

“At the Seder, we make a point of eating bitter herbs, to recall the difficulties of the past, and also drink wine and eat the foods of freedom. It is a mix -- a meal filled with discussion that confronts the challenges of being a Jew throughout history and of being a Jew today.” -- Rabbi Moshe Hauer, executive vice president of the Orthodox Union, a major U.S.-based Jewish organization .

“What a challenging time it is right now for the Jewish people. We feel so alone ... There is so much cynicism in the world, so much hopelessness. We need Passover now more than ever. It’s a story that ends in freedom and joy.” -- Rabbi Noah Farkas, president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.

Today in History: April 21, Prince dies at age 57

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, April 21, the 112th day of 2024. There are 254 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On April 21, 2016, Prince, one of the most inventive and influential musicians of modern times, was found dead at his home in suburban Minneapolis; he was 57.

On this date:

In 1649, the Maryland Toleration Act, providing for freedom of worship for all Christians, was passed by the Maryland assembly.

In 1836, an army of Texans led by Sam Houston defeated the Mexicans at San Jacinto, assuring Texas independence.

In 1910, author Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as Mark Twain, died in Redding, Connecticut, at age 74.

In 1926, Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II was born in Mayfair, London; she was the first child of The Duke and Duchess of York, who later became King George VI and the Queen Mother.

In 1930, fire broke out inside the overcrowded Ohio Penitentiary in Columbus, killing 332 inmates.

In 1975, with Communist forces closing in, South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu resigned after nearly 10 years in office and fled the country.

In 1976, clinical trials of the swine flu vaccine began in Washington, D.C.

In 1980, Rosie Ruiz was the first woman to cross the finish line at the Boston Marathon; however, she was later exposed as a fraud. (Canadian Jacqueline Gareau was named the actual winner of the women’s race.)

In 1998, astronomers announced in Washington that they had discovered possible signs of a new family of planets orbiting a star 220 light-years away, the clearest evidence to date of worlds forming beyond our solar system.

In 2012, Charles W. “Chuck” Colson described as the “evil genius” of the Nixon administration who served

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seven months in prison for a Watergate-related conviction, then spent the next 35 years ministering to prison inmates, died at age 80.

In 2013, Joe Scarborough, a 50-year-old self-employed electrical contractor, rolled the first 900 series in Professional Bowlers Association history — three straight perfect games.

In 2015, an Egyptian criminal court sentenced ousted Islamist President Mohammed Morsi to 20 years in prison over the killing of protesters in 2012. (Morsi collapsed and died during trial on espionage charges in June 2019.)

In 2018, actor Verne Troyer, best known for his role as “Mini-Me” in the “Austin Powers” movies, died at age of 49.

In 2020, researchers reported that a malaria drug that had been widely touted by President Donald Trump for treating the coronavirus showed no benefit in a large study of its use in U.S. veterans hospitals.

In 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed victory in the battle for the Ukrainian city of Mariupol, even as he ordered his troops not to take the risk of storming the giant steel plant where the last Ukrainian defenders were holed up.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-comedian-writer Elaine May is 92. Anti-death penalty activist Sister Helen Prejean is 85. Singer-musician Iggy Pop is 77. Actor Patti LuPone is 75. Actor Tony Danza is 73. Actor James Morrison is 70. Actor Andie MacDowell is 66. Rock singer Robert Smith (The Cure) is 65. Rock musician Michael Timmins (Cowboy Junkies) is 65. Actor-director John Cameron Mitchell is 61. Rapper Michael Franti (Spearhead) is 58. Actor Leslie Silva is 56. Actor Toby Stephens is 55. Rock singer-musician Glen Hansard (The Frames) is 54. Actor Rob Riggle is 54. Comedian Nicole Sullivan is 54. Football player-turned-actor Brian White is 51. Olympic gold medal pairs figure skater Jamie Sale (sah-LAY') is 47. Rock musician Dave Brenner (Theory of a Deadman) is 46. Actor James McAvoy is 45. Former NFL quarterback Tony Romo is 44. Actor Terrence J is 42. Actor Gugu Mbatha-Raw is 41. Actor Christoph Sanders is 36. Actor Frank Dillane is 33. Rock singer Sydney Sierota (Echosmith) is 27.