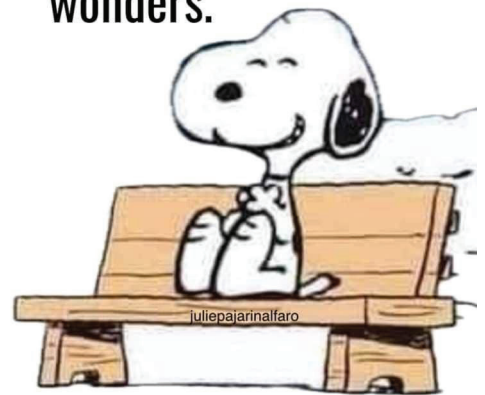


# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 1 of 71

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [4- Water Restrictions in Effect](#)
- [4- Special Needs Family Fun Night](#)
- [4- Doggie Day](#)
- [5- Prairie Doc: When Is It Time to Visit the Dentist?](#)
- [6- GDI Fitness New Program ad](#)
- [7- Groton Area Girls Golf Awards](#)
- [8- EarthTalk - Hot cities](#)
- [9- Sioux Falls, Brandon Valley moving to cashless ticketing system](#)
- [10- Roberts County Fatal Crash](#)
- [11- Alex Morris Of Groton Locke Electric 2024 Shuts Out Merchants](#)
- [12- Locke Electric Box Score](#)
- [13- Weekly Vikings Roundup](#)
- [14- The Real EV Issue is Quite Taxing on America's Infrastructure](#)
- [16- SD SearchLight: U.S. home prices hit a record high as sales fell.](#)
- [18- Weather Pages](#)
- [22- Daily Devotional](#)
- [23- Subscription Form](#)
- [24- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [25- Upcoming Groton Events](#)
- [26- News from the Associated Press](#)

*Another Day*  
to be grateful for the  
gift of life and all its  
wonders.



## Monday, July 29

Senior Menu: Baked fish, oven roasted potatoes pea-cheese salad, fruit, whole wheat bread.

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

Pantry Open, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Groton Community Center

## Tuesday, July 30

Senior Menu: Tater tot hot dish, carrots, peaches, whole wheat bread.

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

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Pantry Open, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Groton Community Center

## Wednesday, July 31

Senior Menu: Ham, au gratin potatoes, creamed cabbage, tropical fruit, whole wheat bread.

Groton CM&A: Family Fun Night, 7 p.m.

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 2 of 71

# 1440

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

## Venezuela Votes

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro was declared the winner of the country's national elections yesterday. As of this writing, officials said Maduro held a 51.2% lead over rival Edmundo González, who had 44%, with 80% of ballots counted. Opposition leaders claimed widespread corruption and pledged to challenge the results.

The election is believed to be the biggest test to the ruling socialist party since the death of Hugo Chávez. The announced results were at odds with exit polling, which showed González with over 60% of the vote compared to 30% for Maduro.

Maduro has ruled since Chávez's death in 2013 and has warned of a "bloodbath" if he was defeated. González is a former diplomat and stand-in for María Corina Machado, herself a former lawmaker barred from running on corruption allegations. González has led Maduro by double digits in recent polls.

The Biden administration has conditioned sanctions relief on free and fair elections. Once the richest country in South America, Venezuela has undergone a prolonged economic crisis. At least 7.7 million people—roughly one-quarter of the country's population—have fled since 2015.

## Olympics Day Three

Today is Day Three of the Paris 2024 Olympics, with 19 medals up for grabs, including in swimming and men's gymnastics.

The US men's swimming team won Team USA's first gold medal of the year for the 4x100 meter freestyle relay. LeBron James and Kevin Durant, recovering from a calf injury, helped defeat Serbia 110-84. The US women's soccer team meanwhile defeated Germany 4-1, while defending champion Canada suffered a penalty over a spying scandal involving drones.

Separately, Simone Biles—the world's most decorated gymnast—notched the highest all-around score in yesterday's qualifying round, becoming the first woman to land the Yurchenko Double Pike (known as the Biles II) at the Olympics. Her teammate and defending Olympic all-around champion, Suni Lee, will seek to make history by performing a full-twisting Jaeger on the uneven bars Sunday.

Meanwhile, American swimming star Katie Ledecky came in third in the 400-meter freestyle, with Australia's Ariarne Titmus taking gold.

## Blood Test Breakthrough

A new diagnostic blood test for Alzheimer's disease was found to correctly identify the condition around 90% of the time, outperforming specialists' assessments based on physical and cognitive symptoms. The breakthrough offers a potential tool to accurately diagnose the disease and at earlier stages of development.

Alzheimer's affects almost 7 million Americans yet remains notoriously difficult to diagnose. Accumulations of molecules known as amyloid beta plaques and misfolded tau proteins are believed to play a key role but are challenging to detect and measure.

The new test—called PrecivityAD2—measures the ratios of both present in a patient's blood, plugging the result into a proprietary algorithm to predict the risk of developing Alzheimer's. Doctors hope the simple and cheap test can replace expensive scans and invasive spinal taps currently considered best-in-class for diagnosis.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 3 of 71

## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

"Deadpool & Wolverine" hauls in \$205M in its opening weekend at the domestic box office, the eighth largest opening ever and a record for an R-rated film.

Three members of the Grammy-nominated gospel group The Nelons are among seven killed in Wyoming plane crash.

Gail Lumet Buckley, author and daughter of Lena Horne, dies at 86.

About 28.6 million Americans tuned in to the Paris Olympics opening ceremony, a 60% jump from the 2021 games and the most since 2012.

## Science & Technology

SpaceX successfully launches Falcon 9 rocket two weeks after its first failed launch since 2016.

Researchers demonstrate new nanometer-sized transistor—the basic component of nearly all electronics—capable of switching at least 100 billion times without any signs of degradation.

Scientists pinpoint brain circuit responsible for the mother-infant bond in mouse study; results shed light on early postnatal development in newborn humans.

## Business & Markets

Markets surge Friday (Dow +1.6%, S&P 500 +1.1%, Nasdaq +1.0%) on positive inflation data, signs the Federal Reserve may begin cutting rates in near future.

US home insurers report more than \$15B in underwriting losses in 2023, more than double the previous year and the worst since 2000; analysts point to population growth in areas prone to natural disasters.

Apple strikes contract with union organizers at Maryland store, its first collective bargaining agreement with employees at a company retail outlet.

## Politics & World Affairs

Israel reportedly strikes weapons depot in Lebanon in retaliation after Hezbollah rocket strike kills 12 at a soccer field in Golan Heights; Hezbollah denies involvement.

Israeli strike hits school in central Gaza; at least 30 people killed, according to Hamas officials.

Justice Department accuses TikTok of collecting user data on political issues, including abortion and gun control, storing the bulk information on servers in China.

California's Park Fire destroys at least 130 buildings, has burned through 350,000 acres; blaze started after a suspect reportedly pushed a burning car into a gully last week

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 4 of 71

## Water Restrictions Now In Effect



Water restrictions have been put in place for the City of Groton. Odd number houses may water on odd number days between 6 p.m. and 11 a.m. Even number houses may water on even number days between 6 p.m. and 11 a.m.

**Absolutely no watering from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

*Thank you for your cooperation!*

## Special Needs Family Fun Night

**4 AUGUST** | **4PM-5:30PM**  
Groton Swimming Pool.

For all children and adults with special needs, with their families and/or caregivers.

Sensory friendly time.  
No radio or water features.

No Charge  
Concessions Available

## 8TH ANNUAL DOGGIE DAY!



**Sunday, September 8th 4-6pm**  
**Groton Swimming Pool \$5/dog**  
Dogs must be accompanied by an adult.



## When Is It Time to Visit the Dentist?

Pain in your mouth is difficult to ignore, especially when it affects everyday activities like speaking, eating, or sleeping. Here are some of the most common reasons to visit your dentist.

The first sign to visit your dentist is a persistent toothache. Sometimes our teeth can hurt temporarily due to things like teeth whitening or sinus issues. However, if a toothache does not go away, or goes away and then comes back, this is a good sign to visit your dentist to identify the source of pain.

Pain or soreness in your jaw (especially when that pain is accompanied by a headache) can point to bruxism, which is the repeated clenching or grinding of your teeth. Treating bruxism is often as simple as prescribing a custom fit mouth guard which separates your teeth, hence preventing any clenching or grinding. Severe bruxism can wear down or break teeth, which may need to be fixed by your dentist.

If you are experiencing any swelling in your gums or jaw, this is a good indicator of an infection in your mouth. An abscessed tooth is also a signal of an infection. Treatment ranges from draining the abscess, a root canal, or even pulling the tooth. Antibiotics can sometimes take care of an infection in your mouth, but leaving a tooth abscess untreated can lead to serious, even life-threatening, complications.

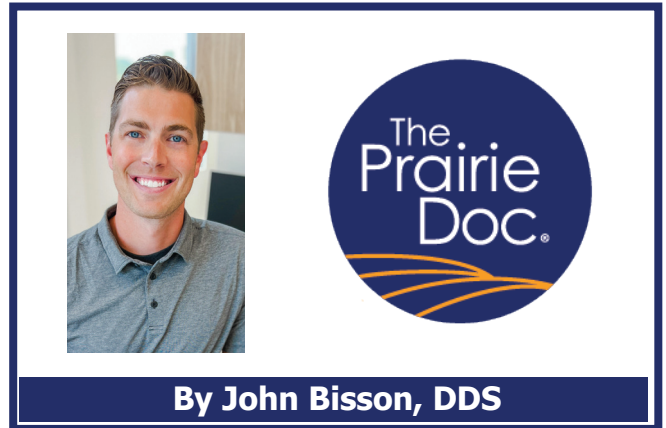
Gums that are red, swollen, and bleed every time you brush or floss your teeth could signal periodontal disease. This is an infection in the tissues that hold your teeth in place. If left untreated, periodontal disease can lead to bone loss around the teeth and eventually lead to tooth loss.

If you crack or chip a tooth, you should also see your dentist as soon as possible even if the tooth does not hurt. A crack or chip in the tooth can spread over time and may further worsen the condition of the tooth. The sooner the crack or chip is addressed by a dentist, chances are far better of a successful tooth repair and an increase in the longevity of the tooth.

If a permanent tooth has been knocked out, immediate dental attention is strongly encouraged. If a tooth is knocked out, in many cases the damaged nerves and blood vessels cannot be saved. A tooth should not move in a healthy mouth, so any signs of movement such as a wiggly tooth usually have an underlying cause that should be assessed by a dental professional.

Finally, any bumps or sores in your mouth that don't clear up in a few weeks should be checked by your dentist. Some bumps or sores, like canker sores, should clear up on their own. Other persistent or painful sores could be a sign of oral cancer and should be checked by your dentist as soon as possible.

In conclusion, we strongly encourage patients to schedule an appointment with their dentist with any dental related questions or concerns. The best way to catch any dental issues early on is to visit your dentist on a regular basis for preventive dental cleanings and checkups. Regularly scheduled dental appointments and diligent home care are the best ways to keep your smile healthy.



John Bisson, DDS is a dentist and owns Bisson Dental in Brookings, SD. Dr. Bisson is originally from Sturgis, SD but moved to Brookings in 2015 and opened Bisson Dental in 2018. For more information about Bisson Dental head here, <https://www.bisson-dental.com/>. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org) and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show providing health information based on science, built on trust, on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

## Brand New Program at

15 N Main St. - Ste. 101  
Downtown Groton

Call/Text Paul: 605-397-7460  
Call/Text Tina: 605-397-7285



### \$20 Monthly Membership

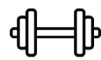
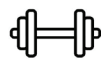
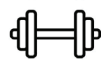
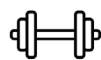
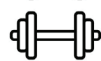
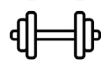
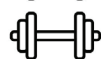
- ☞ for people 60 years of age and older
- ☞ for those who need equipment for physical therapy!



Downtown  
Groton

24/7 access to the facility ~ Cancel any time

**Staying fit and practicing healthy nutrition  
can be linked to benefits, such as:**

-  Reduced levels of stress and anxiety
-  Improved cognitive function
-  Increased energy levels and productivity
-  Controlled blood pressure
-  Better blood flow circulation
-  Strengthened bones and muscles
-  Reduced risk of heart disease and other illnesses

Call/Text Paul at 605-397-7460

Call/Text Tina at 605-397-7285

## Groton Area Girls Golf Awards



**Carly Guthmiller - Top Medalist**



**Claire Schuelke - Most Improved**



## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Cities seem to be heating up fast more so than less urban areas. What can we do to keep them cool in the face of increasing global warming?

-- Paul Smith, Providence, RI

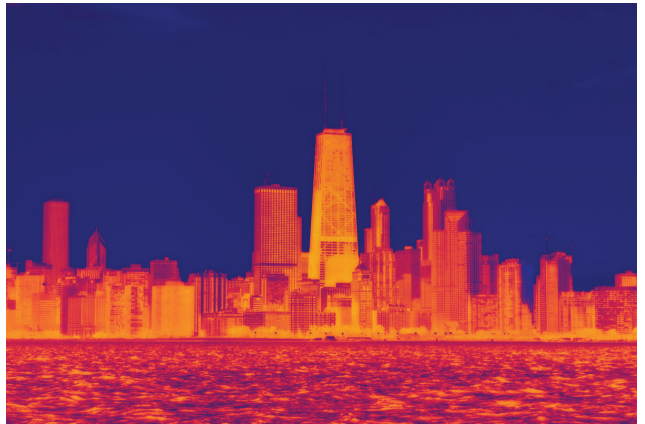
As global warming intensifies, cities worldwide are experiencing an accelerated rise in temperatures compared to less urban areas. This phenomenon, known as the urban heat island (UHI) effect, results from the concentration of buildings, roads and other infrastructure that absorb and re-emit heat more than natural landscapes. Addressing urban heat is crucial in the context of global warming to improve public health, reduce energy consumption and enhance the livability of urban environments.

One effective strategy is the implementation of green infrastructure. Urban green spaces, like parks and tree-lined streets, provide shade and cool the air through evapotranspiration, whereby heat is reduced as water evaporates from soil surfaces and transpires from plant leaves. Urban green spaces can significantly reduce the surrounding air temperature, offering a natural solution to urban heat.

Reflective and cool roofs are another strategy to mitigate urban heat. White roofs can reflect up to 90 percent of sunlight, significantly reducing the amount of heat absorbed by buildings. Several cities have successfully implemented white roofs, demonstrating their effectiveness in lowering urban temperatures. Cool roofs, made from lighter colored materials, offer another viable solution. These can be constructed from various materials, including reflective coatings, tiles and membranes. Implementing cool roofs helps reduce urban heat and contributes to energy savings by lowering the need for air conditioning.

Urban design and planning also play a key role in managing urban heat. Cool pavements, which include reflective and permeable materials, can greatly reduce heat absorption versus asphalt and concrete. Cities like Los Angeles have started using cool pavements, showing promising results. Other technological innovations offer advanced solutions for urban cooling. Smart shading systems, which adjust automatically based on the sun's position, and other innovative technologies, can enhance the effectiveness of traditional methods. Urban climate modeling is another valuable tool that helps urban planners make informed decisions in implementing different heat mitigation strategies.

Globally, many cities have successfully implemented measures to combat urban heat. Singapore's green roof initiative and Melbourne's urban forest strategy have had significant impacts on local temperatures. Urban planners, policymakers and communities must adopt multi-faceted approaches and policies to create cooler, more resilient urban environments and protect the health and well-being of city dwellers.



**As global warming intensifies, cities worldwide are experiencing an accelerated rise in temperatures compared to less urban areas.** Credit: dustinphillips,

FlickrCC.



# Broton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 9 of 71

## Sioux Falls, Brandon Valley moving to cashless ticketing system

(Sioux Falls, SD) – The Sioux Falls School District (SFSD) (Brandon Valley is also moving in this direction starting this fall) is excited to announce the implementation of a new, cashless ticketing system for all district-sponsored activities, athletics, and fine arts events. In partnership with Iowa-based company Bound, this transition to a digital ticketing platform is part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing convenience, safety, and efficiency for our students, parents, and community members.

The new digital ticketing program applies to all patrons, including visiting ones. Everyone is to use the digital ticketing system for a smoother and more convenient experience.

Regarding cash, their events will be a fully cashless system, so they will not be accepting cash at the gates. Digital tickets and card payments will be the primary methods for admission.

### Why Cashless Ticketing?

In our rapidly evolving digital world, there are several key benefits to cashless ticketing:

**Convenience:** Parents, students, and community members can purchase tickets online anytime, anywhere. No more standing in line or needing the exact change.

**Enhanced Safety:** Digital transactions reduce the need for physical cash handling, minimizing the risk of theft or loss, and streamlines the accounting process.

**Efficiency:** Fans and audiences skip bottlenecks at the gate to enjoy improved event experiences.

**Environmental Impact:** By reducing paper ticket use, we are taking steps towards a more sustainable and environmentally friendly district.

### How It Works

The new digital ticketing system, Bound, is designed to be user-friendly and easily accessible. Tickets for all district events can be conveniently purchased online through the SFSD website or the Bound mobile app. Once purchased, tickets can be securely stored on a smartphone or printed for convenience. Additionally, card readers will be available at the gate, making the gameday experience smoother and more convenient.

Contactless payment is no longer a trend but has become the norm around the country. This change to a 100% cash-free box office leads to faster service and shorter wait times for fans.

### Athletic Passes

In addition to single event tickets, student, booster, and staff athletic passes are also in digital format. These passes can be easily purchased at [sf.k12.sd.us](http://sf.k12.sd.us) or directly through this link. Digital passes offer the same convenience and efficiency as individual tickets and are easily stored within the digital wallet on your smartphone.

### Admission Pricing

Fees for SFSD athletic contests and music concerts are as follows:

Adults: \$6.00 ~ Students: \$4.00 ~ Senior Citizens (60+): \$4.00

No additional fees are passed on to the purchaser.

\*Certain Invitational and Fine Arts events, including drama performances, prices may vary.

### Support and Accessibility

We understand transitioning to a new system can come with questions and concerns. Bound and SFSD are committed to providing support throughout this process. Detailed instructions and FAQs will be available on Bound's website ([Click Here](#)), and their customer service team is ready to assist with any issues or inquiries, by clicking the green chat bubble.

We understand not everyone may have access to digital devices. Assistance is available by reaching out to the activities office at any of our four high schools. Staff will be happy to help you navigate the new system and ensure you have access to the events.

### Looking Ahead

This move to cashless ticketing is just one of the many steps SFSD is taking to embrace innovative solutions that benefit our community. This transition to Bound incorporates ticketing, scheduling, scores, and more! We are dedicated to creating a safer, more efficient, and enjoyable experience for all fans.

## Roberts County Fatal Crash

What: Single vehicle/Pedestrian fatal crash

Where: SD Highway 123, mile marker 180, three miles south of Wilmot, SD

When: 1:23 a.m., Sunday, July 28, 2024

Vehicle 1: 2004 Chevrolet Tahoe

Occupant 1: 19-year-old female, no injuries

Seatbelt Use: No

Pedestrian: 20-year-old male, fatal injuries

Roberts County, S.D.- A pedestrian walking along SD Highway 123 died after being struck by a vehicle near Wilmot, SD early Sunday morning.

The names of the people involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates a 20-year-old male was walking in the southbound lane of SD Highway 123 early Sunday morning when he was struck by the driver of a 2004 Chevrolet Tahoe also in the southbound lane. The driver was taken into custody for DUI and has other charges pending.

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.

## Alex Morris Of Groton Locke Electric 2024 Shuts Out Merchants

By GameChanger Media

Alex Morris didn't allow a single run as defeated Merchants 7-0 on Sunday. Morris allowed just three hits.

Groton Locke Electric 2024 scored five runs in the sixth inning on the way to victory. an error scored one run, a passed ball scored two runs, an error scored one run, and Ben Althoff singled, scoring one run.

Groton Locke Electric 2024 got on the board in the fourth inning after Johnny Celedonio singled, scoring one run.

Ashton Remily started the game for Merchants. They surrendered two hits and one run (zero earned) over three and one-third innings, striking out three and walking four.

Althoff drove the middle of the lineup, leading Groton Locke Electric 2024 with two runs batted in. The number three hitter went 1-for-3 on the day. Celedonio led Groton Locke Electric 2024 with two hits in four at bats. Groton Locke Electric 2024 had a strong eye at the plate, piling up eight walks for the game. Wyatt Locke and Dylan Frey led the team with two free passes each. Groton Locke Electric 2024 turned one double play in the game.

Greg Heyne, Carson Simes, and Carter Lane each collected one hit for Merchants. Merchants turned one double play 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

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 12 of 71

## Merchants 0 - 7 Groton Locke Electric 2024

📍 Home 📅 Sunday July 28, 2024

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	R	H	E
MRCH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6
GRTN	0	0	0	1	1	5	0	0	0	7	5	2

### BATTING

Merchants	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
C Simes #1 (CF)	4	0	1	0	0	1
J Maxfield #13 (1B)	4	0	0	0	0	2
G Heyne #11 (2B)	4	0	1	0	0	0
N Pezon... #28 (SS)	3	0	0	0	0	2
K Stahl #2 (C)	2	0	0	0	1	1
B Fischba... #5 (3B)	3	0	0	0	0	2
E Beyers #34 (DH)	1	0	0	0	0	1
C Lane #32 (3B)	2	0	1	0	0	0
D Ward #20 (LF)	3	0	0	0	0	1
M Waltm... #29 (RF)	3	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>

**TB:** G Heyne, C Simes, C Lane, **LOB:** 3

### PITCHING

Merchants	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
A Remily #21	3.1	2	1	0	4	3	0
<b>N Pezonella #22</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>

**L:** A Remily, **P-S:** A Remily 59-33, N Pezonella 95-52,  
**WP:** N Pezonella 2, **HBP:** N Pezonella, **BF:** A Remily 16,  
N Pezonella 22

Groton Locke Electric 2024R	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
D Frey #6 (LF)	2	2	1	0	2	0
A Sippel #5 (LF)	0	0	0	0	0	0
T Sieber #19 (SS)	4	0	0	0	1	0
B Althoff #1 (3B)	3	0	1	2	0	2
A Morris #13 (P)	3	1	0	0	1	1
B Hansen #37 (1B)	3	1	1	0	1	0
J Celedo... #25 (C)	4	1	2	1	0	1
C Simon #2 (CF)	3	1	0	0	1	2
S Knecht #8 (RF)	3	1	0	1	0	1
A Jones #7 (RF)	1	0	0	0	0	1
W Locke #38 (2B)	2	0	0	0	2	1
C Cama... #12 (2B)	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>

**TB:** D Frey, B Althoff, B Hansen, J Celedonio 2, **SF:** B Althoff, **CS:** T Sieber, D Frey, **HBP:** D Frey, **LOB:** 7

Groton Locke Electric 2024R	IP	ER	BB	SO	HR
A Morris #13	9.0	3	0	1	10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>

**W:** A Morris, **P-S:** A Morris 117-81, **BF:** A Morris 30

## Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

In less than two weeks, the Minnesota Vikings will be playing their first game of the 2024 NFL season. It might only be a preseason game, but it's our first tangible evidence that the long nightmare of the offseason is almost over. Before we wrap up our roster breakdown with the safety and special team positions, let's talk about some news coming out of training camp.

First, the good news!

After signing their star receiver to a massive extension earlier this month, the Vikings have now locked up their star left tackle Christian Darrisaw. (Also, if you haven't watched it yet, Netflix has a great behind-the-scenes look at Justin Jefferson in their show Receiver). The Vikings also brought back a fan favorite when they signed Duke Shelley last week. Shelley played for the Vikings in 2022 and was instrumental in several wins during that magical season.

Now, for the bad news.

Mekhi Blackmon, the second-year player who was in the mix for a starting role, sustained a major knee injury and has already been placed on injured reserve so he will miss most of the season. Shaq Griffin, a former Pro-Bowler brought in this offseason, was also injured in training camp – and although it's only a soft tissue injury and he should be back soon, those types of injuries can linger and impact a player for much longer. NaJee Thompson, a core special teamer and backup CB, is also dealing with an injury and has been placed on the PUP (physically unable to perform) list, so he'll be out a minimum of six games. The Vikings' CB room has been decimated over the past few weeks, so expect them to bring in at least one free agent in the next few days. Luckily there are several high-quality free agents still available, including Xavien Howard, J.C. Jackson, Adoree' Jackson, Stephon Gilmore, and Patrick Peterson.

Now back to our regularly scheduled programming. We wrap up our roster breakdown with the safety, kicker, and punter positions. The Vikings made history last season when they had three safeties start all 17 games and play over 1,000 snaps each. With Harrison Smith coming back, and the issues at cornerback, I expect the Vikings to continue that trend in 2024.

Harrison Smith – Entering his 13th season since being drafted in the first round of the 2012 NFL Draft, Harry (The Hitman) Smith is the unquestioned leader of the Vikings' defense. This will likely be the last season for the future Hall-of-Famer.

Camryn Bynum – Another one of the starting safeties, Bynum is entering his fourth season in the NFL. A solid starter, Bynum didn't miss a single game last year.

Josh Metellus – A former special teams star, Metellus caught the eye of defensive coordinator Brian Flores last year. Metellus is the Vikings' Swiss Army knife, playing safety, corner, linebacker, and even some defensive line.

Jay Ward – Drafted in the fourth round last year, Ward is the primary backup for the safety group and an impact player on special teams.

Theo Jackson – Just like Ward, Theo Jackson is a backup safety who is a core special teams player. His spot on the Vikings' final 53-man roster is fairly secure.

Lewis Cine – The first draft pick of General Manager Kwesi Adofo Mensah's career, Lewis Cine has been a massive bust. He struggled to see the field as a rookie, then broke his leg in week four. Although he was healthy during his sophomore season, Cine only appeared in seven games and was a healthy scratch in the other ten. As crazy as it seems for a first-round pick entering his third season, Cine is in serious danger of not making the final 53-man roster.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 14 of 71

## The Real EV Issue is Quite Taxing on America's Infrastructure Environmental Social Governance University

Gas taxes are typically collected at the point of sale, where consumers pay a specified amount per gallon of gasoline purchased, this is not the case with Electric Vehicles.

The concept of gas taxes traces back to the early 20th century, a period marked by the rapid expansion of automobile usage in the United States. The first state to implement a gas tax was Oregon in 1919, with a modest levy of one cent per gallon.

This pioneering move aimed to generate revenue for road construction and maintenance, addressing the increasing demand for better road infrastructure driven by the burgeoning popularity of cars.

### How Gas Taxes Are Collected

Gas taxes are typically collected at the point of sale, where consumers pay a specified amount per gallon of gasoline purchased. The process involves several layers:

**Production and Distribution:** Oil companies produce gasoline and distribute it to retailers. At this stage, federal and state taxes are added to the base price of the fuel.

**Retail Sale:** Gas stations sell the fuel to consumers, incorporating the tax into the final price per gallon displayed at the pump.

**Remittance:** Retailers then remit the collected tax revenue to the appropriate government authorities, both federal and state.

### Allocation of Gas Tax Revenue

The primary purpose of gas taxes has always been to fund transportation-related projects. Revenue from these taxes is generally allocated to:

**Highway Construction and Maintenance:** Building and maintaining roads, highways, and bridges to ensure safe and efficient travel.

**Public Transit Systems:** Supporting buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation to provide alternatives to personal vehicle use.

**Traffic Safety Programs:** Funding initiatives aimed at improving road safety, such as traffic lights, signage, and road design improvements.

### Historical Changes in Gas Taxes

Over the decades, gas taxes have evolved in response to changing economic conditions, infrastructure needs, and political dynamics. Key milestones include:

**Federal Gas Tax Introduction (1932):** The U.S. federal government introduced a one-cent-per-gallon tax to address the fiscal challenges of the Great Depression. Initially temporary, it became a permanent fixture.

**Federal-Aid Highway Act (1956):** This act increased the federal gas tax to fund the construction of the Interstate Highway System, a transformative project that reshaped American transportation.

**Rate Adjustments:** Gas tax rates have been periodically adjusted to account for inflation and rising infrastructure costs. The federal gas tax, for example, was last raised in 1993 to 18.4 cents per gallon. President Bill Clinton signed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 on August 10, 1993, which increased the tax by 4.3 cents per gallon to reduce the deficit.

### Controversial Debates Surrounding Gas Taxes

Despite their essential role in funding infrastructure, gas taxes have been the subject of heated debates and controversies:

#### Inflation and Revenue Shortfalls

One of the major controversies revolves around the static nature of gas tax rates. As inflation erodes the purchasing power of tax revenues, and as vehicles become more fuel-efficient, the per-gallon tax generates less revenue over time. This mismatch between revenue and infrastructure needs has led to calls for either increasing the tax rate or exploring alternative funding mechanisms.

#### Regressive Nature of the Tax

Critics argue that gas taxes are regressive, disproportionately affecting lower-income individuals who spend a higher percentage of their income on fuel. This concern has fueled debates over the fairness of



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 15 of 71

the tax and the need for more equitable transportation funding solutions.

## Environmental Considerations

With growing awareness of climate change, some advocate for higher gas taxes as a way to discourage fossil fuel consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Conversely, opponents fear that higher taxes could burden consumers and negatively impact the economy.

Furthermore, EV batteries contain minerals that are mined and controlled mostly by China. Many consider EVs to be worse for the environment than gas combustion vehicles.

## The Future of Gas Taxes

Looking ahead, the future of gas taxes is uncertain. Several trends and developments could shape their trajectory:

**Electric Vehicles (EVs):** The rise of electric vehicles, which do not use gasoline, poses a challenge to the traditional gas tax model. Policymakers are exploring alternative funding mechanisms, such as mileage-based user fees, to ensure EVs contribute to infrastructure funding.

**Technological Advances:** Innovations in transportation technology, such as autonomous vehicles and ride-sharing, may require new approaches to taxation and funding.

**Policy Reforms:** There is ongoing debate about the need for comprehensive transportation funding reforms to address revenue shortfalls, equity concerns, and environmental goals.

## Impact of Electric Vehicles on Roadways and Gas Taxes

The government forcing the EV market is transforming the automotive landscape, bringing significant implications for roadways and public funding:

### Decline in Gas Tax Revenue:

**Reduced Fuel Consumption:** EVs do not consume gasoline, leading to decreased gas tax revenues, which traditionally fund road maintenance and infrastructure projects.

**Funding Gaps:** The growing adoption of EVs exacerbates the shortfall in funds needed for roadway upkeep and expansion, as gas taxes remain a primary source of revenue.

### Alternative Funding Mechanisms:

**Mileage-Based User Fees (MBUF):** Policymakers are exploring MBUF as a replacement for gas taxes. This system charges drivers based on miles traveled rather than fuel consumed, ensuring EV owners contribute to road maintenance.

**EV-Specific Fees:** Some states have implemented additional registration fees for EVs to offset the lost gas tax revenue and ensure that all vehicle owners contribute fairly to infrastructure funding.

### Infrastructure Adaptations:

**Charging Stations:** The expansion of EV charging infrastructure requires investment, which could strain existing public funding mechanisms. This infrastructure is essential to support the growing number of EVs on the road.

**Road Wear and Tear:** While some believe EVs typically cause less wear and tear due to their lighter weight, the reality is that increasing prevalence still demands sustained investment in road maintenance.

### Environmental and Economic Considerations:

**Encouraging EV Adoption:** Higher gas taxes could incentivize the shift to EVs, aligning with environmental goals. However, this shift must be balanced with ensuring sufficient infrastructure funding.

**Economic Impact:** Policymakers must navigate the economic implications of transitioning funding models, ensuring that new mechanisms do not disproportionately affect lower-income individuals.

## Conclusion

Gas taxes have played a crucial role in shaping the transportation landscape, providing essential funding for infrastructure projects. As the world evolves, so too must the mechanisms for funding transportation.

Balancing the needs of infrastructure development, economic fairness, and environmental sustainability will be key to ensuring the continued vitality of transportation systems in the 21st century and beyond.

At the end of the day, forcing people to endure one problem through legislation and subsidies to create another issue is never good policy.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### U.S. home prices hit a record high as sales fell. Here's how housing experts explain the trends

BY: CASEY QUINLAN - JULY 28, 2024 6:00 AM

U.S. median home prices hit a record high for the second month in a row as sales continued to fall, according to a report released last week, as potential buyers continue to lie in wait for lower mortgage rates.

Existing home sales fell 5.4% in June and median home sales reached its highest level on record since prices were first tracked by the National Association of Realtors in 1999. The median price rose the most in the northeast region at 9.7%. In June, existing home sales plummeted 8% in the Midwest, the greatest fall among the regions, according to the report released on Tuesday.

New home sales, released on Wednesday by the U.S. Census Bureau, fell 0.6%

in June and is 7.4% lower than new home sales a year ago. The median sales price of a new home was \$417,300, lower than the existing home sales median price of \$426,900. Housing experts say that this closeness in price is unusual, since new homes have usually sold for much more in the past 10 years and may be reflective of changing demands for smaller and more affordable homes.

Despite that change, these two measures have shown that home prices still remain out of reach for many and that in response, sales have been slow. What is driving these prices and when will they abate? Housing economists say there are many factors at play, including Fed policy and an aging population.

#### Why are home sales low and home prices high?

High demand for homes and lower inventory levels have contributed to higher home prices in recent years. These expensive home prices and high mortgage rates have resulted in this housing market shift.

Matthew Walsh, economist at Moody's Analytics, said low housing affordability and the "persistently high" mortgage rate is contributing to cooling housing activity. Unless housing becomes more affordable soon, he said he expects to continue to see lower existing home sales. The 30-year fixed mortgage rate was 6.78% as of July 25, according to Freddie Mac.



**A sign advertising a home for sale is displayed outside of a Brooklyn brownstone on April 11, 2024, in New York City.** (Spencer

Platt/Getty Images)

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 17 of 71

"Buyers are very responsive to mortgage rates and with the information being so readily available and the anticipation that mortgage rates are going to come down, I think that's keeping people on the sidelines," said Selma Hepp, chief economist at CoreLogic.

But she said homebuyers face a double-edged sword. When mortgage rates do come down, there will be a lot of pent-up demand that will also put pressure on home prices. A rise in cash buyers could also be pushing prices higher, Hepp said. All cash buyers were 28% of home transactions in June.

"A lot of these cash buyers are actually baby boomers who maybe cashed out on their existing home. We do know that home equity is at an all-time high and if you're moving from a very expensive home price area to a lower-priced area, you obviously will have a lot of cash," she added.

## **Housing inventory is changing but is it enough?**

One bright spot for homebuyers is that total housing inventory has been rising. Inventory increased 3.1% from May and was up 23.4% from a year ago according to the June existing home sales report. Walsh said some households may be deciding they can't wait to make a life change and are moving out of homes for larger or smaller options.

"It's a lot of households that can no longer postpone plans to sell, whether that's because their household is expanding because they're having children or it's shrinking and they need to sell their larger home in the Northeast and move to a smaller home to retire in the South," Walsh said. "They can no longer put up with the homes that they're in and sacrifice their low mortgage rate for a higher rate."

Still, Hepp said the inventory is far lower than pre-pandemic levels and where demand has picked up — in Boston, New York, and Chicago, for example — there's not a proportionate increase in the supply of housing.

Some homebuyers may be watching the Fed's plans to cut interest rates, which affect mortgage rates, for some financial relief. A majority of economists say they believe the Fed will cut rates in September and December, according to a recent Reuters poll. Cutting rates may help bring some buyers back into the market and pump up inventory, but the effect will likely not be strong enough to bring home sales back to where they were before the pandemic, Walsh added.

## **What is the government doing?**

The Biden administration announced a flurry of proposals this month to make housing more affordable, some of which would impact homebuyers as well as the repurposing of public lands in Nevada to bring at least 15,000 affordable rental and homeownership units to the area. In February, the White House also announced the opening of grant applications for assistance to homeowners to replace dilapidated homes.

Donald Trump, the Republican nominee for president, said at a July rally in Iowa that he would address problems in the housing market through cutting interest rates, according to Newsweek. Although presidents nominate the chair of the Fed for a four-year term, they do not have power over whether the Fed cuts rates.

States have been pursuing their own policies to improve housing inventory and affordability, including Utah and Oregon, which passed legislation to use funds for loans to developers who plan to build more affordable homes. A Maryland bill signed into law by Democratic Gov. Wes Moore in May would push property owners to make plans for vacant properties by letting cities raise taxes on those properties.

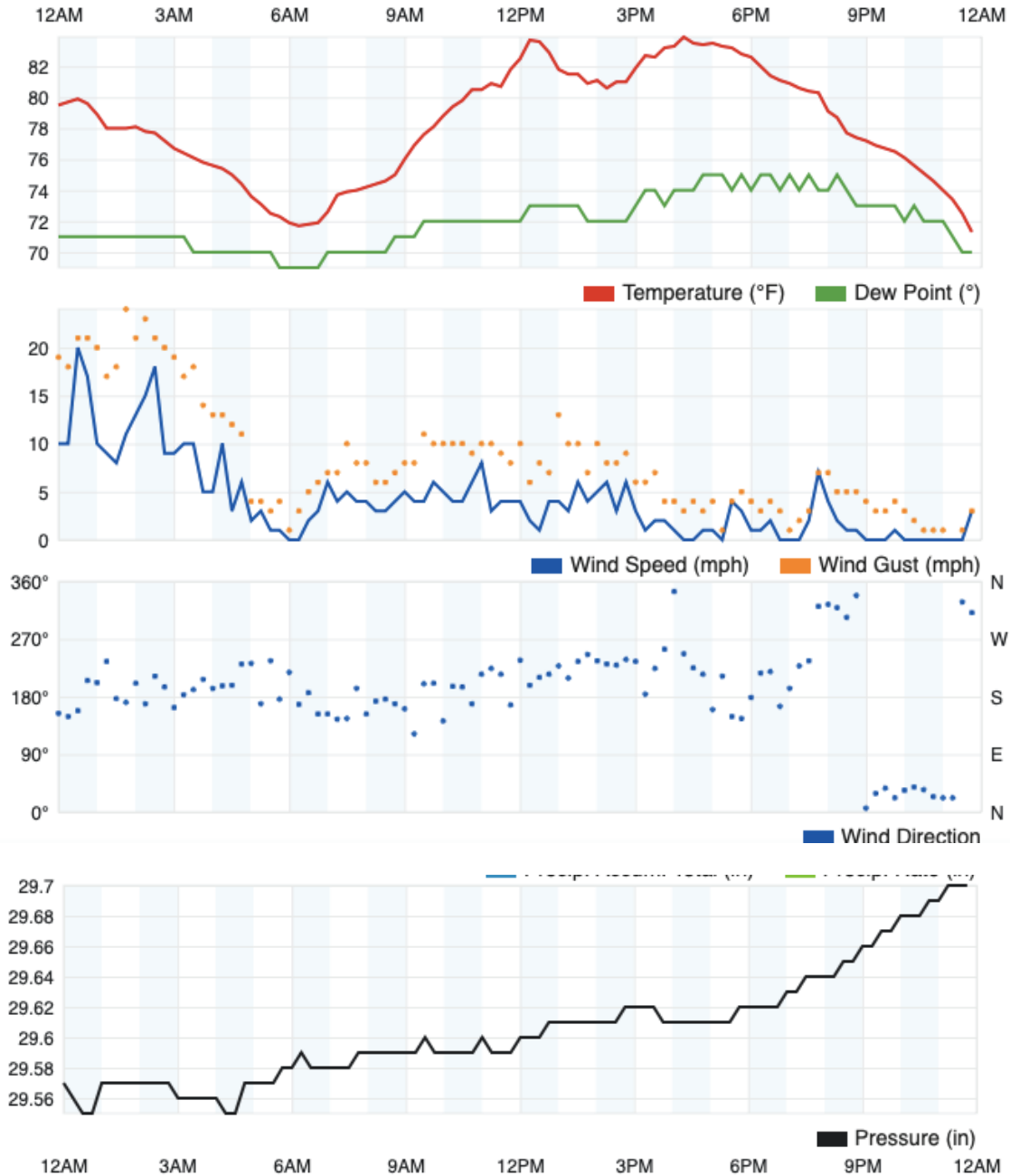
*Casey Quinlan is an economy reporter for States Newsroom, based in Washington, D.C. For the past decade, they have reported on national politics and state politics, LGBTQ rights, abortion access, labor issues, education, Supreme Court news and more for publications including The American Independent, ThinkProgress, New Republic, Rewire News, SCOTUSblog, In These Times and Vox.*



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 18 of 71

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



# Broton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 19 of 71

Today



High: 89 °F

Patchy Fog  
then Mostly  
Sunny

Tonight



Low: 65 °F

Chance  
T-storms and  
Patchy Fog

Tuesday



High: 91 °F

Patchy Fog  
then Sunny

Tuesday Night



Low: 67 °F

Chance  
T-storms

Wednesday



High: 85 °F

Chance  
T-storms



## Monday Severe Weather Threat

July 29, 2024  
4:21 AM

Afternoon and Evening Hours

### Location/Timing

Storms are expected to develop over central South Dakota between 4-6 PM CDT and track east through the evening.

**Primary Threats** for the **Yellow** areas

### Tornado Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High

### Max Hail Size

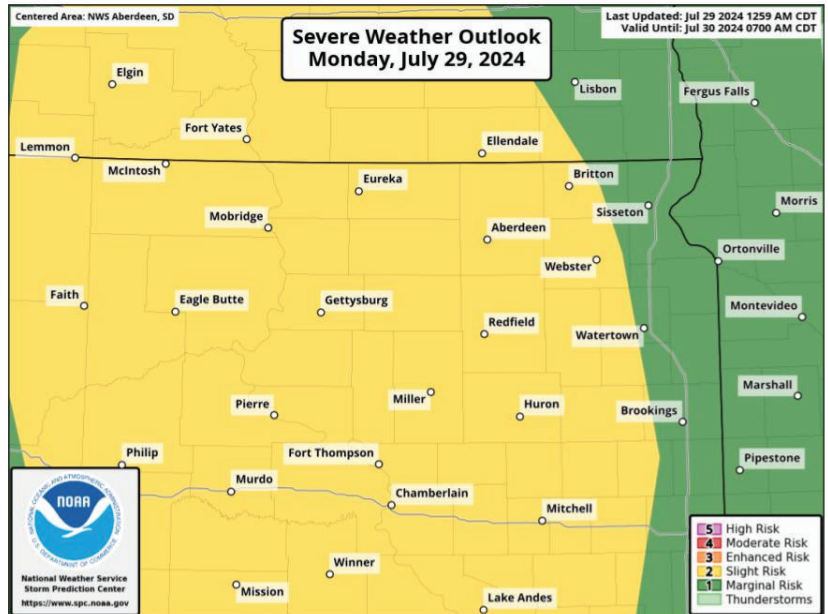
Dimes **Quarters** Golfball Baseball

### Max Wind Speed

< 60 mph **60-70 mph** 70-80 mph > 80mph

### Heavy Rain/Flooding Potential

Very Low **Low** Medium High



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Storms are expected to form over central SD this afternoon between 4 and 6 PM and track east through the evening. Main threats will be quarter size or larger hail, and wind gusts of 60+ mph. Make sure you have multiple ways to receive warnings

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 20 of 71

## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 84 °F at 12:21 PM

Low Temp: 72 °F at 6:20 AM

Wind: 24 mph at 1:43 AM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 14 hours, 52 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 109 in 1933

Record Low: 42 in 2014

Average High: 85

Average Low: 60

Average Precip in July.: 2.03

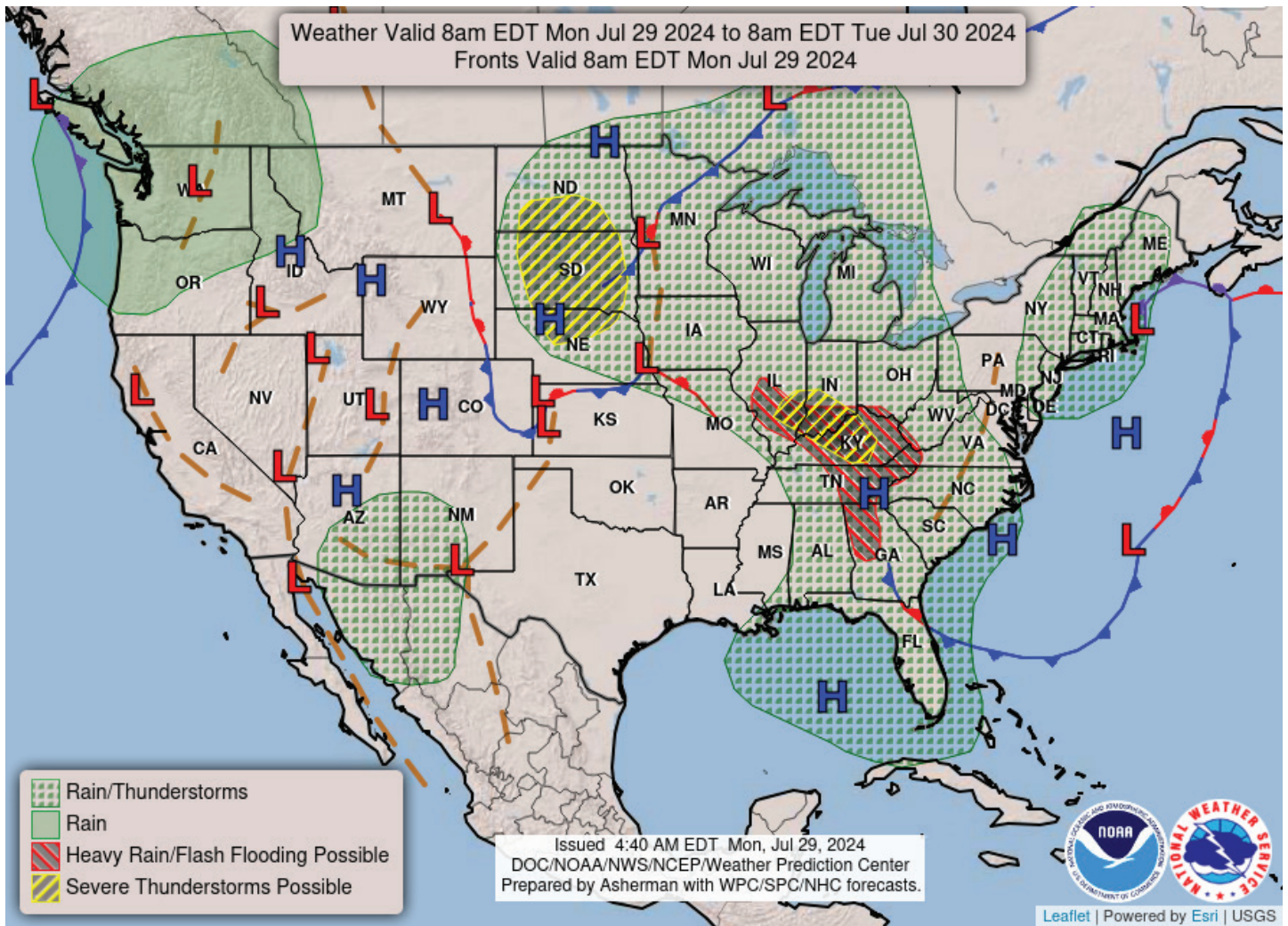
Precip to date in July: 3.78

Average Precip to date: 13.94

Precip Year to Date: 14.73

Sunset Tonight: 9:05:20 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:13:33 am





# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 21 of 71

## Today in Weather History

July 29, 1896: A destructive hailstorm originated in the central part of Edmunds County near Ipswich, passing southeast. This storm destroyed crops and broke glass in many windows along a path to the eastern portions of Spink County.

July 29, 2003: Winds of 70 mph, to over 100 mph caused damage in and around Redfield east to Frankfort and south to Tulare. The winds and hail damaged many roofs, crops, outbuildings, downed power lines, and poles, and also downed many branches and trees. In Redfield, a trailer home with two occupants was rolled three to four times over 75 feet. The trailer home rolled over a pickup truck and damaged it. Much of the contents in the trailer home were damaged, and the trailer home itself was a total loss. The people inside the home received minor injuries. A garage was also blown apart in Redfield with the car damaged inside. At the grain elevator in Redfield, several vehicle windows were broke out by airborne sand and rocks. A street light was ripped from the concrete in Redfield. East of Redfield, a 70-foot silo of over 70 tons was crumbled to the ground, and a large tractor shed was blown apart with damage to the contents. Wind equipment by Redfield measured winds at 106 mph before the power went out.

July 29, 2006: Record heat and high humidity affected central, north central, and northeast South Dakota for the end of July. Heat indices rose to 105 to 115 degrees across the area. Record high temperatures were set at Pierre, Mobridge, Kennebec, Timber Lake, and Aberdeen. Pierre rose to 111 degrees on each of the three days. Mobridge rose to 111 degrees on the 28th and 112 degrees on the 30th. Several record highs of 108 and 109 degrees were set at Timber Lake and Kennebec in the three-day period. Aberdeen set a record high of 106 on the 30th.

1898 - The temperature at Prineville, OR, soared to 119 degrees to establish a state record, which was tied on the 10th of August at Pendleton. (The Weather Channel)

1905 - Heavy rain in southwestern Connecticut caused a dam break, and the resulting flood caused a quarter of a million dollars damage at Bridgeport. As much as eleven inches of rain fell prior to the flood. (David Ludlum)

1958: The U.S. Congress passes legislation establishing the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), a civilian agency responsible for coordinating America's activities in space.

1960: Severe thunderstorms brought damaging winds, possibly as high as 100 mph to central Oklahoma. Eight planes and several hangars were damaged at Wiley Post Airfield, while two aircraft and additional hangars were damaged at Will Rogers World Airport. The winds caused seven injuries in the area, including two youths who were injured by flying debris.

1981 - Fifty cattle, each weighing 800 pounds, were killed by lightning near Vance, AL. The lightning struck a tree and then spread along the ground killing the cattle. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Minnesota to Indiana and Illinois. A thunderstorm at Janesville, WI, produced wind gusts to 104 mph which flipped over two airplanes, and blew another plane 300 feet down the runway. The northeastern U.S. experienced some relief from the heat. Nine cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Saint Johnsbury, VT, with a reading of 42 degrees. Barnet, VT, reported a morning low of 33 degrees, with frost reported on vegetation. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Hail three inches in diameter was reported south of Saint Cloud, MN. Hot weather prevailed in the western U.S. Fresno, CA reported a record thirteen straight days of 100 degree heat. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2004: A record-setting flash flood occurred over part of the Greenville, South Carolina, during the morning hours. Six to eight inches of rain fell just east of Berea, a northwestern suburb, which caused the Reedy River through downtown Greenville crested 9 feet above flood stage. This crest was the highest level since 1908.





## **"WHY DIDN'T YOU ASK ME?"**

Henry Ford was always the center of attention. It seemed that people could never get enough information about him or what he was doing. On one occasion he purchased a very large insurance policy. It made the headlines in a Detroit newspaper.

One of his friends, an insurance salesman, read the article and called Mr. Ford. "Why," he asked, "didn't you purchase the policy from me?"

"Because," came the answer, "you didn't ask me."

All of us have the same needs. No doubt that God "wired us" the same so we could understand one another's needs so we would know how to help each other. We are quick to help others when we know that they have physical or emotional needs. It comes naturally. But the greatest need that each of us has is a spiritual need: To know Jesus Christ as Savior. We must always consider this need.

It's difficult for most individuals to ask for help. However, when they do, it is a good place to begin to build a relationship to ask life's most important question: Do you know Jesus Christ as your Savior?

Prayer: Help us, Father, to be aware of the needs of others and in Your name help them when we can. But let us never forget their most important need: salvation. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Hearing this, a man sitting at the table with Jesus exclaimed, "What a blessing it will be to attend a banquet in the Kingdom of God!" Luke 14:15-24

*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

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 23 of 71

## 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](mailto:paperpaul@grotonsd.net)

## Groton Daily Independent [www.397news.com](http://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](https://paypal.me/paperpaul)

Pay with Venmo: [@paperpaul](https://venmo.com/paperpaul) Phone Number to Confirm: 7460

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 24 of 71



## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.26.24

2 14 33 58 65 3

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$331,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 48  
DRAW: Mins 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.27.24

9 15 17 42 45 2

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$6,010,000**

NEXT 16 Hrs 3 Mins 22  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.28.24

2 4 10 26 29 3

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 16 Hrs 18 Mins 23  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.27.24

3 5 8 11 26

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$51,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 18  
DRAW: Mins 22 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.27.24

19 45 57 64 69 7

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 16 Hrs 47 Mins 22  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

07.27.24

3 31 37 40 64 17

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$144,000,000**

NEXT 16 Hrs 47 Mins 22  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 25 of 71

## 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
- CANCELLED:** 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
- 11/16/2024 Groton American Legion "Turkey Raffle" 6:30-11:30pm
- 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
- 04/12/2025 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park 10am Sharp
- 05/03/2025 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm
- 07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
- 09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
- 11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm



## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### **Maduro locked in standoff with opponents as each side claims victory in presidential elections**

By JOSHUA GOODMAN and REGINA GARCIA CANO Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuela's opposition and President Nicolas Maduro's government were locked in a high-stakes standoff after each side claimed victory in Sunday's presidential vote, which millions in the long-suffering nation saw as their best shot to end 25 years of single-party rule.

Several foreign governments, including the U.S., held off recognizing the results as election officials delayed releasing detailed vote tallies after proclaiming Maduro the winner with 51% of the vote, to 44% for retired diplomat Edmundo González.

"Venezuelans and the entire world know what happened," González said.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken from Tokyo said the U.S. has "serious concerns that the result announced does not reflect the will or the votes of the Venezuelan people."

Gabriel Boric, the leftist leader of Chile, said: "The Maduro regime should understand that the results it published are difficult to believe."

Meanwhile, on the streets of Caracas, a mix of anger, tears and loud pot banging greeted the announcement of results by the Maduro-controlled National Electoral Council.

"This isn't possible," said Ayari Padrón, wiping away tears. "This is a humiliation."

Voters lined up before dawn to cast ballots Sunday, boosting the opposition's hopes it was about to break Maduro's grip on power.

The official results came as a shock to opposition members who had celebrated, online and outside a few voting centers, what they believed was a landslide victory for González.

"I'm so happy," said Merling Fernández, a 31-year-old bank employee, as a representative for the opposition campaign walked out of one voting center in a working class neighborhood of Caracas to announce results showing González more than doubled Maduro's vote count. Dozens standing nearby erupted in an impromptu rendition of the national anthem.

"This is the path toward a new Venezuela," added Fernández, holding back tears. "We are all tired of this yoke."

Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado said the margin of González's victory was "overwhelming," based on voting tallies the campaign received from representatives stationed at about 40% of ballot boxes.

Authorities delayed releasing the results from each of the 30,000 polling booths nationwide, promising only to do so in the "coming hours," hampering attempts to verify the results.

González was the unlikeliest of opposition standard bearers. A retired diplomat, the 74-year-old was unknown until he was tapped in April as a last-minute stand in for opposition powerhouse Machado, who was blocked by the Maduro-controlled supreme court from running for any office for 15 years.

The delay in announcing a winner — which came six hours after polls were supposed to close — indicated a deep debate inside the government about how to proceed after Maduro's opponents came out early in the evening all but claiming victory.

After finally claiming to have won, Maduro accused unidentified foreign enemies of trying to hack the voting system.

"This is not the first time that they have tried to violate the peace of the republic," he said to a few hundred supporters at the presidential palace. He provided no evidence to back the claim but promised "justice" for those who try to stir violence in Venezuela.

The election will have ripple effects throughout the Americas, with government opponents and supporters alike signaling their interest in joining the exodus of 7.7 million Venezuelans who have already left their homes for opportunities abroad should Maduro win another six year term.

Authorities set Sunday's election to coincide with what would have been the 70th birthday of former

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 27 of 71

President Hugo Chávez, the revered leftist firebrand who died of cancer in 2013, leaving his Bolivarian revolution in the hands of Maduro. But Maduro and his United Socialist Party of Venezuela are more unpopular than ever among many voters who blame his policies for crushing wages, spurring hunger, crippling the oil industry and separating families due to migration.

The opposition managed to line up behind a single candidate after years of intraparty divisions and election boycotts that torpedoed their ambitions to topple the ruling party.

Machado was blocked by the Maduro-controlled supreme court from running for any office for 15 years. A former lawmaker, she swept the opposition's October primary with over 90% of the vote. After she was blocked from joining the presidential race, she chose a college professor as her substitute on the ballot, but the National Electoral Council also barred her from registering. That's when González, a political newcomer, was chosen.

Venezuela sits atop the world's largest proven oil reserves, and once boasted Latin America's most advanced economy. But it entered into a free fall after Maduro took the helm. Plummeting oil prices, widespread shortages and hyperinflation that soared past 130,000% led first to social unrest and then mass emigration.

Economic sanctions from the U.S. seeking to force Maduro from power after his 2018 reelection — which the U.S. and dozens of other countries condemned as illegitimate — only deepened the crisis.

Maduro's pitch to voters this election was one of economic security, which he tried to sell with stories of entrepreneurship and references to a stable currency exchange and lower inflation rates. The International Monetary Fund forecasts the economy will grow 4% this year — one of the fastest in Latin America — after having shrunk 71% from 2012 to 2020.

But most Venezuelans have not seen any improvement in their quality of life. Many earn under \$200 a month, which means families struggle to afford essential items. Some work second and third jobs. A basket of basic staples — sufficient to feed a family of four for a month — costs an estimated \$385.

The opposition has tried to seize on the huge inequalities arising from the crisis, during which Venezuelans abandoned their country's currency, the bolivar, for the U.S. dollar.

González and Machado focused much of their campaigning on Venezuela's vast hinterland, where the economic activity seen in Caracas in recent years didn't materialize. They promised a government that would create sufficient jobs to attract Venezuelans living abroad to return home and reunite with their families.

## California firefighters make progress as wildfires push devastation and spread smoke across US West

By NIC COURY and REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

FOREST RANCH, Calif. (AP) — Firefighters made progress and were aided by improving weather Sunday in the battle against wildfires covering massive areas and leaving a trail of damage in the western United States, but further evacuations and resources have been necessary as thousands of personnel tackle the flames.

The so-called Park Fire, the largest wildfire in California this year, was one of more than 100 blazes burning in the U.S. on Sunday, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. Some were sparked by the weather, with climate change increasing the frequency of lightning strikes as the western U.S. endures blistering heat and bone-dry conditions.

The Park Fire had scorched an area greater than the city of Los Angeles as of Sunday, darkening the sky with smoke and engaging thousands of firefighters. The blaze spanned more than 562 square miles (1,455 square kilometers) of inland Northern California.

Millions of people were under air quality alerts Sunday in the northwestern U.S. and western Canada.

The Park Fire started Wednesday, when authorities say a man pushed a burning car into a gully in Chico and then fled. A man accused of setting the fire was arrested Thursday and is due in court Monday.

Firefighters increased containment to 12% on Saturday, aided by cooler temperatures and more humidity, officials said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 28 of 71

Although cooler-than-average temperatures are expected through the middle of this week, that doesn't mean existing fires will disappear, said Marc Chenard, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Center in College Park, Maryland.

A "red flag" warning was in effect for the region on Sunday, meaning dry fuels and stronger winds were increasing the fire danger, the weather service said.

The National Weather Service also issued a "red flag" warnings Sunday for wide swaths of Idaho, Montana, Utah, Colorado and Wyoming, in addition to parts of California.

Fires burned across eastern Oregon and eastern Idaho, where officials were assessing damage from a group of blazes called the Gwen Fire, which was estimated at 43 square miles (111 square kilometers) as of Sunday.

In California, Paradise and several other Butte County communities were under an evacuation warning Sunday. Yet the fire's southernmost front, which is closest to Paradise, was "looking really good," Cal Fire operations section chief Jeremy Pierce said around midday.

Officials did not expect it to move farther into Chico, a city of about 100,000 people just west of Paradise, and over the next three days crews plan to extinguish hot spots and remove hazards, Pierce said.

The focus on saving lives and endangered property has shifted to confronting the blaze head-on, Jay Tracy, a Park Fire headquarters spokesperson, told The Associated Press by phone Sunday.

Nearly 4,000 firefighters are battling the fire, aided by numerous helicopters and air tankers. Reinforcements are expected to give much-needed rest to local firefighters, some of whom have been working nonstop since Wednesday, Tracy said.

"This fire is surprising a lot of people with its explosive growth," he said. "It is kind of unparalleled."

The Park Fire has drawn comparisons to the 2018 Camp Fire that tore through Paradise, killing 85 people and torching 11,000 homes.

Cohasset exhibited remnants of the devastation Sunday. Mailboxes and vehicles were covered with pink fire retardant dropped by aircraft. The husks of a washer and dryer set were surrounded by burned debris and a charred motorcycle was propped upright, balancing on rims after its tires apparently melted away.

Another part of Cohasset was relatively unscathed, said Garrett Sjolund, the Butte County fire chief.

"We have an unburned island in that community that we are continuing to patrol and ensure that there are no hot spots in it," Sjolund said.

Managing evacuation orders in the area has been complex. Authorities were about to downgrade an order to an evacuation warning for Forest Ranch when they learned a number of hot spots were reported nearby, Butte County Sheriff Kory Honea said.

"That illustrates how rapidly things can change," Honea said. "We were all set to be able to reduce that order to get people back in there."

In Southern California, about 2,000 people were ordered to evacuate because of a fire sweeping through the Sequoia National Forest. The wind-driven blaze was fed by dried, dead plants and moving fast, eating up more than 60 square miles (155 square kilometers) in four days, Andrew Freeborn of the Kern County Fire Department said.

No fatalities have been reported in the Park and Borel fires, but some people were increasing the danger for everyone by disregarding evacuation orders, Freeborn said.

"When people are trying to ignore the orders and later call for rescue, that takes firefighters away from the task of fighting the fires," he said. "This fire is moving at a pace and with such intensity that individuals should not be thinking they can wait until the last minute. They need to get out of the way."

The historic mining town of Havilah and several other communities were "heavily impacted" by the fires, but it was too soon to count the burned homes, Freeborn said.

The Park Fire has destroyed at least 66 structures and damaged five others, Tracy said. Authorities initially believed 134 structures were lost, based on drone footage, but lowered the number after assessing the damage in-person, while acknowledging the figure could increase.

"Each day that number has potential to grow. Our teams obviously don't do damage inspections when

there is active fire in an area," Tracy said.

Jerry White, 72, left his Magalia home of 50 years when authorities issued an evacuation warning. Years earlier White sustained third-degree burns and the memory of that pain made him take the warning seriously.

"I don't want to catch fire again. It's one of the worst pains you can endure," White said. "I wanted to get out of dodge. Burns are bad."

## **Blinken says US has 'serious concerns' about announced result of Venezuelan election**

TOKYO (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the United States has 'serious concerns' about the announced result of Venezuela's hotly contested presidential election that authorities say was won by incumbent Nicolas Maduro.

Speaking in Tokyo on Monday shortly after the announcement was made, Blinken said the U.S. was concerned that the result reflected neither the will nor the votes of the Venezuelan people. He called for election officials to publish the full results transparently and immediately and said the U.S. and the international community would respond accordingly.

"We have seen the announcement just a short while ago by the Venezuelan Electoral Commission," he said. "We have serious concerns that the result announced does not reflect the will or the votes of the Venezuelan people."

"It's critical that every vote be counted fairly and transparently that the electoral authorities immediately share information with the opposition and independent observers without delay and that the electoral authorities publish the tabulation of votes. The international community is watching this very closely and will respond accordingly," Blinken said.

In Venezuela, the announcement of Sunday's election results was delayed by several hours, and the National Electoral Council, which is controlled by Maduro loyalists, said Maduro had secured a majority without releasing tallies from polling booths.

Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado was blocked from running. But she said after the council's announcement that the margin of victory for the opposition's candidate, Edmundo González, was "overwhelming" based on voting tallies it had received from campaign representatives from about 40% of ballot boxes nationwide.

## **The Galapagos Islands and many of their unique creatures are at risk from warming waters**

By ALIE SKOWRONSKI Associated Press

GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS, Ecuador (AP) — Warm morning light reflects from the remains of a natural rock arch near Darwin Island, one of the most remote islands in the Galapagos. In clear, deep blue water, thousands of creatures — fish, hammerhead sharks, marine iguanas — move in search of food.

The 2021 collapse of Darwin's Arch, named for the famed British naturalist behind the theory of evolution, came from natural erosion. But its demise underscored the fragility of a far-flung archipelago that's coming under increased pressure both from climate change and invasive species.

Warming oceans affect the food sources of many of the seagoing animals in the Galapagos. Marine iguanas — one of many species that are endemic, or unique, to the Galapagos — have a harder time finding the red and green algae they prefer. Sea turtles struggle to nest in warmer temperatures. Raising young gets harder as water warms and fewer nutrients are available.

While the Galapagos are known for a great multitude of species, their numbers aren't unlimited.

"We have something of everything here — that's why people say the Galapagos is so diverse — but we have a small number of each thing," said Natasha Cabezas, a naturalist guide.

The Galapagos have always been sensitive to changes in ocean temperature. The archipelago itself is located where major ocean currents converge — cool from the south, warm from the north, and a cold



upwelling current from the west. Then there's El Nino, the periodic and natural Pacific Ocean warming that affects weather worldwide.

While temperatures vary depending on the season and other naturally-occurring climate events, ocean temperatures have been rising because of human-caused climate change as oceans absorb the vast majority of excess heat in the atmosphere. The ocean experienced its warmest decade since at least the 1800s in the last 10 years, and 2023 was the ocean's warmest year on record.

Early June brings winter in the Southern Hemisphere, and the Cromwell current brings whale sharks, hammerheads, and massive sunfish to the surface. It also provides nutrients for penguins, marine iguanas and sea lions in search of food. As more of those animals make themselves known this season, scientists are tracking how they fared in the warming of the past year's El Nino.

El Nino can bring food shortages for some species like marine iguanas and sea turtles, as the warmer ocean means dwindling food sources. Scientists observing the species have noted a significant decline in population numbers during El Nino events.

Marine iguanas swim like snakes through the water from rock to rock as waves crash against the shore of Fernandina Island. They latch themselves onto the undersea rocks to feed on algae growing there, while sea lions spin around them like puppies looking for someone to play with.

The iguanas were "one of the most affected species from El Niño last year and right now they are still recovering," said Galapagos Conservancy Director Jorge Carrión.

As rising ocean temperatures threaten aquatic or seagoing life, on land there's a different problem. Feral animals — cats, dogs, pigs, goats and cattle, none of them native — are threatening the unique species of the islands.

After the COVID-19 pandemic, many people are abandoning the dogs and cats they wanted to keep them company, Cabezas said.

"If you don't take care of them they become a problem and now it's a shame to see dogs everywhere. We have a big problem right now I don't know what we're going to do," she said.

The non-native animals are a special threat to the giant tortoises closely associated with the Galapagos. The tortoises declined dramatically in the 19th century due to hunting and poaching, and authorities have worked to protect them from humans. It's been illegal to kill a giant tortoise since 1933.

"In one night, a feral pig can destroy all nesting sites in an area," Carrión said. Park rangers try to visit areas with nesting sites once a day, and kill pigs when they find them. But the pigs are elusive, Carrion said.

Feral cats feed on marine iguana hatchlings, and both pigs and cats compete for food with the tortoises.

If invasive species and warming oceans weren't enough, there's the plastic that is a widespread problem in the world's oceans. One recent study reported microplastics in the bellies of Galapagos penguins.

"There are no animals in the Galapagos that do not have microplastics in their food," Carrión said.

## Ten years on, many Yazidis uprooted by Islamic State onslaught struggle to find safe, stable homes

By ABBY SEWELL and QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

SINJAR, Iraq (AP) — When Rihan Ismail returned to her family's home in the heartland of her Yazidi community, she was sure she was coming back for good.

She had yearned for that moment throughout long years of captivity.

Islamic State militants had abducted then-adolescent Ismail as they rampaged through Iraq's Sinjar district, killing and enslaving thousands from the Yazidi religious minority.

As they moved her from Iraq to Syria, she clung to what home meant to her: a childhood filled with laughter, a community so tight knit the neighbor's house was like your own. After her captors took her to Turkey, she finally managed to get ahold of a phone, contact her family and plan a rescue.

"How could I leave again?" Ismail, 24, told The Associated Press last year, soon after returning to her village, Hardan.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 31 of 71

Reality quickly set in.

The house where she lives with her brother's family is one of the few still standing in the village. A nearby school houses displaced families.

Her father and younger sister are still missing. In a local cemetery, three of her brothers are buried along with 13 other men and boys killed by IS.

Ismail passes it every time she has an errand in a neighboring town.

"You feel like you're dying 1,000 deaths between here and there," she said.

A decade after the IS assault, members of the Yazidi community have been trickling back to their homes in Sinjar. But despite their homeland's deep emotional and religious significance, many see no future there.

There's no money to rebuild destroyed homes. Infrastructure is still wrecked. Multiple armed groups carve up the area.

And the landscape is haunted by horrific memories. In August 2014, militants stormed through Sinjar, determined to erase the tiny, insular religious group they considered heretics. They killed men and boys, sold women into sex slavery or forced them to convert and marry militants. Those who could, fled.

It has been seven years since IS was defeated in Iraq. But as of April 2024, only 43% of the more than 300,000 people displaced from Sinjar had returned, according to the International Migration Organization.

Some fear that if Yazidis don't return, the community may lose its identity.

"Without Sinjar, Yazidism would be like a cancer patient who's dying," said Hadi Babasheikh, the brother and office manager of the late Yazidi spiritual leader who held the position during IS' atrocities.

This strategically located remote corner of northwest Iraq near the Syrian border has been the Yazidis' home for centuries. Villages are scattered across a semi-arid plain.

Rearing up from the flatland are the Sinjar Mountains, a long, narrow range considered sacred by the Yazidis. Legend says Noah's ark settled on the mountain after the flood. Yazidis fled to the heights to escape IS, as they have done in past bouts of persecution.

In Sinjar town, the district center, soldiers lounge in front of small shops on the main street. A livestock market brings buyers and sellers from neighboring villages and beyond. Some reconstruction crews work among piles of cinder blocks.

But in outlying areas, signs of the destruction — collapsed houses, abandoned fuel stations — remain everywhere. Water networks, health facilities and schools, even religious shrines have not been rebuilt. Sinjar town's main Sunni Muslim district remains mostly rubble.

The central government in Baghdad and authorities in the semi-autonomous northern Kurdish region have been wrestling over Sinjar, where each has backed a rival local government.

That dispute is now playing out in a debate over the displacement camps in the Kurdish region housing many of those who fled Sinjar.

Earlier this year, Baghdad ordered the camps to be closed by July 30 and offered payments of 4 million dinars (about \$3,000) to occupants who leave.

Karim al-Nouri, deputy minister for the displaced, said this month that difficulties in returning to Sinjar "have been overcome." But Kurdish authorities say they won't evict the camp residents.

Sinjar "is not suitable for human habitation," said Khairi Bozani, an advisor to the Kurdish regional president, Nechirvan Barzani.

"The government is supposed to move people from a bad place to a good place and not vice versa."

Khudeida Murad Ismail refuses to leave the camp in Dohuk, where he runs a makeshift store. Leaving would mean losing his livelihood, and the payout wouldn't cover rebuilding his house, he said. If the camps closed, he says he'll stay in the area and look for other work.

But some are returning. On June 24, Barakat Khalil's family of nine left the town in Dohuk that had been their home for nearly a decade.

They now live in a small, rented house in Sinjar town. They fixed its broken doors and windows and are gradually furnishing it, even planting geraniums. Their old home, in a nearby village, is destroyed.

"We stayed in it for two months and then they (IS militants) came and blew it up," he said.

Now, "it's a totally new life — we don't know anybody here," said Khalil's 25-year-old daughter, Haifa

Barakat. She's the only family member currently working, in the local hospital's pharmacy.

Although life in Sinjar is tolerable for now, she worries about security.

Different parts of the territory are patrolled by the Iraqi army and Kurdish peshmerga forces, along with various militias that came to fight IS and never left.

Prominent among those is the Sinjar Resistance Units, or YBS, a Yazidi militia that is part of the primarily Shiite Popular Mobilization Forces.

Turkey regularly launches airstrikes against its members because it is aligned with the Kurdistan Workers Party' or PKK, a Kurdish separatist group that has waged an insurgency in Turkey.

The presence of armed groups has sometimes complicated rebuilding. In 2022, a damaged school in Sinjar was rehabilitated by a Japanese NGO. Instead, Japanese officials complained that a militia took it.

This month, the Nineveh provincial council finally voted to appoint a single mayor for Sinjar, but disputes have delayed his confirmation.

The would-be mayor, school administrator and community activist Saido al-Ahmady, said he hopes to restore services so more displaced will return.

But many of those who have come back say they are thinking of leaving again.

In the village of Dugure, on a recent evening, children rode bicycles and women in robes chatted at sunset in front of their houses.

Rihan Ismail, who once dreamed of a return to Sinjar, now wants to get away.

"You wouldn't be able to forget. But at least every time you come or go you wouldn't have to see your village destroyed like this," she said.

## Ten years on, many Yazidis uprooted by Islamic State onslaught struggle to find stable homes

By ABBY SEWELL and QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

SINJAR, Iraq (AP) — When Rihan Ismail returned to her family's home in the heartland of her Yazidi community, she was sure she was coming back for good.

She had yearned for that moment throughout long years of captivity.

Islamic State militants had abducted then-adolescent Ismail as they rampaged through Iraq's Sinjar district, killing and enslaving thousands from the Yazidi religious minority.

As they moved her from Iraq to Syria, she clung to what home meant to her: a childhood filled with laughter, a community so tight knit the neighbor's house was like your own. After her captors took her to Turkey, she finally managed to get ahold of a phone, contact her family and plan a rescue.

"How could I leave again?" Ismail, 24, told The Associated Press last year, soon after returning to her village, Hardan.

Reality quickly set in.

The house where she lives with her brother, a police officer, and his wife and toddler, is one of the few still standing in the village. A school down the street houses displaced families who have nowhere else to go.

Her father and younger sister are still missing. In a cemetery on the village edge, three of her brothers are buried along with 13 other local men and boys killed by IS and discovered in a mass grave.

Ismail passes it every time she has an errand to a neighboring town.

"You feel like you're dying 1,000 deaths between here and there," she said.

Deep connections persist for a homeland changed by horrors

A decade after the IS assault, members of the Yazidi community have been trickling back to their homes in Sinjar. But despite their homeland's deep emotional and religious significance, many see no future there.

There's no money to rebuild destroyed homes. Infrastructure is still wrecked. Multiple armed groups carve up the area.

And the landscape is haunted by horrific memories. In August 2014, militants stormed through Sinjar, determined to erase the tiny, insular religious group they considered heretics. They killed men and boys, sold women into sex slavery or forced them to convert and marry militants. Those who could, fled.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 33 of 71

It has been seven years since IS was defeated in Iraq. But as of April 2024, only 43% of the more than 300,000 people displaced from Sinjar had returned, according to the International Migration Organization. Some fear that if Yazidis don't return, the community may lose its identity.

"Sinjar is the Yazidi center of gravity," said Hadi Babasheikh, the brother and office manager of the late Yazidi spiritual leader who held the position during IS' atrocities. "Without Sinjar, Yazidism would be like a cancer patient who's dying."

This strategically located remote corner of northwest Iraq near the Syrian border has been the Yazidis' home for centuries. Villages are scattered across a semi-arid plain dotted with sheep, a cement factory and the occasional liquor store.

Rearing up from the flatland are the Sinjar Mountains, a long, narrow range considered sacred by the Yazidis. Legend says Noah's ark settled on the mountain after the flood. Yazidis fled to the heights to escape IS, as they have done in past bouts of persecution.

In Sinjar town, the district center, soldiers lounge in front of small shops on the main street. A livestock market brings buyers and sellers from neighboring villages and beyond. Here and there, reconstruction crews work among piles of cinder blocks.

But in outlying areas, signs of the destruction — collapsed houses, abandoned fuel stations — remain everywhere. Water networks, health facilities and schools, and even religious shrines have not been rebuilt. Sinjar town's main Sunni Muslim district remains a stretch of rubble; the occupants have not returned, facing hostility from their former Yazidi neighbors who view them as IS collaborators.

The central government in Baghdad and authorities in the semi-autonomous northern Kurdish region have been wrestling over Sinjar, where each backed a rival local government for years.

That dispute is now playing out in a debate over the displacement camps in the Kurdish region housing many of those who fled Sinjar.

Camp closures loom, leaving Yazidis torn on whether to stay or go.

Earlier this year, Baghdad ordered the camps to be closed by July 30 and offered payments of 4 million dinars (about \$3,000) to occupants who leave.

Karim al-Nouri, deputy minister for the displaced, said this month that difficulties in returning to Sinjar "have been overcome" and that getting the displaced back is "an official, humanitarian and moral imperative."

But Kurdish authorities say they won't evict the camp residents.

Sinjar "is not suitable for human habitation," said Khairi Bozani, an advisor to the Kurdish regional president, Nechirvan Barzani.

"The government is supposed to move people from a bad place to a good place and not vice versa."

Khudeida Murad Ismail refuses to leave the camp in Dohuk, where he runs a makeshift store selling eggs, instant noodles, pacifiers and hair henna. Leaving would mean losing his livelihood, and the payout wouldn't cover rebuilding his house, he said.

If the camps shut down, he said he would remain in the area, rent a home and look for other work.

He acknowledged that if many Yazidis stay away from Sinjar, other groups will likely populate their areas. That saddens him, he said, "but there's nothing I can do."

But the camp closure order and relocation payments have prompted an increase in returns.

On June 24, Barakat Khalil's family of nine joined a convoy of trucks piled with mattresses, blankets and household goods, leaving the town in Dohuk that had been their home for nearly a decade.

They now live in a small, rented house in Sinjar town. They fixed its broken doors and windows and are gradually furnishing it, even planting geraniums.

Their old home, in a nearby village, is destroyed. A humanitarian organization removed the rubble, leaving nothing but the foundation, but couldn't help them rebuild. Khalil had spent seven years building the house, gradually saving money from his work in construction.

"We stayed in it for two months and then they (IS militants) came and blew it up," he said.

Now, "it's a totally new life — we don't know anybody here," said Khalil's 25-year-old daughter, Haifa Barakat. She's the only family member who is working, in the pharmacy of the local hospital.



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 34 of 71

Although life in Sinjar is tolerable for now, she worries about security.

Tensions among various militias in Sinjar raise safety concerns

Different parts of the territory are patrolled by the Iraqi army and Kurdish peshmerga forces, along with various militias that came to fight IS and never left.

Prominent among those is the Sinjar Resistance Units, or YBS, a Yazidi militia that is part of the primarily Shiite Popular Mobilization Forces.

Turkey regularly launches airstrikes against its members because it is aligned with the Kurdistan Workers Party' or PKK, a Kurdish separatist group that has waged an insurgency in Turkey.

At the YBS headquarters near the Syrian border, the group's then-acting commander, Khalid Rasho Qassim, also known as Abu Shadi, said in an interview last year that his group had fought IS when official forces fled.

"The young people are joining because they saw that we defended them," he said.

Less than a week later, he was killed by a Turkish airstrike, the same fate his predecessor had met.

The presence of armed groups has also sometimes complicated rebuilding. In 2022, a damaged school in Sinjar was rehabilitated by a Japanese NGO called IVY, hoping to relieve overcrowding in the area's few functional schools. Instead, Japanese officials complained that a militia took over the renovated facility.

When AP reporters visited the school last September, no classes were in session, but a few young men and women were in the entry hall, where bookshelves were stocked with revolutionary texts. Staff said the school director was not available.

IVY later said it was told that the building had been vacated. But when an AP team returned this month, it found the same young men who had been there before. They asked the journalists to leave.

This month, the Nineveh provincial council finally voted to appoint a single mayor for Sinjar, but disputes have held up his confirmation.

The would-be mayor, school administrator and community activist Saido al-Ahmady, said he hopes to push for the restoration of services so more displaced will return.

"Sinjar has always been the center of Yazidis and we will preserve it that way," he said.

But many of those who have come back say they are thinking of leaving again.

In the village of Dugure, on a recent evening, children rode bicycles and women in traditional robes chatted at sunset in front of their houses.

"In the end we have to return" to Sinjar said Hadi Shammo, whose family left a camp last month. "This is part of our identity."

But when prodded, Shammo acknowledged, "If I'd had a chance I would have left Iraq a long time ago."

Rihan Ismail, who once spent her days dreaming of a return to Sinjar, now wants to get away.

"Even if you went somewhere else, you wouldn't be able to forget. But at least every time you come or go you wouldn't have to see your village destroyed like this," she said.

A photo of her missing father gazed down from the wall. In the corner was a small replica of Lalish, the most holy Yazidi temple, and a snake, a sacred symbol of protection.

"You can't forget what happened, but you have to find a way to live."

She has now pinned her hopes on joining her mother and other relatives who have resettled in Canada.

## Arab American leaders are listening as Kamala Harris moves to shore up key swing-state support

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI Associated Press

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) — Osama Siblani's phone won't stop ringing.

Just days after President Joe Biden withdrew his bid for reelection and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris for the Democratic presidential nomination, top officials from both major political parties have been asking the publisher of the Dearborn-based Arab American News if Harris can regain the support of the nation's largest Muslim population located in metro Detroit.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 35 of 71

His response: "We are in listening mode."

Harris, who is moving to seize the Democratic nomination after Biden stepped down, appears to be pivoting quickly to the task of convincing Arab American voters in Michigan, a state Democrats believe she can't afford to lose in November, that she is a leader they can unite behind.

Community leaders have expressed a willingness to listen, and some have had initial conversations with Harris' team. Many had grown exacerbated with Biden after they felt months of outreach had not yielded many results.

"The door is cracked open since Biden has stepped down," said Dearborn Mayor Abdullah Hammoud. "There's an opportunity for the Democratic nominee to coalesce the coalition that ushered in Biden's presidency four years ago. But that responsibility will now fall on the vice president."

Arab American leaders such as Hammoud and Siblani are watching closely for signals that Harris will be more vocal in pressing for a ceasefire. They're excited by her candidacy but want to be sure she will be an advocate for peace and not an unequivocal supporter of Israel.

But Harris will need to walk a fine line not to publicly break with Biden's position on the war in Gaza, where officials in his administration have been working diligently toward a ceasefire, mostly behind the scenes.

The divide within Harris' own party was evident in Washington last week during Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to address Congress. Some Democrats supported the visit, while others protested and refused to attend. Outside the Capitol, pro-Palestinian protesters were met with pepper spray and arrests.

Michigan Rep. Rashida Tlaib, the only Palestinian American in Congress whose district includes Dearborn, held up a sign that read "war criminal" during Netanyahu's remarks.

Harris did not attend.

Some Arab American leaders interpret her absence — she instead attended a campaign event in Indianapolis — as a sign of good faith with them, though they recognize her ongoing responsibilities as vice president, including a meeting Thursday with Netanyahu.

Her first test within the community will come when Harris chooses a running mate. One of the names on her short list, Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro, has been public in his criticism of pro-Palestinian protesters and is Jewish. Some Arab American leaders in Michigan say putting him on the ticket would ramp up their unease about the level of support they could expect from a Harris administration.

"Josh Shapiro was one of the first ones to criticize the students on campus. So it doesn't differentiate Harris very much if she picks him. That just says I'm going to continue the same policies as Biden," said Rima Meroueh, director of the National Network for Arab American Communities.

Arab Americans are betting that their vote holds enough electoral significance in pivotal swing states like Michigan to ensure that officials will listen to them. Michigan has the largest concentration of Arab Americans in the nation, and the state's majority-Muslim cities overwhelmingly supported Biden in 2020. He won Dearborn, for example, by a roughly 3-to-1 margin over former President Donald Trump.

In February, over 100,000 Michigan Democratic primary voters chose "uncommitted," securing two delegates to protest the Biden administration's unequivocal support for Israel's response to the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas. Nationally, "uncommitted" garnered a total of 36 delegates in the primaries earlier this year.

The groups leading this effort have called for — at a minimum — an embargo on all weapons shipments to Israel and a permanent ceasefire.

"If Harris called for an arms embargo, I would work around the clock every day until the election to get her elected," said Abbas Alawieh, an "uncommitted" Michigan delegate and national leader of the movement. "There's a real opportunity right now to unite the coalition. It's on her to deliver, but we are cautiously optimistic."

Those divisions were on full display Wednesday night when the Michigan Democratic Party brought together over 100 delegates to pitch them on uniting behind Harris. During the meeting, Alawieh, one of three state delegates who did not commit to Harris, was speaking when another delegate interrupted him by unmuting and telling him to "shut up," using an expletive, according to Alawieh.

The call could be a preview of tensions expected to surface again in August, when Democratic lead-

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 36 of 71

ers, lawmakers, and delegates convene in Chicago for the party's national convention. Mass protests are planned, and the "uncommitted" movement intends to ensure their voices are heard within the United Center, where the convention will be held.

Trump and his campaign, meanwhile, are keenly aware of the turmoil within the Democratic base and are actively seeking the support of Arab American voters. That effort has been complicated by Trump's history of anti-immigrant rhetoric and policy during his one term as president.

A meeting between over a dozen Arab American leaders from across the country and several of Trump's surrogates was convened in Dearborn last week. Among the surrogates was Massad Boulos, a Lebanese-born businessman whose son married Tiffany Trump, the former president's younger daughter, two years ago. Boulos is leveraging his connections to rally support for Trump.

Part of the pitch that Boulos and Bishara Bahbah, chairman of Arab Americans for Trump, made in Dearborn was that Trump has shown an openness to a two-state solution. He posted a letter on social media from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and pledged to work for peace in the Middle East.

"The three main points that were noted in the meeting were that Trump needs to state more clearly that he wants an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and that he supports the two-state solution, and that there is no such thing as a Muslim ban," said Bahbah. "This is what the community wants to hear in a clear manner."

Before a July 20 rally in Michigan, Trump also met with Bahbah, who pressed him about a two-state solution. According to Bahbah, Trump responded affirmatively, saying, "100%."

But any apparent political opportunity for Trump may be limited by criticism from many Arab Americans about the former president's ban on immigration from several majority Muslim countries and remarks they felt were insulting.

"I have not heard any individuals saying I'm now rushing to Donald Trump," said Hammoud, Dearborn's Democratic mayor. "I have yet to hear that in any of the conversations I've had. They all know what Donald Trump represents."

Siblani, who organized Wednesday's meeting with Trump surrogates, has spent months serving as an intermediary between his community and officials from all political parties and foreign dignitaries. Privately, he says, almost all express the need for a permanent ceasefire.

"Everybody wants our votes, but nobody wants to be seen as aligning with us publicly," Siblani said.

## **Museums closed Native American exhibits 6 months ago. Tribes are still waiting to get items back**

By PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Tucked within the expansive Native American halls of the American Museum of Natural History is a diminutive wooden doll that holds a sacred place among the tribes whose territories once included Manhattan.

For more than six months now, the ceremonial Ohtas, or Doll Being, has been hidden from view after the museum and others nationally took dramatic steps to board up or paper over exhibits in response to new federal rules requiring institutions to return sacred or culturally significant items to tribes — or at least to obtain consent to display or study them.

The doll, also called Nahneetis, is just one of some 1,800 items museum officials say they're reviewing as they work to comply with the requirements while also eyeing a broader overhaul of the more than half-century-old exhibits.

But some tribal leaders remain skeptical, saying museums have not acted swiftly enough. The new rules, after all, were prompted by years of complaints from tribes that hundreds of thousands of items that should have been returned under the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 still remain in museum custody.

"If things move slowly, then address that," said Joe Baker, a Manhattan resident and member of the Delaware Tribe of Indians, descendants of the Lenape peoples European traders encountered more than

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 37 of 71

400 years ago. "The collections, they're part of our story, part of our family. We need them home. We need them close."

Sean Decatur, the New York museum's president, promised tribes will hear from officials soon. He said staff these past few months have been reexamining the displayed objects in order to begin contacting tribal communities.

The museum also plans to open a small exhibit in the fall incorporating Native American voices and explaining the history of the closed halls, why changes are being made and what the future holds, he said.

Museum officials envision a total overhaul of the closed Eastern Woodlands and Great Plains halls — akin to the five-year, \$19 million renovation of its Northwest Coast Hall, completed in 2022 in close collaboration with tribes, Decatur added.

"The ultimate aim is to make sure we're getting the stories right," he said.

Lance Gumbs, vice chairman of the Shinnecock Indian Nation, a federally recognized tribe in New York's Hamptons, said he worries about the loss of representation of local tribes in public institutions, with exhibit closures likely stretching into years.

The American Museum of Natural History, he noted, is one of New York's major tourism draws and also a mainstay for generations of area students learning about the region's tribes.

He suggests museums use replicas made by Native peoples so that sensitive cultural items aren't physically on display.

"I don't think tribes want to have our history written out of museums," Gumbs said. "There's got to be a better way than using artifacts that literally were stolen out of gravesites."

Gordon Yellowman, who heads the department of language and culture for the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, said museums should look to create more digital and virtual exhibits.

He said the tribes, in Oklahoma, will be seeking from the New York museum a sketchbook by the Cheyenne warrior Little Finger Nail that contains his drawings and illustrations from battle.

The book, which is in storage and not on display, was plucked from his body after he and other tribe members were killed by U.S. soldiers in Nebraska in 1879.

"These drawings weren't just made because they were beautiful," Yellowman said. "They were made to show the actual history of the Cheyenne and Arapaho people."

Institutions elsewhere are taking other approaches.

In Chicago, the Field Museum has established a Center for Repatriation after covering up several cases in its halls dedicated to ancient America and the peoples of the coastal Northwest and Arctic.

The museum has also since returned four items back to tribes, with another three pending, through efforts that were underway before the new regulations, according to spokesperson Bridgette Russell.

At the Cleveland Museum in Ohio, a case displaying artifacts from the Tlingit people in Alaska has been reopened after their leadership gave consent, according to Todd Mesek, the museum's spokesperson. But two other displays remain covered up, with one containing funerary objects from the ancient Southwest to be redone with a different topic and materials.

And at Harvard, the Peabody Museum's North American Indian hall reopened in February after about 15% of its roughly 350 items were removed from displays, university spokesperson Nicole Rura said.

Chuck Hoskin, chief of the Cherokee Nation, said he believes many institutions now understand they can no longer treat Indigenous items as "museum curiosities" from "peoples that no longer exist."

The leader of the tribe in Oklahoma said he visited the Peabody this year after the university reached out about returning hair clippings collected in the early 1930s from hundreds of Indigenous children, including Cherokees, forced to assimilate in the notorious Indian boarding schools.

"The fact that we're in a position to sit down with Harvard and have a really meaningful conversation, that's progress for the country," he said.

As for Baker, he wants the Ohtas returned to its tribe. He said the ceremonial doll should never have been on display, especially arranged as it was among wooden bowls, spoons and other everyday items.

Museum officials say discussions with tribal representatives began in 2021 and will continue, even though the doll technically does not fall under federal regulations because it's associated with a tribe outside the



U.S., the Munsee-Delaware Nation in Ontario.

"It has a spirit. It's a living being," Baker said. "So if you think about it being hung on a wall all these years in a static case, suffocating for lack of air, it's just horrific, really."

## **Biden is pivoting to his legacy. He speaks Monday at the LBJ Presidential Library**

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden, who belatedly opted against seeking reelection, on Monday will pay a visit to the library of the last president to make the same difficult choice, more than a half-century ago.

Biden's speech Monday at the LBJ Presidential Library in Austin, Texas, is designed to mark the 60th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, enacted under President Lyndon Johnson. But the visit has taken on very different symbolism in the two weeks it took to reschedule it after Biden had to cancel because he got COVID-19.

The speech, originally set for July 15, was once seen by the White House as an opportunity for Biden to try to make a case for salvaging his sinking presidential campaign — delivered in the home district of Rep. Lloyd Doggett, the 15-term congressman who was the first Democratic lawmaker to publicly call for Biden to step aside.

Two weeks later, the political landscape has been reshaped. Biden is out of the race. Vice President Kamala Harris is the likely Democratic nominee. And the president is focused not on his next four years, but on the legacy of his single term and the future of democracy.

No American incumbent president has dropped out of the race as late in the process as did Biden. Johnson announced he would not seek reelection in March of 1968, at the height of the Vietnam War.

Biden has drawn a lot of comparisons to Johnson of late. Both men spoke to the nation from the Oval Office to lay out their decisions. Both faced pressure from within their own party to step aside, and both were ultimately praised for doing so.

But their reasons were very different. Johnson stepped away in the heat of the war and spoke at length about his need to focus on the conflict. Biden, 81, had every intention of running for reelection until his shaky June 27 debate performance ignited fears within his own party about his age and mental acuity, and whether he could beat Republican Donald Trump.

Biden has called Trump a serious threat to democracy, particularly after the ex-president's efforts in 2020 to overturn the results of the election he lost and his continued lies about that loss. The president framed his decision to bow out of the race as motivated by the need to unite his party to protect democracy.

"I've decided the best way forward is to pass the torch to a new generation. That's the best way to unite our nation," Biden said in his Oval Office address. "Nothing, nothing can come in the way of saving our democracy. And that includes personal ambition."

Biden decided to seek the presidency in 2020 after witnessing the violence at a 2017 "Unite The Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, where torch-wielding white supremacists marched to protest the removal of a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, chanting "You will not replace us!" and "Jews will not replace us!"

Biden said he was horrified by Trump's response, particularly when the Republican told reporters that "you had some very bad people in that group, but you also had people that were very fine people, on both sides."

During his presidency, Biden has often put equity and civil rights at the forefront, including with his choice for vice president. Harris is the first woman, Black person and person of South Asian descent to have the job. She could also become the first woman elected to the presidency.

Biden's administration has worked to combat racial discrimination in the real estate market, he pardoned thousands of people convicted on federal marijuana charges that have disproportionately affected people

of color and provided federal funding to reconnect city neighborhoods that were racially segregated or divided by road projects, and also invested billions in historically Black colleges and universities.

His efforts, he has said, are meant to push the country forward — and to guard against efforts to undermine the landmark legislation signed by Johnson in 1964, one of the most significant civil rights achievements in U.S. history.

The law made it illegal to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. It was designed to end discrimination in school, work and public facilities, and barred unequal application of voter registration requirements.

Johnson signed the act five hours after Congress approved it, saying the nation was in a “time of testing” that “we must not fail.” He added: “Let us close the springs of racial poison. Let us pray for wise and understanding hearts. Let us lay aside irrelevant differences and make our nation whole.”

Eight years later, Johnson convened a civil rights symposium bringing together those who fought for civil rights to push for more progress.

“The progress has been too small; we haven’t done nearly enough,” he said in 1972 during the symposium. “Until we overcome unequal history, we can’t overcome unequal opportunity ... There is still work to be done, so let’s be on with it.”

Biden has said he is “determined to get as much done” as he can in his final six months in office, including signing major legislation expanding voting rights and a federal police bill named for George Floyd.

“I’ll keep defending our personal freedoms and our civil rights, from the right to vote to the right to choose,” Biden said from the Oval Office. “I’ll keep calling out hate and extremism, make it clear there is no place, no place in America for political violence or any violence ever, period.”

Later Monday, Biden will also travel to Houston to pay his respects to the late Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, who died July 19 at age 74.

## **Infants’ tongue-tie may be overdiagnosed and needlessly treated, American Academy of Pediatrics says**

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Tongue-tie — a condition in infants that can affect breastfeeding — may be overdiagnosed in the U.S. and too often treated with unnecessary surgery, a prominent doctors’ group said Monday.

The American Academy of Pediatrics is the latest, and largest, medical society to sound an alarm about the increasing use of scissors or lasers to cut away some infants’ tongue tissue when breastfeeding is difficult.

“It’s almost an epidemic,” said Dr. Maya Bunik, a Colorado-based co-author of the report.

Experts say there isn’t a good count of how many infants each year are being treated for tongue-tie with surgery, though Bunik believes the annual tally may exceed 100,000. Research suggests many of those treatments are not necessary, she added.

The academy’s new report encourages pediatricians and other medical professionals to consider non-surgical options to address breastfeeding problems. The report cites a study that suggests less than half of the kids with the characteristics of tongue-tie actually have difficulty breastfeeding.

Ankyloglossia, or “tongue-tie,” occurs when an infant is born with a tight or short band of tissue that tethers the bottom of the tongue’s tip to the floor of the mouth. The condition can make it hard for the infant to extend and lift their tongue to grasp a nipple and draw milk — which in turn can be painful for the mother.

Doctors say it’s critical to get breastfeeding on track in the first three to four weeks, and surveys indicate most parents want to breastfeed, so it’s natural that they want a quick solution to a problem, Bunik said.

Ankyloglossia diagnoses have been increasing worldwide, though there is no uniform diagnostic criteria for this condition and no consensus on how to treat it. One common approach is to cut the tissue with scissors, but dentists increasingly are using lasers to vaporize the tissue — some charging \$800 or more.

But the procedures can cause pain and sore mouths, potentially deterring babies from trying to breast-feed, Bunik said.

"The practice (of treating tongue-tie) got to be very common without a lot of good data," said Wisconsin pediatrician Dr. Jennifer Thomas, who also co-authored the report.

The report also recommends lactation experts, pediatricians and surgeons and other medical professionals work with parents to evaluate possible reasons for breastfeeding challenges and make the best treatment decision.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, which has 67,000 members who specialize in treating children, started working on the report in 2015 after some pediatricians began to notice that an increasing number of patients were going to dentists to get treatment for tongue-tie, Thomas said. Pediatricians were finding out after the surgeries.

At least two other medical groups have issued statements about tongue-tie. In 2020, the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery issued a consensus statement in which member physicians said they believe tongue-tie is being overdiagnosed in some places and that there isn't sufficient evidence to support claims that using lasers is superior to other techniques.

A year later, the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, an international group, issued a position called for more research into tongue-tie treatment and stressed that decisions "require a high level of clinical skill, judgment, and discernment."

The American Dental Association didn't directly respond to The Associated Press' questions about the new report. It sent a statement saying the organization agrees with a 2022 policy statement by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, which noted not all children with ankyloglossia need surgical intervention and that a team-based approach with other specialists can aid in treatment planning.

Haley Brown saw a lactation consultant two years ago after her son Shiloh, who was born prematurely, had trouble nursing. But as months passed and the situation didn't improve, Brown turned to a Denver dentist she heard about on social media. The dentist diagnosed Shiloh with tongue-tie and also lip-tie, in which the tissue inside the upper lip is too tight. Shiloh underwent a short laser procedure that cost \$750.

Breastfeeding improved immediately. "Things just seemed a little easier for him," said Brown, 33, of Englewood, Colorado.

Brown later had another baby, and another lactation consultant told her that a scissors snip could have been less involved and just as effective. Brown said the laser treatment worked for Shiloh, but added: "I probably should have consulted with my pediatrician before I went straight to the dentist."

## Trump and Harris enter 99-day sprint to decide an election that has suddenly transformed

By STEVE PEOPLES and MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

ST. CLOUD, Minn. (AP) — Barely a week ago, a sense of inevitability hung over the U.S. presidential election.

Donald Trump's allies gleefully predicted a landslide victory during a Republican National Convention that felt more like a coronation for a nominee who had just survived an assassination attempt and was promising to unite the country. Democrats, desperate and listless, feared the worst as a diminished President Joe Biden clung to his party's nomination.

But over the last seven days, a week unlike any other in American history, the 2024 presidential contest has been transformed. And now, just 99 days before Election Day, a fundamentally new race is taking shape featuring new candidates, a new issue focus and a new outlook for both parties.

Vice President Kamala Harris stepped in for Biden last Sunday and quickly smashed fundraising records, took over social media and generated levels of excitement that some Democrats said reminded them of the energy that surrounded Barack Obama's historic candidacy nearly two decades ago.

"This is potentially Obama on steroids," said Rep. Jasmine Crockett, D-Texas, who was among 40,000 participants on a Black Women for Harris call last week.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 41 of 71

On the other side, Republicans are suddenly fearful and frustrated as they begin to accept the new reality that Trump's victory is no sure thing. And as their mood sours, the finger pointing has begun. Some prominent conservatives are openly second-guessing Trump's vice presidential pick, JD Vance, a little-known Ohio senator with less than two years in office and a well-documented history of provocative statements.

Just 12 days ago, Vance earned a huge ovation as he addressed the RNC in Milwaukee, where there was a strong belief that Trump could do no wrong in the wake of his near-death experience.

"We're light years away from where we were in Milwaukee," said Republican National Committee member Henry Barbour, who just a week ago predicted that the GOP might win the national popular vote this fall for the first time since 2004. He's not so sure anymore.

"The Democrats now have a candidate who can speak, who can attack. They have a weapon," Barbour said. "They have a path."

Conventional wisdom is often wrong

The incredible speed with which the election was transformed is a stark reminder that, in the Trump era, little is certain, and the conventional wisdom is often wrong. Even now, the Democrats' newfound confidence may be premature. Early public polling suggests that Harris starts in a slightly better position against Trump than Biden was just before his withdrawal from the race. But the numbers also point to a very close race in a deeply divided nation.

Meanwhile, there are still more questions than answers about the 99-day sprint that lies ahead.

Harris has yet to select a running mate. Trump has introduced new uncertainty about the prospect of the next debate slated for Sept. 10 and hosted by ABC, arguing that was part of a deal arranged with Biden. Third-party candidates could still take the race in unexpected directions. And more than a billion dollars in political advertising has yet to be broadcast as both parties re-think their message, their policies and their path to 270 electoral votes.

But the shift over the last week is undeniable.

Harris raised a record-smashing \$200 million in the seven days since taking over Biden's campaign, with two-thirds of the haul coming from first-time contributors, her campaign said on Sunday. Over the same period, more than 170,000 volunteers have signed up to help the de facto Democratic nominee with phone banking, canvassing and other get-out-the-vote efforts.

Democrats up and down the ballot have benefited from the unprecedented surge.

John Anzalone, a former Biden pollster, described Harris' candidacy as "a defibrillator" for Democrats and swing voters across the nation. "We're back in the game, baby!"

Sen. Tammy Baldwin, a Wisconsin Democrat, did not attend Biden's four most recent visits to her state this year. But she was at Harris' side for the vice president's opening political rally last Wednesday.

Similarly in Michigan, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who was Biden's national campaign co-chair, was unwilling to break away from her book tour to join the president in Michigan at a critical moment earlier in the month. Whitmer will co-headline an event for the Harris campaign in Pennsylvania on Monday, having already campaigned on her behalf in New Hampshire over the weekend.

And the conversation has been profoundly altered.

No longer are Democrats consumed by questions about their nominee's age and mental acuity. Instead, they're leaning into issues that allow them to go on offense. As a woman, Harris has focused on the GOP's fight against abortion rights in a way that Biden could not. And as a former prosecutor, she has seized on Trump's criminal conviction in New York with confidence.

Harris has also leaned into a more folksy and emotional criticism of Trump and Vance; she and her allies have begun to describe the Republican presidential ticket as "just plain weird."

Trump has abandoned his magnanimous tone

Meanwhile, a frustrated Trump has abandoned the magnanimous tone he sought to project in the days after an assassin's bullet nearly ended his life.

"They all say, 'I think he's changed. I think he's changed since two weeks ago. Something affected him,'" Trump told a massive crowd Saturday night in Minnesota. "No, I haven't changed. Maybe I've gotten worse, because I get angry at the incompetence that I witness every single day."



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 42 of 71

For now, the Republican former president and his supporters have adopted a kitchen-sink strategy as they figure out which attacks are most effective against their new Democratic opponent.

Some conservatives, especially in the pro-Trump MAGA wing of the party, are calling Harris a "DEI candidate," referencing "diversity, equity and inclusion" to suggest Democrats only embraced her as the likely nominee because of her gender and race. House leaders on Capitol Hill have discouraged such criticism, which is largely seen as racist and sexist, but the MAGA movement has not relented.

In Minnesota over the weekend, Trump and Vance described Harris as a "radical left lunatic," who wants to de-fund the police, destroy the American dream, allow immigrants in the country illegally to vote and ban fracking. Harris' team pushed back against the attacks.

Trump also devoted a substantial amount of his remarks to Biden, seemingly struggling to move on from the opponent he has been fixated on since losing the 2020 election.

Voters who packed into the Minnesota rally were largely upbeat about Trump's chances this fall — even in their state, which Republicans have lost in every presidential election since 1976. Sensing a shift, however, some questioned whether Harris at the top of the ticket might make the race closer.

"That makes me a little nervous," said Jim Caldwell, a 59-year-old truck driver who lives in a city about 40 minutes away from St. Cloud. He pointed to the historic nature of Harris' candidacy that "might bring out more people."

"People are going to want the first woman," he said. "I don't think she's the one."

John Jose, a 56-year-old associate pastor from St. Cloud, said he was optimistic, especially because of the upheaval on the Democratic side. He also described the last week or two as "dramatic."

"I think we need stability right now," Jose said.

## Crews battle wildfires across the US West and fight to hold containment lines

By NIC COURY and REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

FOREST RANCH, Calif. (AP) — Wildfires across the western United States and Canada put millions of people under air quality alerts on Sunday as thousands of firefighters battled the flames, including the largest wildfire in California this year.

The so-called Park Fire had scorched an area greater than the size of Los Angeles as of Sunday, darkening the sky with smoke and contributing poor air quality to a large swath of the northwestern U.S. and western Canada. The blaze spanned more than 562 square miles (1,455 square kilometers) of inland Northern California.

Firefighters were helped by cooler temperatures and more humidity on Saturday and made some progress, increasing containment from zero to 12%. The fire has drawn comparisons to the 2018 Camp Fire that tore through the nearby community of Paradise, killing 85 people and torching 11,000 homes.

Paradise and several other Butte County communities were under an evacuation warning Sunday. However, Cal Fire operations section chief Jeremy Pierce had some good news for the area, saying around midday that the Park Fire's southernmost front, which is closest to Paradise, was "looking really good," with crews focusing on extinguishing any remaining hot spots and removing other hazards over the next three days. He also said they don't expect it to move farther into Chico, a city of about 100,000 people just west of Paradise.

First responders initially focused on saving lives and property endangered by the Park Fire, but that has since shifted to confronting the blaze head-on, Jay Tracy, a spokesperson at the Park Fire headquarters, told The Associated Press by phone Sunday.

Nearly 4,000 firefighters are battling the blaze, aided by numerous helicopters and air tankers, and Tracy said reinforcements would give much-needed rest to local firefighters, some of whom have been working nonstop since the fire started Wednesday.

"This fire is surprising a lot of people with its explosive growth," he said. "It is kind of unparalleled."

In places where the flames had died down by Sunday, signs of the devastation were clear. Mailboxes

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 43 of 71

and vehicles were covered with pink fire retardant dropped by aircraft in Cohasset. At other locations in the community the husks of a washer and dryer set were surrounded by burned debris from a home, and a charred motorcycle was still propped upright, balancing on rims after its tires apparently melted away.

Another part of the town was relatively unscathed, the Butte County Fire Chief said.

"We have an unburned island in that community that we are continuing to patrol and ensure that there are no hot spots in it," Sjolund said.

Managing evacuation orders can be complex. Butte County Sheriff Kory Honea said authorities were about to downgrade the evacuation order to a warning for Forest Ranch when they learned a number of hot spots were reported nearby.

"That illustrates how rapidly things can change — we were all set to be able to reduce that order to get people back in there," Honea said.

In Southern California, roughly 2,000 people had been ordered to evacuate because of a fire sweeping through the Sequoia National Forest. The wind-driven fire was moving fast, Kern County Fire Department public information officer Andrew Freeborn said, eating up more than 60 square miles (155.4 square kilometers) in four days.

The National Weather Service said a "red flag" warning was in effect for the region on Sunday, meaning dry fuels and stronger winds were increasing the fire danger.

The fire was exhibiting extreme fire conditions, fed by lots of dead plants that dried up after several years of rainfall, Freeborn said. The historic mining town of Havilah and several other communities have been "heavily impacted" by the fires, he said, but it was still too soon for damage assessment crews to count the number of burned homes.

So far, no fatalities have been reported in the Park and Borel fires. Some people in the region were choosing to ignore or disregard evacuation orders, increasing the danger for everyone, Freeborn said.

"When people are trying to ignore the orders and later call for rescue, that takes firefighters away from the task of fighting the fires," he said. "This fire is moving at a pace and with such intensity that individuals should not be thinking they can wait until the last minute. They need to get out of the way."

Although the area expects cooler-than-average temperatures through the middle of this week, that doesn't mean "that fires that are existing will go away," said Marc Chenard, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Center in College Park, Maryland.

The Park Fire has destroyed at least 66 structures and damaged five others, Tracy said. Authorities initially believed 134 structures had been lost, based on drone footage, but they lowered the number after teams assessed the damage in-person.

"Unfortunately, that number will probably go up," Tracy said. "Each day that number has potential to grow — our teams obviously don't do damage inspections when there is active fire in an area."

Jerry White, 72, left his Magalia home when authorities issues an evacuation warning, a step below an evacuation order. Years earlier White sustained third-degree burns when a barbecue caused his coat to catch fire and he said the thought of that pain made him take the warning seriously.

"I don't want to catch fire again. It's one of the worst pains you can endure," White said. "I wanted to get out of dodge. Burns are bad."

White's home is safe from the flames so far and he plans to keep living in the fire-prone mountain community, he said.

"I've been up here 50 years," White said. "The beach is more dangerous than here ... it was packed by sharks before, back when I used to surf. I'll take a fire over a shark any day!"

The Park Fire started Wednesday, when authorities say a man pushed a burning car into a gully in Chico and then fled. A man accused of setting the fire was arrested Thursday and is due in court Monday.

The Park Fire was one of more than 100 blazes burning in the U.S. on Sunday, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. Some were sparked by the weather, with climate change increasing the frequency of lightning strikes as the western U.S. endures blistering heat and bone-dry conditions.

Despite the improved fire weather in Northern California, conditions remained ripe for even more blazes to ignite, with the National Weather Service warning of "red flag" conditions on Sunday across wide swaths

of Idaho, Montana, Utah, Colorado and Wyoming, in addition to parts of California.

Fires were also burning across eastern Oregon and eastern Idaho, where officials were assessing damage from a group of blazes referred to as the Gwen Fire, which was estimated at 43 square miles (111 square kilometers) as of Sunday.

## Lawmakers from 6 countries say Beijing is pressuring them not to attend conference in Taiwan

By DAKE KANG Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Lawmakers from at least six countries said Chinese diplomats were pressuring them not to attend a China-focused conference in Taiwan, in what they described as efforts to isolate the self-governed island.

Politicians in Bolivia, Colombia, Slovakia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and one Asian country that declined to be named said they were getting texts, calls and urgent requests for meetings that would conflict with their plans to travel to Taipei. China vehemently defends its claim to Taiwan and views it as its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary.

The conference begins Monday and is being held by the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, or IPAC, a group of hundreds of lawmakers from 35 countries concerned about how democracies approach Beijing. IPAC has long faced pressure from the Chinese government: Some members have been sanctioned by Beijing, and in 2021 the group was targeted by Chinese state-sponsored hackers, according to a U.S. indictment unsealed earlier this year.

But Luke de Pulford, the alliance's director, said the pressure from Chinese officials the past few days has been unprecedented. During past IPAC meetings in other locations, lawmakers were approached by Chinese diplomats only after they concluded. This year, the first in which IPAC's annual meeting is taking place in Taiwan, there appeared to be a coordinated attempt to stop participants from attending.

The Associated Press spoke to three lawmakers and reviewed texts and emails sent by Chinese diplomats asking whether they were planning to participate in the meeting.

"I'm Wu, from Chinese Embassy," read a message sent to Antonio Miloshoski, a member of parliament in North Macedonia. "We heard that you got an invitation from IPAC, will you attend the Conference which will be held next week in Taiwan?"

In some cases, lawmakers described vague inquiries about their plans to travel to Taiwan. In other cases, the contact was more menacing: One lawmaker told AP that Chinese diplomats messaged the head of her party with a demand to stop her from going.

"They contacted president of my political party, they ask him to stop me to travel to Taiwan," said Sanela Klarić, a member of parliament in Bosnia. "They're trying, in my country, to stop me from traveling ... This is really not OK."

China routinely threatens retaliation against politicians and countries that show support for Taiwan, which has only informal relations with most countries due to Chinese diplomatic pressure. Klarić said the pressure was unpleasant but only steeled her determination to go on the trip.

"I really am fighting against countries or societies where the tool to manipulate and control peoples is fear," said Klarić, adding that it reminded her of threats and intimidation she faced while suffering through wars in Bosnia in the 1990s. "I really hate the feeling when somebody is frightening you."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry did not respond to a request for comment.

De Pulford called the pressure "gross foreign interference."

"How would PRC officials would feel if we tried to tell them about their travel plans, where they could and could not go?" de Pulford said, using the acronym for China's official name, the People's Republic of China. "It's absolutely outrageous that they think that they can interfere in the travel plans of foreign legislators."

Lawmakers from 25 countries were expected to attend this year's meeting, including Japan, India and the U.K., and IPAC said in a statement that some would meet with high-level Taiwanese officials. The Taiwanese Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 45 of 71

Last week, Beijing criticized Taiwan for its annual Han Kuang military drills, saying that Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party was "carrying out provocations to seek independence."

"Any attempt to whip up tensions and use force to seek independence or reject reunification is doomed to failure," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told reporters.

China has been peeling off the island's diplomatic allies, often with promises of development aid, in a long-running competition between the two that has swung in Beijing's favor in recent years. The Pacific Island nation of Nauru switched recognition to Beijing earlier this year, a move that reduced Taiwan's dwindling number of diplomatic allies to 12.

But China's at-times heavy-handed approach has also alienated other countries.

In 2021, Beijing downgraded relations and blocked imports from Lithuania, a member of both the EU and NATO, after the Baltic nation broke with diplomatic custom by agreeing that a Taiwanese representative office in its capital of Vilnius would bear the name Taiwan instead of Chinese Taipei, which other countries use to avoid offending Beijing. The following year, the EU adopted a resolution criticizing Beijing's behavior toward Taiwan and took action against China at the World Trade Organization over the import restrictions.

The pressure over the IPAC meeting was also triggering backlash.

Bolivian Senator Centa Rek said she submitted a letter of protest after a Chinese diplomat called her and told not to go to Taiwan, saying the island was run by an "imposter president" and that the meeting was hosted by an organization "not accepted within the terms of the policy of mainland China." When Rek refused, the diplomat said he would report her decision to his embassy, which Rek interpreted as a "veiled threat."

"I told him that it was an unacceptable intrusion, that I would not accept an order or intrusion from any government," Rek said. "These were personal decisions and that it seemed to me that he had gone beyond all international political norms."

Most of the lawmakers targeted appear to be from smaller countries, which de Pulford, the alliance's director, said was likely because Beijing "feels that they can get away with it." But he added that the coercive tactics have only made participants more determined to take part in the summit.

Miriam Lexmann, a Slovakian member of the European Parliament whose party head was approached by Chinese diplomats, said the pressure underscored her reason for coming to Taiwan.

We want to "exchange information, ways how to deal with those challenges and threats which China represents to the democratic part of the world, and of course, to support Taiwan," she said.

## US women beat Germany 4-1 at Olympics and Canada tops France 2-1 amid drone-spying scandal

By ANNE M. PETERSON AP Soccer Writer

MARSEILLE, France (AP) — Coach Emma Hayes tempered expectations as the United States cruised to a 4-1 win over Germany on Sunday night for a spot in the quarterfinals at the Paris Olympics.

Sophia Smith had a pair of goals for the Americans, who have won their opening two matches in France. Mallory Swanson and Lynn Williams also scored against Germany.

"We haven't done anything, let's be frank," Hayes said. "We've got three points against a really good German team. That's is all it is, nothing more."

The Americans are playing their first major tournament under Hayes, who took over the U.S. team in late May.

Hayes is tasked with leading the Americans as they seek to distance themselves from the disappointment of last summer's Women's World Cup, when they crashed out in the round of 16.

The United States is the winningest team in the Olympics, with four gold medals. The Americans won the bronze medal at the Tokyo Games under former coach Vlatko Andonovski, who resigned following the World Cup.

Smith started for the United States after leaving the opener in the first half with what appeared to be



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 46 of 71

an ankle injury.

Ten minutes into the match, Smith struck a cross from Trinity Rodman that sailed past German goalkeeper Katrin-Ann Berger.

Giulia Gwinn equalized in the 22nd minute with a low, bouncing shot from well outside the penalty area that eluded diving U.S. goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher.

Swanson put the United States back in front in the 26th. Berger punched out an attempt from distance by Smith, but Swanson picked up the rebound for a goal. It was Swanson's third goal of the Olympics.

Swanson is the second player to score three goals in the group at an Olympics, joining Abby Wambach in 2012.

Smith scored her second in the 44th minute on a high-arcing shot that hit the far post and caromed into the goal.

"Anytime I'm in a position to get a touch, shift and shoot. I'm doing to take it," Smith said.

Williams, a substitute, added the final goal in the 89th minute and fans in Marseille chanted "USA! USA!" as time ran down.

U.S. defender Tiarna Davidson left the match with an injury and was replaced by Emily Sonnett.

Alexandra Popp left in the 76th minute with what appeared to be a right leg injury. It was a blow to Germany, which was already playing without midfielder Lena Oberdorf (knee).

The United States plays Australia in Marseille on Wednesday to conclude group play. Germany, which defeated Australia in its Olympic opener 3-0, plays Zambia in Saint-Etienne.

Canada 2, France 1

Vanessa Gilles scored in the 12th minute of stoppage time against France to keep alive Canada's hopes of advancing.

Canada looked to be heading out of the tournament before its final Group A match when the game was tied 1-1 in Saint-Etienne.

A six-point deduction for the drone-spying scandal meant only a win would be enough to give the defending Olympic champion any chance of advancing.

Gilles converted via the post from close range to seal the comeback win after Jordyn Huitema's shot was saved.

Marie-Antoinette Katoto had put France ahead in the 42nd and Jessie Fleming evened the match in the 58th to give the Canadians hope.

The win still leaves Canada on zero points despite back-to-back wins because of the sanctions by FIFA. Canada was looking into an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport over the ruling.

Australia 6, Zambia 5

Australia produced a stunning comeback to beat Zambia in Nice and boost its chances of advancing to the quarterfinals of the tournament.

Michelle Heyman's goal in the 90th minute at Stade de Nice settled a thrilling match that Zambia led 5-2 early in the second half, with Barbra Banda scoring a first-half hat trick.

"We would not have wanted it to go exactly how it did, but I think the way that the game ended says so much for the hardened spirit of this team," said Australia's Steph Catley, who scored twice. "We knew we could get back into it, we knew we could score more goals."

Zambia had been involved in the highest scoring game in the history of women's soccer at the Olympics — beaten 10-3 by the Netherlands at the Tokyo Games three years ago, with Banda scoring a hat trick in that match too.

An own goal by Ngambo Musole sparked Australia's fightback in the 58th.

Two more goals from Catley — a free kick in the 65th and a penalty in the 78th — evened the score and set up the dramatic finale.

Heyman had come on as a substitute in the 57th and slotted home the winner for the Matildas, who were World Cup semifinalists last year.

Australia lost 3-0 to Germany in its opening game in Group B and was looking set for a second defeat

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 47 of 71

after Zambia raced to a commanding lead.

As well as Banda's hat trick, Racheal Kundananji scored twice. Alanna Kennedy and Hayley Raso scored in the first half for Australia, which plays the United States in its final group game.

Zambia plays Germany.

Japan 2, Brazil 1

Momoko Tanikawa scored a long-range goal deep in stoppage time to clinch Japan's comeback win over Brazil.

The spectacular goal followed Saki Kumagai's equalizer from the penalty spot after Yasmin was called for a handball at the end of regulation at Parc des Princes in Paris.

Brazil was leading 1-0 after Jheniffer's goal in the 56th minute until Japan's late goals, capped with Tanikawa's strike from well outside the top of the box that caught Brazilian goalkeeper Lorena out of position.

Brazil's Marta put her head in her hands in disbelief on the bench. A victory would have all but assured Brazil a spot in the knockout round.

Brazil started Marta, the team's longtime captain who is playing in her sixth Olympics.

A record six-time world player of the year, Marta has said this will be her last major tournament with Brazil. Every time that the 38-year-old got a touch on the ball Sunday night the Paris crowd cheered.

She nearly scored in Brazil's 1-0 victory over Nigeria in the team's opener, but the goal was called back by video review. But the win over Nigeria was a valuable three points for the Brazilians who won't know their fate in Paris until after the last group matches on Wednesday.

Brazil dominated possession in the opening half. Mina Tanaka had a good chance for Japan in the 19th minute, but her shot went just wide. Later in the half she missed on a penalty. Tanaka has 37 goals in 82 appearances for Japan.

Japan lost its opening match 2-1 to Women's World Cup winner Spain.

The top two teams in each of the three groups, including the top two third-place teams, advance to the quarterfinals.

Spain 1, Nigeria 0

World champion Spain beat Nigeria to make it two wins from two in Group C and advance to the quarterfinals.

Alexia Putellas scored in the 85th at Stade de la Beaujoire in Nantes to leave Spain three points clear at the top of the group, ahead of Japan and Brazil.

The game was goalless going in to the final stages when Putellas curled a long free kick past goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie into the top corner.

Colombia 2, New Zealand 0

Colombia recovered from opening loss to France by beating New Zealand in Lyon.

Goals from Marcela Restrepo and Leicy Santos secured the win that provisionally moved the Colombians level on points with France in Group A.

World Cup quarterfinalist Colombia took an early lead through Restrepo in the 27th and Santos sealed the win in the 72nd.

## **Harris raised \$200 million in first week of White House campaign and signed up 170,000 volunteers**

By AAMER MADHANI, BILL BARROW, and MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris' campaign has raised \$200 million since she emerged as the likely Democratic presidential nominee last week, an eyepopping haul in her race against the Republican nominee, former President Donald Trump.

The campaign, which announced its latest fundraising total on Sunday, said the bulk of the donations — 66% — comes from first-time contributors in the 2024 election cycle and were made after President Joe Biden announced his exit from the race and endorsed Harris.

Over 170,000 volunteers have also signed up to help the Harris campaign with phone banking, canvass-

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 48 of 71

ing and other get-out-the-vote efforts. Election Day is 100 days away.

"The momentum and energy for Vice President Harris is real — and so are the fundamentals of this race: this election will be very close and decided by a small number of voters in just a few states," Michael Tyler, the campaign's communications director, wrote in a memo.

Her campaign said it held some 2,300 organizing events in battleground states this weekend as several high-profile Democrats under consideration to serve as Harris' running mate stumped for her.

Harris campaigned in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, on Saturday, drawing hundreds to a fundraiser that had been organized when Biden was still at the top of the Democratic ticket. The fundraiser had originally been expected to raise \$400,000 but ended bringing in about \$1.4 million, according to the campaign.

Mandy Robbins, 45, of Decatur, Georgia, drove to one of those organizing events Sunday in the northern suburbs of Atlanta to hear Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear, a potential Harris running mate.

She thought Biden did a "great job" in the White House, but acknowledged she "would not have been nearly this excited" if he remained in the race.

"I finally feel hopeful now," Robbins said. She added, "We can win this with Harris."

Beshear spoke from experience to supporters, telling them their work could be the difference in what's expected to be a close race. Beshear won his 2019 campaign by a margin of about 5,000 votes of 1.41 million ballots cast. He was reelected in November by a relatively comfortable margin.

"Every door knock mattered. Every phone call mattered. Every difficult conversation that people had with their uncle at Thanksgiving mattered," Beshear said of his 2019 race. "Everyone here today that signs up to volunteer ... you might be the difference in winning this race for Vice President Harris."

Meanwhile, Trump, running mate Sen. JD Vance and their surrogates stepped up efforts to frame Harris as a far-left politician out of touch with the American mainstream.

Vance said after a stop at a diner in Waite Park, Minnesota, on Sunday that Harris has "got a little bit of a bump from her introduction" but predicted it would soon dissipate.

"Look, the people are going to learn her record," Vance said. "They're going to learn that she's a radical. They're going to learn that she's basically a San Francisco liberal who wants to take San Francisco policies to the entire country."

Vance was echoing Trump, who in a campaign appearance with Vance in St. Cloud, Minnesota on Saturday, called Harris a "crazy liberal," accused her of wanting to "defund the police" and said she was an "absolute radical" on abortion. Harris, a vocal proponent of abortion rights, has made clear that she will make Republican-backed efforts to restrict reproductive rights a key plank in her campaign.

"There is no liberal horse that she has chosen not to ride," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.

Trump backer Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., also tried to brand Harris as a full partner for "a lot of the worst decisions of the Biden administration," including the chaotic August 2021 pullout of U.S. troops led to the swift collapse of the Afghan government and military.

Cotton also accused Harris of emboldening Iranian proxies Hamas and Hezbollah by pressing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over civilian casualties in the war in Gaza.

Netanyahu met separately with Harris and Biden at the White House on Thursday. Afterward, Harris said she urged Netanyahu to reach a cease-fire deal soon with the militant group Hamas so that dozens of hostages held by the militants in Gaza since Oct. 7 can return home. Harris said she also affirmed Israel's right to defend itself but expressed deep concern about the high death toll in Gaza and the "dire" humanitarian situation there.

Tensions in the Mideast intensified on Saturday after Israeli authorities said a rocket from Lebanon struck a soccer field in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, killing 12 children and teenagers. The strike raised fears of a broader regional war between Israel and Hezbollah, which denied a role in the attack.

Trump at his Saturday rally said the Golan Heights incident "will go down as another moment in history created by a weak and ineffective United States president and vice president." And Vance on Sunday accused Harris of being "a disaster" on the conflict.

Still, some Republicans are concerned that Harris' entrance has given Democrats a spark and that Trump needs to recalibrate.

Gov. Chris Sununu, R-N.H., said Harris is in a “honeymoon” period that will probably last a month, but he also said that both Trump and Vance should stop the personal attacks against Harris because those will not drive people to vote. Instead, he said they must stick to the issues and “stay away from the insults.”

He said Trump missed an opportunity to do that in recent campaign events, but “hopefully they can get back on track.” Sununu, however, acknowledged that “nobody can get Donald Trump to do anything” he doesn’t want to do.

“But hopefully the numbers, the polls, will get Donald Trump to realize what was working and what didn’t,” Sununu said

Graham was on CBS’ “Face the Nation,” Sununu was on ABC’s “This Week,” and Cotton was on CNN’s “State of the Union.”

## Paris Olympics Day 2: Simone Biles and LeBron James shine as Americans step up at the Games

By JENNA FRYER AP National Writer

PARIS (AP) — On the first sunny day of the Paris Olympics, the stars from the United States shined bright. Simone Biles and LeBron James dazzled, so did the U.S. women’s soccer team. Torri Huske grabbed some of the spotlight, and Haley Batten made a name for herself by earning a silver medal in mountain biking for the best finish ever by an American rider.

Although it was French swimmer Léon Marchand who received the most boisterous cheers in crushing the field to win gold in the men’s 400-meter individual medley, the U.S. had a strong Sunday on Day 2 of the Games.

Simone Shines

Biles made her Olympic return three years after pulling out of multiple finals at the Tokyo Games to protect her safety, which prompted an international discussion about mental health, by powering through discomfort she felt in her calf to lead the U.S. women’s gymnastics team into the finals.

Biles, Suni Lee and Jordan Chiles went 1-2-3 in the all-around during early qualifying, though Chiles will miss the all-around final due to rules that limit countries to entering two athletes per competition.

There’s a chance Chiles will make the floor exercise final should she finish in the top eight. Lee is practically a lock for the beam and bars finals, with 2020 floor exercise champion Jade Carey in good position to join Biles in the vault final.

But all eyes were on Biles, who briefly scared an entire nation when she left the floor after her floor exercise and received medical attention. She had tweaked her calf in warm-up, but U.S. coach Cecile Landi said it was a minor injury.

She performed in front of a star-studded crowd that included Tom Cruise, Jessica Chastain, Snoop Dogg, Anna Wintour and Lady Gaga, who wrote on social media of Biles: “She nailed it, what an honor to be so close!”

LeBron James Leads Team USA

Two of the most experienced Olympians on the U.S. men’s basketball team, James and Kevin Durant, began the squad’s bid for a fifth consecutive gold medal with a near-flawless performance.

Durant made his first eight shots and scored 23 points, James added 21 points, nine assists and seven rebounds and the U.S. rolled to a 110-84 win over Serbia in the Olympic opener for both teams.

James and Durant were a combined 18 for 22 from the field — 8 of 9 for Durant, 9 of 13 for James — as the U.S. had no trouble with the reigning World Cup silver medalists.

Jrue Holiday scored 15, Devin Booker had 12 and Anthony Edwards and Stephen Curry each added 11 for the U.S.

Pool Party

Huske knocked off world-record holder Gretchen Walsh in the women’s 100 butterfly, using a strong finish to get her hands to the wall just ahead of her teammate in a 1-2 finish for the U.S.

The favorite went out with her usual strategy: start fast and try to hold on. It worked at the U.S. trials,



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 50 of 71

where she set her world record of 55.18 last month, and she was under record pace at the turn.

But Huske chased her down in the race that really mattered. The winner touched in 55.59 — about the length of a finger ahead of Walsh's time of 55.63.

When Huske saw the "1" beside her name on the scoreboard, she reached across the lane rope to give Walsh and hug while breaking down in tears.

Marchand, meanwhile, lived up to the huge expectations at his home Olympics with a flag-waving crowd cheering his every stroke. He was under world-record pace on the final turn but faded a bit coming home, touching in 4 minutes, 2.95 seconds — an Olympic record, but just shy of his own world mark of 4:02.50.

Marchand claimed that mark at last year's world championships in Fukuoka, Japan, erasing a record held by Michael Phelps for 15 years.

And, in an upset, Italian swimmer Nicolo Martinenghi shocked record-holder Adam Peaty in the 100 breaststroke.

Peaty, the gold medalist in both Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo, had taken a long layoff to deal with mental health issues. Upon his return, he worked his way back up to speed and entered the final as the top qualifier but settled for silver as his quest for a third consecutive gold was ended.

## US Soccer Wins

Sophia Smith scored a pair of goals to lead the U.S. past Germany 4-1 and put the team in good position to advance out of its group at the Olympics.

Mallory Swanson and Lynn Williams also scored for the Americans, who defeated Zambia 3-0 in the opener but won't know their fate in the knockout round for sure until after the final Group B matches on Wednesday.

The Americans play Australia in Marseille to conclude group play.

## Mountain Biker Medals

Batten broke a rule but still came home with America's best ever mountain biking finish when she won silver.

Batten was fined by the Olympic mountain bike judges for violating a rule on the final lap of her race. She was jockeying for second place when she went through a lane dedicated for taking on food and drink or stopping for mechanical problems.

After the judges reviewed the footage, they decided Batten had done neither and broke one of the rules of the race. She was fined 500 Swiss francs, or about \$565, for "failure to respect the instructions of the race organization or commissaires," though the judges apparently decided that the infraction was not serious enough to warrant a disqualification.

Batten finished ninth three years ago at the Tokyo Games.

## Tennis Veterans Win

Rafael Nadal was unsure he could even play men's singles Sunday the day before his match, but turned up at Roland Garros and beat Marton Fucsovics of Hungary 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 in the first round.

The victory set up a blockbuster showdown against rival Novak Djokovic.

It will be the 60th meeting between this pair of greats, more than any other two men have played against each other in the sport's Open era, which began in 1968. Djokovic, a 37-year-old from Serbia, leads the head-to-head series 30-29, and his 24 Grand Slam titles make him the only man in tennis history with more than Nadal's 22.

Andy Murray's tennis career, meanwhile, was extended for at least one more match when he and British partner Dan Evans saved five match points during a first-round doubles win. Murray and Evans rallied past the Japanese pair of Taro Daniel and Kei Nishikori 2-6, 7-6 (5), 11-9.

The Brits trailed 9-4 in the decisive tiebreaker, which is held in place of a third set in doubles.

The 37-year-old Murray announced before the Summer Games that it would be the final event of his career, and then pulled out of the singles bracket, leaving him only in doubles.

Murray is a three-time Grand Slam champion and the only tennis player with two Olympic singles golds — from London in 2012 and Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

## Israel weighs response to Hezbollah after a rocket from Lebanon kills 12 youths on a soccer field

By MELANIE LIDMAN and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — The Middle East braced for a potential flare-up in violence on Sunday after Israeli authorities said a rocket from Lebanon struck a soccer field in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, killing 12 children and teens in what the military called the deadliest attack on civilians since Oct. 7. It raised fears of a broader regional war between Israel and Hezbollah, which in a rare move denied it was responsible.

The White House National Security Council said it was speaking with Israeli and Lebanese counterparts and working on a diplomatic solution to “end all attacks once and for all” in the border area between Israel and Lebanon.

The Israeli military said it struck a number of targets inside Lebanon overnight into Sunday, though their intensity was similar to months of cross-border fighting between Israel and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah. Hezbollah said it also carried out strikes. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Saturday’s attack came as Israel and Hamas are negotiating a cease-fire proposal to end the nearly 10-month war in Gaza.

Here is a look at the broader repercussions:

What happened?

On Saturday, a rocket slammed into a soccer field where dozens of children and teens were playing in the Druze town of Majdal Shams, about 12 kilometers (7 miles) south of Lebanon and next to the Syrian border. Twelve were killed and 20 others wounded, according to the Israeli military.

“I feel darkness inside and out. Nothing like this happened here,” resident Anan Abu Saleh said. “There’s no way to explain this. I saw children, I don’t want to say what I saw, but it’s horrible, really horrible. We need more security.” On Sunday, the coffins passed through a crowd of thousands. Photos of the youth were displayed at a roundabout as residents lit candles at dusk.

The Israeli military said it was investigating why the rocket wasn’t intercepted and questioned whether it would have been possible due to its short journey and short reaction time. A bomb shelter was next to the blackened field, steps away.

The Druze are a religious sect that began as an offshoot of Shiite Islam and has communities in Israel, Syria and Lebanon. There are about 25,000 Druze in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, according to Yusri Hazran of the Hebrew University.

The Druze are considered among Israel’s most loyal citizens, although those in the Golan Heights have a more fraught relationship with authorities. Israel captured the Golan, a strategic plateau, from Syria in the 1967 Mideast war and annexed it in 1981. Much of the international community considers the area to be occupied territory. While Druze leaders there profess allegiance to Syria, relations with Israel are normally good.

“Big anger, big, big. I have no feelings that I can explain to you,” said Hassan Shakir, a Majdal Shams resident.

What could this mean for a wider war?

Attacks along the Israel-Lebanon border have simmered below the threshold of all-out war since the start of the conflict in Gaza. But the toll and young victims in Saturday’s attack could push Israel to respond more severely.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was weighing options Sunday after hurrying home from the U.S. and warning that Hezbollah “will pay a heavy price for this attack, one that it has not paid so far.” The security Cabinet authorized him and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant to decide how and when to respond.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said “every indication” showed the rocket came from Hezbollah. The Israeli military’s Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi said an Iranian-made Falaq rocket with a 53-kilogram (117-pound) warhead belonging to Hezbollah was fired.

Hezbollah began firing at Israel the day after Hamas’ attack on Oct. 7. Israel responded by targeting what it calls Hezbollah’s military infrastructure with airstrikes and drones. Most attacks have been confined to

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 52 of 71

border areas, though Israel has assassinated Hezbollah and Hamas leadership farther north in Lebanon. Tens of thousands of people along the border have evacuated.

Since early October, Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon have killed more than 500 people, including around 90 civilians. On the Israeli side, 22 soldiers and 24 civilians have been killed.

Hezbollah has far superior firepower than Hamas. Igniting a war in Israel's north while it's engaged in Gaza would overburden the military, Barak Ben-Zur, a researcher at the International Institute of Counter-Terrorism, told journalists.

In Lebanon, some prepared for more fire from Israel. Lebanon's national airline announced it postponed the Beirut arrival of seven flights until Monday morning, without saying why. Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati had urgent calls with diplomats and politicians, his office said.

"I doubt that there will be a strike, but nothing is far-fetched when it comes to the enemy," said Abdallah Dalal, a resident of the Lebanese border village of Chebaa. Israeli officials said the rocket was fired nearby.

Any conflict could bring in Iran, which warned Israel that a strong reaction would lead to "unprecedented consequences." Iran and Israel's shadow war burst into the open in April, when Iran launched 300 missiles and drones at Israel, most of them intercepted, in response to the killing of an Iranian general.

The United Nations secretary-general called for maximum restraint by all parties.

How could this impact the war in Gaza?

Officials from the United States, Egypt and Qatar were meeting Sunday with Israeli officials in Rome in the latest push for a cease-fire deal in Gaza. The head of Israel's Mossad spy agency, David Barnea, returned home and negotiations will continue in the coming days, Netanyahu's office said.

An Egyptian official said the attack in the Golan Heights could give urgency to negotiations. "Both fronts are connected," he said. "A cease-fire in Gaza will lead to a cease-fire with Hezbollah." The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the sensitive talks with the media.

In a statement, the Egyptian foreign ministry called on all influential international players to "intervene immediately to spare the peoples of the region further disastrous consequences of the expansion of the conflict."

## Edna O'Brien, Irish literary giant who wrote 'The Country Girls,' dies at 93

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Edna O'Brien, Ireland's literary pride and outlaw who scandalized her native land with her debut novel "The Country Girls" before gaining international acclaim as a storyteller and iconoclast that found her welcomed everywhere from Dublin to the White House, has died. She was 93.

O'Brien died Saturday after a long illness, according to a statement by her publisher Faber and the literary agency PFD.

"A defiant and courageous spirit, Edna constantly strove to break new artistic ground, to write truthfully, from a place of deep feeling," Faber said in a statement. "The vitality of her prose was a mirror of her zest for life: she was the very best company, kind, generous, mischievous, brave."

O'Brien published more than 20 books, most of them novels and story collections, and would know fully what she called the "extremities of joy and sorrow, love, crossed love and unrequited love, success and failure, fame and slaughter." Few so concretely and poetically challenged Ireland's taboos on religion, sex and gender. Few wrote so fiercely, so sensually about loneliness, rebellion, desire and persecution. A world traveler in mind and body, O'Brien was as likely to imagine the longings of an Irish nun as to take in a man's "boyish smile" in the midst of a "ponderous London club."

O'Brien was an unknown about to turn 30, living with her husband and two small children outside of London, when "The Country Girls" became one of Ireland's most polarizing works of fiction in memory. Written in just three weeks and published in 1960, for an advance of roughly \$75, "The Country Girls" follows the lives of two young women — Caithleen (Kate) Brady and Bridget (Baba) Brennan journey from a rural convent to the risks and adventures of Dublin. Admirers were as caught up in their defiance and

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 53 of 71

awakening as would-be censors were enraged by such passages as "He opened his braces and let his trousers slip down around the ankles" and "He patted my knees with his other hand. I was excited and warm and violent."

Fame, wanted or otherwise, was O'Brien's ever after. Her novel was praised and purchased in London and New York while back in Ireland it was labeled "filth" by Minister of Justice Charles Haughey and burned publicly in O'Brien's home town of Tuamgraney, County Clare. Detractors also included O'Brien's parents and her husband, the author Ernest Gebler, from whom O'Brien was already becoming estranged.

O'Brien would be recognized well beyond the world of books. The 1980s British band DEXY'S Midnight Runners named her alongside Eugene O'Neill, Samuel Beckett and Oscar Wilde among others in the literary tribute "Burn It Down." She dined at the White House with then-first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Jack Nicholson and befriended Jacqueline Kennedy, whom she remembered as a "creature of paradoxes. While being private and immured she also had a hunger for intimacy — it was as if the barriers she had put up needed at times to be battered down."

O'Brien's other books included the novels "August Is a Wicked Month," the story of a woman's sexual liberation that was banned in parts of Ireland; "Down By The River," based on a true story about a teenage Irish girl who becomes pregnant after being raped by her father, and autobiographical "The Light of Evening," in which a famous author returns to Ireland to see her ailing mother. Her most recent work, "Girl," a novel about victims of Boko Haram, came out in 2019.

Josephine Edna O'Brien was one of four children raised on a farm where "the relics of riches remained. It was a life full of contradictions. We had an avenue, but it was full of potholes; there was a gatehouse, but another couple lived there." Her father was a violent alcoholic, her mother a talented letter writer who disapproved of her daughter's profession, quite likely out of jealousy. Lena O'Brien's hold on the author's imagination, the force of her regrets made her a lifelong muse and a near stand-in Ireland itself, "the cupboard with all things in it, the tabernacle with God in it, the lake with the legends in it."

By her early 20s, she was working in a pharmacy in Dublin and reading Tolstoy, Thackeray and O'Connor among others in her spare time. She had dreams of writing since sneaking out to the nearby fields as a child to work on stories, but doubted the relevance of her life until she read a biography of James Joyce and learned that "Portrait Of An Artist As a Young Man" was autobiographical. She began writing fiction that ran in the literary magazine The Bell and found work reviewing manuscripts for the publishing house Hutchinson, where editors were impressed enough by her summaries to commission what became "The Country Girls."

"I cried a lot writing 'The Country Girls,' but scarcely noticed the tears. Anyhow, they were good tears. They touched on feelings that I did not know I had. Before my eyes, infinitely clear, came that former world in which I believed our fields and hollows had some old music slumbering in them, centuries old," she wrote in her memoir.

"The words poured out of me, and the pen above the paper was not moving fast enough, so that I sometimes feared they would be lost forever."

## US men's basketball team rolls past Serbia 110-84 in opening game at the Paris Olympics

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

VILLENEUVE-D'ASCQ, France (AP) — LeBron James was feeling some nervousness, some butterflies, maybe even a bit of angst as he listened to the national anthem play before his first Olympic game in 12 years.

It all went away quickly.

James and Kevin Durant — the two most-experienced Olympians on this American team — opened the Paris Games and a U.S. bid for a fifth consecutive gold medal with a near-perfect show. Durant made his first eight shots and scored 23 points, James added 21 points, nine assists and seven rebounds and the U.S. rolled to a 110-84 win over Serbia in the Olympic opener for both teams on Sunday.



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 54 of 71

"That's the best game we've played so far," James said after the Americans improved to 6-0 this summer, 1-0 in the tournament that matters.

James and Durant were a combined 18 for 22 from the field — 8 of 9 for Durant, 9 of 13 for James — as the U.S. had no trouble with the reigning World Cup silver medalists from last summer in the Philippines. Jrue Holiday scored 15, Devin Booker had 12 and Anthony Edwards and Stephen Curry each added 11 for the U.S.

"Whatever it takes," James said. "It's going to be somebody different every day. And we have that type of firepower."

The U.S. improved to 144-6 overall in Olympic play, 56-0 when scoring more than 100 points. The Americans won without Jayson Tatum of the NBA champion Boston Celtics — someone who just agreed to the richest contract in NBA history — in the rotation, which even U.S. coach Steve Kerr thought was crazy when he decided to do it.

"I went with the combinations that I felt like would make sense," Kerr said. "I talked to him and he's incredibly professional. And that's tonight. It doesn't mean it's going to stay that way the rest of the tournament. He'll make his mark. Our guys know this: The key to this whole thing is to put all the NBA stuff in the rear-view mirror and just win six games. Jayson's the ultimate pro, a champion, he handled it well and he'll be ready for the next one."

Three-time NBA MVP Nikola Jokic scored 20 points for Serbia, while Bogdan Bogdanovic scored 14. Serbia got outscored 54-27 from the 3-point line — a big liability for the Americans in the warmup games before this tournament, but a strength on Sunday — and let the U.S. shoot 62% while getting held to 42% from the floor.

With Jokic on the floor in his 31 minutes, the teams were even. In the nine minutes when Jokic wasn't on the floor, the U.S. outscored Serbia by 26 points. The final margin: 26 points.

"They got the best player in the world," Edwards said.

Both teams return to action on Wednesday, with the U.S. taking on upstart South Sudan — a rematch of a 101-100 escape win for the Americans in an exhibition in London earlier this month — and Serbia meeting Puerto Rico in what could essentially be an elimination game for both teams.

It was Serbia 10, U.S. 2 early. It was U.S. 108, Serbia 74 the rest of the way.

"We knew they were going to come out and play hard," Booker said. "They did the same thing when we were in Abu Dhabi. They have a lot of talented guys over there. We didn't underestimate them."

Before the tournament started, Serbia coach Svetislav Pesic — who coached against the 1992 Olympic "Dream Team" from the U.S. — said this version of the American squad was even better than that first NBA-star-filled bunch that took the world by storm at the Barcelona Games. And when told of that comment a couple of weeks back, Kerr laughed it off.

"When Chuck Daly coached the Dream Team, he never called timeout," Kerr said.

It took all of 2 minutes, 41 seconds of these Olympics for Kerr to call one. Serbia jumped out to that eight-point lead, putting the Americans into a quick hole. Kerr subbed Joel Embiid out for Anthony Davis after that first stoppage and things changed in a hurry; a three-point play by James midway through the first gave the U.S. its first lead and a lob from James to Edwards put the Americans up 25-20 after one.

By then, the Durant show was underway.

He finished his 8-for-8 first-half showing with a fadeaway, falling to the court, that beat the halftime buzzer for a 58-49 lead. And the lead steadily grew from there: Edwards shook free of Serbia's Nikola Jovic for a nifty baseline score to make it 84-65 after three, a play so good that Curry was dancing in delight and mimicking using a video-game controller on the sideline.

"Very, very important to get off to a good start in this tournament because every game is so big," Curry said after his Olympic debut. "You only have six of them if you want to get to the gold and obviously, Serbia is a great team. They run an intricate offense and a very physical defense. KD was unbelievable in the first half and gave us a huge boost, and our defense in the second half opened the game up."

## **Fires in the West are becoming ever bigger, consuming. Why and what can be done?**

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

Decades of snuffing out fires at the first sign of smoke combined with climate change have laid the groundwork for a massive wildfire in northern California and scores of smaller ones across the western U.S. and Canada, experts say.

These fires are moving faster and are harder to fight than those in the past. The only way to stop future wildfires from becoming so ferocious is to use smaller controlled fires, as indigenous people did for centuries, experts say. But they acknowledge that change won't be easy.

Here are some things to know about the latest fires and why they are so savage:

Blazes scorch hundreds of square miles

The Park Fire, the largest blaze so far this year in California, stood at 544 square miles (1,409 square kilometers) as of Saturday. It ignited Wednesday when authorities said a man pushed a burning car into a gully in Chico and then calmly blended in with others fleeing the scene.

Its intensity and dramatic spread led fire officials to make unwelcome comparisons to the monstrous Camp Fire that fire burned out of control in nearby Paradise in 2018, killing 85 people and torching 11,000 homes.

Communities elsewhere in the U.S. West and Canada also were under siege Saturday from fast-moving flames. More than 110 active fires covering 2,800 square miles (7,250 square kilometers) were burning in the U.S. on Friday, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

Fires are becoming bigger and more threatening

"Amped up" is how Jennifer Marlon, a research scientist at Yale's School of the Environment, described the recent fires.

Marlon said there aren't necessarily more wildfires now, but they are larger and more severe because of the warming atmosphere. "The big message is that seeing extreme wildfires is just part of a series of unnatural disasters that we are going to continue seeing because of climate change," she said.

Ten of California's 20 largest fires occurred in the last five years, said Benjamin Hatchett, a fire meteorologist with the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere with Colorado State University, in Fort Collins.

And he noted that the Park Fire was in eighth place as of Saturday morning, even as it continued to spread. He blamed climate change for creating more variability in weather conditions.

"We have a lot of very, very wet years and very, very dry years," Hatchett said. "And so we get a lot of this variability that helps to accumulate and then dry out fuels."

Such is the case this year in California, where record-setting temperatures dried up the plant growth that sprung up during recent wetter-than-average years, Hatchett said.

"So now we really have a really good setup for having these widespread large wildfires," Hatchett said. "And we're starting to push the limits of firefighting resource availability."

These fires don't even give firefighters a chance to rest at night, said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with the University of California, Los Angeles and the National Center for Atmospheric Research.

"They're burning with extreme intensity straight through the overnight and just continuing on into the next day," he said. "We're also seeing fires burning over a longer fire season than we used to."

Forests may have trouble recovering

The fires that are burning today are sometimes so severe and hot that they transform forests into a different type of ecosystem, Swain said.

"The forest is not coming back in the same in the same way as it was in a lot of regions," Swain said.

Part of the issue is that climate change means that there are hotter conditions as plant life returns. In some cases, trees are replaced with invasive grasses that are themselves flammable.

"So the climate change has altered the context in which these fires are occurring," he said. "And that's affecting not only the intensity and the severity of the fires themselves, which it clearly is at this point,

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 56 of 71

but it's also affecting the ability of ecosystems to recover afterwards."

Snuffing out fires in the past created problems now

In parts of the country, like the Midwest, farmers use fire to control trees, woody shrubs and invasive species. But not so in the western U.S., where fires have been extinguished in their infancy for decades.

"The problem now is we've allowed so much fuel to build up in some of these places that the fires burn very hot and intense. And that tends to do more damage than what nature typically will do with a fire," said Tim Brown, a research professor at the Desert Research Institute and director of the Western Regional Climate Center in Reno, Nevada.

Fires were once commonplace in the West because of lightning strikes and indigenous burning, Hatchett said. The practice stopped during colonial settlement, but it now needs to return, Hatchett said.

"That's the only way we're really going to get out of this, is to really accept and embrace the use of fire on our terms," Hatchett said. "Otherwise we're going to get fire on the fire's terms, which is like what we're seeing right now."

Doing so isn't easy because there are no longer big-open landscapes where millions of acres can burn unchecked, Swain acknowledged.

"And that's sort of the conundrum: This is something we need to be doing more of. But the practical reality of doing so is not at all simple," Swain said.

But he said there is no option to address the wildfire risk that doesn't involve fire.

"We're going to see more and more fire on the ground," he said. "The question is whether we want to see it in the form of more manageable, primarily beneficial prescribed burns, or in these primarily harmful, huge, intense conflagrations that we're increasingly seeing."

## Attorney for cartel leader 'El Mayo' Zambada says his client was kidnapped and brought to the US

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — The lawyer of a powerful Mexican drug cartel leader who is now in U.S. custody pushed back Sunday against claims that his client was tricked into flying into the country, saying he was "forcibly kidnapped" by the son of Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán.

Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada had eluded authorities for decades and had never set foot in prison until a plane carrying him and Joaquín Guzmán López, a son of notorious drug kingpin "El Chapo," landed at an airport in Santa Teresa, New Mexico, near El Paso, Texas, on Thursday. Both men, who face various U.S. drug charges, were arrested and remain jailed.

Frank Perez, Zambada's attorney, said his client did not end up at the New Mexico airport of his own free will.

"My client neither surrendered nor negotiated any terms with the U.S. government," Perez said in a statement. "Joaquín Guzmán López forcibly kidnapped my client. He was ambushed, thrown to the ground, and handcuffed by six men in military uniforms and Joaquin. His legs were tied, and a black bag was placed over his head." Perez went on to say that Zambada, 76, was thrown in the back of a pickup truck, forced onto a plane and tied to the seat by Guzmán López.

Known as an astute operator skilled at corrupting officials, Zambada has a reputation for being able to negotiate with everyone, including rivals. He is charged in a number of U.S. cases, including in New York and California. Prosecutors brought a new indictment against him in New York in February, describing him as the "principal leader of the criminal enterprise responsible for importing enormous quantities of narcotics into the United States."

Removing him from the criminal landscape could set off a turbulent internal war for control over the cartel, as has occurred with the arrest or killings of other kingpins. Experts say it could also open the door for a more violent, younger generation of Sinaloa traffickers to move up.

Perez declined to offer much more comment beyond his Sunday statement, saying only that his client had been traveling with a light security detail and was set up after being called to a meeting with Guzmán

López.

Perez's comments were first reported by the Los Angeles Times.

A spokesperson for the U.S. Justice Department did not immediately return an email seeking comment Sunday on Perez's claims. Court records did not list an attorney for Guzmán López, whose father is serving a life sentence in a U.S. prison.

According to a U.S. law enforcement official familiar with the matter, Zambada was duped into flying into the U.S.

The cartel leader got on an airplane believing he was going somewhere else, said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter. The official did not provide details such as who persuaded Zambada to get on the plane or where exactly he thought he was going.

Zambada appeared in federal court in El Paso on Friday morning, where a judge read the charges against him and informed him of his rights. He is being held without bond and has pleaded not guilty to various drug trafficking charges, court records show. His next court hearing is scheduled for Thursday, Perez said.

## 'Deadpool & Wolverine' smashes R-rated record with \$205 million debut, 8th biggest opening ever

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Marvel is back on top with "Deadpool & Wolverine." The comic-book movie made a staggering \$205 million in its first weekend in North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday. It shattered the opening record for R-rated films previously held by the first "Deadpool" (\$132 million) and notched a spot in the top 10 openings of all time.

Including international showings, where it's racked up an additional \$233.3 million from 52 markets, "Deadpool & Wolverine" is looking at a global opening of over \$438.3 million.

Fittingly for both characters' introduction to the Marvel Cinematic Universe, "Deadpool & Wolverine" played less like earlier X-Men or Deadpool movies and more like an Avengers pic. In the top domestic opening weekends ever, "Deadpool & Wolverine" is seated in 8th place between "The Avengers" (\$207.4 million) and "Black Panther" (\$202 million), bumping "Avengers: Age of Ultron" (\$191.3 million) out of the top 10.

It's by far the biggest opening of the year, unseating Disney's "Inside Out 2" (\$154.2 million) and the most tickets a movie has sold in its debut weekend since "Barbie" (\$162 million) stormed theaters last July. Playing in 4,210 locations, "Deadpool & Wolverine" also surpassed 2019's "The Lion King" (\$191.8 million) to become the biggest July opening ever, and is the 34th consecutive MCU movie to debut in first place. And these are numbers previously thought impossible for an R-rated film.

"It's great news full stop," said Tony Chambers, who leads theatrical distribution for Disney. "Not only is it great for Disney, not only is it great for Marvel, but it's great for the industry as a whole. We've said it before but success begets success."

That the numbers came alongside an R-rating, Chambers added, was "nothing short of phenomenal."

The Walt Disney Studios release arrived at a pivotal time for an industry grappling with box office returns that continue to run at a double-digit deficit from last year. Disney has played a vital role in the summer season, releasing the top movies in May ("Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes"), June ("Inside Out 2") and now July.

The success is also an important moment for Marvel Studios, which has had several high-profile disappointments lately; Most notably in "The Marvels" which opened to an MCU low of \$47 million last November.

Superheroes have been struggling even more elsewhere: Sony, which reached a high point with "Spider-Man: No Way Home" (\$1.9 billion worldwide) had a new low with "Madame Web," which barely crossed \$100 million. Warner Bros. Discovery, after a string of disappointments with "The Flash" and "Blue Beetle," is currently working on restarting their DC universe under the supervision of James Gunn.

Marvel's savior came in the form of two characters who got their start outside of the MCU. Both Deadpool



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 58 of 71

and Wolverine, played by Ryan Reynolds and Hugh Jackman, existed previously under the 21st Century Fox banner which for two decades had the rights to Marvel characters like the "X-Men" and "Fantastic Four." That changed when Disney acquired the studio's film and TV assets in early 2019 and plans started to take shape of how all these characters would fit into Kevin Feige's MCU. In some cases, as with "Fantastic Four," Marvel Studios is starting fresh. With "Deadpool & Wolverine," directed by Shawn Levy, the stars were as crucial as their characters.

This weekend at the Comic-Con fan convention, Marvel also teased more to come, including Robert Downey Jr.'s return — not as Iron Man but as Doctor Doom.

Going into the weekend, \$200 million domestic seemed like a pipe dream. Analysts were more conservative with predictions in the \$160 million range. But from the start of the 3 p.m. Thursday preview screenings it was clear that "Deadpool & Wolverine" was more powerful. By the end of Friday, it had already made \$96 million and received a coveted A CinemaScore from audiences. Critics, too, have been mostly positive. Premium screens, including IMAX and other large formats, accounted for 18% of the total box office.

"Historically, PG-13 is the rating that will get you the biggest bang for your buck," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore.

"The old rule that R-rated movies have a box office ceiling was literally shattered this weekend. The edgier content actually enhances their appeal to older teens and young 20-somethings."

The top domestic opening of all time still firmly belongs to "Avengers: Endgame" with \$357.1 million. It's followed by "Spider-Man: No Way Home" (\$260.1 million), "Avengers: Infinity War" (\$257.6 million), "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" (\$247.9 million) and "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" (\$220 million).

Second place went to Universal's "Twisters," now in its second weekend with \$35.3 million. The stand-alone sequel to "Twister" has now earned \$154.9 million in North America. Universal also claimed third place with "Despicable Me 4," which added \$14.2 million in its fourth weekend, bringing its domestic total to nearly \$291 million.

"Inside Out 2" landed in fourth place with \$8.3 million. The Disney and Pixar release this week became the biggest animated release ever with \$613.4 million domestically (surpassing "Incredibles 2") and \$1.5 billion globally. It also passed "Top Gun: Maverick" to become the 12th highest-earning global release of all time.

It all adds up to one of the top 10 domestic grossing weekends of all time, with \$277.5 million, according to Comscore. That puts it ahead of this weekend last year, when "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer" helped propel the box office to over \$216.9 million in their second weekends.

"This is one for the history books," Dergarabedian said. "Hopefully this will carry over into August."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "Deadpool & Wolverine," \$205 million.
2. "Twisters," \$35.3 million.
3. "Despicable Me 4," \$14.2 million.
4. "Inside Out 2," \$8.3 million.
5. "Longlegs," \$6.8 million.
6. "A Quiet Place: Day One," \$3 million.
7. "Bad Boys: Ride or Die," \$1.3 million.
8. "The Fabulous Four," \$1 million.
9. "Fly Me to the Moon," \$750,000.
10. "Raayan," \$378,571.

## Paris officials are confident water quality will improve to let Olympians swim in the Seine

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The swimming portion of a practice run for the Olympic triathlon was canceled Sunday because of concerns about water quality in the Seine River, but Paris officials said they're confident that triathletes will be able to swim in the city's famed waterway during the actual events this coming week.

The men's triathlon is scheduled for Tuesday, while the women are set to compete Wednesday. The triathletes were supposed to have a chance to familiarize themselves with the course Sunday, but organizers said they nixed the swimming leg after representatives of World Triathlon, city and regional authorities, and other decision-makers met to discuss water quality tests.

The water quality in the Seine is closely linked to the weather. After heavy rain fell during Friday's Olympic opening ceremony and showers continued Saturday, the decision was made to cancel the test swim. With no more rain in the forecast, officials said they expect athletes will get the unique experience of racing in the Seine.

"We've seen what were the dynamics of the Seine over the past few weeks, and that's what makes us confident," Paris Deputy Mayor Antoine Guillou said at a news conference Sunday.

After similar rain events in the past, the water quality has returned to safe levels within 24 to 48 hours, he said.

Olympic organizers on Sunday echoed the confidence of Paris officials.

"We are still very confident with the weather forecast for the next 48 hours, the water quality will improve," Paris 2024 spokesperson Anne Descamps said. "Thanks to all the work that has been undertaken by our public stakeholders, we saw the water quality of the River Seine has improved significantly."

If concerns persist when race time arrives, the first backup plan is to postpone the triathlon events by a few days. If the water quality still isn't good enough, the swimming portion of the triathlon will be canceled and the athletes will only compete in the running and biking portions.

Triathletes, however, have expressed hope that the waters would be clean enough for them to swim in.

Swimming in the Seine has been banned for over a century, in large part due to poor water quality. Paris spent 1.4 billion euros (\$1.5 billion) to prepare the river ahead of the Olympics. In addition to the swimming portion of the triathlon, the marathon swimming event also is expected to be held in the river later in the Games.

Among the measures taken to improve the water quality was the construction of a giant basin to capture excess rainwater and keep wastewater from flowing into the river, renovating sewer infrastructure and upgrading wastewater treatment plants. Friday's rainfall did trigger the use of the basin built near the Austerlitz train station, causing it to become about 20% full, Guillou said.

Daily water quality tests in early June indicated unsafe levels of the fecal bacteria known as E. coli, followed by recent improvements. Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo took a dip in the river less than two weeks before Olympic events were set to start, fulfilling a promise to show that the long-polluted waterway was clean enough to host swimming competitions.

Tests by monitoring group Eau de Paris showed levels were acceptable as of Tuesday, the most current data posted online, but that was before the most recent rain.

Paris officials declined Sunday to release more current data, saying the governing bodies of each sport have the measurements and it's up to them to make decisions on whether events should go forward in the river.

World Triathlon officials said they share the belief of Paris and Olympic officials that the river will be suitable for swimming Tuesday and Wednesday.

Torin Koos, a spokesperson for World Aquatics, said they will "revisit the water quality of the Seine" closer to the marathon swimming events, which have their training day on Aug. 7.

## Blood tests for Alzheimer's may be coming to your doctor's office. Here's what to know

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — New blood tests could help doctors diagnose Alzheimer's disease faster and more accurately, researchers reported Sunday — but some appear to work far better than others.

It's tricky to tell if memory problems are caused by Alzheimer's. That requires confirming one of the disease's hallmark signs — buildup of a sticky protein called beta-amyloid — with a hard-to-get brain scan or uncomfortable spinal tap. Many patients instead are diagnosed based on symptoms and cognitive exams.

Labs have begun offering a variety of tests that can detect certain signs of Alzheimer's in blood. Scientists are excited by their potential but the tests aren't widely used yet because there's little data to guide doctors about which kind to order and when. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration hasn't formally approved any of them and there's little insurance coverage.

"What tests can we trust?" asked Dr. Suzanne Schindler, a neurologist at Washington University in St. Louis who's part of a research project examining that. While some are very accurate, "other tests are not much better than a flip of a coin."

Demand for earlier Alzheimer's diagnosis is increasing

More than 6 million people in the United States and millions more around the world have Alzheimer's, the most common form of dementia. Its telltale "biomarkers" are brain-clogging amyloid plaques and abnormal tau protein that leads to neuron-killing tangles.

New drugs, Leqembi and Kisunla, can modestly slow worsening symptoms by removing gunky amyloid from the brain. But they only work in the earliest stages of Alzheimer's and proving patients qualify in time can be difficult. Measuring amyloid in spinal fluid is invasive. A special PET scan to spot plaques is costly and getting an appointment can take months.

Even specialists can struggle to tell if Alzheimer's or something else is to blame for a patient's symptoms.

"I have patients not infrequently who I am convinced have Alzheimer's disease and I do testing and it's negative," Schindler said.

New study suggests blood tests for Alzheimer's can be simpler and faster

Blood tests so far have been used mostly in carefully controlled research settings. But a new study of about 1,200 patients in Sweden shows they also can work in the real-world bustle of doctors' offices — especially primary care doctors who see far more people with memory problems than specialists but have fewer tools to evaluate them.

In the study, patients who visited either a primary care doctor or a specialist for memory complaints got an initial diagnosis using traditional exams, gave blood for testing and were sent for a confirmatory spinal tap or brain scan.

Blood testing was far more accurate, Lund University researchers reported Sunday at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference in Philadelphia. The primary care doctors' initial diagnosis was 61% accurate and the specialists' 73% — but the blood test was 91% accurate, according to the findings, which also were published in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Which blood tests for Alzheimer's work best?

There's almost "a wild West" in the variety being offered, said Dr. John Hsiao of the National Institute on Aging. They measure different biomarkers, in different ways.

Doctors and researchers should only use blood tests proven to have a greater than 90% accuracy rate, said Alzheimer's Association chief science officer Maria Carrillo.

Today's tests most likely to meet that benchmark measure what's called p-tau217, Carrillo and Hsiao agreed. Schindler helped lead an unusual direct comparison of several kinds of blood tests, funded by the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health, that came to the same conclusion.

That type of test measures a form of tau that correlates with how much plaque buildup someone has, Schindler explained. A high level signals a strong likelihood the person has Alzheimer's while a low level indicates that's probably not the cause of memory loss.

Several companies are developing p-tau217 tests including ALZpath Inc., Roche, Eli Lilly and C2N Diagnostics, which supplied the version used in the Swedish study.

Who should use blood tests for Alzheimer's?

Only doctors can order them from labs. The Alzheimer's Association is working on guidelines and several companies plan to seek FDA approval, which would clarify proper use.

For now, Carrillo said doctors should use blood testing only in people with memory problems, after checking the accuracy of the type they order.

Especially for primary care physicians, "it really has great potential to help them in sorting out who to give a reassuring message and who to send on to memory specialists," said Dr. Sebastian Palmqvist of Lund University, who led the Swedish study with Lund's Dr. Oskar Hansson.

The tests aren't yet for people who don't have symptoms but worry about Alzheimer's in the family — unless it's part of enrollment in research studies, Schindler stressed.

That's partly because amyloid buildup can begin two decades before the first sign of memory problems, and so far there are no preventive steps other than basic advice to eat healthy, exercise and get enough sleep. But there are studies underway testing possible therapies for people at high risk of Alzheimer's, and some include blood testing.

## Firefighters helped by cooler weather battle blaze that has scorched area larger than Los Angeles

By NIC COURY, EUGENE GARCIA and OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ Associated Press

FOREST RANCH, Calif. (AP) — Thousands of firefighters battling a wildfire in Northern California received some help from the weather hours after it exploded in size, scorching an area greater than the size of Los Angeles. The blaze was one of several tearing through the western United States and Canada, fueled by wind and heat.

Cooler temperatures and an increase in humidity could help slow the Park Fire, the largest this year in California. Its intensity and dramatic spread led fire officials to make unwelcome comparisons to the monstrous Camp Fire, which burned out of control in nearby Paradise in 2018, killing 85 people and torching 11,000 homes.

Paradise again was near the danger zone on Saturday. The entire town was under an evacuation warning, one of several communities in Butte County. Evacuation orders were also issued in Plumas, Tehama and Shasta counties. An evacuation warning calls for people to prepare to leave and await instructions, while an evacuation order means to leave immediately.

Temperatures are expected to be cooler than average through the middle of next week, but "that doesn't mean that fires that are existing will go away," said Marc Chenard, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center in College Park, Maryland.

As of Saturday night, the Park Fire had scorched 547 square miles (1,416 square kilometers) and destroyed 134 structures since igniting Wednesday, when authorities said a man pushed a burning car into a gully in Chico and then fled. It was 10% contained and moving to the north and east near Chico.

The fire is larger than the city of Los Angeles, which covers about 469 square miles (1,214 square kilometers), and now ranks seventh on the list of the state's top 10 largest wildfires by acreage, Cal Fire said in a social media post.

Nearly 2,500 firefighters were battling the blaze, aided by 16 helicopters and numerous air tankers.

Jeremy Pierce, a Cal Fire operations section chief, said firefighters were taking advantage of the cooler weather while it lasts: "We're having great success today."

Susan Singleton and her husband packed their SUV with clothes, some food and their seven dogs and rushed to evacuate their home this week in Cohasset, a town of about 400 northeast of Chico. They have since learned that their house burned down.

"Everything else we had burned up, but getting them out, getting us out, was my priority," Singleton said Saturday, standing outside her SUV as her dogs rested. They have all been sleeping in the car outside a



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 62 of 71

Red Cross shelter at a church that does not allow animals, and Singleton, 59, said the next thing is to find a place for her pets to stretch out.

"We've got to have a place to land and stop doing this, because this is what's stressing me out," she said.

Overall more than 110 active fires covering 2,800 square miles (7,250 square kilometers) were burning in the U.S. as of Friday, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

In Southern California, a blaze in the Sequoia National Forest swept through the community of Havilah after burning more than 48 square miles (124 square kilometers) in less than three days. The town of 250 people had been under an evacuation order.

Crews were also making progress on a complex of fires in the Plumas National Forest near the California-Nevada line, Forest Service spokesperson Adrienne Freeman said. Traffic was backed up for miles near the border along the main highway linking Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

The most damage so far has been to the Canadian Rockies' Jasper National Park, where 25,000 people were forced to flee and the park's namesake, a World Heritage site, was devastated, with 358 of the town's 1,113 structures destroyed.

Late Friday in eastern Washington, crews stopped the progress of a fire near Tyler that destroyed three homes and five outbuildings, the Washington Department of Natural Resources said.

Two fires in eastern Oregon, the Durkee and Cow Valley blazes, burned about 660 square miles (1,709 square kilometers).

And in Idaho, homes, outbuildings and a commercial building were among structures lost in several communities including Juliaetta, which was evacuated Thursday. The grouping of blazes referred to as the Gwen Fire was estimated at 41 square miles (106 square kilometers) in size with no containment.

## Senate candidate Bernie Moreno campaigns as an outsider. His wealthy family is politically connected

By JULIE CARR SMYTH and JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Bernie Moreno was ready with a quip when a radio host in his native Colombia asked why he would want to trade his successful professional and personal life in Ohio for the toils of the U.S. Senate.

"Remember that my brother, Luis Alberto, just got out of politics — and there always needs to be a Moreno in politics," he replied in Spanish during the 2021 interview. "Otherwise, what happens in the world, right?"

The lighthearted response from Moreno, the Republican candidate for a U.S. Senate seat in Ohio, hints at his family's deep political connections in both the U.S. and Colombia. Moreno's father was a high government official in Colombia, while among his six siblings are a powerful former political adviser and diplomat and an important Colombian businessman.

Those ties, combined with his family's considerable wealth in their home country, are the backdrop to Moreno's journey from purchasing a single Cleveland car dealership to millionaire to becoming Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump's pick in the pivotal state.

"He comes from one of Colombia's well-off families, whose wealth goes back generations and whose members recycle through senior government jobs," said Philip Chicola, a retired U.S. diplomat who once worked closely with Moreno's older brother, Luis Alberto Moreno.

Moreno has pitched himself as a political outsider and immigrant whose family built its way out of rudimentary beginnings in the U.S. thanks to the American dream. In a statement, he pushed back against questions about his portrayal of his origin story and his parents' sacrifices as "disgraceful." He also sees it as disingenuous, describing his Democratic rival, third-term Sen. Sherrod Brown, as someone who "grew up with a silver spoon," a reference to the incumbent's status as the Yale-educated son and grandson of doctors. The Brown campaign declined comment.

Vicky Stockamore, Moreno's older sister, said in a statement provided by Moreno's campaign that she remembers her family's trajectory exactly as her brother describes it.

"It took great sacrifice for my parents to leave behind their home country and risk a new, unknown life

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 63 of 71

in a foreign place," she said. "My parents firmly believed that if you work hard, you'll be successful, and that's what the American Dream means to me."

Wealth and political connections are nothing new in the Senate, whose members include 15 former governors, one former presidential nominee and at least 10 people who are worth more than \$30 million.

Moreno built his fortune as a luxury car dealer and blockchain entrepreneur. If elected, he would be among the top eight wealthiest U.S. senators, based on the most recent data from the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics, with an estimated net worth between \$25.5 million and \$105.7 million.

Brown has a high-end net worth of about \$1 million, according to his 2022 Senate financial disclosure, the most recent available.

Moreno's business background and wealth helped him win over Trump during a contentious GOP primary this spring that included questions about a profile created with Moreno's email account on an adult website – a profile Moreno's lawyer said was created by a former intern as a prank. Moreno retained support from Trump during the controversy and was given a coveted speaking spot at the Republican National Convention earlier this month.

The Morenos started their family in the U.S., where Bernardo Sr. did his surgical residency at the University of Pennsylvania in the 1950s. Their first three children were born in Philadelphia but raised in Bogota, where Bernardo was a medical school dean, a leading advocate for Colombia's surgeons and then the equivalent of Colombian secretary of health.

Bernie, or Bernardo Jr., the youngest of seven children, was about five when the family moved to Florida. Before entering politics, Bernie Moreno described his mother as coming from "outsized privilege" and says she emigrated because she didn't want her children to be raised in "an entitled way." Bernie Moreno became a U.S. citizen at 18.

"Our family came to the United States because our mother wanted her children to grow up here," Stockmore said. "It would've been easier for us to stay in Colombia, which is why, at first, my father wanted to stay, but my mother was insistent. She knew that growing up in the United States would teach my siblings and I the value of hard work."

After attending American universities, Luis Alberto Moreno, their eldest child, returned to Colombia and served in several cabinet positions. As conservative President Andres Pastrana's ambassador to the U.S. starting in 1998, he helped win passage in Congress of what remains the largest ever U.S. aid package to Latin America. Among his legislative partners: then-Delaware Sen. Joe Biden, a sponsor of the \$1.6 billion counternarcotics strategy known as Plan Colombia.

Another Moreno brother, Roberto, is co-founder and president of Amarilo Construction, one of Colombia's largest builders of affordable housing. Before getting entangled in a corruption scandal and returning to the United States, Moreno's cousin Luis Andrade led Colombia's national infrastructure agency.

## **Kamala Harris has America focused on multiracial identity**

By TERRY TANG Associated Press

An election year that was already bitterly partisan has been completely upended by President Joe Biden's decision to drop out of the 2024 White House race and endorse Vice President Kamala Harris. But it's not just Harris's late entry that has electrified things. It's also the history to be made if the likely Democratic nominee becomes the first female president who is also multiracial.

The daughter of a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, both of whom immigrated to the U.S. during the Civil Rights Movement, Harris's historic presidential bid has again put a spotlight on American identity politics and the growing number of people who say they are multiracial.

Different countries divide people into categories depending on different national traditions. The U.S., with its slavery-molded history, divides people into Black or white, and nine million people identified as multiracial in 2010.

When Harris ran for vice president in 2020, 33.8 million people in the U.S. identified as being more than one race, according to the census.

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 64 of 71

Is Kamala Harris a Black woman?

Yes, she is. Her father Donald Jasper Harris, professor emeritus of economics at Stanford University, is a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Jamaica.

Harris has said her mother deliberately raised her and her sister as Black because she felt that was how the world would see them first. Harris chose to go to Howard University, a historically Black college and university in Washington, D.C. The vice president maintains close ties to her alma mater and to her sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

Being multiracial often means people try to categorize you and then treat you accordingly, said Dr. Kalya Castillo, a licensed psychologist in New York whose clinical interests include multiracial identity. She has met with patients who come for therapy for one issue and end up talking about being biracial or multiracial.

"What are the messages that you've received from your family along with the outside community and society?" said Castillo, who is Black and Japanese. "I have more people who are curious about exploring that now."

Every multiracial person's experience and how they choose to present themselves is different. There's also no predicting if someone decides to stereotype you. Castillo said many people assume she is a member of a "model minority" group because of her Japanese heritage.

Growing up, however, her Asian mother was afraid how Castillo would be treated if people saw her as Black.

"She knew a bit about the discrimination that African-Americans, Blacks, have faced in America," Castillo said.

Is Kamala Harris also an Indian American woman?

Yes, she is. Her late mother Shyamala Gopalan, a biomedical scientist at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, was born in India.

In 2020, there was criticism that Harris' Indian heritage wasn't given much media attention. Some wonder if that's happening again.

"What I've already seen just in the last 24 hours is folks who are advocates for the South Asian community arguing or complaining that her Asian-ness is getting erased," said Stephen Caliendo, co-founder and co-director of The Project on Race in Political Communication at North Central College.

"She's often referred to as a Black woman candidate," he said.

From the playground to the workplace, being multiracial can be fraught with challenges. In politics, it can spark attacks rooted in race instead of policy disagreements.

The day after Harris replaced Biden at the top of the Democratic presidential ticket, Tennessee Republican Rep. Tim Burchett called her a "DEI hire" in a TV interview. Conservatives have been using diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives to argue that unqualified people get hired solely based on their race and gender.

But, GOP leaders are now urging Republicans to lay off racist and sexist attacks for fear of alienating voters.

Andra Gillespie, a political science professor at Emory University who has written extensively about Black politicians and political mobilization and race, says both racist and sexist tropes were inevitable for Harris. GOP vice presidential nominee JD Vance said at a rally that Harris has been only "collecting a government paycheck for the last 20 years."

"Kamala Harris got something that was especially tailored to stereotypes about Black women," Gillespie said.

Even seemingly innocuous words from Harris sparked what seemed like racist arguments, Caliendo said. In her first statement after Biden's withdrawal, Harris announced "my intention is to earn and win this nomination." Very quickly, some Republican officials quipped that she hadn't earned anything.

"It plays into a stereotype of undeserving members of minority groups, particularly women, 'welfare queen' kind of thing," Caliendo said. "She feels entitled to something that she hasn't earned. She's using it as an inoculation against what she expects."

Conservatives have also butchered Harris' first name, igniting accusations of racism and disrespect. Kamala (KAH'-mah-lah) means lotus in Sanskrit. In his first rally since Harris became the likely Democratic

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 65 of 71

nominee, Republican Donald Trump repeatedly mispronounced her name as part of a broad attack on someone he called his "new victim to defeat." And at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee earlier this month, several speakers mispronounced the vice president's name.

Supporters say these mispronunciations are meant to stress her multiracial background as something scary.

"I think we should all expect more, from all corners of American civic life. But certainly we should expect more from the halls of Congress," said Chintan Patel, director of the political empowerment organization Indian American Impact.

Do some people think the vice president isn't Black or South Asian enough?

When Harris announced her presidential candidacy the first time in 2019, it didn't take long for people in the Black community to question if she was "Black enough." Some cited the fact she is Jamaican, not African American. Others pointed to her marriage to Doug Emhoff, who is white. Candidate Harris decided to address these accusations head-on by going on all-Black-hosted radio shows like "The Breakfast Club."

"I'm black, and I'm proud of being black," Harris, then a U.S. senator, said in the 2019 radio interview. "I was born black. I will die black, and I'm not going to make excuses for anybody because they don't understand."

Gillespie called such a criticism a tired trope, saying Harris has always rightfully been a part of the Black community and the Black experience. Gillespie also points to the two Zoom calls held this week by Black women and Black men, respectively, that raised nearly \$3 million.

"The idea that you could get tens of thousands of Black people on a call that was organized at the last minute to talk about how are we going to support this presidential candidate, I think speaks volumes to how black grassroots activists are going to organize in support of her and how they're organizing and embracing her as a member of their community," Gillespie said.

Patel also hit back at any notion that Harris is not "Indian enough." He praised her for supporting Indian American Impact when it launched in 2018.

"She has keynoted at many community events that we've had across the years, across the country. She's hosted Diwali event celebrations, Eid celebrations at her home," Patel said. "She's really showed up and championed South Asian American communities."

Why do racial labels continue to matter in American politics?

The idea that someone gets to be the authority on someone else's racial identity is reminiscent of the "one-drop rule." A legal principle rooted in slavery, the so-called rule determined anyone with even a drop of Black lineage could not own land or be free. To come up with criteria to validate a multiracial person is pointless and hurtful, Castillo said.

"Your legitimacy is questioned. It's like this superficial, arbitrary stuff that's like super performative," Castillo said.

What Castillo has found helpful is the "Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People," a list published by Maria Root, a renowned clinical psychologist who is also bi-racial, in 1993. The list contains a dozen declarations such as "I have the right not to justify my ethnic legitimacy." Castillo showed it to her daughter after the girl's friends argued "what percentage Asian she was versus Black."

"It's also been super-empowering for me," Castillo said. "It's something that I still am trying to practice and really be thoughtful about when I'm in situations in which I think people are trying to tell me who I am."

## Senate candidate Bernie Moreno campaigns as an outsider. His wealthy family is politically connected

By JULIE CARR SMYTH and JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Bernie Moreno was ready with a quip when a radio host in his native Colombia asked why he would want to trade his successful professional and personal life in Ohio for the toils of the U.S. Senate.

"Remember that my brother, Luis Alberto, just got out of politics — and there always needs to be a Moreno



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 66 of 71

in politics," he replied in Spanish during the 2021 interview. "Otherwise, what happens in the world, right?"

The lighthearted response from Moreno, the Republican nominee for Senate in Ohio, hints at his family's deep political connections in both the United States and Colombia. Those ties, combined with his family's considerable wealth in their home country, are the backdrop to Moreno's journey from owning a single Cleveland car dealership to becoming Donald Trump's pick in the pivotal state.

"He comes from one of Colombia's well-off families, whose wealth goes back generations and whose members recycle through senior government jobs," said Philip Chicola, a retired U.S. diplomat who once worked closely with Moreno's older brother.

Moreno has pitched himself as a political outsider and immigrant whose family built its way out of rudimentary beginnings in the U.S. thanks to the American dream. In a statement, he pushed back against questions about his portrayal of his origin story and his parents' sacrifices as "disgraceful." He also criticized his Democratic rival, third-term Sen. Sherrod Brown, as someone who "grew up with a silver spoon," a reference to the incumbent's status as the Yale-educated son and grandson of doctors.

Vicky Stockamore, Moreno's older sister, said in a statement provided by Moreno's campaign that she remembers her family's trajectory exactly as her brother describes it.

"It took great sacrifice for my parents to leave behind their home country and risk a new, unknown life in a foreign place," she said. "My parents firmly believed that if you work hard, you'll be successful, and that's what the American Dream means to me."

#### Wealth and connections in the Senate

Wealth and political connections are nothing new in the Senate, whose members include 15 former governors, one former presidential nominee and at least 10 people who are worth more than \$30 million.

Moreno built his fortune as a luxury car dealer and blockchain entrepreneur. If elected, he would be among the top eight wealthiest senators, based on the most recent data from the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics, with an estimated net worth between \$25.5 million and \$105.7 million.

Brown has a high-end net worth of about \$1 million, according to his 2022 Senate financial disclosure, the most recent available.

Moreno's business background and wealth helped him win over Trump during a contentious Senate primary that included questions about a profile created with Moreno's email account on an adult website — a profile that Moreno's lawyer said was created by a former intern as a prank. Moreno retained support from Trump and was given a coveted speaking spot at the Republican National Convention this month.

Moreno's parents started their family in the U.S., where Bernardo Sr. did his surgical residency at the University of Pennsylvania in the 1950s. Their first three children were born in Philadelphia but raised in Bogota, Colombia, where Bernardo was a medical school dean, a leading advocate for Colombia's surgeons and then a government leader.

Bernie, or Bernardo Jr., the youngest of seven children, was about age 5 when the family moved to Florida. Before he entered politics, Bernie Moreno described his mother as coming from "outsized privilege" and says she emigrated because she did not want her children to be raised in "an entitled way." Bernie Moreno became a U.S. citizen at 18.

"Our family came to the United States because our mother wanted her children to grow up here," Stockamore said. "It would've been easier for us to stay in Colombia, which is why, at first, my father wanted to stay, but my mother was insistent. She knew that growing up in the United States would teach my siblings and I the value of hard work."

After attending American universities, their eldest child, Luis Alberto Moreno, served in several cabinet positions in Colombia. As conservative President Andres Pastrana's ambassador to the U.S. starting in 1998, he spearheaded passage in Congress of what remains the largest ever U.S. aid package to Latin America. Among his legislative partners: then-Democratic Sen. Joe Biden of Delaware, a sponsor of the \$1.6 billion counternarcotics strategy known as Plan Colombia.

"He was one of the most effective ambassadors in Washington at the time," said Chicola, the retired U.S. diplomat who worked closely with Luis Alberto Moreno to win congressional support for the aid. "He was very personable. Both Democrats and Republicans loved him."

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 67 of 71

Chicola, who immigrated to the U.S. as a teenager from Cuba and ran State Department policy on Colombia during the late 1990s, said Moreno never mentioned his brother Bernie, who is more than a decade younger, during their almost monthly breakfasts and other frequent meetings. But he called Bernie Moreno's immigrant origin tale a "gross exaggeration."

## Arriving in the United States

Stockamore said life was not easy when the Morenos first arrived in the U.S. She recalled the children going to the local flea market to sell trinkets to make extra money for the family and having to pay her own way through community college.

Many of Luis Alberto Moreno's connections in business stem from his time as president of the Washington-based Inter-American Development Bank, the largest source for long-term financing in Latin America and the Caribbean. During his tenure from 2005 to 2020, he oversaw the biggest capital increase in the international bank's history. But he also drew criticism from U.S. lawmakers for the way the bank, whose mission is to fight poverty in the region, lost nearly \$1 billion by plowing a large chunk of its cash reserves into mortgage-backed securities at a time Wall Street was fleeing toxic assets blamed for triggering the 2008 global financial crisis.

Another brother, Roberto Moreno, is co-founder and president of Amarilo Construction, one of Colombia's largest builders of affordable housing. The Moreno campaign said the brothers maintained clear legal and operational firewalls while Luis Alberto Moreno headed the IDB to avoid potential conflicts. But corporate records show at least some of IDB's funding going to banks that worked with Amarilo, and Bernie Moreno's financial disclosures indicate he is heavily invested in a U.S. affiliate of the company.

The IDB loaned or underwrote bonds totaling \$360 million to two private Colombian banks to promote affordable housing through its private-sector lending arm. One of the banks, Banco Davivienda, financed Amarilo's development of a Bogota apartment complex between 2019 and 2020, according to the mortgage lender's 2021 annual report. Meanwhile the other financial institution, Bancolombia, signed an alliance in 2020 with Amarilo and Yellowstone Capital Partners, a private equity firm the construction giant created in 2009 to source institutional investment. It has operations in both Colombia and the U.S.

According to Bernie Moreno's 2023 personal financial disclosure, he is a majority owner of a Yellowstone-associated parcel of land in Costa Rica worth between \$1 million and \$5 million. He also has invested between \$750,000 and \$1.5 million in two of Yellowstone's U.S. investment funds, one of which targets opportunities in the American housing market.

Luis Alberto Moreno's more recent activities include serving on the boards of The Dow Chemical Company, a major Brazilian bank and Mexico's largest Coca-Cola bottler. He also is managing director of Allen & Co., a New York-based investment bank that every summer hosts a dealmaking retreat in Sun Valley, Idaho, for the billionaire set and that has closed deals for companies ranging from Chewy.com and the New York Mets to Walmart and Facebook. The elder Moreno is also a member of the International Olympic Committee and sits on the Leadership Council of the World Economic Forum.

## Siblings and spouses

Bernie Moreno's siblings and their spouses have donated more than \$134,000 since 2021 to Bernie Moreno's two Senate runs, campaign finance records show. About half of that was returned after Moreno dropped out of the 2021 race.

Moreno's campaign also received \$2,900 in 2021 from Luis Andrade, his cousin. An American citizen, Andrade helped run consulting giant McKinsey & Company's business in Latin America for 25 years, before leaving the private sector in 2011 to lead a Colombian government agency tasked with courting private infrastructure investment.

Among the biggest investors in the highway upgrades he promoted was Brazil's Odebrecht, which in 2016 pleaded guilty in the U.S. to charges of paying \$788 million in bribes to officials across Latin America, including Colombia.

Although Andrade was never charged for taking bribes himself, he was accused of acting improperly in the awarding of an extension to a concession contract controlled by Odebrecht and a Colombian partner, Grupo AVAL. Last year, he was banned from holding office for 15 years as a result of an administrative

disciplinary proceeding, which is now being appealed. He also faces criminal charges.

Andrade maintains his innocence and has helped U.S. authorities untangle Odebrecht's web of corruption in Colombia. Among his advocates in Washington is former Sen. Connie Mack, R-Fla. He has accused Colombia's former attorney general, who previously served as counsel to Odebrecht's partner in Colombia, of retaliation after, as director of the infrastructure agency, he moved to cancel Odebrecht's contract without any compensation for some \$300 million in cost overrun claims once the scandal broke.

Moreno's daughter, Emily, is the spouse of Rep. Max Miller, R-Ohio, a former White House and campaign aide to Trump, and a sometime spokesperson for the Moreno family.

## **Mudslide kills 15 people near tourist site in China as rains from tropical storm Gaemi drench region**

By KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Fifteen people were killed after a mudslide hit a homestay house in a tourist area in southeastern China on Sunday as heavy rains from what remained of a tropical storm drenched the region, state media said.

Elsewhere in China, a delivery person on a scooter was killed Saturday after being hit by a falling tree in Shanghai, apparently because of storm-related winds, according to The Paper, a digital news outlet.

The deaths were the first in China that appear linked to Typhoon Gaemi, which weakened to a tropical storm after making landfall on Thursday. Before reaching China, the typhoon intensified monsoon rains in the Philippines, leaving at least 34 dead, and swept across the island of Taiwan, where the death toll has risen to 10, authorities said late Saturday.

The mudslide struck the homestay house after 8 a.m. and trapped 21 people in Yuelin, a village under the jurisdiction of Hengyang city in Hunan province, state broadcaster CCTV said in a series of online reports. About 30 centimeters (12 inches) of rain was recorded in the area over a 24-hour period.

Six injured people were rescued and taken to a hospital for treatment, the official Xinhua News Agency said. The media reports didn't say whether the injuries were serious.

The one-story house offered food and accommodation near Hengshan, a mountain in a scenic area where tourists come on weekends to escape the summer heat, a report by The Paper said. The scenic areas had been closed starting Sunday because of the rains until further notice, even before the mudslide.

The CCTV reports said the mudslide was triggered by water rushing down the mountains from the rains. They didn't mention Gaemi but the China Meteorological Administration said that heavy rain tied to the tropical storm hit southeastern parts of Hunan province on Saturday.

In Shanghai, a photo posted by The Paper showed a delivery scooter on its side mostly covered by leafy branches near the still-standing barren trunk of a tree. It said that winds from the storm were the suspected cause, and that the investigation was continuing.

The wide arc of the tropical storm also was bringing heavy rain about 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles) away to China's northeast.

The Linjiang city government in Jilin province posted a notice on social media asking residents living below the third floor to move to higher places on Sunday as the Yalu River, which forms the border with North Korea, rose above the warning level.

In neighboring Liaoning province, hundreds of chemical and mining companies suspended operations from Saturday as a precautionary measure and more than 30,000 people had been evacuated, the official Xinhua News Agency said. Nearly 40 trains were suspended through Thursday for safety reasons after steady rain in recent days created hazards and damaged tracks.

Two more people were reported dead in Taiwan, raising the death toll to 10, the island's Central News Agency said, quoting the emergency operation center. Two others were missing, and 895 people were injured.

The latest victims were a man found in a drainage ditch and another man who died in a car accident. More than 800 people remained in shelters in Taiwan as of Saturday night, and more than 5,000 house-

holds were without power.

The typhoon caused nearly 1.8 billion New Taiwan dollars (\$54.9 million) in damage to crops including bananas, guavas and pears; chicken and other livestock farming and oyster and other fisheries, the Central News Agency said, citing figures from the Ministry of Agriculture.

A cargo ship sunk off Taiwan's shore during the typhoon, killing the captain, while eight other ships ran aground.

## **Doug Emhoff would become the country's first first gentleman if Kamala Harris wins the presidency**

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When President Joe Biden dropped out of the presidential race and propelled Vice President Kamala Harris into a political vortex, her husband was far from the first to find out.

Doug Emhoff, in fact, was closer to the last.

At home in California, Emhoff had attended a Sunday morning SoulCycle class in West Hollywood and left his cellphone in the car while going for coffee and a chat with friends in a park.

When Biden's statement posted, Emhoff ultimately saw it on a borrowed phone, but he wasn't sure it was authentic at first and skipped to the end — initially missing the key part. When he finally retrieved his phone, it was "self-immolating with the amount of messages and calls," Emhoff said in an interview with The Associated Press.

And after he reached Harris, "First, it was kinda like, 'Where the ... were you?' Emhoff laughed, before recalling that he told his wife, "I love you, I'm proud of you, I'm here for you, I kinda know what to do."

'We haven't had time for the history'

Emhoff has demonstrated a flair for defining the role of the nation's first second gentleman over the past three-plus years. He would become the country's first first gentlemen if his wife, the likely Democratic nominee, wins in November.

In White House shorthand, Emhoff would elevate from SGOTUS — second gentleman of the United States — to FGOTUS.

He's already used to traveling the country championing his wife and the Biden administration's accomplishments. With her now pursuing the nomination, those efforts have quickly gone into overdrive.

"It happened so suddenly, the change," Emhoff said, "we haven't had time to really reflect on the history."

Emhoff, 59, has visited 37 states and 14 countries as second gentlemen. He's already been to four states just since Biden bowed out, and he'll be in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine from Monday to Wednesday.

"I've picked up a lot more events," Emhoff said, "and events are getting bigger."

He's leading a delegation to the Paris Olympics closing ceremonies and will headline a fundraiser there, taking first lady Jill Biden's place. The second gentleman is also filling in for Jill Biden, who is scaling back travel with her husband out of the race, at the upcoming fundraiser on Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts featuring former late-night host David Letterman.

Spreading Harris' campaign message

The vice president has built her early campaign around the theme of freedom, and Emhoff was one of the nascent campaign's first surrogates to trumpet that message last week when he visited an abortion clinic in the Washington suburbs — an event planned before Biden's announcement.

There, Emhoff decried an environment "where freedoms are taken away. Where autonomy is taken away. Where they're telling you that you can't read this book. They're telling you that you can't learn these facts. They're telling you that you can't vote."

In the interview, Emhoff said of his wife, "I have my own way of communicating things and my own way of trying to authentically talk about her and her positions."

He's also no stranger to Harris running for president, having campaigned for her when she ran unsuccessfully in 2020.



# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 70 of 71

"He's like a Swiss Army knife of whatever is necessary," said Deidre DeJear, who was Iowa chair for Harris' last campaign. "If he needed to hold something for her, he would hold something. He'll motivate the team, too. He'll come and put some fire under you, and use his dad voice if he has to."

DeJear recalled how Harris and Emhoff moved to her state for months in late 2019, and even had Thanksgiving dinner in Des Moines. When Harris was describing how she would make collards and joked that "bacon is a spice," Emhoff retorted that she had come up with an apt way to expand the campaign's "for the people" mantra.

"That could be our new campaign slogan: 'For the people. Bacon is a spice,'" he said then.

Today, though, Emhoff said he doesn't see many parallels between that first presidential primary bid and taking on Republican Donald Trump in November.

"She's been vice president for almost four years, she's been in the Oval Office, the Situation Room, she's been on the world stage," the second gentlemen said of Harris. "This is a Kamala Harris who is ready to lead us."

'Going to live openly as a Jew'

Emhoff is the first Jewish person to serve as the spouse of a nationally elected U.S. leader. He affixed mezuzahs on the doorposts of the vice president's residence, helped compile the first national strategy to combat antisemitism and has led White House Passover celebrations.

The second gentleman also attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the memorial at the Tree of Life campus in Pittsburgh, where 11 worshipers were killed by a gunman driven by hatred of Jews.

"I'm also going to live openly and proudly as a Jew and that will never change," Emhoff said. "I'm going to fight antisemitism and that's never going to change."

Trump, while addressing a Turning Point USA gathering in Florida on Friday night, claimed that Harris "doesn't like Jewish people."

Israel's war with Hamas in Gaza has divided many in the United States who might otherwise be more enthusiastic about voting Democratic this fall and led to pro-Palestinian demonstrations over Biden's strong backing of Israel.

Harris is aligned with Biden's policies but is trying to bridge the divide within the party by emphasizing Israel's right to defend itself while also focusing on alleviating Palestinian suffering.

The second gentlemen's adult daughter, Ella, drew criticism from some corners when she briefly posted on a personal social media account a fundraising link to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees. Israel has moved to ban the group, suggesting it supports terrorists, a charge that European leaders says is baseless.

Emhoff was born in Brooklyn, raised in New Jersey, graduated from California State University, Northridge, and attended law school at the University of Southern California. He gave up a lucrative position as an entertainment and intellectual property lawyer to avoid conflicts of interest once Harris became vice president, but served as a visiting law professor at Georgetown University after moving to Washington.

Emhoff and Harris met on a blind date in 2013 and married the following year. It was her first marriage and his second. Harris' stepchildren — Ella and her brother Cole Emhoff — are named for Ella Fitzgerald and John Coltrane. They were teenagers when their father remarried.

Republican vice presidential nominee JD Vance once criticized Harris and other Democratic leaders as a "bunch of childless cat ladies who are miserable," a quote that has resurfaced in the heat of the 2024 campaign. At an appearance for his wife in Wisconsin on Saturday, Emhoff did not mention Vance by name, but noted that Harris officiated at Cole's wedding and flew cross-country through the night to make it to Ella's graduation.

"From Day 1, she's been present, nurturing and fiercely protective of them," Emhoff said.

After he finally spoke with his wife on the Sunday when Biden bowed out of the race, Emhoff flew to Wilmington, Delaware, early the next morning and met her at what had been Biden campaign headquarters, helping to rally the staff of what was suddenly the Harris campaign.

"I got to see her for a minute or two and gave her a big hug," Emhoff said. "And they said, 'Well, sir, you need to jump out on that stage.'"

# Groton Daily Independent

Monday, July 29, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 035 ~ 71 of 71

## Today in History: July 29, USS Forrestal accident

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, July 29, the 211th day of 2024. There are 155 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On July 29, 1967, an accidental rocket launch on the deck of the supercarrier USS Forrestal in the Gulf of Tonkin resulted in a fire and explosions that killed 134 service members.

Also on this date:

In 1836, the newly-completed Arc de Triomphe was inaugurated in Paris.

In 1858, the United States and Japan signed the Harris Treaty, formalizing diplomatic relations and trading rights between the two countries.

In 1890, artist Vincent van Gogh, 37, died of an apparently self-inflicted gunshot wound in Auvers-sur-Oise, France.

In 1914, transcontinental telephone service in the U.S. became operational with the first test conversation between New York and San Francisco.

In 1921, Adolf Hitler became the leader of the National Socialist German Workers' (Nazi) Party.

In 1954, the first volume of JRR Tolkien's novel "The Lord of the Rings" ("The Fellowship of the Ring") was published.

In 1957, the International Atomic Energy Agency was established.

In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the National Aeronautics and Space Act, creating NASA.

In 1981, Britain's Prince Charles married Lady Diana Spencer in a glittering ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. (They divorced in 1996.)

In 1986, a federal jury in New York found that the National Football League had committed an antitrust violation against the rival United States Football League, but the jury ordered the NFL to pay token damages of just three dollars.

In 1994, abortion opponent Paul Hill shot and killed Dr. John Bayard Britton and Britton's escort, James H. Barrett, outside the Ladies Center clinic in Pensacola, Florida.

In 1999, a former day trader, apparently upset over stock losses, opened fire in two Atlanta brokerage offices, killing nine people and wounding 13 before shooting himself; authorities said Mark O. Barton had also killed his wife and two children.

In 2016, former suburban Chicago police officer Drew Peterson was given an additional 40 years in prison for trying to hire someone to kill the prosecutor who put him behind bars for killing his third wife.

In 2021, American Sunisa Lee won the gold medal in women's all-around gymnastics at the Tokyo Games; she was the fifth straight American woman to claim the Olympic title in the event.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Nancy Kassebaum-Baker is 92. Former Sen. Elizabeth H. Dole is 88. Artist Jenny Holzer is 74. Documentary filmmaker Ken Burns is 71. Style guru Tim Gunn is 71. Rock singer-musician Geddy Lee (Rush) is 71. Rock singer Patti Scialfa (Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band) is 71. Actor Alexandra Paul is 61. Country singer Martina McBride is 58. Actor Wil Wheaton is 52. R&B singer Wanya Morris (Boyz II Men) is 51. Actor Stephen Dorff is 51. Actor Josh Radnor is 50. Hip-hop DJ/music producer Danger Mouse is 47. NFL quarterback Dak Prescott is 31.