

Groton Daily Independent

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Sunday, April 28

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

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

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Piano Recital, noon; choir, 6 p.m.

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

High School Baseball at Volga. Varsity at 2 p.m., Junior Varsity at 4 p.m.

Monday, April 29

Senior Menu: Baked cod, macaroni and cheese, spinach salad with tomatoes fruit cocktail, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Pancake on stick.

School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, cooked carrots.

FFA Banquet, GHS Gym, 6 p.m.

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

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

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

"Truth is such a rare thing, it is delightful to tell it."

-EMILY DICKINSON



Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study 6:30 a.m.
JH Track at Groton Area, 2 p.m.

Tuesday, April 30

Senior Menu: Teriyaki chicken, rice pilaf, cauliflower and broccoli, pineapple strawberry ambrosia whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Scones.

School Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans.

Track at Milbank, 1:30 p.m.

Elementary Spring Concert, 7 p.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.

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The city-wide cleanup week had begun in Groton as residents began bringing their junk to the city shop. This all accumulated Saturday. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

**GROTON
HISTORIC JAIL
RESTORATION
BENEFIT
BRUNCH**



**SUNDAY,
APRIL 28TH
8AM-1PM
COMMUNITY
CENTER**



Name Released in Pennington County Fatality

What: Single vehicle fatal crash
Where: 12881 SD Highway 244, three miles west of Keystone, SD
When: 1:48 p.m., Wednesday, April 24, 2024

Driver 1: Henry James Douglass, 87-year-old male from Reidsville, NC, fatal injuries
Vehicle 1: 2023 Nissan Terrain
Seat Belt Use: Yes

Pennington County, S.D.- An 87-year-old man died Wednesday afternoon in a single-vehicle crash three miles west of Keystone, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates Henry J. Douglass, the driver of a 2023 Nissan Terrain was traveling eastbound on SD Highway 244 when the vehicle left the roadway, entering the south ditch. The vehicle struck an embankment which caused the vehicle to roll, coming to final rest on its top. Douglass was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Names Released in Fall River County Double Fatality

What: Single vehicle fatal crash
Where: SD Highway 471, mile marker 25, 3 miles south of Edgemont, SD
When: 7:54 a.m., Wednesday, April 24, 2024

Driver 1: Michael S. Gembala, 55-year-old male from Edgemont, SD, fatal injuries
Vehicle 1: 2001 Ford F250
Seat Belt Use: No

Passenger 1: Roy Joseph Nielson, 64-year-old male from Willmar, MN, fatal injuries
Seat Belt Use: No

Fall River County, S.D.- Two men died Wednesday morning in a single-vehicle crash three miles south of Edgemont, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates Michael S. Gembala, the driver of a 2001 Ford F250 was headed southbound on SD Hwy. 471 when the vehicle ran off the roadway then returned to the southbound lane, over-corrected and went off the roadway again, down an embankment, and rolled several times. Gembala and a passenger in the vehicle, Roy J. Nielson, were not wearing seatbelts and both sustained fatal injuries.

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

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

**Storm Damage
To Your Roof?**



WITTE 
EXTERIORS LLC

Specializing in Asphalt and Wood Shingles

Call for an estimate

Zack Witte ~ 605-695-7874

Webster, SD

No Contracts!

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High School Baseball

Howard Varsity Tigers Squeaks By Groton Area Tigers Varsity In Pitchers Duel

Both teams were strong on the hill on Saturday, but Howard Varsity Tigers was just a little bit stronger at the plate in their 3-0 victory over Groton Area Tigers Varsity. Gavin Englund started the game for Groton Area Tigers Varsity and recorded 17 outs.

Howard Varsity Tigers got on the board in the top of the sixth inning after Weeton Remmers grounded out, and Nolan Mentele singled, each scoring one run.

Luke Koepsell earned the win for Howard Varsity Tigers. The southpaw gave up four hits and zero runs over seven innings, striking out five and walking none. Englund took the loss for Groton Area Tigers Varsity. They went five and two-thirds innings, allowing two runs (zero earned) on five hits, striking out five and walking three.

Brevin Flihs, Colby Dunker, Carter Simon, and Bradin Althoff each collected one hit for Groton Area Tigers Varsity.

Mentele and Remmers were a one-two punch in the lineup, as each drove in one run for Howard Varsity Tigers. Howard Varsity Tigers worked the count all day, amassing six walks.

15 N Main St. - Ste. 101
Downtown Groton

Call/Text Paul: 605-397-7460

Call/Text Tina: 605-397-7285



Living Heart Fitness Center

Exercise helps ease arthritis
pain and stiffness. - Mayo Clinic

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Howard Varsity Tigers **3 - 0** Groton Area Tigers Varsity

📍 Home 📅 Saturday April 27, 2024

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
HWRD	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	5	2
GRTN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2

BATTING

Howard Varsity Tig	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
K Feldhaus (2B)	2	0	1	0	1	0
C Claussen (1B)	3	1	0	0	1	2
J Remmers (SS)	4	1	1	0	0	0
L Koepsell (P)	3	1	0	0	1	0
K Koepsell (CF)	2	0	0	0	1	0
W Remmers (C)	3	0	0	1	0	1
N Mentele (3B)	3	0	2	1	0	1
K Shumaker (RF)	2	0	1	0	1	0
L Haak (LF)	2	0	0	0	1	2
Totals	24	3	5	2	6	6

TB: K Shumaker, N Mentele 2, J Remmers, K Feldhaus,
HBP: K Feldhaus, **SB:** K Feldhaus, L Koepsell, K Koepsell, **LOB:** 7

PITCHING

Howard Varsi	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
L Koepsell	7.0	4	0	0	0	5	0
Totals	7.0	4	0	0	0	5	0

W: L Koepsell, **P-S:** L Koepsell 83-64, **WP:** L Koepsell,
BF: L Koepsell 27

Groton Area Tigers	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
B Flihs (CF)	3	0	1	0	0	0
D Abeln (SS)	2	0	0	0	0	1
C Dunker (LF)	3	0	1	0	0	0
L Ringgenberg (RF)	3	0	0	0	0	0
B Althoff (1B)	3	0	1	0	0	0
C Simon (3B)	3	0	1	0	0	2
G Englund (P)	2	0	0	0	0	0
J Erdmann (P)	1	0	0	0	0	0
K Flihs (C)	3	0	0	0	0	0
B Imrie (2B)	3	0	0	0	0	2
CR: N Morris	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	26	0	4	0	0	5

2B: C Dunker, **TB:** B Althoff, C Dunker 2, C Simon, B Flihs, **SAC:** D Abeln, **LOB:** 6

Groton Area	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
G Englund	5.2	5	2	0	3	5	0
J Erdmann	1.1	0	1	0	3	1	0
Totals	7.0	5	3	0	6	6	0

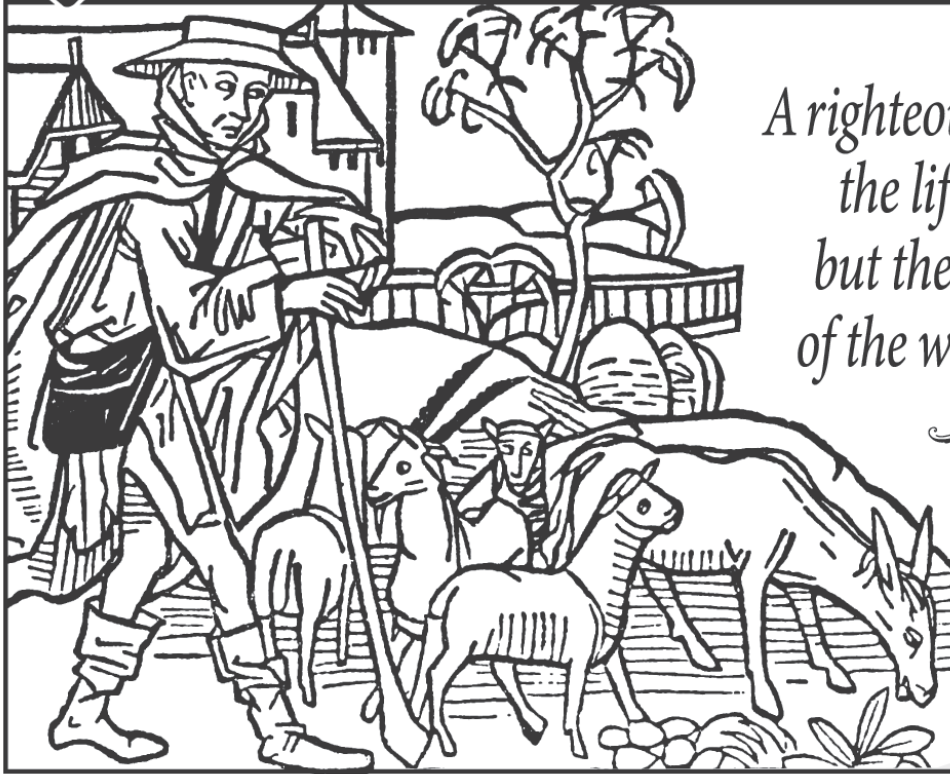
L: G Englund, **P-S:** G Englund 90-46, J Erdmann 29-10,
HBP: G Englund, **BF:** G Englund 25, J Erdmann 6

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

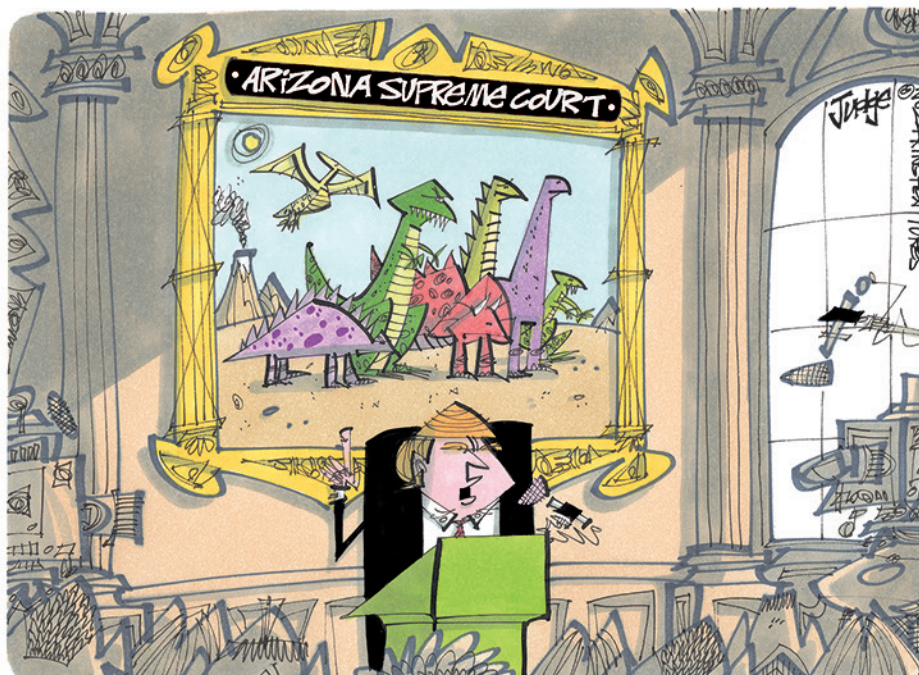


*A righteous man regards
the life of his animal,
but the tender mercies
of the wicked are cruel.*

PROVERBS
12:10

Detail of
15th-century
woodcut

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"WHY NOT LEAVE THE ABORTION ISSUE UP TO THE STATES?"

BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. How many chosen men of Israel did Saul take with him to the wilderness of Ziph to search for David? *12, 100, 200, 3000*

3. From 1 Samuel 3, whose voice did Samuel think it was when he first heard God calling him? *Jonathan, Saul, Ahiah, Eli*

4. The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any ...? *Tongue, Knife, Two-edged sword, Wit*

5. In Genesis 26, where did Isaac stay when there was a famine in the land? *Gerar, Endor, Sychar, Lydda*

6. What insect was a plague on the Egyptians? *Wasp, Locust, Flea, Cockroach*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) 3000, 3) Eli, 4) Two-edged sword, 5) Gerar, 6) Locust

Find expanded trivia online with Wilson Casey at www.patreon.com/triviaguy. FREE TRIAL!

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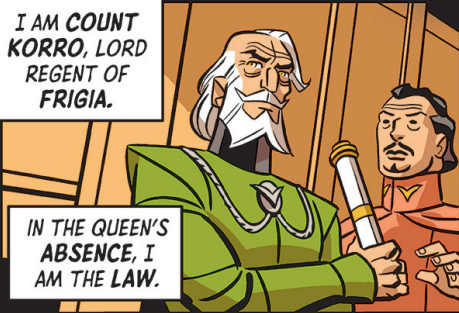


FLASH GORDON

WHEN I WAS YOUNG, FRIGIA WAS A NATION ON THE BRINK OF COLLAPSE.

SO I CHARTED NEW LANDS. DISCOVERED NEW RICHES HIDDEN WITHIN THE SURFACE.

THIS IS MY HOME, AND I HAVE BLED FOR EVERY INCH OF IT.



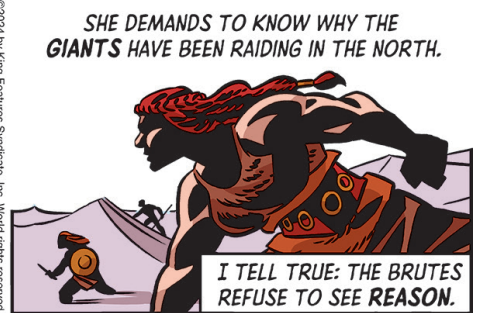
I AM COUNT KORRO, LORD REGENT OF FRIGIA.

IN THE QUEEN'S ABSENCE, I AM THE LAW.



THE QUEEN COMES AND GOES AS SHE PLEASES, ADVENTURING IN THE COMPANY OF OUTSIDERS.

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SHE DEMANDS TO KNOW WHY THE GIANTS HAVE BEEN RAIDING IN THE NORTH.

I TELL TRUE: THE BRUTES REFUSE TO SEE REASON.



SHE DISAPPROVES OF HOW I MANAGE "HER KINGDOM."



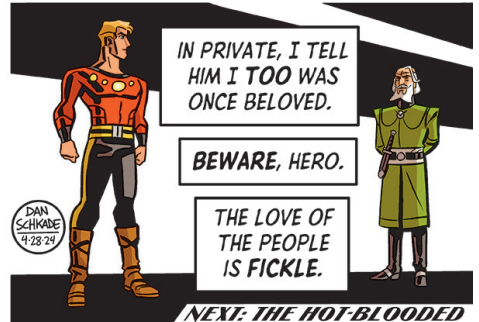
PRINCE RONAL THINKS ME JUST A HATEFUL OLD MAN.



THE DRAGONMAN THEY'VE BROUGHT HERE WANTS MY BLOOD.



THE ALIEN FLASH GORDON REGARDS ME WITH PITY.



IN PRIVATE, I TELL HIM I TOO WAS ONCE BELOVED.

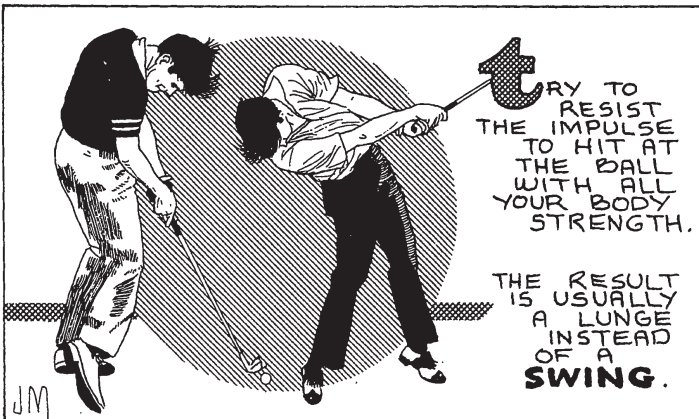
BEWARE, HERO.

THE LOVE OF THE PEOPLE IS FICKLE.

DAN SCHWABE 4-28-24

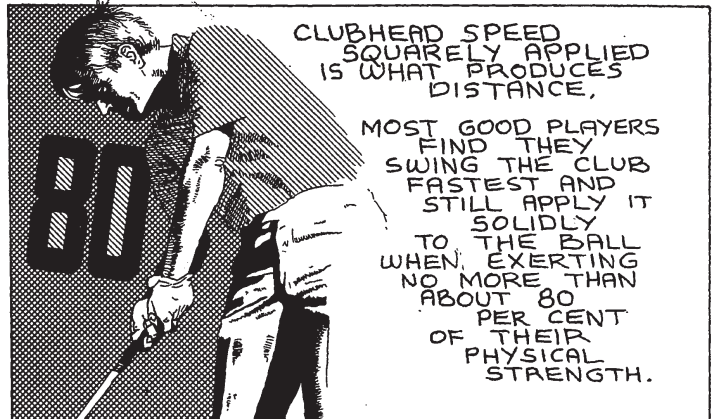
NEXT: THE HOT-BLOODED

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



TRY TO RESIST THE IMPULSE TO HIT AT THE BALL WITH ALL YOUR BODY STRENGTH.

THE RESULT IS USUALLY A LUNGE INSTEAD OF A SWING.



CLUBHEAD SPEED SQUARELY APPLIED IS WHAT PRODUCES DISTANCE.

MOST GOOD PLAYERS FIND THEY SWING THE CLUB FASTEST AND STILL APPLY IT SOLIDLY TO THE BALL WHEN EXERTING NO MORE THAN ABOUT 80 PER CENT OF THEIR PHYSICAL STRENGTH.

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Apple Cider Vinegar Is a Surprising Help for Blood in Urine

DEAR DR. ROACH: Recently, I had anal cancer and was treated with chemo and radiation. The radiation burned my insides and severely damaged most of my internal organs. One of the aftereffects was occasional blood and small clots in my urine. A few months ago, both the frequency and amount of blood, especially the clots, increased dramatically. The size and number of the clots got so large that they blocked my urethra.

During a visit to my urologist, he looked into my bladder and declared it "angry." Then he told me the same thing every doctor has told me about every problem caused by my treatment: "It was caused by the radiation, and there is nothing that can be done."

Shortly after this, I began to take unfiltered apple cider vinegar in hopes that it would improve my digestive problems. It helped a little, but the big difference was that I have not had a single recurrence of either blood or clots in my urine. Can you tell me if this is due to the vinegar or if it is just a coincidence? -- A.G.

ANSWER: No, I can't definitively tell you whether the vinegar helped. It was probably by chance, but let me explain a little about it.

Rectal cancer is often treated with radiation, or combined chemotherapy and radiation, either prior to or after surgery. The dose of radiation is quite high compared to some other cancers, and the complications can be significant.

In addition to damage to the bowel and bladder, radiation treatment can damage the bones and bone marrow, leading to poor blood-cell production, infertility, premature menopause, and more cancer years later. On the other hand, radiation is used when it is expected to improve the cure rate of cancer. Still, the side effects can be challenging.

Hemorrhagic cystitis (bleeding from the bladder) can be caused by chemotherapy or radiation. It may start within a few months or as long as 20 years after radiation.

I am surprised your urologist did not offer any treatments, as there are certainly ones available. Although none of the currently available systemic drugs are proven to be very effective, hyperbaric oxygen is one treatment that is, at least, moderately effective. Medicines placed into the bladder and laser bladder treatments are sometimes tried as well.

I was unable to find any study that evaluated the effectiveness of apple cider vinegar. I am skeptical, but reports like yours of apparent improvement associated with its use might convince a researcher to conduct a study to determine whether it really is effective.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am presently taking 300 mg of gabapentin once daily for neuropathy, which had become increasingly severe with burning, itching, and pins and needles. It is helping, but not 100%. I still need ice packs at night for relief sometimes. Do you have any suggestions for alternative treatment? -- B.R.

ANSWER: Gabapentin is an effective drug for painful neuropathy, whether the cause is known or not. However, its side effect of sedation limits its use, and the medicine needs to be advanced slowly to be tolerated.

In my experience, 300 mg once daily is not adequate for most people, but 300 mg three times daily is effective for many. The recommended dose in one type of severe neuropathy, postherpetic neuralgia, is 1,200 mg three times daily. It may take months to be able to get to this dose.

I have also had some success with anti-inflammatory medicines as an adjunctive treatment.

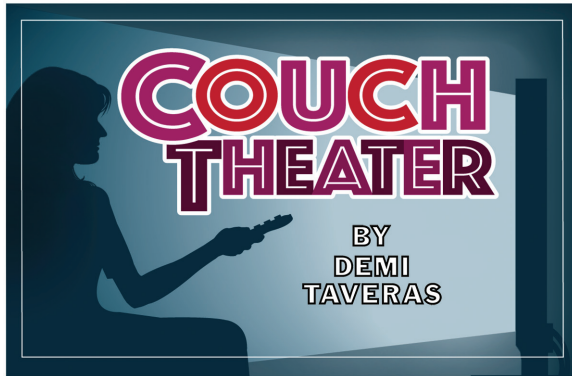
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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Cillian Murphy stars in the 2005 comedy-drama film "Breakfast on Pluto." Courtesy of MovieStillsDB

"Dune: Part Two" (PG-13) -- The sequel to the 2021 sci-fi film "Dune" is officially out now to rent after garnering more than \$685 million worldwide in its box-office release. Starring our modern-day movie stars Timothee Chalamet ("Wonka") and Zendaya ("Euphoria"), "Part Two" picks up right

after the events of the first film that left Paul Atreides (Chalamet) and his mother, Lady Jessica (Rebecca Ferguson), in the hands of the Fremen troops on the planet Arrakis. Paul and Lady Jessica begin learning the ways of the Fremen, while Baron Vladimir Harkonnen remains relentless in his plans to take over the desert planet. The Baron recruits his bloodthirsty nephew, Feyd-Rautha (Austin Butler), to assist him in conquering Arrakis. With much more action, an excellent ensemble cast, and visuals that will give you goosebumps, this incredible film will make you want to stay in the worlds of "Dune" forever. (Apple TV+)

In Case You Missed It

"Quiet on Set: The Dark Side of Kids TV" (TV-14) -- This five-part docu-series isn't an easy watch, whether you grew up watching Nickelodeon's shows or not, but it's monumental for shedding light on the brutal behind-the-scenes world child actors deal with. Featuring interviews from child actors who worked for shows like "All That," "Zoey 101," "The Amanda Show" and more, the first four episodes detail the horrific work environment they had to endure at the mercy of producers like Brian Peck and Dan Schneider. Drake Bell ("Drake & Josh") explains the crimes that were committed to him by Peck, a sex offender who continued to work in Hollywood following his conviction. The series also highlights the subtly inappropriate jokes that Schneider would slide in for unknowing young actors like Ariana Grande and Jamie Lynn Spears. The fifth and final episode includes extra, in-depth interviews led by journalist Soledad O'Brien. (Max)

"Breakfast on Pluto" (R) -- Before Cillian Murphy ever donned a brimmed hat to play J. Robert Oppenheimer and win an Oscar, he once played Patricia "Kitten" Braden in this peculiar comedy-drama film from 2005. Born Patrick, Patricia lives in the fictional Irish town of Tyrellin during the 1970s and causes havoc because of her choice to come out as transgender. After years of getting in trouble at school and never feeling like she belonged, Patricia decides to run away from Tyrellin and see where the world takes her. As she tries to find her footing in the dodgiest of places, she meets an unusual array of individuals, like Billy Hatchet and the Mohawks, magician Bertie Vaughan, and the singing/dancing Wombles, who all eventually push her closer to realizing and accepting her truth. This film will leave you astounded with Murphy's range as an actor. Out now. (Amazon Prime Video)

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1. Who was the first artist to release "The Wonder of You"?
2. Name the artist who released "Do Right Woman, Do Right Man."
3. Who released "My Baby Loves Lovin"?"
4. Who wrote and released "The Boxer"?"
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Après tous les beaux jours, Je te dis merci, merci, You were the answer of all my questions."

Answers

1. Ray Peterson, in 1959. But it was Elvis Presley, in 1970, who took the song to the top of the charts.
2. Aretha Franklin, in 1967. The song has been widely covered by others, including The Flying Burrito Brothers and Joe Cocker.
3. White Plains, in 1969. For years there was debate in the industry about who sang lead on the song, with most betting it was session singer Tony Burrows. Turns out it was band member Ricky Wolff after all.
4. Simon & Garfunkel, in 1969. It's said the song took 100 hours (and recording in multiple locations) to get the final version.
5. "Ma Belle Amie," by Tee-Set in 1970. The French lyric translates to "After all the beautiful days, I say thank you, thank you." The song did well globally, even going to No. 1 in Africa.

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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}



"Someone from the Commission on Honesty in Government is on the phone. ... Are you here?"

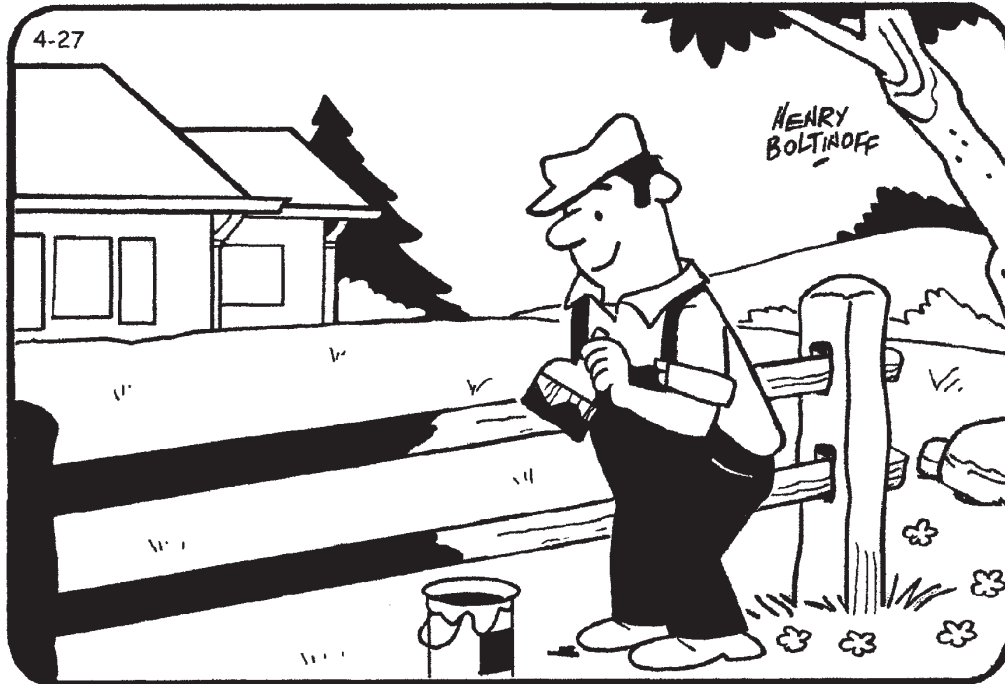
Just Like Cats & Dogs ^{by Dave T. Phipps}



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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Can is larger. 2. Brush has no paint on it. 3. Rail is larger. 4. Window is smaller. 5. Sleeve is different. 6. Ear is larger.

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* "My best friend recently had her first child. For her shower, we decided to get together and cook her several meals that could be frozen and go right from the freezer to the oven. This way, she has many meals to grab in the first few sleepless weeks." -- E.S. in Mississippi

* Need to save money grocery shopping? Studies show that if you shop when the store is least busy, you'll make smarter decisions. Try shopping at off-peak hours, such as later in the evening or early in the morning. Or try your store on Wednesday, traditionally the least busy day of the week.

* "I was making cookies last week and needed to roll out the dough. I couldn't find my rolling pin anywhere. In a pinch, I pulled a bottle of wine off my wine rack and wrapped it tightly

in plastic. It did the trick. I'm thinking I might just save the next empty bottle and clean the label off of it to use. I can store it right there in my rack!" -- O.V. in Oregon

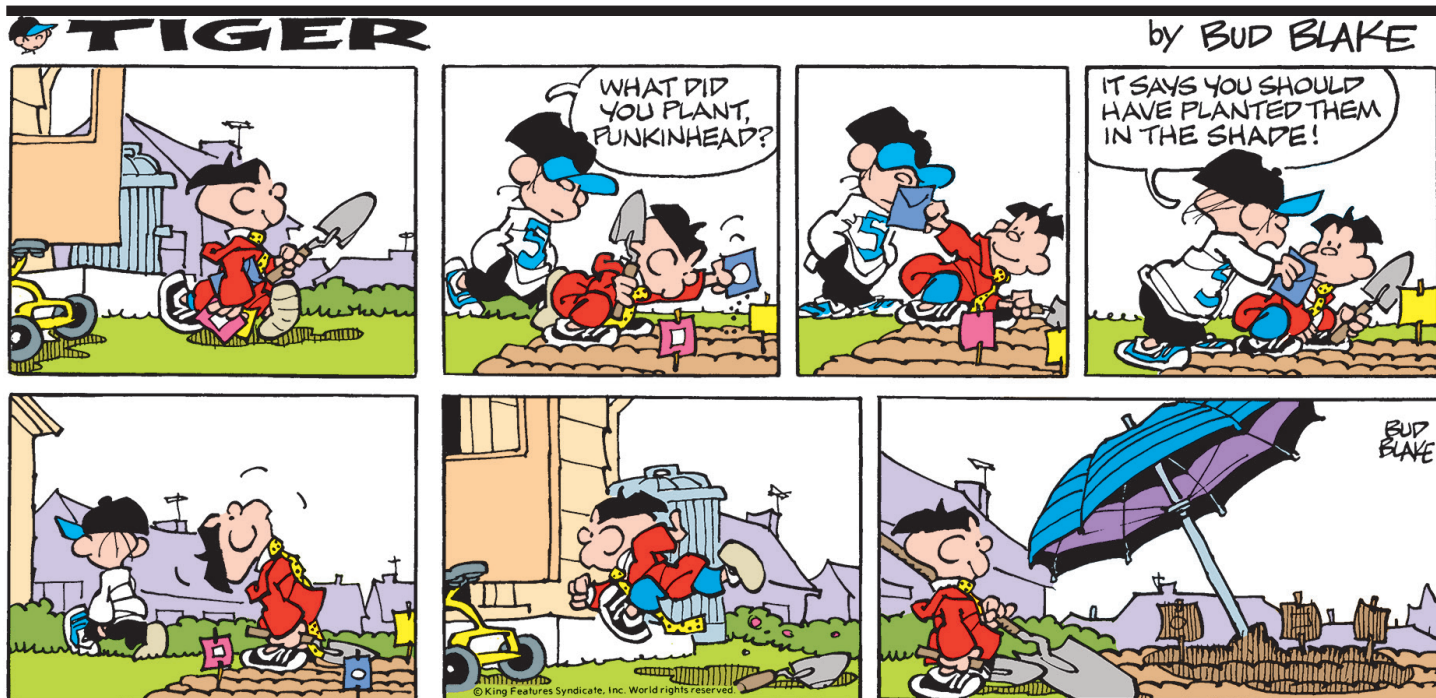
* Add shredded veggies to tomato sauce to up the veggie quotient. Many vegetables can be added without adding many calories and will not change the taste that much. Try carrots, squash or sweet potatoes. You can even add a tablespoon or two of canned, pureed pumpkin.

* "I like the smaller size of kids' meals at the drive-thru. I save the toys in a box, then I drop them off with a teacher friend to use as rewards in her classroom." -- via email

* "I found a bunch of guttering at a garage sale super cheap, and was inspired to bring it INSIDE my house. I purchased end pieces at my local hardware store and cut the gutters to fit inside my closet. They line the wall all the way up in horizontal rows. I use them to keep shoes, purses, even small baskets of accessories. It's wonderful. -- T. in Tennessee

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

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Scene stealer
- 4 Pilgrimage to Mecca
- 8 Auction
- 12 Carte lead-in
- 13 Pakistani language
- 14 Currier's partner
- 15 Florida city
- 17 Clothing store section
- 18 Intimidates, with "out"
- 19 Apprehend
- 21 Shade
- 22 Pictures
- 26 Throat affliction
- 29 Sault — Marie
- 30 Fib
- 31 Cobra feature
- 32 IRS employee
- 33 Exceptional
- 34 Mornings, briefly
- 35 "Oy —!"
- 36 Duck down
- 37 "Pop Goes the —"
- 39 Evening hrs.
- 40 Chopping tool
- 41 Portugal's place
- 45 Apple computers
- 48 Hit song by Shawn

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
18							19	20				
			21				22			23	24	25
26	27	28				29				30		
31					32				33			
34				35				36				
37			38				39					
			40				41			42	43	44
45	46	47			48	49						
50					51					52		
53					54					55		

- 31 Cobra feature
- 32 IRS employee
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- 45 Apple computers
- 48 Hit song by Shawn

- Mendes and Camila Cabello
- 50 "Oops!"
- 51 Walked (on)
- 52 Standard
- 53 Infatuated
- 54 Bohemian
- 55 Swiss peak
- 7 "Walk on the Wild Side" actress Moore
- 8 "The Lion King" lion
- 9 "Hail!"
- 10 Actor Cariou
- 11 Curved letter
- 16 Yearned
- 20 Soul, to Camus
- 23 Pleased
- 24 Green land
- 25 Crystal gazer
- 26 "Candida" playwright
- 27 Hefty book
- 28 Activist Parks
- 29 Covert agent
- 32 Piano's cousin
- 33 Stair part
- 35 Puzzle
- 36 Represent
- 38 Malia's sister
- 39 Wine grape
- 42 TV host Kelly
- 43 Slanted type (Abbr.)
- 44 Org. for seniors
- 45 Coffee holder
- 46 "Caught ya!"
- 47 Gear tooth
- 49 Goof up

DOWN

- 1 Door fastener
- 2 Regrettably
- 3 Creche figure
- 4 "Quiet!"
- 5 Stood
- 6 Banned pesticide

— King Crossword —

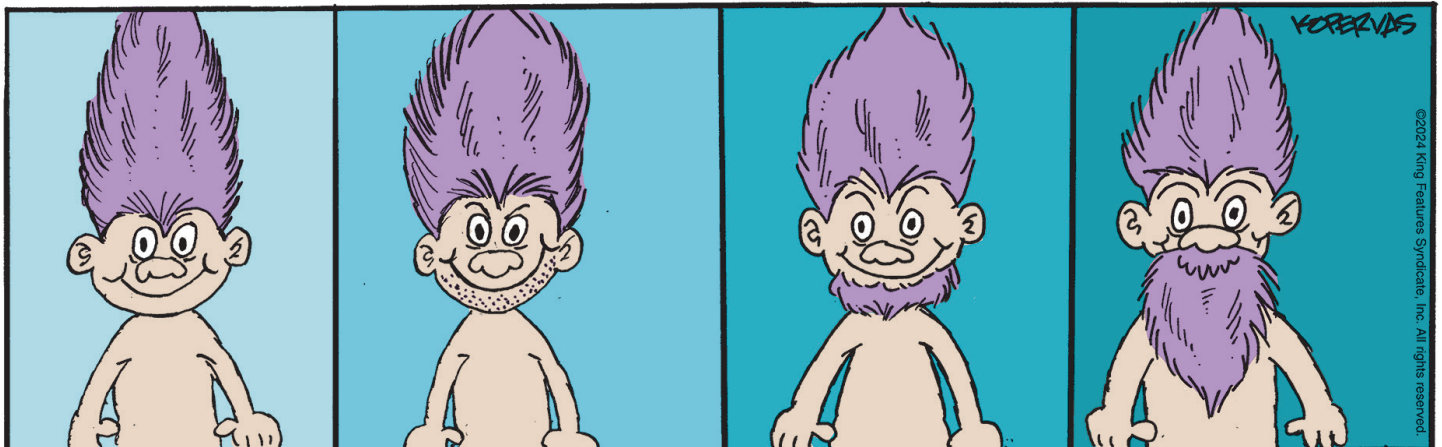
Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

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Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS
POPEYE
BY RANDY MILHOLLAND

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.

MY FIRST PROFESSIONAL FIGHT AND I'M ALREADY DOWN FOR THE COUNT.

YE JUSK GOTSK A PAPER CUT ON THE SIGN-UP SHEET, GRAVY.

WHY DO THEY NEED PAPER THAT SHARP?!

THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS
"ENOFFS FISTICUFFS!"
PART 7

PROF. KILPH IS RUNNING AN ILLEGAL FIGHTING TOURNAMENT TO GET POPEYE TO BREAK A FIGHTING BAN KILPH HIMSELF SET IN MOTION AND HALF OF THE TOWN HAS SHOWN UP TO JOIN.

I KNOW YOU'RE ALL TIRED OF THE FIGHTING BAN BY THE DEVILISHLY HANDSOME PROF. KILPH. NOW'S YOUR CHANCE TO WORK THAT RAGE OUT. AND THERE IS A PRIZE FOR THE BEST FIGHTER!

AND SO...

I'M GUESSING THE FIGHTER WITH BULGY ARMS AND ALL THE WINS MUST BE POPEYE, SIR.

YOU COULD PROBABLY END THIS WHOLE TOURNAMENT NOW. HAVE HIM CHARGED WITH VIOLATING THE BAN, AND QUIT WHILE YOU'RE AHEAD.

GO GET POPEYE'S LAST OPPONENT OUT OF ITS CRATE. AND DON'T MAKE EYE CONTACT. IT MISSED ITS DINNER.

OR YOU COULD DO THAT.

BARNEY GOOGLE AND SNUFFY SMITH

ME AN' 'WEEZY'S GOT BIG PLANS TO TRAVEL TH' COUNTRY AN' SEE TH' WORLD !!

AN' JEST WHEN DO YA PLAN TO DO ALL THAT, SNUFFY ?

WELL, THAT'S KINDA UP TO THAT GAL WHO DRAWS THEM WEEKLY LOTTERY NUMBERS !!

HOWDY, CUZZIN MIKEY !! WHAT'S GOIN' ON ?

MY WIFE GOT IT INTO HER HAID THAT WE SHOULD DO SOME TRAVELIN' WIF TH' YOUNG-UNS AN' SEE TH' COUNTRY !!

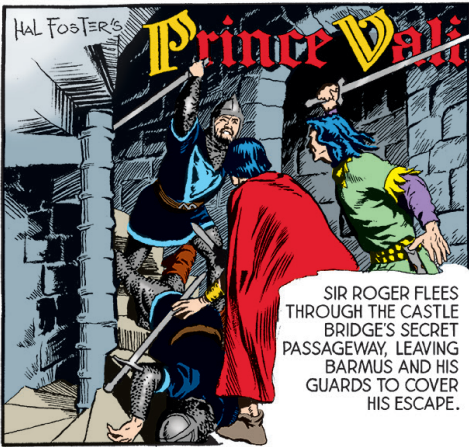
BUT THAR AIN'T NO WAY IN HECK WE COULD EVER AFFORD ONE'A THEM BIG OL' RV RIGS !!

SO I CAME UP WIF TH' NEXT BEST THING...

I JACKED TH' HOUSE UP, SLAPPED ON SOME WHEELS, AN' AWAY WE'RE 'BOUT T'GO !!

Groton Daily Independent

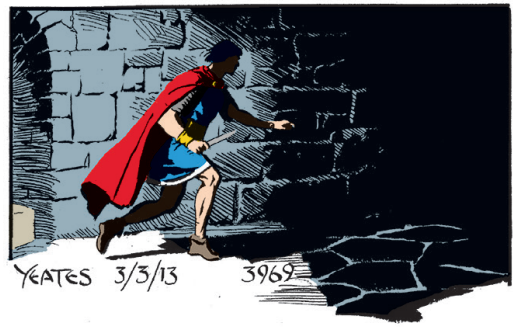
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SIR ROGER FLEES THROUGH THE CASTLE BRIDGE'S SECRET PASSAGEWAY, LEAVING BARMUS AND HIS GUARDS TO COVER HIS ESCAPE.



THE TWO GUARDS ARE QUICKLY DISPATCHED. "I'LL FOLLOW ROGER," SAYS VAL. "YOU OCCUPY THAT SCOUNDREL BARMUS ABOVE."



YEATES 3/5/13 3969

VAL CAUTIOUSLY MAKES HIS WAY INTO THE PITCH-BLACK TUNNEL, TRUSTING THAT ROGER HAS NOT TURNED TO LIE IN WAIT...



... WHILE GAWAIN DASHES HEADLONG UP THE TOWER STAIRS...

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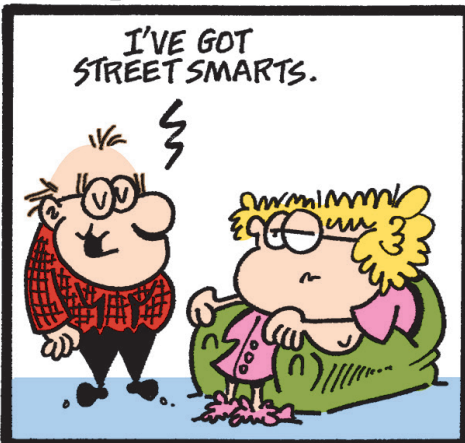


...WHERE BARMUS AWAITS, AS DANGEROUS AS A CORNERED RAT!

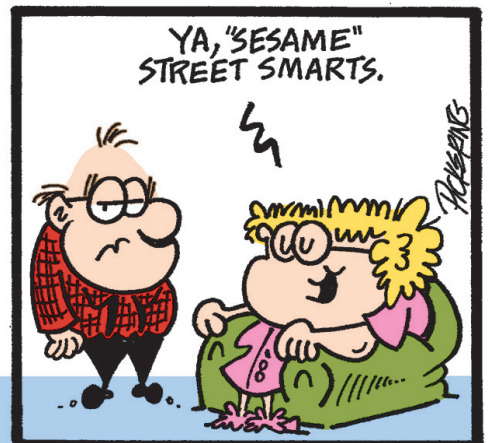
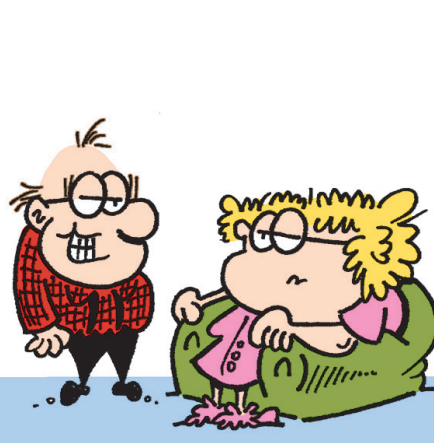
NEXT:
Ambush

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Aftermath of the Storms

Just about the time that I'd decided I needed a major shopping trip to replenish food and supplies, along came two back-to-back winter storms. The winds knocked out power, which took out the freezer and dairy sections of all the local stores, which meant they had to throw away all the frozen and cold foods: milk, eggs, butter, cheeses, everything.

Then, of course, trucks struggled to get through all the downed limbs and damage on the roads and therefore were slow to restock the stores.

We haven't seen eggs for nearly two weeks at our local store, for example. Today, miracle of miracles, they managed to get a box -- that's a box, one box -- of 24 cartons of eggs. The ensuing crush of excited people pressing forward to the dairy section could have been deadly to seniors who aren't exactly sturdy on their feet.

But I ended up very proud of the folks in this town. A handful of college kids saw what was happening and blocked the mass of people who surged forward, carefully escorting one very elderly lady forward and handing her a carton of eggs.

That changed the urgent mood of the crowd, when they realized what they were doing and what could have happened. People eased away, no longer in a panic about getting eggs, realizing there just weren't enough for everyone, and the college kids stayed there taking it upon themselves to distribute eggs, mostly to seniors, I noticed.

I was impressed.

Afterward, no matter where I walked in the store, it seemed that there was one item left in the sections where stocks were low, as though people were intentionally leaving the last item for someone else who might need it more. Could those college kids have started a trend of kindness? Is that possible?

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1. What Italian manufacturer became the official tire supplier of the FIA Formula 1 World Championship in 2011?

2. What Norwegian female long-distance runner won both the Boston Marathon and New York City Marathon in 1989?

3. Former professional boxer Tony Burton first portrayed trainer Tony "Duke" Evers in what 1976 film?

4. What American swimmer upset Australia's Susie O'Neill to win gold in the women's 200-meter butterfly at the 2000 Sydney Summer Olympics?

5. What Chicago White Sox pitcher recorded the 18th perfect game in Major League Baseball history in a 5-0 win over the Tampa Bay Rays on July 23, 2009?

6. Alan Eagleson, who was convicted of fraud and embezzlement in 1998, was the first executive director of what sports labor union?

7. What Kansas City Chiefs quarterback threw for 504 yards and two touchdowns and ran for one score in a 49-31 loss to the Oakland Raiders in November 2000?



by Ryan A. Berenz

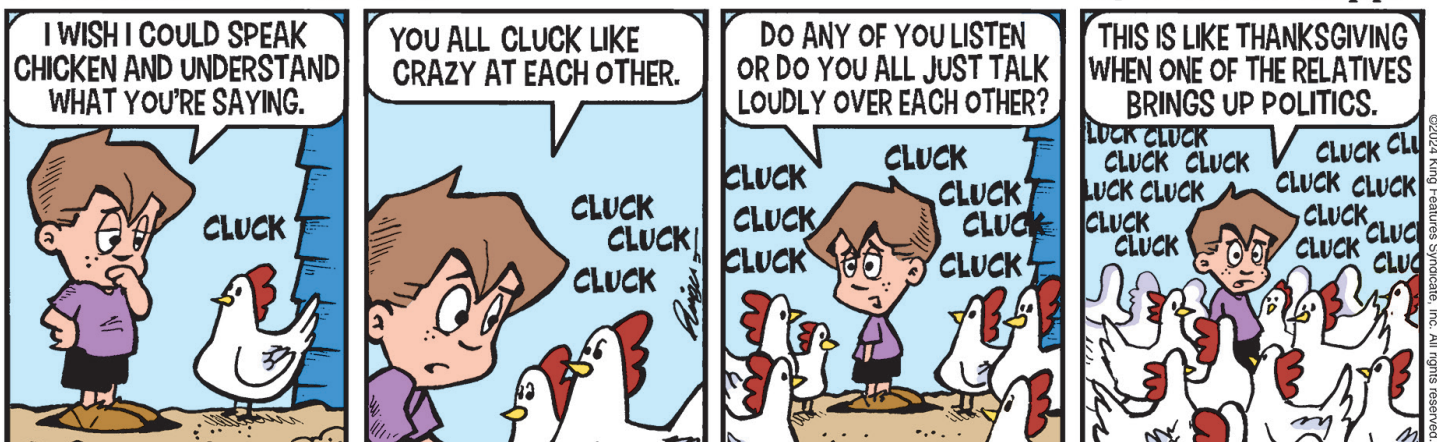
Answers

1. Pirelli.
2. Ingrid Kristiansen.
3. "Rocky."
4. Misty Hyman.
5. Mark Buehrle.
6. The NHL Players Association (NHLPA).
7. Elvis Grbac.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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Home Renovations and Pets Just Don't Mix

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: We have a contractor coming soon to renovate our kitchen. I plan to keep my cat, "Freya," out of the way and in a separate room during the day. But at night, she'll want to wander the house. How do I keep her out of the kitchen? -- Jim in Portland, Maine

DEAR JIM: Cats are pretty wily, and I'm sure Freya will try to find a way around any barriers you set up to keep her out of the kitchen.

The best way to dissuade her from exploring the construction area, therefore, is to tempt her away with better distractions. That means moving her food and

water to a new location far from the construction area (but out of heavy foot traffic) and giving her treats and attention whenever she opts to stay in the living room with you or near her bedding and food.

At night, tighten the barriers around the kitchen -- if there's a door, close it. If there is plastic sheeting up, tack it to surrounding walls and tape it to the floor. Put a sheet of plywood across the entrance if necessary.

Inside the work area, make sure that the contractors put away all sharp tools and cover any containers tightly. They should clean up any debris at the end of each day and use a wet-dry vacuum to pick up sawdust and dirt. Any spills need to be cleaned completely. This will reduce the risk to Freya if she manages to get into the kitchen, and it's just good practice.

Readers, how did you keep your pets safe during home renovations? Tell me at ask@pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

* Pass the Beano! In Japan, they used to hold contests to see who could fart the longest and loudest. The winner received a prize and high honors.

* Leeches have 32 brains.

* In June 2017, a tire shop in Fort Worth, Texas, was robbed so often that the owner bought a guard dog. But that didn't solve the problem -- the next time the shop was robbed, the intruders stole the dog!

* Native Americans planted "Three Sisters"-- corn, beans and squash -- together for their mutual benefit. Corn provided a structure for the beans to climb, beans provided nitrogen to the soil, and squash spread along the ground, preventing the growth of weeds.

* PayPal once accidentally credited a man with \$92 quadrillion.

* "Highway hypnosis" is a mental state where a person can drive a vehicle great distances while responding to external events in a safe and correct manner, but with no recollection of having consciously done so.

* Andrew Myrick, a storekeeper on a Minnesota Native American reservation, allegedly suggested that starving natives eat grass. While the quote's validity has been debated, he was notably found dead on the first day of the Dakota War of 1862 with grass stuffed in his mouth.

* The average man spends about one year of his life staring at women.

* A tattoo needle doesn't actually inject ink. It's just coated with pigment and your skin absorbs the color via capillary action.

* In 2014, 13-year-old Danielle Lei, a Girl Scout in San Francisco, became the first Girl Scout to make news by selling cookies outside a marijuana dispensary, unloading an impressive 117 boxes in just two hours.

Thought for the Day: "You must believe in yourself enough to be the person now that others will remember you for later." -- Greg Plitt

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The Garden Bug

Thyme can grow indoors in a pot on a sunny kitchen window, but really does best outside, in sandy or rocky soils, with good drainage and full sun.

It is quite tolerant of drought, and can be a great addition to a rock garden or a dry embankment.

It is a perennial, with numerous woody stems that grow upward. Its stems have very aromatic gray-green leaves that reach their peak just before the plants flower, and are used fresh or dried to season soups, stews, sauces, meat and fish dishes. Its delicate lilac flowers are attractive to bees. - Brenda Weaver

Source: www.missouribotanicalgarden.org





by Freddy Groves

Avoiding Foreclosure With VA Help

At the end of May, the Department of Veterans Affairs will start a new program called VASP, Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase, to help over 40,000 veterans stay in their homes when facing foreclosure.

If you have a VA home loan, and if you're active duty, a veteran or a surviving spouse, you could be eligible for help through VASP if you're in serious financial trouble. VASP will come in and buy out your loan, modify it and then handle it as a direct VA loan. One of the best parts is that you'll get a fixed 2.5% interest rate. (As of this writing, a standard 30-fixed mortgage rate is 7.9%.)

VASP is not something you apply for. Instead, the mortgage companies will put in requests to the VA to help veterans they've identified as having problems with their loans. You'll have to do your part by being in touch with your lender. If VASP is the best option, they will be responsible for submitting your name to the VA. If you have a problem with your lender, call the VA at 877-827-3702 and press 4.

For the specifics of VASP, go to benefits.va.gov/WARMS/M26_4.asp and select Chapter 9, VA Purchase.

For general information about VA home loans, if you've never had a VA home loan, download the buyer handbook at www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/index.asp. Start with the Eligibility section.

If you're just starting the process of buying a home, you'll need your Certificate of Eligibility (COE), which will tell a lender that you have that benefit either for the first time or again after you've paid off a previous VA home loan.

Then send for your credit reports either at AnnualCreditReport.com or by calling 877-322-8228. If there are any errors in your credit history, the time to get them resolved is at the beginning of your home buying experience, not after you've already picked out a home and have mentally moved in. Get your ducks in a row first.

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Wishing Well®

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8	2	3	2	3	8	6	7	6	7	3	8	4
I	E	C	S	T	N	O	G	N	H	S	G	Y

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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1. GEOGRAPHY: Which of the Great Lakes is smallest in surface area?
2. TELEVISION: Which sitcom has the theme song, "Where Everybody Knows Your Name"?
3. ANATOMY: Which part of the human body is involved with ACL surgery?
4. GAMES: What is the victim's name in the U.S. version of the board game "Clue"?
5. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is the world's largest species of frog?
6. SCIENCE: What do isobars indicate?
7. LITERATURE: In the novel "Don Quixote," who is the human companion to the title character?
8. MOVIES: In which movie did actor Bill Murray live the same day over and over?
9. THEATER: Who is believed to be the first actor in a Greek drama?
10. MUSIC: What is the name of Beyonce's 2024 country album?

Answers

1. Lake Ontario.
2. "Cheers."
3. The knee.
4. Mr. Boddy.
5. Goliath frog.
6. Atmospheric pressure.
7. Sancho Panza.
8. "Groundhog Day."
9. Thespis, 6th-century poet
10. "Cowboy Carter."

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

As Dumb as it is Dangerous: Why Dismantling Title IX is an All-Out Assault on Women

With the stroke of a single pen, President Joe Biden has given mediocre men the right to steal opportunities from exceptional women.

The landmark federal civil rights law known as Title IX is an over 50-year-old law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in any school or education program that receives federal funding. That is, until Joe Biden dismantled Title IX as we know it.

President Biden is orchestrating an all-out assault on women.

Biden's new provisions will make gender identity equivalent to sex. This is as dumb as it is dangerous. It allows biological men to claim discrimination if they are prohibited from participating in female-only programming, including sports. The new rules would, in part, allow men to take athletic scholarships from women and give men full access to women's locker rooms. What's worse, if these new rules are broken – likely, if they are even questioned – you can be accused of harassment. Promoting female-only education activities would get you a grievance for violating biological men's civil rights – but what about the rights of women that Congress promised to protect 50 years ago?

Joe Biden and his fellow Democrats can't even define what a woman actually is – it's no wonder they don't care at all about protections or fairness for females. Biden is legislating from the Oval Office by turning Title IX's "on the basis of sex" into "on the basis of gender identity."

This rule blatantly ignores states' rights to enforce their own laws. Here in South Dakota, we've taken decisive action in furtherance of our right to protect girls' and women's sports. We had a bad bill come to my desk in 2021 that sounded good, but, in reality, would have nothing to protect girls' sports. So I returned it to the South Dakota Legislature. We would not have been able to enforce it, and it would have been crushed when it was inevitably brought up in court. Had that bill been enacted, we would have found ourselves in the same situation Utah is in right now – with a bill mired in a legal fight resulting in no actual protections for female athletes.

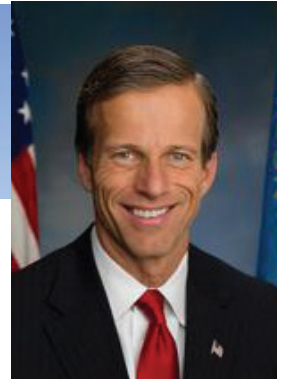
When the legislators refused to fix the bill and let it die, I immediately issued an Executive Order to protect girls' sports while I spent the next year working with legislators and stakeholders to craft a bill that would actually ensure fairness for South Dakota's women in sports. And in 2022, I was proud to sign the toughest bill in the nation to protect girls' sports. I've been glad to see other states take similar action, and I hope more will continue to follow our lead.

But we didn't stop there. More than five months ago, I led eight of my fellow Republican governors in urging the NCAA to rewrite its Transgender Student Athlete Policy. The current policy allows for the national governing bodies of each sport to determine their own rules regarding transgender student-athlete participation. That means the NCAA can hide behind the policy and avoid its responsibility to ensure fairness of collegiate sports.

Thankfully, more than 3,000 female athletes and coaches have joined us to urge the NCAA to take responsibility and protect women's sports. Now it's up to the NCAA to do the right thing. The NCAA Board of Governors should take the concerns of real female athletes seriously, ignore men who think putting on a skirt actually makes you a woman, and rewrite their unjust policy to guarantee an environment where female college athletes can thrive.

I am proud that so many female athletes and state leaders are standing up for what we know is true: ONLY women should play women's sports.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Keep the Internet Free, Open, and Safe

On April 25, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to reinstate heavy-handed government regulations on the internet. The Biden FCC has been dead set on asserting broad new government powers over the internet using a law that was designed for telephone monopolies during the Great Depression. This is a solution in search of a problem, and it's likely to create problems where none exist.

In 2015, the Obama FCC implemented a nearly identical net neutrality scheme to the one that was just approved. It didn't go well. It opened the door to a host of new regulations, including price controls. Broadband investment declined, which was especially bad news for rural areas like South Dakota where investment is still needed to expand access to broadband.

A Republican-led FCC repealed the onerous Obama rules in 2017 – a move that was met with near hysteria on the left. We were told it would be the end of the internet as we know it, that the internet would slow to a crawl, and that we would get the internet one word at a time. Of course, none of this came to pass. In fact, internet speeds have since gotten faster. Competition has increased. And the internet remains a vehicle for free and open discourse.

The United States has long taken a light-touch approach to internet regulation, which has allowed the internet to flourish. But if the Biden FCC gets its way, I'm concerned those days might be numbered. These rules could again depress broadband investment, denying needed investment in areas of our country that lack adequate internet access. They could also imperil our position at the forefront of internet innovation, and they could spell the end of the free and open internet that the FCC is supposed to protect.

Former members of the Obama administration have even admitted that these new rules are likely to be struck down in court – as they should be. The prospect of failure is all the more reason the FCC should not be spending its energies on resurrecting a failed exercise in heavy-handed regulation. It should be focused on addressing real challenges, not working to grow the government's reach into yet another area of Americans' lives without good reason.

While the FCC focuses its energies on problems that do not exist, Congress has recently taken action against a very real online threat. Currently, if it so chooses, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is able to gain unlimited access to the data of American TikTok users. The implications of this risk are clear: China can access Americans' information and shape their experience on the app to their own ends. Like many Americans, I find this deeply concerning.

I'm proud that Congress recently passed a law to require TikTok to be sold to a company without ties to the CCP or be banned in the United States. It emerged recently that the Chinese Embassy in Washington actually lobbied congressional staff against legislation to force the sale of TikTok. This shocking revelation just confirms the value that the Chinese government places on its ability to access Americans' information through the app, and it confirms that passing this law is the right thing to do.

As the internet has permeated more areas of our daily lives, it is critical that it remains free, open, and accessible and that your information remains safe online. I will continue working to ensure these principles guide the internet and online platforms through whatever innovation might come next.

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



Great Faces, Great Places

BIG Update

The California Air Resource Board (CARB) recently proposed new emissions standards, procedures, financial assessments, and reporting requirements on railroad operations. California's rule sets new environmental standards that will require new trains to be zero emissions starting in 2030 – just six years from now. This rule is estimated to cost operators more than \$86 billion.

While the rule is led by CARB, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to approve the rule due to policies within the Clean Air Act. If the EPA approves the rule, ALL railroads across America would be forced to comply with California's green agenda. This proposed rule will raise costs on shippers and could cause job losses.

I joined my colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in opposition to CARB's rule that would likely lead to closures of short line railroads, which make up 29% of rail operations in the U.S. I'll continue to push back against President Biden and the Left's green agenda that imposes unnecessary burdens on businesses, consumers, and our economy.

BIG News

Last weekend, the House passed a provision to require TikTok to divest from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) or be removed from U.S. app stores and web platforms. I've been supportive of this legislation and I'm glad the Senate also passed the bill. It was signed into law by the President this week.

There's a lot of misinformation out there. The biggest headline is that Congress banned TikTok, but this is not true. This is not a ban. My colleagues and I agree that TikTok can still operate in America, so long as it cuts ties with the CCP. For years, we have heard this app is CCP malware that collects personal data on private American citizens. We should not trust the intentions of the CCP, and we cannot allow them to have access to Americans' information, nor should we let them influence our kids with Chinese propaganda.

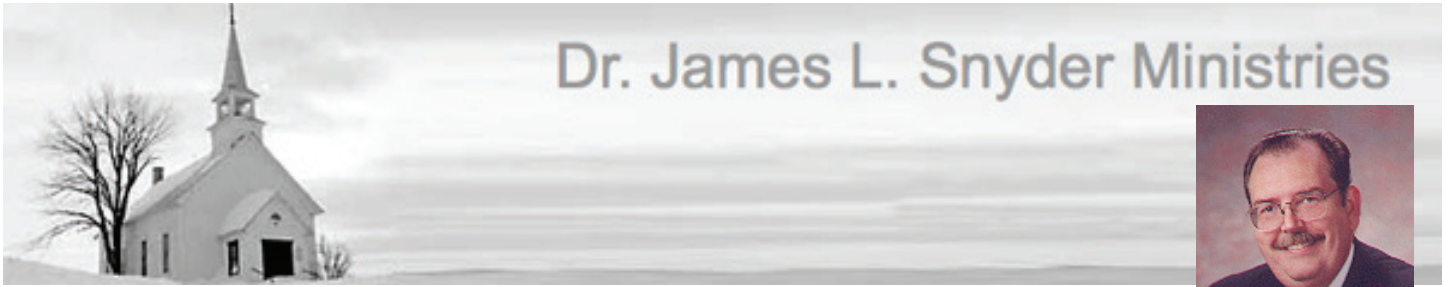
In the coming weeks and months, we will see if TikTok wants to continue operating in America and is willing to part ways with the CCP. I sure hope they do..

BIG Idea

It's rare for communities the size of Redfield to have such great amenities for folks transitioning out of substance abuse lifestyles, but Marcie is leading a great facility – the Reflections Recovery Home for Men. The staff help residents through comprehensive treatment programs for drug and alcohol substance abuse and offer graduates of the programs to continue healing post-treatment. It was also encouraging to hear how the community of Redfield is involved with the recovery home and helps ensure it is well equipped for its residents. I was really impressed with this space and glad to see South Dakotans helping South Dakotans.

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Being Sick Is Not My Cup Of Tea



I do not have a history of being sick. I rarely even have a headache, but I must confess, I give headaches.

The last two weeks have been different for me. I have never experienced such a long stretch of sickness before. One day in the hospital and then two weeks in bed. What kind of experience is that?

The great thing about being sick, if there is anything great about it, is that you have a big excuse for not doing anything. For several days, I did not even get out of my pajamas or out of bed.

I can't imagine anybody being sick all the time; it just doesn't make sense to me.

If there is a good side—and I'm really not convinced there is—I have yet to find it. When I think things are coming to an end, the road suddenly turns right.

For several days, I coughed and sneezed and coughed and sneezed. One day, I sneezed so bad that I sneezed my brains out. No problem, I haven't missed my brains.

Getting well is a process I'm not very familiar with. I've had to take more pills than I have ever seen in my life. And, thanks to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage I take those pills every day. She is my drug lord. I never knew drugs were so important.

There is an ongoing contest with me. That is, how soon can I get to the bathroom? The bathroom is at one end of the house, and my easy chair is at the other end. Oh boy, I've never seen such a long distance before.

Most of the time, I made it on time, but that's for another time.

In thinking about my medication, I have found myself a little woozy when I get up to walk. It doesn't last long, just long enough to make me feel crazy.

Not only did I spend one day in the hospital, but I had several trips to the doctor's office for checkups and to monitor the medication I was taking.

At one doctor's visit, the nurse had to do blood work for me. She came and brought all of her equipment, I looked at her and said, "Why don't you just punch me in the nose and get my blood that way. That would be easier for both of us."

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The way she looked at me seemed like she was ready to punch me in the nose. But all that poking on my arm with needle after needle after needle I think she got even with me. Why is my blood so important to them? After all, it's my blood, so let me keep it.

For some reason, they can look at my blood and tell my whole health history.

The thing about my sickness is that my energy has gone on vacation. I hope it enjoys the vacation wherever it is, and I'm anxious for it to return and hear it's stories.

I didn't realize how unenergetic I was until the other day when the great-granddaughter stayed with us. She was running around in circles, giggling, jumping up and down, and doing all kinds of things, and I got tired just watching her do all of those things.

I wanted to grab her, but I didn't have the energy, and find out where she gets all that energy and ask to borrow some of it just for a day.

In pondering this, I've come to the conclusion that the older you get, the less energy you have. If I had known this when I was young, I would not have spent all of my energy so foolishly. I would have put some of it in a savings account for my senior years.

One good thing about the great-granddaughter, as I watch her running and jumping and giggling and rolling on the floor, I forget about what I'm doing at the time. I even can laugh a little.

Once I get better, and that will be TOMORROW, I will be cautious about how I use my energy. I'm going to find some way to put a little bit of energy every day into some kind of savings account to use later. I'm not sure how that works, but I'm going to take the time I have getting better trying to figure out how I can do that.

There could be a good side to all of this sickness nonsense. Once I get better and return to normal life, I could use the experience for my own benefit.

For example, when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asks me to do something I'm not very anxious about, I can say, "Oh, boy. I'm starting to feel dizzy right now?"

Then, she will feel sorry for me, lead me to my chair and help me sit down. I'm not sure how long I can play this violin, but I will play it as long as I can.

Someone once said that there is a rainbow after every storm. I guess this is my rainbow.

A verse of scripture came to mind as I thought about being sick. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

Prayer is the solution to every problem, even my health.

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What is wind repowering and why are environmentalists so bullish on it?

-- H. King, Mesa, AZ

One of the most common forms of clean energy is wind power. People from around the world could recognize a wind farm from just one look. While wind power has been a staple in renewable energy since the idea's inception, many of the original and old wind turbines have begun to show signs of aging. Wind repowering aims to fix this, by revamping old turbines with more efficient components, or putting in new, state-of-the-art turbines as a whole. These new components and units can reduce noise, more efficiently power a turbine, and deliver a higher overall energy output.

Denmark, an early adopter of wind repowering, saw a 1.3 GW gain in capacity and a reduction of 109 wind turbines, enabling substantially increased wind energy production with fewer turbines. This promising data prompted a surge in wind repowering projects, and in 2019, 86 percent of wind energy projects there were classified as "repowered."

These signs of success and scalability showed other countries the benefits of wind repowering. The U.S, with help from large energy corporations like General Electric, has more than 40 active wind repowering sites, with over 2,500 turbines having some type of renovation. This hefty wind repowering advancement is responsible for four gigawatts of energy, or the power for more than 30 million homes.

It's no secret how fast wind repowering is growing, but upgrades can be made to many different types of renewable energy. Why do eco-advocates support wind repowering so strongly? Wind repowering has energy, financial, aesthetic and technological benefits. Not only does it make units more efficient, it also removes units that might be aesthetically unpleasing, or in less efficient spots than they could be. Wind repowering also increases the lifespan of turbines by as much as 20 years, and reduces the need for maintenance. Repowered turbines are also quieter, sleeker, and produce considerably more energy.

So, while there are many types of repowering efforts for other renewable energy sources, none are as comprehensive or successful as wind repowering. Not only is it a comprehensive option for revamping clean energy, but it does not require the entry costs that just building new wind farms requires.

The only barrier to wind repowering at the moment is legislation. Bills and policies cannot keep up with the demand for it. Readers should call local officials, or urge any nearby wind farms to look at wind repowering. Spreading awareness is the first and most important step.



The lifespan of wind farms can be greatly expanded by "repowering" them with new parts and components. Credit: U.S. Department of Energy.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Searchlight wins 11 awards, including Outstanding Young Journalist for Huber

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - APRIL 27, 2024 6:18 PM

South Dakota Searchlight won 11 awards in its division of the South Dakota NewsMedia Association's 2023 Better News Media Contest, including the Outstanding Young Journalist award for Makenzie Huber.

Awards were presented Friday in Huron during the association's 141st annual convention. The association, based in Brookings, represents more than 100 members from newspapers and digital news outlets in South Dakota.

The Outstanding Young Journalist award honors the work of journalists under the age of 30. It's chosen from nominations by supervisors and portfolios of the nominees' work.

The other awards earned by Searchlight were:

First Place, Seth Tupper and John Hult, Best Freedom of Information Project, Revealing Gov. Kristi Noem's Pardons and Commutations.

First place, Makenzie Huber, with Annie Todd, formerly of the Argus Leader, Best News Series, The Lost Children, about the overrepresentation of Native American children in foster care (for the same series, Huber and Todd were named finalists earlier this week for a Livingston Award from the Wallace House Center for Journalists at the University of Michigan).

First Place, Seth Tupper, Best Headline Writing, "The holy Sturgis trinity: Noem, Jesus and family," "ACLU is 'RZNEHELL' with state over specialized plate denials," "How two dead South Dakotans continue to feed the



Makenzie Huber, reporter for South Dakota Searchlight, addresses the crowd April 26, 2024, at the South Dakota NewsMedia Association convention in Huron while accepting the 2023 Outstanding Young Journalist award from the association's executive director, David Bordewyk. (Seth Tupper/South Dakota Searchlight)

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world," "The cost of free land and either-or history," "When emails aren't 'writing,' and other adventures in pursuit of pardon records."

First Place, Seth Tupper, Best Lede, for the lede of the story, "ACLU is 'RZHELL' with state over specialized plate denials."

Second place, John Hult, Best Feature Series, The Karen People in Huron.

Second place, Makenzie Huber, Best Feature Story-Profile, "Children are political targets: A family's struggle with SD's trans health care ban."

Second place, Makenzie Huber, Best Photo Series, for the images accompanying her story, "Children are political targets: A family's struggle with SD's trans health care ban."

Second Place, Seth Tupper, Best Local Column, "The holy Sturgis trinity: Noem, Jesus and family," "How two dead South Dakotans continue to feed the world," "The cost of free land and either-or history."

Third place, John Hult, Best Local Government Story, "Big prices drive interest in small homes, but lot-size rules stand in the way."

Third place, Makenzie Huber, Best Spot News Story, "Just a knee bone: Reinterment brings pain and healing to Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate."

Searchlight competed in the division for news outlets that publish multiple days per week. The top newspaper awards in the division went to the Rapid City Journal, which won the General Excellence award, and the Mitchell Republic, which won the Sweepstakes award (honoring the newspaper that garners the most points for awards in all categories).

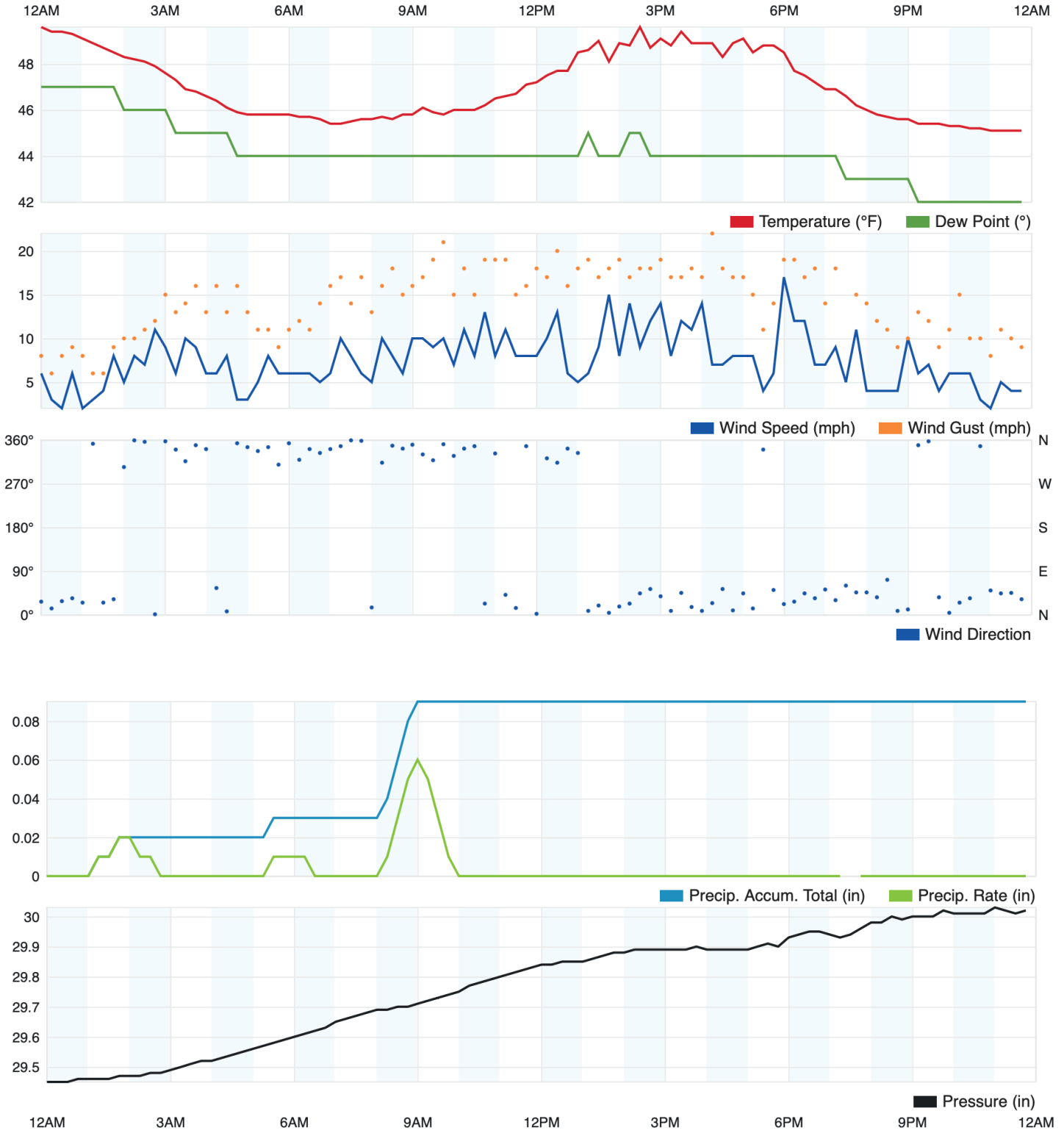
In the weekly divisions, the Outstanding Young Journalist award went to Emelia Enquist, a journalist for the Grant County Review in Milbank. The Hamlin County Republican, in Castlewood, won the General Excellence and Sweepstakes awards for weeklies with circulations under 1,300 copies. In the division for weeklies with circulation greater than 1,300, the Fall River County Herald Star, of Hot Springs, was the General Excellence winner, and the Brandon Valley Journal was the Sweepstakes winner.

Members of the Wyoming Press Association judged the contest entries.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today

Tonight

Monday

Monday
Night

Tuesday



Chance
Showers then
Showers and
Breezy

High: 45 °F



Showers

Low: 37 °F



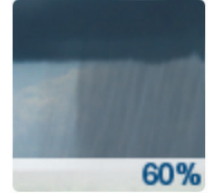
Chance
Showers

High: 56 °F



Mostly Clear

Low: 38 °F



Showers
Likely

High: 69 °F

Today

Tonight

Monday



43° - 48°

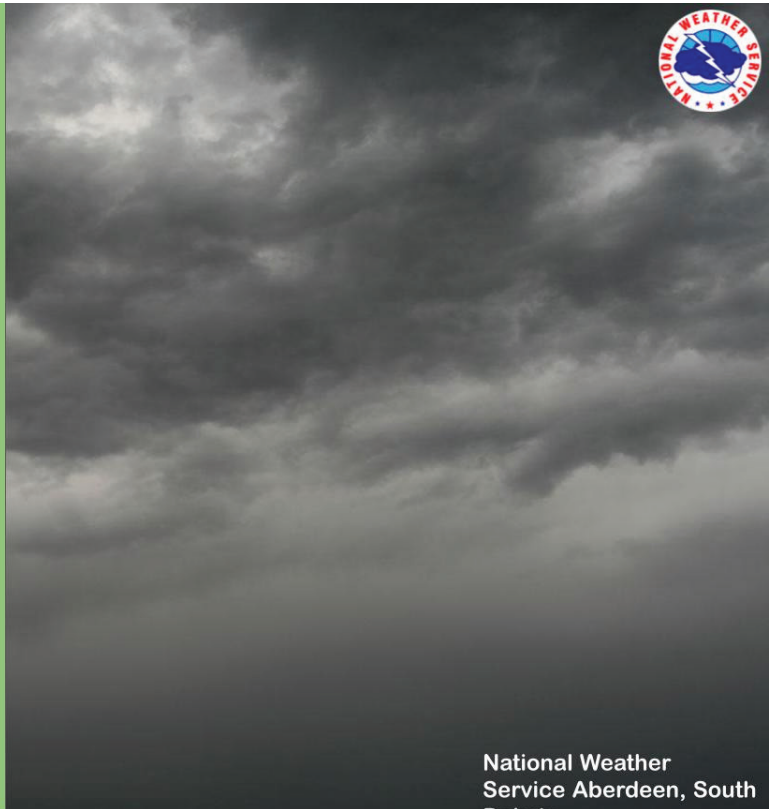


35° - 38°



52° - 66°

- Cloudy w/ Rain Today
 - Might Mix With A Little Snow By Morning
- Clearing Monday
- Next System For Tuesday Features
 - Milder Temperatures
 - Showers/Weak Thunderstorms
 - Windy



National Weather Service Aberdeen, South Dakota

With the next system coming up from the south, expect another round rain that will last most of the day. Moisture will range between around and inch in northeast South Dakota to only about a quarter inch in north central South Dakota with even less for western portions of the state.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 50 °F at 12:00 AM

Low Temp: 45 °F at 10:44 PM

Wind: 22 mph at 9:32 AM

Precip: : 0.09

Day length: 14 hours, 15 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 90 in 1934

Record Low: 19 in 2008

Average High: 63

Average Low: 36

Average Precip in April.: 1.72

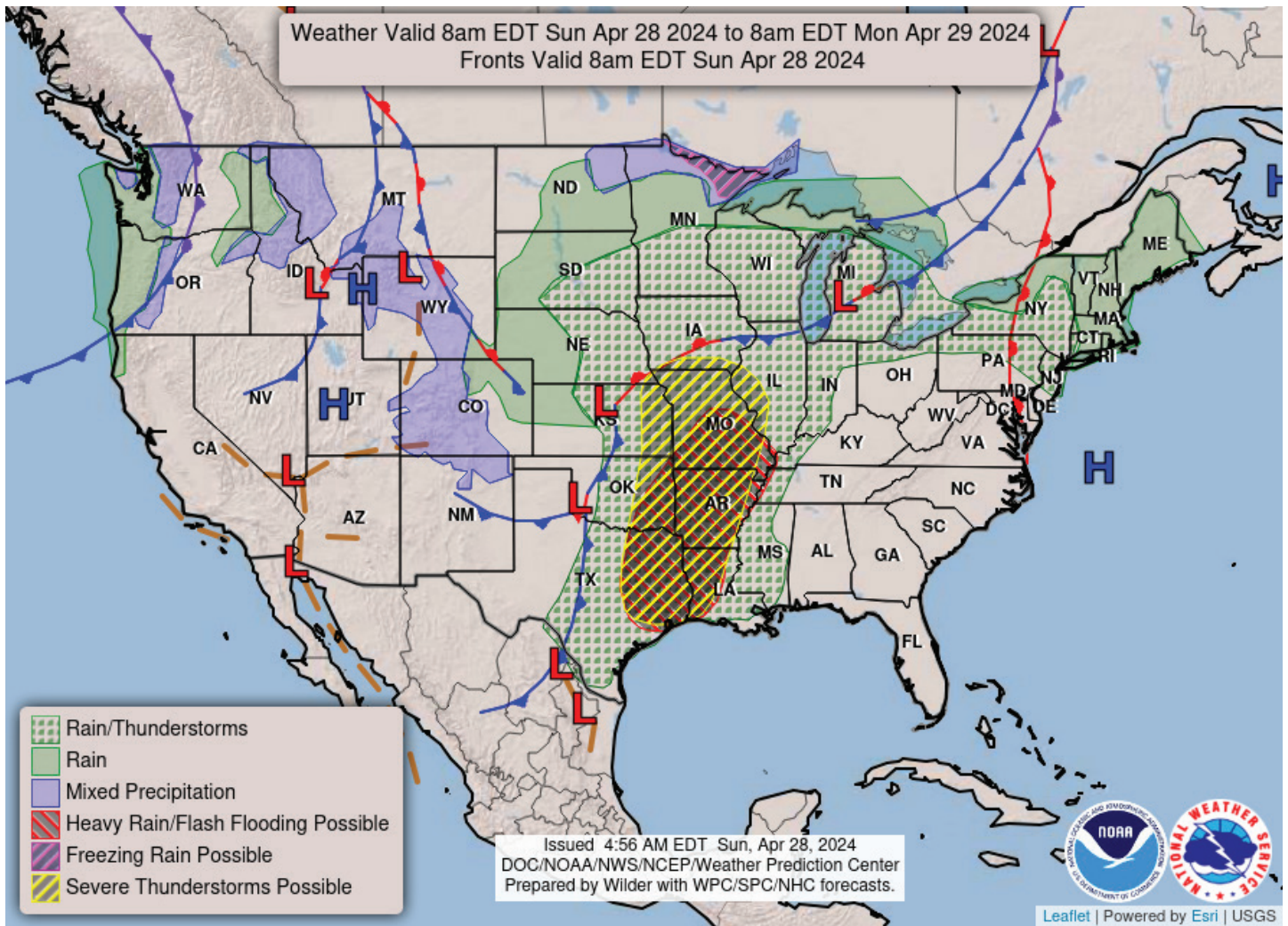
Precip to date in April: 2.90

Average Precip to date: 3.78

Precip Year to Date: 3.85

Sunset Tonight: 8:37:21 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:20:40 am



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Today in Weather History

April 28, 1994: Snow accumulated 5 to 12 inches over most of the eastern half of South Dakota, with the 12-inch report from Winner. Ten to eleven inches of snow was reported at numerous places including Sioux Falls and Platte in the southeast, and Summit in the northeast. Numerous accidents were caused by snow and ice, including one which killed a man and injured two women on Highway 12 near Bath, South Dakota. There was some undetermined crop damage, and livestock loss was feared as the late season cold and snow lowered resistance to disease.

1893: A half-mile wide estimated F4 tornado killed 23 people and injured 150 as it tore a path of devastation through Cisco, Texas. Every building in the town was either destroyed or severely damaged.

1921 - A severe hailstorm in Anson County, NC, produced hail the size of baseballs. Gardens, grain fields and trees were destroyed. Pine trees in the storm's path had to be cut for lumber because of the hail damage. (The Weather Channel)

1928 - A coastal storm produced tremendous late season snows in the Central Appalachians, including 35 inches at Bayard WV, 31 inches at Somerset PA, and 30 inches at Grantsville MD. High winds accompanying the heavy wet snow uprooted trees and unroofed a number of homes. The storm caused great damage to fruit trees and wild life. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1973: The record crest of the Mississippi River at St. Louis, Missouri was registered at 43.23 feet on this day. This level exceeded the previous 1785 mark by 1.23 feet. This record was broken during the 1993 Flood when the Mississippi River crested at 49.58 feet on August 1st. At Memphis, Tennessee, the Mississippi was over flood stage for 63 days, more than that of the historic 1927 flood, and the river was above flood stage for an even longer 107 days at upstream Cairo, Illinois. Out of the seven largest floods on the Mississippi between 1927 and 1997, the 1973 event ranked third in both volume discharged and duration but only sixth in flood height. Over \$250 million of damages were incurred mainly in the Mississippi Valley states of Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

1987 - Twenty cities in the western and central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Highs of 95 degrees at Houston TX, 95 degrees at Lake Charles LA, and 94 degrees at Port Arthur TX, were April records. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Miami, FL, hit 92 degrees, marking a record eight days of 90 degree heat in the month of April. Squalls produced snow in the Washington D.C. area. Belvoir VA reported a temperature reading of 57 degrees at the time the snow began. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Strong northerly winds and heavy snow ushered cold air into the north central U.S. Snowfall totals in Montana ranged up to 20 inches at Miles City. Thunderstorms produced severe weather from eastern Texas to the Southern Appalachians and the southern Ohio Valley. Hail four and a half inches in diameter was reported at Keller TX and White Settlement TX. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the southeastern U.S. during the day. Severe thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes, including one which injured four persons at Inman SC. There were also more than one hundred reports of large hail and damaging winds, with better than half of those reports in Georgia. Strong thunderstorm winds injured four people at Sadler's Creek SC. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data) Twenty-nine cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date as readings soared into the 80s and lower 90s. Highs of 88 degrees at Binghamton NY, 94 degrees at Buffalo NY, 89 degrees at Erie PA, 90 degrees at Newark NJ, 93 degrees at Rochester NY and 92 degrees at Syracuse NY, were records for the month of April. (The National Weather Summary)

2002: During the evening hours, a violent F4 tornado carved a 64-mile path across southeast Maryland. The La Plata, Maryland tornado was part of a larger severe weather outbreak that began in the mid-Mississippi Valley early on that day and spread across portions of the Ohio Valley and the Mid-Atlantic States. In Maryland, three deaths and 122 injuries were a direct result of the storm. Property damage exceeded \$100 million. Tornadoes along the Atlantic coast are not frequent, and tornadoes of this magnitude are extremely rare. Only six F4 tornadoes have occurred farther north and east of the La Plata storm: Worcester, Massachusetts - 1953; New York/Massachusetts - 1973; Windsor Locks, Connecticut - 1979; five counties in New York - 1989; New Haven, Connecticut - 1989; North Egremont, Massachusetts - 1995. None was as close to the coast. The tornado traveled across the Chesapeake Bay almost to the Atlantic.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

WHAT NEXT, GOD?

"Time for bed, Rosemary," said grandmother.

"Let's read the story of creation." As she read through the verses, she would pause and emphasize how carefully God worked and made something different each day. She wanted her granddaughter to love and understand the power, majesty and wonder of God.

"What do you think of this story?" she asked.

"Oh, I love it," came the reply. "You never know what God's going to do!"

How true.

Jesus once said, "It is very hard to get into the Kingdom of God."

He was then asked, "Then who in the world can be saved?"

He replied, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God."

Jesus took this important opportunity to teach the message of salvation. Although salvation by one's efforts is impossible, by God's grace we can be saved if we place our faith in Christ.

It is God's love that provides the grace for our salvation. "You never know what God's going to do."

Prayer: We thank and praise You, Father, for what You did to make our salvation possible through Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God." Mark 10:27



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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
04.26.24

15 23 53 57 61 9

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$257,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
04.27.24

9 13 16 39 48 3

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,050,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
04.27.24

16 22 26 31 34 12

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 47 Mins 30 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
04.27.24

6 7 25 28 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$75,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
04.27.24

12 28 36 47 65 22

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
04.27.24

9 30 53 55 62 23

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$164,000,000

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

Pope visits Venice to speak to the artists and inmates behind the Biennale's must-see prison show

By NICOLE WINFIELD and PAOLO SANTALUCIA Associated Press

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Venice has always been a place of contrasts, of breathtaking beauty and devastating fragility, where history, religion, art and nature have collided over the centuries to produce an otherworldly gem of a city. But even for a place that prides itself on its culture of unusual encounters, Pope Francis' visit Sunday stood out.

Francis traveled to the lagoon city to visit the Holy See's pavilion at the Biennale contemporary art show and meet with the people who created it. But because the Vatican decided to mount its exhibit in Venice's women's prison, and invited inmates to collaborate with the artists, the whole project took on a far more complex meaning, touching on Francis' belief in the power of art to uplift and unify, and of the need to give hope and solidarity to society's most marginalized.

Francis hit on both messages during his visit, which began in the courtyard of the Giudecca prison where he met with the women inmates one by one. As some of them wept, Francis urged them to use their time in prison as a chance for "moral and material rebirth."

"Paradoxically, a stay in prison can mark the beginning of something new, through the rediscovery of the unsuspected beauty in us and in others, as symbolized by the artistic event you are hosting and the project to which you actively contribute," Francis said.

Francis then met with Biennale artists in the prison chapel, decorated with an installation by Brazilian visual artist Sonia Gomes of objects dangling from the ceiling, meant to draw the viewer's gaze upward. He urged the artists to embrace the Biennale's theme this year "Strangers Everywhere," to show solidarity with all those on the margins.

"Art has the status of a 'city of refuge,' a city that disobeys the regime of violence and discrimination in order to create forms of human belonging capable of recognizing, including, protecting and embracing everyone," Francis said.

The Vatican exhibit has turned the Giudecca prison, a former convent for reformed prostitutes, into one of the must-see attractions of this year's Biennale, even though to see it visitors must reserve in advance and go through a security check. It has become an unusual art world darling that greets visitors at the entrance with Maurizio Cattelan's wall mural of two giant filthy feet, a work that recalls Caravaggio's dirty feet or the feet that Francis washes each year in a Holy Thursday ritual that he routinely performs on prisoners.

Francis' dizzying morning visit, which ended before lunchtime after Mass in St. Mark's Square, represented an increasingly rare outing for the 87-year-old pontiff, who has been hobbled by health and mobility problems that have ruled out any foreign trips so far this year.

But it was also unusual because it came as Venice, sinking under rising sea levels and weighed down by the impact of overtourism, is in the opening days of an experiment to try to limit the sort of day trips that Francis undertook Sunday.

Venetian authorities last week launched a pilot program to charge day-trippers 5 euros (\$5.35) apiece on peak travel days. The aim is to encourage them to stay longer or come at off-peak times to cut down on crowds and make the city more livable for its dwindling number of residents.

For Venice's Catholic patriarch, Archbishop Francesco Moraglia, the new tax program is a worthwhile experiment, a potential necessary evil to try to preserve Venice as a livable city for visitors and residents alike.

"Venice has to be defended as a polis, as a city," Moraglia said in an interview on the eve of Francis' visit. "The city risks not being a city anymore; it risks being a cultural offering, an open-air museum."

Moraglia said Francis' visit — the first by a pope to the Biennale — was a welcome boost, especially for

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the women of the Giudecca prison who participated in the exhibit as tour guides and as protagonists in some of the artworks.

"These are places of sadness, of suffering, and for these people to have someone of global importance like the pope come to Venice to see them, is a real and concrete encouragement," he said. "And there's a message also to the city and to civil society: that those who make a mistake must pay, but they cannot be forgotten."

Moraglia acknowledged that Venice over the centuries has had a long, complicated, love-hate relationship with the papacy, despite its central importance to Christianity.

The relics of St. Mark — the top aide to St. Peter, the first pope — are held here in the basilica, which is one of the most important in all of Christendom. Several popes have hailed from Venice — in the past century alone three pontiffs were elected after being Venice patriarchs. Venice hosted the last conclave held outside the Vatican: the 1799-1800 vote that elected Pope Paul VII.

But for centuries before that, relations between the independent Venetian Republic and the Papal States were anything but cordial as the two sides duelled over control of the church. Popes in Rome issued interdicts against Venice that essentially excommunicated the entire territory. Venice flexed its muscles back by expelling entire religious orders, including Francis' own Jesuits.

"It's a history of contrasts because they were two competitors for so many centuries," said Giovanni Maria Vian, a church historian and retired editor of the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano whose family hails from Venice. "The papacy wanted to control everything, and Venice jealously guarded its independence."

Moraglia said that troubled history is long past and that Venice was welcoming Francis with open arms and gratitude, in keeping with its history as a bridge between cultures, even opposing ones.

"The history of Venice, the DNA of Venice — beyond the language of beauty and culture that unifies — there's this historic character that says that Venice has always been a place of encounter," he said.

A top Qatari official urges Israel and Hamas to do more to reach a cease-fire deal

By TIA GOLDENBERG, JON GAMBRELL and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — A senior Qatari official has urged both Israel and Hamas to show "more commitment and more seriousness" in cease-fire negotiations in interviews with Israeli media, as pressure builds on both sides to move toward a deal that would set Israeli hostages free and bring potential respite in the nearly 7-month-long war in Gaza.

The interviews with the liberal daily Haaretz and the Israeli public broadcaster Kan were published and aired Saturday evening. They came as Israel still promises to invade Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah despite global concern for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians sheltering there and as the sides are exchanging proposals surrounding a cease-fire deal.

Qatar, which hosts Hamas headquarters in Doha, has been a key intermediary throughout the Israel-Hamas war. Along with the U.S. and Egypt, Qatar was instrumental in helping negotiate a brief halt to the fighting in November that led to the release of dozens of hostages.

The sides have held numerous rounds of negotiations since, none of which produced an additional truce. In a sign of its frustration, Qatar last week said it was reassessing its role as mediator.

In the interviews, Qatar's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Majed al-Ansari expressed disappointment in both Hamas and Israel, saying each side has made its decisions based on political interests and not with the good of civilians in mind.

"We were hoping to see more commitment and more seriousness on both sides," he told Haaretz.

He did not reveal details of the current state of the talks, other than to say they have "effectively stopped," with "both sides entrenched in their positions."

"If there is a renewed sense of commitment on both sides, I'm sure we can reach a deal," he said.

The Israeli journalists conducted the interviews in Qatar, which has no formal diplomatic ties with Israel.

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Relations between Qatar and Israel have been strained throughout the war, as some politicians in Israel, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, have criticized Qatar for not putting enough pressure on Hamas.

Israeli legislators have also cleared the way for the country to expel Al Jazeera, the Qatar-owned broadcaster.

Al-Ansari's remarks came after an Egyptian delegation had discussed with Israeli officials a "new vision" for a prolonged cease-fire in Gaza, according to an Egyptian official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to freely discuss the developments.

Hamas meanwhile said Saturday it was reviewing a new Israeli proposal for a cease-fire, which came in response to a Hamas proposal from two weeks ago.

Negotiations earlier this month centered on a six-week cease-fire proposal and the release of 40 civilian and sick hostages held by Hamas in exchange for freeing hundreds of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

There is growing international pressure for Hamas and Israel to reach a cease-fire deal and avert an Israeli attack on Rafah.

A letter penned by U.S. President Joe Biden along with 17 other world leaders urged Hamas to release the hostages immediately.

Hamas in recent days has released new videos of three hostages it holds, which appear to be meant to push Israel to make concessions.

Israel meanwhile has massed dozens of tanks and armored vehicles ahead of an expected offensive in Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's 2.3 million population is seeking shelter. The planned incursion has raised global alarm because of concerns over potential harm to civilians. The troop buildup may also be a pressure tactic on Hamas in the truce talks.

Israel sees Rafah as Hamas' last major stronghold and has vowed to attack the militant group there in its bid to destroy its military and governing capabilities.

The war was sparked with Hamas' attack on Oct. 7 into southern Israel, which killed 1,200 people, mostly civilians, according to Israeli authorities, who say another 250 people were taken hostage. Hamas and other groups are holding about 130 people, including the remains of about 30, Israeli authorities say.

Israel's retaliatory assault on Hamas has killed more than 34,000 people, most of them women and children, according to health authorities in Gaza, who do not distinguish between civilians and combatants in their tally. The Israeli military says it has killed at least 12,000 militants, without providing evidence to back the claim.

Chants of 'shame on you' greet guests at White House correspondents' dinner shadowed by war in Gaza

By FARNOUSH AMIRI and ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

The war in Gaza spurred large protests outside a glitzy roast with President Joe Biden, journalists, politicians and celebrities Saturday but went all but unmentioned by participants inside, with Biden instead using the annual White House correspondents' dinner to make both jokes and grim warnings about Republican rival Donald Trump's fight to reclaim the U.S. presidency.

An evening normally devoted to presidents, journalists and comedians taking outrageous pokes at political scandals and each other often seemed this year to illustrate the difficulty of putting aside the coming presidential election and the troubles in the Middle East and elsewhere.

Biden opened his roast with a direct but joking focus on Trump, calling him "sleepy Don," in reference to a nickname Trump had given the president previously.

Despite being similar in age, Biden said, the two presidential hopefuls have little else in common. "My vice president actually endorses me," Biden said. Former Trump Vice President Mike Pence has refused to endorse Trump's reelection bid.

But the president quickly segued to a grim speech about what he believes is at stake this election, saying

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that another Trump administration would be even more harmful to America than his first term.

"We have to take this serious — eight years ago we could have written it off as 'Trump talk' but not after January 6," Biden told the audience, referring to the supporters of Trump who stormed the Capitol after Biden defeated Trump in the 2020 election.

Trump did not attend Saturday's dinner and never attended the annual banquet as president. In 2011, he sat in the audience, and glowered through a roasting by then-President Barack Obama of Trump's reality-television celebrity status. Obama's sarcasm then was so scalding that many political watchers linked it to Trump's subsequent decision to run for president in 2016.

Biden's speech, which lasted around 10 minutes, made no mention of the ongoing war or the growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

One of the few mentions came from Kelly O'Donnell, president of the correspondents' association, who briefly noted some 100 journalists killed in Israel's 6-month-old war against Hamas in Gaza. In an evening dedicated in large part to journalism, O'Donnell cited journalists who have been detained across the world, including Americans Evan Gershkovich in Russia and Austin Tice, who is believed to be held in Syria. Families of both men were in attendance as they have been at previous dinners.

To get inside Saturday's dinner, some guests had to hurry through hundreds of protesters outraged over the mounting humanitarian disaster for Palestinian civilians in Gaza. They condemned Biden for his support of Israel's military campaign and Western news outlets for what they said was undercoverage and misrepresentation of the conflict.

"Shame on you!" protesters draped in the traditional Palestinian keffiyeh cloth shouted, running after men in tuxedos and suits and women in long dresses holding clutch purses as guests hurried inside for the dinner.

"Western media we see you, and all the horrors that you hide," crowds chanted at one point.

Other protesters lay sprawled motionless on the pavement, next to mock-ups of flak vests with "press" insignia.

Ralliers cried "Free, free Palestine." They cheered when at one point someone inside the Washington Hilton — where the dinner has been held for decades — unfurled a Palestinian flag from a top-floor hotel window.

Criticism of the Biden administration's support for Israel's military offensive in Gaza has spread through American college campuses, with students pitching encampments and withstanding police sweeps in an effort to force their universities to divest from Israel. Counterprotests back Israel's offensive and complain of antisemitism.

Biden's motorcade Saturday took an alternate route from the White House to the Washington Hilton than in previous years, largely avoiding the crowds of demonstrators.

Saturday's event drew nearly 3,000 people. Celebrities included Academy Award winner Da'Vine Joy Randolph, Scarlett Johansson, Jon Hamm and Chris Pine.

Both the president and comedian Colin Jost, who spoke after Biden, made jabs at the age of both the candidates for president. "I'm not saying both candidates are old. But you know Jimmy Carter is out there thinking, 'maybe I can win this thing,'" Jost said. "He's only 99."

Law enforcement, including the Secret Service, instituted extra street closures and other measures to ensure what Secret Service spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said would be the "highest levels of safety and security for attendees."

Protest organizers said they aimed to bring attention to the high numbers of Palestinian and other Arab journalists killed by Israel's military since the war began in October.

More than two dozen journalists in Gaza wrote a letter last week calling on their colleagues in Washington to boycott the dinner altogether.

"The toll exacted on us for merely fulfilling our journalistic duties is staggering," the letter stated. "We are subjected to detentions, interrogations, and torture by the Israeli military, all for the 'crime' of journalistic integrity."

One organizer complained that the White House Correspondents' Association — which represents the hundreds of journalists who cover the president — largely has been silent since the first weeks of the war about the killings of Palestinian journalists. WHCA did not respond to a request for comment.

According to a preliminary investigation released Friday by the Committee to Protect Journalists, nearly 100 journalists have been killed covering the war in Gaza. Israel has defended its actions, saying it has been targeting militants.

"Since the Israel-Gaza war began, journalists have been paying the highest price — their lives — to defend our right to the truth. Each time a journalist dies or is injured, we lose a fragment of that truth," CPJ Program Director Carlos Martínez de la Serna said in a statement.

Sandra Tamari, executive director of Adalah Justice Project, a U.S.-based Palestinian advocacy group that helped organize the letter from journalists in Gaza, said "it is shameful for the media to dine and laugh with President Biden while he enables the Israeli devastation and starvation of Palestinians in Gaza."

In addition, Adalah Justice Project started an email campaign targeting 12 media executives at various news outlets — including The Associated Press — expected to attend the dinner who previously signed onto a letter calling for the protection of journalists in Gaza.

"How can you still go when your colleagues in Gaza asked you not to?" a demonstrator asked guests heading in. "You are complicit."

Campus anti-war protesters dig in from New York to California as universities and police take action

By MICHAEL CASEY and JAMES POLLARD Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — From New York to California, students protesting the Israel-Hamas war slept in tents at college campuses, as some universities moved to shut down encampments and arrested dozens of demonstrators after reports of antisemitic activity.

With the death toll mounting in the war in Gaza, protesters nationwide are demanding schools cut financial ties to Israel and divest from companies they say enable the conflict. Some Jewish students say the protests have veered into antisemitism and made them afraid to set foot on campus.

At Columbia University in New York City, where early protests sparked pro-Palestinian demonstrations across the country, students and administrators have engaged in negotiations, the university said in a statement Saturday night.

"Dialogue between university officials and student organizers is ongoing. We want to be clear: There is no truth to claims of an impending lockdown or evictions on campus," the Columbia administration's statement said.

Though the university repeatedly set and then pushed back deadlines for the removal of the encampment, the school sent an email to students saying that bringing back police "at this time" would be counterproductive.

Decisions to call in law enforcement, leading to hundreds of arrests nationwide, have prompted school faculty members at universities in California, Georgia and Texas to initiate or pass votes of no confidence in their leadership. They are largely symbolic rebukes, without the power to remove their presidents.

Washington University in St. Louis locked some campus buildings and arrested protesters Saturday. The St. Louis Police Department said in a social media post that it assisted campus police, although city officers did not make any arrests.

The Riverfront Times, a St. Louis weekly newspaper, reported more than 80 people were arrested during the protest that began in public areas before moving to the campus in the afternoon. Megan Green, president of the St. Louis Board of Aldermen, said in a social media post that she was present and the protest remained calm "until the police came in like an ambush."

Green Party Presidential Candidate Jill Stein said in a social media post that she and two of her campaign managers were among those arrested on the Washington University campus.

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The University of Southern California said on Saturday it had temporarily closed its University Park Campus to nonresidents, without providing details of the closure or possible enforcement measures.

Joel Curran, senior vice president of communications, said in a statement that USC property was vandalized by members of a group "that has continued to illegally camp on our campus," as well as disrupting operations and harrasing students and others.

Students declined numerous attempts by university President Carol Folt to meet, and the administration hopes for "a more reasonable response Sunday before we are forced to take further action," Curran said.

"While the university fully supports freedom of expression, these acts of vandalism and harassment are absolutely unacceptable and will not be tolerated," Curran said.

In Boston, police in riot gear cleared an encampment on the campus of Northeastern University on Saturday. Massachusetts State Police said about 102 protesters were arrested and will be charged with trespassing and disorderly conduct. Protesters said they were given about 15 minutes to disperse before being arrested.

As workers pulled down tents and bagged up the debris from the encampment, several dozen people across from the encampment chanted, "Let the Kids Go," and slogans against the war in Gaza. They also booed as police cars passed and taunted the officers who stood guard.

Northeastern said in a statement that the demonstration, which began two days ago, had become "infiltrated by professional organizers" with no affiliation to the university and antisemitic slurs, including "kill the Jews," had been used.

"We cannot tolerate this kind of hate on our campus," the statement posted on social media said.

The Huskies for a Free Palestine student group disputed the university's account, saying in a statement that counterprotesters were to blame for the slurs and no student protesters "repeated the disgusting hate speech."

Students at the Boston protest said a counterprotester attempted to instigate hate speech but insisted their event was peaceful and, like many across the country, was aimed at drawing attention to what they described as the "genocide" in Gaza and their university's complicity in the war.

The president of nearby Massachusetts Institute of Technology said in a statement Saturday that an encampment there had become a "potential magnet for disruptive outside protesters" and was taking hundreds of staff hours to keep safe.

"We have a responsibility to the entire MIT community — and it is not possible to safely sustain this level of effort," MIT President Sally Kornbluth said. "We are open to further discussion about the means of ending the encampment. But this particular form of expression needs to end soon."

Indiana University campus officers and state police arrested 23 people Saturday at an encampment on the school's Bloomington campus. Tents and canopies were erected Friday at Dunn Meadow in violation of school policy, university police said in a release. Group members were detained after refusing to remove the structures with charges ranging from criminal trespass to resisting law enforcement, police said.

Arizona State University said 69 people were arrested early Saturday on suspicion of criminal trespassing for setting up an unauthorized encampment on a lawn on its Tempe campus. The protesters were given chances to leave and those who refused were arrested.

"While the university will continue to be an environment that embraces freedom of speech, ASU's first priority is to create a safe and secure environment that supports teaching and learning," the university said in a statement.

The tensions have piled pressure on school officials, who are scrambling to resolve the protests as May graduation ceremonies near.

USC drew criticism after refusing to allow the valedictorian, who has publicly supported Palestinians, to make a commencement speech. Administrators then scrapped the keynote speech by filmmaker Jon M. Chu. The school on Thursday announced the cancellation of its main graduation event, a day after more than 90 protesters were arrested by police in riot gear.

Folt, the university president, made her first public statement late Friday, addressing the controversies as "incredibly difficult for all of us."

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"No one wants to have people arrested on their campus. Ever. But, when long-standing safety policies are flagrantly violated, buildings vandalized, Department of Public Safety directives repeatedly ignored, threatening language shouted, people assaulted, and access to critical academic buildings blocked, we must act immediately to protect our community," Folt said.

The nationwide campus protests began in response to Israel's offensive in Gaza. Hamas launched a deadly attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7, when militants killed about 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and took roughly 250 hostages. Vowing to stamp out Hamas, Israel launched an offensive in Gaza. In the ensuing war, Israel has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, according to the local health ministry.

Israel and its supporters have branded the university protests as antisemitic, while critics of Israel say it uses such allegations to silence opponents. Although some protesters have been caught on camera making antisemitic remarks or violent threats, organizers of the protests, some of whom are Jewish, say it is a peaceful movement aimed at defending Palestinian rights and protesting the war.

African farmers look to the past and the future to address climate change

By FARAI MUTSAKA, OMAR FARUK and DESMOND TIRO Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — From ancient fertilizer methods in Zimbabwe to new greenhouse technology in Somalia, farmers across the heavily agriculture-reliant African continent are looking to the past and future to respond to climate change.

Africa, with the world's youngest population, faces the worst effects of a warming planet while contributing the least to the problem. Farmers are scrambling to make sure the booming population is fed.

With over 60% of the world's uncultivated land, Africa should be able to feed itself, some experts say. And yet three in four people across the continent cannot afford a healthy diet, according to a report last year by the African Union and United Nations agencies. Reasons include conflict and lack of investment.

In Zimbabwe, where the El Nino phenomenon has worsened a drought, small-scale farmer James Tshuma has lost hope of harvesting anything from his fields. It's a familiar story in much of the country, where the government has declared a \$2 billion state of emergency and millions of people face hunger.

But a patch of green vegetables is thriving in a small garden the 65-year-old Tshuma is keeping alive with homemade organic manure and fertilizer. Previously discarded items have again become priceless.

"This is how our fathers and forefathers used to feed the earth and themselves before the introduction of chemicals and inorganic fertilizers," Tshuma said.

He applies livestock droppings, grass, plant residue, remains of small animals, tree leaves and bark, food scraps and other biodegradable items like paper. Even the bones of animals that are dying in increasing numbers due to the drought are burned before being crushed into ash for their calcium.

Climate change is compounding much of sub-Saharan Africa's longstanding problem of poor soil fertility, said Wonder Ngezimana, an associate professor of crop science at Zimbabwe's Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology.

"The combination is forcing people to re-look at how things were done in the past like nutrient recycling, but also blending these with modern methods," said Ngezimana, whose institution is researching the combination of traditional practices with new technologies.

Apart from being rich in nitrogen, organic fertilizers help increase the soil's carbon and ability to retain moisture, Ngezimana said. "Even if a farmer puts synthetic fertilizer into the soil, they are likely to suffer the consequences of poor moisture as long as there is a drought," he said.

Other moves to traditional practices are under way. Drought-resistant millets, sorghum and legumes, staples until the early 20th century when they were overtaken by exotic white corn, have been taking up more land space in recent years.

Leaves of drought-resistant plants that were once a regular dish before being cast off as weeds are returning to dinner tables. They even appear on elite supermarket shelves and are served at classy restaurants, as are millet and sorghum.

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This could create markets for the crops even beyond drought years, Ngezimana said.

A GREENHOUSE REVOLUTION IN SOMALIA

In conflict-prone Somalia in East Africa, greenhouses are changing the way some people live, with shoppers filling up carts with locally produced vegetables and traditionally nomadic pastoralists under pressure to settle down and grow crops.

"They are organic, fresh and healthy," shopper Sucdi Hassan said in the capital, Mogadishu. "Knowing that they come from our local farms makes us feel secure."

Her new shopping experience is a sign of relative calm after three decades of conflict and the climate shocks of drought and flooding.

Urban customers are now assured of year-round supplies, with more than 250 greenhouses dotted across Mogadishu and its outskirts producing fruit and vegetables. It is a huge leap.

"In the past, even basic vegetables like cucumbers and tomatoes were imported, causing logistical problems and added expenses," said Somalia's minister of youth and sports, Mohamed Barre.

The greenhouses also create employment in a country where about 75% of the population is people under 30 years old, many of them jobless.

About 15 kilometers (9 miles) from the capital, Mohamed Mahdi, an agriculture graduate, inspected produce in a greenhouse where he works.

"Given the high unemployment rate, we are grateful for the chance to work in our chosen field of expertise," the 25-year-old said.

Meanwhile, some pastoralist herders are being forced to change their traditional ways after watching livestock die by the thousands.

"Transitioning to greenhouse farming provides pastoralists with a more resilient and sustainable livelihood option," said Mohamed Okash, director of the Institute of Climate and Environment at SIMAD University in Mogadishu.

He called for larger investments in smart farming to combat food insecurity.

A MORE RESILIENT BEAN IN KENYA

In Kenya, a new climate-smart bean variety is bringing hope to farmers in a region that had recorded reduced rainfall in six consecutive rainy seasons.

The variety, called "Nyota" or "star" in Swahili, is the result of a collaboration between scientists from the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization, the Alliance of Bioversity International and research organization International Center for Tropical Agriculture.

The new bean variety is tailored for Kenya's diverse climatic conditions. One focus is to make sure drought doesn't kill them off before they have time to flourish.

The bean variety flowers and matures so quickly that it is ready for harvesting by the time rains disappear, said David Karanja, a bean breeder and national coordinator for grains and legumes at KALRO.

Hopes are that these varieties could bolster national bean production. The annual production of 600,000 metric tons falls short of meeting annual demand of 755,000 metric tons, Karanja said.

Farmer Benson Gitonga said his yield and profits are increasing because of the new bean variety. He harvests between nine and 12 bags from an acre of land, up from the previous five to seven bags.

One side benefit of the variety is a breath of fresh air.

"Customers particularly appreciate its qualities, as it boasts low flatulence levels, making it an appealing choice," Gitonga said.

A munitions explosion at a Cambodian army base kills 20 soldiers, but its cause is unclear

By SOPHENG CHEANG Associated Press

CHBAR MON, Cambodia (AP) — Security was tight around a military base in southwestern Cambodia on Sunday, a day after a huge explosion there killed 20 soldiers, wounded others and damaged nearby houses.

Guards sought to keep media away from the site in Kompong Speu province.

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Hun Manet said in a Facebook post on Saturday that he was “deeply shocked” when he received the news of the blast in the province’s Chbar Mon district. It was not immediately clear what caused it.

A villager living nearby told The Associated Press on Sunday that he trembled after hearing the blast because he had never before experienced such a loud explosion.

“When the explosion happened, I was fixing my house with some construction workers,” said Chim Sothea. “Suddenly there was a loud explosion, causing my house to shake and breaking tiles on my roof. They fell down but luckily they didn’t fall inside the house.”

Images from the scene showed several badly damaged buildings on the base, at least one with its roof blown off, and soldiers receiving treatment in a hospital. Other photos showed nearby houses with holes in their roofs.

Four buildings — three for storage and one work facility — were destroyed and several military vehicles damaged, Col. Youeng Sokhon, an army officer at the site, said in a brief report to army chief Gen. Mao Sophon, posted on social media. He added that 25 villagers’ homes were damaged as well. Photos of the base showed the damaged structures in a large field, apparently with no civilian structures close by.

Another villager, who asked to be named only as Sophal, told AP he had heard a sharp sound, and when he saw smoke rising from the direction of the army base, he realized it was an explosion at the arms depot. He then ran back to his house from the small shop where he sells food and drink to shelter inside with his wife and two children.

He said the military immediately closed the road to the base and “villagers were in a panic, seeking a safe place.” He then moved his family to his parent’s home, farther away from the base. When he returned to his own house hours later, he found it undamaged but other villagers’ houses had broken windows, doors and roofs, he said.

Cambodia, like many countries in the region, has been suffering from an extended heat wave, and the province where the blast took place registered a high of 39 C (102 F) on Saturday. While high temperatures normally can’t detonate ammunition, they can degrade the stability of explosives over a period of time, with the risk that a single small explosion can set off a fire and a chain reaction.

Kiripost, an online English language news service, quoted villager Pheng Kimneang as saying a major explosion occurred at about 2:30 p.m., followed by smaller blasts for about another hour.

In March 2005, a nighttime blast at an arms depot in the northwestern provincial town of Battambang triggered an hourslong spray of shells and bullets, killing at least six people and panicking local residents.

A 2014 report by the Swiss-based group Small Arms Survey highlighted the dangers of poorly stored or mishandled munitions, calling it a “global problem.” It noted that from 2013 through 2019 there were more than 500 incidents involving unplanned explosions at munitions sites.

“A single unplanned explosion at a munitions site can claim dozens of lives, injure hundreds of people, and displace thousands,” it said. “The damage to infrastructure can be extensive, covering many square kilometers. In addition, the loss of economic activity can exceed tens of millions of dollars and have long-term ramifications for livelihoods and the environment.”

Hun Manet offered condolences to the soldiers’ families and promised the government would pay for their funerals and provide compensation both to those killed and those wounded.

A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, he was army commander before he was elected last year to serve as prime minister, succeeding his father Hun Sen, who led Cambodia for 38 years before stepping down.

U.S. Ambassador W. Patrick Murphy, in a post on the social platform X, extended condolences to the families of the soldiers affected by the explosion.

Police officer hiring in US increases in 2023 after years of decline, survey shows

By CLAUDIA LAUER Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Police departments across the United States are reporting an increase in their ranks for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 killing of George Floyd, which led to a historic exodus of officers, a survey shows.

More sworn officers were hired in 2023 than in any one of the previous four years, and fewer officers overall resigned or retired, according to the 214 law enforcement agencies that responded to a survey by the Police Executive Research Forum, or PERF.

Floyd's death at the hands of Minneapolis police officers spurred nationwide protests against police brutality and heightened scrutiny of law enforcement.

As more and more officers left, many of the departments had to redeploy stretched resources by shifting officers away from investigative work or quality of life issues such as abandoned vehicles or noise violations to handle increases in crime and, in some cases, the shortages meant slower response times or limiting responses to emergencies only, police officials say.

"I just think that the past four years have been particularly challenging for American policing," said Chuck Wexler, executive director of PERF, a nonprofit policing think tank based in Washington, D.C. "And our survey shows we're finally starting to turn a corner."

Individual departments are turning that corner at different rates, however, according to Wexler, who noted many are still struggling to attract and keep officers.

As a whole, the profession "isn't out of the woods yet," he said.

The Associated Press left phone and email messages with several unions and police departments to ask about increased hiring.

The survey shows that while small and medium departments had more sworn officers than they did in January 2020, large departments are still more than 5% below their staffing levels from that time, even with a year-over-year increase from 2022 to 2023.

The survey also showed smaller departments with fewer than 50 officers are still struggling with a higher rate of resignations and retirements.

The survey asked only for numbers, Wexler said, so it's hard to say whether those officers are leaving for larger departments or leaving the profession altogether. He also said smaller departments, which account for 80% of agencies nationwide, were underrepresented in the responses PERF received.

Many larger departments have increased officer pay or started offering incentives such as signing bonuses for experienced officers who are willing to transfer, something smaller departments can't really compete with. At least a dozen smaller departments have disbanded, leaving the municipalities they once served to rely on state or county help for policing.

But even some of the highest-paying large departments are still struggling to get new hires in the door.

"I don't think it's all about money. I think it's about the way people perceive their job and feel they are going to be supported," Wexler said. "You have West Coast departments that are paying six figures, but still seeing major challenges in hiring."

In addition to pay and bonuses, many agencies are reexamining their application requirements and hiring processes.

Wexler believes some of those changes make sense, including allowing visible tattoos, reweighing the importance of past financial issues and processing applicants' background checks faster. But he cautioned that PERF does not support lowering standards for training or for applicants.

Maria "Maki" Habersfeld, chair of the Department of Law, Police Science and Criminal Justice Administration at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, says departments have been too focused on officer numbers. She worries some are lowering education requirements and other standards to bolster numbers instead of trying to find the best people to police their communities.

"Policing is a real profession that requires more skills and more education than people can understand,"

she said. "It's not about tattoos or running a mile in 15 minutes. It's really more about emotional intelligence, maturity and making those split-second decisions that don't use deadly force."

Haberfeld also cautioned that any staffing gains made through incentives could easily be erased, especially as officers, including some in riot gear, have been seen breaking up protests against the Israel-Hamas war at universities across the country.

"In policing, it takes decades to move forward and a split second for the public attitude to deteriorate," she said.

PERF's survey showed a more than a 20% drop in resignations overall, from a high of almost 6,500 in 2022 to fewer than 5,100 in 2023. They are still up over early pandemic levels in 2020, however, when a few more than 4,000 officers resigned across all responding departments.

As with the hiring increases, the rate of decrease in retirements tended to depend on the size of the departments. There were fewer retirements in 2023 than in 2019 at large departments, slightly more retirements at medium departments and elevated retirements at small departments. The survey found a steep drop in resignations at large agencies with 250 or more officers and medium-size agencies with between 50 and 249 officers.

In addition to pay and benefit increases, the improved retention can be partly attributed to a shift in how some public officials view their public safety departments, Wexler says.

"We went from having public discourse about defunding the police just a few years ago to public officials waking up to the fact their workforce is leaving," he said. "I don't think there's any question that there has been a sea change among political leaders."

Yemen's Houthi rebels claim downing US Reaper drone, release footage showing wreckage of aircraft

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Yemen's Houthi rebels on Saturday claimed shooting down another of the U.S. military's MQ-9 Reaper drones, airing footage of parts that corresponded to known pieces of the unmanned aircraft.

The Houthis said they shot down the Reaper with a surface-to-air missile, part of a renewed series of assaults this week by the rebels after a relative lull in their pressure campaign over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Bryon J. McGarry, a Defense Department spokesperson, acknowledged to The Associated Press on Saturday that "a U.S. Air Force MQ-9 drone crashed in Yemen." He said an investigation was underway, without elaborating.

The Houthis described the downing as happening Thursday over their stronghold in the country's Saada province.

Footage released by the Houthis included what they described as the missile launch targeting the drone, with a man off-camera reciting the Houthi's slogan after it was hit: "God is the greatest; death to America; death to Israel; curse the Jews; victory to Islam."

The footage included several close-ups on parts of the drone that included the logo of General Atomics, which manufactures the drone, and serial numbers corresponding with known parts made by the company.

Since the Houthis seized the country's north and its capital of Sanaa in 2014, the U.S. military has lost at least five drones to the rebels counting Thursday's shootdown — in 2017, 2019, 2023 and this year.

Reapers, which cost around \$30 million apiece, can fly at altitudes up to 50,000 feet and have an endurance of up to 24 hours before needing to land.

The drone shootdown comes as the Houthis launch attacks on shipping in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, demanding Israel ends the war in Gaza, which has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians there. The war began after Hamas-led militants attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing 1,200 people and taking some 250 others hostage.

The Houthis have launched more than 50 attacks on shipping, seized one vessel and sank another since November, according to the U.S. Maritime Administration.

Houthi attacks have dropped in recent weeks as the rebels have been targeted by a U.S.-led airstrike campaign in Yemen. Shipping through the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden has declined because of the threat. American officials have speculated that the rebels may be running out of weapons as a result of the U.S.-led campaign against them and after firing drones and missiles steadily in the last months. However, the rebels have renewed their attacks in the last week.

A Hawaii military family avoids tap water at home. They're among those suing over 2021 jet fuel leak

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii (AP) — Richelle Dietz, a mother of two and wife of a U.S. Navy officer, often thinks about water.

The family, stationed in Honolulu, spends more than \$120 a month on jugs of bottled water for drinking, cooking and cleaning, as well as showerhead and sink filters. Each night the children, ages 13 and 5, carry cups of bottled water upstairs to their bathrooms to brush their teeth.

"I hope that one day I can not think about water all the time," Dietz said. "But right now it's a constant."

That vigilance is to avoid more vomiting, diarrhea, rashes and other ailments, which they said they started experiencing 2021, when jet fuel leaked into the Navy water system serving 93,000 people on and around the Pearl Harbor base. It sickened thousands in military housing, including, Dietz says, her own family.

She's one of 17 relatives of U.S. military members suing the United States over the leak from the World War II-era storage tanks. She said her entire family — including dog Rocket — continues to suffer from health problems they link to the tainted water. Her husband, a chief petty officer, declined to be interviewed by The Associated Press because he fears retaliation from the Navy.

The 17 are considered "bellwether" plaintiffs representing more than 7,500 other military family members, civilians and service members in three federal lawsuits. The outcome of their trial, which starts Monday, will help determine the success of the other cases and the damages that could be awarded.

Kristina Baehr, one of their attorneys, said she already considers it a success because the U.S. government has admitted liability.

U.S. Department of Justice attorneys wrote in court documents that the government admits the Nov. 20, 2021, spill at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility "caused a nuisance" for the plaintiffs, that the United States "breached its duty of care" and that the plaintiffs suffered compensable injuries.

But they dispute the plaintiffs were exposed to jet fuel at levels high enough to cause their alleged health problems. Lingering issues plaintiffs say they are battling include seizures, memory loss, anxiety, eczema and asthma.

When the Dietz family arrived in Hawaii in February 2021, "we thought we were moving to heaven on earth," Dietz wrote in a declaration filed in the case.

But around Thanksgiving — soon after the leak — they couldn't figure out their stomach pain, vomiting and diarrhea. Other families in the neighborhood were also sick. Then they developed rashes.

"My throat is burning. I feel like I just drank gasoline," Dietz remembers telling her husband on Nov. 27.

The next night, her Facebook timeline was filled with neighbors complaining about the smell of fuel in their water. The Dietzes ran to their faucets and smelled fuel, too. They noticed the tap water also had an oily sheen.

Attorneys representing the families say the trial will show Navy officers failed to warn residents after learning about fuel in the water, and even maintained that staff members were drinking the water.

Navy representatives and government attorneys didn't respond to an email seeking comment on the lawsuit.

The fuel storage tanks have long been a flashpoint in Hawaii, with Native Hawaiians and other residents raising concerns over the past decade about leaks that threatened the broader water supply. The tanks

sit above an aquifer that delivers water to 400,000 people in urban Honolulu.

At first, the Navy said it hadn't determined how petroleum got into the water, but its own investigation eventually pinned the cause to a cascading series of mistakes.

On May 6, 2021, a pipe ruptured due to an operator error and caused 21,000 gallons (80,000 liters) of fuel that was being transferred between tanks to spill. Most of the fuel, however, entered a fire suppression line and remained there until six months later, when a cart rammed into the line and released 20,000 gallons (75,700 liters) that eventually got into the water system.

Red Hill workers noticed that one of the tanks was short that amount, but didn't report the discrepancy to senior leadership.

Dietz didn't want to risk her husband's career by asking to leave Hawaii. So they stayed and were committed to avoiding tap water while they figured out their next steps.

"They're just going to put another family in this house," she said. "So we need to stay here and we need to try to fight to get this fixed."

In doing so, Dietz says she found unexpected allies among Native Hawaiians, who revere water as a sacred resource and already have a distrust of the U.S. military, which can be traced back to at least 1893, when a group of American businessmen, with support from U.S. Marines, overthrew the Hawaiian kingdom.

Kawena'ulaokalā Kapahua — a Native Hawaiian political science doctoral student and one of the activists who pushed to shut down the tanks — said the water crisis forged a sense of solidarity with affected military families. It also fostered relationships within a military community of members who often cycle quickly in and out of the islands, he said.

When families felt abandoned by the military, "the people who did show up for them was the Native community," Kapahua said.

Dietz agreed. "They gave us a seat at the table," she said through tears.

Eventually, under orders from state officials, pressure from the outcry and ongoing protests, the military drained the tanks.

Dietz's husband later got new orders and the family is relocating to Jacksonville, Florida, this summer. They don't plan to live in military housing there.

As she prepares to move out of a house where the ice maker has remained off since 2021, Dietz hopes the trial will renew awareness about what happened to the water.

"Somebody's going to move in," she said, "and I'm worried they're going to turn on the ice machine."

Residents begin going through the rubble after tornadoes hammer parts of Nebraska and Iowa

By NICK INGRAM, JEFF MARTIN and HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Residents began sifting through the rubble Saturday after a tornado plowed through suburban Omaha, Nebraska, demolishing homes and businesses as it moved for miles through farmland and into subdivisions, then slamming an Iowa town.

Dozens of reported tornadoes wreaked havoc Friday in the Midwest, causing a building to collapse with dozens of people inside and destroying and damaging at least 150 homes in Omaha alone.

But no fatalities were reported, and fewer than two dozen people were treated at Omaha-area hospitals, said Dr. Lindsay Huse, health director of the city's Douglas County Health Department.

"Miraculous" she said, stressing that none of the city's injuries were serious. Neighboring communities reported a handful of injuries each.

The tornado damage started Friday afternoon near Lincoln, Nebraska. An industrial building in Lancaster County was hit, causing it to collapse with 70 people inside. Several were trapped, but everyone was evacuated, and the three injuries were not life-threatening, authorities said.

One or possibly two tornadoes then spent around an hour creeping toward Omaha, leaving behind damage consistent with an EF3 twister, with winds of 135 to 165 mph, said Chris Franks, a meteorologist in

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the National Weather Service's Omaha office.

Ultimately the twister slammed into the Elkhorn neighborhood in western Omaha, a city of 485,000 people with a metropolitan-area population of about 1 million.

"We barely made it to the basement and then we heard the destruction going on upstairs," said James Stennis, who moved to the Elkhorn neighborhood about a year ago. "Wow!"

Firefighters worked into the evening to make sure no one was trapped. By Saturday morning, the sounds of chainsaws filled the air there. Lumber from the damaged homes lay in piles. Fences were knocked over, and the trees were skeletal, missing most of their branches.

Staci Roe surveyed the damage to what was supposed to be her "forever home," which was not even two years old. When the tornado hit, they were at the airport picking up a friend who was supposed to spend the night.

"There was no home to come to," she said, describing "utter dread" when she saw it for the first time.

Power outages peaked at 10,000, but they had dropped to 4,300 by morning.

Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen and Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds spent Saturday touring the damage and arranging for assistance for the damaged communities. Formal damage assessments are still underway, but the states plan to seek federal help.

"It is an extraordinary miracle that we've had this kind of cell come through and no casualties, no loss of life," Pillen marveled at a news conference.

Douglas County Sheriff Aaron Hanson begged gawkers to stay at home, saying he and Pillen were stuck in multiple traffic jams while viewing the wreckage.

"And that's because in large part there's a lot of looky-loos who are very curious," he said. Hanson said law enforcement would be out in force to safeguard the damaged property.

A second tornado then passed over Eppley Airfield on the eastern edge of Omaha, destroying four hanger buildings with 32 privately owned planes inside. No one was hurt, and the passenger terminal was not hit. The airport has resumed operations, although access to areas used by noncommercial pilots is limited so crew can clean up the mess, the airfield said in a news release.

Franks estimated that this twister was a slightly weaker EF2, capable of winds of 111 to 135 mph.

"Strong tornadoes, rare tornadoes," he called the duo of twisters that hit the city.

After hitting the airport, the storm moved into Iowa, taking aim at the small town of Minden.

Forty to 50 homes were completely destroyed. Two injuries were reported but none were life-threatening, said Jeff Theulen, chief deputy of the Pottawattamie County Sheriff's Office, at a late Friday briefing.

"It's heartbreaking to see these people who have lost houses, cars, essentially their life until they have to rebuild it," he said, urging people to stay away because of downed power lines.

At the Minden United Church of Christ, which survived the storm and has become a community hub of help and support, there were plans to take 4-wheel-drive vehicles out to devastated parts of town to bring meals to those who need them, Pastor Eric Biehl said.

"A lot of people are just kind of in shock," Biehl said. "It's all overwhelming now."

Tammy Pavich, who stores equipment on the west edge of town, said she "kind of breathed a sigh of relief" after the first round of tornadoes moved through Omaha. Then, she recalled, the storm "hit Minden dead-on."

Todd Lehan, a lifelong resident of the town, said he took shelter in a windowless basement. "It sounded like a vacuum cleaner on top of your house," he recalled.

Just west of the Iowa town of Pleasant Hill, a suspected tornado also damaged nearly 20 homes, injuring one person.

The damage was causing headaches for Nebraska football fans headed to the spring game.

"Be prepared for heavy traffic, buckle up and put the phone down," warned the Nebraska Department of Transportation.

Even as the National Weather Service worked to evaluate the damage, the forecast for Saturday was ominous. It issued tornado watches for parts of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Iowa.

Large hail also was possible. Some schools canceled proms because of the forecasts.

"Tornadoes, perhaps significant tornadoes," were possible Saturday afternoon and evening, said weather service meteorologist Bruce Thoren in Norman, Oklahoma.

College protesters seek amnesty to keep arrests and suspensions from trailing them

By JOCELYN GECKER Associated Press

Maryam Alwan figured the worst was over after New York City police in riot gear arrested her and other protesters on the Columbia University campus, loaded them onto buses and held them in custody for hours.

But the next evening, the college junior received an email from the university. Alwan and other students were being suspended after their arrests at the "Gaza Solidarity Encampment," a tactic colleges across the country have deployed to calm growing campus protests against the Israel-Hamas war.

The students' plight has become a central part of protests, with students and a growing number of faculty demanding their amnesty. At issue is whether universities and law enforcement will clear the charges and withhold other consequences, or whether the suspensions and legal records will follow students into their adult lives.

Terms of the suspensions vary from campus to campus. At Columbia and its affiliated Barnard College for women, Alwan and dozens more were arrested April 18 and promptly barred from campus and classes, unable to attend in-person or virtually, and banned from dining halls.

Questions about their academic futures remain. Will they be allowed to take final exams? What about financial aid? Graduation? Columbia says outcomes will be decided at disciplinary hearings, but Alwan says she has not been given a date.

"This feels very dystopian," said Alwan, a comparative literature and society major.

What started at Columbia has turned into a nationwide showdown between students and administrators over anti-war protests and the limits of free speech. In the past 10 days, hundreds of students have been arrested, suspended, put on probation and, in rare cases, expelled from colleges including Yale University, the University of Southern California, Vanderbilt University and the University of Minnesota.

Barnard, a women's liberal arts college at Columbia, suspended more than 50 students who were arrested April 18 and evicted them from campus housing, according to interviews with students and reporting from the Columbia Spectator campus newspaper, which obtained internal campus documents.

On Friday, Barnard announced it had reached agreements restoring campus access to "nearly all" of them. A statement from the college did not specify the number but said all students who had their suspensions lifted have agreed to follow college rules and, in some cases, were put on probation.

On the night of the arrests, however, Barnard student Maryam Iqbal posted a screenshot on the social media platform X of a dean's email telling her she could briefly return to her room with campus security before getting kicked out.

"You will have 15 minutes to gather what you might need," the email read.

More than 100 Barnard and Columbia faculty staged a "Rally to Support Our Students" last week condemning the student arrests and demanding suspensions be lifted.

Columbia is still pushing to remove the tent encampment on the campus main lawn where graduation is set to be hosted May 15. The students have demanded the school cut ties with Israel-linked companies and ensure amnesty for students and faculty arrested or disciplined in connection with the protests.

Talks with the student protesters are continuing, said Ben Chang, a Columbia spokesperson. "We have our demands; they have theirs," he said.

For international students facing suspension, there is the added fear of losing their visas, said Radhika Sainath, an attorney with Palestine Legal, which helped a group of Columbia students file a federal civil rights complaint against the school Thursday. It accuses Columbia of not doing enough to address discrimination against Palestinian students.

"The level of punishment is not even just draconian, it feels like over-the-top callousness," Sainath said.

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More than 40 students were arrested at a Yale demonstration last week, including senior Craig Birkhead-Morton. He is due to graduate May 20 but says the university has not yet told him if his case will be submitted to a disciplinary panel. He worries about whether he will receive a diploma and if his acceptance to Columbia graduate school could be at risk.

"The school has done its best to ignore us and not tell us what happens next," said Birkhead-Morton, a history major.

Across the country, college administrators have struggled to balance free speech and inclusivity. Some demonstrations have included hate speech, antisemitic threats or support for Hamas, the group that attacked Israel on Oct. 7, sparking a war in Gaza that has left more than 34,000 dead.

May commencement ceremonies add pressure to clear demonstrations. University officials say arrests and suspensions are a last resort, and that they give ample warnings beforehand to clear protest areas.

Vanderbilt University in Tennessee has issued what are believed to be the only student expulsions related to protesting the Israel-Hamas conflict, according to the Institute for Middle Eastern Understanding. More than two dozen students occupied the university chancellor's office for several hours on March 26, prompting the university to summon police and arrest several protesters. Vanderbilt then issued three expulsions, one suspension and put 22 protesters on probation.

In an open letter to Chancellor Daniel Diermeier, more than 150 Vanderbilt professors criticized the university's crackdown as "excessive and punitive."

Freshman Jack Petocz, 19, one of those expelled, is being allowed to attend classes while he appeals. He has been evicted from his dorm and is living off campus.

Petocz said protesting in high school was what helped get him into Vanderbilt and secure a merit scholarship for activists and organizers. His college essay was about organizing walkouts in rural Florida to oppose Gov. Ron DeSantis' anti-LGBTQ policies.

"Vanderbilt seemed to love that," Petocz said. "Unfortunately, the buck stops when you start advocating for Palestinian liberation."

Anti-war protesters dig in as some schools close encampments after reports of antisemitic activity

By MICHAEL CASEY and JAMES POLLARD Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — As students protesting the Israel-Hamas war at college campuses across U.S. dug in Saturday and dozens of demonstrators were arrested, some universities moved to shut down encampments after reports of antisemitic activity.

With the death toll mounting in the war in Gaza, protesters nationwide are demanding that schools cut financial ties to Israel and divest from companies they say are enabling the conflict. Some Jewish students say the protests have veered into antisemitism and made them afraid to set foot on campus.

Early Saturday, police in riot gear cleared an encampment on the campus of Northeastern University in Boston. Massachusetts State Police said about 102 protesters were arrested and will be charged with trespassing and disorderly conduct. Protesters said they were given about 15 minutes to disperse before being arrested.

As workers pulled down tents and bagged up the debris from the encampment, several dozen people across from the encampment chanted, "Let the Kids Go," and slogans against the war in Gaza. They also booed as police cars passed and taunted the officers who stood guard over the encampment.

The school said in a statement that the demonstration, which began two days ago, had become "infiltrated by professional organizers" with no affiliation to the school and antisemitic slurs, including "kill the Jews," had been used.

"We cannot tolerate this kind of hate on our campus," the statement posted on the social media platform X said.

The Huskies for a Free Palestine student group disputed the university's account, saying in a statement that counterprotesters were to blame for the slurs and no student protesters "repeated the disgusting

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hate speech.”

Students at the protest said a counterprotester attempted to instigate hate speech but insisted their event was peaceful and, like many across the country, was aimed at drawing attention to what they described as the “genocide” in Gaza and their university’s complicity in the war.

The president of nearby Massachusetts Institute of Technology put out a statement Saturday saying the encampment there had become a “potential magnet for disruptive outside protesters” and was taking hundreds of staff hours to keep safe.

“We have a responsibility to the entire MIT community — and it is not possible to safely sustain this level of effort,” MIT President Sally Kornbluth said. “We are open to further discussion about the means of ending the encampment. But this particular form of expression needs to end soon.”

Indiana University campus officers and state police arrested 23 people Saturday at an encampment on the school’s Bloomington campus. Tents and canopies had been erected Friday night at Dunn Meadow in violation of school policy, university police said in a release. Members of the group were detained after refusing to remove the structures, police said. Charges ranged from criminal trespass to resisting law enforcement.

At the University of Pennsylvania on Friday, interim President J. Larry Jameson called for an encampment of protesters on the west Philadelphia campus to be disbanded, saying it violates the university’s facilities policies, though about 40 tents remained in place Saturday morning.

The “harassing and intimidating comments and actions” by some protesters violate the school’s open expression guidelines as well as state and federal law, Jameson said, and vandalism of a statue with anti-semitic graffiti was “especially reprehensible and will be investigated as a hate crime.”

A faculty group said Saturday that it was “deeply disturbed” by the university president’s email, saying it included “unsubstantiated allegations” that “have been disputed to us by faculty and students who have attended and observed the demonstration.”

The university’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors said Jameson’s statement “mischaracterizes the overall nature of an antiwar protest that necessarily involves strong emotions on both sides but has not, to our knowledge, involved any actual violence or threats of violence to individuals on our campus.”

Campus protests began after Hamas’ deadly attack on southern Israel, when militants killed about 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and took roughly 250 hostages. During the ensuing war, Israel has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, according to the local health ministry.

Israel and its supporters have branded the protests as antisemitic, while critics of Israel say it uses such allegations to silence opponents. Although some protesters have been caught on camera making antisemitic remarks or violent threats, organizers of the protests, some of whom are Jewish, say it is a peaceful movement aimed at defending Palestinian rights and protesting the war.

At Columbia University, where protesters have inspired pro-Palestinian demonstrations across the country, students representing the encampment said Friday that they reached an impasse with administrators and intended to continue their protest.

Though the university has repeatedly set and then pushed back deadlines for the removal of the encampment, the school sent an email to students Friday night saying that bringing back police “at this time” would be counterproductive.

Decisions to call in law enforcement, leading to hundreds of arrests nationwide, have prompted school faculty members at universities in California, Georgia and Texas to initiate or pass votes of no confidence in their leadership. They are largely symbolic rebukes, without the power to remove their presidents.

But the tensions pile pressure on school officials, who are already scrambling to resolve the protests as May graduation ceremonies near.

The University of Southern California drew criticism after refusing to allow the valedictorian, who has publicly supported Palestinians, to make a commencement speech. Administrators then scrapped the keynote speech by filmmaker Jon M. Chu. The school announced the cancellation of its main graduation

event Thursday, a day after more than 90 protesters were arrested by police in riot gear.

USC President Carol Folt made her first public statement late Friday addressing the controversies as "incredibly difficult for all of us."

"No one wants to have people arrested on their campus. Ever. But, when long-standing safety policies are flagrantly violated, buildings vandalized, Department of Public Safety directives repeatedly ignored, threatening language shouted, people assaulted, and access to critical academic buildings blocked, we must act immediately to protect our community," Folt said.

Arizona State University said 69 people were arrested early Saturday on suspicion of criminal trespassing for setting up an unauthorized encampment on a lawn on its Tempe campus. The protesters were given chances to leave, and those who refused were arrested.

"While the university will continue to be an environment that embraces freedom of speech, ASU's first priority is to create a safe and secure environment that supports teaching and learning," the university said in a statement.

Alaska's Indigenous teens emulate ancestors' Arctic survival skills at the Native Youth Olympics

By MARK THIESSEN Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The athletes filling a huge gym in Anchorage were ready to compete, cheering and stomping and high-fiving each other as they lined up for the chance to claim the state's top prize in their events.

But these teenagers were at the Native Youth Olympics, a statewide competition that attracts hundreds of Alaska Native athletes each year and pays tribute to the skills and techniques used by their ancestors to survive in the harsh polar climate.

Events at the competition that wraps up Saturday include a stick pull, meant to mimic holding onto a slippery seal as it fights to return to the water, and a modified, four-step broad jump that approximates leaping across ice floes on the frozen ocean.

For generations, Alaska Natives played these games to develop the skills they needed to become successful hunters — and survive — in an unforgiving climate.

Now, today's youth play "to help preserve our culture, our heritage, and to teach our youth how difficult life used to be and to share our culture with everyone around us who wants to know more about our people," said Nicole Johnson, the head official for the event and one of Alaska's most decorated Native athletes.

Johnson herself has won over 100 medals at Native Olympic competitions and for 29 years held the world record in the two-foot high kick, an event where athletes jump with both feet, kick a ball while keeping both feet even, and then land on both feet. Her record of 6-feet, 6-inches was broken in 2014.

For the "seal hop," a popular event on Saturday, athletes get into a push-up or plank position and shuffle across the floor on their knuckles — the same stealthy crawl their ancestors used during a hunt to sneak up on unsuspecting seals napping on the ice.

"And when they got close enough to the seal, they would grab their harpoon and get the seal," said Johnson, an Inupiaq originally from Nome.

Colton Paul had the crowd clapping and stomping their feet. Last year, he set a world record in the scissors broad jump with a mark of 38 feet, 7 inches when competing for Mount Edgecumbe High School, a boarding school in Sitka. The jump requires power and balance, and includes four specific stylized leaps that mimic hop-scotching across floating ice chunks to navigate a frozen river or ocean.

The Yupik athlete from the western Alaska village of Kipnuk can no longer compete because he's graduated, but he performed for the crowd on Friday, and jumped 38 feet, 9 inches.

He said Native Youth Olympics is the only sport for which he's had a passion.

"Doing the sports has really made me had a sense of 'My ancestors did this' and I'm doing what they did for survival," said Paul, who is now 19. "It's just something fun to do."

Awaluk Nichols has been taking part in Native Youth Olympics for most of her childhood. The events

give her a chance to explore her Inupiaq heritage, something she feels is slowly fading away from Nome, a Bering Sea coastal community.

"It helps me a lot to just connect with my friends and my culture, and it just means a lot to me that we still have it," said the high school junior, who listed her best event as the one-foot high kick.

Some events are as much of a mental test as a physical one. In one competition called the "wrist carry," two teammates hold a stick at each end, while a third person hangs from the dowel by their wrist, legs curled up like a sloth, as their teammates run around an oval track.

The goal is to see who can hang onto the stick the longest without falling or touching the ground. The event builds strength, endurance and teamwork, and emulates the traits people of the north needed when they lived a nomadic lifestyle and had to carry heavy loads, organizers said.

Nichols said her family and some others still participate in some Native traditions, like hunting and subsisting off the land like their ancestors, but competing in the youth games "makes you feel really connected with them," she said.

"Just knowing that I'm part of what used to be — it makes me happy," she said.

Hamas is reviewing an Israeli proposal for a cease-fire in Gaza, as a planned Rafah offensive looms

By SAMY MAGDY and DAVID RISING Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Hamas said Saturday it was reviewing a new Israeli proposal for a cease-fire in Gaza, as Egypt intensified efforts to broker a deal to end the months-long war and stave off a planned Israeli ground offensive into the southern city of Rafah.

Senior Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya gave no details of Israel's offer, but said it was in response to a Hamas proposal two weeks ago. Negotiations earlier this month centered on a six-week cease-fire proposal and the release of 40 civilian and sick hostages in exchange for freeing hundreds of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

A separate Hamas statement said leaders from the three main militant groups active in Gaza discussed attempts to end the war. It didn't mention the Israeli proposal.

The statements came hours after an Egyptian delegation ended a visit to Israel where it discussed a "new vision" for a prolonged cease-fire in Gaza, according to an Egyptian official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to freely discuss the developments.

It wasn't immediately clear whether Israel's proposal was directly related to the visit.

The discussions between Egyptian and Israeli officials focused on the first stage of a plan that would include a limited exchange of hostages held by Hamas for Palestinian prisoners, and the return of a significant number of displaced Palestinians to their homes in northern Gaza "with minimum restrictions," the Egyptian official said.

Mediators are working on a compromise that will answer most of both parties' main demands, which could pave the way to continued negotiations with the goal of a deal to end the war, the official said.

Hamas has said it won't back down from demands for a permanent cease-fire and full withdrawal of Israeli troops. Israel has rejected both and said it will continue military operations until Hamas is defeated and that it will retain a security presence in Gaza.

There is growing international pressure for Hamas and Israel to reach a cease-fire deal and avert an Israeli attack on Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's 2.3 million people have sought refuge.

Israel has insisted for months it plans a ground offensive into Rafah, on the border with Egypt, where it says many remaining Hamas militants remain, despite calls for restraint including from Israel's staunchest ally, the United States.

Egypt has cautioned an offensive into Rafah could have "catastrophic consequences" on the humanitarian situation in Gaza, where famine is feared, and on regional peace and security.

The Israeli military has massed dozens of tanks and armored vehicles in southern Israel close to Rafah and hit locations in the city in near-daily airstrikes.

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Early Saturday, an airstrike hit a house in Rafah's Tel Sultan neighborhood, killing a man, his wife and their sons, ages 12, 10 and 8, according to records of the Abu Yousef al-Najjar hospital's morgue. A neighbor's 4-month-old girl was also killed.

Ahmed Omar rushed with other neighbors after the 1:30 a.m. strike to look for survivors, but said they only found bodies and body parts.

"It's a tragedy," he said.

An Israeli airstrike later Saturday on a building in Rafah killed seven people, including six members of the Ashour family, according to the morgue.

Five people were killed in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza overnight when an Israeli strike hit a house, according to officials at the al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital.

Elsewhere, Israeli forces shot and killed two Palestinian men at a checkpoint in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, the military said. It said the men had opened fire at troops stationed at Salem checkpoint near the city of Jenin.

Violence in the West Bank has flared since the war. The Ramallah-based Health Ministry says 491 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire.

Washington has been critical of Israeli policies in the West Bank. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who is expected in Israel on Tuesday, recently determined an army unit committed rights abuses there before the war in Gaza.

But Blinken said in an undated letter to U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson, obtained by The Associated Press on Friday, that he's postponing a decision on blocking aid to the unit to give Israel more time to right the wrongdoing. Blinken stressed that overall U.S. military support for Israel's defense wouldn't be affected.

The U.S. has also been building a pier to deliver aid to Gaza through a new port. Israel's military confirmed Saturday that it would be operational by early May.

The BBC reported the U.K. government was considering deploying troops to drive the trucks to carry the aid to shore, citing unidentified government sources. British officials declined to comment.

Another aid effort, a three-ship flotilla coming from Turkey, was prevented from sailing, organizers said.

Student protests over the war and its effect on Palestinians are growing on college campuses in the U.S., while demonstrations continue in many countries.

Hamas sparked the war by attacking southern Israel on Oct. 7, with militants killing around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking around 250 hostage. Israel says the militants still hold around 100 hostages and the remains of more than 30 others.

Hamas on Saturday released a video showing hostages Keith Siegel and Omri Miran. It wasn't clear when the video was made. Both referred to the Jewish holiday of Passover, which began Monday. They called on Israel's government to reach a deal with Hamas. They almost certainly spoke under duress.

More than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's offensive, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza, around two-thirds of them children and women. Its count doesn't distinguish between civilians and combatants. The ministry said 32 people killed were brought to local hospitals over the past 24 hours.

Israel blames Hamas for civilian casualties, accusing it of embedding in residential areas. Israel has reported at least 260 soldiers killed since the start of ground operations.

Harvey Weinstein hospitalized after his return to New York from upstate prison

By LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Harvey Weinstein's lawyer said Saturday that the onetime movie mogul has been hospitalized for a battery of tests after his return to New York City following an appeals court ruling nullifying his 2020 rape conviction.

Attorney Arthur Aidala said Weinstein was moved to Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan after his arrival on

Friday to city jails.

"They examined him and sent him to Bellevue. It seems like he needs a lot of help, physically. He's got a lot of problems. He's getting all kinds of tests. He's somewhat of a train wreck health wise," Aidala said.

A message left with the hospital was not immediately returned Saturday.

Frank Dwyer, a spokesperson with the New York City Department of Correction, said only that Weinstein remains in custody at Bellevue. Thomas Mailey, a spokesperson for the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, said Weinstein was turned over to the city's Department of Correction pursuant to the appeals ruling. Weinstein had been housed at the Mohawk Correctional Facility, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) northwest of Albany.

On Thursday, the New York Court of Appeals vacated his conviction after concluding that a trial judge permitted jurors to see and hear too much evidence not directly related to the charges he faced. It also erased his 23-year prison sentence and ordered a retrial.

Prosecutors said they intend to retry him on charges that he forcibly performed oral sex on a TV and film production assistant in 2006 and raped an aspiring actor in 2013.

Weinstein remained in custody after the appeals ruling because he was convicted in Los Angeles in 2022 of another rape and was sentenced to 16 years in prison.

For some time, Weinstein has been ailing with a variety of afflictions, including cardiac issues, diabetes, sleep apnea and eye problems.

Aidala said he spoke to Weinstein on Friday afternoon after he was in transit to New York City from an upstate jail less than 24 hours after the appeals ruling, which was released Thursday morning.

He said his client's ailments are physical, adding that mentally he is "sharp as a tack. Feet are firmly planted on the ground."

The lawyer said it usually takes state corrections and prisons officials a week or two to arrange to transport a prisoner.

"He was not treated well. They refused to give him even a sip of water, no food, no bathroom break," Aidala said. "He's a 72-year-old sickly man."

Mailey, the state corrections spokesperson, had no comment when Aidala's remarks about Weinstein's treatment were read to him over the phone.

Aidala said he was told that Bellevue doctors planned to run a lot of tests on Weinstein before he can be returned to the Rikers Island jail complex.

The lawyer said he's scheduled to meet with Weinstein on Monday. He added that he plans to tell a judge when Weinstein goes to court on Wednesday in Manhattan that a retrial should occur after Labor Day.

Oregon's Sports Bra, a pub for women's sports fans, plans national expansion as interest booms

By CLAIRE RUSH Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — On a recent weeknight at this bar in northeast Portland, fans downed pints and burgers as college women's lacrosse and beach volleyball matches played on big-screen TVs. Memorabilia autographed by female athletes covered the walls, with a painting of U.S. soccer legend Abby Wambach mounted above the chalkboard beer menu.

The Sports Bra is a pub where women's sports are celebrated — and the only thing on TV.

Packed and buzzing with activity, the bar has successfully tapped into a meteoric rise of interest in women's sports, embodied most recently by the frenzy over University of Iowa basketball phenomenon Caitlin Clark's records-smashing feats.

Just two years after opening, the bar announced plans this week to go nationwide through a franchise model.

"Things have happened at light speed compared to what my forecast was," founder and CEO Jenny Nguyen told The Associated Press. "This tiny spot that I built for my friends and I to watch games and give female athletes their flowers means so much more. And not just to me, but to a lot of people."

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Under the plan, bars and entrepreneurs elsewhere will be able to apply to use The Sports Bra brand for their franchises. Nguyen is open to working with people who already have a physical space, as well as those who may only have a business plan. What matters, she said, is that the potential future partners share The Sports Bra's values.

One aspiring partner is Jackie Reau, who hopes to open a franchise in Cincinnati, where she works as the CEO of a media and marketing agency. During an interview at The Sports Bra, where she happily watched her college women's lacrosse team on one of the TV sets, she said such establishments "celebrate women's sports and the champions and the athletes behind the story."

"It's exciting to see it grow and gain such popularity," Reau said of the bar. "It's just such a moment right now for women's sports."

The expansion will be boosted by funding from a foundation created by Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian, who is married to tennis legend Serena Williams. Nguyen said she already has received hundreds of inquiries.

Interest in women's sports is at an all-time high, helped by Clark's exploits this year, when she shattered all-time NCAA scoring records for women and men. The championship game between Iowa and South Carolina on April 7 drew 18.9 million viewers on average, surpassing the audience for the men's title match for the first time.

A week later a record 2.45 million viewers on average tuned in to the WNBA draft to watch as Clark went to the Indiana Fever as the No. 1 pick. This week it was reported that she was set to sign a \$28 million deal with Nike that would be the richest sponsorship contract for a women's basketball player.

The rise in interest is not just for women's basketball, but other sports as well. The 2023 Women's World Cup reported record attendance with nearly 2 million fans. A University of Nebraska volleyball game played in a football stadium drew more than 92,000 people last August, a world record for largest attendance at a women's sporting event.

"It's sort of in this pinnacle moment where eyeballs are plentiful," said Lauren Anderson, director of the Warsaw Sports Business Center at the University of Oregon. "It's just been an alignment of many things that has created this incredible moment for women's sports that seems to be more than just a flash in the pan."

As the fan base and engagement grow, so too does the appetite for changing a sports bar culture that has traditionally catered to men's athletics. Other establishments like The Sports Bra have recently opened elsewhere: A Bar of Their Own began operating in Minneapolis earlier this year, and Seattle's Rough & Tumble launched in late 2022.

Sports bars have not always been welcome spaces for women, Nguyen said. A fan since childhood, she would gather groups of friends to go because she didn't feel safe going by herself. She recalled encountering macho environments that made her uncomfortable, and bartenders who refused to change the channel to a women's game.

"That was just what we settled with," she said. "When I wanted to push back and kind of flip the status quo, that's when I really started to dig in on how The Sports Bra could matter and change the narrative on sports bars."

One memory in particular stands out for Nguyen from her time as proprietor: Serena Williams' last match, in 2022. A massive crowd showed up to watch, spilling over onto the sidewalk. People outside cupped their eyes with their hands as they peered through the windows to see the screens.

"When Serena would score a point, I swear to God, I thought the glass was going to shatter. My eyeballs were rattling inside my head," Nguyen said. "And then when they were volleying, I feel like you could hear a burger flip in the kitchen."

Toward the end, she felt tears welling up. She passed two tissue boxes around for similarly weepy customers as everyone reveled in Williams' last minutes on the court.

"I remember taking a deep breath and thinking, 'I don't know if there's a single place on the face of the planet that is having this exact moment,'" Nguyen said. "It was amazing."

Fans can still find it challenging to watch women's sports games, because many are not broadcast on TV and require different streaming subscriptions, said Tarlan Chahardovali, an assistant professor in the University of South Carolina's Department of Sport and Entertainment Management.

Women's sports bars can be a reliable go-to for many events by having those subscriptions. But more broadly, Chahardovali said, much work remains to be done to ensure the media market doesn't undervalue women's sports.

"Today's numbers are hard to ignore, and I think it's a very exciting time," she said. "But it's a moment that needs to be maintained and sustained, and it needs continuous investment."

As border debate shifts right, Sen. Alex Padilla emerges as persistent counterforce for immigrants

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden had a question.

"Is it true?" Biden asked Sen. Alex Padilla, referencing the roughly 25% of U.S. students in kindergarten through high school who are Latino. Padilla said the question came as he was waiting with the president in a back room at a library in Culver City, California, before an event in February.

It was exactly the kind of opening Padilla was hoping to get with the Democratic president. Biden was weighing his reelection campaign, executive actions on immigration and what to do about a southern border that has been marked by historic numbers of illegal crossings during his tenure.

Padilla wanted to make sure Biden also took into account the potential of the country's immigrants. "Mr. President, do you know what I call them, those students?" Padilla recalled saying. "It's the workforce of tomorrow."

It was just one of the many times Padilla, who at 52 years old is now the senior senator of California, has taken the opportunity — from face-to-face moments with the president to regular calls with top White House staff and sometimes outspoken criticism — to put his stamp on the Democratic Party's approach to immigration.

The son of Mexican immigrants and first Latino to represent his state in the Senate, Padilla has emerged as a persistent force at a time when Democrats are increasingly focused on border security and the country's posture toward immigrants is uncertain.

Illegal immigration is seen as a growing political crisis for Democrats after authorities both at the border and in cities nationwide have struggled to handle recent surges. The party may also be losing favor with Hispanic voters amid disenchantment with Biden. But Padilla, in a series of interviews with The Associated Press, expressed a deep reserve of optimism about his party's ability to win support both from and for immigrant communities.

"Don't be afraid, don't be reluctant to talk about immigration. Lean into it," Padilla said. "Because number one, it's the morally right thing to do. Number two, it is key to the strength, the security and the future of our country."

The senator has tried to anchor his fellow Democrats to that stance even as the politics of immigration grow increasingly toxic. Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, has said immigrants who enter the U.S. illegally are "poisoning the blood" of the country and accused Biden of allowing a "bloodbath" at the southern border. Biden, meanwhile, has shifted to the right at times in both the policies and language he is willing to use as illegal border crossings become a vulnerability for his reelection bid.

Such was the case when Biden, during his State of the Union address, entered into an unscripted exchange with Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Republican of Georgia, and referred to a Venezuelan man accused of killing a nursing student in Georgia as an "illegal" — a term anathema to immigration rights advocates.

After the speech, Padilla discussed the moment with Rep. Tony Cárdenas in the apartment they share in Washington. The men, who have known each other since their earliest days in Los Angeles politics, now form a political odd couple while away from their families in California. Padilla towers over many in the Capitol with his height and usually speaks in measured tones, while Cárdenas, shorter in stature, is known

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to come to tears during debates and worries sometimes his voice carries into the neighboring apartment. "Usually I'm talking in 20 sentences by the time he'll get his one or two sentences," Cárdenas said. "He'll say what I'm saying pretty much, but much more calmly, much more methodically."

And that night, Cárdenas said, their conversation turned to how they wanted politicians to avoid labeling migrants as "illegals" because it deprived them of dignity.

Padilla told him he would call the White House.

"He's is the kind of person who steps in and steps up, and, you know, he's tactical about it," Cárdenas said.

It's a difficult role to play, especially as Democrats try to shore up what's seen as a weakness on border security in the battleground states that will determine control of the White House and Congress.

Even in California, Republicans have been emboldened on immigration as they try to reassert statewide relevance, said Mark Meuser, a lawyer who lost elections against Padilla for the Senate in 2022 and California Secretary of State in 2018. He argued top California Democrats like Padilla "are driving hard towards the extreme edges of their party."

Padilla has urged the president and fellow Democrats to hold firm to the position that border enforcement measures be paired with reforms for immigrants who are already in the country. Padilla expressed frustration with how some Democrats, including Biden, did not keep immigration reforms, such as a pathway to citizenship for those who entered the U.S. illegally as children, a top priority during a negotiation earlier this year with Senate Republicans on border security.

During those negotiations, Padilla asserted himself as the leader of congressional opposition from the left: He pulled Biden aside for one-on-one conversations to warn against the changes, spoke forcefully at rallies advocating for immigrant rights and organized a call with top White House aides and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Padilla, along with four other Democratic-aligned senators, eventually voted against advancing the package, ensuring its failure as Republicans also rejected it.

"He is a lone voice but it is a courageous voice in the Senate," said Vanessa Cardenas, who leads the immigration advocacy organization America's Voice.

It's been a quick ascent for Padilla, who is just beginning his fourth year in Congress, and comes as little surprise to those who have known him since his days in California politics.

"What he's always been brilliant at is being able to navigate the space, bring people together, be a constructive player," said John A. Pérez, who was the California Assembly Speaker while Padilla was in the state Senate. "With Alex you don't get criticism without an alternative."

Padilla was also known as a determined and effective negotiator. While he was on the Los Angeles City Council, Padilla negotiated a statewide deal with then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to send more funding to local governments. What was supposed to be a one-day meeting turned into a ten-day, around-the-clock negotiation in Sacramento. Padilla quickly exhausted his wardrobe and resorted to washing his socks in a sink, said Mike Madrid, a Republican strategist who worked with Padilla on the League of Cities. They got the compromises they wanted.

Now that Padilla is involved in the immigration policy debate, Madrid said "the politics have never demanded border security more and immigration reform less."

But he conceded that he could be proven wrong: "If there is any one person in Washington that could make that deal happen, it would be Alex Padilla."

And for Padilla, it's the very reason he entered politics in the first place.

When he graduated in 1994 with an engineering degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, it was a dream fulfilled for his parents — his father a short order cook and his mother a house cleaner. But he was soon drawn into politics as the state's attention turned to Proposition 187, a 1994 ballot measure that was approved to deny education, health care and other non-emergency services to immigrants who entered the country illegally.

It was branded by supporters as the Save Our State Initiative. Padilla still remembers the ads for the campaign.

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"Trying to try to blame a downward economy on the hardest working people that I know was offensive and an outrage," he said.

Now he sees parallels between California in the 1990s, which approved the ballot measure but then had it invalidated in federal court, and the wider country today: changing demographics, economic uncertainty and political opportunists "scapegoating" immigrants.

Yet it also spurred the state's Latinos to get involved politically. To Padilla, there's no coincidence that California, the state with the most immigrants, now boasts the nation's largest economy and is a stronghold for Democrats.

One of Padilla's first jobs in politics was managing the state assembly campaign for Cárdenas, who is about a decade older than Padilla and grew up a few blocks from him in Pacoima, a neighborhood in the San Fernando Valley.

The campaign started as an unlikely bid for two political neophytes trying to get the area to elect a Latino for the first time. Cárdenas remembered Padilla working so hard on the campaign trail that he fell asleep standing up as they debriefed one night.

"We were literally laughed out of people's offices at the time," Padilla said. Still, Cárdenas won.

Padilla went on to work for the late Sen. Dianne Feinstein and manage other local campaigns until he ran for Los Angeles City Council at the age of 26. Padilla rose quickly in the council, becoming its president at the age of 28. And for two days following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Padilla oversaw the emergency response while then-Mayor James Hahn was stranded across the country in Washington. Padilla gave interviews in both English and Spanish to reassure the city's population.

But before he was elected to his first office, he faced skepticism about his age. Cárdenas said his bid for the council seat only took off when Padilla closed a debate by invoking a phrase often used in the hardscrabble community of the San Fernando Valley: "No te rajes." Don't give up.

Top diplomat Blinken will visit the Mideast again this coming week. What can he achieve this time?

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Antony Blinken is returning to the Middle East on his seventh diplomatic mission to the region since the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza began more than six months ago, the State Department said Saturday.

Blinken is traveling to Saudi Arabia on Monday, just two days since arriving back in Washington after a trip to China. Blinken will attend a World Economic Forum conference and meet with Arab foreign ministers in Riyadh, the Saudi capital.

An Israeli foreign ministry official says Blinken will visit Israel on Tuesday, a stop not mentioned in the State Department's announcement about Blinken's itinerary.

His latest Mideast trip, on the heels of meetings in China with President Xi Jinping and other high-ranking officials, comes as the war grinds on, with more than 34,000 Palestinians killed, hundreds of thousands displaced and a steadily worsening humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. In the surprise attack by Hamas against Israel on Oct. 7 that triggered the war, about 1,200 people were killed and about 250 people abducted.

U.S.-backed efforts to negotiate a cease-fire in exchange for the release of the hostages have failed. On Saturday, Hamas said it was reviewing a new Israeli proposal for a cease-fire as Egypt stepped up efforts to broker a deal to end the war and avert a possible Israeli ground offensive into the southern Gaza city of Rafah. A Hamas official gave no details of the offer. Negotiations earlier this month centered on a six-week cease-fire plan and the release of 40 civilian and sick hostages in exchange for freeing hundreds of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

Since mid-October, Blinken has shuttled between Israel and its most of its Arab and Muslim neighbors, trying to boost aid to civilians in Gaza, prevent the conflict from spreading throughout the region and build support for plans for the reconstruction and governance of postwar Gaza — all while vocally backing Israel's right to defend itself.

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Israel's offensive in Gaza has heightened political pressure in the U.S., with pro-Palestinian protests springing up at universities and resulting pushback from some who say the demonstrations have veered into antisemitism.

Blinken and other American officials have tried to dissuade Israel from mounting a large-scale military operation in Rafah, where more than a million Palestinians have fled to escape the fighting.

He has had limited success. Aid shipments into Gaza have increased but are not at the level to prevent what the United Nations says is looming famine, and Arab nations have agreed to back evolving plans for Gaza's future.

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Blinken "will discuss ongoing efforts to achieve a cease-fire in Gaza that secures the release of hostages and how it is Hamas that is standing between the Palestinian people and a cease-fire." Blinken will stress the importance of keeping the conflict from spreading and discuss efforts "to achieve lasting peace and security in the region, including through a pathway to an independent Palestinian state with security guarantees for Israel."

Israel is plowing ahead with preparations to attack Rafah, and the conflict has escalated, in particular after a suspected Israeli attack on Iran's consulate in Syria. Iran retaliated with drone, ballistic and cruise missile launches, provoking an apparent Israeli airstrike near a major air base and nuclear site in central Iran.

Trump promised big plans to flip Black and Latino voters. Many Republicans are waiting to see them

By MATT BROWN and STEVE PEOPLES Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump says he wants to hold a major campaign event at New York's Madison Square Garden featuring Black hip-hop artists and athletes. Aides speak of Trump making appearances in Chicago, Detroit and Atlanta with leaders of color and realigning American politics by flipping Democratic constituencies.

But five months before the first general election votes are cast, the former president's campaign has little apparent organization to show for its ambitious plans.

His campaign removed its point person for coalitions and has not announced a replacement. The Republican Party's minority outreach offices across the country have been shuttered and replaced by businesses that include a check-cashing store, an ice cream shop and a sex-toy store. Campaign officials acknowledge they are weeks away from rolling out any targeted programs.

The presumptive Republican presidential nominee has struggled to navigate a messy transition into the November election, plagued by staffing issues, personal legal troubles and the "Make America Great Again" movement's disdain for "identity politics." There are signs of frustration on the ground, where Republicans believe Trump has a real opportunity to cut into Democratic President Joe Biden's advantages with voters of color.

"To be quite honest, the Republican Party does not have a cohesive engagement plan for Black communities," said Darrell Scott, a Black pastor and longtime Trump ally who co-founded the National Diversity Coalition for Trump in 2016. "What it has are conservatives in communities of color who have taken it upon themselves to head our own initiatives."

On-the-ground organizing has long been a hallmark of successful presidential campaigns, which typically invest tremendous resources into identifying would-be supporters and ensuring they vote. The task may be even more critical this fall given how few voters are excited about the Biden-Trump rematch.

But in Michigan, a pivotal state that flipped from Trump to Biden four years ago, several party officials confirmed that the Republican National Committee, overhauled by Trump allies after he clinched the nomination in March, has yet to set up any community centers for minority outreach. Office spaces to house the centers have been offered up by community members, but staffing has been an issue, said the Oakland County GOP chair, Vance Patrick.

"We've got all these carts but we have no horses yet," Patrick said. "So, it's all about making sure we

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have staffing when we open up these offices.”

In Wayne County, home to Detroit, local Republican officials say they are trying to figure it out on their own.

“It’s me setting up events or people just reaching out to me,” said Rola Makki, the outreach vice chair for the Michigan GOP, noting she hasn’t seen any minority outreach centers open in spite of claims to the contrary by Trump’s national campaign team.

In recent years, the RNC invested big in community centers and minority outreach based on the belief that real relationships with voters, even those who typically do not support Republicans, would make a difference on Election Day. Since taking over the RNC in the spring, however, Trump’s team has dramatically scaled back such efforts.

“Traditionally, Republicans have not been effective in their efforts to persuade Black and Hispanic voters to vote for our party,” said Lynne Patton, a senior adviser on the campaign overseeing coalitions work who has worked closely with the Trump family for decades. “But this is yet another reason why President Trump was adamant that his hand-picked leadership team assume control at the RNC and spearhead a unified effort to embrace the historic defection being witnessed within Black & Hispanic communities from the Democrat party and ensure it’s permanent.”

The campaign hired a national coalitions director last October. But the staffer, Derek Silver, left in March without explanation, according to two people familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity to share internal discussions. Silver did not return multiple requests for comment. No replacement has been announced.

Trump’s advisers reject criticism that they are not doing enough organizing or spending to reach minorities. James Blair, the campaign’s political director, said the campaign would not “broadcast” its spending or staffing levels, “but I assure you, it’s enough to ensure President Trump’s historic surge in support amongst Black and Hispanic voters sticks in November and beyond.”

Patton said Trump’s political team is laying the groundwork for a robust minority outreach program, although largely in private.

“We are speaking with Black leaders, we are speaking with small-business owners, we’re speaking with famous athletes, hip-hop artists, some of whom I think you’d be surprised if you knew who was talking with us right now,” Patton said in an interview. “These are people who are expressing openness to supporting President Trump both publicly and privately.”

She said the campaign is weeks away from rolling out any specific programs. The delayed timeline stands in stark contrast to the early outreach during Trump’s 2020 reelection bid. He started his coalition efforts, including “Latinos for Trump” and “Black Voices for Trump” programs, in the summer and fall of 2019, respectively.

Trump’s team insists he will improve his standing with voters of color, perhaps the most steadfast segment of the Democratic base, regardless of the strategy. Advisers believe the campaign has momentum with both African Americans and Hispanics, especially younger men, and note that Trump has proved he can win in his own way, disregarding traditional rules of politics.

Polls show that many Black and Hispanic adults are dissatisfied with Biden. According to polls by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, Biden’s approval among Black adults has dropped from 94% when he started his term to 55% in March. Among Hispanic adults, it dropped from 70% to 32% in the same period.

An April poll by the Pew Research Center confirms the problem is especially acute among younger adults. In this poll, 43% of Black adults under age 50 said they approve of Biden, compared with 70% of those age 50 and older. Among Hispanics, 29% of younger adults said they approve, slightly less than the 42% who said that among those 50 and older.

The Trump campaign’s developing outreach strategy relies on using his celebrity and bombastic personality to create viral moments in communities of color that his advisers believe will have more impact than grassroots organizing or paid advertising alone. Advisers point to Trump’s appearances at an Atlanta

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Chick-fil-A, a New York bodega and a New York City police officer's wake as examples of the strategy.

His allies argue that increased frustration about crime, inflation and immigration may win over some voters of color who have previously been less receptive to Trump's record and divisive rhetoric.

"Communities of color aren't leaning toward the right, they're leaning toward Trump," said Scott, the pastor and close Trump ally who is calling on the RNC to ramp up and reform its efforts. Scott said Black voters support Democrats because of the party's longtime outreach to the community, which the GOP has not matched, and said the 2024 election presents an opportunity that the party shouldn't waste. "Trump is the draw; Trump is the magnet."

Biden has been spending millions of dollars on ads targeting Black and Latino voters in key states. That's in addition to dozens of new office openings in minority neighborhoods. All the while, Biden's team has frequently sent out Vice President Kamala Harris, the nation's first Black female vice president, and other prominent leaders of color.

The Democratic president's campaign points to record-low minority unemployment rates and education policies such as funding for historically Black colleges and universities and student loan forgiveness, as well as Biden's stance on civil rights policy.

"Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans proudly admitting that they have no real strategy to reach Black voters because they believe all they need is rap concerts and free chicken is only surprising if you haven't paid attention to Trump's fraudulent relationship to Black America for years," said Jasmine Harris, the Biden campaign's director of Black media, who described Trump as "a fraud" who "takes every opportunity available to him to demean our community."

After the publication of this story, Patton responded to the critiques from the Biden campaign.

"No one is proudly admitting a 'non-plan' plan. That is simply desperate deflection from a deep blue party hemorrhaging Black and brown voters due to destructive immigration policies and billions in foreign aid that continues to put minority Americans last," Patton said. "To the contrary, we are rolling out the largest, most comprehensive and strategic coalition effort the Republican Party has ever undertaken and have detailed that plan to top surrogates, grassroots allies and even media outlets to great reception."

Trump's personal legal troubles may also be complicating his plans.

Campaign officials believe they should wait to come out with new initiatives until the conclusion of Trump's New York criminal hush money trial, which is expected to extend deep into May, if not longer.

In the meantime, there are visible signs of a lack of investment in swing states. AP reporters visited the sites of several former community outreach centers that have now been shuttered.

In Allentown, Pennsylvania, the GOP vacated its Hispanic outreach office in January 2023, a few months after the midterm election, according to the landlord, Hem Vaidya. He said the office, which he recalled as a busy place, was staffed by Hispanic workers.

Republican officials recently approached him about renting the same space again, but he declined because they only wanted it for eight months. The storefront is now occupied by his own check-cashing business.

In Wisconsin, the RNC closed a Hispanic outreach center in Milwaukee after the 2022 midterms and it will soon be home to an ice cream shop, according to Daniel Walsh, leasing agent for the property.

Matt Fisher, a spokesman for the Wisconsin Republican Party, said the state GOP continues to operate a Black outreach center in Milwaukee. As for targeting Hispanic voters, the state party and RNC are still weighing how to approach that task.

In suburban Atlanta, one RNC community outreach center focused on outreach to Asian American voters was shuttered and later was reopened as a sex shop. AP reporters confirmed the venue's change in ownership, which was originally reported by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

Republican strategist Alice Stewart, a veteran of several GOP campaigns, said she is confident the Trump campaign will ultimately do what is necessary.

"But the key is they can't just talk about minority outreach," she said. "They have to do it."

From New York to Arizona:

Inside the head-spinning week of Trump's legal drama

By MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Even by Donald Trump's standards, this was a dizzying week.

The first criminal prosecution of a former president began in earnest with opening statements and testimony in a lower Manhattan courtroom. But the action quickly spread to involve more than half a dozen cases in four states and the nation's capital. Twice during the week, lawyers for Trump were simultaneously appearing in different courtrooms.

The collision of so many cases within a five-day span underscores the challenges Trump will face as he campaigns again for the White House while his legal matters intensify. While the presumptive Republican nominee sought to talk about the economy and other issues, his intended message was repeatedly overshadowed by the latest developments popping up across the country.

Here's how the week broke down and what's ahead:

MONDAY

The week began with a moment for the history books, with prosecutors for the first time presenting a jury with a criminal case against a former American president. In opening statements, prosecutors told jurors that hush money payments made to an adult film actor were "a criminal scheme to corrupt the 2016 presidential election" while Trump's lawyers argued the case is baseless. Testimony then began with former National Enquirer publisher David Pecker giving the public the most tangible look yet at the allegations.

It also gave the clearest picture yet of Trump's defense and how he is blending his roles as candidate and criminal defendant. Trump is starting and ending the day appearing before waiting reporters at the courthouse, offering complaints that he is required to be there and commentary on how cold it is in the courtroom or remarks on unrelated national news.

In a separate but nearby courthouse, one of Trump's lawyers struck a deal with New York state lawyers over a \$175 million bond that Trump posted to pause a large civil fraud judgment he's appealing in a separate case.

TUESDAY

Trump returned to court where prosecutors began by urging the judge to hold Trump in contempt for social media posts that they said violated a gag order that bars him from attacking witnesses, jurors and others involved. The judge did not immediately rule on the request but seemed skeptical of defense arguments that Trump was just responding to others' attacks.

Pecker, a longtime Trump friend, testified the rest of the day and said he pledged to help suppress harmful stories about Trump during the 2016 election.

WEDNESDAY

Trial proceedings were not scheduled for Wednesday so Trump didn't trek to the Manhattan courthouse from his namesake penthouse tower. But he did fire off a post at 2 a.m. on Truth Social, his social media platform, criticizing the judge and did it again later in the day in an interview with Fox News Digital.

Meanwhile, more court documents were unsealed in Florida in another criminal case in which federal prosecutors have charged Trump and two of his employees with mishandling classified documents after he left the White House. Though the case has proceeded at a plodding pace in recent months and seems unlikely to reach trial this year, the documents show, among other things, the warnings that Trump received from associates to return the sensitive files he was later charged with possessing.

Beyond cases in which Trump is charged as a defendant, Arizona's attorney general on Wednesday indicted 18 of his associates for their roles in an effort to overturn Trump's loss in that state to Democrat Joe Biden in the 2020 election. Trump was referred to in the Arizona case as an unindicted co-conspirator.

In a similar case in Michigan, a state investigator testified that he considers Trump to be an uncharged co-conspirator in that state's case against fake electors.

THURSDAY

Trump's hush money case in New York state court resumed Thursday. But prosecutors began the day

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by arguing before the judge that Trump had again violated the gag order with social media posts and comments he made early that morning at a dawn campaign stop in the city.

New York state Supreme Court Judge Juan Merchan has not yet ruled on whether to hold Trump in contempt. Pecker later resumed testimony. Boris Epshteyn, a longtime Trump aide who was among the 18 charged in Arizona a day earlier, was listening in the courtroom.

At the same time in Washington, the U.S. Supreme Court weighed whether Trump can be prosecuted over his efforts to undo his loss to Biden. The justices in their questions seemed skeptical of Trump's claims of absolute immunity from prosecution, but a few seemed to signal they had reservations about the charges, and that could result in a delay in that trial beyond November's election.

In New York federal court on Thursday, a judge rejected Trump's request for a new trial in a defamation case in which he was ordered to pay \$83.3 million to an advice columnist for his social media attacks over her claims that he sexually assaulted her.

FRIDAY

The hush money trial continued in New York on Friday, with Pecker wrapping up testimony and Trump's lawyers seeking to discredit him. Two other witnesses, Trump's longtime executive assistant Rhona Graff and Gary Farro, a banker for former Trump attorney Michael Cohen. Epshteyn again was seated in the courtroom.

THIS COMING WEEK

The New York hush money case is not expected to resume until Tuesday because of a long-scheduled day off Monday. Testimony is expected to continue Thursday and Friday, giving Trump a chance to make campaign stops in Michigan and Wisconsin on Wednesday.

On Thursday, the judge has scheduled a morning hearing on prosecutors' most recent push to punish Trump over the gag order.

And in the Arizona case, details could emerge about the charges against Trump's chief of staff Mark Meadows and former lawyer Rudy Giuliani.

Sixteen of the 18 people indicted by a grand jury have been charged with conspiracy, fraud and forgery for their role in submitting a false slate of electors to Congress; the state attorney general has yet to confirm charges against the two remaining defendants. The indictment makes clear, based on their statements and positions, that they are Giuliani and Meadows, but the charges against them are still redacted.

Migration roils US elections.

Mexico sees mass migration too, but its politicians rarely mention it

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI and MARCOS MARTÍNEZ CHACÓN Associated Press

BRIGHTON, Colo. (AP) — Republican activists gathered in a school lunchroom last month to hear political pitches from candidates and agreed on the top issue in the Denver suburbs these days: immigration.

The area has been disrupted by the arrival of largely Venezuelan migrants coming north through Mexico, they said. Virtually everyone in the meeting said they were uncomfortable with the new population, which has overwhelmed public services and become a flashpoint in local and national elections.

"We've lived here our whole lives, and now we have to pay for hotels and debit cards and health care" for the migrants, through government spending, said Toni Starner, a marketing consultant. "My daughter's 22 and she can't even afford to buy a house."

Some 1,200 miles to the south, migrants are also transforming the prosperous industrial city of Monterrey, Mexico. Haitian migrants speak Creole on downtown streets and Central American migrants ask motorists for help at intersections.

But the new arrivals aren't even part of Mexico's political conversation as the country gears up for its presidential vote on June 2.

"If it were a problem, the politicians would already be mentioning it in their campaigns," said Ingrid Morales, a 66-year-old retired academic who lives on Monterrey's south side.

Every 12 years, the coincidence of presidential elections in the U.S. and Mexico provides a valuable

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comparative snapshot. The different ways migration is resonating in the two countries' elections this year reflects the neighbors' very different styles of democracy.

Mexican politics are still dominated by institutional political parties, while Donald Trump disrupted the United States' two-party system with his more populist approach, and moved anti-immigration sentiment to center stage in U.S. politics.

Mexican politics also revolve more around "bread-and-butter" issues like the economy than in the wealthier United States, which is increasingly consumed with questions of national identity, said Andrew Selee, president of the Migration Policy Institute.

What's more, just about every Mexican family has an immediate experience with migration, with many still having relatives living in other countries. While migrants must travel through Mexico to enter the U.S., they are more dispersed as they travel and have not generated similar scenes of an overwhelmed Mexican side of the border.

"In Mexico, there isn't that same perception of chaos," Selee said.

Trump is making that perception of chaos his campaign's main theme as he tries to return to the White House. AP VoteCast, a survey of the national electorate, found immigration was a top issue among voters in the Republican presidential primary's initial states. An AP-NORC poll conducted last month found that 58% of Americans say immigration is an extremely or very important issue for them personally.

In contrast, Mexico's presidential frontrunner, Claudia Sheinbaum, didn't even include a mention of immigration when she announced 100 campaign commitments last month. When she came to the state where Monterrey sits — Nuevo Leon — in February she talked about security and the water supply. Her main opponent, Xochitl Gálvez, visited the city last month and talked about her proposals to raise police salaries and combat gender violence.

But Monterrey, a three-hour drive from the Texas border, has increasingly become a critical waystation, even destination, for tens of thousands of migrants. Local authorities and international organizations have scrambled to find a place for the new arrivals.

Femsa, the owner of the ubiquitous convenience store chain Oxxo, has hired hundreds of migrants to work in its stores through a program with the United Nations refugee agency.

An annual survey of Nuevo Leon found last year that nearly nine in 10 residents noticed an increase in migrants and about seven in 10 felt that they should be provided work. It's not as if Mexicans aren't divided over the issue: Those surveyed in Nuevo Leon were split over whether Mexico should admit more migrants or stop the flow.

The lack of clear political advantage could explain why politicians have stayed away from talking about immigration, said Luis Mendoza Ovando, a political analyst and columnist with the main local newspaper, El Norte.

"Ultimately, society says if there are more migrants, give them work and everything is good," he said.

Ricardo Cobián, 30, runs a beauty salon in downtown Monterrey. The next administration will have to deal with immigration but it is not a top priority for the nation, he said.

"The main issues for the candidates must be resolving security and ensuring economic stability," said Cobián, adding that he has sympathy for migrants because he knows of his own relatives' recent struggles to reach the United States.

Colorado became a stop on the migrant trail even more recently than Monterrey. In late 2022, Venezuelans crossing into Texas from Mexico found that it costs less to take a bus from the border city of El Paso to Denver than many of the United States' better-known metropolises. And Denver — a liberal, fast-growing city — offered migrants food and shelter.

Now, Denver's mayor, Mike Johnston, reports that his city of 710,000 has received nearly 40,000 migrants, what he calls the highest number of new migrants per capita of any city in the United States. The largely Venezuelan population is mainly confined to Denver but has started to trickle into surrounding suburbs like Brighton, often selling flowers or window-washes at streetcorners.

Unlike in Monterrey, where many migrants found jobs with established employers, paperwork hassles and federal regulations have prevented most migrants in Denver from receiving authorization to work.

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Irregular labor like yard work or housecleaning is their only way of making a living.

That's led to a heavy burden on Denver's coffers, and other cities in Colorado have watched in alarm. The two next largest after Denver, Aurora and Colorado Springs, both passed resolutions saying they don't want large numbers of migrants sent to their cities.

The migrants in Denver say they feel increased pressure in the form of fewer city benefits and stepped up warnings from local police that they can't sell windshield washes, flowers or home-cooked food from streetcorners without a permit. The wary feelings towards them extend to the heavily Hispanic suburbs just north of Denver that comprise the state's 8th congressional district, likely to be one of the most heated fights in this year's battle for control of the House of Representatives.

State Rep. Gabe Evans, one of the Republicans competing for the party's nomination against Democratic Rep. Yadira Caraveo, said that the district's residents are fed up.

Evans' grandfather immigrated from Mexico and earned his U.S. citizenship by serving in World War 2. "The citizenship for the Chavez family was paid for in blood," Evans said. "Then you have people crossing the border and just getting handed things."

Cynthia Moreno, a Democrat, said her father came from Mexico legally in the 1920s. Though she has personal sympathy for the migrants' plight, she's aghast they're allowed to stay.

"If I lived in Denver, I'd be pissed right now," Moreno said, calling immigration "the nation's top priority." Far from everyone in the area says it's overwhelmed.

Alex Marvin lives in the 8th Congressional District but works in personnel for the city of Denver and watches buses drop off new arrivals outside his municipal office building. He thinks the federal government needs to compensate the city for the influx, but is proud the city is welcoming the new arrivals.

"We need to support people and help people the most we can," said Marvin, a 35-year-old Democrat.

Rep. Caraveo was born in Colorado, but her parents were Mexican immigrants living in the U.S. illegally who obtained legal status under the 1986 immigration bill signed by then-President Ronald Reagan. Caraveo became a pediatrician and state legislator before running for Congress in 2022 and winning by only 1,600 votes.

That 1986 immigration bill was the last significant one passed by Congress, which has deadlocked for decades over whether to legalize additional generations of people living in the country illegally. In a sign of how the politics of immigration have shifted, that issue didn't even come up in the bipartisan immigration bill that Trump killed earlier this year. Instead, the proposal focused on border enforcement.

The legislation never made it to the floor of the Republican-controlled House of Representatives. But Caraveo, who introduced her own package of immigration measures last month that included a proposal to legalize those brought to the country illegally as children, said she would have supported the bipartisan immigration bill anyway.

"The process is broken. We're seeing the brokenness of it in front of our faces," she said.

Top 100 prospects already scooped up but Saturday still stocked with NFL difference-makers

By ARNIE STAPLETON AP Pro Football Writer

The top 100 prospects are off the board but plenty of playmakers remain for teams to pick through Saturday in the NFL draft's final four rounds.

Defense became the focus Friday after a record-setting 23 offensive players were selected in the first round, including the first 14 picks, an unprecedented wait for the first defender to come off the board.

The Atlanta Falcons, who provided the biggest shocker in years by taking quarterback Michael Penix Jr. at No. 8 after signing free agent QB Kirk Cousins for \$180 million, kicked off the shift by moving up to take Clemson defensive lineman Ruke Orhoro with the third pick of the second round.

The Washington Commanders then took Illinois defensive tackle Jer'Zhan Newton and a total of 20 defensive players went in a round that had seven trades as teams were wheeling and dealing to get their guy.

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Rice wide receiver Luke McCaffrey, one of several sons of former NFL stars who were selected in Rounds 1-3, was the final pick Friday night, going to Washington with the fifth compensatory pick and 100th overall selection so far.

Heading into the lightning rounds Saturday, 54 offensive players and 46 defensive players have been drafted.

There could be more wheeling and dealing at the start of the fourth round Saturday as teams jockey to select some of the best players who were considered top-100 talent.

Those include former Texas tight end Ja'Tavion Sanders, who had a dozen catches of at least 20 yards this season, just one fewer than Georgia's Brock Bowers, the 13th overall selection in Round 1.

Two other offensive players sure to go quickly are record-setting wide receiver Troy Franklin of Oregon and running back Jaylen Wright of Tennessee, who averaged better than 6 yards a carry over his college career. Franklin set school records last year with 1,383 yards receiving, 14 touchdown receptions and eight 100-yard performances.

Then there's a trio of cornerbacks available who will tempt teams to move up: D.J. James of Auburn, Kris Abrams-Draine of Missouri and Khyree Jackson of Oregon.

James broke up 18 passes over the last two seasons for the Tigers, Abrams-Draine is a converted wide receiver who had seven interceptions in college and Jackson had three interceptions for the Ducks last year.

Another defender to watch for is Colorado State outside linebacker Mohamed Kamara, the Mountain West Conference's defensive player of the year last season, who racked up 30 1/2 career sacks to go with 45 1/2 tackles for loss.

A woman might win the presidency of Mexico. What could that mean for abortion rights?

By MARÍA TERESA HERNÁNDEZ Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — If a woman wins Mexico's presidency on June 2, would she rule with gender in mind?

The question has been raised by academics, humans rights organizations and activists ahead of the voting that will likely elect Mexico's first female president for the term 2024-2030.

Out of three candidates, the frontrunner is Claudia Sheinbaum, who has promised to keep President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's legacy on track. Next comes Xóchitl Gálvez, representing several opposition parties, one of which is historically conservative.

The triumph of Sheinbaum or Gálvez, however, would not guarantee their support for certain gender-related policies.

In a country of more than 98 million Catholics, neither of the two leading candidates has shared specific proposals on abortion. Both have suggested equality and protection measures for women amid a wave of violence and femicide.

Here's a look at some of the challenges that Mexico's next president would face regarding abortion and LGBTQ+ rights.

WHAT'S THE CURRENT ABORTION LANDSCAPE?

Twelve of Mexico's 32 states have decriminalized abortion, most of them in the past five years. One more will join them after its legislature complies with a recent court's ruling, demanding a reform in its penal code.

A few more states allow abortion if the mother's life is in danger, and it is legal nationwide if the pregnancy is the result of rape.

Mexico's Supreme Court ruled in 2023 that national laws prohibiting abortions are unconstitutional and violate women's rights. The ruling, which extended Latin America's trend of widening abortion access, happened a year after the U.S. Supreme Court went in the opposite direction, overturning the 1973 ruling that established a nationwide right to abortion.

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Although the Mexican ruling orders the removal of abortion from the federal penal code and requires federal health institutions to offer the procedure to anyone who requests it, further state-by-state legal work is pending to remove all penalties.

In most of the states where it has been decriminalized, abortion-rights activists say they face persistent challenges in trying to make abortion safe, accessible and government-funded.

To address restrictions and bans, dozens of volunteers — known as “acompañantes” — have developed a nationwide network to share information on self-managed medication abortions following guidelines established by the World Health Organization.

COULD A NEW GOVERNMENT STRIKE DOWN THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO ABORTION IN MEXICO?

Whoever wins, the next president would not directly affect abortion legislation, since each state has autonomy over its penal code.

However, the president could indeed have an impact as a moral authority among the members of his or her party, said Ninde Molina, lawyer at Abortistas MX, an organization specializing in abortion litigation strategies.

“Much of the governors’ behavior emulates what the president does,” Molina said.

She among the activists who worry that neither Sheinbaum nor Galvez have shared specific proposals addressing abortion, LGBTQ+ rights and the protection of migrants.

“Such lukewarm proposals send the message that these are not fundamental rights,” Molina said.

And though she wouldn’t immediately worry about a setback on abortion policy, the scenario would change if López Obrador or Sheinbaum manage to get the approval of a judiciary reform aiming to replace the current judges with new ones elected by popular vote.

“The court is also in danger,” Molina said. “People may find this (electing the judges) attractive, but they don’t realize what it entails.”

If, for example, an abortion case reaches the Supreme Court and its current composition has changed, then a setback could indeed happen, Molina said.

WHAT DO THE CONSERVATIVES THINK?

Isaac Alonso, from Viva México Movement, which supported right-wing activist Eduardo Verástegui’s presidential aspirations, thinks that neither Sheinbaum nor Gálvez represent Mexico’s conservative interests.

In his ranks, he said, no one is in favor of criminalizing women who have abortions. But since they firmly believe that abortion is unjustifiable, they would hope for government policies that encourage births through improvements in the adoption system.

Rodrigo Iván Cortés, director of the National Family Front, an anti-abortion group, said the current administration could not be considered an ally. “Before 2018, abortion had only been approved in Mexico City,” he said.

“It is very relevant to say how the Supreme Court, under the leadership of Arturo Saldívar, had an ideological bias,” said Cortés about a judge who currently advises Sheinbaum.

Still, he said, despite who wins the elections, his organization will continue “to take care of the first and fundamental of rights: life.”

WHAT’S NEEDED TO RULE WITH A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE?

“Just because a woman wins does not guarantee a gender perspective at all,” said Pauline Capdevielle, an academic from the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

“In fact, what we are seeing are strategies by conservative sectors to create a façade of feminism that opposes the feminist tradition.”

A true change, Capdevielle said, would start by integrating feminists into the government.

“It is not about putting women where there were none, but about politicizing these issues and really promoting a transformation.”

Some feminists have shown support for Sheinbaum, but both she and López Obrador have also received criticism for their lack of empathy towards women who protest against gender violence.

Amnesty International and other organizations have denounced excessive use of force against women during International Women’s Day protests and say that Mexican women’s right to protest has been stig-

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matized.

According to Capdevielle, some of the issues that need to be addressed in Mexico's gender agenda are reproductive justice and women's participation in political processes.

"The right to get an abortion must be consolidated," she said. "It is far from being a reality for all women."

Comprehensive sexual education, access to contraceptives and the rights of the LGBTQ+ community should be prioritized as well, Capdevielle said.

WHAT ABOUT LGBTQ+ RIGHTS?

"The needs of this community are not likely to figure prominently in Mexico's presidential elections," said Cristian González Cabrera, senior researcher at Human Rights Watch.

Gay and transgender populations are regularly attacked and killed in Mexico, a nation marked by its "macho" culture and highly religious population. Human rights organization Letra S documented more than 500 homicides of LGBTQ+ people in the last six years, 58 of them in 2023.

The latest deaths came in 2024, with the murder of three members of the transgender community. This group, along with migrants, are particularly vulnerable to attacks, Gonzalez Cabrera said.

"LGBT migrants continue to suffer abuse from criminal groups and Mexican officials," he said. "Too often, these human rights violations are not effectively investigated or punished."

Sheinbaum said in 2023 that, as Mexico City's mayor, she created a special unit for trans people and said that her dream would be to continue fighting on behalf of sexual diversity, but did not go into specifics.

As for Gálvez, she showed support for women "from the sexual diversity," but also did not delve into specifics.

González Cabrera highlights that since 2022 all Mexican states recognize same-sex marriage, but some LGBTQ+ rights are not yet guaranteed nationwide.

"There are 11 states where the legal recognition of gender identity for trans people is not possible through administrative means, despite a Supreme Court's ruling recognizing this right," he said.

For there to be an agenda in favor of the LGBTQ+ population, González Cabrera said, a government should approach the communities' organizations to learn about their needs, allocate resources to address violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity, support LGBTQ+ migrants and encourage local governments to align their legislation with the court's rulings on their rights.

Today in History: April 28

Muhammad Ali stripped of heavyweight title

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, April 28, the 119th day of 2024. There are 247 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 28, 1967, heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali was stripped of his title after he refused to be inducted into the armed forces.

On this date:

In 1788, Maryland became the seventh state to ratify the Constitution of the United States.

In 1945, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, were executed by Italian partisans as they attempted to flee the country.

In 1947, a six-man expedition set out from Peru aboard a balsa wood raft named the Kon-Tiki on a 101-day journey across the Pacific Ocean to the Polynesian Islands.

In 1952, war with Japan officially ended as a treaty signed in San Francisco the year before took effect.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered U.S. Marines to the Dominican Republic to protect American citizens and interests in the face of a civil war.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter accepted the resignation of Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance, who had opposed the failed rescue mission aimed at freeing American hostages in Iran.

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In 1986, the Soviet Union informed the world of the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl that began two days earlier.

In 1990, the musical "A Chorus Line" closed after 6,137 performances on Broadway.

In 1994, former CIA official Aldrich Ames, who had passed U.S. secrets to the Soviet Union and then Russia, pleaded guilty to espionage and tax evasion, and was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

In 2001, a Russian rocket lifted off from Central Asia bearing the first space tourist, California businessman Dennis Tito, and two cosmonauts on a journey to the international space station.

In 2011, convicted sex offender Phillip Garrido and his wife, Nancy, pleaded guilty to kidnapping and raping a California girl, Jaycee Dugard, who was abducted in 1991 at the age of 11 and rescued 18 years later. (Phillip Garrido was sentenced to 431 years to life in prison; Nancy Garrido was sentenced to 36 years to life in prison.)

In 2013, Mohammed Sohel Rana, the fugitive owner of an illegally constructed building in Bangladesh that collapsed and killed more than 1,100 people, was captured by a commando force as he tried to flee into India.

In 2015, urging Americans to "do some soul-searching," President Barack Obama expressed deep frustration over recurring Black deaths at the hands of police, rioters who responded with senseless violence and a society that would only "feign concern" without addressing the root causes.

In 2018, Alfie Evans, the 23-month-old terminally-ill British toddler who was at the center of a legal battle over his treatment, died at a British hospital.

In 2021, Apollo 11 astronaut Michael Collins, who orbited the moon alone while Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin made their first steps on the lunar surface, died of cancer in Florida at age 90.

In 2022, Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Trevor Bauer was suspended for two full seasons without pay by Major League Baseball for violating the league's domestic violence and sexual assault policy, which he denied doing.

In 2023, Russia fired more than 20 cruise missiles and two drones at Ukraine, killing at least 23 people, almost all of them when two missiles slammed into an apartment building in a terrifying night attack.

Today's Birthdays: Former Secretary of State James A. Baker III is 94. Actor-singer Ann-Margret is 83. Actor Paul Guilfoyle is 75. Former "Tonight Show" host Jay Leno is 74. Rock musician Chuck Leavell is 72. Actor Mary McDonnell is 72. Rock singer-musician Kim Gordon (Sonic Youth) is 71. Actor Nancy Lee Grahn is 68. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan is 64. Rapper Too Short is 58. Actor Bridget Moynahan is 53. Actor Chris Young is 53. Rapper Big Gipp is 52. Actor Jorge Garcia is 51. Actor Elisabeth Rohm is 51. Actor Penelope Cruz is 50. Actor Nate Richert is 46. TV personalities Drew and Jonathan Scott are 46. Actor Jessica Alba is 43. Actor Harry Shum Jr. is 42. Actor Jenna Ushkowitz is 38. Actor Aleisha Allen is 33.