

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 1 of 84

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [4- Kosel Bridal Shower Ad](#)
- [5- Name Released in Harding County Fatal Crash](#)
- [6- Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 Walk It Off Against Aberdeen Smittys](#)
- [7- Jr. Legion Box Scores](#)
- [8- Groton Post 39 With Tough Game Against Lisbon Post 7](#)
- [8- Groton Locke Electric 2024 Stymied By Circus Sports Bar](#)
- [9- Locke Electric Box Scores](#)
- [10- Mayo Clinic: Can moderate amounts of caffeine positively impact brain health?](#)
- [13- SD News Watch: Statewide South Dakota 911 outage caused by hurricane in southern US, provider says](#)
- [14- SD SearchLight: Referendum on carbon pipeline law validated for November election](#)
- [15- SD SearchLight: State says six inmates injured in fights at prison in Springfield](#)
- [17- SD SearchLight: State says six inmates injured in fights at prison in Springfield](#)
- [18- SD SearchLight: U.S. Senate GOP blocks bill proclaiming congressional support for abortion access](#)
- [20- SD SearchLight: U.S. House passes bill requiring proof of citizenship to vote in federal races](#)
- [22- SD SearchLight: Missouri leads seven states, including SD, challenging transgender health care protections](#)
- [23- SD SearchLight: Gas taxes can't pay for roads much longer, but Amazon deliveries might](#)
- [26- Weather Pages](#)
- [30- Daily Devotional](#)
- [31- Subscription Form](#)
- [32- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [33- Upcoming Groton Events](#)
- [34- News from the Associated Press](#)

Be proud of yourself
because you've survived
the days you thought you
couldn't.



Thursday July 11

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, oriental blend vegetables, baked apples, whole wheat bread.

Softball at Webster: U8 at 5:30 p.m. (1); U10G at 6:30 p.m. (DH), U12 at 6:30 p.m. (DH)

Softball U14 at Miller, 6:30 p.m. (DH)

Legion at Clark Rotary Tournament

Story Time at Wage Memorial Library 10 a.m.

Groton Lions Club meeting, 6 p.m. 104 N Main

Friday, July 12

Senior Menu: BBQ giblet on bun, scalloped potatoes, tomato spoon salad, watermelon, cookie.

Saturday, July 13

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

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

© 2024 Groton Daily Independent

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 2 of 84

1440

In partnership with **smartasset**[™]

CNN's Strategic Pivot

CNN is cutting about 100 jobs, nearly 3% of its workforce, as CEO Mark Thompson yesterday unveiled a new digital strategy for the company amid declining TV viewership and revenue.

In a memo to staff, Thompson outlined his plan to release a video-heavy subscription product this year through CNN.com as well as paywalled lifestyle content. The announcement comes two years after the abrupt launch—and shuttering—of CNN+, its subscription streaming service. Last year, the company released CNN Max, a live news streaming platform available through parent company Warner Bros.' Max.

For years, CNN's prime-time viewership ratings have declined, trailing Fox News and MSNBC. Profit last year fell below \$1B for the first time in years as advertising revenue in early 2023 dropped almost 40% from the year before. CNN's struggles come amid a broader trend in news consumption habits; today, a majority of Americans get at least some of their news through digital products.

Brittle Bone Breakthrough

Scientists have solved a long-standing mystery about how new mothers retain bone strength during breastfeeding, according to a new study. The results may lead to treatments to help injuries heal more quickly and prevent bone diseases in the general population.

The high nutritional demands of milk can deplete bones of essential calcium-based minerals during lactation. Because estrogen, which typically helps promote healthy bones, drops in the postpartum period, it was unclear how new mothers maintain near-healthy bone density. The study found that a hormone produced exclusively during breastfeeding—known as CCN3—jumps in to take the place of estrogen, triggering bone formation throughout the body.

Although CCN3 is only produced by new mothers, introducing it to any mouse—young or old, male or female—strengthened and promoted bone growth. Researchers hope the findings may one day help treat osteoporosis, which affects more than 200 million people globally.

Tariffs, Tightened

The White House yesterday released new rules strengthening tariffs on metals routed through Mexico. The rules build upon former President Donald Trump's 2018 tariffs, which set a 25% tax on steel imports and a 10% tax on aluminum imports.

Mexico won an exemption to the tariffs in 2019; under the new rules, however, companies shipping steel and aluminum from Mexico will have to prove their origin. Officials say 13% of steel and 6% of aluminum imported from Mexico originate from outside of North America, including from China, which produces half of the world's steel. The announcement comes after the Biden administration raised tariffs on \$18B of Chinese imports earlier this year. Goods targeted included electric vehicles, solar panels, semiconductors, syringes, and medical gloves.

The announcement comes as the value of US-China trade has soared in recent decades, with imports surpassing \$420B last year, up more than 300% from the turn of the century. Last year's imports nonetheless represented a 20% drop from 2022, as tariffs narrowed the trade deficit with China.

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

NBA finalizes 11-year, \$76B TV and media rights deal with ABC/ESPN, NBC, and Amazon.

Former NBA player Jontay Porter pleads guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud; Porter was banned for life from the NBA for gambling.

"Inside Out 2" becomes Pixar's highest-grossing film ever, hauling in \$1.25B at global box office less than one month after its release.

England tops the Netherlands 2-1 to advance to 2024 European Championship; they face off against Spain for the title Sunday.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 3 of 84

Science & Technology

Scientists edit genes of gut microbiome bacteria in a living mouse in world first; approach could provide new treatments for gut-related diseases and conditions in humans.

Link uncovered between anti-obesity drugs and severe nausea experienced by some users; study reveals separate brain circuits for feeling sick and feeling full.

Astronomers discover the most direct evidence to date for an intermediate black hole; at 100 to 10,000 times the mass of the sun, such objects have been difficult to detect.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +1.0%, Dow +1.1%, Nasdaq +1.2%); S&P 500 notches 37th record close for the year, Nasdaq notches 27th.

HubSpot shares drop 12% on reports Alphabet is no longer buying the marketing software platform.

Federal Trade Commission reportedly poised to sue three largest pharmacy benefit managers linked to UnitedHealth, Cigna Group, and CVS Health over tactics for negotiating drug prices.

Archegos Capital founder Bill Hwang convicted of fraud, market manipulation tied to firm's 2021 collapse.

Microsoft ends nonvoting observer role on OpenAI's board amid partnership scrutiny from US and European antitrust regulators.

Politics & World Affairs

Israeli military orders Gaza City residents to evacuate south as Israeli airstrikes kill 50 people and wound over 200 more across Gaza, per Hamas-run Health Ministry.

Cease-fire talks continue in Qatar.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D, NY-14) introduces articles of impeachment against Supreme Court Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito, criticizing their refusal to recuse themselves from cases in which they allegedly had personal or financial interests.

Democratic calls continue for President Joe Biden to drop out of presidential race as top fundraiser George Clooney joins calls and House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi appears to sidestep question on Biden support.

House Oversight Committee subpoenas three White House aides over Biden's mental fitness.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 4 of 84



PLEASE JOIN US IN
CELEBRATING

DROP & GO GIFT CARD
BRIDAL SHOWER FOR

*Julianna Kosel
& Isaac Moll*

Box also
at Lori's
Pharmacy!

Julianna is the daughter of Tina & the one & only "Paper Paul" Kosel
The wedding will take place in Florida on July 30th.

GROTON SWIMMING POOL
DROP OFF TIMES ARE: 1-8:30 M-TH
1-8 FRI-SUN
FROM: JUNE 27TH TO JULY 14TH

*The couple is also registered on Amazon if you prefer to send them a gift.



Name Released in Harding County Fatal Crash

What: Single vehicle fatal crash

Where: SD Highway 79, mile marker 230, 30 miles north of Reva, SD

When: 8:59a.m., Sunday, July 7, 2024

Vehicle 1: 2015 Ford F350

Driver 1: Miles Roux Reed, 75-year-old male from Sturgis, SD, fatal injuries

Seatbelt Use: No

Harding County, S.D.- A 75-year-old man died July 7 from injuries in a single vehicle crash 30 miles north of Reva, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates Miles R. Reed, the driver of a 2015 Ford F350 was traveling south near mile marker 230 on SD Highway 79. For an unknown reason, the vehicle crossed the center line, entered the east ditch, struck a field approach and rolled. Reed was ejected and passed away from his 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.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 6 of 84

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 Walk It Off Against Aberdeen Smittys

By GameChanger Media

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 took Wednesday's game in dramatic fashion, with a 13-12 walk-off victory over Aberdeen Smittys. The game was tied at 12 in the bottom of the ninth when Jarrett Erdmann singled, scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 collected 12 hits and Aberdeen Smittys had 17 in the high-scoring affair.

A single by Noah Circle Eagle put Aberdeen Smittys on the board in the top of the second.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 took the lead, 3-1, in the bottom of the second thanks to singles by TC Schuster, and Lincoln Krause.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 added to their early lead in the bottom of the third inning after Erdmann doubled, and Erdmann stole home, each scoring one run.

Aberdeen Smittys tied the game in the top of the sixth thanks to a single by Carter Jaragoske, a single by Jack Dickey, and a double by Isaac Torbert.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 took the lead in the bottom of the sixth. An error scored one run, to give Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 the edge, 8-7.

In the top of the seventh inning, Aberdeen Smittys went back into the lead after Brayden Heuer walked, and Cash Bahr singled, each scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 took the lead in the bottom of the seventh inning after Gavin Kroll walked, Krause walked, and Carter Simon was struck by a pitch, each scoring one run.

Aberdeen Smittys took the lead, 12-11, in the top of the eighth thanks to doubles by Simon Voorhees, and Heuer.

In the bottom of the ninth inning, Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 went back into the lead after Gavin Englund doubled, and Erdmann singled, each scoring one run.

Nicholas Morris earned the win for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. They gave up four hits and three runs over two innings, striking out three and walking one. Branson Peterson took the loss for Aberdeen Smittys. They went three innings, surrendering five runs (four earned) on five hits, striking out one and walking two. Simon stepped on the mound first for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. They surrendered six hits and two runs over four innings, striking out one and walking one. Erdmann and Kellen Antonsen each appeared in relief for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 collected 12 hits in the game. Krause, Karsten Fliehs, Erdmann, and Englund each collected two hits for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. Krause, Erdmann, and Englund each drove in two runs for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. Antonsen led Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 with three walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, amassing 10 walks for the game. Simon and Erdmann each stole multiple bases for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 stole six bases in the game. Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 turned one double play in the game.

Aberdeen Smittys accumulated 17 hits in the game. Bahr and Dickey each collected three hits for Aberdeen Smittys. Heuer and Dickey each drove in two runs for Aberdeen Smittys. Circle Eagle and Boyd Willems each collected multiple hits for Aberdeen Smittys. Tyler Davidson led Aberdeen Smittys with two walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, tallying eight walks for the game. Aberdeen Smittys turned one double play in the game.

Next up for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 is a game at Redfield Clay Kiser Jr. Legion 17U on Monday.

Copyright © 2024 GameChanger Media, Inc. All rights reserved. Any reuse or republication of this story must include the preceding attribution and is subject to the Dick's Sporting Goods, Inc. Terms of Use, License Agreement, and Privacy Policy.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 7 of 84

Smittys 16U 2024 Aberdeen **12 - 13** Groton Jr. Legion Post 39

📍 Home 📅 Wednesday July 10, 2024

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	R	H	E
SMTT	0	1	1	0	1	4	2	3	0	12	17	2
GRTN	0	3	2	2	0	1	3	0	2	13	12	5

BATTING

Smittys 16U 2024 Aberdeen	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
W Malsam #8 (SS)	4	1	1	1	1	1
S Voorhe... #11 (LF)	4	1	1	1	1	1
B Heuer #13 (C)	4	2	2	2	1	0
B Peterson #19 (P)	5	1	1	0	0	2
B Willems #18 (1B)	4	2	2	0	1	1
N Circle Eagle #21	4	0	2	1	1	0
C Bahr #7 (3B)	5	0	3	1	0	1
C Jarago... #9 (CF)	5	1	1	1	0	1
J Dickey #22	3	2	3	2	0	0
I Torbert #6 (RF)	3	0	1	1	1	1
T Davidson #2 (2B)	2	2	0	0	2	0
Totals	43	12	17	10	8	8

2B: B Heuer, S Voorhees, I Torbert, **TB:** N Circle Eagle 2, C Bahr 3, B Peterson, B Heuer 3, W Malsam, S Voorhees 2, B Willems 2, I Torbert 2, C Jaragoske, J Dickey 3, **CS:** S Voorhees, **HBP:** J Dickey, **SB:** C Bahr, B Heuer, W Malsam, B Willems, T Davidson, **LOB:** 13

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
L Krause #2 (LF)	4	1	2	2	1	0
Jordan... #11 (LF)	0	1	0	0	1	0
C Simon #4 (P)	2	2	1	1	0	0
G Englund #18 (C)	5	0	2	2	0	0
N Morris #17 (3B)	4	1	0	0	2	0
J Erdmann #0 (CF)	5	2	2	2	1	0
N Groebl... #12 (1B)	3	2	1	0	0	0
B Flihs #19 (1B)	1	0	0	0	0	1
K Flihs #10 (2B)	4	2	2	0	1	1
T Schuster #3 (SS)	2	0	1	1	0	0
K Antonsen #7 (P)	0	1	0	0	3	0
T McGa... #22 (RF)	2	1	1	0	0	1
G Kroll #8 (RF)	2	0	0	1	1	0
Totals	34	13	12	9	10	3

2B: G Englund, J Erdmann, **TB:** T McGannon, L Krause 2, G Englund 3, J Erdmann 3, T Schuster, N Groeblinghoff, K Flihs 2, C Simon, **CS:** K Flihs, **HBP:** G Englund, N Groeblinghoff, C Simon 4, **SB:** T McGannon, J Erdmann 2, C Simon 2, N Morris, **LOB:** 10

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 8 of 84

Groton Post 39 With Tough Game Against Lisbon Post 7

By GameChanger Media

Groton Post 39 had trouble keeping up with Lisbon Post 7 in a 15-4 loss on Wednesday.

Lisbon Post 7 jumped out to the lead in the top of the second inning after Lincoln Adair singled, scoring one run, Brandt Levos doubled, scoring two runs, Teylor Diegel induced Kashden Wadeson to hit into a fielder's choice, but one run scored, Wyatt Olson singled, scoring one run, and Blaze Reinke tripled, scoring two runs.

Lisbon Post 7 scored five runs on five hits in the top of the fifth inning. Reinke singled, scoring two runs, Cameron Opp doubled, scoring two runs, and Grady Wehlander singled, scoring one run.

Jayden Bittner earned the win for Lisbon Post 7. They gave up zero hits and zero runs over one inning, striking out none and walking one. Diegel took the loss for Groton Post 39. The starting pitcher went two innings, giving up seven runs on five hits, striking out none and walking two. Opp stepped on the bump first for Lisbon Post 7. They allowed one hit and zero runs over one inning, striking out one and walking none.

Bradin Althoff provided pop in the middle of the lineup, and led Groton Post 39 with two runs batted in. The number three hitter went 3-for-3 on the day. Gavin Englund collected two hits for Groton Post 39 in three at bats.

Lisbon Post 7 accumulated 11 hits in the game. Opp provided pop in the middle of the lineup, and led Lisbon Post 7 with four runs batted in. The cleanup hitter went 3-for-4 on the day. Reinke collected two hits for Lisbon Post 7 in three at bats. Wehlander led Lisbon Post 7 with two walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, tallying seven walks for the game.

Next up for Groton Post 39 is a game at Clark Rotary Tournament on Thursday.

Copyright © 2024 GameChanger Media, Inc. All rights reserved. Any reuse or republication of this story must include the preceding attribution and is subject to the Dick's Sporting Goods, Inc. Terms of Use, License Agreement, and Privacy Policy.

Groton Locke Electric 2024 Stymied By Circus Sports Bar

By GameChanger Media

Groton Locke Electric 2024 had trouble keeping up with Circus Sports Bar in a 9-2 loss on Wednesday.

A single by Michael Babcock put Circus Sports Bar on the board in the bottom of the first.

Circus Sports Bar added two runs in the second after Wolf'Don tripled after a 6-pitch at-bat.

A walk by Tyler Oliver, and a single by Ryan Ellingson helped Circus Sports Bar extend their early lead in the third.

Evan Brandt earned the win for Circus Sports Bar. They gave up five hits and one run over five innings, striking out four and walking none. Wyatt Locke took the loss for Groton Locke Electric 2024. The right-handed pitcher went eight innings, surrendering nine runs (eight earned) on 11 hits, striking out four and walking seven.

Spencer Locke, Groton Locke Electric 2024's number eight hitter, led the team with two hits in four at-bats. Ben Althoff and Cole Simon each drove in one run for Groton Locke Electric 2024.

Circus Sports Bar tallied 11 hits in the game. Kelly Coates, Corey Harrell, and Ellingson each collected two hits for Circus Sports Bar. Ellingson and Wolf'Don each drove in two runs for Circus Sports Bar. Circus Sports Bar had a strong eye at the plate, piling up seven walks for the game. Easton Millar, Oliver, and Wolf'Don led the team with two free passes each. Wolf'Don stole two bases. Circus Sports Bar turned two double plays in the game.

Copyright © 2024 GameChanger Media, Inc. All rights reserved. Any reuse or republication of this story must include the preceding attribution and is subject to the Dick's Sporting Goods, Inc. Terms of Use, License Agreement, and Privacy Policy.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 9 of 84

Groton Locke Electric 2024 2 - 9 Circus Sports Bar

📍 Away 📅 Wednesday July 10, 2024

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	R	H	E
GRTN	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	6	1
CRCS	1	2	3	0	0	1	1	1	X	9	11	2

BATTING

Groton Locke Electric 2024	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
D Frey #6 (LF)	4	0	0	0	0	1
C Simon #2 (CF)	4	1	1	1	0	0
T Sieber #19 (SS)	3	0	1	0	0	0
B Althoff #1 (3B)	3	0	0	1	0	0
B Hansen #37 (1B)	3	0	0	0	0	0
J Celedo... #25 (C)	4	0	0	0	0	3
W Locke #38 (P)	4	1	1	0	0	0
S Locke #15 (RF)	4	0	2	0	0	0
C Camac... #12 (2B)	3	0	1	0	0	1
Totals	32	2	6	2	0	5

2B: S Locke, **TB:** W Locke, S Locke 3, C Simon, T Sieber, C Camacho, **HBP:** B Hansen, B Althoff, T Sieber, **SB:** C Simon, C Camacho, **LOB:** 6

PITCHING

Groton Locke Electric 2024	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
W Locke #38	8.0	11	9	8	7	4	0
Totals	8.0	11	9	8	7	4	0

L: W Locke, **P-S:** W Locke 154-83, **WP:** W Locke 7, **HBP:** W Locke, **BF:** W Locke 43

Circus Sports Bar	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
Wolf'Don (RF)	3	1	1	2	2	1
M Babco... #10 (SS)	5	0	1	1	0	0
C Harrell (1B)	4	2	2	0	1	1
E Millar (LF)	3	1	1	0	2	1
T Oliver #21 (3B)	2	1	1	1	2	0
K Coates #17 (C)	4	2	2	1	0	0
A McCafferty (DH)	4	0	0	0	0	1
C Ellings... #3 (RF)	0	0	0	0	0	0
R Ellingson (2B)	4	1	2	2	0	0
J Babcock #8 (CF)	4	1	1	0	0	0
Totals	33	9	11	7	7	4

2B: C Harrell 2, **3B:** Wolf'Don, **TB:** Wolf'Don 3, R Ellingson 2, C Harrell 4, E Millar, K Coates 2, M Babcock, J Babcock, T Oliver, **SF:** K Coates, T Oliver, **CS:** C Harrell, **HBP:** A McCafferty, **SB:** Wolf'Don 2, **LOB:** 10

Circus Sports Bar	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
E Brandt	5.0	5	1	1	0	4	0
Wolf'Don	4.0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Totals	9.0	6	2	1	0	5	0

W: E Brandt, **P-S:** Wolf'Don 50-27, E Brandt 70-48, **HBP:** Wolf'Don 2, E Brandt, **BF:** Wolf'Don 15, E Brandt 20



Press

Can moderate amounts of caffeine positively impact brain health?

Consuming the right amount may focus and energize you. However, too much may set up a downward spiral.

By Alisa Bowman

If you're like 85% of U.S. adults, caffeine starts your morning, powers you through the workday and gives you the fortitude to face situations you'd rather avoid.

According to some news stories and opinions, that's good news for your brain, as caffeine boosts your mood and reduces your risk of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and other brain diseases, especially when consumed in tea or coffee.

However, you've perhaps also seen media coverage that says the opposite — warning that caffeine shrinks brain volume and increases the risk of dementia.

You may rightly wonder: Which is it? Does caffeine protect your brain? Or harm it?

The answer doesn't neatly fall into "yes" or "no" categories. Whether caffeine's cognitive benefits outweigh the risks depends on many factors, including how much you consume, how you consume it and how you metabolize it, says Donald D. Hensrud, M.D., M.S., an associate professor of nutrition and preventive medicine at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine.

What happens when you consume caffeine

It takes about an hour for caffeine to make its way down your throat, into your stomach, through your intestines, and eventually into your bloodstream and brain. As it circulates in the body, caffeine triggers wide-ranging effects.

These include the following:

Production of stomach acid goes up.

The muscular walls of the colon contract, which can trigger the urge to defecate.

Blood vessels constrict.

Urine production increases.

What does caffeine do to your brain?

Once in your brain, caffeine impersonates adenosine, a neurotransmitter that depresses the nervous system.

You might remember adenosine triphosphate (ATP) from high school or college biology. As you go about your day, cells break down ATP to create energy, releasing adenosine molecules in the process. In your brain, these adenosine molecules function like keys that fit into specialized locks called A1 and A2A receptors. Once enough adenosine keys open enough A1 and A2A locks, your muscles relax, motivation plummets, and an "I can't keep my eyes open" sensation kicks in.

Then, as you sleep, your brain reassembles ATP, clearing adenosine and allowing you to wake feeling refreshed.

As it turns out, caffeine's chemical structure looks a lot like adenosine's. This allows caffeine to attach to the same A1 and A2A receptors, blocking adenosine's "sleepy" signal from getting through. You feel more awake, motivated and alert. Reaction time improves, and you process information, make decisions and solve problems more quickly, says Dr. Hensrud.

Several hours after ingestion, however, adenosine receptors clear the caffeine. This allows adenosine to reach its destination, causing an afternoon slump in some people.

Can caffeine and coffee prevent dementia and other cognitive problems?

If you've searched for information about caffeine and brain health, you've likely come across research that linked caffeine consumption to increased dementia risk and smaller brain volumes. For example, one study analyzed MRI results from 17,702 people, determining that study participants who consumed more than six cups of coffee a day had smaller brain volumes and a 53% higher risk of being diagnosed with

dementia than did people who drank one or two daily cups.

Then again, you also may have come across research that reported the opposite finding. For example, a recent review pooled the data from 141 meta-analysis studies concerning more than 70 health outcomes and hundreds of thousands of participants. Much more powerful than a single study, these pooled results found that coffee consumption was associated with a reduced risk of cognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

When conflicting findings like the ones above get released, media outlets generally jump on the results, printing headlines like "Caffeine increases dementia!" and "Coffee reduces the risk of Alzheimer's disease!"

Though such headlines accurately describe the specific studies in question, they miss the much more nuanced big picture.

The nuances of caffeine and brain health

"It's hard to look at just one aspect of diet and connect it to a health condition because so many other factors could play a role," says Dr. Hensrud.

For example, heavy coffee drinkers also tend to use tobacco and be sedentary, both of which can raise dementia risk.

In addition, as the adage goes, the dose makes the poison. It's likely that caffeine protects the brain when consumed moderately but potentially harms it when consumed excessively, says Dr. Hensrud.

Finally, most people don't consume straight shots of caffeine. Instead, the chemical comes embedded in a food or beverage, including cola, energy drinks, coffee, tea and chocolate. Other components of these foods or beverages could offset or accentuate caffeine's healing properties.

For example, coffee and tea contain an abundance of health-protective substances like flavonoids that are thought to protect cells from damage as well as keep inflammation in check.

However, sweetened soft drinks and energy drinks come loaded with added sugar and few, if any, nutrients. Still other drinks combine the health-promoting substances from coffee or tea with hefty amounts of added sugar and fat. Some of these blended coffees and teas contain more calories, sugar and fat than most frosted and cream-filled donuts.

Caffeine vs. phytochemicals: Which protects the brain?

As mentioned above, caffeine isn't the only beneficial ingredient in coffee and tea.

Coffee, for example, contains more than 1,000 compounds, including protective plant chemicals like flavonoids, mentioned earlier. Similarly, tea also contains flavonoids and L-theanine, an amino acid thought to be involved in attention and cognitive health.

"Some effects of these beverages are due to caffeine, and other effects are due to other components in the beverage," says Dr. Hensrud. "Regarding dementia, caffeinated coffee is protective, and caffeine seems to account for most of the protective effect because decaffeinated coffee has much less protective effect."

The health upsides of caffeine and coffee

In addition to reducing risk of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and other degenerative brain diseases, caffeine consumption is associated with several other benefits, says Dr. Hensrud. By altering levels of brain chemicals involved in mood, caffeine consumption may reduce risk of depression. In research that examined the health records of more than 200,000 men and women, risk of suicide was 45% lower in people who consumed two to three daily cups of coffee compared with people who drank no coffee.

Other health benefits include a decreased risk of the following:

- Liver disease
- Liver cancer
- Type 2 diabetes
- Gallstones
- Kidney stones
- Gout
- Some cancers
- Possibly overall mortality

The downsides of caffeine

If you consume caffeine regularly, you're likely familiar with some of the drawbacks. The increased urine output can lead to urgency and bladder incontinence in susceptible people. More gut motility can do more than relieve constipation. In some people, it triggers diarrhea.

Depending on your disposition and how much caffeine you consume, you also may feel anxious and stressed, says Dr. Hensrud. It can disturb sleep, which leads to a vicious circle. You drink more caffeine to stay awake during the day, which keeps you wide awake at night, and the cycle continues.

Other potential downsides include:

Heartburn and stomach upset.

Difficulty conceiving, miscarriage and poor pregnancy outcomes like low birth weight and preterm birth.

Caffeine is mildly addictive and can lead to withdrawal headaches if you abruptly decrease your consumption.

Whether you experience these downsides will depend on your health, individual physiology and how you metabolize caffeine.

"Caffeine is metabolized on a genetic basis," says Dr. Hensrud.

Some people are fast metabolizers and can go to sleep soon after drinking coffee, Dr. Hensrud says. Other people metabolize it more slowly and struggle to sleep if they consume it late morning or early afternoon.

In addition to your genetics, your age can affect how you metabolize caffeine. In people age 65 and older, it may take 33% longer for the brain to clear caffeine. Some steroids, oral contraceptives, antidepressants, heart medicines and antibiotics also can slow caffeine metabolism.

How to weigh the pros and cons

Overall, the positive effects of consuming caffeine from unsweetened coffee and tea appear to outweigh the drawbacks. To decide if caffeine is right for you, consider the following questions:

Do you enjoy coffee and tea? If you do, there's little reason to stop, assuming you drink it moderately, says Dr. Hensrud. However, if you don't enjoy coffee or tea, there's no reason to force yourself to consume these beverages.

Does caffeine lead to problems? If you experience side effects, limit your consumption. If coffee or tea makes you feel anxious, gives you heartburn or keeps you up at night, you might want to cut back, says Dr. Hensrud.

Do you consume caffeine moderately? Assuming you're not experiencing side effects like anxiety or stomach upset, up to five or six cups of coffee (about 600 milligrams of caffeine) is safe and potentially beneficial for most healthy adults. Keep in mind that the actual caffeine content in beverages varies widely.

Are you pregnant or trying to conceive? If so, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends limiting caffeine intake to 200 daily milligrams or less.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Statewide South Dakota 911 outage caused by hurricane in southern US, provider says

Similar incident occurred in April; state has \$36 million contract with company responsible for services

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JULY 10, 2024 3:45 PM

A second statewide 911 outage this year is suspected to have been caused by Hurricane Beryl making landfall in Texas on Tuesday night and damaging network infrastructure, according to South Dakota's 911 telecommunications provider Lumen, formerly known as CenturyLink.

Investigations into the cause are still ongoing, said spokesman Matthew Villarreal.

"Our techs worked hard to fix an intermittent disruption affecting some customers' ability to reach 911 in South Dakota and parts of Nebraska," Villarreal said in an emailed statement. "We appreciate our customers' patience and understanding."

South Dakota signed its contract with Lumen for "Next Generation 911 services" in 2019 and has since renewed the contract until 2029. The contract is for up to \$36.33 million.

Lumen is headquartered in Louisiana, with network infrastructure running throughout the country. April's statewide 911 outage in South Dakota was caused by a company installing a light pole in Kansas City, Missouri, the company said at the time.

In addition to the statewide outages, an outage in January disrupted 911 service in southeastern South Dakota, leaving customers in Lincoln, Union, Miner and Minnehaha counties unable to call 911 with a landline for hours, according to reporting from Siouxland Proud.

This week's hurricane also caused an AT&T network outage impacting 911 calls in Texas and Louisiana.

Sioux Falls residents were without 911 services for about six hours between two outages Tuesday night and into early Wednesday morning, said Michael Gramlick, Sioux Falls assistant fire chief and director of Metro Communications. The outage affected hundreds of calls for emergency services throughout South Dakota.

Gramlick said the state's largest city was "immediately aware" of the outage, and its Metro Communications took steps learned from April's outage to troubleshoot and keep 911 services up and running, including alerting residents to call a non-emergency number or text 911.

The city had 522 calls for service (including text messages and calls to the non-emergency number) during the outage — twice as many calls as a typical day. Many were "test calls" by residents, Gramlick added, and all calls received a call back from 911 services.

The two outages are forcing 911 communications offices — both locally and at the state level — to re-evaluate redundancy efforts, Gramlick said.

"We don't want to believe that this is a regular occurrence, but our job is to plan for those occurrences," Gramlick said.

Stephanie Olson, deputy director of operations for Pennington County 911, said the western side of the state experienced a similar outage timeline. Staff in the dispatch center were notified of the first outage Tuesday night by the state 911 coordinator, but noticed the second outage themselves.

"We can see when someone is attempting to call 911, but then our phone system doesn't ring, so we know there's a problem with the phone system," Olson said. The county called back 32 residents when the initial call didn't come through. Sixty-five other calls for service came through text messaging or the non-emergency phone number.

Residents calling from Verizon and AT&T phones were calling a dead line, Olson explained, while some T-Mobile and landline phones were diverted to alternate 911 centers in Canada and Colorado that handle misrouted calls.

"We're learning to continue educating our staff and citizens on the capabilities of 911 and that text is available. That was up and running all night," Olson said. "If they call and can't get through, we have redundancies in place."

The Federal Communications Commission announced after this year's earlier statewide outage it would investigate recent outages across the country. The FCC recently declined to provide an update on the investigation to South Dakota Searchlight.

"As a general practice, we don't comment on investigations," an FCC spokesperson said in an email.

After a 2020 outage in South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Colorado, Arizona, Utah and North Carolina, the commission investigated whether Lumen, in addition to three other companies, failed to deliver 911 calls and timely notify public safety customers. In a settlement, Lumen agreed to implement a compliance plan and pay a \$3.8 million civil penalty.

Lumen serves the Omaha area and some other eastern Nebraska counties. The company is being investigated there for recent outages in 2023 and earlier this year, according to the Nebraska Examiner.

The South Dakota Department of Public Safety, which manages the state contract with Lumen, did not issue a news release about this week's outage and did not respond to emailed questions from South Dakota Searchlight by the time this article published.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.

Referendum on carbon pipeline law validated for November election

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JULY 10, 2024 1:13 PM

A seventh ballot question has been validated by the Secretary of State's Office for the Nov. 5 general election. The referendum asks voters to consider a recently adopted state law concerning carbon dioxide pipeline restrictions and landowner rights.

Based on a random sample of signatures, the office estimated that 92% percent of the more than 34,000 signatures on the petition are from South Dakota registered voters, which means the estimated number of valid signatures is 31,432. The petition needed 17,508 to qualify for the election.

Opponents of the law want voters to reject Senate Bill 201, which the Legislature and Gov. Kristi Noem approved last winter. Supporters said the legislation will implement new protections for local governments and landowners while preserving a path forward for pipeline projects. Opponents view it as a capitulation to pipeline companies.

A 30-day window is now open for challenges to the validity of the petition.

The bill came in response to an \$8.5 billion pipeline proposed by Summit Carbon Solutions, which is headquartered in Iowa. The pipeline would collect carbon dioxide from 57 ethanol plants in South Dakota and neighboring states and pipe it to North Dakota for underground storage. The project could benefit from federal tax credits that incentivize carbon sequestration to fight climate change.

The Iowa Utilities Board approved Summit's project in June. The company announced shortly afterward that it plans to apply again for a permit in South Dakota this month, after the Public Utilities Commission denied its initial application last year. The company's pipeline application in North Dakota is under consideration, and it still needs an underground storage permit in North Dakota.

The South Dakota denial was partly due to conflicts with county ordinances that require minimum distances known as "setbacks" between pipelines and other features. The project has also faced opposition

from some landowners concerned about property rights and safety, including health risks associated with potential leaks.

The last referred law to appear on a South Dakota ballot was in 2016, after the state Legislature tried to exempt workers under age 18 from receiving a minimum wage increase (which had been approved by South Dakota voters in 2014). South Dakotans voted by a majority of 71.13% to reject the Legislature's action.

Ballot question status update

Measures placed on the Nov. 5 ballot by the Legislature:

An amendment to the state constitution updating references to certain officeholders and people (replacing male-specific pronouns with neutral language).

An amendment to the state constitution authorizing the state to impose work requirements on certain people who are eligible for expanded Medicaid.

Citizen-proposed measures validated for the ballot:

An initiated measure prohibiting state sales taxes on items sold for human consumption, specifically targeting state sales taxes on groceries.

An initiated amendment to the state constitution re-establishing abortion rights.

An initiated amendment to the state constitution establishing open primary elections.

An initiated measure legalizing adult recreational use, possession and distribution of marijuana.

Referred law validated for the ballot:

A referendum on a new law regulating carbon dioxide pipelines.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.

State says six inmates injured in fights at prison in Springfield

Incident comes four months after unrest at penitentiary in Sioux Falls

BY: JOHN HULT - JULY 10, 2024 12:30 PM

SPRINGFIELD — The South Dakota Department of Corrections says six inmates were hurt at a prison in Springfield following an overnight bout of unrest.

Agency spokesman Michael Winder said Wednesday morning that the inmates suffered "non-life-threatening" injuries in fighting that began Tuesday evening at Mike Durfee State Prison.

His emailed message said "several inmates" were involved in the fighting, but did not elaborate on how many, where they may have been in the facility or what sparked the fighting.

Winder also said some DOC staff "suffered minor injuries while acting quickly to restore order."

"There were no assaults on staff, no loss of facility operations, and no damage to property," he wrote.

Winder's email did not specify if any of the injured inmates were taken to outside medical facilities for treatment.

A social media post Tuesday night from the editor of the Springfield Times newspaper, Alex Bochman, showed emergency vehicles parked outside the prison. Bochman reported hearing the sound of alarms and inmates shouting from inside.

Tea Storm Chasers, a media outlet in southeast South Dakota that focuses on public safety, reported Tuesday evening that multiple agencies responded to the incident, and that ambulances were seen outside the facility.

At 5:15 p.m. Wednesday, Winder sent another email verifying that a second fight broke out in the morning after the initial incident was over. DOC staff "responded immediately and restored order," he wrote.

He said the DOC will continue to investigate both fights, and that "any criminal activity that is identified" would be referred to the state Division of Criminal Investigation.

The Springfield Living Center nursing home had a sign on its door through the afternoon saying that visitors are welcome to call for entry, but that the doors would remain locked "due to the situation at the

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 16 of 84

prison.”

On Wednesday morning and through the afternoon, inmates yelled at reporters from their cell windows. One shouted that an inmate had died as a result of the fighting and said “20-plus inmates have been hospitalized.”

They also said the prison wasn’t staffed well enough to manage the fighting, that they’re not receiving adequate medical care or mental health care, and that they’ve lost recreation time and access to phones.

“We don’t feel safe,” an inmate said.

Others blamed DOC Secretary Kellie Wasko for the trouble, and said “they don’t want anybody to know what’s going on in here.”

“They’re telling us not to talk to y’all right now,” one man said.

South Dakota Searchlight has sent some of the inmates’ claims to Winder but has not yet received a response or been able to independently verify the inmates’ claims.

Bon Homme County Sheriff Mark Maggs arrived on the scene at around 1:30 p.m. Wednesday. He did not ask reporters to step away from the fence between the inmates’ dorm-style hall, but asked that they not say anything to “rile them up.”

Maggs said his deputies were on scene from 10:30 p.m. until about 2:30 a.m. to help maintain a secure perimeter. No deputies went inside the facility, he said, but their patrolling allowed the DOC’s regular perimeter security staff to help out inside.

“Obviously, this put a lot of strain on their staffing,” Maggs said.

Deputies returned at around 8 a.m. to check on the situation.

Maggs’ office has a memorandum of understanding with the state to provide mutual aid for the prison when needed. Maggs, who started as a deputy with Bon Homme County in 2013, said this week’s troubles mark the first time the state has asked for help under that agreement since he’s been working for the sheriff’s office.

The incident is the second acknowledged bout of unrest behind state prison walls in the space of four months.

A multi-day incident in March at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls saw at least one correctional officer injured, and ultimately resulted in felony charges for 11 inmates.

The unrest in Sioux Falls came after the DOC opted to shut down tablet-based communications for inmates at all state prisons. Gov. Kristi Noem said inmates had been using the devices for “nefarious purposes.” Neither the governor nor the DOC have offered further details on the alleged activity.

Inmates and their families said the decision unfairly punished them for the actions of a few.

Inmates inside East Hall, the building where the March incidents in Sioux Falls took place, could be heard yelling “we want phones” and “we have rights” on the second night of unrest.

The director of the South Dakota State Employees Organization told South Dakota Searchlight the loss of tablet communications was the spark for that situation, but that lax security policies had emboldened inmates and put staff at risk.

The DOC reopened phone calls in late March, but put new restrictions in place. Calls can be placed from the contractor-provided tablets or using wall phones, but inmates are now limited to five calls a day, with a maximum of 20 minutes per call.

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

State says six inmates injured in fights at prison in Springfield

Incident comes four months after unrest at penitentiary in Sioux Falls

BY: JOHN HULT - JULY 10, 2024 12:30 PM

SPRINGFIELD — The South Dakota Department of Corrections says six inmates were hurt at a prison in Springfield following an overnight bout of unrest.

Agency spokesman Michael Winder said Wednesday morning that the inmates suffered “non-life-threatening” injuries in fighting that began Tuesday evening at Mike Durfee State Prison.

His emailed message said “several inmates” were involved in the fighting, but did not elaborate on how many, where they may have been in the facility or what sparked the fighting.

Winder also said some DOC staff “suffered minor injuries while acting quickly to restore order.”

“There were no assaults on staff, no loss of facility operations, and no damage to property,” he wrote.

Winder’s email did not specify if any of the injured inmates were taken to outside medical facilities for treatment.

A social media post Tuesday night from the editor of the Springfield Times newspaper, Alex Bochman, showed emergency vehicles parked outside the prison. Bochman reported hearing the sound of alarms and inmates shouting from inside.

Tea Storm Chasers, a media outlet in southeast South Dakota that focuses on public safety, reported Tuesday evening that multiple agencies responded to the incident, and that ambulances were seen outside the facility.

At 5:15 p.m. Wednesday, Winder sent another email verifying that a second fight broke out in the morning after the initial incident was over. DOC staff “responded immediately and restored order,” he wrote.

He said the DOC will continue to investigate both fights, and that “any criminal activity that is identified” would be referred to the state Division of Criminal Investigation.

The Springfield Living Center nursing home had a sign on its door through the afternoon saying that visitors are welcome to call for entry, but that the doors would remain locked “due to the situation at the prison.”

On Wednesday morning and through the afternoon, inmates yelled at reporters from their cell windows. One shouted that an inmate had died as a result of the fighting and said “20-plus inmates have been hospitalized.”

They also said the prison wasn’t staffed well enough to manage the fighting, that they’re not receiving adequate medical care or mental health care, and that they’ve lost recreation time and access to phones.

“We don’t feel safe,” an inmate said.

Others blamed DOC Secretary Kellie Wasko for the trouble, and said “they don’t want anybody to know what’s going on in here.”

“They’re telling us not to talk to y’all right now,” one man said.

South Dakota Searchlight has sent some of the inmates’ claims to Winder but has not yet received a response or been able to independently verify the inmates’ claims.

Bon Homme County Sheriff Mark Maggs arrived on the scene at around 1:30 p.m. Wednesday. He did not ask reporters to step away from the fence between the inmates’ dorm-style hall, but asked that they not say anything to “rile them up.”

Maggs said his deputies were on scene from 10:30 p.m. until about 2:30 a.m. to help maintain a secure perimeter. No deputies went inside the facility, he said, but their patrolling allowed the DOC’s regular perimeter security staff to help out inside.

“Obviously, this put a lot of strain on their staffing,” Maggs said.

Deputies returned at around 8 a.m. to check on the situation.

Maggs’ office has a memorandum of understanding with the state to provide mutual aid for the prison when needed. Maggs, who started as a deputy with Bon Homme County in 2013, said this week’s troubles mark the first time the state has asked for help under that agreement since he’s been working for the sheriff’s office.

The incident is the second acknowledged bout of unrest behind state prison walls in the space of four months.

A multi-day incident in March at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls saw at least one correctional officer injured, and ultimately resulted in felony charges for 11 inmates.

The unrest in Sioux Falls came after the DOC opted to shut down tablet-based communications for inmates at all state prisons. Gov. Kristi Noem said inmates had been using the devices for "nefarious purposes." Neither the governor nor the DOC have offered further details on the alleged activity.

Inmates and their families said the decision unfairly punished them for the actions of a few.

Inmates inside East Hall, the building where the March incidents in Sioux Falls took place, could be heard yelling "we want phones" and "we have rights" on the second night of unrest.

The director of the South Dakota State Employees Organization told South Dakota Searchlight the loss of tablet communications was the spark for that situation, but that lax security policies had emboldened inmates and put staff at risk.

The DOC reopened phone calls in late March, but put new restrictions in place. Calls can be placed from the contractor-provided tablets or using wall phones, but inmates are now limited to five calls a day, with a maximum of 20 minutes per call.

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

U.S. Senate GOP blocks bill proclaiming congressional support for abortion access

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - JULY 10, 2024 5:59 PM

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate gridlocked over reproductive rights on Wednesday, when Republicans blocked Democrats from advancing a measure that would have expressed support for abortion access.

The failed 49-44 procedural vote was just one in a string of votes Senate Democrats are holding this summer to highlight the differences between the two political parties on contraception, in vitro fertilization and abortion ahead of the November elections.

Maine Sen. Susan Collins and Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski were the only Republicans to vote to move the bill toward final passage.

"This is a plain, up-or-down vote on whether you support women being able to make their own reproductive health care decisions," Washington Democratic Sen. Patty Murray said during floor debate. "It doesn't enforce anything. It doesn't cost anything. It's actually just a half-page bill, simply saying that women should have the basic freedom to make their own decisions about their health care."

Minnesota Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar said that women and their doctors, not politicians, should make decisions about abortion and other reproductive health choices.

"This is our current reality, but it doesn't have to be our future," Klobuchar said. "This is a pivotal moment for America: Are we going to move forward and protect freedom, which has long been a hallmark of our nation, or are we going to go further backwards in history — not just to the 1950s but to the 1850s."

Michigan Democratic Sen. Debbie Stabenow urged support for the legislation, saying women should be able to make decisions about their own health care, lives and futures.

"That's what this vote is about and we're not going to give up until we have those freedoms fully protected," Stabenow said.

No Republican senators spoke during debate on the bill ahead of the vote.

The two-page bill would not have actually changed or provided any nationwide protections for abortion access.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 19 of 84

The legislation, if enacted, would have expressed a "sense of Congress" that abortion rights "should be supported" and that the nationwide, constitutional protections for abortion established by Roe v. Wade "should be restored and built upon, moving towards a future where there is reproductive freedom for all."

The Biden administration released a Statement of Administration Policy earlier in the week, backing the bill. "Today, more than 20 states have dangerous and extreme abortion bans in effect, some without exceptions for rape or incest," the statement said. "Women are being denied essential medical care, including during an emergency, or forced to travel thousands of miles out of state for care that would have been available if Roe were still the law of the land. Doctors and nurses are being threatened with jail time."

Trio of bills offered, blocked

The blocked procedural vote on Wednesday came just one day after Democrats went to the floor in an attempt to pass three other bills on reproductive rights through the fast-track unanimous consent process.

That involves one senator asking "unanimous consent" to pass legislation. Any one senator can then object, blocking passage of the bill. If no one objects, the bill is passed.

The maneuver is typically used to approve broadly bipartisan measures or for lawmakers to bring attention to legislation without moving it through the time-consuming cloture process that can take weeks in the Senate.

Nevada Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto on Tuesday tried unsuccessfully to pass her bill, which would have barred the government from preventing travel "to another state to receive or provide reproductive health care that is legal in that state."

Forty Democratic or independent senators co-sponsored the legislation.

During brief floor debate, Cortez Masto said the bill "reaffirms that women have a fundamental right to interstate travel and makes it crystal clear that states cannot prosecute women — or anyone who helps them — for going to another state to get the critical reproductive care that they need."

"Elected officials in states like Tennessee and Texas and Alabama are trying to punish women for leaving their state for reproductive care, as well as anyone who helps them, including their doctors or even their employers," Cortez Masto said. "Why? Because for these anti-choice politicians, this is about controlling women."

Mississippi Republican Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith objected to the unanimous consent request, saying that while members of the anti-abortion movement "most certainly do not oppose any individual's freedom to travel across this great country," they do have concerns the measure would hinder prosecution of crimes, like human trafficking.

Bill would 'take us backward,' Budd says

Republicans blocked a second bill, sponsored by Murray, that would have blocked state governments from preventing, restricting, impeding, or disadvantaging health care providers from providing "reproductive health care services lawful in the state in which the services are to be provided."

The bill was co-sponsored by 30 Democratic or independent senators.

"When I talk to abortion providers in Spokane, where they see a lot of patients fleeing restrictive abortion bans from states like Idaho, they are terrified that they could face a lawsuit that will threaten their practice and their livelihood, just for doing their jobs, just for providing care their patients need — care that is, once again, completely legal in my state," Murray said. "We are talking about people who are following the law and simply want to provide care to their patients. This should be cut-and-dried."

North Carolina GOP Sen. Ted Budd objected to the request, arguing the bill "would make it easier for unborn life to be ended."

"The Supreme Court's Dobbs decision brought renewed hope to Americans who believe in the sanctity of each and every life, including life in the womb," Budd said. "But this bill would take us backward."

Following Budd's objection to passing the bill, Murray said his actions "made clear" that GOP lawmakers "have no problem whatsoever with politicians targeting doctors in states like mine, where abortion is legal."

"I think that pretty much gives the game away," Murray added.

Grant program

Democrats also tried to pass legislation from Wisconsin Democratic Sen. Tammy Baldwin that would have established a federal grant program to bolster the number of health care providers who receive "comprehensive training in abortion care."

That bill had seven Democratic or independent co-sponsors in the Senate.

"For our top-ranked medical schools, a post-Roe reality sowed chaos as students and their instructors wondered how future doctors in our state would have access to the full slate of training necessary to safely practice obstetrics and gynecology," Baldwin said.

Kansas Republican Sen. Roger Marshall, an OB-GYN, blocked the request, saying that the federal government "should not be spending taxpayer dollars to encourage medical students and clinicians to take life when their principal duty, their sacred oath, is to protect life and to do no harm from conception to natural death."

Repeated attempts throughout 2024

Democrats sought to advance legislation on access to contraception and in vitro fertilization despite the 60-vote legislative filibuster earlier this year, and failed to get the necessary Republican support each time.

In early June, Democrats tried to advance legislation that would have protected "an individual's ability to access contraceptives" and "a health care provider's ability to provide contraceptives, contraception, and information related to contraception."

A week later, Democrats tried again, this time with legislation that would have provided a right for people to access IVF and for doctors to provide that health care without the state or federal government "enacting harmful or unwarranted limitations or requirements."

Collins and Murkowski were the only Republicans to vote to move the bills toward a final passage vote.

Alabama GOP Sen. Katie Britt attempted to pass an IVF access bill through the unanimous consent process in mid-June, but was unsuccessful.

That measure, which she co-sponsored with Texas Republican Sen. Ted Cruz, would have blocked a state from receiving Medicaid funding if it prevented IVF.

The legislation, which had three co-sponsors as of Wednesday, didn't say what would happen to a state's Medicaid funding if lawmakers or a state court defined life as starting at conception.

That's what led IVF clinics in Alabama to temporarily shut down earlier this year after the state Supreme Court ruled that frozen embryos at IVF clinics constitute children under state law.

The Alabama state legislature has since provided civil and criminal protections for IVF clinics.

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

U.S. House passes bill requiring proof of citizenship to vote in federal races

SD Rep. Dusty Johnson votes in favor of legislation

BY: LIA CHIEN - JULY 10, 2024 5:19 PM

WASHINGTON – The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill Wednesday that would require individuals registering to vote to provide proof of citizenship to participate in federal elections.

The legislation, passed 221-198, would also require states to check their voter rolls for registered non-citizens. South Dakota Republican Dusty Johnson voted in favor of the bill.

The Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act, or SAVE, is intended to prevent noncitizens from voting.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 21 of 84

That act is already illegal, since under current U.S. law, only citizens can vote in federal elections, but the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 prohibits states from confirming citizenship status.

Voting laws vary by state, with some states like Georgia and Wisconsin requiring photo identification and others, such as Pennsylvania and New Mexico, requiring no documentation at all.

States that do mandate photo identification or other documents use driver's licenses, military ID cards, student ID cards, birth certificates, tribal ID cards, or even a recent utility bill.

The SAVE Act, introduced by GOP Rep. Chip Roy of Texas in May, would require most individuals to have a passport to register to vote.

Only about 48% of U.S. citizens have a passport, according to State Department data. Driver's license and tribal ID cards typically do not prove a person's citizenship and couldn't be used to register under the SAVE Act.

Data also indicates that noncitizen voting is not a prevalent issue, as many House Republicans have said.

According to The Associated Press, states such as North Carolina, Georgia, Arizona, California, and Texas reviewed their voter rolls between 2016 and 2022. These audits found that fewer than 50 noncitizens in each state had voted in recent elections, out of upwards of 23 million total votes per state.

The measure is unlikely to advance in the Democratic-controlled Senate.

Partisan divide

House Republicans have stood staunchly in favor of Roy's bill, H.R.8281.

On the House floor Wednesday, Speaker Mike Johnson, a Louisiana Republican, urged his colleagues to pass the bill, saying it was "one of the most important votes that members of this chamber will ever take in their entire careers."

Last month, Johnson's office released a 22-page report asserting the SAVE Act was critical for American election integrity.

Johnson blamed the Democratic Party for keeping American "borders wide open to every country on the planet," and claimed Democrats "want illegal aliens voting in our elections."

On Monday, the Biden administration issued a Statement of Administration Policy against the legislation, saying there is no cause for concern about noncitizen voting and that it would only hinder the voting rights of eligible Americans.

South Dakota's vote

South Dakota's lone member of the U.S. House, Republican Dusty Johnson, voted in favor of the legislation.

"Millions of illegal immigrants have crossed our border since Joe Biden took office — if they cast votes, our election system would be severely compromised," he said in a news release. "We must protect this right and protect election security. Allowing noncitizens to vote threatens both of those objectives."

Rep. Joe Morelle of New York, the top Democrat on the House Administration Committee, urged his House colleagues during Wednesday floor debate to vote no on the bill, saying it would be devastating for all American voters.

"This bill is about scaring Americans, this bill is about silencing Americans, this bill is about disenfranchising Americans," he said. "This bill is about further damaging the foundations of our democracy."

But House Administration Committee Chairman Bryan Steil backed the legislation during a Rules Committee hearing.

"In the past few decades, Americans' faith in the integrity of our elections has eroded and it is Congress' responsibility to restore confidence in our election system," said Steil, a Wisconsin Republican. "The SAVE Act would do just that."

Republican Majority Leader Steve Scalise of Louisiana in a Monday press conference called the bill "a safeguard to ensure that only American citizens vote in America's elections."

Election implications

Democratic Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York during Wednesday floor debate alluded to the broader implications of the SAVE Act, looking towards the November election and the possibility of a second term for President Joe Biden.

He said Republicans could use the bill "as a cover, already trying to set up an excuse for what may happen in November."

Voting rights advocates have expressed concern over the SAVE Act, saying it contains many falsehoods and conspiracy theories that perpetuate extreme views.

At a Tuesday press conference hosted by America's Voice, an immigrant advocacy nonprofit, Sean Morales-Doyle from the Brennan Center for Justice said the bill plays into greater themes of racism and xenophobia.

"It's also a very damaging lie with an ulterior motive: to lay the groundwork for challenging legitimate election results down the road," he said.

One House member equated the bill to a "Jim Crow poll tax" during floor debate. Jennifer McClellan, a Virginia Democrat, said she "is not aware of any single proof of citizenship document that doesn't cost an individual money to get it."

Wesley Hunt, a Republican from Texas, responded that "Jim Crow is over."

— *The staff of South Dakota Searchlight contributed to this report.*

Lia is a Capitol Reporting Fellow based in the States Newsroom Washington, D.C Bureau. She is passionate about covering agriculture, climate, and education policy areas.

Missouri leads seven states, including SD, challenging transgender health care protections

BY: ANNEISE HANSHAW, MISSOURI INDEPENDENT - JULY 10, 2024 4:55 PM

Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey is leading a coalition of seven states — including South Dakota — challenging a rule by the Biden administration that would preempt state restrictions on gender-affirming care.

Filed in United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri on Wednesday, the states are seeking to block the regulation and prevent the federal government from enforcing similar mandates.

The rule seeks to add protections to a section of the Affordable Care Act that prevent health care providers who discriminate on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation from receiving federal funding, including through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

The rule was set to go into effect July 5, with some provisions beginning later. But another coalition of attorneys general succeeded in their petition to block its implementation just two days prior. The judge in that case cited the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn "Chevron Deference," a precedent that gave regulatory authority to federal agencies when statute is unclear.

Bailey, along with attorneys general from Utah, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Idaho and Arkansas, argues that the rule conflicts with their states' restrictions on gender-affirming care for minors. Each has varying restrictions on payments for gender-affirming treatment, with Missouri blocking payment for all treatments for medical transition through Medicaid and CHIP.

"... states will be unable to enforce these duly enacted laws and longstanding policies without coming into conflict with the rule," the attorneys general wrote in the lawsuit.

The American College of Pediatricians joins the attorneys general as a plaintiff. The ACPeds is a group of 400 physicians and other health care professionals in 47 states with a history of anti-LGBTQ advocacy.

"ACPeds members categorically do not provide medical interventions or referrals for, and do not facilitate or speak in ways that affirm the legitimacy of, the practice of 'gender transition,'" the attorneys general

wrote.

The lawsuit alleges that the organization's pediatricians would suffer "significant financial harm to lose eligibility to participate in federal healthcare programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP."

One pediatrician in Utah is quoted in the lawsuit saying he would not "self-censor his opinions on transition efforts if the rule goes into effect."

Predicting his noncompliance with the rule, the Utah pediatrician "faces the prospect of no longer caring for his patients, being fired from his employment and being unable to practice medicine in most settings," the attorneys general wrote.

The rule violates physicians' freedom of assembly, the lawsuit states, "by coercing them to participate in facilities, programs, groups and other healthcare-related endeavors that are contrary to their views and that express messages with which they disagree."

The lawsuit also says it "coerces ACPeds members' speech."

"By forcing ACPeds members to tell patients directly, on their walls, and on their websites that they do not discriminate on the basis of gender identity, the rule forces ACPeds members to speak falsely, and it forces ACPeds members to fatally undermine their communication of their own medical ethical standards," it says.

Beyond questions of constitutionality, the attorneys general allege that the rule goes beyond congressional authorization.

The rule interprets gender identity as protected by both including gender dysphoria as a disability and interpreting sex discrimination to include gender identity. The attorneys general disagree with this application.

Key to the case will be the judge's interpretation of the 2020 U.S. Supreme Court Case *Bostock v. Clayton County*, in which a majority of justices ruled that gender identity was protected under Title VII, which is on employment discrimination.

The rule leans on some courts' interpretation that transfers the *Bostock* decision to Title IX and the Affordable Care Act, according to its publication in the Federal Register. But the attorneys general cite decisions from judges in red states that do not allow *Bostock* to apply outside of Title VII.

The Department of Health and Human Services, which is the defendant in the litigation, did not respond to a request for comment.

Annelise Hanshaw writes about education — a beat she has covered on both the West and East Coast while working for daily newspapers in Santa Barbara, California, and Greenwich, Connecticut. A born-and-raised Missourian, she is proud to be back in her home state. Missouri Independent is part of States Newsroom, the nation's largest state-focused nonprofit news organization.

Gas taxes can't pay for roads much longer, but Amazon deliveries might

More states could follow Colorado and Minnesota in putting a fee on retail deliveries

BY: ALEX BROWN, STATELINE - JULY 10, 2024 8:00 AM

For decades, states have relied on gas taxes to provide much of the money to maintain roads and bridges. But as cars become more fuel efficient, and some Americans switch to electric vehicles, state leaders say the gas tax won't pay the bills for much longer.

At the same time, many cities have seen their streets crowded with delivery trucks from Amazon and other companies, as consumers increasingly opt to have products delivered to their homes. In a few states, lawmakers think fees on those deliveries could be part of their road-funding solution.

"If you're going to be creating wear and tear on our roads, you should help pay to maintain them," said Colorado state Rep. Cathy Kipp, a Democrat who chairs the Energy and Environment Committee.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 24 of 84

In July 2022, Colorado became the first state with a retail delivery fee, a charge on all vehicle deliveries to consumers within the state. The fee, which currently stands at 29 cents per delivery, provides funding for highways, bridges, tunnels, electric vehicle charging stations and projects to reduce air pollution and to electrify vehicle fleets and transit systems. It has brought in more than \$160 million.

Colorado leaders have had to simplify the law to help businesses comply with it, but they say it's largely been a success story. Minnesota enacted its own retail delivery fee in 2023, and lawmakers in New York and Illinois have proposed similar measures. Meanwhile, legislators and transportation officials in several other states have commissioned studies to consider the concept.

Some retailers and Republican lawmakers have argued that the fee hurts consumers, and many businesses in Colorado initially had trouble complying with the law.

"The 27-cent delivery fee is not trivial, its effects are not imperceptible, and it greatly affects our citizens — especially those who are already struggling to pay the bills and provide for their families," Republican state Rep. Rose Pugliese, the House minority leader, wrote in a Colorado Springs Gazette guest column several months after the law was enacted.

But backers of the fee say they see growing interest across the country, especially as delivery trucks become ubiquitous in many neighborhoods.

'Future-proofing' transportation funding

State law in Colorado limits the ways in which lawmakers can expand taxes. With gas tax revenues dwindling, legislators didn't have an obvious solution to pay for roads. They eventually settled on the retail delivery fee, which is not characterized as a tax.

Initially, the program was a struggle for many businesses, due to a requirement that they detail the fee separately on each receipt.

"For our medium and small businesses, it was a real complicated thing and very burdensome for them to have to reprogram their software with a whole extra line item," Kipp said.

Last year, Kipp joined a bipartisan group of lawmakers to amend the program. They rescinded the requirement that businesses itemize the fee on each receipt and allowed companies to cover the fee themselves rather than breaking it out on each order. They also exempted retailers with less than \$500,000 in sales.

Since the fix was adopted, Kipp said she has stopped hearing complaints about the program. Chris Howes, president of the Colorado Retail Council, said he too has not heard any recent gripes.

"We've got it straightened out by now," he said. "People have accepted it and moved on."

Amazon did not grant a Stateline interview request, and the National Retail Federation deferred questions to state chapters. Chamber of Progress, a tech industry advocacy group, did not arrange an interview by publication time.

Last year, lawmakers in Minnesota enacted their own retail delivery fee, a 50-cent charge on purchases of more than \$100. Lawmakers heard from local governments that they were struggling to maintain their roads and badly needed state aid to make up the gap.

"This is trying to future-proof our transportation funding," said Democratic state Rep. Erin Koegel, who sponsored the bill. "We keep getting performance grades from civil engineers saying we're at a C- or D for our infrastructure. We needed to think about ways to get more revenue in the system."

Koegel said the measure was a compromise. Her initial draft, which did not have a \$100 threshold for purchases, was intended to be a deterrent, much like cigarette taxes. She said delivery trucks are increasing congestion in many cities and damaging streets that weren't built to support large vehicles. However, lawmakers ultimately decided to limit the fee to more expensive purchases in order to protect lower-income consumers.

Minnesota's fee is projected to generate \$59 million in its first fiscal year. The funding will be distributed to cities, counties and towns to help with their road-funding needs.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 25 of 84

Traffic throughout the day

Cities and counties in Washington state also have asked for help, and some local leaders have asked state lawmakers to consider a retail delivery fee — or to authorize cities to collect one. State lawmakers commissioned an analysis, published last month, looking at the potential for such a program. The report found that a fee could generate \$45 million to \$112 million in revenue in 2026, depending on which businesses and orders were covered.

“We’re now seeing that there’s traffic on our system throughout the day, and the growth of these delivery services is a part of that,” said Democratic state Sen. Marko Liias, who chairs the Transportation Committee. “We’ve had a history in transportation of user-based fees. This feels like a mechanism that could help in that regard.”

Liias emphasized that some version of the fee is likely to be a big topic of discussion in the next legislative session. He said he’s already heard strong arguments on both sides of the issue.

In some areas, the rise in retail deliveries has put the greatest burden on the infrastructure surrounding shipping facilities. Illinois’ CenterPoint Intermodal Center, the nation’s largest inland port, connects interstate trucking, railway lines and Mississippi River barges.

“There really needs to be a shift in the tax structure, since many of these facilities are not generating the local sales tax you’d get at a brick and mortar,” said Democratic state Sen. Rachel Ventura, whose district includes the CenterPoint facility. “We have a lot of traffic going in and out, and the environmental burden and road repairs and the tax burden fall locally.”

Ventura has drafted a bill that would allow communities to assess fees on intermodal facilities — locations that transfer products from one type of transportation to another. Local governments that opted in would be able to spend the funds on roads within five miles of the facilities. The fee, which would be based on the weight of each shipment, is projected to generate \$33 million to \$68 million per year.

The bill has not passed out of committee, and Ventura said lawmakers are still discussing the path forward amid opposition from the trucking industry.

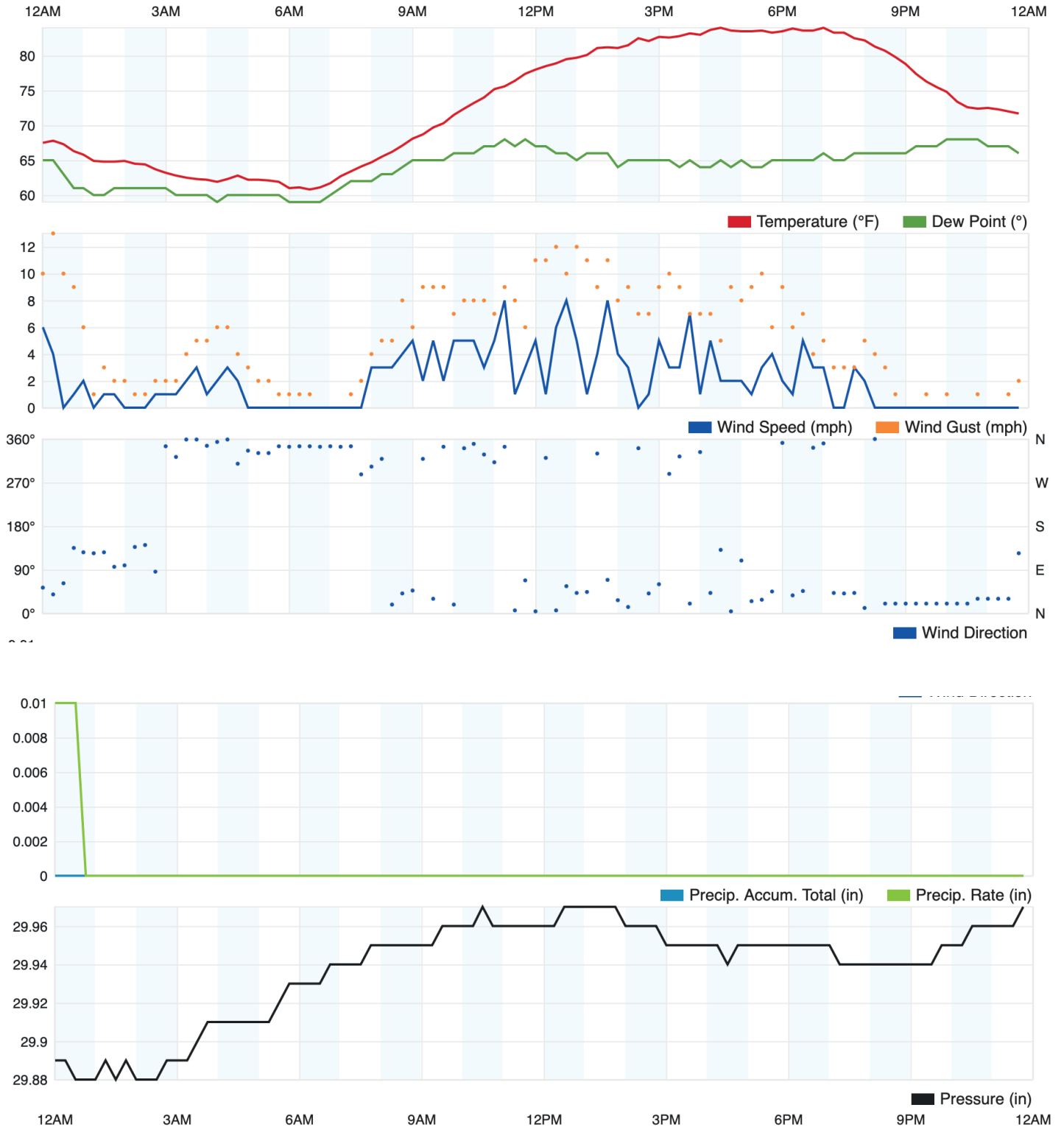
In New York, a Democratic bill to impose a 25-cent fee on deliveries within New York City has been introduced but remains in committee. Meanwhile, state agencies in Nevada and Ohio have commissioned studies examining the feasibility of retail delivery fees. Those reports have not yet led to legislative action.

Based in Seattle, Alex Brown covers environmental issues for Stateline. Prior to joining Stateline, Brown wrote for The Chronicle in Lewis County, Washington state.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 26 of 84

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 27 of 84

Today



High: 86 °F

Sunny

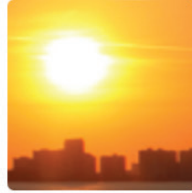
Tonight



Low: 65 °F

Mostly Clear

Friday



High: 91 °F

Hot

Friday Night



Low: 69 °F

Slight Chance
T-storms

Saturday



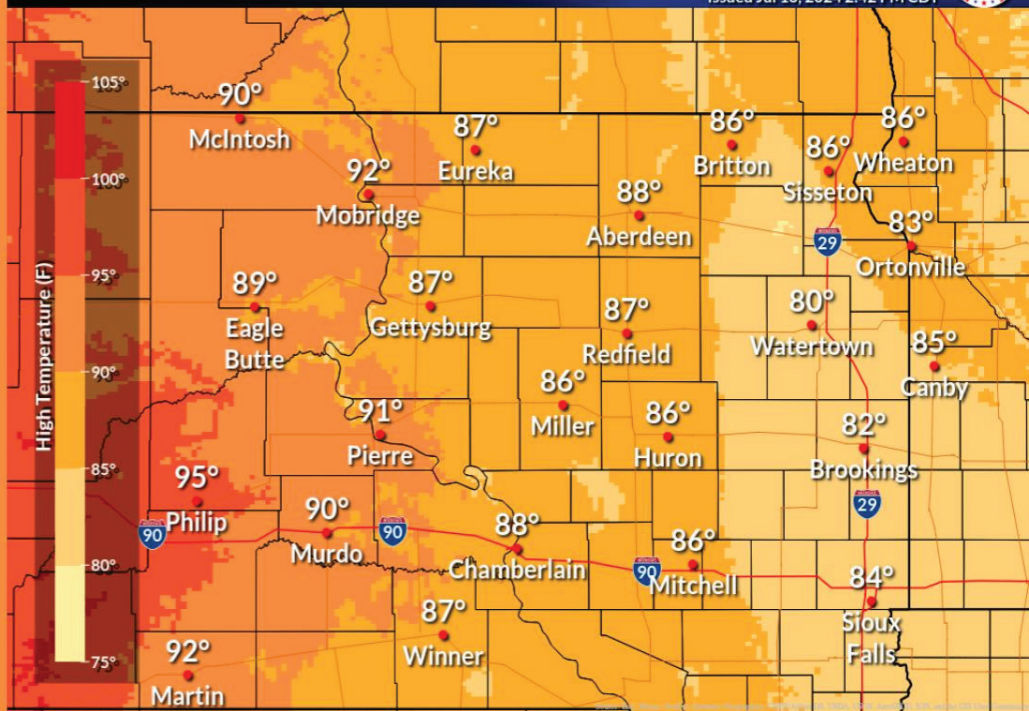
High: 97 °F

Hot

- ☀️ Highs in the upper 80s to low 90s
- ☀️ Above average temperatures continue into the weekend and start of next work week
- ☀️ Will feel more like upper 90s to around 100
- ☀️ Plans for outdoor activities should include extra water and frequent breaks!

High Temperatures for Thursday

Weather Forecast Office
Aberdeen, SD
Issued Jul 10, 2024 2:42 PM CDT



Thursday, highs will be in the upper 80s to low 90s - about 5 degrees above average. This will start our string of above normal temperatures lasting into early next week. "Feels like" temperatures will be in the upper 90s to around 100. Any outdoor plans should include extra water and frequent breaks.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 28 of 84

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 84 °F at 6:56 PM

Low Temp: 61 °F at 6:28 AM

Wind: 13 mph at 12:08 AM

Precip: : 0.01

Today's Info

Record High: 110 in 1930

Record Low: 45 in 1941

Average High: 85

Average Low: 60

Average Precip in July.: 1.26

Precip to date in July: 3.56

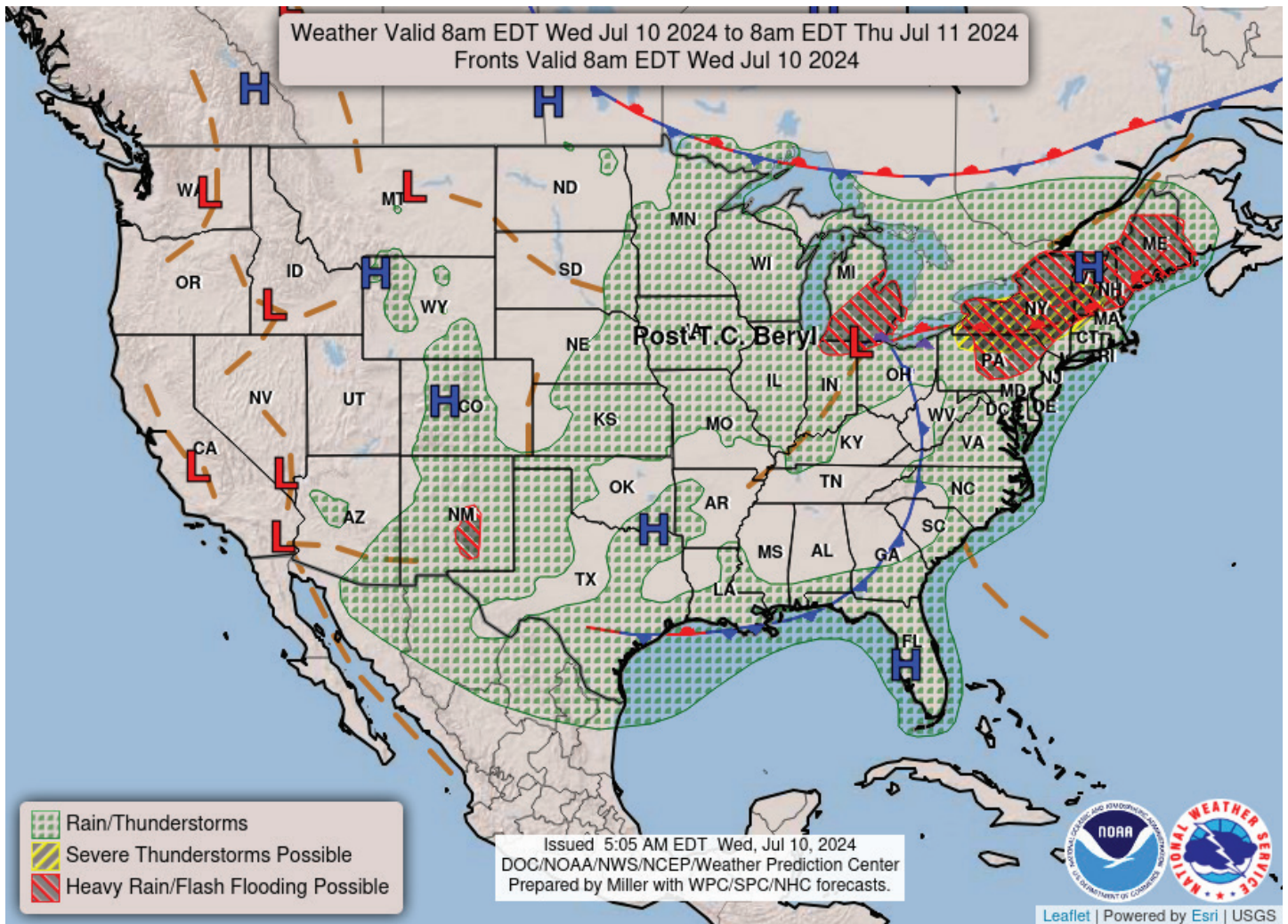
Average Precip to date: 12.27

Precip Year to Date: 14.51

Sunset Tonight: 9:22:09 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:54:48 am

Day length: 15 hours, 28 minutes



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 29 of 84

Today in Weather History

July 11, 1909: A deadly, estimated F2 tornado moved ESE across the Simpson Park section of Big Stone City in South Dakota. A bus was thrown from the road, and the driver was killed. Two homes and several barns were destroyed. As the tornado crossed the foot of Big Stone Lake, it tore apart a railroad yard and killed four of the 26 Armenian laborers who were living in box cars at Ortonville, Minnesota. Nineteen were injured.

July 11, 1981: Severe thunderstorms moved eastward across the entire length of the South Dakota along the northern portion of the state. Hail, with the largest up to nine inches in circumference, resulted in 100 percent crop loss, damage to numerous buildings and loss of livestock. Trees were stripped, and large limbs were broken. High winds also accompanied these storms. Storms lasted into the early morning hours on the 12. Thunderhawk in Corson County had estimated winds of 70 to 75 mph that destroyed a machine shop and seven metal grain storage bins. In and around Pollock, a silo was moved three feet off the foundation. Power and telephone lines were down. Rainfall measured 2.28 inches in two hours in Pollock.

1888 - Heavy snow reached almost to the base of Mt. Washington, NH, and the peaks of the Green Mountains were whitened. (David Ludlum)

1936: From July 5-17, temperatures exceeding 111 degrees in Manitoba and Ontario claimed 1,180 lives (mostly the elderly and infants) during the most prolonged, deadliest heat wave on record. Four hundred of these deaths were caused by people who drowned seeking refuge from the heat. In fact, the heat was so intense that steel rail lines and bridge girders twisted, sidewalks buckled, crops wilted and fruit baked on trees. Some record temperatures include; 112 degrees at St. Albans and Emerson, Manitoba, 111 at Brandon, Manitoba, 108 at Atikokan, Ontario, and Winnipeg, Manitoba.

1987 - Early morning thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 90 mph at Parkston, SD, and wind gusts to 87 mph at Buffalo, MN. Later in the day strong thunderstorm winds at Howard WI collapsed a circus tent injuring 44 persons. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced heavy rain in southern Texas, with totals ranging up to 13 inches near Medina. Two men drowned when their pick-up truck was swept into the Guadalupe River, west of the town of Hunt. Ten cities in the eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Baltimore, MD, reported a record high reading of 102 degrees for the second day in a row. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather from North Dakota to Indiana. Thunderstorms in North Dakota produced tennis ball size hail at Carson. Thunderstorms in Indiana produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Fort Wayne. Five cities in the Southern Atlantic Coast Region reported record high temperatures for the date, including Lakeland, FL, with a reading of 100 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990: The costliest hailstorm in U.S. history occurred along the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies. (Denver, Colorado): Softball-sized hail destroyed roofs and cars, causing more than \$600 million in total damage.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 30 of 84

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

GOD AND THE CAFETERIA

After church one Sunday the head usher decided to take his family to a local buffet to eat. After they went through the line and selected their food, they sat at a table near a window. Little Margie unfolded her napkin, folded her hands, bowed her head and waited for the prayer of thanksgiving. After a moment or two she opened her eyes to see what the others were doing. To her surprise, her father had started to eat.

"Mom," she whispered quietly, "Dad has started to eat, and we haven't thanked Jesus for the food. What's going on?"

"Hush," said her father. "People don't give thanks in a place like this."

"Why?" asked Margie. "Doesn't God go to a buffet?"

Our thankfulness should not fluctuate with where we are or what is going on in our lives. Though our circumstances change and feelings fluctuate, we must never forget that God is in all things doing what is in our best interest. Remember: He is always at work in our lives shaping us into the person He wants us to be.

When life's trials turn to triumphs we can rejoice with Paul and say, "Thanks be to God who gave us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" He always protects us and provides for us and is worthy of our thanks.

Prayer: We often forget, Father, that You love us with an everlasting love and that You are with us even though others forget about our pains and sorrows. Thank you! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:57



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

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 31 of 84

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

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

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

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent

www.397news.com

Subscription Form

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

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

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

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

E-mail _____

Password _____

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

paypal.me/paperpaul



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 32 of 84



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
07.09.24

21 26 54 60 64 3

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$203,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 7
Mins 12 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.10.24

6 21 25 42 51 4

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$4,980,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 22
Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.10.24

2 14 19 22 36 9

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 37 Mins 11
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.10.24

7 18 21 34 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$32,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 37
Mins 12 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.10.24

16 17 33 56 66 18

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 6
Mins 12 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.10.24

7 11 12 27 46 26

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$54,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 6
Mins 11 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 33 of 84

Upcoming Groton Events

- 07/04/2024 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/09/2024 FREE SNAP Application Assistance 1-6pm at the Community Center
- 07/14/2024 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
- 07/17/2024 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm
- 07/17/2024 Pro Am Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/25/2024 Dairy Queen Miracle Treat Day
- 07/25/2024 Summer Downtown Sip & Shop 5-8pm
- 07/25/2024 Treasures Amidst The Trials 6pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church
- 07/26/2024 Ferney Open Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
- 07/27/2024 1st Annual Celebration in the Park 1-9:30pm
- 08/05/2024 School Supply Drive 4-7pm at the Community Center
- 08/02/2024 Wine on 9 at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
- 08/08/2024 Family Fun Fest 5:30-7:30pm
- 08/9-11/2024 Jr. Legion State Baseball Tournament
- 08/12/2024 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 1:15-7pm
- 09/07/2024 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 09/07-08/2024 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
- 09/08/2024 Sunflower Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
- 10/05/2024 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
- 10/11/2024 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
- 10/31/2024 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
- 10/31/2024 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
- 11/28/2024 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
- 12/01/2024 Groton Snow Queen Contest, 4:30 p.m.
- 12/07/2024 Olive Grove 8th Annual Holiday Party & Tour of Homes with Live & Silent Auctions 6pm-close

News from the Associated Press

10 miners are injured and rescuers are searching for dozens of others in Polish coal mine accident

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — At least 10 Polish coal miners have been injured and rescuers are searching for dozens of others after a powerful tremor shook the Rydułtowy coal mine about 1,200 meters (4,000 feet) underground on Thursday, officials said.

The cause of the tremor was not immediately clear.

Polish Coal Mining Group spokesperson Aleksandra Wysocka-Siembiga said the accident took place around 8 a.m.

“Some of these people are being brought to the surface, some have already been brought up and some have not yet been reached by the rescuers,” Wysocka-Siembiga said.

Officials said 68 miners were in the area at the time. Fifteen have been brought to the surface, including 10 who were hospitalized, officials said. Airborne ambulances were taking part in the rescue operation.

Łukasz Pach, head of the ambulance service in Katowice, the mining region’s main city, said the hospitalized miners were in stable condition.

Opened in 1792, the Rydułtowy mine currently employs about 2,000 miners.

China tells NATO not to create chaos in Asia and rejects label of ‘enabler’ of Russia’s Ukraine war

By KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China accused NATO on Thursday of seeking security at the expense of others and told the alliance not to bring the same “chaos” to Asia.

The statement by a Foreign Ministry spokesperson came a day after NATO labeled China a “decisive enabler” of Russia’s war against Ukraine.

“NATO hyping up China’s responsibility on the Ukraine issue is unreasonable and has sinister motives,” spokesperson Lin Jian said at a daily briefing. He maintained that China has a fair and objective stance on the Ukraine issue.

China has broken with the United States and its European allies over the war in Ukraine, refusing to condemn Russia’s invasion. Its trade with Russia has grown since the invasion, at least partially offsetting the impact of Western sanctions.

NATO, in a communique issued at a summit in Washington, said China has become an enabler of the war through its “no-limits partnership” with Russia and its large-scale support for Russia’s defense industrial base.

Lin said that China’s trade with Russia is legitimate and reasonable and based on World Trade Organization rules.

He said that NATO’s “so-called security” comes at the cost of the security of other countries. China has backed Russia’s contention that NATO expansion posed a threat to Russia.

China has expressed concern about NATO’s budding relationships with countries in the region. Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea sent their leaders or deputies to the NATO summit this week.

“China urges NATO to ... stop interfering in China’s internal politics and smearing China’s image and not create chaos in the Asia-Pacific after creating turmoil in Europe,” Lin said.

Chinese troops are in Belarus this week for joint drills near the border with Poland, a NATO member. The exercises are the first-ever with Belarus, an ally of Russia.

Lin described the joint training as normal military exchange and cooperation that is not directed at any particular country.

Biden awards \$1.7 billion to boost electric vehicle manufacturing and assembly in eight states

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is awarding nearly \$2 billion in grants to help restart or expand electric vehicle manufacturing and assembly sites in eight states, including the presidential battlegrounds of Michigan, Pennsylvania and Georgia.

The Energy Department will issue grants totaling \$1.7 billion to create or retain thousands of union jobs and support auto-based communities that have long driven the U.S. economy, the White House said Thursday. Besides the three battleground states, grants also will go to EV facilities in Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland and Virginia.

The grants cover a broad range of the automotive supply chain, including parts for electric motorcycles and school buses, hybrid powertrains, heavy-duty commercial truck batteries and electric SUVs, the White House said.

“Building a clean energy economy can and should be a win-win for union autoworkers and automakers,” President Joe Biden said in a statement. “This investment will create thousands of good-paying, union manufacturing jobs and retain even more — from Lansing, Michigan to Fort Valley, Georgia — by helping auto companies retool, reboot and rehire in the same factories and communities.”

The grants, paid for by the landmark 2022 climate law, will help deliver on his commitment to ensure the future of the auto industry is made in America by American union workers, Biden said.

“Workers that were left behind by my predecessor are now making a comeback with the support of my policies, including the conversion grants my administration is announcing today,” the Democratic president said.

The grant announcement comes as Biden rejects calls to step aside after a disastrous debate performance last month. Biden, 81, has acknowledged his poor performance but has brushed it off as a “bad night,” even as many congressional Democrats, including former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, have declined to give him a full vote of confidence.

Former President Donald Trump, meanwhile, has maintained a tight grip on the Republican party, even after becoming the first former president to be convicted of a felony.

“There is nothing harder to a manufacturing community than to lose jobs to foreign competition and a changing industry,” said Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, a former Michigan governor. Even as competitors like China invest heavily in electric vehicles, the grants announced Thursday will help “ensure that our automotive industry stays competitive — and does it in the communities and with the workforce that have supported the auto industry for generations,” Granholm said.

The new grants complement \$177 billion in private sector investment in EV and battery manufacturing since Biden took office, Granholm and other officials said.

Awards are subject to negotiations to ensure that commitments to workers and communities are met, officials said. The Energy Department also will complete environmental reviews before money is awarded later this year.

If awards are completed as planned, the selected projects would create more than 2,900 jobs and help ensure that about 15,000 union workers are retained across all 11 facilities, the White House said. The grants come after successful union organizing drives from Chattanooga, Tennessee to Fort Valley, Georgia, the White House said.

“The president will not take his foot off the pedal when it comes to supporting the U.S. auto industry,” said White House national economic adviser Lael Brainard.

Transportation accounts for the single largest source of U.S. greenhouse gas pollution and Biden has made electric vehicles a key part of his climate agenda.

“Not only are we delivering new sources of clean transit — that iconic yellow school bus going green — but we’re also delivering to the American people options to save ... thousands of dollars of fuel and maintenance costs over the lifetime of a vehicle” by going electric, White House climate adviser Ali Zaidi said.

Companies slated for awards include Blue Bird Body Co., which will receive nearly \$80 million to convert a Georgia site previously used to make diesel-powered motor homes to produce electric school buses. Fiat Chrysler will receive nearly \$335 million to convert an idled assembly plant in Illinois to assemble electric vehicles, and \$250 million in a separate grant to convert an Indiana transmission plant to make electric drive modules for EVs.

General Motors, meanwhile, will receive \$500 million to convert an assembly plant in Lansing, Michigan to produce EVs. GM production lines will further support and benefit from ongoing investments in a U.S. battery supply chain, accelerating the commercialization of advanced, affordable EVs, the White House said.

Harley-Davidson will receive \$89 million to expand a facility in York, Pennsylvania to make electric motorcycles, and Volvo Group will receive \$208 million to upgrade three manufacturing facilities that supply and build Mack and Volvo-branded heavy-duty trucks. The plants are located in Macungie, Pennsylvania; Dublin, Virginia; and Hagerstown, Maryland.

Pressure mounts on Houston power company to quickly restore service as city sweats after Beryl

By JUAN A. LOZANO and JIM VERTUNO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Pressure mounted Wednesday on Houston's power utility as millions of residents still had no electricity nearly three days after Hurricane Beryl made landfall, stoking questions over how a city that is all too familiar with destructive weather was unable to better withstand a Category 1 storm.

With frustration growing as Houston residents spent another sweltering day in search for places to cool off, fuel up and grab a bite to eat, a CenterPoint Energy executive faced a barrage from city leaders who wanted to know why it was taking so long to get the lights back on again. Mayor John Whitmire bluntly called on the utility to do a better job.

"That's the consensus of Houstonians. That's mine," Whitmire said.

Late Wednesday, CenterPoint Energy said it had "restored more than 1 million of the 2.26 million customers impacted by Hurricane Beryl in the first 55 hours of its restoration efforts, and continues to focus on restoring customers without power."

"Based on its continued progress, the company expects to have an additional 400,000 customers restored by the end of the day on Friday, July 12 and an additional 350,000 customers restored by the end of the day on Sunday, July 14," the utility's statement said.

Beryl came ashore as a Category 1 hurricane, the weakest type, but has been blamed for at least seven U.S. deaths — one in Louisiana and six in Texas. Earlier, 11 died in the Caribbean.

The storm's lingering impact for many in Texas, however, was the wallop to the power supply that left much of the nation's fourth-largest city sweltering days later in hot and humid conditions that the National Weather Service deemed potentially dangerous.

"Maybe they thought it wasn't going to be so bad, but it's had a tremendous effect. They needed to be better prepared," construction worker Carlos Rodriguez, 39, said as he gathered apples, oranges and ready-to-eat meal packs at a food distribution center. His family, with two daughters ages 3 and 7, was struggling, he said.

"We have no power, we're going to bed late and I'm using a fan made out of a piece of cardboard to give my kids some relief," Rodriguez said.

Hospitals were sending patients who could not be released to homes with no power to a sports and event complex where an area was set up to hold as many as 250 people. As of late Wednesday afternoon, about 40 patients had arrived and about 70 to 75 others were on their way, Office of Emergency Management spokesman Brent Taylor said.

Power outages peaked at 2.7 million customers after the storm made landfall Monday, according to PowerOutage.us.

As of late Wednesday afternoon there were 1.6 million customers without power in the Houston area, including 1.3 million CenterPoint customers.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 37 of 84

Brad Tutunjian, the CenterPoint vice president for regulatory policy, defended the company's response while facing pointed questions from the City Council and said more than 1 million customers had their power restored by Wednesday.

"To me, I think that's a monumental number right there," Tutunjian said.

The company acknowledged that most of the 12,000 workers it brought in to help the recovery were not in the Houston area when the storm arrived. Initial forecasts had the storm blowing ashore much farther south along the Gulf Coast, near the Texas-Mexico border, before it headed toward Houston.

CenterPoint would not ask third-party workers from other companies and municipalities to pre-position and "ride out" the storm "because that is not safe," Tutunjian said. Instead they are asked to be as close as possible to respond after the storm moves through.

One major difficulty with Beryl was restoring power knocked out by fallen trees and branches, Tutunjian said.

"When we have storms such as this, with the tree completely coming down ... taking out our lines and our poles, that's where all the time comes in to do the restoration work," he said.

But council members pressed for answers about why CenterPoint, which has been the Houston area for about 100 years, hasn't been more aggressive in trimming trees during calm weather or putting more of its power lines underground. The company has been putting new lines underground in residential areas for decades, Tutunjian responded.

Two council members said they received a text about a house that burned down after reporting a downed power line. The texts reported the fire department said it could not do anything, and the utility did not respond. City Council member Abbie Kamin called the extended lack of power a "life safety concern."

It's hardly the first time the Houston area has faced widespread power outages.

In 2008, Hurricane Ike made landfall on Galveston Island as a Category 2 storm, causing flooding and wind damage to the Houston area. It left about 2.2 million CenterPoint customers without power, according to the Harris County Flood Control District, which said that 75% of the power was restored within 10 days.

Houston was also hit hard in 2021 when Texas' power grid failed during a deadly winter storm that brought plunging temperatures, snow and ice. Millions lost power and were left to ride out the storm in frigid homes or flee.

As recently as May, storms killed eight people and left nearly a million customers without power.

Gov. Greg Abbott, who is in Asia on an economic development trip, questioned why Houston has repeatedly been plagued with power problems after severe weather. In an interview with Austin television station KTBC, Abbott, who has been governor since 2014, said he would direct the Texas Public Utility Commission to investigate that, as well as the preparations for and response to Beryl.

"CenterPoint will have to answer for themselves, if they were prepared, if they were in position," Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who was acting governor with Abbott away, said Tuesday. "Their company is responsible for that. The state was in position."

Sharon Carr, 62, a lifelong Houston resident, was frustrated.

"Every little thing affects us that way. There's too much wind, we don't have power. It's raining a long time, we don't have power," Carr said. "And it takes three, four, five days to get it back up. Sometimes that's too long for people that are sickly, can't stand the heat or don't have transportation to get to cooling centers."

Raquel Desimone, who has lived in the area since about 2000 and experienced many storms, was surprised at having to scramble yet again for power and shelter.

"I went through Rita, Ike, Imelda and Harvey," Desimone said. "That the infrastructure can't handle a basic storm, leaving for a Category 1, (it) is sort of crazy to me that I'm having to do this."

Russian missile attack on Ukraine's largest hospital complicates treatment of kids with cancer

By HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The National Cancer Institute in Kyiv was busier than usual after a Russian missile struck Ukraine's largest children's hospital this week, forcing the evacuation of dozens of its young patients battling cancer.

Russia's heaviest bombardment of the Ukrainian capital in four months severely damaged Okhmatdyt Children's Hospital on Monday, terrorizing families and severely impacting their children already battling life-threatening diseases.

Now, some families face a dilemma of where to continue their children's treatment.

Oksana Halak only learned about her 2-year-old son Dmytro's diagnosis — acute lymphoblastic leukemia — at the beginning of June. She immediately decided to have him treated at Okhmatdyt, "because it is one of the best hospitals in Europe."

She and Dmytro were in the hospital for his treatment when sirens blared across the city. They couldn't run to the shelter as the little boy was on an IV. "It is vitally important not to interrupt these IVs," Halak said.

After the first explosions, nurses helped move them to another room without windows, which was safer. "We felt a powerful blast wave. We felt the room shaking and the lights went out," she recalled. "We understood that it was nearby, but we didn't think it was at Okhmatdyt."

Shortly after that, they were evacuated to the National Cancer Institute, and now Dmytro is one of 31 patients who, amid a difficult fight with cancer, have to adapt to a new hospital. With their arrival, the number of children being treated for cancer there has doubled.

Dmytro and the other patients were offered evacuation to hospitals abroad, and Halak wants his further treatment to be in Germany.

"We understand that with our situation, we cannot receive the help we should be getting, and we are forced to apply for evacuation abroad," she said.

Other hospitals in the city that took in children for treatment faced a similar overcrowding situation after the shutdown of Okhmatdyt, where hundreds of children were being treated at the time of the attack.

"The destroyed Okhmatdyt is the pain of the entire nation," said the director general of the National Cancer Institute, Olena Yefimenko.

Almost immediately after the attack, messages began circulating on social media networks to raise money for the hospital's restoration. Many parents whose children were treated there wrote messages of gratitude, saying their children survived due to the hospital's care despite difficult diagnoses. In just three days, Ukrainians and private businesses raised more than \$7.3 million through the national fundraising platform UNITED24.

Work to rebuild the hospital is already underway. Okhmatdyt doctors balance their duties treating their young evacuated patients while working to get the children's hospital reopened. But even with resources and determination, that may take months.

Even so, Yuliia Vasylenko has already decided that her 11-year-old son, Denys, will remain in Kyiv for his cancer treatment.

The day of the attack the boy, diagnosed with multiple spinal cord tumors, was supposed to start chemotherapy. The strike delayed his treatment indefinitely, and Denys has to undergo additional examinations and tests, his mother said.

Denys was very scared during the strike, said his mother as she wheeled him around the National Cancer Institute in a wheelchair.

"The last days felt like an eternity," she said. Only now are they slowly recovering from the stress.

"If we go somewhere, with our diagnosis, we would have to retake all the tests from the beginning," she said, adding that this could take three to four months.

"And we don't know if we have that time," she said.

People of diverse backgrounds in France welcome far right's defeat, but fear a rise in hate speech

By JADE LE DELEY and DIANE JEANTET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — For many French voters of diverse backgrounds, last Sunday's parliamentary election results were a relief, seemingly an embrace of the country's ethnic variety instead of a victory for xenophobic far-right forces.

"It was a moment of joy, a light at the end of the tunnel," Loventine Bensimon said about the ballot results. She celebrated Sunday with thousands of others who rallied against the far right at Place de la Republique in Paris around a giant patchwork French flag that read, "France is the fabric of migrations."

"But the fight is not over," said Bensimon, 27, a Black woman who works in communications. "We have to fight against the racism we face every day, and which has been more visible in the past few weeks."

Thought to be on the verge of seizing a majority in the National Assembly, the anti-immigration National Rally eventually came in third in Sunday's vote, after centrists and leftists joined forces. Candidates in three-way races dropped out of the runoff to favor the challenger considered most likely to beat the far right.

But civil society groups and concerned citizens say the campaign has exposed racist hate speech and occasional violence that are unlikely to vanish when the new parliament takes office.

Franco-Algerian Nacera Houngues, 61, says she experienced abuse because of her origins for the first time during the campaign. The day after the first round of the elections in June, Houngues says neighbors knocked over her trash can, called her obscene epithets and spat at her during an altercation.

"I am afraid, really afraid, a feeling I never had before," Houngues said, fighting off tears.

She filed a police complaint the next day, but says she's afraid of leaving her house. She has been living in Chacrise, a quiet town north of Paris, with her five children and her Franco-Beninese husband for 37 years.

It is difficult to quantify race and ethnicity as factors in French society using statistics because the country doesn't count people by race or religion as part of its doctrine of colorblind universalism.

It isn't known, for example, if people of foreign backgrounds came out to vote Sunday in higher-than-expected numbers, though the turnout in general was high. Polling agencies do not track voting patterns by ethnic group.

A human rights panel has, however, reported a significant increase in complaints about racist and anti-semitic acts. France's National Consultative Commission on Human Rights reported a 32% spike in racist incidents in 2023, and an "unprecedented" surge in antisemitic acts, up 284% from 2022. The report said the numbers were likely an undercount, given that many victims of racism don't file complaints.

According to France's national statistics agency, one million people said that they were victims of racism at least once last year.

Neither agency gave a breakdown of the complainants by race or ethnicity, though the human rights panel said there has been a decrease in tolerance toward Black, Arab, Roma, Jewish and Muslim people in France.

The panel cites the National Rally as a key party in emboldening hate speech but says that other parties have contributed too, including militants close to far-left party France Unbowed, which has been accused of antisemitism.

A renowned Nazi hunter in France, Serge Klarsfeld, went so far as to urge voters to choose the far right party over the country's leftist coalition if faced with the choice of just those two options, saying he feared France Unbowed because of its "antisemitic overtones."

For Dominique Sopo, the head of civil society group SOS Racisme, the numbers reflect an especially tense political climate.

He said the essential message of the National Rally, which has seen a steady increase in support over the past decade, is that French people would be better off "if they strike, one way or another — symbolically, legally — immigrants and their children."

His group recently filed a complaint after residents of an upper-class neighborhood in Western Paris reported receiving anonymously distributed flyers reading "Stop the Blacks."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 40 of 84

France's diverse population includes new immigrants and those whose foreign roots stretch back generations, including people from former French colonies in Africa. A 2022 study found that about a third of French people under 60 have an immigrant ancestor, though exact breakdowns are unknown.

Nonna Mayer, a leading expert on the National Rally, said the growth in voter support for the far right party in recent years has made people more comfortable using xenophobic and antisemitic language in public.

"The National Rally defends a 'French first' strategy that makes foreigners and immigrants scapegoats," Mayer said. "Its success favors racist acts, mostly verbal aggressions."

During the campaign, the National Rally singled out dual citizens, saying they shouldn't be given certain "strategic jobs." One of its candidates, Roger Chudeau, sparked controversy when he said on TV that it had been a "mistake" to have appointed Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, a French-Moroccan, to the position of education minister in 2014-17, saying it was "not a good thing for the Republic."

President Emmanuel Macron's centrist government has also tightened immigration measures, exacerbating anti-immigrant feeling in society, the human rights panel said.

For Jessica Saada, a 31-year-old Jewish woman of Tunisian origins working in a French pediatric hospital, racism is more palpable now than she can ever remember. She said she opposed the National Rally's proposals to ban Muslim headscarves in public or outlaw ritual slaughter, which would restrict French Muslims' and Jews' access to kosher and halal meat.

"It's just going to cause problems and bring more hate," she said.

Still, many saw Sunday's results as bringing hope.

Thomas Bertrand, who works in the advertising business in Paris, said Sunday's vote was about "individual freedoms, and also tolerance and respect for others."

Schoolteacher Rachid Sabry said he came to France as a student a few decades ago and fell in love with the country.

"I built a family with a French woman, and a few weeks ago, there was a moment of doubt," he said. "Now I feel much better."

Chileans confront a homelessness crisis, a first for one of South America's richest countries

By NAYARA BATSCHKE Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — The presidential residence of Gabriel Boric, the leftist millennial leader of Chile elected three years ago in the wake of public unrest over income inequality, shares a street in downtown Santiago with an overwhelmed homeless shelter.

The sight of cardboard boxes and blankets strewn across sidewalks in Boric's bohemian neighborhood serves as a sharp reminder of his struggle to fulfill his promise to give Chileans "a better life."

A pandemic-induced recession combined with a housing crunch and a major immigration influx have expanded Chile's homeless population like never before. Over the last four years, the rate of homelessness in one of South America's richest economies has jumped more than 30%, transforming the streets of a country that prides itself on its prosperity.

"The resources allocated to combat homelessness have been reduced, and the homeless population has increased," said Rosario Carvajal, a city councilor in the capital, Santiago.

Even in the "barrios altos" — the well-heeled areas that presidents before Boric called home — destitute families have increasingly turned benches into beds and trees into toilets. In the beachside tourist hub of Viña del Mar, huddles of improvised tents have overshadowed the trendy art scene.

Chile said it has registered 21,126 homeless people this year, compared to 15,435 in 2020. Government figures rely on single-night snapshots by municipalities. Social workers put the real count around 40,000.

Last month, the government announced that, for the first time, it would include the homeless in its national census. Aid workers say that a better number, however flawed, will better reflect the scope of the problem and the country's progress — or lack thereof — toward fixing it.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 41 of 84

"This should force the government to implement more effective social policies," said Andrés Millar, from Chilean charity Hogar de Cristo.

The sheer visibility of so many homeless people in Chile — a country considered far wealthier and more stable than its neighbors — has pushed the problem up on the agenda. "There is a lot of pressure from the neighbors to recover the public spaces," said Carvajal.

Chilean police, reviled by the left for their harsh handling of the mass 2019 protests, have taken to tearing down encampments, joining municipal workers in routinely removing rough sleepers from parks and plazas.

"Police come and take everything, my tent, my blankets, my HIV medication," said 43-year-old Paris López who sleeps outside in downtown Santiago. She stays up all night, she said, fearing violence from police as much as assaults from criminal gangs that have recently gained a foothold in Chile.

"It's dangerous," Victoria Azevedo, a homeless mother of two, said of life on the streets in Santiago — particularly amid a crime wave that has driven Chile's homicide rate up 50% since 2018. "If you are a woman and have children, it's worse."

In recent years, Chile has seen a demographic shift in its homeless population. Although there won't be an official breakdown until the census comes out next year, experts say that the country's affordable housing crunch has pushed more women and children onto the streets.

"Entire families have lost their resources to pay rent," said Ximena Torres, another advocate from Hogar de Cristo.

Pandemic lockdowns wreaked hardship on Chile's economy while it was struggling to recover from the 2019 mass protests that cost the country at least \$3 billion, Chile's national insurance organization estimated.

Lavish pandemic aid — including a measure allowing Chileans to withdraw their pensions early — stoked inflation. The unemployment rate doubled to a record-breaking 13% from 2019 to 2020, making it difficult for many to pay rent. The central bank raised interest rates, lenders hiked the cost of loans and a housing crisis was born.

Housing prices jumped 70% over the last decade, said economist Gonzalo Durán from SOL Foundation, a Chilean think tank.

"I'm extremely broken inside," said Moka Valdés, bursting into tears as she tried to describe the shock of having landed on the street last November after losing her job.

Migration on the rise

Many families bouncing between Chile's tent camps are undocumented migrants lured to the country by its reputation as South America's most successful economy.

Government data shows that nearly 1.6 million of Chile's 19 million inhabitants are registered migrants, up from 1.3 million in 2018. The number of undocumented migrants has also soared, from 16,000 in 2020 to a staggering 53,875 two years later, according to the Observatory of Responsible Migration, a Chilean watchdog.

As the economy has slumped and public backlash against migrants intensified, Chile tightened visa requirements for Venezuelans — the largest group of recent arrivals. And last year President Boric deployed armed forces to the northern border with Peru, a key migration pass, to check migrants' documents and arrest smugglers.

After fleeing Venezuela and finding life as a migrant intolerable in Colombia and then Ecuador, 34-year-old Karen Salazar dreamed of Chile. Via foot and pick-up truck, Salazar, her husband and their two small children braved freezing cold mountains, rough desert terrain and predatory smugglers, lured by Chile's reputation as a rare upwardly mobile nation in the region.

They didn't find what they hoped for. At first, they lived in a flimsy tent encampment in northern Chile. Then they moved to Santiago, where they slept outside in a public park.

"We know why we're in this situation, but to see the children like this is heart-breaking," Salazar said from the shelter on Boric's street, where she queues for free meals.

As the crisis mounts, aid groups have intensified their pressure on the government. There are fewer than 200 homeless shelters nationwide, barely enough to accommodate 13% of Chile's current homeless population, said local advocate Rodrigo Ibarra Montero.

Upon taking office in March 2022, Boric vowed to build 260,000 new government-sponsored houses during his four-year term. Given the scale of the problem, many fear that will not be enough.

But the president hopes it will.

"We are making steady progress," he insisted in a recent speech inaugurating a new public housing development in Santiago. "You should judge us by the end of our term."

Colombia beats Uruguay 1-0 and will face Lionel Messi and Argentina in Copa America final

By STEVE REED AP Sports Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Colombia is headed to the Copa America championship game for the first time in 23 years after a contentious win over Uruguay in which it played the second half a man short and players brawled with fans in the stands following the final whistle.

Jefferson Lerma scored in the 39th minute for a 1-0 win Wednesday night and a matchup with Lionel Messi and defending champion Argentina on Sunday.

"Until you overcome your weaknesses you cannot grow," Colombia coach Nester Lorenzo said through an interpreter. "And when you overcome those obstacles you can grow."

Daniel Muñoz was ejected in first-half stoppage time for an elbow that led to his second yellow card. Despite Uruguay having 61.9% possession, Colombia held on to reach the championship for the first time since winning its only Copa title as host in 2001.

Colombia extended its unbeaten streak to a team record 28 games, one more than from 1992-94 and the longest current streak in men's international soccer.

"They are very hungry as players and very eager and they really add many elements to their game beyond the tactical side," Lorenzo said.

In a match that included seven yellow cards in addition to the red, players from both teams pushed and shoved in a scrum on the field at the final whistle. Darwin Núñez and about a dozen Uruguay teammates went into the stands as fans brawled.

A video showed Núñez hitting a fan in Colombian team colors.

CONMEBOL released a statement after the game saying that it strongly condemns any act of violence that affects the game.

"Our work is based on the conviction that soccer connects and unites us through its positive values," the organization said. "There is no place for intolerance and violence on and off the field. We invite everyone in the remaining days to pour all of their passion into cheering on their national teams and having an unforgettable party."

Defending champion Argentina and Colombia meet at Miami Gardens, Florida, in the tournament finale. The Albiceleste are seeking a record 16th Copa title and are looking to join Spain from 2008-12 as the only countries to win three straight major championships.

Uruguay stays in Charlotte to meet Canada in Saturday night's third-place match.

Before an overwhelmingly pro-Colombia crowd of 70,644 that filled Bank of America Stadium with yellow jerseys and flags, Uruguay fell behind for the first time in the tournament.

James Rodríguez's corner kick was headed in from short range by Lerma, who outjumped José María Giménez for his third international goal and second of the tournament. Rodríguez has six assists in the tournament -- triple the total of any other player.

Muñoz received his first yellow card from Mexican referee César Ramos in the 31st minute for a reckless slide tackle on Maximiliano Araújo and his second for elbowing Manuel Ugarte in the stomach.

Rodríguez was given a yellow card in the 55th minute for arguing with Ramos when the referee failed to stop play after Richard Ríos was kicked on a shin by Darwin Núñez.

Ríos was removed on a stretcher, re-entered the match, then went down in another challenge and was substituted in the 62nd minute. Rodríguez was removed at the same time to keep him eligible for the final.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 43 of 84

Colombia goalkeeper Camilo Vargas didn't have to make his first save until he stopped Nicolás de la Cruz in the 68th minute.

Luis Suárez, Uruguay's career leader with 68 goals, entered in the 66th minute and hit the outside of a post with a shot in the 71st. He grasped his head in his hands in disgust.

"The moments in which we could unbalance the game, we did not succeed," Uruguay coach Marcelo Bielsa said. "We should have generated more goal situations than we did."

Colombia's Mateus Uribe, another second-half sub, put an open shot wide in the 88th, and Uribe's open shot in the fourth minute of stoppage time ricocheted off the body of sliding goalkeeper Sergio Rochet and then the crossbar.

Uruguay moved Rochet up to the attacking half of the field in the final minute, desperate for a goal.

The match was played in 90-degree heat on a surface that was converted from artificial turf to grass in the weeks leading up to the game.

Players on the NFL's Carolina Panthers have been outspoken about soccer teams having the luxury of playing on grass on their home field. Players say NFL games on artificial turf leave them more susceptible to injuries.

With two games left, attendance of 1.48 million is just 1,663 shy of the total for the 2016 tournament in the United States,

Biden's press conference will be a key test for him. But he's no master of the big rhetorical moment

By ZEKE MILLER AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has a fresh opportunity Thursday to try to prove to the American public that he's capable of serving another four years after his shocking debate flop threw the future of his presidency into doubt. But Biden is not known as a master of the big rhetorical moment and his recent cleanup efforts have proved inadequate.

Biden, 81, will close out the NATO summit in Washington — an event meant to showcase his leadership on the world stage — with a rare solo press conference. His stamina and effectiveness are under the microscope like never before and he's struggling to quell the Democratic Party's panic about his chances this November.

By many metrics, from job growth and major legislation to the expanded transatlantic alliance, Biden can point to successes during his tenure in office. But where he has sometimes failed — spectacularly, in the case of the debate — is at a defining part of the role that isn't in the official job description: Delivering inspiring oratory that commands the attention and respect of the nation.

Biden has tried to step up his performance since the debate but his follow-up interview on ABC last week was disappointing. Nothing he's tried seems to be stopping the bleeding, with more lawmakers calling for him to bow out in the face of concerns that he could hand the White House back to former President Donald Trump.

Americans tend to regard their leaders less for what they do than how they make them feel, and Biden's debate disaster has shaken his party to its core.

"The debate was a reminder that you can have as many policies as you want, but what the public sees and hears might matter more," said Julian Zelizer, the Princeton presidential historian.

Rhetoric is intertwined with the modern presidency, from Franklin D. Roosevelt's "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself" to Ronald Reagan's "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

It can inspire in the wake of tragedy, like George W. Bush's bullhorn speech on the smoky rubble at Ground Zero and help a war- and recession-weary country recover its sense of self, like Barack Obama's "Yes we can!" Even Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" cry echoed the temperament of the agitated nation.

"People saw Trump as a reflection of a more turbulent, chaotic and angry country," Zelizer said. "Voters may see Biden's frailty as a symbol of weakness or its own kind of instability."

Biden can give a good speech — his State of the Union address earlier this year helped quiet doubters

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 44 of 84

about his viability as a candidate. But his strength as a president and politician has been how his humanity in intimate settings resonated with voters, and the power of his personal narrative and down-to-earth roots.

Yet those moments, in private or before small crowds, even if amplified on social media as Biden's team hopes, are certain to reach fewer people than the tens of millions who watched his bout with Trump.

Despite a drumbeat of calls from some in his party to step aside, Biden has dug in, insisting he's the best Democrat to defeat Trump, whose candidacy he's called an existential threat to democracy.

His press conference will be closely watched for his ability to think on his feet, to demonstrate dynamism and to articulate both that he is still capable of doing the job and of winning it once more.

Even before the debate, Biden's victories as president have often come despite his inability to sell them to a skeptical public. Heading into his face-off with Trump he has historically low job approval ratings for an American leader. And he's been unable to overcome voters' pessimism over the direction of the country and a majority of voters in his own party had already believed him too old to effectively lead the country.

The debate, rather than helping Biden reset the race against Trump, confirmed voters' preestablished fears about him, said Allison Prash, a professor of rhetoric who researches presidential communications at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

"The president is a symbol," she said, adding that Americans often look to the president as a mirror to reflect on their hopes and their fears.

"You could argue that when you see a president that appears infirm, has difficulty doing some basic tasks of the presidency, you have questions about the state of the nation," she said.

She contrasted his recent halting public comments with his message from the campaign four years ago.

"In 2020 he was promising to demonstrate confidence in the face of chaos. He was saying, 'I'm this steady force,'" Prash said. "If that's how you branded yourself and you do the opposite thing in this debate, that's exactly why this was so jarring for the public."

Biden aides and allies responded to the debate with a series of public pronouncements defending Biden's mental state and fitness for the job, notably focused on the big decisions of the Oval Office, rather than his ability to articulate them to the masses.

"I have not seen any reason whatsoever to question or doubt his lucidity, his grasp of context, his probing nature, and the degree to which he is completely in charge of facts and figures," White House National Security spokesman John Kirby said Monday.

Brett McGurk, the White House coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa and a veteran of four administrations, said he has never been concerned about Biden's decision-making.

Speaking of Biden, he told The Associated Press: "I have never seen a president who is not prepared, who is not deliberate, who is not asking rigorous questions of those in the room or of a foreign leader," adding that Biden "makes decisions sometimes which are often difficult decisions, and then actually follows up."

While Biden and his team have made a concerted effort since the debate to increase his public visibility — which had been limited by aides worried about Biden's penchant for gaffes or missteps — he has proven to be uneven and at times underwhelming.

Campaigning in Pennsylvania on Sunday, Biden delivered remarks for less than 10 minutes at a Philadelphia church and a Harrisburg rally, but spent three times as long taking selfies and hugging kids — the sort of feel-good content that has always bolstered his political fortunes.

A call-in interview with MSNBC's "Morning Joe" showcased Biden's defiance and distaste of party "elites" as he pledged to stay in the race. In his opening remarks at the NATO summit, Biden was forceful in defense of the alliance.

"The more he gets out there to campaign with voters, the starker the contrast and easier the choice will be for these voters: between Joe Biden, a decent man fighting for the middle class and an unhinged billionaire like Trump who wants to terminate the ACA and turn our country into a dictatorship," said campaign spokesman Kevin Munoz, referring in part to the Affordable Care Act.

But asked in the ABC interview about how he would feel if his candidacy handed the White House back to Trump, he offered a mangled and less-than-inspiring response: "I'll feel as long as I gave it my all and I did the good as job as I know I can do, that's what this is about."

Government power in the US is a swirl of checks and balances, as a recent Supreme Court ruling shows

By DEEPTI HAJELA Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The delegates at the 1787 Constitutional Convention were trying to create a new governing framework for the fledging United States of America. They knew they needed SOMEONE to be at the helm of the federal government.

Someone had to be in position to see that the laws legislated by Congress “be faithfully executed,” to make treaties, to be the military’s commander-in-chief, to preside over the nation. You know, a president.

But they didn’t want to risk creating a new autocrat. After all, they had just fought a war to get away from one. Many of the fundamental responsibilities — making laws, collecting taxes, declaring war — were put under the purview of Congress, itself split into two chambers as a way to manage authority among the states. The federal judiciary, the Supreme Court, was also made independent. The powers would be balanced.

Where something starts, though, isn’t always where it stays, as America’s history since the convention that created the U.S. Constitution shows. Through the centuries, as the country expanded from 13 states to 50, as the roles and responsibilities of government expanded through wars and social change and changing global realities, the powers that the branches of government pushed to have for themselves and in relation to each other have made checks and balances a moving target.

A new development in the realm of presidential power

That was on display yet again this month, when the Supreme Court displayed its own power as it ended a hugely significant term with a 6-3 decision that in turn broadened presidential power by saying former presidents had widespread immunity from criminal prosecution for acts undertaken while they were in office.

For the framers of the Constitution, “generally the idea was, we need each of the branches to be strong enough to protect themselves against being overwhelmed by the others,” says Andrew Rudalevige, professor of government at Bowdoin College.

That meant including things like presidential veto power over legislation, and also the 2/3 majority vote from the houses of Congress that could override that veto.

But in comparison to Congress in the country’s early years, “the presidency was a very weak institution,” says Benjamin Ginsberg, professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University, who pointed out that Congress initially didn’t even give the president money to pay for household staff.

Framers “knew you needed an executive. They knew that, for example, if the country was attacked, you couldn’t wait for Congress to convene and decide what to do, you needed someone who could act,” he says. “On the other hand, they were very concerned about creating a king.”

Of course, those holding the office weren’t willing to be mere caretakers. Article II of the Constitution said executive power would be vested in the president but didn’t specify what those powers specifically were, and so presidents began to define them. Rudalevige cites Andrew Jackson, who expanded how and when veto power was used during his presidency.

It was the 20th century, though, that really saw the increase in the power of the presidency, particularly through the New Deal era under Franklin D. Roosevelt and World War II. The government expanded through social programs, financial reforms and regulations to get out from under the Great Depression, all of which needed administering.

That didn’t happen by itself, of course; Congress passed legislation that allowed it to be so, statutes that various federal agencies were charged with coming up with rules for if the laws didn’t include specific instructions. In effect, that was ceding power to the executive branch.

“Where Congress has failed is keeping up with the presidency on these things,” says William Antholis, president and CEO of the Miller Center at the University of Virginia, which studies the country’s executive office.

Congress “could be much more explicit in its rulemaking and not hand over the rulemaking to the executive branch,” he says.

The high court's role is significant

The Supreme Court played a role as well. It staked out some of its own ground in the Marbury vs. Madison decision of 1803, which established judicial review — the principle that the court had the power to overturn laws it deemed unconstitutional.

At times, the court has allowed for the federal government and its regulatory agencies to be the ones making the rules, as in 1984 in a ruling known as the Chevron doctrine. In others, it has clamped down on regulatory power, as it did late last month in overturning Chevron. In recent years, it overturned legal precedents in abortion access and affirmative action in higher education.

In actuality, compared to other countries, the power of the American presidency as framed in the U.S. Constitution is in some ways much more limited, says Zachary Elkins, associate professor of government at the University of Texas at Austin and co-director of the Comparative Constitutions Project. The president, for example, can't make laws or disband Congress.

That doesn't mean presidents haven't tried to get their agendas pushed through, whether it's by executive orders and signing statements when it comes to policies and programs, or pushing their choices for who they want to see on the federal bench and the Supreme Court, or stepping into the space created by seismic events like the Civil War or the Sept. 11 attacks to take action.

"Presidents push," Rudalevige says. "Sometimes Congress just doesn't push back. Then the boundary moves."

Biden says pressure on him is driven by elites. Voters paint a more complicated picture

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI, ISABELLA VOLMERT, MARC LEVY and JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press SAGINAW, Mich. (AP) — Considering her choices in this year's rapidly approaching presidential election, Rochelle Jones thinks both major party candidates should step aside.

"They just need to get somebody that's going to run this country right, that don't have any health issues, that care about us people," the 39-year-old culinary worker at Michigan State University said this week.

As President Joe Biden struggles to recover from a disastrous debate performance last month, he has argued that desires for him to leave the campaign are limited to his party's "elite." But Jones' sentiment reflects a more nuanced reality unfolding in some of the most politically competitive states, from here in Michigan to Pennsylvania and Nevada.

In interviews this week, many voters said they still support Biden. But they also expressed concern that a lack of enthusiasm for his candidacy could cause a lot of Democratic voters to stay home, handing the race to Republican Donald Trump. Some are concerned as well about the impact Biden's continued candidacy would have on down-ballot races at a time when control of the U.S. House and Senate are also up for grabs.

Although Biden has gotten some of his strongest support in recent days from Black elected officials, many Black swing state voters said they were worried. Jones, who is Black, said she will probably vote for Biden when it comes down to it but feels he needs to address inflation, a top-of-mind issue for her.

The one unifying factor for most Democrats — elites and regulars alike — is the threat of a second Trump term. Biden has long argued that voters will reject Trump when faced with a one-on-one race, whatever their reservations about the incumbent.

Anxiety among rank-and-file voters comes as Biden fends off public and private pressure for him to relinquish the Democratic nomination and allow the party to field a different candidate to take on Trump in November. House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi on Wednesday said merely "it's up to the president to decide" if he should stay in the race, Vermont Sen. Peter Welch called on Biden to withdraw from the election, becoming the first Senate Democrat to do so, and celebrity donor George Clooney also said Biden should not run.

"What I hear more so from people of color is, 'if not him, what's the alternative?'" said Craig Tatum,

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 47 of 84

a pastor and prominent Black leader in Saginaw, Michigan. He said many people he speaks with found Biden's performance troubling but remain committed to voting Democratic after seeing Trump's presidency and character.

A demographic microcosm of Michigan at large, Saginaw County is the only Michigan bellwether to side with the winner in the last four presidential elections. The county's namesake city, population 44,000, is about half Black, while surrounding areas are predominantly Republican.

Trump had a slight lead over Biden in two national polls of voters conducted after the debate. One of the polls — conducted by SSRS for CNN — found that three-quarters of voters, including more than half of Democratic voters, said the party has a better chance of winning the presidency in November with a candidate other than Biden. Around 7 in 10 voters — and 45% of Democrats — said that.

Biden's physical and mental ability is a reason to vote against him, according to the CNN/SSRS poll. And around 6 in 10 voters, including about one-quarter of Democrats, said that reelecting Biden as president this November would be a risky choice for the country rather than a safe one, according to a New York Times/Siena College poll. That poll also found that Democrats were split on whether Biden should remain the nominee.

Ethan Williams, who teaches at a summer education program in Saginaw, will turn 18 before the November election. He said he and his friends who watched the debate were shocked by what they saw.

"We were not excited to say the least," he said.

Williams said he found the Supreme Court's recent ruling on presidential immunity, Trump's felony convictions and the manifesto for a second Trump term known as Project 2025 to be particularly alarming. He plans to vote for Biden despite his age but may focus more on local and state races.

"In terms of best chance of beating Trump, it would have to be Biden," he said. "But I don't like that fact."

Pamela Pugh, a lifelong Saginaw resident running in the Democratic primary for a battleground congressional district in Michigan, demurred when asked whether Biden should be the Democratic nominee. She said down-ballot candidates like her will need to rely on themselves for voter turnout and to attract voters "who don't believe that those at the top of the ticket represent them."

Pugh called Biden's debate performance "beyond subpar," and emphasized that he has "work to do in our communities" to earn another four years in office.

Members of the influential Congressional Black Caucus and other Black activists in the Democratic Party have emerged as some of the most forceful backers of Biden remaining the party's choice and staying on the ticket. In 2020's Democratic primary, Black voters elevated Biden to victories in early primary states with overwhelming support in South Carolina, on Super Tuesday and in Midwestern states like Michigan.

As long as Black people and young people vote in strong numbers, Biden will win, said Brian Humphrey, a 62-year-old activist in Pennsylvania, who is Black. But he frets about younger voters — such as his granddaughters, one 18 and one 19 — who lack enthusiasm for a man four times their age.

"I'm a little worried right now, to be honest," Humphrey said. "You know, because of his age and things and my young grandkids telling me 'he's too old' and 'I'm not voting for that old man', you know, trying to convince them that he's the better of the two candidates."

For Alyse Sobosan, a school counselor in Las Vegas, the turmoil over Biden's debate performance is a distraction Democrats don't need right now.

"It's taking away from the campaign and the real issues," she said. "That's all anyone can talk about, so it makes sense to me if he steps down."

Despite the ambivalence and anxiety among so many Democrats, Biden retains support ranging from enthusiastic to resigned.

James Johnson, a retired public school teacher in Pennsylvania, said Biden's performance was "difficult to watch" but "did not in any way deter my determination to vote for him and see him elected as the next president."

Teresa Hoover, a Democrat who went to hear Biden speak Sunday in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, agreed.

"He was the chosen candidate and I think at this point we're just months away, it's kind of hard to switch

gears," Hoover said.

For all the consternation, the debate did not change the fundamental reality that the candidates are both unpopular and Americans are unenthusiastic about their choices.

"I couldn't bring myself to watch the debate because I'm struggling with both candidates," said Christian Garrett, a 26-year-old manager of a summer education program in Saginaw.

Garrett said he is unsure of how he is going to vote, believing Trump is vindictive and Biden is incompetent to continue leading.

"So that's why I feel that this case has become a joke, because we as Americans have sat by and watched this just unfold," he said. "And it's almost as if we don't have the power when really the power lies in us."

Trump wants Black and Latino support.

But he's not popular with either group, poll analysis shows

By LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As he prepares to accept the Republican nomination for the third time, Donald Trump has promised new efforts to expand his coalition — and, in particular, to win over more of the nonwhite voters who largely rejected him during the 2020 election.

But an AP analysis of two consecutive polls conducted in June by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research shows that about 7 in 10 Black Americans have a somewhat or very unfavorable view of Trump, as do about half of Hispanic Americans. While both groups do see Trump a little more favorably than when he left office in 2021, their opinion of him is still more negative than positive.

Any gains in support among Black or Hispanic Americans would be helpful for Trump, who won 35% of Hispanic voters and 8% of Black voters in 2020, according to AP VoteCast, and has struggled to grow his appeal beyond his base. He's hoping, in part, to capitalize on frustration with his opponent, since President Joe Biden's favorability among Black and Hispanic Americans has also fallen since 2021. It's not clear, though, that Biden's loss of enthusiasm among Black and Hispanic adults is helping Trump's own standing among these groups.

Views of Trump are remarkably stable

Most Americans have a negative view of Trump, according to the AP-NORC analysis, which combined two polls conducted close together to yield a bigger sample size. About 6 in 10 U.S. adults have a very or somewhat unfavorable opinion of him, while about 4 in 10 have a favorable opinion. Overall views of Trump were similar in January and July 2021, too, in the months after Biden took office.

Views of Trump are generally very stable — even a felony conviction didn't change how Americans see him. After he was convicted in May of 34 felony counts in New York for falsifying business documents, polls from the AP-NORC Center found that overall views of Trump barely budged. During the Trump presidency, Gallup polls found that Trump's average job approval rating was 41%, and it never exceeded 50%.

About half of Hispanic adults view Trump negatively

Trump has said on the campaign trail that he has "great support" from Hispanic communities. But the AP analysis found that about half of Hispanic adults have an unfavorable view of Trump. About 4 in 10 Hispanic adults in the recent AP-NORC polls see Trump positively, up from about 3 in 10 in January 2021.

And even though Trump's campaign advisers have said he has specific appeal among Hispanic men and younger Hispanic adults because of his business focus, that's not what the poll analysis shows. Current views of Trump are similar among Hispanic men and women, older and younger Hispanic adults, and those with and without a college degree.

Biden, too, is facing a perception problem among this group. The new analysis found that about half of Hispanic adults have an unfavorable view of him, while about 4 in 10 have a favorable view. That's a substantial decline from early 2021, when about 6 in 10 Hispanic Americans saw Biden positively.

Trump remains unpopular among Black adults

The Trump campaign has claimed that he could perform better among Black adults this year than in 2020, speculating that his legal woes could endear him to a community that has faced systematic discrimination

by the criminal justice system, and that his immigration policies could also hold appeal.

Black adults continue to have broadly negative views of Trump, however: About 7 in 10 Black adults have an unfavorable view of Trump, a decrease of about 20 percentage points since early 2021. And although the Trump campaign has said Black men may be more receptive to his message, Black men and women have similar views of him.

Younger Black Americans might be a little more open to Trump's appeals. About one-third of Black younger adults — those under 45 — see him positively, compared to around 1 in 10 Black adults who are 45 or older. But most younger Black adults view him unfavorably.

About 6 in 10 Black Americans, meanwhile, have a positive view of Biden — down from 8 in 10 when he took office.

The poll of 1,115 adults was conducted June 7-10, 2024 and the poll of 1,088 adults was conducted June 20-24, 2024. Both were conducted using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. ____

Wildfire risk rises as Western states dry out amid ongoing heat wave baking most of the US

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Authorities in Western states warned of the rising risk of wildfires as hot conditions and low humidity dry out the landscape amid a protracted heat wave that is expected to bake much of the U.S. again Thursday.

California's top fire official said Wednesday that so far this year the state has responded to more than 3,500 wildfires that have scorched nearly 325 square miles (842 square kilometers) of vegetation — five times the average burned through July 10 in each of the past five years.

"We are not just in a fire season, but we are in a fire year," Joe Tyler, director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, said at a news conference. "Our winds and the recent heat wave have exacerbated the issue, consuming thousands of acres. So we need to be extra cautious."

California crews working in scorching temperatures and single-digit humidity were battling at least 19 major wildfires Wednesday, including a stubborn 45-square-mile (117-square-kilometer) blaze that prompted evacuation orders for about 200 homes in the mountains of Santa Barbara County northwest of Los Angeles. Flames made fuel of tinder-dry brush and grass.

Several wildfires were also burning in Oregon, including one about 111 miles (178 kilometers) east of Portland that blew up to 11 square miles (28 square kilometers) Wednesday due to hot temperatures, gusty winds and low humidity, according to the state fire marshal.

Oregon Gov. Tina Kotek issued an emergency authorization allowing additional resources to be deployed against fires breaking out as the state has seen record daily high temperatures. Portland reached 103 F (39.4 C) and Salem and Eugene hit 105 F (40.5 C) on Tuesday. The number of potentially heat-related deaths in Oregon rose to 10, according to the state medical examiner's office.

More than 142 million people around the U.S. were under heat alerts Wednesday, especially in Western states, where dozens of locations tied or broke heat records over the weekend and were expected to keep doing so all week.

Las Vegas on Wednesday recorded its record fifth consecutive day of temperatures sizzling at 115 F (46.1 C) or greater. The temperature climbed to 115 shortly after 1 p.m. at Harry Reid International Airport, breaking the old mark of four consecutive days set in July 2005. And the record could be extended, or even doubled, by the weekend.

Already Nevada's largest city has broken 16 heat records since June 1 "and we're not even halfway through July yet," National Weather Service meteorologist Morgan Stessman said Wednesday. That includes an all-time high of 120 F (48.8 C) set on Sunday, which beat the previous 117 F (47.2 C) record.

In Henderson, Nevada, more than a dozen officers from the Office of Public Response drove around

Wednesday offering cold water, bus passes and rides to cooling stations to homeless people and anyone else in need.

On the other side of the nation, the weather service warned of major-to-extreme heat risk over portions of the East Coast. An excessive heat warning remained in place Wednesday for the Philadelphia area, northern Delaware and nearly all of New Jersey. Temperatures were around 90 F (32.2 C) for most of the region, and forecasters warned the heat index could soar as high as 108 F (42.2 C).

In the West, heat was blamed for a motorcyclist's death over the weekend in California's Death Valley National Park. At the Grand Canyon, the National Park Service was investigating the death of a third hiker in recent weeks. Temperatures on parts of some trails can reach 120 F (48.8 C) in the shade.

Arizona authorities were investigating the death of a 2-year-old who was left alone in a hot vehicle Tuesday afternoon in Marana, near Tucson, police said. At Lake Havasu, a 4-month-old died from heat-related complications Friday, the Mohave County Sheriff's Department said.

The U.S. heat wave came as the global temperature in June was a record warm for the 13th straight month and marked the 12th straight month that the world was 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times, the European climate service Copernicus said. Most of this heat, trapped by human-caused climate change, is from long-term warming from greenhouse gases emitted by the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, scientists say.

"Climate change is real," California Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a news conference Wednesday. "Those extremes are here present every day in the great state of California. If you don't believe in science, you have to believe your own eyes the lived experience all of us have out here in the western United States, for that matter, all around the globe."

Newsom said the state was prepared to fight the conflagrations, praising federal support in providing new fire suppression planes to the state. Cal Fire also has been using cameras and artificial intelligence to spot fires and alert first responders, officials said.

In southern New Mexico, heavy rain produced flash flooding on top of wildfire burn scars for the second day in a row on Wednesday, forcing an estimated 1,000 residents to flee their homes in Ruidoso, city spokeswoman Kerry Gladden said.

She said emergency responders had conducted more than 30 water rescues but there were no immediate reports of deaths or serious injuries. She said most bridges over rivers and streams were closed, as was U.S. Highway 70 — one of the main arteries into town — while crews removed debris.

Alec Baldwin cast as reckless flouter of rules at his trial in cinematographer's shooting

By MORGAN LEE and ANDREW DALTON Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Prosecutors sought to cast Alec Baldwin as someone who flouts rules and has little regard for safety at the first day of his New Mexico trial in the shooting of a cinematographer.

Special prosecutor Erlinda Ocampo Johnson repeatedly referred to Baldwin playing "make-believe" with a revolver on the set of the film "Rust," and said it led to very real danger and the death of Halyna Hutchins, whom she called "a vibrant 42-year-old rising star."

Ocampo Johnson told jurors in her opening statement Wednesday that Baldwin "requested to be assigned the biggest gun available" and that during a training session for it, he had "people filming him while he's running around shooting this gun."

The prosecutor said behind-the-scenes video will show Baldwin casually disregarding basic firearm safety. "You will see him using this gun as a pointer to point at people, point at things," Ocampo Johnson said. "You will see him cock the hammer when he is not supposed to cock the hammer, you will see him put his finger on the trigger when his finger's not supposed to be on the trigger."

Hutchins' death and the wounding of director Joel Souza nearly three years ago sent shock waves through the film industry and led to the felony involuntary manslaughter charge against Baldwin that could result in up to 18 months in prison.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 51 of 84

The trial of the 66-year-old star of "30 Rock" and frequent host of "Saturday Night Live" continues Thursday with testimony from a crime scene technician with the Santa Fe County Sheriff's Department.

The beginning of testimony of the technician, Marissa Poppell, allowed jurors to see the revolver and the spent round from the shooting.

Baldwin's lawyer Alex Spiro emphasized in his opening statement that Baldwin did only what actors always do.

"He must be able to take that weapon and use it in the way that the person he's playing would," Spiro told jurors.

That includes pulling the trigger. Baldwin has said the gun fired accidentally, but Spiro said that it still would not be manslaughter even if he had willfully fired it.

"On a movie set, you're allowed to pull that trigger," said Spiro.

Spiro called the shooting an "unspeakable tragedy" and that an "amazing person" dies, but said the responsibility lies with the film's armorer Hannah Gutierrez-Reed, who has already been convicted of involuntary manslaughter, and of assistant director David Halls, who told Baldwin the gun was "cold."

"It had been checked and double checked by those responsible for ensuring the gun was safe," Spiro said. "He did not tamper with it, he did not load it himself. He did not leave it unattended."

The first witness to take the stand was Nicholas LeFleur, the first law enforcement officer to arrive at the movie set at Bonanza Creek Ranch after the shooting, and his lapel camera video gave jurors a glimpse of the chaotic scene: a grim view of an apparently unconscious Hutchins as LeFleur and others worked to revive her.

Later in the video, LeFleur can be seen telling Baldwin not to speak to the other potential witnesses, but Baldwin repeatedly does.

"Was Mr. Baldwin supposed to be talking about the incident?" special prosecutor Kari Morrissey asked him.

"No ma'am," LeFleur replied.

"Does he appear to be doing it anyway?" Morrissey asked.

"Yes, ma'am," LeFleur said.

Among those sitting in the gallery behind Baldwin watching the trial were his wife Hilaria Baldwin, younger brother Stephen Baldwin and older sister Elizabeth Keuchler — who wiped away tears at times during the proceedings.

Biden's candidacy faces new peril, including first Senate Democrat saying he should exit race

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's imperiled reelection campaign hit new trouble Wednesday as House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi said merely "it's up to the president to decide" if he should stay in the race, celebrity donor George Clooney said he should not run and Democratic senators and lawmakers expressed fresh fear about his ability to beat Republican Donald Trump.

Late in the evening, Vermont Sen. Peter Welch called on Biden to withdraw from the election, becoming the first Senate Democrat to do so. Welch said he is worried because "the stakes could not be higher."

The sudden flurry of grave pronouncements despite Biden's determined insistence he is not leaving the 2024 race put on public display just how unsettled the question remains among prominent Democrats. On Capitol Hill, an eighth House Democrat, Rep. Pat Ryan of New York, and later a ninth, Rep. Earl Blumenauer of Oregon, publicly asked Biden to step aside.

"I want him to do whatever he decides to do," Pelosi said Wednesday on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" rather than declaring Biden should stay in. While Biden has said repeatedly that he's made his decision, she said, "We're all encouraging him to make that decision, because time is running short."

It's a crucial moment for the president and his party, as Democrats consider what was once unthinkable — having the incumbent Biden step aside, just weeks before the Democratic National Convention that is on track to nominate him as their candidate for reelection.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 52 of 84

Biden is hosting world leaders in Washington for the NATO summit this week with a crowded schedule of formal meetings, sideline chats and long diplomatic dinners, all opportunities to showcase he is up for the job despite a worrisome performance last month in the first presidential debate with Trump.

His party at a crossroads, Biden faces the next tests Thursday — in public, at a scheduled news conference that many Democrats will be watching for signs of his abilities, and privately, as his top advisers meet with the Senate Democratic caucus to discuss their concerns and shore up support.

Welch said in a Washington Post opinion piece published Wednesday evening, "We cannot unsee President Biden's disastrous debate performance."

The first-term senator said Vermont loves Biden and he was calling on the president to withdraw from the race "with sadness."

To be sure, Biden maintains strong support from key corners of his coalition, particularly some in the Congressional Black Caucus on Capitol Hill, whose leadership was instrumental in ushering the president to victory in 2020 and is standing by him as the country's best choice to defeat Trump again in 2024.

"At this moment, the stakes are too high and we have to focus," Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota told The Associated Press earlier in the week, saying Democrats are "losing ground" the longer they fight over Biden's candidacy. "Democracy is on the line. Everything we value as Democrats, as a country, is on the line, and we have to stop being distracted."

Pelosi has been widely watched for signals of how top Democrats are thinking about Biden's wounded candidacy, her comments viewed as important for the party's direction as members weigh possible alternatives in the campaign against Trump.

Because of her powerful position as the former House speaker and proximity to Biden as a trusted longtime ally of his generation, Pelosi is seen as one of the few Democratic leaders who could influence the president's thinking.

The lack of a full statement from Pelosi backing Biden's continued campaign is what lawmakers are likely to hear most clearly, even as she told ABC later she believes he can win. Her remarks came as actor Clooney, who had just hosted a glitzy Hollywood fundraiser for the president last month, said in a New York Times op-ed that the Biden he saw three weeks ago wasn't the Joe Biden of 2020. "He was the same man we all witnessed at the debate."

Democrats have been reeling over whether to continue backing Biden after his poor showing in the June 27 debate and his campaign's lackluster response to their pleas that Biden, at 81, show voters he is ready for another four-year term.

Sen. Michael Bennet, a Democrat from Colorado, spoke forcefully late Tuesday about the danger of a second Trump presidency and said it's for the president "to consider" the options.

Stopping just short of calling for Biden to drop out, Bennet said on CNN what he told his colleagues in private — that he believes Trump "is on track to win this election — and maybe win it by a landslide and take with him the Senate and the House."

Bennet said, "It's not a question about politics. It's a moral question about the future of our country."

By Wednesday, Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut said he was "deeply concerned" about Biden winning the election, which he called existential for the country.

"We have to reach a conclusion as soon as possible," Blumenthal said on CNN.

And Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia told reporters: "I have complete confidence that Joe Biden will do the patriotic thing for the country. And he's going to make that decision."

Biden and his campaign are working more intently now to shore up support, and the president met with labor leaders Wednesday, relying on the unions to help make the case that his record in office matters more than his age.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer invited Biden's campaign to address senators' concerns, and redoubled his backing of the president. "As I have made clear repeatedly publicly and privately, I support President Biden and remain committed to ensuring Donald Trump is defeated in November," he said.

The president's team is sending senior Biden advisers Mike Donilon and Steve Ricchetti, and Campaign Chair Jen O'Malley Dillon to meet with Democratic senators privately Thursday for a caucus lunch, accord-

ing to both a Senate leadership aide and the Biden campaign.

There were some concerns, however, that it could backfire. One Democratic senator who requested anonymity to speak about the closed-door meeting said it could be a waste of time if Biden would not make the case to senators himself.

Pelosi said Biden "has been a great president" who is beloved and respected by House Democrats. The Californian said she watched as he delivered a forceful speech at the NATO summit Tuesday, and she recounted his many accomplishments.

While foreign leaders are in Washington this week and Biden is on the world stage hosting the event at a critical time in foreign affairs, Pelosi encouraged Democrats to "let's just hold off" with any announcements about his campaign.

"Whatever you're thinking, either tell somebody privately but you don't have to put that out on the table until we see," she said, how it goes "this week."

Las Vegas hits record of fifth consecutive day of 115 degrees or greater as heat wave scorches US

By KEN RITTER and TY ONEIL Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Las Vegas baked Wednesday in its record fifth consecutive day of temperatures sizzling at 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46.1 Celsius) or greater amid a lengthening hot spell that is expected to broil much of the U.S. into the weekend.

The temperature climbed to 115 shortly after 1 p.m. at Harry Reid International Airport, breaking the old mark of four consecutive days set in July 2005. And the record could be extended, or even doubled, by the weekend.

Even by desert standards, the prolonged baking that Nevada's largest city is experiencing is nearly unprecedented, with forecasters calling it "the most extreme heat wave" since the National Weather Service began keeping records in Las Vegas in 1937.

Already the city has broken 16 heat records since June 1, well before the official start of summer, "and we're not even halfway through July yet," meteorologist Morgan Stessman said Wednesday. That includes an all-time high of 120 F (48.8 C) set on Sunday, which beat the previous 117 F (47.2 C) record.

Alyse Sobosan said this July has felt the hottest in the 15 years she has lived in Las Vegas. She said she doesn't step outside during the day if she can help it.

"It's oppressively hot," she said. "It's like you can't really live your life."

It's also dangerously hot, health officials have emphasized. There have been at least nine heat-related deaths this year in Clark County, which encompasses Las Vegas, according to the county coroner's office. Officials say the toll is likely higher.

"Even people of average age who are seemingly healthy can suffer heat illness when it's so hot it's hard for your body to cool down," said Alexis Brignola, an epidemiologist at the Southern Nevada Health District.

For homeless residents and others without access to safe environments, officials have set up emergency cooling centers at community centers across southern Nevada.

The Las Vegas area has been under an excessive heat warning on three separate occasions this summer, totaling about 12 days of dangerous heat with little relief even after the sun goes down, Stessman said.

Keith Bailey and Lee Doss met early Wednesday morning at a Las Vegas park to beat the heat and exercise their dogs, Breakie, Ollie and Stanley.

"If I don't get out by 8:30 in the morning, then it's not going to happen that day," Bailey said, wearing a sunhat while the dogs played in the grass.

More than 142 million people around the U.S. were under heat alerts Wednesday, especially in Western states, where dozens of locations tied or broke heat records over the weekend and are expected to keep doing so all week.

Oregon has seen record daily high temperatures, with Portland reaching 103 F (39.4 C) and Salem and

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 54 of 84

Eugene hitting 105 F (40.5 C) on Tuesday. The number of potentially heat-related deaths in Oregon has risen to 10, according to the state medical examiner's office. The latest two deaths involved a 54-year-old man in Jackson County and a 27-year-old man in Klamath County.

On the other side of the nation, the National Weather Service warned of major-to-extreme heat risk over portions of the East Coast.

An excessive heat warning remained in place Wednesday for the Philadelphia area, northern Delaware and nearly all of New Jersey. Temperatures were around 90 F (32.2 C) for most of the region, and forecasters warned the heat index could soar as high as 108 F (42.2 C). The warning was due to expire at 8 p.m. Wednesday, though forecasters said there may be a need to extend it.

The heat was blamed for a motorcyclist's death over the weekend in Death Valley National Park. At Death Valley on Tuesday, tourists queued for photos in front of a giant thermometer that was reading 120 F (48.9 C).

Simon Pell and Lisa Gregory from London left their air-conditioned RV to experience a midday blast of heat that would be unthinkable back home.

"I wanted to experience what it would feel like," Pell said. "It's an incredible experience."

At the Grand Canyon, the National Park Service was investigating the third hiker death in recent weeks. Temperatures on parts of some trails can reach 120 F (49 C) in the shade.

An excessive heat warning continued Wednesday in many parts of southern and central Arizona. Forecasters said the high in Phoenix was expected to reach 114 F (45.5 C) after it hit 116 F (46.6 C) Tuesday, tying the previous record for the date set in 1958.

Authorities were investigating the death of a 2-year-old who was left alone in a hot vehicle Tuesday afternoon in Marana, near Tucson, police said. At Lake Havasu, a 4-month-old died from heat-related complications Friday, the Mohave County Sheriff's Department said.

The U.S. heat wave came as the global temperature in June was a record warm for the 13th straight month and marked the 12th straight month that the world was 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times, the European climate service Copernicus said. Most of this heat, trapped by human-caused climate change, is from long-term warming from greenhouse gases emitted by the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, scientists say.

Firefighters in Henderson, Nevada, last week became the first in the region to deploy what city spokesperson Madeleine Skains called "polar pods," devices filled with water and ice to cool a person exhibiting symptoms of heat stroke or a related medical emergency.

Extreme heat in the West has also dried out vegetation that fuels wildfires.

A blaze burning in northern Oregon, about 111 miles (178 kilometers) east of Portland, blew up to 11 square miles (28 square kilometers) by Wednesday afternoon due to hot temperatures, gusty wind and low humidity, according to the Oregon State Fire Marshal. The Larch Creek Fire closed Highway 197 and forced evacuations for remote homes.

In California, firefighters were battling least 19 wildfires Wednesday, including a 45-square-mile (117-square-kilometer) blaze that prompted evacuation orders for about 200 homes in the mountains of Santa Barbara County.

A pro-Palestinian encampment at McGill University in downtown Montreal is being dismantled

MONTREAL (AP) — McGill University closed its downtown campus on Wednesday as Montreal police descended in large numbers to help clear a pro-Palestinian encampment that has been there for weeks.

McGill president Deep Saini called the encampment at the Canadian university, one of many that had sprung up on campuses across North America since the start of the Israel-Hamas war, "a heavily fortified focal point for intimidation and violence, organized largely by individuals who are not part of our university community."

Under pounding rain, pro-Palestinian protesters carried their belongings off campus, as bulldozers and

security forces dismantled the encampment that had been on the school's lower field.

"That was officially the last stand. There's nobody in the encampment anymore," said protester Félix Burt, 20, standing a block from McGill's lower field, where a pile of tents and wooden pallets were what remained of the protest site.

A Montreal police spokesman said one person was arrested on Wednesday for assault on a security agent. In Quebec City, Higher Education Minister Pascale Déry told reporters "it was time" to remove protesters from the encampment.

Déry said the atmosphere on campuses has become "toxic," and expressed hope that things would be calmer by the time fall classes begin.

Zaina Karim, a McGill student who wasn't inside the camp when the dismantlement began, said protesters will persist until the university discloses and cuts its ties with Israel.

"This is not the end at all," Karim said.

Campus protesters have demanded the university end its investments connected to Israel's military and cuts ties with Israeli institutions over the offensive in Gaza.

Over the last few months, students on campuses across North America have built encampments, occupied buildings and led protests to call on colleges and universities to divest their endowments from companies doing business with Israel or which support its war in Gaza.

Man suspected of killing the family of BBC radio commentator has been found, British police say

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British police said they found Wednesday the man suspected of killing three women, the wife and daughters of a well-known BBC radio commentator, near London in a brutal crossbow attack.

In a statement, Hertfordshire Police said 26-year-old Kyle Clifford was found in the Enfield area of north London, near his home, and that he is receiving medical treatment for his injuries. Police did not say how those injuries happened but stressed that they had not fired any shots.

The BBC confirmed that the women killed were members of the family of its commentator John Hunt — his 61-year-old wife Carol Hunt and their daughters Hannah, 28, and Louise, 25.

Footage from Sky News showed the suspect being carried on a stretcher out of Lavender Hill Cemetery in Enfield, which is close to his home and around 52 kilometers (17 miles) to the east from the site of the killings. Armed police officers, forensic personnel and ambulance staff had massed around the cemetery through the day.

The public had been urged not to approach Clifford, who the BBC reported had been in the British Army for a brief period of service in 2022.

"Following extensive inquiries, the suspect has been located and nobody else is being sought in connection with the investigation at this time," said Detective Inspector Justine Jenkins from the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit.

"This continues to be an incredibly difficult time for the victims' family and we would ask that their privacy is respected as they come to terms with what has happened," she added.

Jenkins said the investigation is moving "at pace" and that formal identification of the victims is yet to take place. She also said that the "premature" naming of the victims "caused great upset."

Police had been scouring a park in north London, near the home of Clifford, after being alerted Tuesday about the killings in a house in Bushey, a residential area in northwestern London. Police and ambulance crews tried to save them, but they were pronounced dead at the scene.

John Hunt is the main racing commentator for BBC 5 Live, the corporation's main news and sports radio channel. His voice is known to millions through his coverage of the world famous Grand National and The Derby.

A colleague of Hunt's and BBC 5 Live's lead presenter Mark Chapman struggled to hold back the tears as he expressed everyone's shock and pain.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 56 of 84

"We have a football match to bring you tonight ... and we will start our buildup to it shortly but this has been a heartbreaking day," he said as he opened Wednesday's coverage on 5 Live of England's semifinal match against The Netherlands in soccer's European Championship.

"John Hunt is our colleague and our friend, not just to the current 5 Live sport team but to all of those who've worked here with him over the past 20 years, and also to all of you who have enjoyed his superb commentaries," Chapman said. "So on behalf of everyone connected to 5 Live Sport, our love and thoughts and support are with John and his family."

The Daily Mail newspaper and others reported that Hunt found the bodies early Tuesday evening, after returning home from reporting at Lingfield Park racecourse south of London.

Police did not say how or whether Clifford was connected to the women, but British media had reported that he was an ex-boyfriend of one of the daughters.

Chief Superintendent Jon Simpson suggested the attack was not random and that the suspect knew the family.

Local council member Laurence Brass, who lives nearby, described the area as "a typical leafy British suburb" as he recounted his experience from the previous night.

"At about eight o'clock last night, I was watching the football on television, and suddenly a helicopter landed in the lawn outside my flat, which is at the top of this road, and then my phone started going, and I was told that there was a major incident here in Bushey and we should all keep away because there was somebody apparently on the run," he told the BBC.

Britain's new home secretary, Yvette Cooper, was kept "fully informed" about the "truly shocking" incident.

People in Britain do not need a license to own a crossbow, but it is illegal to carry one in public without a reasonable excuse.

A spokesperson for the Home Office said Cooper will "swiftly consider" the findings from a recently launched review into whether further controls on crossbows should be introduced.

Ukraine is on an 'irreversible' path to NATO.

But only after war with Russia ends

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and LORNE COOK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The 32-members of NATO on Wednesday formally declared Ukraine on an "irreversible" path to membership in the Western military alliance, offering a bare but more binding assurance of protection once its war with Russia ends.

NATO member countries individually and in Wednesday's joint statement from their summit in Washington announced a series of steps aimed at bolstering Ukraine's defenses. That includes the U.S., the Netherlands and Denmark announcing that the first NATO-provided F-16s would be in the hands of Ukrainian military pilots by this summer.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tweeted his appreciation of the effort to strengthen his air force, coming soon after Ukraine saw one of the deadliest strikes of the war.

NATO on Wednesday also announced a long-term commitment of security assistance to Ukraine, and confirmed establishment of a new NATO center aimed at ensuring that Ukraine gets a more reliable flow of arms and training from members of the alliance. But the commitments still fall short of the striking power Ukraine says it needs to defeat the invading Russian forces.

The final statement called China — which the West says provides components for Russia's weapons — a "decisive enabler" of Russia's war against Ukraine.

"Ukraine's future is in NATO," alliance members said in their statement. "We will continue to support it on its irreversible path to full Euro-Atlantic integration, including NATO membership."

The alliance welcomed Ukraine's democratic, economic and security reforms needed to join and said it would get an invitation "when Allies agree and conditions are met."

While the leaders stand ready to offer Ukraine the means to defend itself in a war now in its third year, nowhere do they say that Ukraine should prevail over Russia. Indeed, their statement said that "NATO

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 57 of 84

does not seek confrontation, and poses no threat to Russia. We remain willing to maintain channels of communication with Moscow to mitigate risk and prevent escalation.”

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg underlined that Ukraine will not join the alliance’s ranks immediately. But he insisted that must happen after the war is over to ensure that Russia never attacks Ukraine again.

Of the overall NATO assistance, he said, “We are not doing this because we want to prolong a war. We are doing it because we want to end a war as soon as possible.

Stoltenberg also delivered a passionate defense of the military alliance itself Wednesday when reporters asked about the possibility that Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, a NATO critic, could pull U.S. support for the alliance if he wins in November.

Trump has been an unofficial but primary topic at the summit, especially among East European governments that believe their country could be targets of future Russian aggression.

The criticism of the alliance from the United States, Stoltenberg said, without naming Trump, has “not been about NATO. It’s about NATO allies not investing enough in NATO. And that has changed.”

As NATO leaders met in Washington, Trump on the campaign trail Tuesday renewed his threat not to defend any NATO members from a Russian attack if their military spending does not meet NATO’s target of at least 2% of their gross domestic product. But since 2021, the number of allies meeting this target has increased from six to 23.

“The United States has been understood,” Stoltenberg said. “Allies have acted.”

Trump, meanwhile, was asked several times on Fox News Radio whether he wants the U.S. to exit NATO. He answered, “No, I want them to pay their bills.”

The U.S. and some other countries have opposed membership for Ukraine during the conflict with Russia to avoid an escalation of tensions that could lead to a larger war. They also have stressed that Ukraine must take significant steps to address corruption as well as other systemic reforms.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has long bitterly opposed neighboring Ukraine’s fight to join the Western alliance, declaring it an encroachment on Russia’s security and interests.

“I think it’s very important to give a message to the Kremlin from here — that Ukraine’s path and bridge towards NATO membership is now irreversible,” Finnish President Alexander Stubb told reporters.

President Joe Biden reaffirmed U.S. support for Ukraine but also more broadly the importance of NATO. He noted that since he took office not only has military spending increased but the number of battle groups has doubled on NATO’s eastern flank.

“We can and will defend every inch of NATO territory, and we will do it together,” Biden said.

Zelenskyy, in Washington for the NATO summit, had stressed what he called Ukraine’s urgent need for the F-16 fighter jets in a speech to friendly Republican lawmakers Tuesday night. He said his country needed more than 100 to start to counter devastating Russian air attacks on Ukraine’s cities, energy infrastructure and other vital targets. He said Russia was using 300 jets to carry out the attacks.

Six nations, including the United States, are training Ukrainians on the F-16s, but officials have not released precise numbers or all the locations.

Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen. David Allvin, just returned from Morris Air National Guard Base in Tucson, Arizona, where the U.S. training is taking place. Of the initial class of 12 Ukrainian pilots, seven completed training in May and the remaining five are expected to do so in August, Allvin said.

The pilots have learned to fly the fighter jet and will get follow-on training once they leave the U.S., but the value of getting Ukraine’s F-16 program running is more about the longer-term, he said. “I don’t know that it’s realistic to assume that it’s going to be a game-changer on the battlefield right now,” Allvin said.

Zelenskyy, meanwhile, met behind closed doors with senators for nearly an hour Wednesday and requested more defense help, said Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del. Zelenskyy also met with the Republican speaker of the House.

Separately Wednesday, the U.S. and Germany announced they would begin “episodic deployments” of long-range missiles to Germany in 2026, including Tomahawk, SM-6 and hypersonic missiles.

The announcement is notable because land-based firing of some of those missiles from within Europe would have been banned under the former Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. They were banned because the conventional missiles could have been modified to be nuclear capable and their use on the European continent would have meant that potential targets would have had no time to react.

Kimball said while the deployment is likely being done to reassure allies, Russia may respond by deploying conventional or nuclear weapons of its own.

European and U.S. allies have announced other new arms deliveries, such as dozens of air defense systems, including Patriots, this week.

The promises of new weapons come after opposition from Republican lawmakers allied to Trump blocked a U.S. support package to Ukraine for months earlier this year, allowing Russia to make battlefield gains against Ukrainian forces who were fighting with dwindling arms and ammunition.

Europeans and NATO, as a lesson from that setback, have vowed to take on more of the responsibility for ensuring a reliable flow of military support to Ukraine.

Congress OKs bill overhauling oversight of troubled federal Bureau of Prisons

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

The Senate passed legislation Wednesday to overhaul oversight and bring greater transparency to the crisis-plagued federal Bureau of Prisons following reporting from The Associated Press that exposed systemic corruption in the federal prison system and increased congressional scrutiny.

The Federal Prison Oversight Act, which the House passed in May, now goes to President Joe Biden to be signed into law. It establishes an independent ombudsman for the agency to field and investigate complaints in the wake of rampant sexual abuse and other criminal misconduct by staff, chronic understaffing, escapes and high-profile deaths.

It also requires that the Justice Department's Inspector General conduct risk-based inspections of all 122 federal prison facilities, provide recommendations to address deficiencies and assign each facility a risk score. Higher-risk facilities would then receive more frequent inspections.

Sen. Jon Ossoff, D-Ga., introduced the bill in 2022 while leading an investigation of the Bureau of Prisons as chair of the Senate Homeland Security Committee's subcommittee on investigations. It passed unanimously Wednesday without a formal roll call vote, meaning no senator objected.

Ossoff and the bill's two other sponsors, Judiciary Committee Chair Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Sens. Mike Braun, R-Ind., launched the Senate Bipartisan Prison Policy Working Group in February 2022 amid turmoil at the Bureau of Prisons, much of it uncovered by AP reporting. Reps. Kelly Armstrong, R-N.D., and Lucy McBath, D-Ga., backed the House version of the bill.

In a statement, Ossoff called Wednesday's passage "a major milestone" and that his investigation had "revealed an urgent need to overhaul Federal prison oversight."

Advocates for incarcerated people also praised the bill's passage.

"After all the headlines, scandals, and controversy that have plagued the Bureau of Prisons for decades, we're very happy to see this Congress take action to bring transparency and accountability to an agency that has gone so long without it," said Daniel Landsman, the vice president of policy for the advocacy group FAMM.

Jonathan Zumkehr, the union president at a federal prison in Thomson, Illinois, said the legislation will also help protect prison workers. At his facility, female staff members were subject to more than 1,600 instances of sexual harassment and abuse by inmates from 2019 to 2023, and had little recourse to stop it, he said.

"Inmates were exposing themselves on a daily basis and management was saying, 'oh no, it never happened here, it only happened a couple of times,'" said Zumkehr. The newly passed bill, he said, "would force an investigation to say, 'hey, did it happen?' and it would enforce reporting of the number of sexual

attacks from an inmate to a staff member, and vice versa.”

“That would be huge, because right now the bureau doesn’t track sexual attacks on staff,” said Zumkehr, who is pursuing separate legislation to make such conduct a federal crime.

A message seeking comment was left with the Bureau of Prisons.

Under the legislation, an independent federal prison ombudsman would collect complaints via a secure hotline and online form and then investigate and report to the attorney general and Congress dangerous conditions affecting the health, safety, welfare and rights of inmates and staff.

Along with inspecting prison facilities, the legislation requires the Justice Department’s Inspector General to report any findings and recommendations to Congress and the public. The Bureau of Prisons would then need to respond with a corrective action plan within 60 days.

Biden signed a separate Ossoff bill into law in December 2022 requiring the Bureau of Prisons to fix broken surveillance cameras and install new ones.

An ongoing Associated Press investigation has uncovered deep, previously unreported flaws within the Bureau of Prisons, the Justice Department’s largest law enforcement agency with more than 30,000 employees, 158,000 inmates and an annual budget of about \$8 billion.

AP reporting has revealed dozens of escapes, chronic violence, deaths and severe staffing shortages that have hampered responses to emergencies, including inmate assaults and suicides.

In April, the Bureau of Prisons said it was closing its women’s prison in Dublin, California, known as the “rape club,” giving up on attempts to reform the facility after an AP investigation exposed rampant staff-on-inmate sexual abuse.

Last year, two high-profile prisoners were attacked and another killed himself in federal prisons.

Former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was stabbed 22 times by a fellow prisoner last November at the Federal Correctional Institution in Tucson, Arizona. The suspect said he targeted Chauvin because of his notoriety for killing George Floyd, federal prosecutors said.

Disgraced former sports doctor Larry Nassar was stabbed in July 2023 at a federal penitentiary in Florida, and “Unabomber” Ted Kaczynski killed himself at a federal medical center in June 2023.

Alec Baldwin’s involuntary manslaughter trial starts with witnesses recalling chaotic set shooting

By MORGAN LEE and ANDREW DALTON Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — A defense attorney told jurors Wednesday that the shooting death of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins was an “unspeakable tragedy” but that “Alec Baldwin committed no crime; he was an actor, acting.”

Baldwin’s lawyer Alex Spiro emphasized in his opening statement in a Santa Fe, New Mexico, courtroom that Baldwin, who is on trial for involuntary manslaughter, did exactly what actors always do on the set of the film “Rust,” where Hutchins was killed in October 2021.

“I don’t have to tell you any more about this, because you’ve all seen gunfights in movies,” Spiro said.

Special prosecutor Erlinda Ocampo Johnson said in her opening statement that before the shooting, Baldwin skipped safety checks and recklessly handled a revolver.

“The evidence will show that someone who played make believe with a real gun and violated the cardinal rules of firearm safety is the defendant, Alexander Baldwin,” Ocampo Johnson said.

Spiro replied that “these cardinal rules, they’re not cardinal rules on a movie set.”

“On a movie set, safety has to occur before a gun is placed in an actor’s hand,” Spiro told the jury.

The first witness to take the stand was the first law enforcement officer to arrive at Bonanza Creek Ranch after the shooting. Video shown in the courtroom from the body camera of Nicholas LeFleur, then a Santa Fe county sheriff’s deputy, captured the frantic efforts to save Hutchins, who looked unconscious as several people attended to her and gave her an oxygen mask. In the courtroom, Baldwin looked at the screen somberly as it played.

Later in the video, LeFleur can be seen telling Baldwin not to speak to the other potential witnesses,

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 60 of 84

but Baldwin repeatedly does.

When special prosecutor Kari Morrissey asked whether the sheriff's deputy handled the situation ideally he responded, "Probably not. But it's what happened."

Spiro tried to establish that neither LeFleur nor the trial's second witness, former sheriff's Lt. Tim Benavidez, treated the scene as a place where a major crime had occurred. Benavidez, who collected the revolver after the shooting, acknowledged that he was careful with it as much for safety reasons as anything else, but did not wear gloves or take meticulous forensic precautions as he might be done for a homicide investigation.

Ocampo Johnson in her opening walked the jurors through the events leading up to Hutchins' death. She said on that day, Baldwin declined multiple opportunities for standard safety checks with armorer Hannah Gutierrez-Reed before the rehearsal in the small church about 20 miles (32 kilometers) from the courthouse where Hutchins, "a vibrant 42-year-old rising star," was killed. She said Baldwin instead "did his own thing."

"He cocks the hammer, points it straight at Miss Hutchins, and fires that gun, sending that live bullet right into Miss Hutchins' body," said Ocampo Johnson.

During the presentation, Baldwin trained his eyes downward on a notepad, away from the jury. He watched Spiro intently during his opening. His wife Hilaria Baldwin, younger brother Stephen Baldwin and older sister Elizabeth Keuchler — who wiped away tears at times — were among the family and friends sitting behind him.

The 16 jurors — 11 women and five men — come from a region with strong currents of gun ownership and safety informed by backcountry hunting. Four of the jurors will be deemed alternates while the other 12 deliberate once they get the case.

Hutchins' death and the wounding of director Joel Souza nearly three years ago sent shock waves through the film industry and led to one felony charge against Baldwin, 66, that could result in up to 18 months in prison.

"It killed an amazing person," Spiro said. "It wounded another, and it changed lives forever."

Baldwin has claimed the gun fired accidentally after he followed instructions to point it toward Hutchins, who was behind the camera. Unaware that it was loaded with a live round, he said he pulled back the hammer — not the trigger — and it fired.

"No one saw him intentionally pull the trigger," Spiro said.

But he said even if Baldwin had pulled it, it still would not have been manslaughter.

"On a movie set, you're allowed to pull that trigger," Spiro said, adding, "that doesn't make it a homicide."

The lawyer emphasized that the responsibility for safety lay with the film's armorer, Gutierrez-Reed, who has already been convicted of involuntary manslaughter, and assistant director David Halls, who pleaded no contest to negligent use of a deadly weapon in exchange for his testimony.

Baldwin had been told "cold gun" before getting the revolver, not knowing there was a live round in it.

"It had been checked and double checked by those responsible for ensuring the gun was safe," Spiro said. "He did not tamper with it he did not load it himself. He did not leave it unattended."

Spiro has in recent years become one of the most sought-after defense attorneys in the country. His clients have included Elon Musk, New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft, and Megan Thee Stallion.

Baldwin — the star of "Beetlejuice," "Glengarry Glen Ross" and "30 Rock" — has been a household name as an actor and public personality for more than three decades.

Spiro said in concluding his opening that witnesses will attest that "no actor in history" has "intercepted a live bullet from a prop gun."

"No one could have imagined or expected an actor to do that," the lawyer said.

Testimony at trial will delve into the mechanics of the weapon and whether it could have fired without a trigger pull. Prosecutors say it couldn't have.

"That gun the defendant had asked to be assigned worked perfectly fine as it was designed," Ocampo Johnson said.

Attorney Gloria Allred sat in the front row of the courtroom audience, a reminder of Baldwin's other legal

difficulties. Allred is representing "Rust" script supervisor Mamie Mitchell and Hutchins' sister and parents in a civil lawsuit against Baldwin and other producers.

Allred said that from her observations in court, the jury appeared to be riveted by testimony and evidence including the police lapel camera video.

NATO allies call China a 'decisive enabler' of Russia's war in Ukraine

By DIDI TANG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In their most serious rebuke against Beijing, NATO allies on Wednesday called China a "decisive enabler" of Russia's war against Ukraine and expressed concerns over Beijing's nuclear arsenal and its capabilities in space.

The sternly worded final communiqué, approved by the 32 NATO members at their summit in Washington, makes clear that China is becoming a focus of the military alliance. The European and North American members and their partners in the Indo-Pacific increasingly see shared security concerns coming from Russia and its Asian supporters, especially China.

Beijing insists that it does not provide military aid to Russia but has maintained strong trade ties with its northern neighbor throughout the conflict. It also accuses NATO of overreaching and inciting confrontation in the Indo-Pacific region.

In the communiqué, NATO member countries said China has become a war enabler through its "no-limits partnership" with Russia and its large-scale support for Russia's defense industrial base.

"This increases the threat Russia poses to its neighbors and to Euro-Atlantic security. We call on the PRC, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council with a particular responsibility to uphold the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter, to cease all material and political support to Russia's war effort," read the communiqué, which referred to China by the abbreviation of its official name, the People's Republic of China.

"The PRC cannot enable the largest war in Europe in recent history without this negatively impacting its interests and reputation," the document says.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said China provides equipment, microelectronics and tools that are "enabling Russia to build the missiles, to build the bombs, to build the aircraft, to build the weapons they use to attack Ukraine."

He said it was the first time all NATO allies have stated this so clearly in an agreed document.

The Chinese embassy in Washington on Wednesday said China is neither a creator of nor a party to the Ukraine crisis. "China does not provide weapons to the parties to the conflict and strictly controls the export of dual-use articles, which is widely applauded by the international community," said Liu Pengyu, the embassy spokesman.

He said China's normal trade with Russia is "done aboveboard" and "beyond reproach."

Danny Russel, a former assistant secretary of state for Asia, called the new wording by NATO "an extraordinary step," particularly because it was coupled with the warning that Beijing continues to pose "systemic challenges" to European interests and security.

"It is a mark of how badly Beijing's attempt to straddle Russia and Western Europe has failed and how hollow its claim of neutrality rings," said Russel, who is vice president for international security and diplomacy at the Asia Society Policy Institute. "China's attempts at divide-and-conquer have instead produced remarkable solidarity between key nations of the Euro-Atlantic and the Asia-Pacific regions."

Max Bergmann, director of the Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said the statement is "highly significant" because it signals to China that Europe, just like the U.S., also condemns support to Russia.

"The U.S. believes that Europe has influence in Beijing, and that while China will not pay any attention to U.S. condemnation, they will pay attention to European condemnation because just because Europe trades with China, China also trades with Europe," Bergmann said.

In this year's final declaration, NATO member countries reiterated their concerns that China poses "sys-

temic challenges” to Euro-Atlantic security. It was first raised in 2021.

The alliance said China has been behind sustained, malicious cyber and hybrid activities, including disinformation and expressed concerns over China’s space capabilities and activities. It also raised alarms that China is rapidly expanding and diversifying its nuclear arsenal with more warheads and a larger number of sophisticated delivery systems.

Liu, the Chinese embassy spokesman, said China handles such issues “in a responsible manner with transparent policies.”

“Hyping up the so-called ‘China threat’ is completely futile,” Liu said, adding Beijing firmly opposes NATO’s use of regional hotspot issues to smear China and incite a new Cold War.

In Washington, where leaders of NATO nations are convening this week to mark the coalition’s 75th anniversary, President Joe Biden said the alliance must not fall behind Russia, which is ramping up weapon production with the help of China, North Korea and Iran.

Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea have sent their leaders or deputies to the NATO summit in Washington this week. They are partners, not members, of the alliance.

In the final declaration, NATO members affirmed the importance of the Indo-Pacific partners to the alliance and said they were “strengthening dialogue to tackle cross-regional challenges.”

NATO and the Indo-Pacific partners plan to launch four projects to support Ukraine, bolster cooperation on cyber defense, counter disinformation and work on artificial intelligence. The NATO members said these projects would “enhance our ability to work together on shared security interests.”

Here’s how to watch Biden’s news conference Thursday as he tries to quiet doubts after the debate

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

President Joe Biden will hold a news conference Thursday, the key event in a monumental week during which the Democratic incumbent is fending off calls for him to step aside as the party’s presumptive nominee following a shaky debate performance.

It’s just the type of event that many political watchers have said Biden needs to pull off successfully to turn back demands — including from within his own party — that he withdraw from his reelection battle against presumptive Republican nominee Donald Trump.

Biden has argued that he had a singularly bad night in Atlanta and that it wasn’t representative of his mental acuity. A strong performance Thursday could convince members of his party that he still has the ability both to win in November and to serve a second term. A weak effort — or stumbles similar to his debate performances — could make the calls for him to withdraw grow much louder.

Here are the details on what White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre has referenced as Biden’s “big boy” news conference:

When is the news conference?

Biden is scheduled to take questions from the White House press corps at 5:30 p.m. Thursday.

Where is Biden speaking?

Biden will be speaking from the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, a short distance from the White House, where many events of the ongoing NATO summit are being held.

What channel is carrying it?

The White House streams much of its live content. Given the attention on this event, television networks could also break away from programming to carry Biden’s remarks live once he starts speaking.

The Associated Press will offer a livestream at apnews.com.

Who will be watching?

Probably a lot of people.

CNN reported that 51 million people watched the Atlanta debate, which was in primetime, while more than 8 million people tuned in to watch Biden’s ABC interview live. If networks break into their daily coverage or cable channels carry it live, that will guarantee a significant number of eyes on Biden.

Will Biden know the questions ahead of time?

Aside from some apparent exceptions — like incidents in which two Black radio hosts said Biden's campaign sent them planned questions ahead of time — it's not standard practice for the president to know precisely what will come up during interviews or news conferences.

His aides prepare him for a host of possibilities based off the headlines of the day, so they're prepping him for the likelihood that journalists will want to ask about his fitness for office, the NATO summit or other topics.

How many questions will he take?

That's not set in stone, and there's not a ton of precedent.

Biden hasn't held very many news conferences that aren't tied to a foreign leader's visit or trips abroad. Typically, those are what's known in the business as a "2+2," meaning two reporters from the U.S. and two foreign reporters ask questions.

What's up next?

Biden returns to the campaign trail with a trip to Michigan Friday. He will also do an interview with NBC on Monday.

Calls for justice grow in death of Black man outside Milwaukee hotel as GOP convention approaches

By COREY WILLIAMS Associated Press

Calls for justice in the death of a Black man who was pinned to the ground during a struggle with security guards at a Milwaukee hotel are growing as thousands of GOP supporters and protesters are expected to gather in the city for the Republican National Convention.

D'Vontaye Mitchell's death on June 30 has become the most recent flashpoint in how the nation confronts race and what some see as the systemic brutality of Black people by members of law enforcement or others in authority, four years after the May 2020 killing of George Floyd by a white police officer in Minneapolis.

The outcry comes as Milwaukee is already dealing with heightened security concerns around political protests days before the July 15 start of the convention.

"Just because they have a big event coming up in Milwaukee, the killing of D'Vontaye Mitchell is just as important as anything else that's going to happen in Milwaukee this month," noted civil rights attorney Ben Crump told reporters Monday.

"We will demand justice every day this week, every day next week and every day after that," said Crump, who is part of a team of lawyers representing Mitchell's family. His relatives have called for charges to be filed against those responsible for the 43-year-old's death.

Crump also represented the family of Floyd, whose death spurred worldwide protests against racial violence and police brutality.

"Everybody in America, after George Floyd, should have trained their employees, especially security personnel, to not put knees on peoples' backs and peoples' necks," Crump added.

A spokesperson for Aimbridge Hospitality, which runs the Hyatt Regency in Milwaukee, said in a statement that it extends its condolences to Mitchell's family and supports the investigation.

Mitchell died at the Hyatt Regency after four security guards held him down on his stomach, media outlets have reported. Police have said Mitchell entered the hotel, caused a disturbance and fought with the guards as they were escorting him out.

The medical examiner's office has said the preliminary cause of death was homicide, but the cause remains under investigation. No one has been criminally charged so far.

The Milwaukee County District Attorney's office said Wednesday that it and police investigators were awaiting full autopsy results and that the case was being reviewed as a homicide.

Surveillance video from inside the hotel viewed by Mitchell's family and their lawyers Wednesday at the district attorney's office showed an unarmed man fleeing for his life while being punched and kicked, they said during an afternoon news conference.

"What I saw today was disgusting. It makes me sick to my stomach," Mitchell's widow, DeAsia Harmon said. "He ran for his life. He was trying to leave. He said 'I'll go,' and they didn't let him go."

Harmon said the video showed a bleeding Mitchell being dragged outside the hotel. "They didn't stop. They could have let him go, but they didn't," she said.

Crump said the family's legal team also has a signed affidavit from a hotel employee who said a security guard was striking Mitchell with a baton and that Mitchell posed no threat when he was on the ground. The worker said a security guard ordered him and a bellman to help hold Mitchell down, Crump said.

Another lawyer, William Sulton said the hotel video showed an on-duty hotel security guard take a photo of Mitchell's lifeless body as the guard was being questioned by police. "Absolutely disgusting," Sulton said.

It is unclear why Mitchell was at the hotel or what happened before the guards pinned him down. The Milwaukee County medical examiner's initial report said he was homeless, but a cousin told The Associated Press on Wednesday that was incorrect.

Crump said video recorded by a bystander and circulating on social media also shows excessive force was used by security guards to subdue Mitchell.

"In the video you see them with their knees on his back and neck," Crump said, and the security guard appears to hit Mitchell in the head with an object. "You see them pull his shirt over his head, stifling not only his sound but, we believe, his breath."

Mitchell was born and raised in Milwaukee, according to his first cousin Samantha Mitchell, 37, and any mental illness he may have had was undiagnosed.

"D'Vontaye loved to cook," she said. "He was overprotective of his family, especially his younger cousins. He was a jokester. He really clung to a lot of our male cousins growing up, enjoying life together."

She said the family changed his funeral from Saturday to Thursday so its significance would not be overshadowed by the GOP convention.

"We need to keep this in the light and not swept under the rug," Mitchell said. "Regardless of the convention going on, this is still a matter that needs attention from everyone, no matter what party you are with. I want to see people speak about it while they're here for the convention. That will say a lot."

The AP sent an email Wednesday to representatives of the Republican National Convention for comment on Mitchell's death.

With a late goal fit for a king, England reaches another Euro final by beating Netherlands 2-1

By STEVE DOUGLAS AP Sports Writer

DORTMUND, Germany (AP) — England is into another European Championship final after its latest dramatic, come-from-behind win that even took King Charles III on a roller coaster ride.

Ollie Watkins, who came on for captain Harry Kane in a bold call by England coach Gareth Southgate, scored in the first minute of stoppage time to earn England a 2-1 win over the Netherlands on Wednesday and a shot at Spain in the title match.

In the knockout stage at Euro 2024, England has scored a stoppage-time equalizer through Jude Bellingham before edging past Slovakia in the last 16 and needed a penalty-shootout to see off Switzerland in the quarterfinals.

The English are keeping their supporters back home on the edge of their seats as the men's team moves closer to a first title since the 1966 World Cup — and that includes its monarch.

"If I may encourage you to secure victory before the need for any last minute wonder-goals or another penalties drama, I am sure the stresses on the nation's collective heart rate and blood pressure would be greatly alleviated!" the king said in a congratulatory message soon after the game in Dortmund.

Watkins' goal was fit for a king.

He had only made one previous appearance at Euro 2024 — as a substitute in the group game against Denmark — so it was a surprise when he was introduced by Southgate in the 80th minute in England's biggest match so far.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 65 of 84

The gamble paid off.

Fed by another substitute in Cole Palmer, Watkins took a touch with his back to goal just inside the area and, from a tight angle, smashed a fierce shot into the bottom corner.

"Unbelievable — I've been waiting for that moment for weeks," said Watkins, the Aston Villa striker who was the fourth-equal top scorer in the Premier League last season. "It's taken a lot of hard work to get to where I am today. I got the opportunity and took it with both hands."

It was painful for Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman.

"I had a feeling toward the end of the match that maybe we could score," Koeman said, "and for sure in extra time I'd have put money on us."

England will play Lamine Yamal and Spain in Sunday's final in Berlin. It will be the nation's first title match on foreign soil, having won the World Cup in 1966 and lost to Italy in the Euro 2020 final — both times at Wembley Stadium.

"It's going to be unbelievably tough — a really difficult game," Kane said of the title match, with Spain widely regarded as the best team at the tournament. "One more game to make history."

The sea of orange in the giant South Stand at Dortmund's Westfalenstadion fell silent for the first time after Watkins' late goal. It housed the most vocal of the Dutch supporters who dominated the city center before marching in their thousands to the stadium ahead of the game. Police reported three separate clashes between fans from both countries in the city.

It gave the occasion the feeling of a home match for the Dutch and England was up against it even more after the 21-year-old Xavi Simons became the second youngest scorer for the Netherlands at a Euros.

The Paris Saint-Germain midfielder dispossessed Declan Rice about 40 meters (yards) out, drove forward and unleashed a shot into the far corner from outside the area.

Compared to the 16-year-old Yamal, Spain's new superstar, Simons is a soccer veteran but this was another case of a young player shining on the big stage at the Euros.

Kane has had plenty of big moments at major tournaments and he had another when he slotted home a penalty after Denzel Dumfries' outstretched leg made contact with Kane's foot as the England striker attempted a shot.

Kane became the sixth player to be on three goals for the tournament.

An open first half, which saw Dumfries and England's Phil Foden hit the goal frame, made way for a tight and tense second half that had a huge two-minute spell when Bukayo Saka had a goal disallowed before Kane and Foden were taken off.

It might rank as Southgate's best call in his eight-year England tenure. And that the goal was set up by Palmer, who entered as a substitute the same time as Watkins, will have made it even sweeter.

"We are giving people some amazing nights ... but we are not finished," Southgate said.

The first lady is helping to salvage her husband's campaign. Will it be enough?

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Campaigning for her husband in Florida, Jill Biden took a break to get some tea. She was on the second stop of a three-state swing and reporters traveling with her had tried multiple times to get her to talk to them. They were curious about what she'd tell the Democrats who were so rattled by President Joe Biden's poor debate performance that they were calling on him to drop his reelection bid.

Leaving a coffee shop after having hibiscus tea with Tampa's mayor, the first lady paused on the walk to her vehicle and turned to face the reporters who were lobbing questions her way.

"Why are you screaming at me? You know me," she said, adding: "Don't scream at me. Just talk."

She walked away without answering their questions.

The public has gotten to know Jill Biden well over her three-plus years as a first lady who navigates multiple roles. Now, she's trying to help her husband salvage his presidential campaign and coming under

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 66 of 84

new scrutiny from critics who've cast her as a power-hungry wife pushing her elderly husband to run again so she can keep her White House lifestyle.

Adding to that, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has started going after the first lady, claiming without proof at a Florida rally this week that she and the president's son, Hunter Biden, are really the ones running the country.

This week, the president's wife of 47 years has logged a three-state swing to promote the Biden administration's support for the military and she's fulfilling a more traditional role as the nation's hostess, welcoming NATO leaders and their spouses for the alliance's 75th anniversary summit. She and Hunter Biden are known to be two of the people Biden listens to most closely, and both have encouraged the president to stay in the race.

Weeks before the debate, the public also saw Jill Biden in her role as the family matriarch, sitting behind Hunter in federal court in Delaware as he was tried and convicted of felony gun charges.

Elizabeth Alexander, the first lady's communications director, said Jill Biden's most important role is as the president's spouse, not as one of his many political and policy advisers.

"As much as any husband and wife team make decisions together that impact their lives, they absolutely do, but as she's said more times than I can count, politics is his lane," Alexander wrote in an email. "She's his biggest supporter and champion, because she believes in him, and she fears for the future of our country if it goes the other way. Just as he's always supported her career, she supports his."

Alexander said most women, including first ladies, struggle with being supportive but not so supportive that their motives are questioned, speaking up but not too loudly and performing their duties well but without fanfare, or they risk being accused of being too ambitious or aggressive.

"Society has put all first ladies, including Dr. Biden, in an impossible situation, especially with today's social media, bots, and the right wing machine fueling narratives and inventing false caricatures at every turn," Alexander said.

Jill Biden stayed close by her husband as the post-debate drama unfolded, campaigning with him in North Carolina, New York and New Jersey. She broke off for some solo campaigning before she reunited with him at the White House for the Fourth of July.

She stood in for him again Monday on a swing through North Carolina, Florida and Georgia that was intended to rally support from veterans and military families but was also part of the Biden team's broader effort to try to steer the conversation back toward Trump.

She told the crowds she supports Biden's decision to stay in the race.

"For all the talk out there about this race, Joe has made it clear that he's all in," she said at all three stops. "That's the decision he's made. And just as he has always supported my career, I am all in too. I know you are too, or you wouldn't be here today."

Jill Biden, as first lady, is the first to work outside the White House. She is a professor of English and writing at Northern Virginia Community College, where she has taught since 2009.

By Tuesday, the first lady was back at the White House in her role as hostess, welcoming NATO leaders and their spouses for the annual summit. She arranged brunch for the spouses on Wednesday at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and was joining the president to welcome the couples to a White House dinner in the evening.

Still, Jill Biden took on yet another role this week: fashion consultant.

As brunch with the NATO spouses wrapped up, she sent them off with advice for their visit Thursday to the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland's Catoctin Mountains.

"Please dress comfortably," she said. "Don't put on those high heels because you're gonna be going into helicopters ... so please just wear flats, wear sneakers. Just feel comfortable."

Astronauts confident Boeing space capsule can safely return them to Earth, despite failures

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Two astronauts who should have been back on Earth weeks ago said Wednesday that they're confident that Boeing's space capsule can return them safely, despite a string of vexing breakdowns.

NASA test pilots Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams launched aboard Boeing's new Starliner capsule early last month, the first people to ride it. Helium leaks and thruster failures almost derailed their arrival at the International Space Station, and have kept them there much longer than planned. Now the earliest they could return may be the end of July, officials said.

In their first news conference from orbit, the pair said they expect to return once thruster testing is complete here on Earth. They said they're not complaining about getting extra time in orbit, and are enjoying helping the station crew. Both have previously spent stints at the orbiting lab, which is also home to seven others.

"I have a real good feeling in my heart that the spacecraft will bring us home, no problem," Williams told reporters.

The test flight should have lasted eight days, ending on June 14.

NASA's commercial crew program director Steve Stich said the earliest the Starliner astronauts might return is the end of July. The goal is to get them back before SpaceX delivers a fresh crew in mid-August, but that, too, could change, he noted.

This week, NASA and Boeing are trying to duplicate the Starliner's thruster problems on a brand new unit at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, one of the prime landing sites in the U.S. western desert. The trouble is in the propulsion system, used to maneuver the spacecraft.

Five thrusters failed as the capsule approached the space station on June 6, a day after liftoff. Four have since been reactivated. Wilmore said there should be enough working thrusters to get him and Williams out of orbit. There are also bigger engines that could fill in, if necessary.

"That mantra you've heard, failure is not an option, that's why we are staying here now," Wilmore said. "We trust that the tests that we're doing are the ones we need to do to get the right answers, to give us the data that we need to come back."

Boeing and NASA consider the ground tests essential to determine what might have gone wrong since that part of the capsule — the service module — is discarded before landing. The leaks also are located in this disposable section.

So far, testing has not replicated the hot temperatures reached during the flight, according to Stich. Managers want to make sure the suspect thrusters are not damaged, before bringing Starliner back. They were fired more frequently than anticipated early in the flight, and the extra demand on them may have caused them to fail, Stich noted.

At the same time, ground tests are being conducted to better understand the helium leaks, which could stem from bad seals. Officials have previously said there is ample helium left for the trip home.

Hurricane Beryl slowed some of the work. Johnson Space Center in Houston, home to the control centers for both NASA and Boeing, was closed earlier this week to all but the most critical staff.

Boeing's Mark Nappi stressed that in an emergency, Starliner and its crew could return right now. While the company does not believe the thrusters are damaged, "we want to fill in the blanks and run this test to assure ourselves of that."

NASA ordered up the Starliner and SpaceX Dragon capsules a decade ago for astronaut flights to and from the space station, paying each company billions of dollars. SpaceX's first taxi flight with astronauts was in 2020. Boeing's first crew flight was repeatedly delayed because of software and other issues.

There have been no discussions with SpaceX about sending up a rescue capsule, Stich said.

Lorenzo Musetti reaches his first Grand Slam semifinal at Wimbledon and will face Novak Djokovic

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

LONDON (AP) — Lorenzo Musetti threw his head back and spread his arms wide to celebrate reaching his first Grand Slam semifinal at Wimbledon, then covered his face with both hands.

His 3-6, 7-6 (5), 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 victory over Taylor Fritz on Wednesday was a big deal, to be sure. After all, the 25th-seeded Musetti, a 22-year-old from Italy, never had made it past the third round at the All England Club — or past the fourth round at any major tournament — until this fortnight.

Now, though, comes a far tougher test: taking on Novak Djokovic.

"He probably knows, better than me, the surface and the stadium, for sure," Musetti said with a chuckle, aware he'll be making his Centre Court debut on Friday. "Jokes apart, he's a legend everywhere, but especially here in Wimbledon."

This will be Djokovic's record-tying 13th semifinal at Wimbledon alone — equaling Roger Federer — and 49th Slam semifinal overall, extending a mark he already held. As Musetti pursues his first major championship, Djokovic seeks a 25th, including what would be an eighth at the All England Club.

Djokovic's smooth trip through this year's bracket was made even easier when the man he was supposed to play in the quarterfinals Wednesday, Alex de Minaur, pulled out with a hip injury hours before their match was scheduled to begin.

Musetti was forced to work for his spot in the final four: His 3 1/2-hour victory over the 13th-seeded Fritz was the 37th five-setter at the All England Club this year, the most at any Grand Slam tournament.

Musetti acknowledged he didn't get off to an ideal start, in part because of nerves. But an early break in the second set helped alter the course of the evening.

"Immediately, I changed my mind. I changed my attitude," he said. "And that probably made the difference."

Musetti's son, Ludovico, was born in March, and he said Wednesday that helped him rededicate himself to his sport and strive to no longer "throw away matches."

"Instead of me teaching him, he's teaching me. ... Having a child makes you reflect a lot," Musetti said. "I feel more mature on the court, more mature off the court, and more mature as a player, as a father, as a person."

Playing at a sun-swathed No. 1 Court against Fritz, an American who is one of the sport's biggest servers but fell to 0-4 in major quarterfinals, Musetti managed to accumulate 13 break points and convert six.

With Queen Camilla, the wife of King Charles III, in the stands and joining fans in doing the wave, Musetti did far more to vary his strokes — a drop shot here, a lob there, plenty of slices — than Fritz did.

"I just felt like it took a lot to finish the point," Fritz said.

Djokovic had knee surgery less than a month before the start of play at the All England Club. But despite limitations on his movement, the 37-year-old Djokovic has dropped only two sets so far — facing a qualifier in the first round, a wild-card entrant in the second and only one seeded player, No. 15 Holger Rune.

Instead of going up against No. 9 de Minaur on Wednesday, Djokovic will get three full days off before meeting Musetti. The other semifinal Friday is defending champion Carlos Alcaraz against Daniil Medvedev.

Djokovic and Musetti have played each other six times previously. Djokovic has won five of those, including a five-setter at this year's French Open that concluded after 3 a.m. It was in Djokovic's following match in Paris that he tore the meniscus in his right knee.

"We know each other pretty well. They've always been a huge fight so I expect a big, big fight. It's going to be one of the toughest challenges on tour," Musetti said, "but I am an ambitious guy and I like to be challenged."

In the women's quarterfinals Wednesday, 2022 champion Elena Rybakina grabbed nine of the last 11 games to defeat No. 21 Elina Svitolina 6-3, 6-2, and No. 31 Barbora Krejckova eliminated No. 13 Jelena Ostapenko 6-4, 7-6 (4) in a matchup between two past champions at the French Open.

The other women's semifinal on Thursday is No. 7 Jasmine Paolini of Italy against unseeded Donna Vekic

of Croatia.

Kazakhstan's Rybakina ended her win with her seventh ace and improved to 19-2 at Wimbledon in four appearances.

"Definitely, I have an aggressive style of game," Rybakina said. "I have a huge serve, so it's a big advantage."

Krejčíková won her first Grand Slam title on the red clay at Roland Garros in 2021, but the 28-year-old from the Czech Republic never put together a five-match winning streak on grass until now.

De Minaur's exit is the latest due to injury in Week 2. His hip issue arose right at the end of his win against Arthur Fils on Monday.

De Minaur said he heard a crack and knew something was wrong.

He underwent medical tests Tuesday that revealed the extent of the problem but tried to practice on Wednesday morning, hoping to participate in what would have been his first Wimbledon quarterfinal.

"This was the biggest match of my career," de Minaur said, "so wanted to do anything I could to play."

Ex-NBA player Jontay Porter pleads guilty in case tied to gambling scandal that tanked his career

By JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former NBA player Jontay Porter admitted Wednesday that he schemed to take himself out of games for gambling's sake, pleading guilty to a federal conspiracy crime in the scandal that already got him banned from the league.

"I know what I did was wrong, unlawful, and I am deeply sorry," the former Toronto Raptors center said as he pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

Echoing findings in an NBA investigation and allegations in an ongoing prosecution of four other men, Porter acknowledged that he agreed to withdraw early from games so that co-conspirators could win bets on his performance.

He did it, he said, "to get out from under large gambling debts."

Porter, 24, is free on \$250,000 bond while awaiting sentencing set for Dec. 18.

Prosecutors estimated his sentence at a range from just under three and a half years in prison to a little over four years. Ultimately it will be up to a judge, who could impose anything from no time to 20 years behind bars. Porter also is likely to be assessed hundreds of thousands of dollars in restitution and fines.

He and his lawyer left court without speaking to reporters. The attorney, Jeff Jensen, later declined by email to comment beyond a statement he made last month, in which he said Porter "was in over his head due to a gambling addiction."

"Jontay is a good young man with strong faith that will get him through this," Jensen said at the time.

Porter told the court he has undergone inpatient rehab for a gambling problem and remains in therapy.

In a related case, four other men are charged with scheming to profit off tips from an NBA player that he was going to exit two games early. They or their relatives used the knowledge to place big-winning bets that the athlete would do poorly in those games, according to a court complaint filed when they were charged in June. They haven't yet entered pleas.

The complaint against them didn't name the player. But details matched up with the NBA investigation that found that Porter gave bettors confidential information about his health, exited at least one game because of bets and wagered on NBA games in which he didn't play. He once bet against his own team, the league said.

According to the complaint, one of the four men pressed the player to clear up gambling debts by prematurely pulling out of games so that bets on him underperforming would pay off.

In a message responding to the man's instructions, the player wrote that if he didn't carry out the plan, "u hate me and if I don't get u 8k by Friday you're coming to Toronto to beat me up."

After tipping off some of the men, the player claimed injury or illness and withdrew from Jan. 26 and March 20 games after only minutes on the court, the complaint said.

Porter played only briefly on those dates before complaining he was hurt or sick and exiting the games. His points, rebounds and assists in both games fell below sportsbooks' expectations.

According to the complaint, some of the alleged conspirators agreed in advance to share about a quarter of any winnings from the March 20 game with the player. One gambler was on track to collect over \$1 million before a betting company got suspicious and stopped him from getting most of the money.

After the NBA and others began investigating, the player messaged some of the men that they "might just get hit w a rico," an apparent reference to the common acronym for a federal racketeering charge, according to the complaint against them. It said the player also asked the men whether they had deleted "all the stuff" from their phones.

Porter averaged 4.4 points, 3.2 rebounds and 2.3 assists in 26 games this season, including five starts. He also played in 11 games for the Memphis Grizzlies in the 2020-21 season.

His NBA salary was about \$410,000.

26 million tons of clothing end up in China's landfills each year, propelled by fast fashion

By TIAN MACLEOD JI Associated Press

WENZHOU, China (AP) — At a factory in Zhejiang province on China's eastern coast, two mounds of discarded cotton clothing and bed linens, loosely separated into dark and light colors, pile up on a workroom floor. Jacket sleeves, collars and brand labels protrude from the stacks as workers feed the garments into shredding machines.

It's the first stage of a new life for the textiles, part of a recycling effort at the Wenzhou Tiancheng Textile Company, one of the largest cotton recycling plants in China.

Textile waste is an urgent global problem, with only 12% recycled worldwide, according to fashion sustainability nonprofit Ellen MacArthur Foundation. Even less — only 1% — are castoff clothes recycled into new garments; the majority is used for low-value items like insulation or mattress stuffing.

Nowhere is the problem more pressing than in China, the world's largest textile producer and consumer, where more than 26 million tons of clothes are thrown away each year, according to government statistics. Most of it ends up in landfills.

And factories like this one are barely making a dent in a country whose clothing industry is dominated by "fast fashion" — cheap clothes made from unrecyclable synthetics, not cotton. Produced from petrochemicals that contribute to climate change, air and water pollution, synthetics account for 70% of domestic clothing sales in China.

China's footprint is worldwide: E-commerce juggernaut brands Shein and Temu make the country one of the world's largest producers of cheap fashion, selling in more than 150 countries.

To achieve a game-changing impact, what fashion expert Shaway Yeh calls "circular sustainability" is needed among major Chinese clothing brands so waste is avoided entirely.

"You need to start it from recyclable fibers and then all these waste textiles will be put into use again," she said.

But that is an elusive goal: Only about 20% of China's textiles are recycled, according to the Chinese government — and almost all of that is cotton.

Chinese cotton is not without a taint of its own, said Claudia Bennett of the nonprofit Human Rights Foundation. Much of it comes from forced labor in Xinjiang province by the country's ethnic Uyghur minority.

"One in five cotton garments globally is linked to Uyghur forced labor," Bennett said.

In May, the U.S. blocked imports from 26 Chinese cotton traders and warehouses to avoid goods made with Uyghur forced labor. But because the supply chain is so sketchy, Uyghur cotton is used in garments produced in other countries that don't bear the "made-in-China" label, Bennett said.

"Many, many, many clothing brands are linked to Uyghur forced labor through the cotton," she said. They "hide behind the lack of transparency in the supply chain."

While China is a global leader in the production of electric cars and electric-powered public transit and

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 71 of 84

has set a goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2060, its efforts in promoting fashion sustainability and recycling textiles have taken a back seat.

According to a report this year from independent fashion watchdog Remake assessing major clothing companies on their environmental, human rights and equitability practices, there's little accountability among the best-known brands.

The group gave Shein, whose online marketplace groups about 6,000 Chinese clothing factories under its label, just 6 out of a possible 150 points. Temu scored zero.

Also getting zero were U.S. label SKIMS, co-founded by Kim Kardashian, and low-price brand Fashion Nova. U.S. retailer Everlane was the highest-scorer at 40 points, with only half of those for sustainability practices.

China's domestic policy doesn't help.

Cotton recycled from used clothing is banned from being used to make new garments inside China. This rule was initially aimed at stamping out fly-by-night Chinese operations recycling dirty or otherwise contaminated material.

But now it means the huge spools of tightly woven rope-like cotton yarn produced at the Wenzhou Tiancheng factory from used clothing can only be sold for export, mostly to Europe.

Making matters worse, many Chinese consumers are unwilling to buy used items anyway, something the Wenzhou factory sales director, Kowen Tang, attributes to increasing household incomes.

"They want to buy new clothes, the new stuff," he said of the stigma associated with buying used.

Still, among younger Chinese, a growing awareness of sustainability has contributed to the emergence of fledgling "remade" clothing businesses.

Thirty-year-old designer Da Bao founded Times Remake in 2019, a Shanghai-based brand that takes secondhand clothes and refashions them into new garments. At the company's work room in Shanghai, tailors work with secondhand denims and sweatshirts, stitching them into funky new fashions.

The venture, which began with Da Bao and his father-in-law posting their one-off designs online, now has a flagship store in Shanghai's trendy Jing'an District that stocks their remade garments alongside vintage items, such as Levi's and Carhartt jackets.

The designs are "a combination of the past style and current fashion aesthetic to create something unique," Bao said.

Zhang Na has a fashion label, Reclothing Bank, that sells clothes, bags and other accessories made from materials such as plastic bottles, fishing nets and flour sacks.

The items' labels have QR codes that show their composition, how they were made and the provenance of the materials. Zhang draws on well-established production methods, such as textile fibers made from pineapple leaf, a centuries-old tradition originating in the Philippines.

"We can basically develop thousands of new fabrics and new materials," she said.

Reclothing Bank began in 2010 to give "new life to old things," Zhang said of her store in a historic Shanghai alley with a mix of Western and Chinese architecture. A large used clothes deposit box sat outside the entrance.

"Old items actually carry a lot of people's memories and emotions," she said.

Zhang said she has seen sustainability consciousness grow since she opened her store, with core customers in their 20s and 30s.

Bao Yang, a college student who dropped by the store on a visit to Shanghai, said she was surprised at the feel of the clothes.

"I think it's amazing, because when I first entered the door, I heard that many of the clothes were actually made of shells or corn (husks), but when I touched the clothes in detail, I had absolutely no idea that they would have this very comfortable feel," she said.

Still, she conceded that buying sustainable clothing is a hard sell. "People of my age are more addicted to fast fashion, or they do not think about the sustainability of clothes," she said.

Recycled garments sold at stores like Reclothing Bank have a much higher price tag than fast-fashion brands due to their costly production methods.

And therein lies the real problem, said Sheng Lu, professor of fashion and apparel studies at the University of Delaware.

"Studies repeatedly show consumers are not willing to pay higher for clothing made from recycled materials, and instead they actually expect a lower price because they see such clothing as made of secondhand stuff," he said.

With higher costs in acquiring, sorting and processing used garments, he doesn't see sustainable fashion succeeding on a wide scale in China, where clothes are so cheap to make.

"Companies do not have the financial incentive," he said.

For real change there needs to be "more clear signals from the very top," he added, referring to government targets like the ones that propelled China's EV industry.

Still, in China "government can be a friend to any sector," Lu said, so if China's communist leaders see economic potential, it could trigger a policy shift that drives new investment in sustainable fashion.

But for now, the plastic-wrapped cones of tightly-wound cotton being loaded onto trucks outside the Wenzhou Tiancheng factory were all headed to overseas markets, far from where their recycling journey began.

"Fast fashion definitely is not out of fashion" in China, Lu said.

Judge says Rudy Giuliani bankruptcy case likely to be dismissed. But his debts aren't going away

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A judge said Wednesday he was leaning toward throwing out Rudy Giuliani's bankruptcy case after lawyers for the cash-strapped former New York City mayor and his biggest creditors — two ex-Georgia election workers who won a \$148 million defamation judgment against him — agreed this was the best way forward.

The case has been roiled by creditors' allegations that Giuliani is flouting bankruptcy laws and potentially hiding assets. A dismissal would end his pursuit of bankruptcy protection, but it wouldn't let him off the hook for his debts. His creditors could pursue other legal remedies to recoup at least some of the money they're owed, such as getting a court order to seize his apartments and other assets.

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Sean Lane said he plans to issue a decision by the end of the week. He scheduled a hearing for 1 p.m. Friday and could make his ruling at that time. Lane ruled out converting the case to a liquidation, an option Giuliani recently proposed, saying that doing so would not be in the best interest of people and entities he's indebted to.

"I'm leaning toward dismissal, frankly, because I'm concerned that the past is prologue," Lane said during a hybrid in-person and Zoom status hearing in White Plains, New York. The judge cited what he said was Giuliani's lack of transparency throughout the proceedings.

Giuliani's lawyer, Gary Fischhoff, said dismissing the case would allow the ex-mayor to pursue an appeal in the defamation case, which arose from his efforts to overturn Donald Trump's 2020 election loss. Another alternative would be to have the Chapter 11 case continue while a court-appointed trustee takes control of Giuliani's assets.

A lawyer for former election workers, Ruby Freeman and her daughter, Wandrea "Shaye" Moss, accused Giuliani of using the bankruptcy process as a "bad-faith litigation tactic" and said "he regards this court as a pause button on his woes while he continues to live his life unbothered by creditors."

"The question here is always going to be the cat-and-mouse game of what dollar can be funneled outside of the estate," Freeman and Moss' lawyer Rachel Strickland said. "Out in the real world, outside of bankruptcy, all dollars are fair game for everyone and Mr. Giuliani has to continue to live and do whatever it is he is able to do with his name, likeness and commentary in order to make a living."

Lane scolded Giuliani at one point for interrupting the hearing. The ex-mayor, joining by phone, called Strickland's comments "highly defamatory, your honor."

Philip Dublin, a lawyer for a committee of Giuliani's other creditors, said the committee would rather

keep the bankruptcy case going with the appointment of a trustee.

Giuliani filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization in December, days after Freeman and her daughter won their defamation case. They said Giuliani's targeting of them because of Trump's lies about the 2020 election being stolen led to death threats that made them fear for their lives.

Earlier this month, Giuliani requested that the case be converted to a Chapter 7 liquidation — which would have seen a trustee appointed to take control of his assets and sell them off to help pay creditors. Reconsidering that idea on Wednesday and pushing for a dismissal instead, Fischhoff noted that administrative fees related to liquidation would “consume if not 100%, a substantial portion of the assets.”

If the bankruptcy is dismissed, Freeman and Moss could bring their effort to collect on the award back to the court in Washington, D.C., where they won their lawsuit, and avoid having to pay more legal fees for bankruptcy court. Lane said a dismissal would include a 12-month ban on Giuliani filing again for bankruptcy protection.

Freeman and Moss, meanwhile, have a pending request before the judge to declare that the \$148 million judgment cannot be discharged — or dismissed — during Giuliani's bankruptcy.

The bankruptcy is one of a host of legal woes consuming Giuliani, once heralded as “America's Mayor” for his calm and steady leadership after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

Last week, the ex-federal prosecutor and 2008 Republican presidential candidate was disbarred as an attorney in New York after a court found that he repeatedly made false statements about Trump's 2020 election loss. He is also facing the possibility of losing his law license in Washington after a board in May recommended that he be disbarred.

In Georgia and Arizona, Giuliani is facing criminal charges over his role in the effort to overturn the 2020 election. He has pleaded not guilty in both cases.

When he filed for bankruptcy, Giuliani listed nearly \$153 million in existing or potential debts, including almost \$1 million in state and federal tax liabilities, money he owes lawyers, and many millions of dollars in potential judgments in lawsuits against him. He estimated he had assets worth \$1 million to \$10 million.

In his most recent financial filings in the bankruptcy case, he said he had about \$94,000 cash in hand at the end of May while his company, Giuliani Communications, had about \$237,000 in the bank. A main source of income for Giuliani over the past two years has been a retirement account with a balance of just over \$1 million in May, down from nearly \$2.5 million in 2022 after his withdrawals, the filings say.

In May, he spent nearly \$33,000 including nearly \$28,000 for condo and co-op costs for his Florida and New York City homes. He also spent about \$850 on food, \$390 on cleaning services, \$230 on medicine, \$200 on laundry and \$190 on vehicles.

In swing-state Pennsylvania, a Latino-majority city embraces a chance to sway the 2024 election

By LUIS ANDRES HENAO Associated Press

READING, Pa. (AP) — Religion and politics frequently overlap in Reading, an old industrial city in one of the most pivotal swing states of this year's presidential election.

In Pennsylvania, there is early precedent for this kind of thing. The state began as a haven for Quakers and other European religious minorities fleeing persecution. That includes the parents of Daniel Boone, the national folk hero born just miles from Reading, a town where the Latino population is now the majority.

Today, the Catholic mayor is also a migrant — and the first Latino to hold the office in Reading's 276-year history. Mayor Eddie Moran is keenly aware of the pivotal role Pennsylvania could play in the high-stakes race, when a few thousand votes in communities like his could decide the future of the United States.

“Right now, with the growing Latino population and the influx of Latinos moving into cities such as Reading, it's definitely an opportunity for the Latino vote to change the outcome of an election,” Moran says. “It's not a secret anymore.”

A community of spirituality — and Latinos

In Reading, the sky is dotted with crosses atop church steeples, one after the other. Catholic church pews

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 74 of 84

fill up on Sundays and many stand for the services. Elsewhere, often in nondescript buildings, evangelical and Pentecostal congregations gather to sing, pray and sometimes speak in tongues.

Outside, salsa, merengue and reggaeton music (often sung in Spanglish) blast from cars and houses along city streets first mapped out by William Penn's sons — and that now serve a thriving downtown packed with restaurants proudly owned by Latinos.

This is a place where, when the mayor is told that his town is 65% Latino, he takes pride in saying: "It's more like 70%."

They believe in their political sway. A Pew Research Center survey conducted in 2022 found that eight in 10 Latino registered voters say their vote can affect the country's direction at least "some."

On a recent Sunday, Luis Hernandez, 65, born in Puerto Rico, knelt to pray near the altar at St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church. Later, walking out after Mass, Hernandez said he'll vote for Trump — even on the very day of the former president's criminal convictions related to hush money for a porn star.

"Biden is old," Hernandez says, and then reflects on how Trump is only a few years younger. "Yes, but you look at Trump and you see the difference. ... Biden's a good man. He's decent. But he's too old."

In the weeks after he spoke, many more Americans would join in calls for Biden to withdraw from the race after his debate debacle, which crystallized growing concerns that, at 81, he's too old.

Immigration is a key topic on people's lips

It's not just about Biden's age or debate performance. It's also, Hernandez says, about the border crisis. He says too many immigrants are arriving in the United States, including some he considers criminals. And, he adds, so much has changed since his Dominican-born father arrived in the 1960s — when, he says, it was easier to enter and stay in America.

For some, there are other issues as well.

"It's the economy, immigration and abortion," says German Vega, 41, a Dominican American who became a U.S. citizen in 2015. Vega, who describes himself as "pro-life," voted for Trump in 2020 and plans to do so again in November.

"Biden doesn't know what he's saying. He doesn't know what he's doing, and we have a country divided," Vega says. Trump is "a person of character. ... He looks confident. He never gives up; he's always fighting for what he believes."

Of course, there are some here who just don't favor taking sides — except if it's for Jesus. Listen to Pastor Alex Lopez, a Puerto Rican who cuts hair in a barber shop on the first floor of his home on Saturdays, and preaches on the second floor on Sundays.

"We're neutral," he says. "We just believe in God."

A city with deep industrial roots resurges

Reading was once synonymous with iron and steel. Those industries cemented the creation of the Reading Railroad (an early stop on the Monopoly gameboard) that helped fuel the Industrial Revolution and became, in the late 19th century, one of the country's major corporations.

Today, the city of about 95,000 people, 65 miles northwest of Philadelphia, has a fast-increasing population. However, it is one of the state's poorest cities, with a median household income of about \$44,000, compared to about \$72,000 in Pennsylvania.

Reading is 67% Latino, according to U.S. Census figures, and home to high concentrations of people of Dominican and Puerto Rican heritage — as well as Colombians and Mexicans, who own restaurants and other businesses around town.

Political candidates are taking notice of Reading's political and economic power. The 2020 presidential election in Pennsylvania was decided by about 82,000 votes, and — according to the Pew Research Center — there are more than 600,000 eligible Latino voters in the state.

It's true that Reading still leans mostly Democratic — Biden crushed Trump in the city by a margin of about 46 percentage points in 2020. However in that election, voting-age turnout in the city (about 35%) was significantly lower than the rest of the state (about 67%).

But the Trump campaign doesn't want to miss out on the opportunity to turn it around. It recently teamed up with the Republican National Committee and Pennsylvania GOP to open a "Latino Americans for Trump"

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 75 of 84

office in a red-brick building near the Democratic mayor's downtown office.

Moran has made a plea to Biden and other Democrats to take notice and visit Reading before the election. It's crucial, he says.

"I think that it's still predominantly Democratic," he says. "But the candidates need to come out and really explain that to the community."

One development, Moran says, is that religious leaders are now less hesitant to get involved in politics. "Things change, even for churches," he says. Clergy "realize the importance that they hold as faith-based leaders and religious leaders and they're making a call of action through their congregations."

The message: Get out and vote

A few blocks from St. Peter's, a crowd gathers inside First Baptist Church, which dates to the late 19th century.

In a sign of Reading's changing demographics, the aging and shrinking congregation of white Protestants donated the building to Iglesia Jesucristo es el Rey (Church Jesus Christ is the King), a thriving Latino congregation of some 100 worshippers who have shared the building with First Baptist for nearly a decade.

Pastors Carol Pagan and her husband Jose, both from Puerto Rico, recently led prayer. At the end of the service, microphone in hand, the pastors encourage parishioners to vote in the election — irrespective of who they choose as the president.

"The right to vote is," Carol Pagan says before her husband chimes in: "a civic responsibility."

After the service, the congregation descends to the basement, where they share a traditional meal of chicken with rice and beans.

"I believe the principle of human rights have to do with both parties — or any party running," Carol Pagan says. "I always think of the elderly, of the health system, of health insurance, and how it shouldn't be so much about capitalism but more rights for all of us to be well."

Both of the Pagans make clear that they won't vote for Trump. They're waiting, like others, for circumstances that might lead Biden to withdraw, so they can support another Democratic candidate.

"It's our duty to shield that person with prayer — it doesn't matter if that person is a Democrat or a Republican," Carol Pagan says. "We owe them that."

A look at heat records that have been broken around the world

By ISABELLA O'MALLEY and MARY KATHERINE WILDEMAN Associated Press

This year has already seen many heat records broken as the world grows hotter with more and more greenhouse gases added to the atmosphere.

For many places, the highest temperatures since record-keeping began have come in just the last 10 to 15 years. That's the clearest possible sign that humans are altering the climate, said Randall Cerveny, a professor at Arizona State University.

Cerveny said temperatures in India, the Middle East, and the U.S. Southwest have been exceptionally hot in 2024.

Las Vegas recorded 120 degrees Fahrenheit (48.0 degrees Celsius) on Sunday for the first time in history.

"It feels like the air is a blanket of just hotness that is enveloping you," Cerveny said about that kind of heat. It's life threatening and people are unprepared for it, he added.

Here is a look at some of the records that have been broken around the world this year. Even one tenth of one degree above a previous record is a meaningful increase, and these records were all broken by at least seven times that amount.

Las Vegas, Nevada, United States

2024 record: 120.02 F (48.9 C)

Previous record: 117 F (47.2 C) set in 2017

Morrisville, North Carolina, United States

2024 record: 105.98 F (41.1 C)

Previous record: 105.08 F (40.6 C) set in 2012

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 76 of 84

Agness, Oregon, United States
2024 record: 114.98 F (46.1 C)
Previous record: 111.92 F (44.4 C) set in 1998
Palmdale, California, United States
2024 record: 114.98 F (46.1 C)
Previous record of 113 (45 C) set in 2007
Redding California, United States
2024 record: 118.94 F (48.3 C)
Previous record: 118.04 F (47.8 C) set in 1988
Las Trampas, California, United States
2024 record: 107.96 F (42.2 C)
Previous record: 105.98 (41.1 C) set in 2021
Aswan, Egypt
2024 record: 121.28 F (49.6 C)
Previous record: 120.02 (48.9 C) set in 1961
Geraldton, Australia
2024 record: 120.74 F (49.3 C)
Previous record: 117.86 F (47.7 C) set in 1954
Progreso, Mexico
2024 record: 111.56 F (44.2 C)
Previous record: 108.50 (42.5 C) set in 2023
Gaya, India
2024 record: 117.32 F (47.4 C)
Previous record: 116.60 F (47 C) set in 1978
Sikasso, Mali
2024 record: 116.24 F (46.8 C)
Previous record: 108.50 F (42.5 C) set in 2020
Vinh, Vietnam
2024 record: 109.22 F (42.9 C)
Previous record: 105.8 F (41 C) set in 2019
Mama, Russia
2024 record: 101.12 F (38.4 C)
Previous record: 99.86 F (37.7 C) set in 2017

A defiant Biden borrows some tactics from his rival as he tries to put debate debacle behind him

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — He's calling in to his favorite morning cable news show, bashing the "elites" of his party and dismissing unfavorable polls. He's even talking up his crowd sizes.

As an increasingly defiant President Joe Biden rejects calls to step aside after a disastrous debate performance, he's been embracing some of the tactics used by a man he calls a mortal threat to democracy: his rival, former President Donald Trump.

Trump has weathered a seemingly never-ending list of controversies, from the Access Hollywood tape that threatened to derail his candidacy weeks before the 2016 election, to his two impeachments, four indictments and conviction on 34 felony charges for falsifying business records. Through it all, Trump has developed a well-worn playbook for confronting allegations. He aggressively denies any wrongdoing. He lashes out at his detractors. And he often disputes what people have seen with their own eyes.

To be clear, there are significant differences between the men's approaches. Unlike Trump, Biden has repeatedly acknowledged his poor debate performance, saying he had a bad night. Instead of publicly

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 77 of 84

blaming his advisers, he's said, "Any mistake made is my fault."

But longtime Trump watchers say there is nonetheless something familiar in some of the ways Biden has pushed back at criticism in recent days.

It remains to be seen if Biden's efforts to keep his party behind him will work. Many congressional Democrats, worried about his prospects and their own in November, have declined to give him a full vote of confidence, including former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in an interview Wednesday. Trump, meanwhile, has maintained a tight grip on his party, even after becoming the first former president to be convicted of a felony. He will accept the GOP nomination next week facing no serious opposition.

Former Trump White House communications director Alyssa Farah Griffin, who is now a Trump critic, has called for Biden to withdraw from the race after the debate. She argues that Biden, in trying to hold onto the nomination, is "employing Trump-like tactics" with combative responses, cable news call-ins, pressure on lawmakers and an 'I alone can fix it' attitude.

"It very much echoes how Trump operates," she said. "I think Trump has changed the stakes and lowered the bar for how to behave in office and what the expectations are."

Biden's campaign sharply rejects any comparison between the two men and between one debate performance and Trump's presentations.

"President Biden respects and defends our democracy, including the more than 14 million who voted for him to be his party's nominee," said Biden campaign senior spokesperson Sarafina Chitika. "Trump, meanwhile, is a convicted felon who cannot accept that he broke the law or that he lost to Joe Biden by more than 7 million votes. The difference between them couldn't be more clear to voters – and it's why Donald Trump will lose yet again this November."

Pennsylvania Sen. John Fetterman, who traveled with the president over the weekend and has been one of his staunchest defenders in the wake of the debate, scoffed at any comparison to Trump.

Instead, he said he saw parallels to his own 2022 race and a debate in which he struggled at times to explain his positions and often spoke haltingly several months after suffering a stroke.

After that debate, Fetterman acknowledged it didn't go well, and then quickly got back to making the case against his opponent, Dr. Mehmet Oz. Fetterman went on to win his race.

"They predicted I would lose by two points and we won by five," he said. "I refuse to allow a debate to define a great president's legacy, just the way people tried to do that to me."

Echoes of Trump

This week began with Biden calling in to "Morning Joe," a favorite cable news show, where he railed against his naysayers and insisted he will be his party's nominee.

He dared those who doubt him to challenge him at the convention and dismissed those who have called for him to step aside as out of touch with rank-and-file voters, despite recent polling that shows widespread concerns about his age.

"I'm getting so frustrated ... by the elites in the party," he said, mocking, in a sing-song voice, the assumption that "they know so much more."

Trump spent many mornings of his 2016 campaign calling in to "Morning Joe" and other morning shows, giving him unfiltered access to millions of viewers and hours of free airtime. He continues to do so, at times, including an interview with Fox News host Sean Hannity that aired Monday night.

Like Trump, Biden has also aggressively dismissed polls he doesn't like, rejecting the notion that he's behind.

"I don't buy that," he said when pressed by ABC's George Stephanopoulos. "How many people draw crowds like I did today?" (Stephanopoulos retorted by telling Biden: "I don't think you want to play the crowd game. Donald Trump can draw big crowds.")

Biden has also lashed out at the press, albeit in far less hostile terms than Trump, who casts the news media as the "enemy of the people" and slams any story he dislikes as "fake news."

On an airplane tarmac last Friday, Biden castigated reporters.

"Look, you've been wrong about everything so far," he said. "You were wrong about 2020. You were wrong about 2022 that we were going to get wiped out. Remember the 'red wave'? You were wrong about 2023."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 78 of 84

He's even making calls thanking people for defending him on TV — another Trump hallmark. Rep. Jan Schakowsky of Illinois, said she had received one such call from Biden after an appearance.

Trump has changed the crisis playbook

Eric Dezenhall, a crisis communications expert who has written multiple books on the subject, said Trump in some ways has changed the way people respond to public relations crises.

"Trump pioneered something that a lot of us in this business knew long before he did it, but were not sufficiently ethically challenged to try it. And that includes lying often works and it also includes the idea that apologies do not always work," he said. "The PR industry loves this idea that if you apologize the problem goes away, when in fact an apology can exacerbate a crisis because it confirms for your critics that you did something wrong."

He said he saw similarities between Biden and Trump — "He's giving audacity a shot by saying, 'I'm going to stick it out. I'm fine. Pound sand'" — but said Trump can get away with things other can't.

"Trump is special. Trump can do things other people cannot. And one of the first things you learn in the crisis business is that not all crisis principals are created equal," he said. "Lying is built into Trump's stock price."

Fetterman, meanwhile, offered a long list of differences between Trump and Biden.

He referred to Trump's alleged affair with porn star Stormy Daniels, which the former president denies. "He was never impeached. Not twice either, Joe does not appear to be consumed by revenge. Joe never vowed to pardon all of the Jan. 6 insurrectionists ... Joe never promised to be a dictator."

"I'd like to remind everybody: There's only one person in America that kicked Trump's ass in an election," he added of Biden. "And that's our guy."

Israeli military orders the evacuation of Gaza City, an early target of its war with Hamas

By WAFAA SHURAFU and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The Israeli military urged all Palestinians to leave Gaza City and head south Wednesday, pressing ahead with a fresh offensive across the north, south and center of the embattled territory that has killed dozens of people over the past 48 hours.

The stepped-up military activity came as U.S., Egyptian and Qatari mediators met with Israeli officials in the Qatari capital, Doha, for talks seeking a long-elusive cease-fire deal with Gaza's Hamas militant group in exchange for the release of dozens of Israeli hostages it is holding.

Israel says it is pursuing Hamas fighters that are regrouping in various parts of Gaza nine months into the war. But heavy strikes in recent days along the length of the territory also could be aimed at putting more pressure on Hamas in the cease-fire talks.

In a visit Wednesday to central Gaza, Israel's military chief, Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi, said forces were operating in different ways, in multiple parts of the territory "to carry out a very important mission: pressure. We will continue operating to bring home the hostages."

Israel informed people in Gaza of the evacuation order by dropping leaflets urging "all those in Gaza City" to take two "safe routes" south to the area around the central town of Deir al-Balah. Gaza City, it said, will "remain a dangerous combat zone."

Months ago, Israel ordered residents of northern Gaza, including Gaza City, to flee south, and much of the population left earlier in the war. Large parts of Gaza City and urban areas around it have been flattened or left a shattered landscape by previous Israeli assaults.

The United Nations says about 300,000 Palestinians have remained in the hard-hit north, with the bulk of those said to be in Gaza City.

Most of Gaza's 2.3 million people are crammed into squalid tent camps in central and southern Gaza.

Israeli troops have pushed into parts of Gaza City in recent days, triggering the flight of thousands of Palestinians trying to escape shelling and airstrikes. This past week, the military ordered Palestinians to

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 79 of 84

evacuate from eastern and central parts of the city.

There was no immediate mass exodus from the city following Wednesday's order. Many Palestinians have concluded that there is no refuge in war-stricken Gaza.

The military, meanwhile, said it wrapped up an operation launched late last month in the Gaza City neighborhood of Shijaiyah, where it killed dozens of militants and destroyed eight underground tunnels.

Wednesday's evacuation order came after a series of deadly strikes over the past two days in other parts of the territory. Israeli bombardment early Wednesday hit four houses in Deir al-Balah and the nearby Nuseirat refugee camp, killing 20 Palestinians.

Among the dead were six children and three women, according to officials at al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, where the casualties were taken. An Associated Press reporter counted the bodies. The house hit in Deir al-Balah was inside the "humanitarian safe zone" where Israel has told Palestinians to flee for refuge.

The overnight bombardment came hours after Israeli warplanes struck the entrance of a school sheltering displaced families outside the southern city of Khan Younis. The toll from the strike rose to 31 people killed, including eight children, and more than 50 wounded, officials at the nearby Nasser Hospital said Wednesday.

Footage aired by Al Jazeera television showed kids playing soccer in the school's yard when a sudden boom shook the area, prompting shouts of "a strike, a strike!"

The Israeli army said the airstrike near the school and reports of civilian casualties were under review. It claimed it was targeting a Hamas militant who took part in the Oct. 7 attack on Israel that triggered the war, though it provided no immediate evidence. The military blames civilian deaths on Hamas because the militants fight in dense, urban areas. But the army rarely comments on what it is targeting in individual strikes, which often kill women and children.

In nine months of bombardment and offensives in Gaza, Israel has killed more than 38,200 people and wounded more than 88,000, according to the territory's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians in its count. Nearly the entire population has been driven from their homes. Many have been displaced multiple times.

During the Oct. 7 raid, militants killed 1,200 people in southern Israel, most of them civilians, according to Israeli authorities. The militants took roughly 250 people hostage. About 120 are still in captivity, with about a third said to be dead.

Israel's new ground assault in Gaza's largest city has prompted what the U.N called a "dangerously chaotic" exodus of people scattering in multiple directions, unsure where to go. Some have fled to other parts of the north. The new Israeli military leaflets encouraged a mass movement south to the purported "humanitarian zone," promising that people leaving Gaza City on the defined routes would not be stopped at Israeli checkpoints. Many Palestinians fear arrest or humiliation by troops at the checkpoints.

After Israel on Monday called for an evacuation from eastern and central parts of Gaza City, staff at two hospitals — Al-Ahli and the Patients Friends Association Hospital — rushed to move patients and shut down, the United Nations said.

Hospitals in Gaza have often evacuated preemptively at any sign of possible Israeli military action, fearing raids. In the past nine months, Israeli troops have attacked at least eight hospitals, causing the deaths of patients and medical workers along with massive destruction to facilities and equipment. Israel has claimed Hamas uses hospitals for military purposes, though it has provided only limited evidence.

Only 13 of Gaza's 36 hospitals are functioning, and those only partially, according to the United Nations' humanitarian office.

Amid the ongoing violence, international mediators were making a new concerted effort to push through a proposed deal for a cease-fire and release of hostages.

Israel and Hamas had appeared to narrow the gaps in recent days, but obstacles remain, even after Hamas agreed to relent on its key demand that Israel commit to ending the war as part of any agreement.

Hamas still wants mediators to guarantee that negotiations conclude with a permanent cease-fire. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has insisted he will not sign any deal forcing Israel to stop its campaign

in Gaza without eliminating Hamas. Hamas on Monday accused Netanyahu of "putting more obstacles in the way of negotiations," including the operations in Gaza City.

An Egyptian official said the head of Egypt's General Intelligence Service, Abbas Kamel, went to Doha to join discussions over the deal. The official said U.S. and Israeli officials were also attending. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the press on the meetings.

A day earlier, CIA Director William Burns, who has led the American mediation, met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi in Cairo.

Specialists say there are benefits to couples sleeping separately

By LEANNE ITALIE AP Lifestyles Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Michael Solender and his wife have been together for 42 years. They slept in the same bed for the first 10, taking to separate rooms after that.

Their sleep separation was due to his developing chronic and heavy snoring that eventually led to a diagnosis of sleep apnea and his use of a CPAP machine.

After the machine eliminated his snoring, they continue to sleep apart in their Charlotte, North Carolina, home because of other issues. He's typically warm at night and she's usually cold.

"For us to maintain separate rooms for sleep just makes for a healthier relationship and a better relationship," said Solender, 66. "There's no shame attached to that. There's no stigma."

Snoring, temperature variations, cover stealers, and tossing and turning often lead to partners sleeping separately. Other issues are also in play, including illness, different work shifts, and partners who go to bed and get up at different times.

More than one-third of Americans said they occasionally or consistently sleep in another room to accommodate a bed partner, according to an American Academy of Sleep Medicine study last year. Men are the ones who usually hit the sofa or guest room.

And, perhaps surprisingly, it's millennials who do it most, rather than older people.

Dr. Seema Khosla, a pulmonologist and spokesperson for the academy, said achieving adequate sleep, which is usually seven to eight hours for adults, is important for healthy relationships.

Studies indicate that people who consistently experience poor sleep are more likely to experience conflict with their partners, said Khosla, who is the medical director of the North Dakota Center for Sleep, in Fargo.

"It's really a question of people prioritizing their sleep," Khosla said. "I have had patients who have been married like 60 years and they swear that separate bedrooms is a reason."

Sleeping separately, she said, "is probably more common than we think."

The same goes for sleep apnea, a leading cause of heavy snoring, Khosla said. Solender said he went to a sleep specialist after realizing the impact sleep deprivation had on himself and his wife.

"I would wake her up and would wake myself up," he said. "I never knew I had sleep apnea. I would say close to 20 years ago, I started falling asleep at red lights. I started falling asleep watching TV or sitting up and reading a book. I felt tired constantly. That's when I knew I had an issue."

Key to making separate sleep spaces work is talking about it beforehand, as Solender did with his wife.

"It's not about avoiding intimacy. It's about recognizing that you can have intimacy, you can have that time together, but then you just sleep apart. That's a really important part of the conversation. Both partners need to understand and agree," Khosla said.

She has seen some reluctance among her patients when she suggests sleeping apart.

"Usually it's somebody's spouse who is snoring or someone who has a spouse's alarm that wakes them up at four in the morning or something like that. We'll talk about it. And people will push back right away saying, oh, no, no, that's not gonna work for me," she said.

Some, Khosla said, "will sit with it for a minute and they'll think about it, and you can tell that they're kind of like, I would love to do this but how do I tell my partner?"

Tracey Daniels and her husband have been sleeping apart for about four years. Initially, there was no big talk. She just headed to the guest room.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 81 of 84

"It started because my husband is a horrible snorer. But also I'm a very light sleeper. He could drop a paperclip on a carpeted floor and I would wake up," said Daniels, who lives in Tryon, North Carolina.

Later, she said, she initiated a conversation after she was diagnosed with breast cancer and went through surgery.

"He comes and tucks me in and gives me a kiss," Daniels said.

They rotate their three dogs at night.

Dr. Phyllis Zee, chief of sleep medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and director of a sleep clinic at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, said sleep separation is common in her practice.

"It would be a great idea to discuss sleep compatibility before you get married. I tend to see it when couples have been married and/or they've been together for some time and have been trying to negotiate this for a while," she said.

Come middle age, Zee said, sleep is less robust.

"In general, you're more prone to getting things like insomnia or sleep apnea. And so that begins to be bothersome," she said.

While there's no shame in sleeping apart, Zee said technology has helped make sharing a bed easier in some ways. White noise machines, cooling pillows and bedding, mattresses with dual temperature controls and dual control electric blankets can help, Zee said. Some couples have given up sharing blankets, using their own, to make sleep easier.

"There's a whole market out there to mitigate some of these issues," she said.

Sleep separation is more accepted now as people have become more aware of the importance of quality sleep to overall health, Zee said.

"On the other hand, there is research to show there are benefits to sleeping together," she said. "In general, probably the top line is seek professional help before making a decision. Are the issues a sign of a sleep disorder that one can treat?"

Injuries are adding up at Wimbledon and determining the outcomes of matches

By HOWARD FENDRICH and KEN MAGUIRE AP Sports Writers

LONDON (AP) — There's no single explanation, of course, for all of the injuries to players in the latter stages at Wimbledon this year. This much is certain: The timing could hardly be worse.

The man Novak Djokovic was supposed to face on Wednesday, Alex de Minaur, withdrew hours before their scheduled quarterfinal because he jarred his hip at the end of a victory two days earlier.

"I'm devastated," de Minaur said. "The problem with me going out and playing is that one stretch, one slide, one anything, can make this injury (recovery) go from three to six weeks to four months. It's too much to risk."

Taylor Fritz's fourth-round opponent, Alexander Zverev, slipped on an unworn patch of green grass in his previous match. That caused a bone bruise — and maybe worse — that Zverev complained left him on "one leg" in his loss to the American at what the two-time major finalist characterized as a wide open opportunity to grab a first Grand Slam title.

Danielle Collins' last Wimbledon appearance before retirement ended with tape wrapped around her hamstring, the work of a trainer during the American's fourth-round loss to 2021 French Open champion Barbora Krejčíková. Collins chalked it up to failing to "think about every little step that you take."

"There's been a ton of injuries on the grass. Left and right, it seems like people are going down. I am, I guess, frustrated that I feel like I was focusing on my tactics and kind of what I needed to do to play at a high level. Usually, I feel like, on other surfaces you're not having to think so critically about your movement," Collins said. "The one second I take my mind off of it, not think about every little thing I'm doing with my footwork, it ends up happening."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 82 of 84

The falls keep happening. The injuries are adding up.

"It's unfortunate, obviously," de Minaur said. "You never want to see this."

He called his mishap "more of a freak injury," related to the "excessive amount of force" used to slide on grass.

Madison Keys, the 2017 U.S. Open runner-up, was in tears when she stopped because of a hurt leg at 5-all in the third set of a Week 2 match against Jasmine Paolini, who reached Thursday's semifinals.

Emma Raducanu, who won the U.S. Open three years ago, withdrew from mixed doubles — which was supposed to be Andy Murray's last event at Wimbledon — because of a sore wrist, then needed a medical timeout later that day after falling in the third set of a singles loss.

No. 17 Anna Kalinskaya cited a bad wrist when she quit in her fourth-round match against 2022 champion Elena Rybakina. No. 10 Grigor Dimitrov retired from his fourth-round match against Daniil Medvedev with a leg problem.

"It's normal for the second week at Wimbledon to be feeling niggling things on your muscles, because it's tough — the grass, getting down low, coming into the net. It's more on the muscles than the joints on the grass," 2003 Wimbledon finalist Mark Philippoussis said. "So I'm sure lots of people will be feeling it now with little things here and there."

Count Djokovic among those who think part of the issue is that all of the rain during the tournament — so much that the mixed doubles final was shifted from Thursday to Sunday, and play began a half-hour earlier than usual on most courts Wednesday — has made the grass more slick and the footing less sure.

So has shutting the retractable roofs at Centre Court and No. 1 Court, the only two arenas with that luxury during wet weather.

"Once you close the roof, you know that the grass is going to be more slippery. So there's more chances that players will fall. Unfortunately, some of the falls have caused some of the players to withdraw," Djokovic said.

"It's part of this surface. You can't really change that," added the seven-time champion at the All England Club. "I mean, it's grass. It's a live surface, and it reacts to different conditions."

The pattern began at grass tourneys that preceded Wimbledon.

Marketa Vondrousova retired from a match in Berlin after hurting her right leg there. When she showed up at Wimbledon, she became the first defending champion in 30 years to lose in the first round and acknowledged: "I was a bit scared because of my leg."

The woman who beat her last week, Jessica Bouzas Maneiro, stopped at Wimbledon because of a back issue in the third round against Krejčíková.

Frances Tiafoe pulled out of the Queen's Club tournament before Wimbledon after spraining a ligament in his right knee when he took a tumble. Tiafoe played at the All England Club with a black sleeve over his knee and made it to the third round before losing to defending champion Carlos Alcaraz.

Djokovic tore the meniscus in his right knee during a match at the French Open, had surgery and returned to competition less than a month later. Ironically, he thinks it's possible that might have helped him stay upright this fortnight.

That's because, years ago, Djokovic was one of the first players to regularly slide on grass the way they do on clay. He has cut down on those movements this time at Wimbledon, being extra careful to avoid risking falls.

"It's probably part of my, I guess, different kind of movement on the court that I've been really experimenting with because of the cautiousness — because of the knee and everything that was happening prior to the tournament," Djokovic explained. "The first couple rounds, I was still not maybe willing to go (for difficult) balls and slide and make splits."

Other theories include: More and more baseline play on grass, and less serving-and-volleying, creates longer points and extra running, which translate into a greater likelihood of slips; less comfort on grass because players tend to grow up practicing and competing on clay or hard courts; and a brief grass portion of the schedule that doesn't allow for accumulating a lot of experience on the turf.

Then there's the general wear-and-tear of a season.

"Listen, tennis is a very physical sport at the moment. For sure, the rallies are longer. Matches. Scheduling. Finishing late," 2006 Australian Open finalist Marcos Baghdatis said. "It's very demanding on the body. ... A lot of things are changing that (contribute) to players getting injured."

Political ads on social media rife with misinformation and scams, new research finds

By DAVID KLEPPER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The online advertisement to Donald Trump supporters was clear enough: Click here, and receive a free Trump 2024 flag and a commemorative coin. All in exchange for taking a quick survey and providing a credit card number for the \$5 shipping and handling.

"You'll get two free gifts just by taking this quick poll in support of Trump," says the ad's narrator.

The ad — which has appeared on Facebook, YouTube and other platforms — didn't mention the \$80 charge that would later appear on credit card statements. Those that clicked were scammed.

Political advertisements on social media are one of the best ways for candidates to reach supporters and raise campaign cash. But as a new report from Syracuse University shows, weak regulations governing online ads and haphazard enforcement by tech companies also make ads a prime source for misleading information about elections — and a tantalizingly easy way for con artists to target victims.

"There is very little regulation on the platforms," said Jennifer Stromer-Galley, the professor who led the research for the ElectionGraph Project at Syracuse University's Institute for Democracy, Journalism & Citizenship. "It leaves the American public vulnerable to misinformation, disinformation and propaganda."

Stromer's research examined more than 2,200 groups on Facebook or Instagram that ran ads between September and May mentioning one of the presidential candidates. Combined, the ads cost nearly \$19 million and were seen more than 1 billion times.

Data connected to the ads (and made public by Meta, Facebook's owner) shows that both right- and left-leaning ads targeted older voters more than younger ones. Right-leaning ads were more likely to target men, progressive ads were more likely to target women.

Overall, conservative-leaning organizations bought more ads than progressive-leaning groups. Immigration was the top issue raised in right-leaning ads while the economy dominated progressive ads.

Many of the ads contained misleading information, or deepfake video and audio of celebrities supposedly crying during a speech by former First Lady Melania Trump. Stromer-Galley noted that falsehoods in ads about urban crime and immigration were especially common.

While most of the groups paying for the ads are legitimate, others seemed more interested in getting a user's personal financial data than boosting any particular candidate. Using a partnership with the data science firm Neo4j, Stromer-Galley found that some of the pages shared common creators, or ran virtually identical ads. When one page disappeared — perhaps removed by Facebook moderators — another would pop up quickly to take its place.

Many of the pages sold Trump-related merchandise such as flags, hats, banners and coins or advertised fictitious investment schemes. The true motive, apparently, was to get a user's credit card information.

The ads promising a free Trump flag were placed by a group called Liberty Defender Group. Emails sent to several addresses listed for the company were not returned, and a phone number for a company representative could not be found. One website associated with the group has moved on from politics, and is now selling devices which claim to improve home energy efficiency.

Meta removed most of the network's ads and pages earlier this year after researchers noticed their activity, but the ads are still visible on other platforms. The company says it prohibits scams or content that could interfere with the operation of an election and removes ads that violate the rules. In addition, the company urges its users not to click on suspicious links, or to hand over personal information to untrustworthy sources.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, July 11, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 016 ~ 84 of 84

"Don't answer messages asking for your password, social security number, or credit card information," the company said.

The Trump campaign, which has no known ties to the network, did not respond to a message seeking comment.

The researchers at Syracuse were only able to study ads on Meta platforms because other companies do not make such information public. As a result, Stromer-Galley said the public is in the dark about the true amount of misinformation and scams spreading on social media.

Today in History: July 11, the fall of Srebrenica

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, July 11, the 193rd day of 2024. There are 173 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 11, 1995, the U.N.-designated "safe haven" of Srebrenica (sreh-breh-NEET'-sah) in Bosnia-Herzegovina fell to Bosnian Serb forces, who subsequently carried out the killings of more than 8,000 Muslim men and boys.

Also on this date:

In 1798, the U.S. Marine Corps was formally re-established by a congressional act that also created the U.S. Marine Band.

In 1804, Vice President Aaron Burr mortally wounded former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton during a pistol duel in Weehawken, New Jersey. (Hamilton died the next day.)

In 1859, Big Ben, the great bell inside the famous London clock tower, chimed for the first time.

In 1864, Confederate forces led by General Jubal Early began an abortive invasion of Washington, D.C., turning back the next day.

In 1914, Babe Ruth made his Major League baseball debut, pitching the Boston Red Sox to a 4-3 victory over Cleveland.

In 1921, fighting in the Irish War of Independence ended with a truce.

In 1960, Harper Lee's novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" was published.

In 1972, the World Chess Championship opened as grandmasters Bobby Fischer of the United States and defending champion Boris Spassky of the Soviet Union began play in Reykjavik, Iceland. (Fischer won after 21 games.)

In 1979, the abandoned U.S. space station Skylab made a spectacular return to Earth, burning up in the atmosphere and showering debris over the Indian Ocean and Australia.

In 1991, a Nigeria Airways DC-8 carrying Muslim pilgrims crashed at the Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, international airport, killing all 261 people on board.

In 2006, eight bombs hit a commuter rail network during evening rush hour in Mumbai, India, killing more than 200 people.

In 2022, President Joe Biden revealed the first image from NASA's new space telescope, the farthest humanity had ever seen in both time and distance, closer to the dawn of the universe and the edge of the cosmos.

Today's Birthdays: Fashion designer Giorgio Armani is 90. Actor Susan Seaforth Hayes is 81. Actor Bruce McGill is 74. Actor Stephen Lang is 72. Actor Mindy Sterling is 71. Actor Sela Ward is 68. Reggae singer Michael Rose (Black Uhuru) is 67. Singer Peter Murphy (Bauhaus) is 67. Actor Mark Lester is 66. Saxophonist Kirk Whalum is 66. Singer Suzanne Vega is 65. Rock guitarist Richie Sambora (Bon Jovi) is 65. Actor Lisa Rinna is 61. Author Jhumpa Lahiri is 57. Wildlife expert Jeff Corwin is 57. Actor Justin Chambers (TV: "Grey's Anatomy") is 54. Actor Michael Rosenbaum (TV: "Smallville") is 52. Rapper Lil' Kim is 50. U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona is 49. Pro Football Hall of Famer Andre Johnson is 43. Pop-jazz singer-musician Peter Cincotti is 41. Actor Serinda Swan is 40. Actor David Henrie is 35. Actor Connor Paolo is 34. Tennis player Caroline Wozniacki is 34. R&B/pop singer Alessia Cara is 28.