

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Monday, Aug. 12

Senior Menu: Hot pork sandwich, cucumber salad, baked beans, Herbert, fruit.

First day of boys golf practice

Storybook Land Theatre, 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., GHS Gym

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

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

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

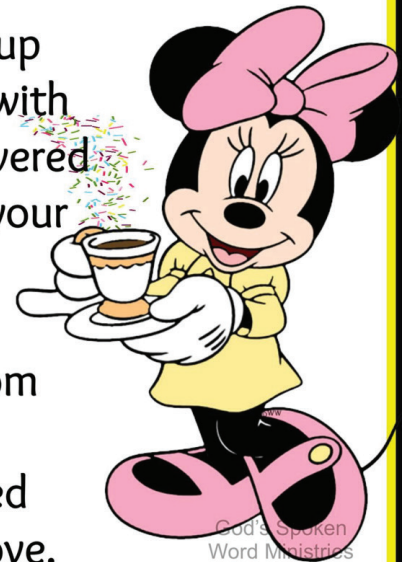
Groton Senior Citizens meet at the Community Center, 1 p.m.

Blood Drive at the Groton Community Center, 1:15 p.m. to 7 p.m.

## Monday Blessings

*Good Morning*

I pray your cup  
runneth over with  
favor, and answered  
prayers. May your  
day be  
filled with  
Blessings from  
above,  
and sprinkled  
with God's Love.



## Tuesday, Aug. 13

Senior Menu: Chicken cordon bleu hot dish, pears, whole wheat bread.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

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

## Wednesday, Aug. 14

Senior Menu: Beef stew, buttermilk biscuit, Waldorf salad, cookie.

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

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

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# 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.**

## Paris 2024 Olympics End

The US ended the Paris 2024 Olympics with 40 gold medals yesterday, tying China for the most gold but winning the overall medal count with 126, compared to China's 91. Japan trailed in third place with 20 gold medals.

The US' final gold came when the women's basketball team defeated France 67-66 in the game's final seconds—a record-breaking eighth straight gold medal for the women's team at the Olympics. The US men's basketball team also defeated France this weekend to win gold, with Steph Curry making eight three-pointers.

Separately, US Olympic gymnast Jordan Chiles was stripped of her bronze medal in the floor exercise yesterday. The Court of Arbitration for Sport determined Team USA had submitted an inquiry into Chiles' initial score past the deadline; the US disagreed and will appeal.

The 2028 Summer Olympics will be held in Los Angeles, California.

## Trump Campaign Hack

The Trump campaign confirmed its internal communications were hacked by "foreign sources" in June, following a report Friday from Microsoft saying Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps targeted a presidential campaign that month.

The timing coincides with former President Donald Trump's selection of JD Vance as his running mate, according to the campaign. Politico says it was contacted last month by an email account under the name "Robert," sharing authentic communications from a senior Trump campaign adviser. That included a 271-page dossier compiled on Vance, reportedly as part of vetting materials. The details on Vance—including past statements critical of Trump—were all publicly available information.

Microsoft had warned the Iranian-linked group used a spear phishing email to target a presidential campaign. The company also warned Iran is seeking to influence US elections via fake news sites and by impersonating activists.

## Famous Utah Arch Falls

The iconic sandstone "Double Arch" rock formation above Lake Powell in southern Utah collapsed Thursday, according to the National Park Service. Also known as "Hole in the Roof" and "Toilet Bowl," the site is distinct from the similarly named Double Arch in Arches National Park farther north. No injuries were reported.

Consisting of 190-million-year-old light-colored rock from the Navajo sandstone formation, the dramatic bowl-shaped arch with a circular opening was a popular tourist spot for boaters exploring the flooded Glen Canyon portion of Lake Powell along the Colorado River. Officials claimed the structure likely fell due to regular, rapid changes in water levels since the canyon was first flooded in the 1960s as part of the construction of the Glen Canyon Dam.

Smaller portions of the rock reportedly began falling into the water earlier in the day as swimmers and climbers enjoyed the formation before departing ahead of a storm. Boaters returning hours later saw the entire arch had collapsed.

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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

"Deadpool & Wolverine" tops \$1B at global box office, will soon top 2019's "Joker" as the highest-grossing R-rated film of all time.

Kevin Sullivan, professional wrestling legend, dies at age 74.

Bob Tischler, former head writer at "Saturday Night Live," dies at age 78.

Rapper Travis Scott released from police custody without charges in Paris after an alleged fight with a hotel bodyguard

## Science & Technology

Food and Drug Administration rejects psychedelic drug MDMA for treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder; decision comes two months after an advisory panel flagged inadequate clinical data and drugs' risks.

Scientists extract record-breaking 4,000-foot-long sample of green-marble-like rock from Earth's mantle—thick, interior layer making up over 80% of the planet—at the bottom of the Atlantic; finding offers insight into formation of Earth's crust.

NASA retires asteroid-hunting infrared telescope NEOWISE after 15 years in orbit; telescope is expected to safely burn up in atmosphere by the end of 2024.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher Friday (S&P 500 +0.5%, Dow +0.1%, Nasdaq +0.5%) ending markets' most volatile week this year amid concerns over the Federal Reserve's pace of rate cuts.

Former YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki dies at age 56 after battling lung cancer; formerly a landlord for Google's cofounders, Wojcicki later led development of AdSense, the technology enabling the company to broker advertisements with millions of customers,

Disney details plans for \$60B Experiences investment after disappointing Q3 earnings report; Florida's park to undergo broadest expansion in over 50 years, including "Villains Land" while cruise ship fleet to expand from nine to 13.

## Politics & World Affairs

Israeli airstrike kills more than 80 people at a school-turned-shelter, according to latest death toll; Israel also expands evacuation order in southern Gaza to include previously declared humanitarian zone, where it says militants fired rockets.

Half of Greece is under a red alert related to wildfires reported throughout the country, including a fast-moving wildfire near Athens.

City of Uvalde, Texas, releases records related to the 2022 Robb Elementary School shooting, including police body camera footage, 911 calls, and emergency communications in response to media lawsuit.

# NOW HIRING

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**We'll work around your schedule!**  
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## State Jr. Legion Baseball Tournament Locke-Karst Field, Groton

Sunday, August 11



Groton Jr....ion Post 39

6 ◀

**5th Place**



Clark Area Jr Legion 17U

2

FINAL



Martin Post 240 Jr

15 ◀

**3rd Place**



Beresford P...egion 2024

7

FINAL



Lennox Po...4 Jr Legion

5 ◀

**1st Place**



Winner/Colome Jr Legion

2

FINAL



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**Back: Head Coach Aaron Severson, Nick Groebelinghoff, Tristin McGannon, Braeden Fliehs, Jordan Schwan, Carter Simon, Ryder Schelle, Jarrett Erdmann, Karsten Fliehs, Nick Morris, Asst. Seth Erickson**

**Front: TC Schuster, Batboy Micah Krause, Gavin Englund, Lincoln Krause, Alex Abeln, Gavin Kroll, Kellen Antonsen** (Courtesy Photo)

## State Jr. Legion Tournament - Fifth Place Game

### **Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 Defeat Clark Area Jr Legion 17U**

**By GameChanger Media**

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 was triumphant over Clark Area Jr Legion 17U 6-2 on Sunday.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 got on the board in the first inning after Karsten Fliehs drew a walk, scoring one run.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 added to their early lead in the top of the second inning after Gavin Englund was struck by a pitch, and Carter Simon hit a sacrifice fly, each scoring one run.

Englund stepped on the hill first for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. The righty surrendered eight hits and two runs over six and two-thirds innings, striking out six and walking three. Jakob Steen started on the bump for Clark Area Jr Legion 17U. The righty surrendered zero hits and three runs over one and one-third innings, striking out one and walking five. When Steen walked off the mount, he had thrown 56 pitches compared to six for Groton's Englund.

Lincoln Krause and Nicholas Morris were a force together in the lineup, as they each collected one hit for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 while hitting back-to-back. Fliehs led the team with two runs batted in. Morris paced Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 with three walks. Overall, the team had patience at the plate, amassing 10 walks for the game. Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 turned one double play in the game.

Cooper Pommer, Will Hovde, and Michael Severson each collected two hits for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. Ky Vandersnick and Michael Severson each drove in one run for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39.

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## State Jr. Legion Tournament - Third Place Game

### **Martin Trounces Beresford Post 72**

**By GameChanger Media**

Martin Post 240 Jr easily dispatched Beresford Post 72 Jr. Legion 2024 on Sunday, 15-7.

Martin Post 240 Jr got on the board in the top of the first inning after Caysen Soderlin doubled, scoring one run, Gavin Risse singled, scoring one run, Lyle Noel was struck by a pitch, driving in a run, Ryker Heath was struck by a pitch, driving in a run, Kade Harris singled, scoring two runs, and Maddux Risse drew a walk, scoring one run.

Rush O'Neill pitched five and one-third innings in relief for Martin Post 240 Jr. The reliever allowed seven hits and five runs while, striking out five and walking five. Soderlin started the game for Martin Post 240 Jr. They surrendered one hit and two runs over one and two-thirds innings, striking out three and walking four. Tucker Martz started on the mound for Beresford Post 72 Jr. Legion 2024. They allowed four hits and seven runs (five earned) over three innings, striking out five and walking three.

Harris, the number nine hitter for Martin Post 240 Jr, led the way with three runs batted in. The outfielder went 2-for-4 on the day. Soderlin, Jordan Risse, and Harris each collected two hits for Martin Post 240 Jr. Risse led Martin Post 240 Jr with three walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, amassing 12 walks for the game.

Martz, Kasen Voss, Tommy Walth, Noah Schoenfelder, Alec Austin, Jax Fickbohm, Ashton Oberle, and Aiden Bobzin each collected one hit for Beresford Post 72 Jr. Legion 2024. Oberle led Beresford Post 72 Jr. Legion 2024 with two runs batted in. The leadoff hitter went 1-for-3 on the day. Beresford Post 72 Jr. Legion 2024 had a strong eye at the plate, piling up nine walks for the game. Oberle and Bobzin led the team with two bases on balls each. Beresford Post 72 Jr. Legion 2024 turned one double play in the game.

Next up for Martin Post 240 Jr is a game at Beresford Post 72 Jr. Legion 2024 on Sunday.

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## State Jr. Legion Tournament - Championship Game

### **Lennox Claims Victory Over Winner/Colome**

**By GameChanger Media**

Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion were victorious against Winner/Colome Jr Legion 5-2 on Sunday.

Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion were the first to get on the board in the first when Mason Reischl singled, scoring one run.

Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion added to their early lead in the top of the third inning after Reischl singled, and Winner/Colome Jr Legion committed an error, each scoring one run.

Jackson Anacker stepped on the hill first for Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion. They surrendered seven hits and two runs over seven innings, striking out seven and walking two. Dylan Brandis stepped on the bump first for Winner/Colome Jr Legion. The starting pitcher surrendered five hits and three runs (one earned) over four and two-thirds innings, striking out six and walking five.

Reischl and Talen Eich each collected three hits for Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion. Reischl and Eich each drove in one run for Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion. Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion had patience at the plate, amassing seven walks for the game. Jaxson Bittner, Nate Haar, and Cole Spieler led the team with two bases on balls each. Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion turned two double plays in the game. Lennox Post 174 Jr Legion didn't commit a single error in the field. Reischl had the most chances in the field with eight.

Quincy Phillips provided pop in the middle of the lineup, and led Winner/Colome Jr Legion with two runs batted in. The catcher went 1-for-3 on the day. Camdyn Anderson and Carter McKenzie were a force together in the lineup, as they each collected two hits for Winner/Colome Jr Legion.

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## Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 6 - 2 Clark Area Jr Legion 17U

📍 Away 📅 Sunday August 11, 2024

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

### BATTING

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
L Krause #2 (LF)	4	2	1	0	1	1
N Morris #17 (SS)	1	2	1	1	3	0
G Englund #18 (P)	1	1	0	1	0	0
C Simon #4 (3B)	2	0	0	1	2	0
J Erdmann #1 (CF)	3	0	0	0	1	2
K Fliehs #10 (C)	3	0	0	2	1	0
A Abeln #5 (2B)	2	0	0	0	1	0
K Anton... #7 (2B)	1	0	0	0	0	0
N Groebl... #12 (1B)	4	0	0	0	0	0
T McGan... #9 (RF)	2	1	0	0	1	2
Jordan... #20 (RF)	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>

**2B:** N Morris, **TB:** N Morris 2, L Krause, **SF:** C Simon, **CS:** N Groebelinghoff, **HBP:** N Morris, G Englund 4, **SB:** A Abeln, L Krause, K Fliehs, **LOB:** 13

### PITCHING

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
G Englu... #18	7.0	8	2	2	3	7	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>

**W:** G Englund, **P-S:** G Englund 105-65, **BF:** G Englund 31

Clark Area Jr Legion 17U	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
Cooper P... #11 (SS)	4	1	2	0	0	0
Ky Vand... #55 (RF)	4	0	0	1	0	0
Jakob Ste... #21 (P)	3	0	0	0	1	0
Michael... #13 (1B)	3	0	2	1	1	1
Watson G... #28 (C)	3	0	1	0	0	1
Josh Kan... #2 (3B)	2	0	1	0	1	0
Damian... #61 (CF)	3	0	0	0	0	2
Will Hovde #10 (2B)	3	1	2	0	0	0
Deegan M... #9 (LF)	3	0	0	0	0	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>

**2B:** Will Hovde, Michael Severson 2, **TB:** Cooper Pommer 2, Will Hovde 3, Michael Severson 4, Josh Kannegieter, Watson Grantham, **SB:** Josh Kannegieter, **LOB:** 8

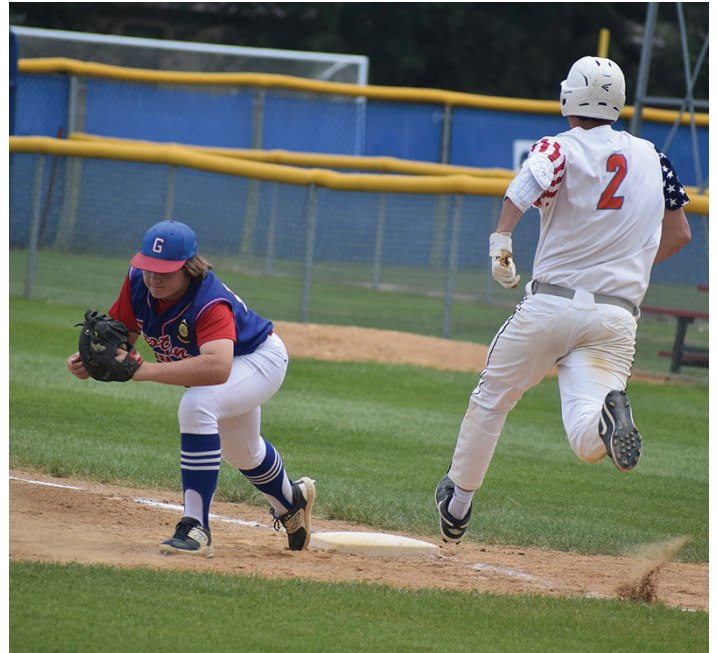
Clark Area Jr Legion 17U	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
Jakob S... #21	1.1	0	3	3	5	1	0
Josh Ka... #2	3.2	0	2	1	4	4	0
Will Ho... #10	2.0	2	1	0	1	1	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>

**L:** Josh Kannegieter, **P-S:** Will Hovde 35-24, Josh Kannegieter 67-31, Jakob Steen 56-27, **WP:** Jakob Steen, **HBP:** Josh Kannegieter 4, Jakob Steen, **BF:** Will Hovde 10, Josh Kannegieter 19, Jakob Steen 11



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**Left Photo: Carter Simon scooped up the ball at third base and got the out, then threw to Nicholas Groeblinghoff (photo above) in time to get the double play in the Clark game.**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)



**The Hamilton family was taking the tickets both Saturday and Sunday. Pictured are Duly, Wanda and Doug.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Coach Aaron Severson talks with his team during the huddle in between innings.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



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**Gavin Englund pitched all seven innings in the fifth place game, giving up eight hits, two runs, three walks and had seven strike-outs.**

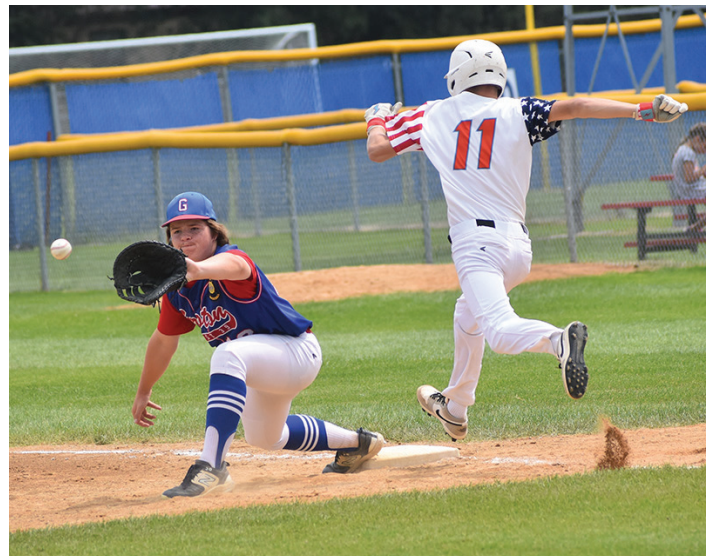
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Catch Karsten Fliehs (right) goes to the mound to talk with the pitcher, Gavin Englund.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Lincoln Krause slides safely into home to score for Groton.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Nicholas Groebelinghoff makes the catch and keeps his foot on the base to get the out at first base..** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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## Sturgis Rally Sunday Report

### Highway Patrol Sturgis Rally Daily Information

Compiled from 6 a.m. Saturday, Aug 03, 2024, to 6 a.m. Sunday August 11, 2024

Item	Sturgis	Rapid City District	District Total	Last Year to Date
DUI Arrests	134	21	155	120
Misd Drug Arrests	232	49	281	246
Felony Drug Arrests	135	28	163	155
Total Citations	954	501	1,455	1479
Total Warnings	3,004	1,441	4,445	4296
Cash Seized	40,804.00	30,700.00	71,504.00	\$2005.00
Vehicles Seized	0	1	1	0
For Drug Poss.	0	1	1	0
For Serial No.	0	0	0	0
Non-Injury Accidents	24	30	54	58
Injury Accidents	13	22	35	64
Fatal Accidents	1	2	3	5
# of Fatalities	1	2	3	5

**Fatal Crashes:** None

**Injury Crashes:**

On 09/10/24 at 3:43 p.m., a 2022 Honda Odyssey was traveling northbound on US Highway16 near mile marker 59. The driver of the Honda slowed for vehicles attempting to turn ahead, near a curve. A 2004 Harley Davidson FLHR Road King and a 2007 Harley Davidson FLHX Street Glide were traveling northbound behind the Honda. The drivers of the Harley Davidsons emerged from the curve and failed to see the Honda slowing. The driver of the Harley Davidson Road King lost control of his motorcycle while attempting to avoid the Honda and overturned, separating the driver from the motorcycle before it struck the rear of the Honda. The driver of the Harley Davidson Street Glide lost control and overturned while attempting to avoid the driver of the Harley Davidson Road King. The driver of the Honda was wearing a seatbelt and was uninjured. The drivers of the Harley Davidsons were wearing helmets and received minor injuries.

On 09/10/24 at 5:24 p.m., a 2004 Harley Davidson ElectraGlide was traveling northbound on Norris Peak Road near Hat Mountain Drive. A 2008 Victory Vision was traveling southbound on Norris Peak Road. The driver of the Harley Davidson ElectraGlide failed to negotiate a curve and entered the southbound lane, striking the Victory Vision. The passenger of the Victory Vision was wearing a helmet and received serious, non-life-threatening injuries. The driver of the Victory Vision was not wearing a helmet and received serious, non-life-threatening injuries. The driver and passenger of the Harley Davidson were not wearing helmets and received serious, non-life-threatening injuries.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating these crashes. All information released so far is only preliminary.

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

## **Lawrence County Fatal Crash**

What: Single vehicle fatal crash

Where: US Highway 385, mile marker 120, two miles south of Deadwood, SD

When: 12:09 p.m., Sunday, August 11, 2024

Vehicle 1: 2001 Harley Davidson FLHT

Driver 1: 68-year-old male, fatal injuries

Helmet Use: No

Lawrence County, S.D.- A 68-year-old man died in a single vehicle motorcycle crash Sunday afternoon two miles south of Deadwood, SD.

The name of the person involved has not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2001 Harley Davidson FLHT was traveling north on US 385 near mile marker 120. The driver failed to negotiate the curve and went off the road to the right. The vehicle tripped and rolled, separating the driver from the motorcycle. The driver passed away from his injuries. He was not wearing a helmet.

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.



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## Their Share: Farmers Feed 1,000 Fairgoers Lunch for 48 Cents

by Lura Roti for  
**South Dakota Farmers Union**

Fair food has a reputation for being fried and expensive. But if fairgoers only paid what the farmer and rancher received for the ingredients they raise, lunch would only cost about 48 cents or the "farmer's share."

The farmer's share is the price South Dakota Farmers Union will charge 1,000 fairgoers Saturday, Aug. 31 during Farmers Union Day at the South Dakota State Fair.

"Farmer's Share Lunch is an easy and tasty way to educate consumers about the profit challenges family farmers and ranchers face," explained Karla Hofhenke, Executive Director of South Dakota Farmers Union.

The premiere sponsor of the South Dakota State Fair and the state's largest agriculture organization, Farmers Union has hosted this meal since 2007. Reliance rancher David Reis appreciates the effort.

"I think the majority of consumers think most of the money they spend in the grocery store for food goes to farmers or ranchers and the truth is only a very small percentage does," explained Reis, who together with his wife, Brenda, and their grown children raise cattle. "The Farmer's Share Lunch helps explain the reason there are fewer and fewer family farmers and ranchers in South Dakota. Farm and ranch families need to be able to earn an income from the land to feed their own families."

The Farmer's Share Lunch also connects consumers with those who raise their food. Reis is among many South Dakota producers who will be at the fair to enjoy the meal – all proceeds of which go to Make-A-Wish.

"We go to the State Fair every year," Reis said. "It's a great place to connect with friends and watch our grandchildren who are showing livestock in 4-H and FFA shows and competing in rodeo events."

Like Reis, Doug Sombke has been attending the South Dakota State Fair since he was 8-years-old. "The State Fair is like a family reunion," explained the President of South Dakota Farmers Union and a fourth-generation Brown County farmer. "There are many friends we only get to see for the week of the fair. Because like many farm and ranch families, State Fair is our family vacation."

### Public Utilities Commission Forum

Sombke added that in addition to connecting with old friends, the State Fair is where many agriculture producers come to connect with information. As a grassroots policy organization, because property rights is a policy concern of members, during Farmers Union Day at the State Fair, the organization will provide agriculture producers and other property owners, with a chance to evaluate the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) candidates, during the PUC Forum at 1 p.m.



**SDFU President Doug Sombke with grandsons, Brooks and Braxten, at the South Dakota State Fair. South Dakota Farmers Union is the premiere sponsor of the 2024 South Dakota State Fair.** (SDFU photo)



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"PUC has always played an important role in state governance, but after passing Senate Bill 201, the PUC's power over local government has dramatically increased – as a result, property owners need to be informed when they go to the polls this fall," Sombke said.

Senate Bill 201 removed county control of property ordinances and gave it to the PUC.

"Now that County Commissioners are no longer in control, voters need to know if the PUC candidates will represent their property rights or special interests," Sombke said.

PUC candidates invited to the forum are Kristi Fiegen, Gideon Oakes and Forrest Willson.

## **Farm Safety is a Year-round Priority**

Farming and ranching are among the top three most dangerous careers. To help educate families on how to stay safe, throughout the fair South Dakota Farmers Union connects thousands of fairgoers with hands-on farm safety information with the help of their Farm Safety Trailer. Throughout the year, the Farm Safety Trailer visits schools and is available for other youth events.

The organization also hosts the Farm Safety Quiz Bowl Championships. The competition tests teens farm safety knowledge. The FFA teams to qualify for the Championships during the State FFA Convention are Canton, Milbank, Platte-Geddes and Wessington Springs.

"Farm safety is among the many ways Farmers Union supports South Dakotas farm and ranch families," Hofhenke explained. "Agriculture is the backbone of our state's economy. State Fair is an event that showcases the families who do the work."

Enjoy Farmers Union events at the Freedom Stage. For Aug. 31 gate tickets, members can reach out to Farmers Union at 605-554-3023 or [solerud@sdfu.org](mailto:solerud@sdfu.org). A limited number of tickets are available on a first come first serve basis. To learn more about how South Dakota Farmers Union supports farm and ranch families, visit [www.sdfu.org](http://www.sdfu.org).

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## Brand New Program at

15 N Main St. - Ste. 101  
Downtown Groton

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## Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

For the first time in 216 days, the Minnesota Vikings played an actual football game. It might have only been a preseason game, but it was still great to see the purple and gold back in action. And, truth be told, it was good this was only a preseason game because the Vikings had a ROUGH first half when the majority of the starters were still playing.

Sam Darnold, who will likely be the week 1 starter at quarterback, played one drive to start the game. He completed 4 of 8 passes for 59 yards, getting the team down to the Raiders' four-yard line but was unable to hit Jalen Nailor in the endzone on fourth down. The Raiders were unfazed by starting in the shadow of their own endzone, driving all the way to the Vikings' three-yard line in 13 plays. Facing a 3rd-and-goal, the Vikings' defense finally stepped up to get a stop, as rookie Dallas Turner got a sack and forced the Raiders to kick a field goal.

The Vikings' second offensive drive gave us our first chance to see the 10th overall pick, J.J. McCarthy. The drive started with three straight runs for 26 yards by Ty Chandler and suddenly it was the end of the first quarter. As the second quarter started, the Vikings had a false start, but McCarthy was able to hit Nailor for 18 yards to pick up a first down. Three plays later, however, McCarthy threw a poor pass intended for Trishton Jackson that was intercepted.

After a six-play touchdown drive by the Raiders, the Vikings' offense showed a little bit of life, needing only three plays to reach the endzone. The drive included a 24-yard pass from McCarthy to Jackson and a 48-yard scamper by Kene Nwangwu. The Raiders refused to give up the momentum, however, and used a nine-play, 74-yard drive for a touchdown to bring the score to 17-7. The Vikings' next drive covered 42 yards in eight plays but ended in a blocked field goal. The Raiders capitalized on the turnover with a field goal of their own, and the two teams went into the locker room for halftime with the Vikings losing 20-7.

The first half might have been disappointing, but the third quarter gave us all reasons to be excited. The Raiders got the ball to start the half but the Vikings' defense stood their ground and finally forced a Las Vegas punt. J.J. McCarthy came out, and on the fourth play of the Vikings' next drive, threw a beautiful deep ball to Trishton Jackson for a 45-yard touchdown. The Vikings forced another three-and-out, and six plays later McCarthy connected with Trent Sherfield for a 33-yard TD. Suddenly, the Vikings had a 21-20 lead!

At this point, McCarthy was replaced by Jaren Hall, and the offense had three straight three-and-outs. Luckily, the Raiders' offense was also inept, only managing a single field goal drive in the second half. After playing hot potato for most of the fourth quarter, the Vikings got the ball back with a minute and a half left on the clock and trailing by two points. Jaren Hall finally showed some spark, and aided by the Raiders inexplicably calling three timeouts, the Vikings were able to get into position to kick a game-winning field goal. With four seconds left in the game, the Vikings trotted out their rookie kicker, who calmly booted the ball through the uprights, giving the Vikings their first preseason win since 2019, 24-23.

It was a good day for the Vikings' rookies. J.J. McCarthy finished 11/17 for 188 yards, two touchdowns and an interception, while also adding 18 yards on two scrambles. Dallas Turner had a sack, a tackle for a loss, and two quarterback hits. Levi Drake Rodriguez and undrafted Bo Richter also had solid performances as well. Jalen Nailor might have locked down the WR3 spot this game – showing fans why the Vikings have been so high on him. If he can stay healthy, he should have a good season. Trishton Jackson and Trent Sherfield Sr. also made a strong case to make the final 53-man roster.

Looking ahead, the Vikings travel to Cleveland to take on the Browns in their 2nd preseason game. The game will be on Saturday, August 17 at 3:25 PM.



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## Historical Society Website and Project 150 Launch

The Brown County Historical Society (BCHS) has launched an innovative interactive website, accessible at <https://bchsofsd.com/>, designed to engage people from around the globe in sharing their stories, histories, and knowledge about the towns, ghost towns, events, and way of life in Brown County, South Dakota. This initiative, named Project 150: Celebrating and Discovering the History of Brown County, is part of the BCHS's preparations to honor and explore the rich history of the many towns within Brown County as they commemorate their 150th anniversaries. The website features a wealth of resources, including maps, photos, and historical accounts, and invites contributions from the public to enrich the collective understanding of Brown County's past. Spanning from 1881 to 2031, Project 150 aims to highlight the vibrant history of the county's people and communities, encouraging everyone to share their memories, photographs, and stories to create a comprehensive history of Brown County, South Dakota.

Sherri Rawstern, BCHS President, "There are currently many social media sites where people can share their stories or comment on others, but not all of them are searchable or have categories that conveniently group or filter like this site. The Project 150 site is completely searchable, by town, subject and date. Whatever your area of historical interest, you will be able to use filters to share it."

Brown County, South Dakota, boasts a rich and diverse history that transcends the pages of traditional history books. This interactive website serves as a dynamic platform where hundreds of individuals can contribute their unique perspectives and stories, weaving together the multifaceted tapestry of the county's past. From pioneer tales and indigenous heritage to modern-day milestones, this collective storytelling effort allows both residents and visitors to delve into the vibrant legacy of Brown County. By fostering community engagement and preserving personal narratives, the website not only celebrates the county's heritage but also ensures that the history of Brown County is continuously enriched and shared with future generations.

The BCHS website is user driven, and its success depends on people sharing information. Although there is no cost to view or submit a story/photo for inclusion on the site, anyone interested in posting information will be asked to complete a form providing your contact information to the BCHS. Details and guidelines are found at <https://bchsofsd.com>. The BCHS will review contributions to ensure no negative or derogatory comments are made.

The BCHS has created this site as a free resource for use by anyone interested in the history of Brown County, South Dakota. The cost to the Society to provide this service is \$100 per month. In order to keep this site going, the BCHS is seeking sponsors (businesses or individuals) to assist in this effort financially, which would ensure the site's availability long term.

Sponsors may choose to support one or multiple months and will receive credit on the homepage for the duration of their sponsorship. This is a great opportunity to show community pride, honor or memorialize a friend or relative, or provide an anonymous gift and allow the rich history of our area to be enjoyed world wide.

BCHS is dedicated to discovering, preserving, and sharing the rich history of Brown County and South Dakota. Our members play a crucial role in supporting the Dacotah Prairie Museum and its Foundation by providing both manpower and financial assistance for a variety of projects and initiatives. By joining BCHS, you become part of a passionate community committed to safeguarding our local heritage and educating future generations. Your membership will help ensure that the stories, artifacts, and traditions of our region are maintained and celebrated. Become a member today and make a meaningful contribution to the preservation of our shared history.

Your donation helps us share the Brown County story. To make a donation, become a member, contribute your story, or for more information please visit the website at <https://bchsofsd.com>.

## "Food Anaphylaxis"

True food allergic reactions cause anaphylaxis. Eating even a tiny bit of the allergenic food causes the patient to quickly develop symptoms that can include shortness of breath, hives, vomiting, diarrhea, throat swelling, passing out, and at times it can be fatal. The patient makes IgE allergy antibody to the food. The cause of the reactions can be determined by the history and confirmed by allergy skin or blood testing.

Once we know the allergenic food, a treatment plan can be put into place. The three parts are avoidance, epinephrine, and becoming less allergic.

Avoiding the allergenic food prevents reactions. Reading labels, thinking about ways of cross contamination, and ways people interact are all essential. An excellent resource on avoidance is the Food Allergy Research and Education national support group ([foodallergy.org](http://foodallergy.org)). Remember-the food has to be eaten to cause full anaphylaxis. Contact is only going to cause some hives.

Unfortunately, three percent of patients experience an accidental ingestion and have a reaction every year. Epinephrine injections can be life-saving. All patients need access to epinephrine. The epinephrine needs to be given right away and the patient taken promptly to the emergency room for ongoing care. No other medication changes the outcome of an anaphylactic reaction. We used to think antihistamines could help—they do not.

A new method of becoming less allergic was approved in March 2024. This product is Xolair (omalizumab). Xolair decreases the allergy antibody IgE so that when the patient has a small exposure to their allergen they are far less likely to have a bad anaphylaxis. It is not a cure. The treatment is a program of ongoing injections. They can help any kind of food allergy and works even if the patient has multiple food allergies.

Becoming less allergic has been done longer for peanut allergy using the product called Palforzia. It is a peanut powder that one takes daily to become less allergic. This means that you are far less likely to react to a small amount of peanut. It is not a cure. The Palforzia has a higher allergic reaction side effect profile than the Xolair does. Both therapies can make a huge impact for the right patients. Other treatments such as allergy drops don't help enough to be approved by the FDA and are not recommended.

Don't miss out--by working with your allergist, primary care physician, dietician, school, daycare center, and family, the food allergic patient can make the most of their life!

Mark E. Bubak, M.D. practicing in Sioux Falls, South Dakota is a contributing Prairie Doc® columnist and owner of Dakota Allergy and Asthma. He is certified by the American Board of Allergy and Immunology to care for adults and children with asthma and allergies. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org) and on Facebook and instagram featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show celebrating its 22nd season of health information based on science, built on trust, on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



By Mark E. Bubak, MD

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## EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: What are some "nature-based solutions" to fight climate change? -- J. M, via email

As we come to terms with the growing effects of climate change, many are turning to so-called nature-based solutions, which are holistic approaches that promote biodiversity and ecosystem preservation. Nature-based solutions harness natural processes to address problems rooted in climate change. Countries such as Africa, the Philippines and Brazil are at the forefront of using nature-based solutions.



**Mangroves are a lesser-known climate champion, essential for both carbon storage and coastal protection.** Credit: Pexels.com.

One example of a nature-based solution is reforestation, the replanting of native trees in areas subject to deforestation. Many initiatives are underway to restore regions of the world negatively affected by logging, burning and land use change. For example, Africa's Great Green Wall project aims to restore 100 million hectares of degraded land across 20 countries. This is already dramatically reducing atmospheric carbon in the region while providing a livelihood for local communities.

Mangroves are a lesser-known climate champion, essential for both carbon storage and coastal protection. The Zoological Society of London (ZSL) is spearheading an extensive mangrove restoration program in the Philippines where over 50 percent of mangrove habitats have been lost. By regrowing the mangroves that line the islands, they are building a defense against rising sea levels.

Urban greening is perhaps one of the most easily accessible nature-based solutions and is most advantageous in areas with little to no nature already present. An example of this is New York City's High Line, a 1.5-mile long track that was previously abandoned before it was transformed by Friends of the Highline who now use it as a community space to grow native plants, host events and display local art. Urban greening is highly effective, easy, and beneficial to communities.

Agroforestry integrates trees and native brush into farms to mimic natural environments. In Brazil's Atlantic Forest, agroforestry has been instrumental in transforming disrupted land into systems that support biodiversity without costing communities who rely on farms. Such projects promote soil health, improve water retention and support the spread of nutrients. Planting trees around farmland or introducing wild-flower seeds at the edge of a property can be instrumental in promoting ecosystem health.

Nature-based solutions may often be presented as large-scale initiatives, but such solutions are still vital and more accessible in a smaller context. Consider joining an ongoing project in your area, or starting one yourself, taking inspiration from other established programs around the world.

.. EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).





## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Former lieutenant governor launches 'Vote in Honor of a Veteran' initiative

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - AUGUST 11, 2024 11:45 AM

SIOUX FALLS — South Dakota's voter turnout has disappointed some military veterans.

Former Lt. Gov. Matt Michels, a veteran of the U.S. Navy, has launched an initiative urging citizens to "Vote in Honor of a Veteran," emphasizing the sacrifices made by military personnel to secure the democratic rights Americans enjoy.

"We always think that government is 'they,' but it really is 'us,'" Michels said. "We the people."

Michels shared the pitch Saturday to a crowd of about 100 during the annual USS South Dakota Day of Honor in Sioux Falls. He handed out sheets of stickers showcasing the slogan to fellow veterans, who were enthusiastic about the effort.

"It's really about voting in honor of America," said Douglas Starr, a World War II and Korean War veteran.

Michels said he will continue sharing the message with veteran organizations in the state.

The event, held on the second Saturday of August, commemorates the legacy of one of the most decorated ships of World War II. The ship gained fame for its actions in the European and Pacific theatres, participating in the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Michels told a story from the second battle of Guadalcanal, in which the ship's electrical system became disabled as the ship was under fire from Japanese destroyers. He said the ship received 27 hits, including a 14-inch shell that hit the rear turret. During this battle, 40 crew members were killed and 180 were wounded.

"Including 12-year-old Calvin Leon Graham, who had lied about his age to enlist," Michels said. "He was the youngest American to fight in the war."

Decommissioned in 1947, the battleship remains a symbol of service. The USS South Dakota Battleship Memorial, which hosted Saturday's event, includes a concrete outline of the ship's main deck and the actual anchor, propeller, a 16-inch gun barrel, mast and exhibit hall.



**Military veteran Ray Decker, left, speaks with former Lt. Gov. Matt Michels, right, as Howard Grinager looks on during a USS South Dakota memorial event in Sioux Falls on Aug. 10, 2024.**

(Joshua Haiar/South Dakota)

#### Proving authoritarians wrong

Michels described the heroism displayed during World War II as continuing a fight for freedom that began with the American Revolution.

"If we pause and think about how this nation was started," Michels said. "At the time, there were no nations



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that were governed by regular people. The monarchs, the kings and queens, those people were controlling everything. And those people thought regular people were too dumb. That they couldn't handle it."

Michels said it's every American's duty to prove authoritarians wrong.

"Everyone 18 and over can honor these women and men who have protected us, served us, given their lives," he said. "What is it we can do? We can vote."

Turnout across South Dakota in the June primary election was historically low at 17% — the lowest percentage since the state began combining presidential primaries with other primary races in 2000.

"It's offensive," Michels said.

For those who were too busy to vote, Michels has a message: "Yeah, well, a lot of people were too busy serving you and dying so that you would have this right."

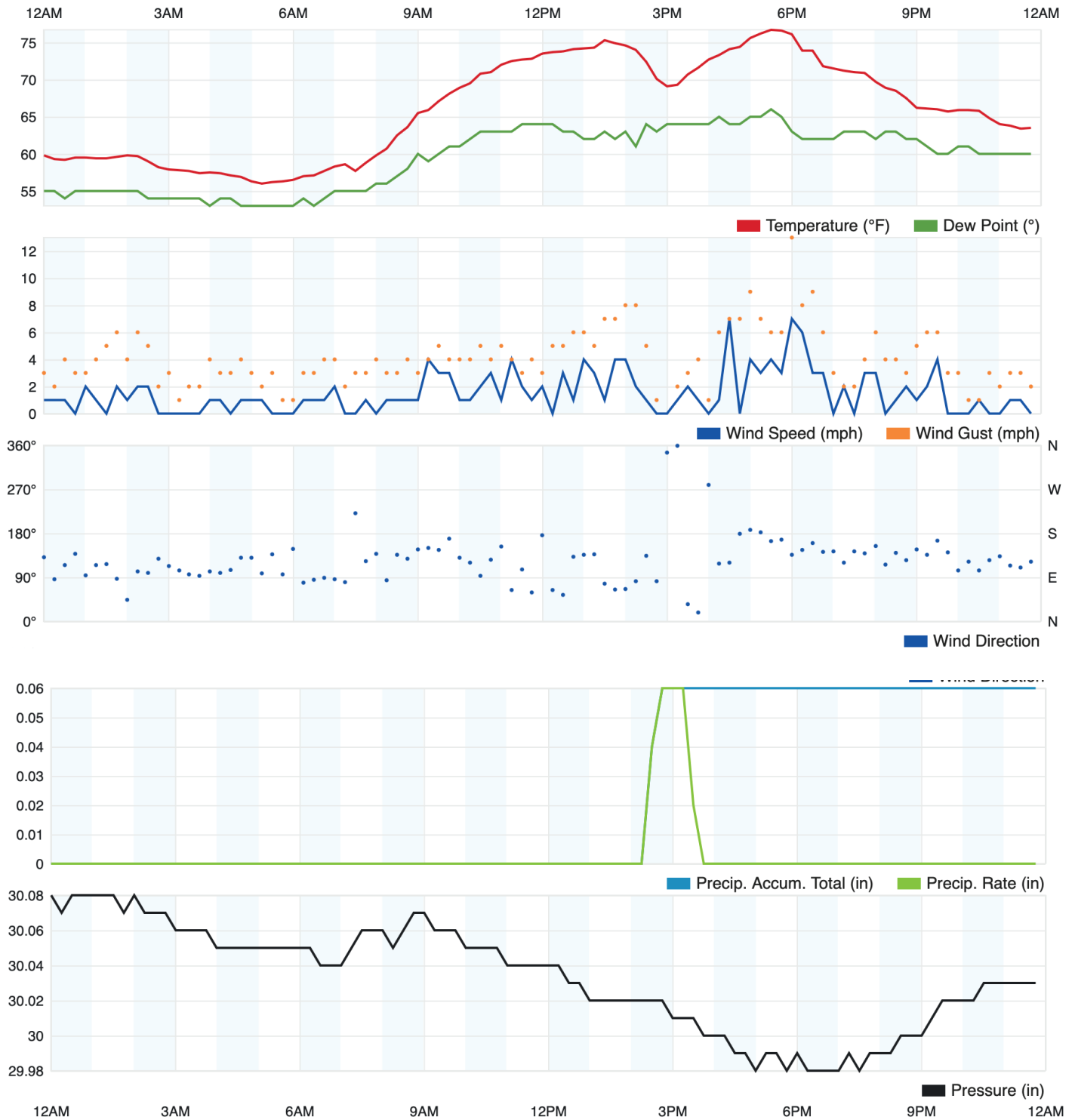
Michels served as lieutenant governor from 2011 to 2019 and served prior to that in the Legislature. He was born in Pierre, grew up in Vermillion, and graduated from the University of South Dakota. He worked as a nurse from 1981 to 1985 while earning a law degree at USD. He then attended Naval Justice School and became a U.S. Navy officer, serving as a lawyer. He was honorably discharged in 1989.

*Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



**High: 78 °F**

Patchy Fog  
then Mostly  
Sunny

Tonight



**Low: 58 °F**

Partly Cloudy

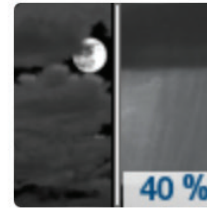
Tuesday



**High: 80 °F**

Mostly Sunny

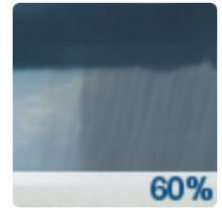
Tuesday Night



**Low: 64 °F**

Mostly Cloudy  
then Chance  
Showers

Wednesday



**High: 76 °F**

Showers  
Likely



## Seasonally Mild & Mostly Dry Today

August 12, 2024  
3:48 AM

**Tonight**



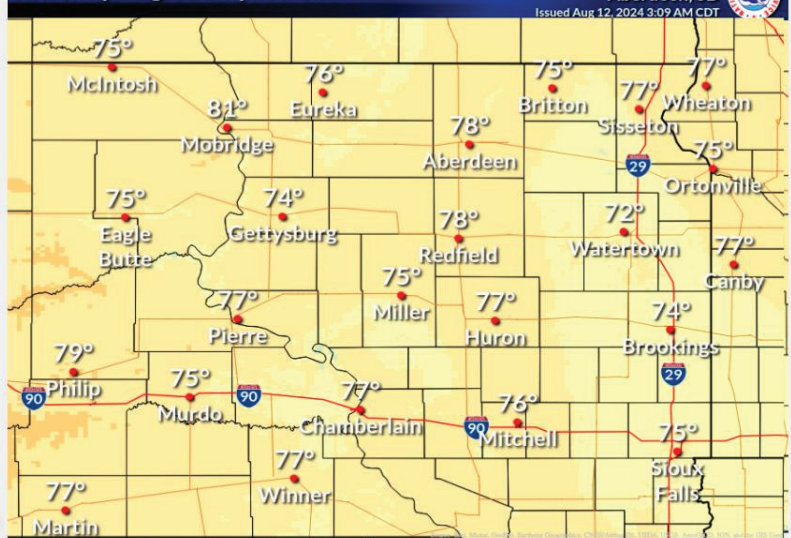
**Lows Around 60**

**Tuesday**



**Highs: Upper 70s Sisseton Hills  
Mid/Upper 80s West River**

### Monday High Temperatures



Check out your specific forecast at  
**[weather.gov/aberndeen](https://weather.gov/aberndeen)**



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

It will be mostly dry with seasonally mild temperatures to start the work week. Late Tuesday we could see some weather in western South Dakota, which will translate east making for a stormy middle of the work week.



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 77 °F at 5:33 PM**

**Low Temp: 56 °F at 5:09 AM**

**Wind: 13 mph at 5:56 PM**

**Precip: : 0.06**

Day length: 14 hours, 16 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 102 in 1933

Record Low: 40 in 1898

Average High: 84

Average Low: 58

Average Precip in Aug.: .87

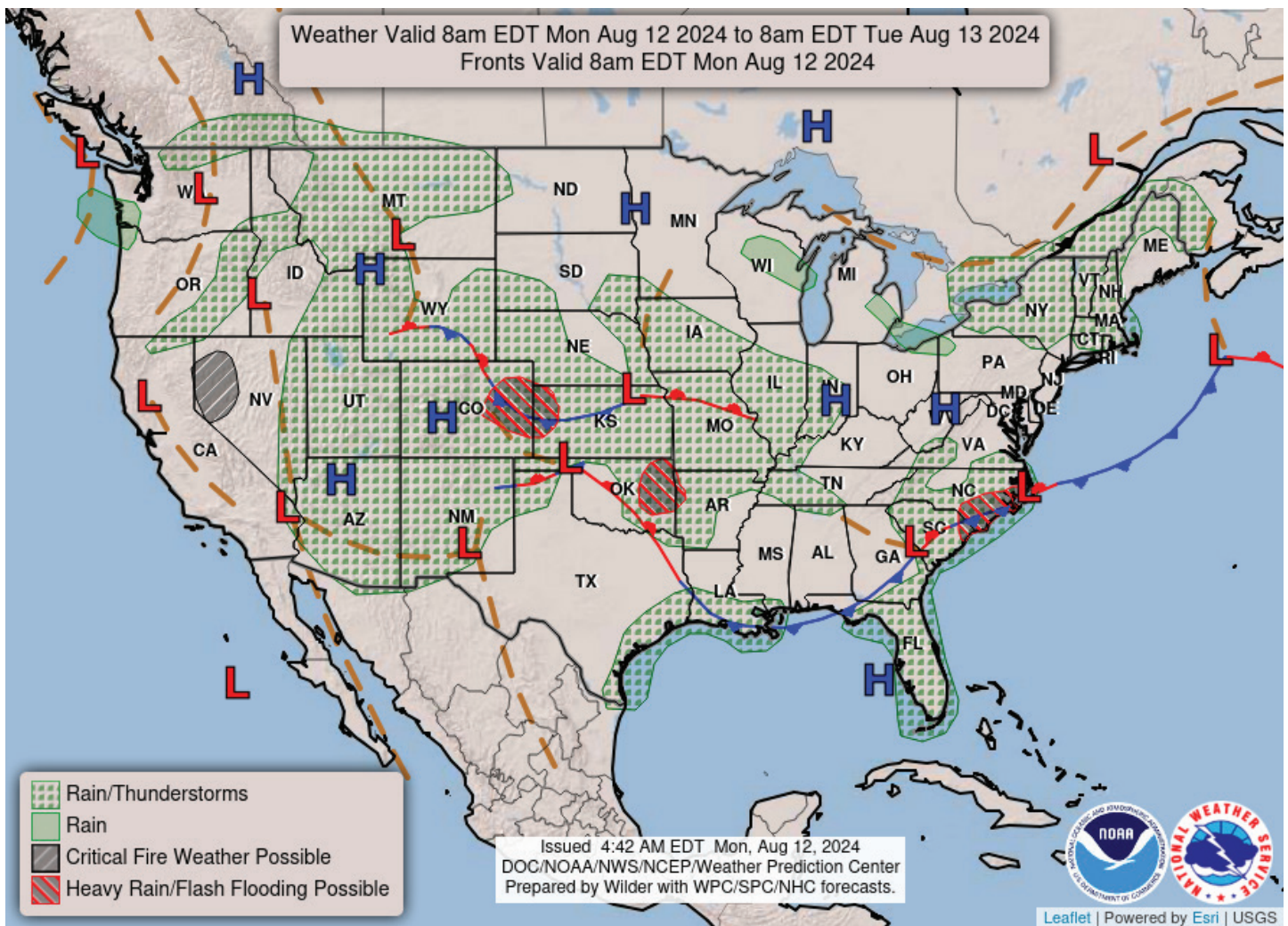
Precip to date in Aug.: 1.16

Average Precip to date: 14.97

Precip Year to Date: 16.05

Sunset Tonight: 8:45:36 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:30:14 am



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## Today in Weather History

August 12, 1986: Thunderstorms produced 2.53 inches of rain in twenty minutes in downtown Rapid City. The heavy rain caused street and basement flooding. Golf ball size hail fell in Zeona, in Perkins County, which covered the ground.

1752: The following is from the Journals of the Rev. Thomas Smith, and the Rev. Samuel Deane, published in 1849. "In the evening there was dismal thunder and lightning, and abundance of rain, and such a hurricane as was never the like in these parts of the world." This hurricane struck Portland, Maine.

1778 - A Rhode Island hurricane prevented an impending British-French sea battle, and caused extensive damage over southeast New England. (David Ludlum)

1933 - The temperature at Greenland Ranch in Death Valley, CA, hit 127 degrees to establish a U.S. record for the month of August. (The Weather Channel)

1936 - The temperature at Seymour, TX, hit 120 degrees to establish a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1955 - During the second week of August hurricanes Connie and Diane produced as much as 19 inches of rain in the northeastern U.S. forcing rivers from Virginia to Massachusetts into a high flood. Westfield MA was deluged with 18.15 inches of rain in 24 hours, and at Woonsocket RI the Blackstone River swelled from seventy feet in width to a mile and a half. Connecticut and the Delaware Valley were hardest hit. Total damage in New England was 800 million dollars, and flooding claimed 187 lives. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Early afternoon thunderstorms in Arizona produced 3.90 inches of rain in ninety minutes at Walnut National Monument (located east of Flagstaff), along with three inches of pea size hail, which had to be plowed off the roads. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Fifteen cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Youngstown OH reported twenty-six days of 90 degree weather for the year, a total equal to that for the entire decade of the 1970s. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms were scattered across nearly every state in the Union by late in the day. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Fergus Falls MN, and golf ball size hail and wind gusts to 60 mph at Black Creek WI. In the Chicago area, seven persons at a forest preserve in North Riverside were injured by lightning. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2004: Hurricane Charley was the third named storm and the second hurricane of the 2004 Atlantic hurricane season. Charley lasted from August 9 to August 15, and at its peak intensity, it attained 150 mph winds, making it a strong Category 4 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale. It made landfall in southwestern Florida at maximum strength, making it the most powerful hurricane to hit the United States since Hurricane Andrew struck Florida in 1992.

2005: A tornado strikes Wright, Wyoming, a coal-mining community, killing two and destroying 91 homes and damaging about 30 more in around the town.

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## GOING BUT NOT DOING

While waiting for a bus to take me to the hotel at the end of the day, I watched as several of them passed by my waiting area. As they sped to their destination there was a sign in each of them that read, "Out of Service."

Jesus, when speaking about the responsibilities of His disciples, said, "Look around you! Vast fields are ripening all around us and are ready now for the harvest."

Our Lord clearly addressed a pressing need in His day and a need that we, as His followers, face today: There are many in front us, to the side of us and behind us that are waiting to be brought into the Kingdom of God. It is not that He is unconcerned about them or that they are not willing to listen to His offer of salvation, it is because we, His followers, are out of service.

Sometimes we excuse ourselves from being His witnesses and "harvesters" by saying that our family members and friends are not ready to believe. Jesus, however, made it very clear that we are surrounded by an opportunity to be involved in a constant and continual harvest waiting to be reaped.

Each day we must remind ourselves that He will return and find us doing "something." What will it be? Will He find us involved in taking the Good News of the Gospel to those around us? When He appears will we be doing what He has called us to do or find us out of service?

Prayer: Lord, You have called us to labor with You in the "great harvest" by witnessing and winning the lost around us. Convict us of our lack of concern for the lost. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: You know the saying, "Four months between planting and harvest." But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest. John 4:34-38

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



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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition Subscription Form

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
08.09.24

12 32 38 40 57 21

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$435,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 17 Hrs 18  
DRAW: Mins 40 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.10.24

6 19 40 41 42 5

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$6,660,000**

NEXT 16 Hrs 33 Mins 40  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.11.24

3 5 10 12 32 16

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 16 Hrs 48 Mins 39  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.10.24

14 16 23 29 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$20,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 48  
DRAW: Mins 39 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.10.24

6 14 53 59 62 12

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 17 Mins 40  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.10.24

9 24 33 64 69 9

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$212,000,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 17 Mins 40  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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## 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

### **More Russians are urged to flee Ukraine's cross-border attack as the Kremlin scrambles to respond**

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — An official in the Kursk border region of Russia on Monday urged more residents to evacuate due to the “very tense situation” in the area, where Russian forces are still scrambling to respond to a surprise Ukrainian attack after almost a week of fierce fighting.

Russia's emergency authorities say more than 76,000 people have fled their homes in areas of Kursk, where Ukrainian troops and armor poured across the border on Aug. 6, reportedly driving as deep as 30 kilometers (19 miles) into Russia and sowing alarm.

Ukrainian forces swiftly rolled into the town of Sudzha about 10 kilometers (6 miles) over the border after launching the attack. They reportedly still hold the western part of the town, which is the site of an important natural gas transit station.

The Ukrainian operation is taking place under tight secrecy, and its goals — especially whether Kyiv's forces aim to hold territory or are staging a raid — remain unclear. The stunning maneuver that caught the Kremlin's forces unawares counters Russia's unrelenting effort in recent months to punch through Ukrainian defenses at selected points along the front line in eastern Ukraine.

Russia has seen previous incursions into its territory during the nearly 2 1/2-year war, but the foray into the Kursk region marked the largest attack on its soil since World War II, embarrassing President Vladimir Putin and constituting a milestone in the hostilities.

The advance has delivered a blow to Putin's efforts to pretend that life in Russia has largely remained unaffected by the war. State propaganda has tried to play down the attack, emphasizing the authorities' efforts to help residents of the region and seeking to distract attention from the military's failure to prepare for the attack and quickly repel it.

Retired Gen. Andrei Gurulev, a member of the lower house of the Russian parliament, criticized the military for failing to properly protect the border.

He noted that while the military has set up minefields in the border region, it has failed to deploy enough troops to block enemy raids.

“Regrettably, the group of forces protecting the border didn't have its own intelligence assets,” he said on his messaging app channel. “No one likes to see the truth in reports, everybody just wants to hear that all is good.”

Pasi Paroinen, an analyst with the Finland-based Black Bird Group open-source intelligence agency, which monitors the war, said the toughest phase of Ukraine's incursion is likely to begin now as Russian reserves enter the fray.

He said that “if the Ukrainians are going to advance any further from where they are now, it's going to be a tough battle, unlike the opening moments of this offensive.”

Ukraine's progress on Russian territory “is challenging the operational and strategic assumptions” of the Kremlin's forces, according to the Institute for the Study of War.

It could compel Russia to deploy more military assets to the long border between the two countries, the Washington-based think tank said in an assessment late Sunday.

It described the Russian forces responding to the incursion as “hastily assembled and disparate.”

In other developments:

— The International Atomic Energy Agency said a fire near Ukraine's Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant had “no impact” on the facility's safety.

Radiation levels are unchanged at what is one of the 10 biggest nuclear plants in the world, the U.N. body said.

Russia and Ukraine blamed each other for the blaze at a cooling tower outside the plant's perimeter, and

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the IAEA chief said late Sunday that the war continues to imperil the Zaporizhzhia facility.

"These reckless attacks endanger nuclear safety at the plant and increase the risk of a nuclear accident. They must stop now," Rafael Mariano Grossi said.

## Israel-Hamas war latest: Leaders of France, Germany and Britain endorse calls for cease-fire in Gaza

By The Associated Press undefined

The leaders of France, Germany and Britain have endorsed calls for a cease-fire in Gaza, the return of scores of hostages held by Hamas and the "unfettered" delivery of humanitarian aid.

In a joint statement released Monday, they endorsed the latest push by the United States, Qatar and Egypt to broker an agreement to end the 10-month-old Israel-Hamas war.

The mediators have spent months trying to get the sides to agree to a three-phase plan in which Hamas would release the remaining hostages captured in its Oct. 7 attack in exchange for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel and Israel would withdraw from Gaza.

"The fighting must end now, and all hostages still detained by Hamas must be released. The people of Gaza need urgent and unfettered delivery and distribution of aid," the statement said.

It was signed by French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

The statement also called on Iran and its allies to refrain from any retaliatory attacks that would further escalate regional tensions after the killing of two senior militants last month in Beirut and Tehran.

Here's the latest:

Hospital in southern Gaza receives bodies of 13 people, including a child

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — A hospital in southern Gaza has received the bodies of 13 people, including a child, who were killed in apparent Israeli strikes on Khan Younis.

The strikes came as Israel has ordered mass evacuations from Gaza's second-largest city in recent days, saying Palestinian militants are firing rockets from the area. Khan Younis suffered heavy destruction earlier this year during a major Israeli air and ground offensive.

An Associated Press journalist counted the bodies at the nearby Nasser Hospital and saw funeral prayers being held Monday morning.

The dead include a medic who was killed along with two others in a strike on his house, according to the hospital records.

The Israeli military says it tries to avoid harming civilians and accuses Hamas of putting them in danger by fighting in dense, residential areas. The army rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children.

The Vatican calls on Iran to embrace 'dialogue, negotiation and peace'

VATICAN CITY — The Vatican is calling on Iran to refrain "in every way" from fueling the Middle East conflict.

The Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, appealed instead for Tehran to embrace dialogue, negotiation and peace, during a phone call Monday with Iran's new president, Masoud Pezeshkian.

Parolin spoke with Pezeshkian to congratulate him on the start of his mandate.

According to a Vatican statement, Parolin "expressed the Holy See's serious concern about what is happening in the Middle East, reiterating the need to avoid in any way the widening of the very serious conflict underway and preferring instead dialogue, negotiation and peace."

The Vatican has tried to maintain a balanced position on Israel's war in Gaza. It has reaffirmed Israel's right to defend itself and called for Hamas to release hostages taken Oct. 7 but has also demanded a cease-fire, an end to the conflict and for humanitarian aid to reach Palestinians.

Airlines extend flight suspensions to and from the Middle East

BERLIN — Airlines are extending their suspension of flights to and from the Middle East as the region

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braces for possible Iranian and Hezbollah retaliation for the targeted killing of two top militants that were blamed on Israel.

The Lufthansa Group, which also includes Austrian Airlines and Swiss, said Monday that its flights to Tel Aviv, Tehran, Beirut, Amman and Irbil will remain suspended until Aug. 21 inclusive. Its airlines also won't use Iranian and Iraqi airspace during that time.

The company said passengers who aren't affected by the current suspensions but have flights to or from those five destinations booked through Aug. 31 can cancel without cost.

Air France said it has extended the suspension of its flights between Paris-Charles de Gaulle and Beirut — as well as flights to and from Lebanon operated by its subsidiary, Transavia France — until Wednesday Aug. 14 due to the security situation in Lebanon.

Air France suspended flights to Beirut on July 29 after a rocket attack on the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights killed 12 children and teens.

Irish low-cost carrier Ryanair said it was canceling all flights to and from Ben Gurion International Airport outside of Tel Aviv from Tuesday until Aug. 26 "due to operational restrictions which are beyond our control." The airline did not elaborate.

EU's top diplomat criticizes Israeli minister's call to cut off aid to Gaza

JERUSALEM — The European Union's top diplomat says it should consider sanctions in response to calls by Israel's far-right national security minister to cut off aid to Gaza.

Writing on the X platform late Sunday, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said the recent remarks by Itamar Ben-Gvir constitute "incitement to war crimes," adding that "sanctions must be on our EU agenda."

In his own post on X and in media interviews, Ben-Gvir said that instead of agreeing to a potential cease-fire deal, Israel should block the entry of humanitarian aid and fuel to Gaza until Hamas releases all of the hostages, saying that doing so would bring the militant group to its knees.

Ben-Gvir has also repeatedly called for Israel to permanently reoccupy Gaza, rebuild Jewish settlements there and encourage the "voluntary" migration of Palestinians from the territory.

Ben-Gvir, a key member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's governing coalition, has threatened to bring the government down if it makes too many concessions in the cease-fire talks.

Borrell called on Israel's government to "unequivocally distance itself from these incitements to commit war crimes," and to engage "in good faith" with cease-fire negotiations mediated by the United States, Qatar and Egypt.

The United States and Israel's other Western allies have repeatedly voiced concern about the killing of Palestinian civilians and Israeli restrictions on aid operations in the 10-month-old war. But they continue to provide vital military and diplomatic support for its offensive.

## Mini farm animals are adorable. There's also a growing demand for them

By HALELUYA HADERO and ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — They're adorable. They require less food and space. And without much coaxing, they might help cut the grass.

Americans are showing more interest in owning miniature cows, goats, donkeys and other diminutive farm animals, a trend driven by hobby farmers looking for easy-to-manage livestock and homesteaders who like the idea of having a petite pig or a scaled-down sheep as a pet.

Animal breeders say sales of pint-sized farm animals have grown since the COVID-19 pandemic, when more people started raising backyard chickens for fun and fresh eggs. Like chickens, mini farm animals appeal to beginners who want the taste of a rugged, agrarian lifestyle.

"A lot of people don't have access to several acres, but if they have a one-acre plot, they can keep a miniature cow or a few miniature goats," said Brian Gazda, who has a small farm in East Idaho and with two friends runs a YouTube channel called "Hobby Farm Guys."

Platforms like YouTube and especially TikTok have played an important part in raising the profile of mini



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farm animals, said Martin Fysh, a vice president and divisional merchandising manager for rural lifestyle retailer Tractor Supply Co. On any given day, TikTok users put cuteness on parade with videos of tiny blue-eyed goats and 2-foot-tall horses that have received millions of views.

But Fysh thinks the trend also reflects a natural progression among customers who started out with a backyard hen coop. In response, Tractor Supply has increased its selection of treats for both mini and regular sized pigs, and goats.

"They're seen as part of the extended family," Fysh said.

While some people buy small farm animals as a stepping stone to owning larger ones, others don't have a desire to expand. Some owners of mini farm animals turn their hobbies into side hustles by giving visitor tours, breeding animals, and blogging about their pastoral experiences.

But before playing Old Macdonald, newcomers need to weigh the pros and cons, Gazda and other hobby farmers said.

Among the challenges: the volatile nature of prices for each of the types of miniature farm animals. And while they're cute, they can also be aggressive.

## Mini goats

Brittany Snow, a high school English teacher in Florida, owns several small-sized Nigerian Dwarf goats. She realized her dream of living on a farm three years ago when her family moved from the Jacksonville suburb of Middleburg to nearby Melrose.

She said her family wanted to be more self-sustaining after the pandemic and now sources its own dairy products, such as milk and eggs. She sticks mostly with miniature animals because they're easier to take care of and cost less to acquire and feed.

Snow, 32, started with four Nigerian Dwarf goats: Buttercup, Snowflake, Cash and Peanut. The herd has since expanded to include Pancake and Oreo, the kids of Peanut and Buttercup.

Snow purchased the Nigerian Dwarf goats intending to milk them to make cheese and products like soap and lotion. But that hasn't worked yet because goats only lactate after giving birth, and Buttercup only recently had her kids.

"The past few years have been a learning curve," Snow said.

Mini goats are one of the most popular entry-level mini animals. In the past year, animal breeders have registered roughly 8,330 mini goats with the Miniature Dairy Goat Association. That's a 73% jump from the 12 months before July 2021, when registrations — mostly for newborn females sought after by breeders — totaled just under 4,800, said Angelia Alden, a business operations manager for the North Carolina-based organization.

Many folks who favor mini goats, however, tend to sell them after a few years because it can be challenging — and expensive — to take care of them, Alden said. Rising animal feed costs can be a headache, as is finding adequate medical care due to a shortage of farm veterinarians.

## Mini cows and donkeys

A farm animal can be both mini and mighty. Some of the four-legged stars on social media are furry cows that can weigh 500-600 pounds. The smallest, which stand under 3 feet in height, are known as micro-miniatures. The slightly bigger miniatures can be as tall as 42 inches, according to Allie Sine, a TikTok creator with more than 737,000 followers on the platform. Videos showcasing some of her mini cows have gotten millions of views.

Sine, 28, launched her own business breeding and selling mini cows in 2020 after reselling a sick mini cow that cost \$350 for \$5,000. Last year, she sold about 190 calves through her Missouri-based business, Mini Moos LLC. The calves were roughly split between mini and micromini cows that can cost from \$2,000 to \$30,000.

"Everything just skyrocketed," Sine said.

Others report a similar boom.

Kim Furches, who owns a farm with her husband, Ken, in West Jefferson, North Carolina, said the couple bred mini donkeys for about 20 years and currently own dozens of Mediterranean miniature donkeys,

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which stand 3 feet high or less.

Before the pandemic, they would typically sell about eight donkeys per year and count themselves lucky if they received a couple thousand dollars for one. They now sell about 20 per year. The last mini donkey sold for \$7,500, Furches said. There are some she's only willing to sell for \$9,000 or more.

New types of 'exotic' pets

Though some of their customers plan to breed and sell mini animals, too, many say many are just looking for "exotic" pets, Gazda said.

Earlier this year, Jamie Campion, 41, and her husband, Jeff, bought two Southdown Babydoll sheep from a local breeder near their home in Thompson's Station, Tennessee, for \$800 each. The couple moved from Chicago in March 2022 after the pandemic made them rethink their lifestyle. They now live in a modern-style farmhouse built on an acre of land.

While Biscuit and Buttermilk have become excellent lawn trimmers, Jamie Campion said she considers the animals — which weigh about 70 pounds and stand 20 inches high — similar to a dog or a cat.

"They eat the grass, so we don't even have to buy food (for the sheep) on a weekly basis," said Campion who discovered the breed on Instagram.

But it can be challenging.

One time, Jeff Campion tried to inject one of the sheep with oral medication to treat parasites, and it tore his bicep.

But more often, the sheep give her joy. Jamie Campion recalls taking them out on a snowy day for a walk in the neighborhood, without a leash.

"They just followed right behind," she said. "There's a whole sheep and shepherd relationship."

Miniature animals offer therapy

Others see therapeutic benefits.

Lisa Moad, who is the owner of Seven Oaks Farm in Hamilton, Ohio and has 13 miniature horses and three regular size horses, operates a therapy farm for older people and others. She also used to take the miniature horses to local nursing homes and hospitals. But since the pandemic, she has spent most of her time conducting online training for those looking to embrace the same mission.

That includes teaching horses how to maneuver around wheelchairs and into elevators of hospitals. She said her miniature versions still weigh 175 to 200 pounds, though much less than her regular horses, which range from 1,200 to 1,500 pounds.

"They're docile, but they can get frightened easily," she said. "You just can't walk into a hospital with a horse."

## The US government wants to make it easier for you to click the 'unsubscribe' button

By FATIMA HUSSEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the name of consumer protection, a slew of U.S. federal agencies are working to make it easier for Americans to click the unsubscribe button for unwanted memberships and recurring payment services.

A broad new government initiative, dubbed "Time Is Money," includes a rollout of new regulations and the promise of more for industries spanning from healthcare and fitness memberships to media subscriptions.

"The administration is cracking down on all the ways that companies, through paperwork, hold times and general aggravation waste people's money and waste people's time and really hold onto their money," Neera Tanden, White House domestic policy adviser, told reporters Friday in advance of the announcement.

"Essentially in all of these practices, companies are delaying services to you or really trying to make it so difficult for you to cancel the service that they get to hold onto your money for longer and longer," Tanden said. "These seemingly small inconveniences don't happen by accident — they have huge financial consequences."

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Efforts being rolled out Monday include a new Federal Communications Commission inquiry into whether to impose requirements on communications companies that would make it as easy to cancel a subscription or service as it was to sign up for one.

The Federal Trade Commission in March 2023 initiated "click to cancel" rulemaking requiring companies to let customers end subscriptions as easily as they started them.

Also Monday, the heads of the departments of Labor and of Health and Human Services are asking health insurance companies and group health plans to make improvements to customer interactions with their health coverage, and "in the coming months will identify additional opportunities to improve consumers' interactions with the health care system," according to a White House summary.

The government already has launched several initiatives aimed at improving the consumer experience. In October, the FTC announced a proposed rule to ban hidden and bogus junk fees, which can mask the total cost of concert tickets, hotel rooms and utility bills.

In April, the Transportation Department finalized rules that would require airlines to automatically issue cash refunds for things like delayed flights and to better disclose fees for baggage or reservation cancellations.

The department also has taken actions against individual companies accused of misleading customers.

In June, the Justice Department, referred by the FTC, filed a lawsuit against software maker Adobe and two of its executives, Maninder Sawhney and David Wadhvani, for allegedly pushing consumers toward the firm's "annual paid monthly" subscription without properly disclosing that canceling the plan in the first year could cost hundreds of dollars.

Dana Rao, Adobe's general counsel, said in an emailed statement that Adobe disagrees with the lawsuit's characterization of its business and "we will refute the FTC's claims in court."

"The early termination fees equate to minimal impact to our revenue, accounting for less than half a percent of our total revenue globally, but is an important part of our ability to offer customers a choice in plans that balance cost and commitment," Rao said.

Some business advocates are not a fan of the government's overall efforts to crack down on junk fees.

Sean Heather, senior vice president of international regulatory affairs and antitrust at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said the initiative is "nothing more than an attempt to micromanage businesses' pricing structures, often undermining businesses' ability to give consumers options at different price points."

## Major wildfire rages out of control on fringes of Greek capital; hundreds of firefighters deployed

By ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Hundreds of firefighters backed by more than 30 water-dropping planes were battling a major forest fire raging out of control Monday on the northern fringes of the Greek capital. Hospitals and residential suburbs were evacuated.

Fanned by strong winds, the blaze that began Sunday afternoon was racing through pine forests left tinder-dry by repeated heat waves this summer, coming on the heels of a particularly dry winter. June and July of this year were the hottest months ever recorded in Greece, which also recorded its warmest winter ever.

By mid-morning, the fire was burning mainly on two separate fronts, with some parts in particularly difficult to reach areas on a mountain northeast of Athens, Climate Crisis and Civil Protection Minister Vassilis Kikilias said.

Authorities were faced with "an exceptionally dangerous fire, which we have been fighting for more than 20 hours under dramatic circumstances," Kikilias said. Conditions were exacerbated by the very strong winds.

The fire department said 670 firefighters, backed by 27 teams specially trained to tackle wildfires and including more than 80 members of the armed forces, were battling the flames. More than 180 vehicles were deployed, while more than 30 water-dropping planes and helicopters were providing aerial support.

A children's hospital, a military hospital, two monasteries and a children's home were evacuated early



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Monday, while evacuation orders were issued for more than a dozen areas, including Marathon and several Athens suburbs. Three Athens hospitals were put on heightened alert to treat any potential injuries.

Local media reported two firefighters were slightly injured, while several civilians were treated in hospitals for smoke inhalation.

Authorities in nearby suburbs opened at least one sports hall and were providing rooms in hotels for evacuees, while yet more suburbs were put on standby for potential evacuation.

The police department said 380 police officers with 77 vehicles, 36 motorcycles, three buses and four vans were assisting in the evacuations, and by mid-morning had helped move more than 250 people away from the path of the flames. It posted a video on its social media channels showing police officers carrying elderly people in their arms out of houses and to waiting vehicles, against a backdrop of a night sky turned red from the flames and smoke.

The fire sent a blanket of smoke over the center of the Greek capital, darkening the sky. It began Sunday afternoon about 35 kilometers (22 miles) from Athens and was fanned by strong winds that quickly drove it out of control. Authorities said flames at times towered more than 25 meters (80 feet) in height.

Meteorologists and government officials have warned of the heightened danger of wildfires because of weather conditions from Sunday until Thursday, with half of the country placed under a "red alert" for wildfire hazard.

The fire department appealed to residents to follow evacuation orders issued by civil protection, with authorities noting that some people who had refused to leave their homes later became trapped and required rescuing, endangering the lives of firefighters.

"During the night, the wind remained strong, creating dangerous situations," said Col. Vassileios Vathrakogiannis, the fire department's spokesman. "Unfortunately their intensity is expected to increase in the coming hours, and in any case citizens of the areas where the fire is developing must follow the directions of authorities."

Wildfires are frequent in Greece during its hot, dry summers, but authorities have said climate change is fueling bigger and more frequent blazes. In 2018, a massive fire swept through the seaside town of Mati, east of Athens, trapping people in their homes and on roads as they tried to flee in their cars. More than 100 people died, including some who drowned trying to swim away from the flames.

Last year, wildfires in Greece killed more than 20 people, including 18 migrants who became trapped by the flames as they trekked through a forest in northeastern Greece and were caught by a massive fire that burned for more than two weeks.

## How a young generation in Bangladesh forced out the leader who ruled for much of their lives

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL Associated Press

Jannatul Prome hopes to leave Bangladesh to study more or possibly find a job after she finishes her university degree, frustrated by a system that she says doesn't reward merit and offers little opportunity for young people.

"We have very limited scope here," said the 21-year-old, who would have left sooner if her family had enough money to pay tuition at foreign universities for both her and her older brother at the same time.

But recent events have given her hope that one day she might be able to return to a transformed Bangladesh. After 15 years in power, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country last week — chased out by young protesters, Prome among them, who say they are fed up with the way her increasingly autocratic rule has stifled dissent, favored the elite and widened inequalities.

Students initially poured into Bangladesh's streets in June, demanding an end to rules that set aside up to 30% of government jobs for the descendants of veterans who fought the country's 1971 war of independence from Pakistan. Protesters said that benefitted supporters of Hasina's Awami League, which led that struggle — and who already were part of the elite. The quota and others for marginalized groups meant only 44% of civil service jobs were awarded based on merit.

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That such jobs lay at the center of the movement was no coincidence: They are some of the most stable and best paying in a country where the economy has boomed in recent years but not created enough solid, professional jobs for its well-educated middle class.

And that Generation Z led this uprising was also not surprising: Young people like Prome are among the most frustrated with and affected by the lack of opportunity in Bangladesh — and at the same time, they are not beholden to the old taboos and narratives that the quota system reflected.

Their willingness to break with the past was clear when Hasina belittled their demands in mid-July, asking who, if not the freedom fighters, should be awarded government jobs.

"Who will? The grandchildren of Razakars?" Hasina retorted, using a deeply offensive word that refers to those who collaborated with Pakistan to quell Bangladesh's independence struggle.

But the student protesters wore the word as a badge of honor. They marched on Dhaka University's campus, chanting: "Who are you? Who am I? Razakar. Who said this? The dictator."

The following day, protesters were killed during clashes with security forces — only galvanizing the demonstrations, which widened into a broader uprising against Hasina's rule.

Sabrina Karim, a professor at Cornell University who studies political violence and Bangladesh's military history, said that many of the protesters are so young they cannot remember a time before Hasina was prime minister.

They were raised, like the generations before them, on stories of the independence struggle — with Hasina's family at the center. Her father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was the first leader of independent Bangladesh and was later assassinated in a military coup. But Karim said this narrative had much less meaning for the young protesters than it did for their grandparents.

"It doesn't resonate with them anymore as much as it did (before). And they want something new," she said.

For Nourin Sultana Toma, a 22-year-old student at Dhaka University, Hasina's equating of the student protesters with traitors made her realize the gulf between what the youth wanted and what the government could provide.

She said that she had watched as Bangladesh was slowly lulled into becoming immune to inequities and people lost hope that things would ever get better.

The country's longest-serving prime minister prided herself on boosting per capita income and transforming Bangladesh's economy into a global competitor — fields turned into garment factories and bumpy roads became winding highways. But Toma said she saw the daily struggle of people trying to buy essentials or find work and her demand for basic rights met with insults and violence.

"It could no longer be tolerated," Toma said.

This economic distress was keenly felt by Bangladesh's youth. Eighteen million young people — in a country of 170 million — are not working or in school, according to Chietigj Bajpae, who researches South Asia at the Chatham House think tank. And after the pandemic, private sector jobs became even more scarce.

Many young people try to study abroad or move overseas upon graduation in the hopes of finding decent work, decimating the middle class and resulting in brain drain.

"The class differences have widened," said Jannatun Nahar Ankan, a 28-year-old who works with a non-profit in Dhaka and who joined the protests.

Despite these problems, none of the protesters seems to have truly believed that their movement would be able to dethrone Hasina.

Rafij Khan, 24, was on the streets preparing to join a protest when he heard Hasina had resigned and fled the country. He called home repeatedly to see if he could verify the news.

He said that in the last days of the demonstrations, people from all classes, religions and professions had joined the students on the streets. Now they hugged one another, while others just sat on the ground in disbelief.

"I can't describe the joy that people felt that day," he said.

Some of that euphoria is wearing off now as the enormity of the task ahead sinks in. Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus became the interim leader Thursday and he, along with a Cabinet that includes two student

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protest leaders, will have to restore peace, build institutions and prepare the country for fresh elections. The hope for most students is that the interim government gets time to repair Bangladesh's institutions while a new political party — not led by the old political dynasties — is formed.

"If you asked me to vote in elections right now, I don't know who I'd vote for," said Khan. "We don't want to replace one dictatorship with another."

The young people who took to the streets have often been described as the "I hate politics" generation. But Azaher Uddin Anik, a 26-year-old digital security specialist and recent graduate of Dhaka University, said that is a misnomer.

They don't hate all politics — just the divisive politics in Bangladesh.

And although he admits that the structural reforms that the country now needs may be more difficult than removing the prime minister, he is hopeful for the first time in a while.

"My last experience is telling me that the impossible can happen," he said. "And maybe it isn't too late."

## Americans' refusal to keep paying higher prices may be dealing a final blow to US inflation spike

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The great inflation spike of the past three years is nearly spent — and economists credit American consumers for helping slay it.

Some of America's largest companies, from Amazon to Disney to Yum Brands, say their customers are increasingly seeking cheaper alternative products and services, searching for bargains or just avoiding items they deem too expensive. Consumers aren't cutting back enough to cause an economic downturn. Rather, economists say, they appear to be returning to pre-pandemic norms, when most companies felt they couldn't raise prices very much without losing business.

"While inflation is down, prices are still high, and I think consumers have gotten to the point where they're just not accepting it," Tom Barkin, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, said last week at a conference of business economists. "And that's what you want: The solution to high prices is high prices."

A more price-sensitive consumer helps explain why inflation has appeared to be steadily falling toward the Federal Reserve's 2% target, ending a period of painfully high prices that strained many people's budgets and darkened their outlooks on the economy. It also assumed a central place in the presidential election, with inflation leading many Americans to turn sour on the Biden-Harris administration's handling of the economy.

The reluctance of consumers to keep paying more has forced companies to slow their price increases — or even to cut them. The result is a cooling of inflation pressures.

Other factors have also helped tame inflation, including the healing of supply chains, which has boosted the availability of cars, trucks, meats and furniture, among other items, and the high interest rates engineered by the Fed, which slowed sales of homes, cars and appliances and other interest rate-sensitive purchases.

Still, a key question now is whether shoppers will pull back so much as to put the economy at risk. Consumer spending makes up more than two-thirds of economic activity. With evidence emerging that the job market is cooling, a drop in spending could potentially derail the economy. Such fears caused stock prices to plummet a week ago, though markets have since rebounded.

This week, the government will provide updates on both inflation and the health of the American consumer. On Wednesday, it will release the consumer price index for July. It's expected to show that prices — excluding volatile food and energy costs — rose just 3.2% from a year earlier. That would be down from 3.3% in June and would be the lowest such year-over-year inflation figure since April 2021.

And on Thursday, the government will report last month's retail sales, which are expected to have climbed a decent 0.3% from June. Such a gain would suggest that while Americans have become vigilant about their money, they are still willing to spend.



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Many businesses have noticed.

"We're seeing lower average selling prices ... right now because customers continue to trade down on price when they can," said Andrew Jassy, CEO of Amazon.

David Gibbs, CEO of Yum Brands, which owns Taco Bell, KFC and Pizza Hut, told investors that a more cost-conscious consumer has slowed its sales, which slipped 1% in the April-June quarter at stores open for at least a year.

"Ensuring we provide consumers affordable options," Gibbs said, "has been an area of greater focus for us since last year."

Other companies are cutting prices outright. Dormify, an online retailer that sells dorm supplies, is offering comforters starting at \$69, down from \$99 a year ago.

According to the Fed's "Beige Book," an anecdotal collection of business reports from around the country that is released eight times a year, companies in nearly all 12 Fed districts have described similar experiences.

"Almost every district mentioned retailers discounting items or price-sensitive consumers only purchasing essentials, trading down in quality, buying fewer items or shopping around for the best deals," the Beige Book said last month.

Most economists say consumers are still spending enough to sustain the economy consistently. Barkin said most of the businesses in his district — which covers Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and North and South Carolina — report that demand remains solid, at least at the right price.

"The way I'd put it is, consumers are still spending, but they're choosing," Barkin said.

In a speech a couple of weeks ago, Jared Bernstein, who leads the Biden administration's Council of Economic Advisers, mentioned consumer caution as a reason why inflation is nearing the end of a "round trip" back to the Fed's 2% target level.

Emerging from the pandemic, Bernstein noted, consumers were flush with cash after receiving several rounds of stimulus checks and having slashed their spending on in-person services. Their improved finances "gave certain firms the ability to flex a pricing power that was much less prevalent pre-pandemic." After COVID, consumers were "less responsive to price increases," Bernstein said.

As a result, "the old adage that the cure for high prices is high prices (was) temporarily disengaged," Bernstein said.

So some companies raised prices even more than was needed to cover their higher input costs, thereby boosting their profits. Limited competition in some industries, Bernstein added, made it easier for companies to charge more.

Barkin noted that before the pandemic, inflation remained low as online shopping, which makes price comparisons easy, became increasingly prevalent. Major retailers also held down costs, and increased U.S. oil production brought down gas prices.

"A price increase was so rare," Barkin said, "that if someone came to you with a 5% or 10% price increase, you almost just threw them out, like, 'How could you possibly do it?'"

That changed in 2021.

"There are labor shortages, Barkin said. "Supply chain shortages. And the price increases are coming to you from everywhere. Your gardener is raising your prices, and you don't have the capacity to do anything other than accept them."

The economist Isabella Weber at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, dubbed this phenomenon "sellers' inflation" in 2023. In an influential paper, she wrote that "publicly reported supply chain bottlenecks" can "create legitimacy for price hikes" and "create acceptance on the part of consumers to pay higher prices."

Consumers are no longer so accepting, Barkin said.

"People have a little bit more time to stop and say, 'How do I feel about paying \$9.89 for a 12-pack of Diet Coke when I used to pay \$5.99?' They don't like it that much, and so people are making choices."

Barkin said he expects this trend to continue to slow price increases and cool inflation.

"I'm actually pretty optimistic that over the next few months, we're going to see good readings on the

inflation side," he said. "All the elements of inflation seem to be settling down."

## How a Mexico City hospital transforms into a coming-of-age celebration for its patients

By MARIANA MARTÍNEZ BARBA Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The smell of hairspray clouds Alexa Flores López as she gets the finishing touches of an intricate updo on her thick black hair. When Alexa found out she was going to have a quinceañera — the traditional celebration for a 15th birthday in Mexico — she could barely contain herself.

"She got super excited, like her heart would come out!" said her mother, Carmen López Díaz. "She was just counting down the days."

At the Federico Gomez Children's Hospital in Mexico City, volunteers clad in white and blue nurse uniforms scurry to attend to birthday girls and boys. They curl hair, do makeup, and adjust bow ties.

It's all for the hospital's annual "Mis XV" or "My Fifteenth" event. Whether the young patients are in treatment for a serious disease or have overcome cancer, the hospital celebrates the coming-of-age of these teenagers. After going through expensive treatments, some families can't afford to pay for a party — with the hospital providing them an alternative.

"We've really just bought shoes because the hospital handles everything," said Díaz.

The hospital started throwing the event in 2017 after volunteer nurses caught wind that a beloved patient would turn 15 soon. They took it as an opportunity to organize a celebration for her and eventually turned it into an annual hospital event that's been going strong for seven years.

In Mexico, the "quinceñera" or "fifteenth birthday" is a huge rite of passage for adolescents, particularly girls. The occasion marks the transition of a teen into adulthood.

Though Alexa's birthday was last month, the hospital allows patients to participate if their birthdays happen within the year of the celebration.

She has been a patient at the hospital the past three years receiving treatment for lupus. Her younger sister was just diagnosed with the same disease last year, making things more difficult for the family. However, the hospital's celebration has been something to look forward to.

"We never imagined so much — we thought this was going to be a regular hospital event," her mother said.

Francesca Solórzano, who has been a volunteer at the hospital for 17 years, assists Alexa on her big day and attends to her every need. Solórzano makes sure the teen has enough water and showers hairspray onto her dress to make sure its fabric remains crisp.

She also sports a silver and blue pin that matches Alexa's bouquet.

"I receive more than I give," Solórzano says about volunteering. "I give my time here and I get a lot of blessings in return."

Solórzano takes Alexa into a dressing area to change into her dress. When she comes out in a deep navy blue gown sprinkled with sequins, volunteers exclaim, "How pretty!" Another volunteer takes her cellphone out and snaps a picture. "She looks like a princess!"

On the other end of the room, Carlos Emilio Escalona García, 15, takes a seat with his mom after getting suited up.

For his mother, Marta Magdalena García Chávez, the day is filled with nothing but joy.

"It's really beautiful to see all of this happening," she said. "He just had surgery so we wouldn't have had the possibility to have a party."

Carlos has been a patient with the hospital for 13 years. He has dealt with heart problems since he was a child, and just underwent his fourth surgery. His mother said he gets tired often, but is still motivated to make the most out of every day.

"Like every other teenager, my favorite class is physical education," Carlos says. "I also really enjoy doing math — I have so much fun doing different operations."

The preparations for the hospital's extravaganza have been a long time in the making. As early as January the hospital is already reaching out to make-up artists and other vendors to see if they want to participate. The entire event comes together free of charge.

After getting fitted into their regal looks, it's time for the party to start.

Downstairs in the banquet hall, family members crowd the dance floor, craning their necks to get a look at the teenagers. As they walk in with their partners, Carlos and Alexa end up lined up side by side.

"A round of applause for our fifteen-year-olds!" says someone in the crowd.

As they kick off the first dance, Alexa takes the hand of her partner and her mom zooms in on her phone to get a video. After the chorus of the song settles, her mother takes a deep breath and puts her phone away — ready to capture the moment.

She stares in awe at her daughter as she twirls in her blue tulle skirt.

## Israel widens evacuation orders in southern Gaza. Hamas wants plans for a deal instead of more talks

By WAFAA SHURAF and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The Israeli military ordered more evacuations in southern Gaza early Sunday, a day after a deadly airstrike on a school-turned-shelter in the north killed at least 80 Palestinians, according to local health authorities. The airstrike was one of the deadliest attacks in the 10-month war.

Hamas appeared to push back against resuming negotiations on Thursday on any new cease-fire proposals. In a statement, it urged mediators United States, Egypt and Qatar to submit a plan to implement what was agreed on last month, based on U.S. President Joe Biden's proposal, "instead of going to more rounds of negotiations or new proposals that provide cover for the occupation's aggression."

Israel has repeatedly ordered mass evacuations as its troops return to heavily destroyed areas where they previously battled Palestinian militants. The vast majority of Gaza's population of 2.3 million people have been displaced, often multiple times, in the besieged territory 25 miles (40 kilometers) long by about 7 miles (11 kilometers) wide.

The latest evacuation orders apply to areas of Khan Younis, Gaza's second-largest city, including part of an Israeli-declared humanitarian zone from which the military said rockets had been fired. Israel accuses Hamas and other militants of hiding among civilians and launching attacks from residential areas.

The humanitarian zone has steadily shrunk during the war with the various evacuation orders. Hundreds of thousands of people have crammed into squalid tent camps with few public services or sought shelter in schools, though the United Nations says hundreds of those have been directly hit or damaged.

Khan Younis suffered widespread destruction during an air and ground offensive earlier this year. Tens of thousands fled again last week after an evacuation order.

The new order came in leaflets dropped from the sky. As smoke rose on the horizon, hundreds of families carrying belongings in their arms left homes and shelters, seeking elusive refuge. One child carried a stuffed Hello Kitty doll as others walked through rubble-filled streets.

"We don't know where to go," said Amal Abu Yahia, a mother of three, who had returned to Khan Younis in June to shelter in their severely damaged home. It was the fourth displacement for the 42-year-old widow, whose husband was killed when an Israeli airstrike hit their neighbors' house in March.

She said they went to Muwasi, a sprawling tent camp along the coast, but couldn't find space.

Ramadan Issa, a father of five in his 50s, fled Khan Younis with 17 members of his extended family, joining hundreds of people walking toward central Gaza.

"Every time we settle in one place and build tents for women and children, the occupation comes and bombs the area," he said, referring to Israel. "This situation is unbearable."

Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't distinguish between civilians and combatants, says the Palestinian death toll from the war is approaching 40,000. Aid groups have struggled to address the staggering humanitarian crisis, while international experts have warned of famine.

The war began when Hamas-led militants burst through Israel's defenses on Oct. 7 and rampaged



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through farming communities and army bases near the border, killing around 1,200 people — mostly civilians — and abducting around 250 people. Of the roughly 110 remaining hostages, Israeli authorities believe around a third are dead.

The conflict has threatened to trigger a regional war, as Israel has traded fire with Iran and its militant allies across the region. "I hope that they will think this through and won't get to a point where they will force us to cause significant damage and increase the chances of war breaking out on additional fronts," Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said Sunday.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke to Gallant on Sunday, reiterating America's commitment to defend Israel and noting the strengthening of the U.S. military force posture and capabilities in the region, according to the Defense Department. It noted Austin has ordered a guided missile submarine to the Middle East and is telling the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group to sail more quickly to the area. The Lincoln was expected in the region by month's end.

In Lebanon, the Health Ministry said an Israeli strike near the southern town of Taybeh killed two people, without giving details. Israel's military said it struck a cell of the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah. Hezbollah announced the deaths of three militants, without details, and said it conducted rocket and artillery attacks on Israeli military positions.

In the Israeli-occupied West Bank, which has seen increased violence since the war began, Israel's military said that an Israeli civilian was killed and another was wounded in a drive-by shooting. Hamas claimed the attack, saying it was a response to the strike on the school in Gaza.

Israel's airstrike on Saturday hit a mosque inside a school in Gaza City where thousands of people were sheltering. The Israeli military said it killed 19 Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants. Hamas and Palestinian activists disputed that, saying two of the 19 were killed in earlier strikes and others were known to be civilians or opponents of Hamas.

Northern Gaza has been surrounded by Israeli forces and largely cut off from the world, and it wasn't possible to independently confirm accounts from either side. European leaders and neighbors of Israel condemned the strike.

## After fire struck Maui's Upcountry, residents of one town looked to themselves to prep for next one

By BRITTANY PETERSON Associated Press

In the days after wildfire ripped through a rural neighborhood in the Maui mountain town of Kula, residents were determined to do what they could to prevent a repeat. With donated hoses and some impromptu training, some even learned how to open a standpipe to attack flames themselves if needed.

It's part of a self-reliance mindset that took hold after the blaze last August, when the Upcountry fire destroyed 19 homes. Since that blaze, which had firefighters trucking in water from elsewhere because of a loss in system pressure, the people of Kula are determined to do all they can to be ready for next time.

"Anyone around who sees something, you're on duty," said Mark Ross, who lost a rental property where he had planned to retire with his wife. Ross, who is among residents who learned how to tap the standpipe from a retired fireman using donated hoses to stamp out hot spots for months after the fire, called the training "kind of a lifeline for everybody who still lives in that neighborhood."

The fire that hit Kula was far smaller than the one that devastated the historic town of Lahaina, about 24 miles (about 38 kilometers) away. At least 102 people died in Lahaina, the deadliest U.S. wildfire in a century, and thousands of homes burned.

But what's happened in Kula in the year since has been a lesson in community-led recovery. Residents stood watch for months to protect their homes from flare-ups as roots smoldered underground. They cleared debris. They installed cameras to watch for signs of future fires. And they're working to restore burned forests, including launching a nursery for native plants aimed at reintroducing a native ecosystem to an area that had been overtaken by thirsty invasive trees.

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"They're building infrastructure, but the beautiful thing is at the same time, they're building social infrastructure," said Rebecca Solnit, author of several books on post-disaster cities. "They're deepening community and that is a major source of safety in a disaster."

Kyle Ellison started a nonprofit after the fire, Malama Kula, that organizes volunteers to meet Kula fire victims' immediate needs like clearing debris. It also bought and installed two advanced smoke detection cameras to watch over the town — a tool that Hawaiian Electric began installing across the entire island around the same time, and is widely used in California.

"We're not going to wait for people to say it's OK for us to do things," said Ellison, who watched flames last year come within 10 feet of the home he was renting. "The community is just going to take action to protect ourselves."

Residents are also urging officials to safeguard their water system and its pressure. Kula's pipes ran dry last year because key pumps had no backup power when they lost electricity — a common vulnerability for towns across the United States. After last August's fire, the Maui Department of Water Supply rented three generators for the Kula system. They kicked in during an outage last month to maintain water pressure, said department director John Stufflebean. The department is in a lengthy process of purchasing seven generators that will be distributed across the island, still about a year away, he said.

Residents have also been quick to flag any apparent weaknesses in the system. Scott Martin said he discovered a small pipe leaking on Pulehuiki, a narrow country road that slices through the heart of Kula, five months ago and reported it multiple times. He's dismayed the leak only just got fixed last week.

The Upcountry water system, where Kula is located, leaks about 21% of its total supply, the agency said, above the national average of 14%. Stufflebean called that level "unremarkable" given the steep terrain, rocky soil and aging infrastructure, and said they had to wait on parts to fix the leak Martin reported.

"Welcome to Maui," Stufflebean quipped when asked about the parts delay.

For Sara Tekula, executive director of the Kula Community Watershed Alliance, such stories reinforce why Kula residents need to be proactive: "We have to link arms, and sometimes they need us to remind them and hold them accountable," she said.

She helps lead a nonprofit that formed weeks after the fire to restore about 100 acres of native forest where invasive black wattle and eucalyptus trees burned across dozens of private properties in Kula. Restoring private forests falls outside the scope of responsibility for local, state or federal agencies, although individual landowners can apply for grants through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The charred trees will soon be cleared and replanted with species that thrived on Maui more than a century ago — koa, mamane, a'ali'i and ohia— before newcomers introduced thirsty trees from drier climates.

By the time federal officials arrived to determine how they could help, the nonprofit had held community meetings and worked out a strategy and a budget. Todd Ellsworth, a U.S. Forest Service post-fire and disaster recovery coordinator who met with the group, called their work "pretty remarkable."

After raising \$1.6 million in federal funds and private grants, the nonprofit is ready to break ground on a nursery for native plants and bought fencing to keep invasive deer from noshing seedlings in the young forest. They expect to begin planting during this winter's rainy season, and Tekula hopes Kula residents will feel some relief in the coming months as they see the land begin to heal.

It will take years and additional funding to manually remove invasive seedlings as they grow, said Joe Imhoff, who is Tekula's husband and, with more than a decade of experience restoring a 42-acre native forest near last year's burn site, is serving as project advisor. Volunteers can do some of the weeding, but trained contractors will be needed to handle some dangerous work that requires rappelling into steep terrain.

But after a few years, the leaf canopy will begin to fill out and block light from invasive seedlings, which then won't require as much manpower to suppress, Imhoff said. The native plants more effectively capture rainwater and moisture from fog than invasives, and they return more of the moisture to the environment, too — an aid in reducing fire risk.

Imhoff said hoping someone else will fix the problem doesn't feel like an option.

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"In the face of climate change and ecological collapse, the time is now to take care of our back yards around the whole country," Imhoff said.

## Harris is pushing joy. Trump paints a darker picture. Will mismatched moods matter?

By WILL WEISSERT and MICHELLE L. PRICE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — At the top of his first speech as her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz turned to Vice President Kamala Harris and declared, "Thank you for bringing back the joy." The next day, Harris took the theme a step further, branding the Democratic ticket "joyful warriors."

Contrast that with former President Donald Trump, who opened a news conference at his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida a few days later by saying, "We have a lot of bad things coming up," and predicting the U.S. could fall into an economic depression unseen since the dark days of 1929 or even another world war.

"I think that our country is, right now, in the most dangerous position it's ever been in, from an economic standpoint, from a safety standpoint," Trump said Thursday.

Democrats are playing up their sunnier outlook, promoting the idea that voters can be inspired to support someone and not just cast their ballot against the other side. The Trump campaign argues their candidate is reflecting the dour mood of the country and dismisses the idea that a growing contrast in tone and upbeat attitude will decide the presidency.

Two-thirds of Americans reported feeling very or somewhat pessimistic about the state of politics, according to polling by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research from last month. Roughly 7 in 10 said things in the country are heading in the wrong direction.

Jason Miller, a senior adviser to the former president, said people don't care about "vibe checks."

"That's not making gas or food or housing less expensive," Miller said.

Walz promotes positivity

Still, just how hard Harris is betting on the opposite approach is evident in her decision to pick Walz, whose personal story includes being on the coaching staff of a high school football team that had gone winless just a few years earlier to clinching a state championship in 1999.

The Minnesota governor's relentless positivity is meant to give supporters a jolt of new energy and keep the momentum that Harris has built after President Joe Biden — facing mounting pressure from within his own party and increasingly pessimistic views about his chances in November — stepped aside and endorsed his vice president.

Walz spent his first week as Harris' running mate traveling to swing states with Harris and underscored the point during a rally in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, celebrating what he said was "the ability to talk about what can be good."

"This idea of caring for our neighbor and kindness, and a hand up when somebody needs it. And just the sense that people go through things and to be able to be there when they need it, that's who we are," he said. "It's not about mocking. It's not name-calling."

Biden often ended his speeches saying he'd never been more optimistic. But he built his now-shuttered reelection bid around branding Trump an existential threat to democracy. The president offered dire predictions about the former president, suggesting he'd dismantle the nation's founding principles should he retake the White House.

Harris' campaign still relies on many of the same themes, decrying Trump as a threat to democracy, warning that he'll impose draconian limits to abortion and voting and that he will follow Project 2025, a plan championed by top conservatives to remake large swaths of the federal government.

And despite Walz insisting that smiles were more powerful than insults, he and Harris have continued their share of denunciations, decrying Trump's conviction in New York on 34 felony counts in a hush-money case and his being found liable for fraudulent business practices and sexual abuse in civil court.

Still, even before she named Walz her running mate, Harris was suggesting that she could help make politics fun again.



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"We love our country. And I believe it is the highest form of patriotism to fight for the ideals of our country," Harris declared in campaign speeches before picking Walz. She now tells crowds that she and her running mate "both believe in lifting people up, not knocking them down."

Paula Montagna, who went to see Harris and Walz at a rally outside Detroit last week, highlighted the shift in messaging since Harris took over from Biden.

"Kamala is so positive, and it's nice to hear positive instead of negative," Montagna said.

Trump team says their candidate is reflecting reality

Trump's senior campaign advisers counter that the mood of the country right now is sour over the economy, the state of the U.S.-Mexico border and turmoil in the Middle East and beyond. They see their candidate as reflecting that reality rather than what they believe is a temporary exuberance igniting the Democratic base after months of discouragement over their ticket.

Trump has tried to harness that with his repeated predictions of stock market crashes and war. His campaign appearances have included a long list of other warnings that have veered into the apocalyptic, saying that if he's not elected, "we're not going to have a country anymore," that "the only thing standing between you and its obliteration is me," and that under a Harris administration, "Social Security will buckle and collapse" and "the suburbs will be overrun with violent crime and savage foreign gangs."

During his Republican National Convention speech last month, where his advisers said Trump would seem changed and more personal after surviving an attempted assassination, the former president did strike a different tone — at least to start.

He said early on that he had "a message of confidence, strength and hope" and sought to "launch a new era of safety, prosperity and freedom for citizens of every race, religion, color and creed."

But by the end, Trump had returned to predictions of doom, twice warning, "Bad things are going to happen."

Ohio Sen. JD Vance, Trump's running mate, has drawn a sharp contrast with Walz. Vance has been cheered on the right for being an aggressive fighter on behalf of the former president, particularly when engaging with reporters.

"Right now, I am angry about what Kamala Harris has done to this country and done to the American southern border," Vance said at a campaign stop in Michigan. "And I think most people in our country, they can be happy-go-lucky sometimes, they can enjoy things sometimes, and they can turn on the news and recognize that what's going on in this country is a disgrace."

Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, not himself known for a sunny disposition, offered much the same assessment Friday at a conservative conference in Atlanta hosted by radio host Erick Erickson.

"The country is obviously in a bad mood," McConnell said.

Trump supporters waiting to see him at a rally in Bozeman, Montana, said they felt the former president's campaign made them feel positive — even if his message often isn't.

"Just looking at the state of the country now, I don't think Kamala Harris' campaign is one of joy and hope. I think that's Trump's campaign," said Alex Lustig, a 23-year-old from Billings, Montana.

Fred Scarlett, a 63-year-old retiree from Condon, Montana, said that "everyone understands that we need to be here to support Trump because he has never let us down."

"They shoot at him," Scarlett said, "and he still keeps firing back."

## **Their job was saving lives. They lost their own in Brazil's horrifying plane crash**

By ELÉONORE HUGHES Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Arianne Risso worked every day to help her patients battle cancer. That made it all the more heart wrenching when her life — along with that of seven other doctors — ended abruptly after a plane tumbled from the sky in Brazil.

She boarded the ill-fated flight Friday in the city of Cascavel, in Parana state, bound for Sao Paulo's Guarulhos international airport. It crashed in the city of Vinhedo, and footage of the ATR 72 twin-engine

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turboprop plunging while in a flat spin horrified people across Brazil.

It smashed into the backyard of a home inside a gated community and transformed into a fiery wreck. All 62 people aboard were killed, among them the eight doctors, according to a statement from Parana's Medical Council. Risso and at least one colleague were headed for an oncology conference to sharpen their knowledge about a disease that kills tens of thousands of Brazilians every year.

"They were people used to saving lives, and now they lost theirs in such tragic circumstances," Parana Gov. Ratinho Júnior told journalists in Vinhedo on Friday, adding that he had friends on the doomed plane. "It is a sad day."

Risso's cousin, Stephany Albuquerque, recalled in a phone interview that the two often played together when she was young. Even then, Risso wanted to become a doctor and, as she grew older, applied herself so intensively to her studies that she rarely went out on the town. Medicine was her calling.

"Arianne treated people who were terminally ill at a time in their lives when they were struggling. But Arianne was always available and did everything with a lot of love," Albuquerque told The Associated Press by phone from Florida, where she now lives. "She wasn't the kind of doctor who would tell the patient, 'This is your illness, take this.' No, Arianne took care of people. ... She would give out her personal phone number to patients."

Risso, 34, was flying with her colleague Mariana Belim, 31. The two had been in residencies at Cascavel's cancer hospital, and a statement from the institution praised them for the conscientiousness, care and respect with which they treated their patients.

"It's no wonder that praise for them both would often reach us. Their love of the profession was very clear," the hospital said.

Willian Rodrigo Feistler, a general practitioner who grew up in Cascavel, knew six people who died in the crash and was particularly close to Belim, with whom he studied and had maintained a 15-year friendship.

"Mariana was serene with a melancholic temperament, but very intelligent, empathetic and devoted to her profession," Feistler said by phone from Cascavel. "She dedicated much of her life to studies and medical training. She had already specialized in clinical medicine and was completing her specialization in clinical oncology."

José Roberto Leonel Ferreira, a recently retired doctor who also died in the fiery wreck, was one of Feistler's teachers during his undergraduate studies. He had a radiology clinic in Cascavel.

"I went over cases with him on several occasions. He was a receptive person who helped other doctors in the discussion of cases to reach diagnoses," Feistler said.

Brazil's Federal Council of Medicine said the loss of the doctors left Brazil's medical world in mourning, and expressed its solidarity for the victims' friends and relatives. They were venturing forth from Cascavel in search of knowledge as a means to better treat their patients, its statement said.

For now, there are more questions about the crash than answers. Metsul, one of Brazil's most respected meteorological companies, said Friday that there were reports of severe icing in Sao Paulo state around the time of the crash. Local media cited experts pointing to that as a potential cause, although others cautioned against jumping to a conclusion.

Both the plane's "black boxes" — one with flight data and the other with cockpit audio — were recovered. The air force's center for the investigation and prevention of air accidents began analyzing them at its laboratory in the nation's capital, Brasilia. Airports Minister Silvio Costa Filho said the center was also opening a criminal probe. The airline Voepass and the French-Italian ATR manufacturer are assisting investigations, they said in statements.

All of Brazil — but in particular victims' loved ones — are eager to learn why these people were ripped from this world.

"It wasn't God who took my daughter; it wasn't God, because he chose her to save lives," Risso's mother, Fatima Albuquerque, told reporters Sunday. She said she blamed the crash on profit-hungry capitalists and authorities' neglect.

Stephany Albuquerque echoed her indignation.

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"I only hope that the prosecutors will investigate," she said. "I hope justice is done, because that's the least my cousin and the other 61 people deserve."

## From Paris to Los Angeles: How the city is preparing for the 2028 Olympics

By JAIMIE DING and ANDREW DALTON Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It's Los Angeles' turn for the torch. Mayor Karen Bass accepted the Olympic flag at the Paris closing ceremony Sunday, before handing it off to a key representative of LA's local business — Tom Cruise — who in a pre-recorded trek via motorcycle, plane and parachute kicked off the countdown to 2028.

The city will become the third in the world to host the games three times as it adds to the storied years of 1932 and 1984. Here's a look forward and back in time at the Olympics in LA.

LA's Olympic trilogy

Los Angeles got the 2028 games as a consolation prize when Paris was picked for 2024.

Back in 1932, LA hosted its first Olympics. The city was the only bidder for the games at a time marred by the Great Depression and the absence of several nations. Yet memorable sport moments came from athletes including American athlete Babe Didrikson Zaharias, who won golds in the new women's events of javelin and hurdles.

Financial and cultural success gave 1984 a reputation as the "good" Olympics" which made seemingly every major world city want their own.

Emphasizing both the modern and the classical with a hand from Hollywood, the games opened with decathlon champion Rafer Johnson lighting the torch, a guy in a jetpack descending into the Memorial Coliseum and theme music by "Star Wars" maestro John Williams.

With Eastern Bloc countries boycotting, the U.S. dominated. Carl Lewis and Mary Lou Retton are among the athletes who became household names. A young Michael Jordan led the men's basketball team to gold.

The games renewed, for a while, the global reputation of a city that had been perceived to be in decline.

"We want our games to be a modern games, youthful, full of the optimism that Southern California brings to the world and the globe," Janet Evans, four-time Olympic gold medalist in swimming and chief athlete officer for the LA 2028 organizing committee, told The Associated Press in Paris.

Passing the torch

Bass, who arrives back in LA Monday, spent these games in Paris along with organizers and city officials, learning what it takes to host the world's largest sporting event.

Joining her were LA28 Chairperson Casey Wasserman, an entertainment executive, and LA councilmember Traci Park, chair of the city Olympic committee.

"As we've seen here in Paris, the Olympics are an opportunity to make transformative change," Bass said at a press conference ahead of the closing ceremony.

Venues old and new, plus a swimming stadium

Amid a stadium-and-arena boom, LA will polish existing structures rather than erect new ones.

"It's a no-build games," Evans said.

After Paris' innovative opening ceremony on the Seine River, LA plans to open with a traditional, stadium-based approach at SoFi Stadium in neighboring Inglewood that also incorporates the century-old Memorial Coliseum in Los Angeles itself.

Home to two NFL teams, SoFi has hosted a Super Bowl and several Taylor Swift concerts since opening in 2020. It will become what organizers say is the largest Olympic swimming venue ever. Its opening ceremony role means swimming will come after track and field for the first time since 1972.

Intuit Dome, the soon-to-open Inglewood home of the NBA's Clippers, would be the games' newest major venue and is the planned home for Olympic basketball. The Lakers' downtown Crypto.com Arena will host gymnastics.

The toxicity of swimming in the Seine became a serious issue in Paris. That could put renewed focus on

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the Long Beach area waterfront when it hosts marathon swimming and triathlon races. Its cleanliness history is mixed but its ocean waters got consistently high marks in a 2023 analysis by nonprofit Heal the Bay.

The Long Beach shore was home to the pre-recorded performances during Sunday's ceremony of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Billie Eilish, Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre, though it was easy to mistake for LA's Venice Beach, where the journey of the flag begun by Cruise was shown ending moments earlier.

Trains, buses and traffic

A city that's notoriously hard to traverse may seem like an odd fit for the Olympics, but it can work.

Bass said she plans to emulate the tactics of Tom Bradley, the mayor in 1984, whose traffic mitigations had some saying it was better than at non-Olympic times. They include asking local businesses to stagger workforce hours to reduce the number of cars on the road and allow work from home during the 17-day games.

Landing the Olympics under then-Mayor Eric Garcetti in 2017 gave the city an unusually long lead time for planning.

While it's no Paris Metro, LA has built a subway since its last Olympics, with lines running past major venues.

In 2018, the city planned an ambitious slate of 28 bus and rail projects to transform public transit. Some were scrapped but others moved forward, including the extension of a subway line to connect downtown Los Angeles with UCLA, the planned home of the Olympic Village.

Another high-profile project is the Inglewood People Mover, an automated, three-stop rail line past major Olympic venues. It initially received a commitment of \$1 billion in federal funding, but opposition from Democratic Rep. Maxine Waters led to a \$200 million reduction, the Los Angeles Times reported. It's unclear whether the line will be completed by 2028.

Metro recently received \$900 million in funding through an infrastructure spending package and grants from the Biden administration, of which \$139 million will go directly toward improving transportation by 2028 and the goal of a "car-free" Olympics.

"The biggest challenge is not waiting to 2028, but really taking the opportunity between now and 2028 to help Angelenos and visitors alike reimagine the transportation network as something that will be their first choice," Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins said.

Crime, safety and perception

While crime rates were considerably higher in 1984 than today, the countdown to 2028 comes as the issue has gotten increased attention and cast a social-media-amplified shadow.

The Olympics are designated as a national special security event, which makes the U.S. Secret Service the lead agency tasked with developing a security plan, supported by significant federal resources.

LA city and county law enforcement sent officers to Paris to observe, learn and assist as they prepare for their own 2028 games.

There are many more encampments on city streets than there were in 1984, and it's unlikely LA will have solved its homeless crisis in the next four years. As the Paris games ended, California Gov. Gavin Newsom threatened to withhold funding from cities unable to clear encampments.

Ahead of the Games in Paris, organizers relocated thousands of unhoused people, a practice also used for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro games and criticized by activists as "social cleansing."

Tourists and finances

LA is the "next logical destination" for the Olympics, said Adam Burke, president and CEO of the LA Tourism and Convention Board. "LA has emerged as really one of the world's sports capitals."

First though, the city will host a FIFA World Cup event and U.S. Women's Open in 2026 and another Super Bowl in 2027.

The city's hotel industry has continued to see growth, adding 9,000 new hotel rooms in the past four years with more to come over the next four.

LA28 organizers are banking on ticket sales, sponsorships, payments from the International Olympic Committee and other revenue streams to cover the games' \$6.9 billion budget. The committee has brought in just over \$1 billion toward a goal of \$2.5 billion in domestic corporate sponsorships.



## From Biden to Gabbard, here's what Harris' past debates show before a faceoff with Trump

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris has repeatedly taunted her opponent's seeming reluctance to debate, telling a series of raucous audiences about Donald Trump's criticisms of her: "As the saying goes, if you've got something to say, say it to my face."

After first backing out of an agreement, Trump reversed himself and said he'd meet Harris on Sept. 10 for an event hosted by ABC. That sets up a long-anticipated faceoff between the Democratic and Republican nominees — and, indeed, the chance for both of them to deliver their attack lines directly at one another.

Sharing a stage with Trump presents a critical chance for Harris to define herself and her opponent in a truncated campaign, with many open questions about her policy positions. But it also sets up a major test — one that President Joe Biden failed badly enough that he ended his campaign and made way for her.

A former San Francisco district attorney and California attorney general, Harris has long presented her debating prowess as a strength, and her sharp questioning of opponents has produced many a career highlight. But she has also had testy exchanges that didn't play as well.

"She's certainly had a good rollout in the past few weeks and that will naturally translate to expectations on the debate stage," said Aaron Kall, director of the University of Michigan's debate program. "Part of the problem is, President Biden did so poorly in the first one, there's no way she could do worse, and so that comparison is not going to help. But her debate history is a mixed bag."

Trump faces high expectations too. And Biden's disastrous performance helped obscure that the former president delivered many falsehoods — from lies about the Jan. 6 riot to misleading claims about abortion and immigration — that went unchecked during the debate.

Two Democratic primary moments offer insight into how Harris debates

Perhaps the pinnacle of Harris' short-lived 2020 presidential campaign was a broadside against then-candidate Biden, who later made her his running mate anyway. She seized on Biden opposing busing to integrate public schools in the 1970s by describing a young girl who boarded such buses before offering, "That little girl was me."

It was memorable but also planned. Harris' campaign then posted the same phrase on social media over a picture of its candidate as a school-aged girl in pigtails.

But a low moment of Harris' same campaign came at a subsequent debate. Another rival, former Rep. Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii, launched a lengthy attack on Harris' prosecutorial record.

Gabbard said Harris "put over 1,500 people in jail for marijuana violations and then laughed about it when she was asked if she ever smoked marijuana." With the audience roaring, Gabbard further accused Harris of having "blocked evidence that would have freed an innocent man from death row until the courts forced her to do so."

Gabbard now recalls being upset that Harris' record hadn't been more carefully scrutinized during the primary. She said she uncovered the issues she raised not with opposition research, but by using Google.

"I was surprised at how unprepared she was to respond to them. Just from, you know, I would imagine that you'd prepare before going into a debate," Gabbard said in an interview. "And also that she made no attempt to deny them or frankly justify them."

Gabbard added, "Ultimately this is disrespectful to voters if she's not responding to, or addressing, questions about a record that she claims to be proud of."

In her response on the debate stage, Harris attempted to dismiss Gabbard, saying, "I am proud of making a decision to not just give fancy speeches, or be in a legislative body and give speeches on the floor, but actually doing the work."

She got even more personal after the debate, calling herself a "top-tier candidate" while suggesting that Gabbard was polling at "0 or 1% or whatever she might be at." At a subsequent debate, Harris hit back,

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saying Gabbard had spent years “full time on Fox News criticizing President Obama.”

Ironically, Gabbard, who has served as a Fox News contributor, remained in the presidential race long after Harris had dropped out.

Harris can show defiance in confrontational moments

Sometimes flashing a touch of defiance can work.

Harris first established a national reputation as being especially verbally nimble while questioning Trump’s nominee for attorney general, William Barr, and his pick for the Supreme Court, Brett Kavanaugh.

After Kavanaugh repeatedly sidestepped abortion questions, Harris demanded to know if he could think of “any laws that give the government the power to make decisions about the male body?” forcing Kavanaugh to concede, “I am not thinking of any right now.”

Kall, of the University of Michigan, said Harris’ 2020 debate performance against Republican Vice President Mike Pence was also well-received. Her most memorable line then was probably rebuking Pence’s interruptions by retorting, “Mr. Vice President, I am speaking.”

She used that line again when protesters decrying the Biden administration’s support for Israel’s war with Hamas in Gaza interrupted Harris at a rally this past week near Detroit’s airport. The vice president was at first accommodating, saying, “I am here because I believe in democracy, and everybody’s voice matters.”

But she then continued, “I am speaking now,” drawing sustained applause from rallygoers before adding, “If you want Donald Trump to win, then say that. Otherwise, I’m speaking.”

“Abandon Biden,” a progressive group that has opposed the president’s now-defunct reelection bid over his Israel policy, bristled at Harris’ “disdain for citizens of this country who are pleading for an end to a genocide.”

Cullen Tiernan, who was a spokesperson for Gabbard’s 2020 campaign, spent hours in debate prep with the then-congresswoman before the on-stage exchange with Harris. He played one of her other primary rivals, Tim Ryan, and laughed about “coastal elites starting being a big problem for me,” latching onto one of Ryan’s catchphrases.

Now political director for a labor union, Tiernan said he saw parallels between Harris’ debate stage reaction to Gabbard’s criticisms and the interruption in Michigan — but not in a good way.

“As a progressive person, I’m looking for change and empathy, and understanding about what’s happening,” he said. “Not gaslighting, and feeling like the reality that is being discussed never existed.”

Gabbard said she hoped a Trump-Harris debate would showcase for voters the huge differences between the candidates.

“Given the history of many presidential elections, unfortunately, political theater is the norm,” she said. “But that substantive debate is really what we need and what we deserve right now.”

## Pentagon chief orders submarine to the Middle East, tells aircraft carrier to hasten its transit

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has ordered a guided missile submarine to the Middle East and is telling the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group to sail more quickly to the area, the Defense Department said Sunday.

The moves come as the U.S. and other allies push for Israel and Hamas to achieve a cease-fire agreement that could help calm soaring tensions in the region following the assassination of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran and a senior Hezbollah commander in Beirut.

Officials have been on the lookout for retaliatory strikes by both Iran and Hezbollah for the killings, and the U.S. has been beefing up its presence in the region.

Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, Pentagon press secretary, said in a statement that Austin spoke with Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant earlier in the day, and reiterated America’s commitment “to take every possible step to defend Israel and noted the strengthening of U.S. military force posture and capabilities throughout the Middle East in light of escalating regional tensions.”

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The Lincoln, which has been in the Asia Pacific, had already been ordered to the region to replace the USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier strike group, which is scheduled to begin heading home from the Middle East. Last week, Austin said the Lincoln would arrive in the Central Command area by the end of the month.

It wasn't clear Sunday what his latest order means, or how much more quickly the Lincoln will steam to the Middle East. The carrier has F-35 fighter jets aboard, along with the F/A-18 fighter aircraft that are also on carriers.

Ryder also did not say how quickly the USS Georgia guided missile submarine would get to the region. He said Austin and Gallant also discussed Israel's military operations in Gaza and the importance of mitigating civilian harm.

The call comes a day after an Israeli airstrike hit a school-turned-shelter in Gaza early Saturday, killing at least 80 people and wounding nearly 50 others, Palestinian health authorities said, in one of the deadliest attacks of the 10-month Israel-Hamas war.

## Paris closes the Olympics, and Los Angeles turns to Tom Cruise for its 2028 mission

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

SAINT-DENIS, France (AP) — Setting out to prove that topping Paris isn't mission impossible, Los Angeles rolled out a skydiving Tom Cruise, Grammy winner Billie Eilish and other stars on Sunday as it took over Olympic hosting duties from the French capital, which closed out its 2024 Games just as they started — with joy and panache.

Capping two and a half extraordinary weeks of Olympic sports and emotion, Paris' boisterous, star-studded closing ceremony in France's national stadium mixed unbridled celebration with a somber call for peace from International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach.

Following in Paris' footsteps in 2028 promises to be a challenge: It made spectacular use of its cityscape for its first Games in 100 years, with the Eiffel Tower and other iconic monuments becoming Olympic stars in their own right as they served as backdrops and venues for medal-winning feats.

But the City of Angels, like the City of Light, showed that it, too, holds some aces.

Cruise — in his Ethan Hunt persona — wowed by descending from the top of the stadium to electric guitar "Mission: Impossible" riffs. Once his feet were back on the ground — and after shaking hands with enthralled athletes — he took the Olympic flag from star gymnast Simone Biles, fixed it to the back of a motorcycle and roared out of the arena.

The appetite-whetting message was clear: Los Angeles 2028 promises to be an eye-opener, too.

Still, this was largely Paris' night — its opportunity for one final party. And what a party it was. Thousands of athletes danced and sang the night away — reveling in the artistic show that celebrated Olympic themes and its firework flourishes.

Even Bach got the party bug, jokingly calling the Paris Games "Seine-sational" — a nod to the Seine River that, despite water quality concerns, staged Olympic triathlon and marathon swimming and the wacky and wonderful opening ceremony.

At what will be his last Games after announcing his intention to step down next year, Bach also made a somber appeal for "a culture of peace" in a war-torn world.

"We know that the Olympic Games cannot create peace, but the Olympic Games can create a culture of peace that inspires the world," he said. "Let us live this culture of peace every single day."

Cruise then provided a change of gear.

After being lowered on a rope live from the roof's giddy heights, Cruise drove his bike past the Eiffel Tower in a prerecorded segment, onto a plane and then skydived over the Hollywood Hills. Three circles added to the O's of the famed Hollywood sign, creating five interlaced Olympic rings.

In the stadium, the athletes' enthusiasm bubbled over when crowds of them rushed the stage at one point. Stadium announcements urged them to double back. Some stayed, creating an impromptu mosh

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pit around Grammy-winning French pop-rock band Phoenix as they played, before security and volunteers cleared the stage.

Multiple French athletes crowd-surfed. U.S. team members jumped up and down in their Ralph Lauren jackets.

On the stadium's giant screens, Eilish, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, rapper Snoop Dogg — wearing pants with the Olympic rings after being a popular feature of the Paris Games — and Dr. Dre kept the party going in an prerecorded show from a California beach.

Each is a California native, including H.E.R., who sang the U.S. national anthem live at the Stade de France, crammed with more than 70,000 people.

The stadium crowd roared as French swimmer Léon Marchand, dressed in a suit and tie instead of the swim trunks he wore to win four golds, first collected the Olympic flame from the Tuileries Gardens in Paris.

Reappearing later in the stadium to spectators' chants of "Léon, Léon," Marchand then blew out the flame. The Summer Games were over.

Their next stop: LA in 2028.

The national stadium, France's largest, was one of the targets of Islamic State gunmen and suicide bombers who killed 130 people in and around Paris on Nov. 13, 2015. The joy and celebrations that swept Paris during the Games as Marchand and other French athletes racked up 64 medals — 16 of them gold — marked a major watershed in the city's recovery from that night of terror.

"Paris became a party again and France found itself," said Tony Estanguet, head of the Paris Games organizing committee.

The closing ceremony also saw the awarding of the last medals — each embedded with a chunk of the Eiffel Tower. Fittingly for the first Olympics that aimed for gender parity, they all went to women — the gold, silver and bronze medalists from the women's marathon earlier Sunday.

The women's marathon took the spot of the men's race that traditionally closed out previous Games. The switch was part of efforts in Paris to make the Olympic spotlight shine more brightly on the sporting feats of women. Paris was also where women first made their Olympic debut, at the Games of 1900.

The U.S. team again topped the medal table, with 126 in all and 40 of them gold.

As a delicate pink sunset gave way to night, athletes marched into the stadium waving the flags of their 205 countries and territories — a display of global unity in a world gripped by global tensions and conflicts. The stadium screens carried the words, "Together, united for peace."

A golden-shrouded figure dropped spider-like from the skies into a darkened world of smoke and swirling stars. Olympic symbols were celebrated, including the flag of Greece, birthplace of the ancient Games, and the five interlaced Olympic rings, lit up in white in the arena where tens of thousands of lights glittered like fireflies.

Now, the lights are out. But the memories of Paris' special summer won't dim anytime soon.

"We saw ourselves as a people of incorrigible grumblers," Estanguet said. "We woke up in a country of wild fans who would not stop singing."

## Families of Brazilian plane crash victims gather in Sao Paulo as French experts join investigation

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and TATIANA POLLASTRI Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — More than 40 families of victims of an airliner crash in Brazil gathered Sunday at a morgue and hotels in Sao Paulo as three French government investigators arrived in the country. Forensics experts worked to identify the remains of the 62 people killed.

Sao Paulo state government said the two engines of the plane were removed from the crash site Sunday evening, more than two days after the accident. The rest of the wreckage had already been removed.

The remains of all 34 male and 28 female victims were recovered on Saturday.

The ATR 72 twin-engine turboprop operated by Brazilian airline Voepass was headed for Guarulhos international airport in Sao Paulo with 58 passengers and four crew members aboard when it went down



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Friday in Vinhedo, 78 kilometers (49 miles) north of the city. Voepass said that three passengers who held Brazilian identification also carried Venezuelan documents and one had Portuguese identity.

ATR is a French-Italian company. International aviation protocols recommend that investigators from the country of origin of the airplane maker follow inquiries on foreign soil whenever a crash involving one of those planes takes place. Local authorities said that the three French investigators in Brazil work at BEA, the European country's body for civil aviation security.

The bodies of the pilot, Danilo Santos Romano, and his co-pilot, Humberto de Campos Alencar e Silva, were the first to be identified. Another 10 have been identified since, local authorities said. One body is already set for burial, and another seven are expected to follow on Sunday, Sao Paulo's state government said.

The airliner said in a statement to The Associated Press that Romano had just finished his first full year as commander. He was hired by the Brazilian company in November 2022 as a co-pilot. His experience with Voepass included 5,202 flying hours, all in planes of the ATR model, the only one the company owns.

At least eight physicians were aboard, Paraná state Gov. Ratinho Júnior said. Four professors at Unioeste university in western Paraná were also confirmed dead.

Liz Ibba dos Santos, a 3-year-old girl who was traveling with her father, was the only child known to be on the passenger list. The remains of Luna, a dog that was traveling with a Venezuelan family, were also found in the wreckage.

Sao Paulo's morgue began receiving the bodies Friday evening, and it asked victims' relatives to bring in medical, X-ray and dental records to help identify the bodies. Blood tests were also done to help identification efforts.

The few family members speaking about the tragedy did so on social media.

Tânia Azevedo, who lost her son Tiago in the crash, was put up in one of the hotels in Sao Paulo, but said that she was waiting to go to the morgue.

"I believe Tiago is somewhere trying to help the other people wounded who also need light and love," she said. "I couldn't go there (to the morgue). I am here waiting. It is dark here, I need some light and love myself."

Images recorded by witnesses showed the aircraft in a flat spin and plunging vertically before smashing to the ground inside a gated community, leaving an obliterated fuselage consumed by fire. Residents said that there were no injuries on the ground.

It was the world's deadliest airline crash since January 2023, when 72 people died on a Yeti Airlines plane in Nepal that stalled and crashed while making its landing approach. That plane also was an ATR 72, and the final report blamed pilot error.

Metsul, one of Brazil's most respected meteorological companies, said Friday that there were reports of severe icing in Sao Paulo state around the time of the crash. Local media cited experts pointing to icing as a potential cause for the crash.

A video shared on social media channels Saturday shows a Voepass pilot telling passengers on a flight from Guarulhos to the city of Cascavel that the ATR 72 has flown safely around the world for decades. He also asked passengers to be respectful to the memory of his colleagues and the company, and asked for prayers.

"This tragedy doesn't hit only those who perished in this accident. It hits all of us," the unidentified pilot said. "We are giving all our hearts, all our best to be here and fulfill our mission to take you safely and comfortably to your destination."

Police restricted access to the main entrance of the Sao Paulo morgue where bodies from the crash were being identified. Some family members of the victims arrived on foot, others came in minivans. None spoke to journalists, and authorities requested that they not be filmed as they came.

A flight carrying more family members from Paraná state landed Saturday afternoon at Guarulhos airport. A minivan sponsored by the airline was provided to transport them to the morgue.

Sao Paulo's state government said that 26 families have already gone to the morgue for identification

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efforts, with more expected on Sunday.

An American Eagle ATR 72-200 crashed on Oct. 31, 1994, and the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board determined the probable cause was ice buildup while the plane was circling in a holding pattern. The plane rolled at about 8,000 feet (2,500 meters) and dove into the ground, killing all 68 people on board. The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration issued operating procedures for ATRs and similar planes telling pilots not to use the autopilot in icing conditions.

Brazilian aviation expert Lito Sousa cautioned that meteorological conditions alone might not be enough to explain why the Voepass plane fell in the manner it did on Friday.

"Analyzing an air crash just with images can lead to wrong conclusions about the causes," Sousa told the AP by phone. "But we can see a plane with loss of support, no horizontal speed. In this flat spin condition, there's no way to reclaim control of the plane."

Asked whether the 62 people aboard would have lost consciousness during the steep fall of the plane, Sousa said "it is possible, but not likely."

Brazil's air force said Sunday that both of the plane's flight recorders had been analyzed at its laboratory in the capital, Brasilia, and their content has been transcribed. The results of its investigations are expected to be published within 30 days, it said.

Marcelo Moura, director of operations for Voepass, told reporters Friday night that while there were forecasts for ice, they were within acceptable levels for the aircraft.

In an earlier statement, the Brazilian air force's center for the investigation and prevention of air accidents said that the plane's pilots didn't call for help or say they were operating under adverse weather conditions.

The ATR 72, which is built by a joint venture of Airbus in France and Italy's Leonardo SpA, is generally used on shorter flights. Crashes involving various models of the ATR 72 have resulted in 470 deaths going back to the 1990s, according to a database of the Aviation Safety Network.

Earlier on Sunday, Pope Francis said during a public mass at the Vatican there should be prayers for the victims of the air crash.

## Catholic devotees honor St Jude's relic with watery procession through Mexico's Xochimilco canals

By MARÍA TERESA HERNÁNDEZ Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — It was no ordinary Sunday on Mexico City's famed Xochimilco canals.

Instead of tourists and locals hanging out with friends, the brightly painted boats known as "trajineras" were filled with Catholics honoring a relic of St. Jude Thaddeus, one of Jesus' 12 apostles and patron saint of impossible causes.

A wooden figure holding a bone fragment of St. Jude's arm was kept in a glass case while it glided through the calm waters as part of a month-long visit to Mexico, a country that is home to nearly 100 million Catholics.

The relic arrived in Mexico in late July after touring the United States in its first-ever trip out of Rome. Devotees will be able to pay respects in a dozen Mexican parishes through Aug. 28.

"Our faith for St. Jude Thaddeus is a family tradition," Iris Guadalupe Hernández, 36, said while waiting in line to board one of the trajineras escorting the relic early Sunday.

Her mother's devotion for the saint began four decades ago, when St. Jude granted her what she wished for the most: a family.

"My mother was unable to have babies," Hernández said. "She had three miscarriages before asking St. Jude for a miracle, so after she got pregnant with my brothers and me, she promised that she would spread the word and our family has honored him since then."

Like Hernández, thousands of Mexicans gather to celebrate St. Jude every Oct. 28 — his official feast day — at San Hipólito church in Mexico City. The saint is one of the most revered figures in Mexico after Our Lady of Guadalupe, one of several apparitions of the Virgin Mary.

"He is one of the most significant expressions of popular piety among the humblest," said the Rev. Jesús

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Alejandro Contreras, a priest in the Xochimilco's diocese. "In our neighborhoods, where there are mainly merchants, devotion toward this apostle is seen as an intercession for difficult causes."

Contreras, who was among those who traveled through Xochimilco's canals in the one-hour trajinera procession, said that being close to the relic is a way to "come into contact with the Lord."

Parishioners were already waiting in nearby boats when the relic left the dock at 8 a.m. Once the procession began, devotees clapped in rhythm with the Mexican traditional songs performed by a local band.

Hundreds more awaited for the relic's arrival at the end of the canal, where a procession on foot made its way to Xochimilco's cathedral.

In the Mexico City neighborhood, locals are also devoted to the "Niñopa," a life-size wooden figure of a baby that is believed to be about 450 years old. Its origins are unknown but it was found after the Spanish conquest, and Catholic families in Xochimilco typically keep images of him in their homes.

"Our faith here is divided," said Arturo Espinosa, 52, standing close to a makeshift altar carrying a figure of St. Jude. "There's a lot of faith here in Xochimilco and the Niñopa is our main representative, but we also have other emblems and participate in these celebrations."

The festive spirit of the procession was led by "comparsas," groups of local dancers who are devoted to a specific image of the infant Jesus. Each member wears a long velvet robe, a big drum-like hat and a mask depicting an old man,. The costume is meant to mock the Spanish conquerors.

Francisco García, 33, jumped steadily in his brown velvet robe while he and fellow comparsa dancers waited to make their way to the cathedral, where the archbishop welcomed the relic and celebrated Mass in its honor.

"My mom is sick, so I came to ask St. Jude for her surgery to go well," said García, who had already seen the relic on July 28, right after it arrived in the capital and was taken to the Zocalo, Mexico City's main square.

"I was so moved I started crying," García said. "I told him (St. Jude): 'You called for me, so here I am.'"

The relic was to be on display in an oratory next to Xochimilco's cathedral until nightfall, and its trip through central Mexico's churches resumes Monday. It is scheduled to leave the country in late August.

## Debby's aftermath leaves thousands in the dark; threatens more flooding in the Carolinas

By RON TODT and HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The weather system previously known as Hurricane Debby was not quite done with parts of the U.S. Sunday as flood warnings remained in effect in North Carolina and thousands were without power in New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

After hitting Florida as a hurricane Aug. 5, the storm spent nearly a week unleashing tornadoes and flooding, damaging homes and taking lives along the East Coast before moving into Canada on Saturday.

While many rivers had receded by Sunday, flood warnings remained in effect across central and eastern North Carolina, where more thunderstorms were possible over the next few days. With the ground already saturated from Debby, the National Weather Service said localized downpours could result in additional flash flooding throughout the coastal Carolinas.

Authorities in Lumberton, N.C., said in a Facebook post Saturday that one person died after driving into floodwaters on a closed road and getting swept away. Officials didn't identify the driver, but said that what they hoped would be a post-storm rescue, quickly turned into a recovery.

"It bears repeating," the agency said in the post. "Never drive into flooded roadways and obey road closed signage."

In New Bern, North Carolina, business was brisk at the Halftime Pub and Grub restaurant Sunday afternoon just after a flash flood warning was issued, said server Chastity Bettis.

"Right now, it's thundering, sprinkling and pretty dark so I'd say it's going to start raining hard here pretty soon," she said. "If you live here, you're pretty used to hurricane season and it being like this, but the last week or two we've been getting it pretty rough."

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In South Carolina, the National Weather Service's Charleston office warned Sunday that as much as 3 to 4 inches of additional rainfall was possible in the afternoon and evening, and could lead to flash flooding. Showers and thunderstorms could develop across Charleston County down through Chatham County and inland, the office said.

Even in drier areas, more than 35,000 homes and businesses in Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania and Vermont still had no electricity as of Sunday afternoon, according to the tracking website PowerOutage.us. Some 23,000 outages lingered in hard-hit Ohio, where Debby-related storms including tornadoes blew through the northeastern part of the state on Wednesday.

Debby's last day and night over the U.S. inundated parts of New York, Pennsylvania and New England with rain and flash flooding on Friday, prompting evacuations and rescues.

Stacey Urban, whose family owns the Moss Vanwie Farm in Canisteo, New York, said the floodwaters destroyed about three-fourths of the 1,200 acre farm, including about 400 acres of corn, 200 acres of soybeans and hundreds more acres of hay used to feed their cows and other animals.

"This is complete and total devastation," she said by phone Sunday as fire department officials were bailing out the home's flooded basement. "We never thought this would happen."

Urban said the family, which has operated the farm about 37 years, hasn't had a chance to take a full accounting of the damage but said all their 150 cows and 200 youngstock are safe and all farm equipment has been recovered.

"Whether it all works is another thing," she said. "The water came in fast."

Recovery efforts were ongoing in upstate New York's Steuben County. Officials announced plans to distribute water bottles and clean-up kits to residents impacted by flash flooding on Sunday and Monday. The Red Cross also opened a shelter for flood victims at the Corning-Painted Post High School and planned to operate it until Monday.

The county, located along the Pennsylvania state line, declared a state of emergency Friday and ordered several towns evacuated as flood waters engulfed homes, farms and roadways. The area has been hit by devastating flash floods in prior storms, including in 2021.

"Twice in three years the Tuscarora Creek turned from a gentle stream into a raging beast," county officials wrote in a post on the government's Facebook page Sunday afternoon. "It's just too much. The sun still rose Saturday. Volunteers fixed breakfast. People from all four towns rolled up their sleeves, took a deep breath."

Officials in Tioga County in north-central Pennsylvania said Sunday morning that 10 teams of emergency service volunteers would be out surveying residents about damage as responders kept up the search for a person missing since the flooding.

"Please be kind to them, because these are volunteers ... they work here in the 911 center, they're fire, police, they're EMS, these folks are dedicating their Sunday to help you out," said County Commissioner Marc Rice.

Faith-based disaster relief organizations were also mobilizing to help assess damage and provide help, state Rep. Clint Owlett said. "That's going to be a big deal."

Meanwhile, the National Hurricane Center is tracking another potential tropical storm in the Atlantic. Officials said a tropical depression is likely to form within the next day or two and could approach portions of the Greater Antilles by the middle of the week.

## English town of Southport mourns 9-year-old stabbing victim and calls for an end to unrest

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The people of Southport, England, came together Sunday for the first of the funerals for three girls killed during a dance class, remembering 9-year-old Alice da Silva Aguiar's radiant smile and calling for an end to the unrest that has convulsed Britain since the attack two weeks ago.

Hundreds of mourners packed St. Patrick's Catholic Church and spilled into the street outside, which



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had been decorated with pink ribbons and balloons in Alice's honor. Chief Constable Serena Kennedy was among them and she delivered the parents' message that no one should commit acts of violence in their daughter's name.

"I am ashamed and I'm so sorry that you had to even consider this in the planning of the funeral of your beautiful daughter, Alice," said Kennedy, who heads the Merseyside Police force, which covers the area around Liverpool. "And I hope that anyone who has taken part in the violent disorder on our streets over the past 13 days is hanging their head in shame at the pain that they have caused you, a grieving family."

Far-right activists have used misinformation about the attack at a Taylor Swift-themed dance class that killed Alice as a pretext for anti-immigrant demonstrations. They descended into riots and looting as mobs attacked mosques, shops owned by immigrants and hotels housing asylum-seekers. The disturbances have been fueled by social media users who spread misinformation about the suspect in the July 29 stabbing rampage.

Rumors, later debunked, quickly circulated online that the suspect was an asylum-seeker, or a Muslim immigrant. The suspect was born in Wales and moved to the Southport area in 2013. His parents were originally from Rwanda.

The violence calmed on Wednesday when far-right demonstrations anticipated in dozens of locations across Britain failed to materialize. Instead, peaceful anti-racism protesters showed up in force.

But on Sunday, the focus was on Alice.

Her parents, Sergio and Alexandra, described Alice as a "perfect dream child" who loved animals and moved through the world with confidence and empathy.

"We feel shocked, unimaginable pain, we miss you," they said in a tribute read on their behalf. "From time to time, the pin drops. When mommy says 'Good night, Sergio, good night Alice,' and then it hits us all over again. We don't hear you back."

Jinnie Payne, the headteacher at Churchtown Primary School, remembered that Alice once decorated a teacher's classroom pointer as a magic wand and outlined the seven "Alice qualities" that she wished every student had.

Those included having a big smile, a genuine interest in others and treating everyone equally.

"This has to be my favorite, how a child at such a young age could not favor one friend over another," she told the congregation. "Friends, she played equally with them all. That is so hard to do, and she mastered it."

But she also loved to dance.

On Sunday, her parents released a photo of Alice standing next to a cardboard cutout of Swift as she waited for her last dance class to begin.

"The time has come to say 'there goes Alice,'" Payne said tearfully. "We are letting you go dancing now, Alice. Teach those angels a few dance moves."

## Ukraine's president acknowledges military incursion onto Russian soil

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Days after Ukraine began a surprise military incursion into Russia's Kursk border region, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has broken the government's silence on it by indirectly acknowledging the ongoing military actions to "push the war out into the aggressor's territory."

Zelenskyy's comment came in his nightly address late Saturday.

Ukraine's incursion into Russia continued for a sixth day Sunday. It's the largest such attack since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion on Feb. 24, 2022 and is unprecedented for its use of Ukrainian military units on Russian soil. Ukraine's raid into Russia caught Moscow unaware and was an embarrassment to Russian military leaders who have scrambled to contain the breach.

The Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement on Sunday that its forces engaged Ukrainian troops in Tolpino, Zhuravli and Obshchy Kolodez, the official Tass news agency reported. Tolpino is 25 kilometers

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(15 miles) from the Ukrainian border.

Evacuation of civilians living in Russia's border areas with Ukraine continued Sunday. Russian state television aired footage of evacuees at a tent camp in the city of Kursk. According to the report by RTR, more than 20 temporary accommodation centers have been set up in the region.

The exact aims of the operation remain unclear, and Ukrainian military officials have adopted a policy of secrecy, presumably to ensure its success. Military experts have said that it is likely intended to draw Russian reserves away from the intense fighting in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, while a presidential adviser suggested that it may strengthen Kyiv's hand in any future negotiations with Russia.

But Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Sunday that Ukraine "understands perfectly well" that the recent attacks "make no sense from a military point of view."

"The Kyiv regime is continuing its terrorist activity with the sole purpose of intimidating the peaceful population of Russia," she added.

**Fire at the Zaporizhzhia Power Plant**

Meanwhile, a fire in the vicinity of the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Power Plant was reported by Ukrainian officials late Sunday. According to Yevhen Yevtushenko, the head of the military administration of Nikopol, which is across the river from occupied Enerhodar where the plant is located, Russian forces set fire to automobile tires in the cooling towers to make it appear as though a fire had broken out.

"Perhaps this is a provocation or an attempt to create panic in the settlements on the right bank of the former reservoir," he said. Zelenskyy also said Russia was using the plant to blackmail Ukraine and playing on Western fears of escalation. Yevhen Balytskyi, the Russia-appointed governor of the occupied Zaporizhzhia region, accused Ukrainian forces of shelling the plant and causing the fire. He provided no evidence for the claim.

**Overnight drone and missile attacks**

Overnight into Sunday, a Russian drone and missile barrage on Kyiv killed two people, including a 4-year-old boy. Russia attacked Ukraine with four ballistic missiles and 57 Shahed drones, Ukraine's air force said. Air defenses shot down 53 of the drones.

The bodies of a 35-year-old man and his son were found under rubble after missile fragments fell on a residential area in Kyiv's suburban Brovary district, according to Ukraine's State Emergency Service. Another three people in the district were wounded in the attack. It was the second time this month that Kyiv has been targeted, said Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv City Military Administration.

Popko said ballistic missiles didn't reach the capital, but that suburbs took the hit, while drones aiming for the capital were shot down.

In Russia, Kursk's regional governor said that a Ukrainian missile shot down by Russian air defenses fell on a residential building, wounding 15 people. The Russian Defense Ministry said that 35 drones were shot down overnight over the Kursk, Voronezh, Belgorod, Bryansk and Oryol regions.

Ukraine hasn't commented on the Sunday drone attacks inside Russia. But they come as Ukraine has increased the pace of similar drone attacks largely targeting military infrastructure and oil depots in recent weeks.

**Belarus says it's sending forces to its border**

Meanwhile, Belarus said that it was sending more troops to its border with Ukraine on Saturday, saying Ukrainian drones had violated its airspace as part of Kyiv's military incursion into Russia's Kursk region.

Authoritarian leader Alexander Lukashenko said Belarusian air defense forces destroyed dozens of targets flying from Ukraine over the Mogilev region, which borders Russia, on Friday evening.

"The Ukrainian armed forces violated all rules of conduct and violated the airspace of the Republic of Belarus. In the eastern direction, very close to us in the Kostyukovich district," Lukashenko said at a meeting in Minsk on Saturday.

Belarusian Defense Minister Viktor Khrenin said the government regards the violation of its airspace as a provocation and is "ready for retaliatory action."

## US surgeon general was warned by his mom to avoid politics, but he jumped into the fray anyway

By AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — The dated gold and silver trophies packed in the china cabinet of Dr. Vivek Murthy's childhood home still boast the surgeon general's many talents, from dance performances to math competitions. Growing up in a Florida suburb, it seemed to his family that Murthy could succeed at just about anything. But when a middle school world history teacher suggested he might one day make a good secretary of state, his mom staged an intervention.

"She got really worried," Murthy said in an exclusive interview with The Associated Press last month, while his mom giggled at his retelling of the story. "She called my dad. She said, 'You need to come home and talk to him because he's thinking about going into politics.'"

Now, in his second term as the "Nation's Doctor," Murthy hasn't run from the political, as his mother hoped. He's charged toward it.

He has taken on powerful tech companies, accusing their addictive algorithms and dangerous content of negatively affecting children's mental health. Earlier this year, he went as far as asking Congress to approve a surgeon general's warning label on social media, on platforms such as Instagram or TikTok. In June, Murthy released his most politically charged report yet, declaring that gun deaths and injuries in America had reached such critical mass that they have created a public health crisis.

A focus on guns

Republicans had long feared Murthy harbored plans to state that gun violence a public health crisis, speculation that almost derailed his first appointment to the job by Democratic President Barack Obama a decade ago.

Murthy attracted Obama's attention while Murthy was working as an internist at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, when he corralled thousands of doctors to lobby for passage of the Affordable Care Act. The political organizing also led him to his wife, Alice Chen, who signed onto his letters from Los Angeles, where she was working as a doctor. The two bonded over text messages and phone calls across time zones.

But Murthy's social media comments describing guns as a "health care issue" sparked a delay of his confirmation and left the country without a surgeon general for more than a year, with even some Democrats refusing to approve him. Republican President Donald Trump promptly fired Murthy.

Murthy was reconfirmed under the Biden administration in 2021, with support from every Democratic senator and a handful of Republicans. He has an annual salary of \$191,900.

As surgeon general, Murthy had largely stayed quiet on gun violence, until now.

He points out that the numbers changed after he became surgeon general for the second time: Gun violence became the leading killer of U.S. children, surpassing car crashes and cancer in 2021. More than 4,752 children died from firearm injuries that year, a study from the American Academy of Pediatrics says.

The stories too awful to ignore that he heard while traversing the country on listening tours have helped shape what issues he decides to weigh in on, he said.

There was the grandmother who told him she does not send her grandson to school in light-up sneakers just in case they might attract the attention of a school shooter. And the mom who, after surviving a mass shooting, always reconsidered leaving the house in flip-flop sandals in case she had to flee another one.

"When you hear these stories again and again from middle school students, from high school students and college students, those stories stick with you," Murthy said. "It was inescapable to me that we had to do something about this."

Murthy's report is full of statistics that show gun deaths, suicides and injuries are worsening. He concludes by saying Congress should act — with laws that ban large-capacity magazines for civilian use, require universal background checks for gun purchases, restrict their use in public spaces and penalize people who fail to safely store their weapons.

The reaction was predictable. Doctors and Democrats praised it. Republicans jeered. The National Rifle

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Association called Murthy's report a "war on law-abiding citizens." Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind., accused him of "flip-flopping," noting that Murthy had told him gun violence would not be a focus of his term.

Murthy believes his report, which has no teeth, might move the conversation, even a little. He sat down with the AP just four days after Trump had been nicked in the ear with a bullet from a would-be assassin during a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania. There was little call to take up gun measures after the latest shooting to shock the nation.

"My hope is that we can shift looking at it as a polarizing and political issue and see it for what it is, which is a public health issue that affects all of us from people in small communities in America to people ... running for high office in our land," Murthy said.

The surgeon general is also emphasizing a different side effect of gun violence: the mental health toll. He dedicates an entire chapter and four pages of his 40-page report to the issue, noting that half of U.S. teenagers 14 to 17 worry about school shootings.

Americans' declining mental health

The demise of Americans' mental health, a topic that seems to have bipartisan interest in Congress but little consensus on how to deal with it, has been a theme in nearly every report released during Murthy's second term.

Past surgeon generals have rarely weighed in on mental health in such a robust way.

Many focused on physical health: alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, breastfeeding, exercise and healthy bones, for example. Murthy, in his reports, has spent the past three years delving into social media's impact on youth, loneliness, health care worker burnout and misinformation.

Those are matters he did not expect to tackle when he was first appointed to the job more than a decade ago.

But Murthy sees them as problems that are straining Americans' overall health.

Loneliness skyrocketed during the COVID-19 pandemic, when people culled their friend groups and cut back on the time they spent in person with those friends — down to a historic low of just 20 minutes every day. The state of loneliness, Murthy concluded in his 2023 findings, can increase the risk of premature death by 30%.

Murthy spent his time during the pandemic and in between terms consulting and giving speeches. He raked in \$2 million working with companies such as Netflix, Airbnb and Carnival Cruises, and wrote a book, "Together," focused on loneliness.

He shares in that book how he felt unprepared to handle the impact loneliness had on his patients' health and happiness. His reports could change that for future doctors.

"The response has been overwhelmingly positive, not just from the public but from the medical and public health profession" Murthy said. "And I have a theory as to why, which is that doctors are actually seeing loneliness and mental health challenges on the front lines themselves in exam rooms, in hospitals each and every day."

After his term ends in March, Murthy does not know what is next. But he said he still wants to focus on mental health and loneliness.

'People are everything'

Murthy traces his interest in eradicating loneliness back to the Miami suburbs, where he retreated last month with his wife and two young children to spend a few summer days under the palm trees of his childhood home alongside his parents, sister and grandmother.

It was here where he says he learned the most about the power of relationships. First, from watching his parents, immigrants from India, work hard to carve out a community of their own in a city where they knew no one when they arrived decades ago. The pair launched a weekend school for the children of other Indian immigrants to learn about the culture and music of their homeland.

As he grew older, he helped his mother in the front office of his dad's family medical practice. When tragedy struck, he went with them to visit patients' homes, including a trip to visit a grieving widow in the middle of the night.

"They taught me from the youngest of ages that people are everything," Murthy said of his parents,



Myetraie and Hallegere. "Whenever they had a patient who was in need, a friend who lost a job or lost a loved one, they would be there on the phone or in person, bringing food or just sitting by the bedside and holding their hand."

Even in the July humidity and heat, his family crowds the kitchen to fry dosas, an Indian crepe, and ke-sari bath, a sweet raisin wheat mix, over the hot oven. His mother stuffs plastic bags full of food, insisting any visitors in the house take one home. Murthy's 7-year-old son wraps himself around his father — and won't let go — as dinner is served up in the kitchen.

It's a long-standing tradition for the Murthys.

Decades ago, after homework was finished, the family ate dinner together every night, said Hallegere Murthy. He still tells his own patients to treat family dinners as a "therapeutic session" and recommends they put away cellphones while catching up at the dinner table.

"I always tell my patients family unity and family interaction is very important, especially if the only time you all can be interacting is during the dinner time," Hallegere Murthy said.

## **Jordan Chiles has been stripped of a gymnastics bronze medal, but the USOPC says it will appeal**

By WILL GRAVES AP National Writer

PARIS (AP) — U.S. Olympic officials are appealing a court ruling that resulted in American gymnast Jordan Chiles being asked to return the bronze medal she won in the Paris Olympics floor exercise.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) voided an on-floor appeal by Chiles' coach that vaulted her to third, saying the appeal came 4 seconds beyond the 1-minute time limit for scoring inquiries.

USA Gymnastics disputed the timing, saying in a statement Sunday that the agency submitted video evidence to CAS that showed coach Cecile Landi first appealed 13 seconds before the deadline.

"The time-stamped, video evidence submitted by USA Gymnastics Sunday evening shows Landi first stated her request to file an inquiry at the inquiry table 47 seconds after the score is posted, followed by a second statement 55 seconds after the score was originally posted."

The dispute over such minute details sets up what could be a months- or years-long legal battle over the gymnastics scores.

The International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) said Saturday night it would respect the court's decision and elevate Ana Barbosu of Romania to third. The International Olympic Committee confirmed the ruling Sunday, announcing that it was reallocating the medal from Monday's final.

"We firmly believe that Jordan rightfully earned the bronze medal, and there were critical errors in both the initial scoring by the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) and the subsequent CAS appeal process that need to be addressed," the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee statement said.

CAS ruled Saturday that Team USA coach Landi's inquiry to have 0.1 added to Chiles' score came outside the 1-minute window. The CAS ad hoc committee wrote that Landi's inquiry came 1 minute, 4 seconds after Chiles' initial score was posted.

The IOC said in a statement it will be in touch with the USOPC regarding the return of Chiles' bronze and will work with the Romanian Olympic Committee to discuss a reallocation ceremony honoring Barbosu.

"The initial error occurred in the scoring by FIG, and the second error was during the CAS appeal process, where the USOPC was not given adequate time or notice to effectively challenge the decision," said a USOPC statement, which was released Sunday.

It was unclear the exact process the appeal would take first. The two potential places the USOPC could take the appeal would be to Switzerland's highest court, the Swiss Tribunal, or the European Court of Human Rights.

CAS wrote Saturday that the initial finishing order should be restored, with Barbosu third, Romanian Sabrina Maneca-Voinea fourth and Chiles fifth. The organization added the FIG should determine the final ranking "in accordance with the above decision," but left it up to the federation to decide who would get

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the medal behind gold winner Rebeca Andrade of Brazil and silver medalist Simone Biles of the U.S.

The FIG said it was the IOC's call on whether to reallocate the medal. The IOC confirmed Sunday it would respect FIG's decision and seek to have Chiles' medal returned.

The rapid turn of events adds another layer to what has been a difficult few days for all three athletes.

Romanian gymnastics legend and 1976 Olympic champion Nadia Comaneci feared for Barbosu's mental health because of the wrenching sequence in which she went from bronze medalist to fourth-place finisher.

"I can't believe we play with athletes mental health and emotions like this... let's protect them," Comaneci posted on X earlier in the week.

Chiles hinted at the decision in an Instagram story on Saturday, indicating she is heartbroken and is "taking this time and removing myself from social media for my mental health, thank you."

U.S. teammates offered support to Chiles, a two-time Olympian.

"Sending you so much love Jordan," American star Simone Biles posted on Instagram. "Keep your chin up 'Olympic champ' we love you."

Barbosu and Maneca-Voinea were left outside the medals in the floor final after finishing with matching scores of 13.700. Barbosu thought she had won bronze over Maneca-Voinea via a tiebreaker — a higher execution score — and began celebrating with a Romanian flag.

Chiles was the last athlete to compete and initially given a score of 13.666 that placed her fifth, right behind Maneca-Voinea. Landi called for an inquiry on Chiles' score was announced.

"At this point, we had nothing to lose, so I was like 'We're just going to try,'" Landi said after the awards ceremony. "I honestly didn't think it was going to happen, but when I heard her scream, I turned around and was like 'What?'"

Judges awarded the appeal, leapfrogging Chiles past Barbosu and Maneca-Voinea.

Barbosu made it a point after returning home to Romania that she had no problem with Chiles.

"I only want for everybody to be fair, we don't want to start picking on other athletes of any nationality," Barbosu told reporters. "We as athletes don't deserve something like that, we only want to perform as best as we can and to be rewarded based on our performance. The problems lie with the judges, with their calculations and decisions."

Chiles' mother, Gina Chiles, called out the critics in a post, writing she was "tired" of the derogatory comments being leveled at Jordan.

"My daughter is a highly decorated Olympian with the biggest heart and a level of sportsmanship that is unmatched," Gina Chiles posted. "And she's being called disgusting things."

The uncertainty also tinges what had been a beautiful moment on the medal stand, when Chiles and Biles knelt to honor Andrade after the Brazilian star won her fourth medal in Paris.

## Early Harris-Walz rallies feature big crowds, talk of 'joy' and unsolicited GOP counterprogramming

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Big crowds, go-to applause lines, talk of joy — and some unsolicited Republican counterprogramming.

These were common themes during the first big campaign swing for Vice President Kamala Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, as the new Democratic ticket barnstormed through five battleground states this past week on a get-to-know-us tour.

They opened with a boisterous rally in Philadelphia on Tuesday, hours after Harris announced Walz as her running mate. From there it was a march through Wisconsin, Michigan, Arizona and Nevada. Planned stops in Georgia and North Carolina were washed out by Tropical Storm Debby.

The tour was a way to help both candidates introduce themselves to voters, especially independent and undecided voters in states where the Democrats are in tight races against Republican nominee Donald Trump and his running mate, Ohio Sen. JD Vance.

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It was also a way for Harris and Walz to get to know each other better.

A look back at the campaign swing:

Size matters

Thousands of people have been flocking to Harris' campaign rallies, a sign that her groundbreaking candidacy has generated new momentum among Democrats who were unenthused about President Joe Biden's reelection bid. Harris is the first Black woman and first person of Asian descent to become a major political party's nominee for president.

By the campaign's count, 12,000 people turned out for rallies in Philadelphia and Eau Claire, Wisconsin. It was 15,000 in the Detroit area and in Glendale, Arizona. In Las Vegas on Saturday, more than 12,000 people were inside a university arena when authorities halted admissions because people were becoming ill waiting outside in 109-degree heat to go through security. About 4,000 people were still in line when the entrances closed, the campaign said.

To Lance Jones, a Tucson native who attended the Arizona rally, it felt like "the tables have turned with Harris and Walz." He predicted his state "is going from basically red to purple to blue."

Those crowd numbers annoyed Trump, who regularly attracts thousands to his own rallies.

"Oh, give me a break," he said at a news conference when asked about Harris. "Nobody's had crowds like I have."

Republican counterprogramming

The Republican ticket didn't just weigh in from afar, Vance tried to shadow his Democratic rivals during the opening days of their tour. He made appearances in Philadelphia and Detroit hours before the Democrats arrived in those cities.

But after Harris and Vance landed around the same time in Eau Claire on Wednesday, the Republican stepped off his plane and walked toward Air Force Two.

Vance later joked about the in-your-face move, saying he had a "bit of fun" while trying to "check out my future plane." Air Force Two would become his primary mode of travel if he and Trump are elected in November.

The stump speeches

Harris and Walz delivered basically the same speeches — heavy on personal biography — from one rally to the next, with some tweaks to tailor their remarks to the particular audience and state.

Harris added lines about fighting for working people and the upside of organized labor to her remarks in Michigan. In Arizona and Nevada, where migration is a big concern, she drew on her prosecutorial background to tell the crowd she had gone after transnational gangs, drug cartels and smugglers when she was California's attorney general.

"I prosecuted them in case after case, and I won," Harris said.

In Las Vegas, where the economy is heavily dependent on the hospitality industry, she promised to work to eliminate federal taxes on tips for restaurant and other service industry employees. Trump, who floated the same idea several months ago, posted on social media that she was a "copycat."

Harris closed her rallies by asking people what kind of country they want to live in, before calling them to action and declaring, "When we fight, we win."

Walz, largely unknown outside the Midwest, went deep on his personal story of serving in the Army National Guard and his years as a high school teacher and football coach, as a member of Congress and governor. In a campaign partly centered on restoring reproductive rights, he shares that he and his wife, Gwen, suffered through years of in vitro fertilization treatments before their daughter, Hope, was born.

Go-to applause lines

Each candidate has lines that rev up the crowd

— "Hear me when I say, I know Donald Trump's type," says Harris, describing the kinds of people she went after as a prosecutor.

— "Even if we wouldn't make the same choice for ourselves, there's a golden rule: Mind your own damn business," says Walz, explaining what he said was the Midwest approach to private, personal decisions such as whether to have an abortion.

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— “We’ll sleep when we’re dead,” says Walz, urging audiences to give it their all for however many days are left in the campaign.

New buzzwords: ‘joy’ and ‘weird’

Walz introduced both words to the campaign. Even before he joined the Democratic ticket, his description of Trump and Vance and their policies as “weird” caught on. Harris herself used the description a few times.

As Walz says, “No one’s asking for that weird crap.”

Walz also credits Harris with “bringing back the joy” to politics, and Harris herself described the Democratic ticket as “joyful warriors.”

‘Lock him up’

At several stops, the crowd started chanting “lock him up” aimed at Trump, an echo of the chants that Trump’s campaign audiences directed at Democrat Hillary Clinton during the 2016 race.

Harris has a ready comeback to move things along. “Hold on. Let the courts take care of that. We’re going to beat him in November,” she says.

Likewise, she had a ready rejoinder for disruptions from protesters upset that the administration isn’t doing more to protect Palestinians during Israel’s war with Hamas in Gaza.

As she told them in Arizona, “I respect your voices but we are here to now talk about this race in 2024.”

Who’s counting?

At each stop, Walz reminded people of the countdown to Election Day, Nov. 5.

By Friday in Phoenix, it must have seemed a blur: He was off by a day when he set the countdown at 87, instead of 88 days.

He isn’t the only one counting.

A troop of Girl Scouts greeted the vice president at the airport in Wisconsin on Wednesday, 90 days out from the election. Snippets of their conversation overheard by reporters suggested they may have been chatting about summer plans.

Harris was heard replying, “I’m planning on going somewhere in 90 days.”

Bonus stop

Harris had one last stop on Sunday — San Francisco — before returning to Washington. This one was all about collecting campaign cash for the fight ahead.

House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., joined Harris for the event, which the campaign said raised more than \$12 million.

Pelosi spoke of wanting “democracy to win an Olympic gold” on Election Day. And Harris, to cheers after saying “we will win this election,” told supporters, “We do not have a day to waste.”

## Paris and the Olympics have changed each other during their summer fling

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — In French, there are no goodbyes.

Instead, Olympic crowds from Paris to the surfing venue in Tahiti were saying “au revoir” — see you again — as the 2024 Games drew to a close Sunday.

After the 100-year wait since Paris’ last Games, no one can say when France’s capital and the Olympics will next embrace. But this much is certain: They’re both emerging changed — in some ways for the better — from their summer romance.

Paris’ third Games — it also hosted in 1900 — have been filled with passion. French fans surprised even themselves with their enthusiasm for two and a half weeks of sports, plunging into the party like Léon Marchand parting the waters for his four swimming golds.

Marchand, in particular, stopped time with his feats — forcing pauses in play at other Olympic venues because spectators cheered so intensely when France’s new darling won again and again. Other French medal winners like judo icon Teddy Riner and mountain biker Pauline Ferrand-Prevot also whipped up



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hometown joy.

Initial grumbling about barricades and other intense security measures that disrupted locals' lives — not to mention arson attacks on France's high-speed rail network — gave way to choruses of "Allez les bleus!" or "France, let's go!"

There were uplifting stories galore for non-French fans, too. Quite literally in the case of Armand Duplantis, the Swedish pole vaulter who broke his own world record in winning Olympic gold.

Simone Biles shone, again. Having set the brave example of prioritizing mental health over competition at the 2021 Tokyo Games, she came back to win three gymnastics golds and a silver.

The Eiffel Tower peering over beach volleyball made that arena Ze Place To Be. Celine Dion's musical comeback at the Olympic opening, belting out Edith Piaf's "Hymne à l'amour" ("Hymn to Love") from the tower's first floor, was high in emotion.

Rain drenched VIPs and fans alike but didn't dampen the wacky and wonderful opening ceremony. Its displays of LGBTQ+ pride and French humor were too much for some: Donald Trump and French bishops were among those who took offense.

As well as many highlight-reel moments, the Games also experienced lows. The ugliest were torrents of online vitriol targeting female boxers Imane Khelif and Lin Yu-ting as well as the opening ceremony's creative teams.

Still, like all good romances, the Paris-Olympics affair left fans yearning for more. That couldn't be said of all Games of late.

China — as host of the Summer Games in 2008 and Winter Games in 2022 — faced accusations of human rights abuses. There was Russia's doping cover-up at its Sochi Winter Games in 2014, quickly followed by the beginnings of its land grabs in Ukraine. All left stains on the Olympic brand.

So, too, did the wastefulness and corruption of the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro that made authorities in Paris determined to do things differently.

"Breaking the norms" became the unofficial motto of Paris Olympic organizers, who worked to slash the Games' carbon emissions and revamp the Olympic model to make it less anachronistic.

The results were evident. The Paris Games weren't perfect — can flying thousands of athletes across the world ever be with the climate in crisis? But the French capital provided new examples of how the Olympics can be improved.

Take the Olympic cauldron, for example: Paris' use of electricity and LED spotlights to make it seem that its cauldron was ablaze puts pressure on Los Angeles, the next host city, and Brisbane, Australia, in 2032 to not go back to burning tons of fossil fuels.

Also gone? Expensive new venues that don't get used much, or at all, once the Olympics have left town. Paris instead widely used existing or temporary arenas.

Marchand and other swimmers raced in a came-as-a-kit pool that will be dismantled and rebuilt in a Paris-area town where kids can't wait to splash around in it. Breaking (another innovation) and other urban sports played out on Concorde Plaza, where French revolutionaries removed King Louis XVI's head.

When the lawns have grown back, there will mostly be only memories of other temporary arenas where archery, equestrian events and other sports looked as glamorous as Paris catwalk shows, set against iconic backdrops.

The Eiffel Tower, Versailles Palace, the domed Grand Palais (turned into a breathtaking arena for fencing and taekwondo) and other monuments became Olympic stars in their own right. The use of Paris' cityscape showed that the Olympics can — and should — adapt to their hosts, not the other way around.

The sole purpose-built signature sports venue was the new aquatics center in Seine Saint-Denis, where China won all eight diving golds, an unprecedented sweep.

The northern suburb of Paris is mainland France's poorest region and had such a shortage of pools that many of its kids can't swim. Regional leader Stéphane Troussel told The Associated Press that thanks to Games-related refurbishments and newly built swim centers that teams used for Olympic training, much of Seine Saint-Denis has now largely caught up — in pools at least — with better-off parts of France.

But the city's ambitions flirted at times with an excess of zeal.

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Making triathletes and marathon swimmers do something that many Parisians recoil at themselves — plunge into the murky Seine River— proved problematic. Its waters were repeatedly deemed too dirty for training swims and forced a postponement of the men's triathlon — moved to the same day as the women's race, near the majestic Pont Alexandre III.

The mayor of Paris, who took a pre-Games dip in the Seine to demonstrate that its long-toxic waters are now swimmable, says 1.4 billion euros (\$1.53 billion) plowed into a cleanup of the river is one of the Games' most transformative legacies. Still, the water quality concerns raised questions about whether many Parisians will dive in when City Hall plans to open the Seine for public swimming next summer.

Massive security required to safeguard the opening ceremony along the river — in a city hit repeatedly by extremist attacks in 2015 — proved financially painful for nearby businesses that were sealed inside the security cordon and lost customers.

French authorities also made unprecedentedly broad use of discretionary powers under an anti-terror law to keep hundreds of people, often minorities, they deemed to be potentially dangerous away from the biggest event modern France has ever organized. The use of AI-assisted surveillance also fueled critics' complaints that the Games are leaving an unwanted legacy of police repression.

Inside the high-security bubble of the athletes' village, some complained about the eco-friendly cardboard beds, rooms that weren't air-conditioned and shortages of some foods — byproducts of Paris' drive for sustainability and waste reduction. Squaring the circle of how the Olympics can be viable in a warming world is going to be an ever-increasing challenge for hosts.

Still, the joyful crowds showed that the popular verdict was more positive than negative. The organizers' slogan was "Games Wide Open." Seeing such happiness on streets that felt so unsafe when al-Qaida and Islamic State gunmen and suicide bombers sowed terror in 2015 seemed to complete Paris' long recovery.

After the Paralympics from Aug. 28 to Sept. 8, normal life will resume. But the Games will keep ringing in Paris.

A victory bell in the Olympic stadium that winning athletes rang in celebration will get a new home — a restored Notre Dame. The cathedral's planned reopening in December, following more than five years of rebuilding after its 2019 fire, is the next big milestone on Paris' horizon.

The cathedral's rector, Rev. Olivier Ribadeau Dumas, said the bell will hang in the roof above the altar and be rung whenever Mass is celebrated.

The chimes will serve as lasting reminders of the Games' "extraordinary atmosphere" and Olympic-inspired "unity of the French people that was very beautiful," he said.

"This bell will be the sign of how these Games have left an imprint on France," Dumas said. "That really makes me happy."

## Vance hails Trump's Fed idea and pushes back against criticism over past words on American families

BY BILL BARROW Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Republican vice presidential nominee JD Vance used a round of Sunday news show appearances to disparage the Democratic ticket and promote Donald Trump's record and second-term plans and defend himself from criticism over past remarks that have become a campaign issue.

The Ohio senator, in a series of taped interviews, said there was merit to Trump's suggestion that presidents have more control of U.S. monetary policy and kept up the GOP line that Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, the Democrats' vice presidential candidate, had exaggerated his military record.

Vance, who shadowed Vice President Kamala Harris and Walz during their visits to several battleground states last week, was quizzed about abortion and his past comments about American family life, among other topics.

Some highlights from his appearances:

Trump is right on Fed independence, Vance says

Trump recently suggested that presidents "should have at least a say" on monetary policy set by the

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Federal Reserve. He did not offer specific proposals.

Curtailing the Fed's independence from political interference as it determines interest rates would be a fundamental change. Even as he tried to argue that Trump said nothing about taking "direct" control of rates, Vance endorsed Trump's general idea.

"President Trump is saying I think something that's really important and actually profound, which is that the political leadership of this country should have more say over the monetary policy of this country," Vance said. "I agree with him. That should fundamentally be a political decision. Agree or disagree, we should have America's elected leaders having input about the most important decisions confronting our country."

Bank of America CEO Brian Moynihan questioned the wisdom of such a major change. "I think if you look around the world's economies and you see where Fed central banks are independent and operate freely," he said, "they tend to fare better than the ones that don't."

Mining Walz's military record

Walz served 24 years in the Army National Guard and was once deployed to Europe, though never to an active war zone. In a video from 2018, he referred to carrying weapons "in war." The Harris campaign said last week that Walz misspoke.

"Scandalous behavior," said Vance, a military veteran.

When it was noted that Trump avoided Vietnam with dubious claims of bone spurs, Vance said that "obviously a lot of people have reasons for not serving. I criticize somebody for embellishing their record, for lying, saying, 'I went to war.'"

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, a combat veteran and a top Harris ally, said Republicans are circulating "the one time" that a long-serving veteran "slipped up" talking about his military service.

Medical abortion and Florida's referendum

Vance dodged when asked about his position on an upcoming Florida referendum that would repeal Republican-passed abortion restrictions and ensure more access to abortion services.

Speaking broadly about states and reproductive rights, Vance said Trump "has said explicitly they're going to make this decision on a state-by-state level."

Vance struggled to clarify Trump's position on whether he would support federal limits on the medical abortion drug mifepristone.

Trump said in his June debate with Biden that he would not block it. At his Florida news conference last week, he offered a disjointed answer and said, "You also have to give a vote" on the matter. Vance suggested that "maybe" Trump had difficulty hearing and understanding a reporter's question.

Walz responded in a statement through the Harris campaign that Trump and Vance "are going to ban medication abortion. ... Vice President Harris and I will make sure that you make your health care decisions because we have a rule, whether you'd make the same decision as someone else: Just mind your own damn business."

Vance and Buttigieg's back-and-forth on family

During Vance's Senate campaign in 2021, he said in a Fox News interview that "we are effectively run in this country via the Democrats," and referred to them as "a bunch of childless cat ladies who are miserable at their own lives and the choices that they've made and so they want to make the rest of the country miserable, too."

He said that included Harris, who has two adult children, and Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, who is gay and a married father of twins but had no children at the time of Vance's comment.

The senator said a "sarcastic remark I made three years ago" has obscured a serious debate about "pro-family" policies, explaining that "I criticize people for being anti-child" in their policy pursuits.

Vance also in the past has suggested giving extra votes for people with children.

"It's not a policy proposal. It's a thought experiment, right?" he said in a Sunday interview, arguing he was reacting to others' ideas to lower the voting age.

"Anybody who disagrees with him is anti-child?" Buttigieg countered in a news show appearance. "He seems incapable of talking about a vision for this country in terms of lifting people up. ... It's always about

disparagement.”

## **Sifan Hassan wins women’s marathon at Paris Olympics after trading elbows with Tigst Assefa**

By JEROME PUGMIRE AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — Nobody will ever accuse Sifan Hassan of taking the easy route at the Olympics.

Heading into the last 150 meters of her 10-day Olympics odyssey that spanned three events and 38 miles (62 kilometers), the Netherlands’ runner traded elbows with Tigst Assefa of Ethiopia, and then sprinted by her to win the last track event of the Paris Games.

Hassan added gold to the bronze medals she won in the 5,000 and 10,000 meters.

“I feel like I am dreaming. At the end, I thought, ‘This is just a 100-meter sprint. Come on, Sifan. One more. Just feel it,’” Hassan said. “Every step I challenged myself, and now I am so grateful.”

Hassan raised her hands and yelled as she crossed the line, before wrapping the Dutch flag around her head. Then, taking in the enormity of her win, Hassan plunged her head in her hands and appeared to weep with joy.

The finish had everything: suspense, speed, grit and feistiness, all against the stunning backdrop of a golden dome glittering under the morning sun.

Hassan, an Ethiopia native, finished in an Olympic record time of 2 hours, 22 minutes, 55 seconds. Assefa won silver, three seconds behind, and Kenya’s Hellen Obiri took the bronze.

The Ethiopian team lodged a protest to have Hassan disqualified for obstruction, but it was rejected by the Jury of Appeal. It looked as if Assefa was blocking Hassan before they traded elbows.

Hassan did not attend the post-race news conference, where Assefa said she would have won if Hassan hadn’t impeded her.

“I didn’t expect at that moment it would happen. Maybe at that moment, if she didn’t push me I would have the gold,” Assefa said through a translator. “But anyway, I’m so happy for her that she gets the gold medal.”

Assefa declined to specify if she asked for the protest or if it was the Ethiopian team on its own.

“I can’t say anything, but she is a good athlete,” Assefa replied.

By simply completing the marathon, the 31-year-old Hassan ran more than 38 miles. She now has six Olympic medals. In Tokyo, Hassan won the 5,000 and 10,000 and finished third in the 1,500.

“She has shown the world that she can do everything,” Obiri said. “People say it’s impossible, but she’s done it. So I say ‘Big up’ for her.”

Obiri had tried to up the pace earlier, knowing she couldn’t take Hassan in a sprint.

“She is so strong,” Obiri said. “No way we could break her.”

Breaking from tradition, the women’s marathon was held on the final day of the Olympics instead of the men’s race.

Hassan used the same tactic in the hilly, 26.2-mile course as she does on the oval. She lingered behind the leaders for the bulk of the race before launching a late-race kick that will go down as one of the best the sport has seen.

As Hassan gathered to make her last pass, Assefa tried to block her path. Hassan moved to the inside around a bend.

Assefa tried to squeeze her against the barrier separating the course from the cheering fans. The runners traded elbows, then Hassan took off to victory.

Hassan’s legend started building three years ago at the Tokyo Games when she was tripped up in a heat of the 1,500 but scrambled to her feet to win the race. She then went on to claim the bronze.

She wasn’t as dominant over the past two years, in part because she was storing up for this feat.

After the 5,000 meters last Monday and the 10,000 meters on Friday, Hassan had roughly 35 hours to recover for the marathon.

She entered the Games looking to match Emil Zatopek’s performance from 1952, when the Czech run-



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ner swept the 5,000, 10,000 and the marathon at the Helsinki Games.

Hassan fell short, but she left a lasting impression.

"She's inspired so many people," said Obiri, a two-time Olympic silver medalist in the 5,000 meters.

Sharon Lokedi of Kenya was fourth on Sunday, and defending champion Peres Jepchirchir, her compatriot, placed 15th.

After 21 miles (almost 34 kilometers), Jepchirchir started falling back. That's when Hassan and Obiri joined Amane Beriso Shankule and Lokedi at the front.

Shankule dropped off the pace near the end, making it a four-way race for gold, which became three when Lokedi fell back on the approach to the finish opposite the gold-domed Invalides monument, site of French emperor Napoleon's tomb.

The marathon route traced the footsteps of an historic march that took place during the French Revolution.

The Women's March on Versailles in 1789 was organized by women in the marketplace of Paris as they protested the high price of bread, leading to their trek from Paris to Versailles.

Starting out from Hôtel de Ville (City Hall), the somewhat hilly route passed through the parks and forests. Runners took in landmarks such as Opéra Garnier and the Louvre museum.

About halfway through, they passed near the regal grounds of the Palace of Versailles — once the home of French royalty — before doubling back toward Paris.

## Trump reportedly used a slur against Harris in private conversations

By The Associated Press undefined

Former President Donald Trump reportedly has used a slur often targeted at women to describe Vice President Kamala Harris during at least two private conversations. His campaign denies it.

The New York Times cited two people who, on different occasions, heard Trump call Harris a "b——." The people were granted anonymity to describe private discussions.

In response, Trump campaign spokesperson Steven Cheung said, "That is not language President Trump has used to describe Kamala and it's not how the campaign would characterize her."

Trump, a Republican, has a history of making derogatory statements about women and his political opponents. He has called Harris, the Democrats' presidential candidate, and other women, including 2016 Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, "nasty," and he bragged about grabbing women's genitalia in the infamous "Access Hollywood" tape.

He called Carly Fiorina, one of his rivals for the Republican nomination in 2016, "horseface" during a campaign debate. Last month, Trump said falsely that Harris, who is Black and of Asian descent, has misled voters about her race.

Trump has said that E. Jean Carroll, a writer who accused him of raping her, was a "nut job" who invented "a fraudulent and false story" to sell a memoir. A New York jury found Trump liable for sexual abuse, but not rape, in a civil case filed by Carroll.

Trump has also directed disparaging comments toward men. He branded former rivals Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida "liddle Marco," Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas "lyin' Ted" and former Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida "low energy Jeb."

## Paris Olympics Memorable Moments: Simone Biles was the star but the spotlight reached many faces

By JENNA FRYER AP National Writer

PARIS (AP) — Simone Biles stole the show at the Paris Olympics with a captivating comeback that had everyone watching everything she did both in and out of the gymnasium.

All eyes were on Biles as she won four medals, but the spotlight was bright enough to highlight new names, new faces and some unlikely new stars. The Paris Games will be remembered for breathtaking venues,

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unprecedented accessibility and Snoop Dogg taking a starring role in NBC's record-smashing coverage. Paris introduced the world to "The Pommel Horse Guy" and "The Real John Wick" and a meme-making performance by an Australian professor in the Olympic debut of breaking.

French swimmer Léon Marchand delivered in his home Olympics with a Michael Phelps-like performance, winning five medals, four of them gold. Ilona Maher angled for a shot on reality TV show "Love Island" after leading the United States to a heart-stopping late victory that gave the U.S. its first ever a medal, a bronze, in rugby sevens.

Noah Lyles was crowned the fastest man in the world for winning the 100 meters, but after he finished third in the 200 — his first loss in his favorite event since the Tokyo Olympics three years ago — he revealed he had tested positive for COVID-19. Sha'Carri Richardson chased down two competitors in the rain to end her first Olympics with a relay gold after settling for silver in the 100.

The United States won the medal count — 126 in total and the women's basketball team closed the Games by winning gold to tie China with an Olympic-best 40. The Americans again prevailed in both men's and women's basketball, and women's soccer, too.

Here's a look at some of the top moments of the Paris Olympics:

Biles soared to gold

Biles returned to the Olympics three years after she pulled out of multiple events at the Tokyo Games for mental health reasons and won four medals, three of them gold.

She was the most popular attraction in Paris and competed in front of celebrity-packed crowds. Those who couldn't sit in the stands with Tom Cruise, Spike Lee, Ariana Grande and Lady Gaga tuned in from afar as NBC said 34.7 million viewers across its platforms watched Biles lead the United States to team gold.

Next up for the greatest gymnast in Olympic history is a 30-stop "Gold Over America Tour" for the GOAT. Swimming struggles

Nine days of competition wrapped up with the Americans barely pulling off the lead in the gold-medal standings in swimming, needing a victory in the last race of the Olympics to do so.

The U.S. finished with just eight golds, its fewest since the 1988 Seoul Games and one ahead of its biggest rival, Australia.

"It's one of the worst performances in history as a U.S. team," said Phelps, the most decorated Olympian ever.

The rest of the world totaled more victories (20) than the United States and Australia combined, the first time that's happened since the 1996 Atlanta Games.

Track troubles

The 34 medals and 14 golds for the Americans were their best showing in track and field in a non-boycotted Games since the early 20th century, when there were more events and fewer countries.

And that came despite the disappointment of Richardson not winning gold in the 100, Lyles losing the 200 after his COVID-19 diagnosis and the men's 4x100 meter relay fumbling its way to a disqualification.

The relay performance was so bad that Carl Lewis, a nine-time gold medalist, called for top-to-bottom changes within the American track and field program.

But the U.S. closed out strong: Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone set another world record in again winning the 400 hurdles, and she then was part of the 4x400 relay team that she and Gabby Thomas led to a runaway win on the final night at Stade de France.

The American men won gold in the same race in a much closer finish about 15 minutes earlier.

The 14 golds by the U.S. are the most in a non-boycotted Olympics since 1968.

USA hoops sweeps gold

Stephen Curry added more hardware to his legacy as he finally won an Olympic gold medal.

Curry scored 24 points and led the U.S. to a 98-87 win over France in the men's basketball final on Saturday. It was the fifth consecutive gold medal for the U.S. — and the 17th in 20 all-time appearances for the Americans at the Games.

Kevin Durant, the first four-time men's gold medalist in Olympic basketball history, scored 15 for the Americans, as did Devin Booker. And LeBron James, wearing metallic gold sneakers, scored 14 for the U.S.

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as he won his fourth Olympic medal and third gold.

Victor Wembanyama, in his first Olympic final, scored 26 points for France and was in tears after the game.

The women's team followed up Sunday by winning the last gold medal of the Games with a 67-66 victory over France.

It was the eighth straight gold for the women, who broke a tie with the American men's program that won seven in a row from 1936-68. The women's victory came less than 24 hours after the U.S. men's team also beat France in the title game, marking the first time in Olympic history that both gold-medal games featured the same two teams.

American women's soccer team back on top

The U.S. women's soccer team won its fifth Olympic gold medal by beating Brazil 1-0 in the final. The Americans had not won gold since the 2012 London Olympics.

The gold closed out an undefeated run to the title in their first international campaign under new coach Emma Hayes.

At the final whistle, the U.S. players celebrated as Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." played in the stadium.

Boxing controversy

Women's boxing was dragged into the culture wars over gender misconceptions involving two of the competitors.

Imane Khelif of Algeria and Li Yu-ting of Taiwan were heavily scrutinized because of a Russian-dominated International Boxing Association's decision to disqualify them from last year's world championships, claiming both failed an eligibility test for women's competition that IBA officials have declined to answer basic questions about.

Khelif endured intense scrutiny in the ring and online abuse from around the world over misconceptions about her womanhood and still won gold in the women's welterweight division.

Lin won a gold medal in the women's featherweight division one night later to cap her four-fight unbeaten run through Paris by winning Taiwan's first Olympic boxing gold medal.

"I'm a woman like any other woman. I was born as a woman, I live as a woman and I am qualified," Khelif said after her victory.

The International Olympic Committee took the unprecedented step last year of permanently banning the IBA from the Olympics following years of concerns about its governance, competitive fairness and financial transparency. The IOC has called the sex tests that the sport's governing body imposed on the two boxers irretrievably flawed.

## Summer tourists flock to boardwalks and piers while sticking to their budgets

By MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Small businesses along popular vacation destinations like boardwalks and piers in the U.S. say the number of tourists flocking to the waterfront is back to normal, meaning pre-2020 levels. But while the affluent are spending freely, lower-income vacationers are sticking to carefully planned-out budgets.

Sean Bailey, marketing manager of the SkyWheel observation wheel by the Myrtle Beach, S.C., Boardwalk and Promenade, said ticket sales for the 13-year-old attraction have exceeded 2019 levels since 2021, and so far this year are tracking slightly above 2023 levels.

Bailey has noticed that tourists buying the cheaper tickets — which increased from \$18 to \$21 this year — are planning ahead and buying online instead of walking up to the 200-foot attraction. A regular ride, or "flight," on the SkyWheel, which has glass enclosed gondolas that seat up to six, takes 10 to 15 minutes.

On the other end of the spectrum, the costlier tickets have become more popular. There are \$35 sunrise tickets and \$109 VIP tickets which include up to four people and get the buyer a flight that lasts 30 minutes. SkyWheel also offers a \$250 gender reveal package which includes a light show and a ride for up to six.

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"People are looking for more enhanced experiences beyond just the regular flight," Bailey said.

According to the U.S. Travel Association's forecast, 2024 tourism volume is expected to top 2019's numbers for the first time since the pandemic began, with 2.45 billion trips taken, up from 2.38 billion in 2023 and 2.40 billion in 2019.

Domestic tourism is rebounding faster than international tourism. U.S. domestic travel spending, which includes general travel spending and passenger fares, is expected to be \$975.6 billion in 2024, 98% of 2019 levels. International travel spending of \$153.9 billion is about 83% of 2019 levels. Both are adjusted for inflation, per the USTA.

Similar to the CEOs of large, consumer-focused companies, owners of small businesses say they see a divide in spending between affluent Americans, who have maintained their spending levels, and those in lower income brackets who are being more careful. Wall Street racked up double-digit gains last year and so far this year — even with some recent volatility — while wage increases have slowed and inflation remains a burden even though price pressures on consumers have eased.

At Navy Pier, which juts out into Lake Michigan in Chicago, Robin Harris, owner of Confidence Apparel, which sells clothing with affirmations on it, says foot traffic and sales are up this year compared with last year. She says customers are being more conscious about their spending, picking things they can wear more than once and choosing quality over quantity. Her top sellers are a \$30 T-shirt in a variety of colors that says "Inhale confidence, exhale doubt," and a \$75 jacket with a recipe-like list of ingredients including "Love, kindness, courage and resilience."

"(Customers) are starting to be a little bit more intentional about what they purchase instead of just purchasing anything and everything," she said.

Elsewhere on Navy Pier, Robert Gomez owns Beat Kitchen Cantina, a Mexican concession stand, and Bar Sol, a full restaurant with a patio. He says sales at the concession stand are up 30% compared with last year, with customers content to spend \$8 on a taco, up \$1 from last year. Gomez expanded his more upscale restaurant Bar Sol and made other improvements so sales aren't comparable.

Gomez also owns two live music venues that serve food, located away from the touristy areas. He said that while tourists on the Pier seem more than happy to pay \$40 for an entrée at Bar Sol, those neighborhood restaurants, which mainly attract local Chicagoans, aren't seeing the same level of spending.

"Tourists come in (to Bar Sol), expecting to spend too big, whereas a local patron is looking for better deals," he said. "It's much more price sensitive, it's almost the other extreme. And so, it's been a struggle for me with the neighborhood businesses in comparison."

At Laura's Fudge in Wildwood, N.J., which has been around since the 1920s, owner Dave Roach said sales of fudge, saltwater taffy and chocolate-covered turtles have risen each year since 2020. He said many customers, often families that have been going to the boardwalk for generations, save up all year to have money to spend at Wildwood.

"They know what it's going to cost them, and they don't mind spending the money," he said.

Michelle Rutkowski, who owns Boardwalk Best and Five Mile Marketplace on the Wildwood, N.J., boardwalk, which sell beach goods and souvenirs, has seen business ebb and flow for decades since her family has had businesses there since the 1980s.

Rainy weekends slowed business in April and May. But things have picked up since, particularly once school ended in mid-June.

Rutkowski said she feels positive about sales momentum this year, with shoppers spending on souvenirs like keychains and magnets and T-shirts with the unofficial Wildwood, N.J., mascot, a seagull with a French fry in its mouth.

"People have allotted a reasonable budget for vacation, and they're spending it," she said. "Maybe this won't be the year for back to 100% of that where it was, but definitely we are on that trajectory."



## Olympic boxing champion Imane Khelif filed a legal complaint for online harassment against her

PARIS (AP) — Olympic boxing champion Imane Khelif has filed a legal complaint in France for online harassment after a rain of criticism and false claims about her sex during the Paris Olympics, her lawyer said Sunday.

Khelif, who will be Algeria's flag bearer in the closing ceremony, won gold Friday in the women's welterweight division, becoming a new hero in her native Algeria and bringing global attention to women's boxing.

The complaint was filed Friday with a special unit in the Paris prosecutor's office for combating online hate speech, alleging "aggravated cyber-harassment" targeting Khelif, lawyer Nabil Boudi said. In a statement, he described it as a "misogynist, racist and sexist campaign" against the boxer.

It is now up to prosecutors to decide whether to open an investigation. As is common in French law, the complaint doesn't name an alleged perpetrator but leaves it to investigators to determine who could be at fault.

Khelif was unwittingly thrust into a worldwide clash over gender identity and regulation in sports after her first fight, when Italian opponent Angela Carini pulled out just seconds into the match, citing pain from opening punches. False claims that Khelif was transgender or a man erupted online, and the International Olympic Committee defended her and denounced those peddling misinformation. Khelif said that the spread of misconceptions about her "harms human dignity."

Earlier, Kirsty Burrows, an official in charge of the IOC's unit for safeguarding and mental health, filed a complaint with French authorities saying she received death threats and harassment online following a news conference in Paris at which she had spoken in defense of Khelif.

The Paris prosecutor's office said it received Burrows' complaint on Aug. 4 and agents from the National Unit for the Fight against Online Hate are investigating the alleged offenses, including death threats, public provocations aimed at attacking a person and cyberbullying. Under French law, the crimes, if proven, carry prison sentences that range from two to five years and fines ranging from 30,000 to 45,000 euros.

The Olympics-banned International Boxing Association disqualified Khelif and fellow boxer Lin Yu-ting of Taiwan from the world championships last year, claiming the two fighters failed unspecified eligibility tests for women's competition. The IOC has called the arbitrary sex tests that the sport's governing body imposed on the two women irretrievably flawed and has defended both boxers since the start of the Paris Games.

Experts say the scrutiny of Khelif and Lin reflected disproportionate scrutiny and discrimination toward female athletes of color when it comes to sex testing and false claims that they are male or transgender.

## American gymnast Jordan Chiles lost her bronze medal on floor exercise. What happened?

By WILL GRAVES AP National Writer

PARIS (AP) — Romania's Ana Barbosu replaced American Jordan Chiles as the Olympic bronze medalist in gymnastics floor exercise after the International Gymnastics Federation restored Barbosu to third.

The International Olympic Committee confirmed the reallocation of the medal less than 24 hours after the Court of Arbitration for Sport voided an appeal from Chiles' coach during Monday's competition that vaulted her over Barbosu and onto the podium.

Here's a look at how Chiles, Barbosu and Romanian Sabrina Maneca-Voinea wound up in a scoring controversy that has been painful for all three.

How did Jordan Chiles initially end up with the bronze?

Chiles qualified third in women's floor exercise and competed last in the eight-woman final, where the order was determined randomly in advance.

The 23-year-old finished her routine and was awarded a 13.666, which was fifth just behind Barbosu and Maneca-Voinea at 13.700.

Cecile Landi, who is Chiles' personal coach and also served as coach for Team USA in Paris, appealed to

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the judges to have an element restored to Chiles' routine. Judges approved the appeal, boosting Chiles' score by .1, good enough for Chiles to earn her third career Olympic medal to go with the team silver she won in Tokyo in 2021 and the team gold she helped the U.S. capture in Paris.

How did Romania appeal Jordan Chiles' bronze medal?

The Romanian Gymnastics Federation asked CAS to review the procedure surrounding Landi's appeal of Chiles' score.

International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) guidelines require coaches to make any appeal of a score within one minute of the score being posted.

CAS ruled that Landi officially made her appeal in 1 minute, 4 seconds, just past the deadline.

The appeal on Chiles was granted, with CAS ruling that Chiles' score should be dropped back down to 13.666 and that the initial order of finish should be restored.

So will Ana Barbosu get the bronze medal?

Yes.

CAS wrote in its ruling that the FIG shall determine the final ranking, but added that FIG should assign the medal "in accordance with" the CAS decision. The FIG placed Barbosu third, Maneca-Voinea fourth and Chiles fifth.

The FIG said while the initial order was restored, it was up to the IOC to determine what would happen with the medals.

The IOC announced the bronze would indeed go to Barbosu and that it would work with the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee to have the bronze awarded to Chiles returned.

The decision is in line with how the IOC typically views medal allocation.

At the Olympics, the governing body of each sport manages the competition and decides the results. The IOC typically accepts that result — once appeals to CAS are completed — and formally awards the medals.

Can the US appeal?

The U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee says it plans to try, but it's unclear what the exact process would be. The two potential places the USOPC could take the appeal would be to Switzerland's highest court, the Swiss Tribunal, or the European Court of Human Rights.

"The initial error occurred in the scoring by FIG, and the second error was during the CAS appeal process, where the USOPC was not given adequate time or notice to effectively challenge the decision," said the USOPC statement, which was released Sunday.

What happened with Sabrina Maneca-Voinea?

While Barbosu was relatively quiet in the aftermath, Maneca-Voinea was not.

She used her social media accounts to highlight what she believed was incorrect scoring during her routine. The judging panel dinged her 0.1 point for stepping out of bounds while spinning around to start a tumbling pass.

Video evidence seemed to indicate that Maneca-Voinea's heel did not actually step on the boundary. The Romanian federation asked CAS to restore 0.1 to Maneca-Voinea's score for a penalty that was given to her "without basis."

The request was denied in part because Maneca-Voinea's coach did not appeal the score in real-time during the meet.

What do the gymnasts think of this?

Chiles, who left Paris earlier this week to return home to the U.S., went dark on social media shortly before the CAS decision became public.

The two-time Olympian had been subject to attacks on her various social media platforms in recent days, with some critics suggesting she give the medal back.

Chiles posted on X not long after the final that "it's funny how some people can still never be happy for someone."

Maneca-Voinea put together an aggressive campaign on social media, asking for justice.

Barbosu asked for calm earlier in the week, blaming the judging panel and not the gymnasts.

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The Paris Olympics served as a comeback of sorts for one of the sport's former superpowers. The Romanian program medaled in the team final in 10 straight Olympics between 1976-2012 before falling on hard times over the last decade. When Barbosu and her teammates walked onto the floor for qualifying on July 28, it marked her country's first appearance under the rings in 12 years.

"We as athletes don't deserve something like that, we only want to perform as best as we can and to be rewarded based on our performance," Barbosu said after returning to Romania. "The problems lie with the judges, with their calculations and decisions."

American star and two-time Olympic champion Simone Biles encouraged Chiles — a longtime friend — to "keep her chin up." U.S. standout and six-time Olympic medalist Sunisa Lee chimed in late Saturday, putting the onus on the judges and calling the outcome "unacceptable."

## **'I don't want to die,' Uvalde student told 911 dispatcher during mass shooting**

By JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — As law enforcement officers hung back outside Khloie Torres' fourth-grade classroom in Uvalde, Texas, she begged for help in a series of 911 calls, whispering into the phone that there were "a lot" of bodies and telling the operator: "Please, I don't want to die. My teacher is dead. Oh, my God."

At one point, the dispatcher asks Khloie if there are many people in the room with the 10-year-old, who ultimately survived.

"No, it's just me and a couple of friends. A lot of people are," she says, pausing briefly, "gone."

Calls from Khloie and others, along with body camera footage and surveillance videos from the May 24, 2022, shooting at Robb Elementary School, were included in a massive collection of audio and video recordings released by Uvalde city officials on Saturday after a prolonged legal fight.

The Associated Press and other news organizations brought a lawsuit after the officials initially refused to publicly release the information. The massacre, which left 19 students and two teachers dead, was one of the worst school shootings in U.S. history.

The delayed law enforcement response to the shooting has been widely condemned as a massive failure: Nearly 400 officers waited more than 70 minutes before confronting the gunman in a classroom filled with dead and wounded children and teachers. Families of the victims have long sought accountability for the slow police response in the South Texas city of about 15,000 people 80 miles (130 kilometers) west of San Antonio.

Brett Cross' 10-year-old nephew, Uziyah Garcia, was among those killed. Cross, who was raising the boy as a son, was angered that relatives weren't told the records were being released and that it took so long for them to be made public.

"If we thought we could get anything we wanted, we'd ask for a time machine to go back ... and save our children, but we can't, so all we are asking for is for justice, accountability and transparency, and they refuse to give this to us," he said.

Jesse Rizo, whose 9-year-old niece Jacklyn Cazares was killed in the shooting, said the release of information Saturday reignited festering anger because it shows "the waiting and waiting and waiting" of law enforcement.

"Perhaps if they were to have breached earlier, they would have saved some lives, including my niece's," he said.

The police response included nearly 150 U.S. Border Patrol agents and 91 state police officials, as well as school and city police. While terrified students and teachers called 911 from inside classrooms, dozens of officers stood in the hallway trying to figure out what to do. Desperate parents who had gathered outside the building pleaded with them to go in.

The gunman, 18-year-old Salvador Ramos, entered the school at 11:33 a.m., first opening fire from the hallway, then going into two adjoining fourth-grade classrooms. The first responding officers arrived at

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the school minutes later. They approached the classrooms, but then retreated as Ramos opened fire.

At 12:06 p.m., much of the radio traffic from the Uvalde Police Department was still focused on setting up a perimeter around the school and controlling traffic in the area, as well as the logistics of keeping track of those who safely evacuated the building. They've had trouble setting up a command post, one officer tells his colleagues, "because we need the bodies to keep the parents out."

"They're trying to push in," he says.

At 12:16 p.m., someone with the Texas Department of Public Safety, the state law enforcement agency, called police to let them know a SWAT team was en route from Austin, about 162 miles (100 kilometers) away. She asked for any information the police could give about the shooting, the suspect and the police response.

"Do you have a command post? Or where do you need our officers to go?" the caller asks.

The police representative responds that officers know there are several dead students inside the elementary school and others still hiding. Some of the survivors have been evacuated to a building nearby. She doesn't know if a command post has been set up.

At 12:50 p.m., a tactical team enters one of the classrooms and fatally shoots Ramos.

Among criticisms included in a U.S. Justice Department report released earlier this year was that there was "no urgency" in establishing a command center, creating confusion among police about who was in charge.

Multiple federal and state investigations have laid bare cascading problems in law enforcement training, communication, leadership and technology, and questioned whether officers prioritized their own lives over those of children and teachers.

Some of the 911 calls released were from terrified instructors. One described "a lot, a whole lot of gunshots," while another sobbed into the phone as a dispatcher urged her to stay quiet. "Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry!" the first teacher cried before hanging up.

Just before arriving at the school, Ramos shot and wounded his grandmother at her home. He then took a pickup from the home and drove to the school.

Ramos' distraught uncle made several 911 calls begging to be put through so he could try to get his nephew to stop shooting.

"Everything I tell him, he does listen to me," Armando Ramos said. "Maybe he could stand down or do something to turn himself in," he added, his voice cracking.

He said his nephew, who had been with him at his house the night before, stayed with him in his bedroom all night, and told him that he was upset because his grandmother was "bugging" him.

"Oh my God, please, please, don't do nothing stupid," the man says on the call. "I think he's shooting kids."

But the offer arrived too late, coming just around the time that the shooting had ended and law enforcement officers killed Salvador Ramos.

Two of the responding officers now face criminal charges. Former Uvalde school Police Chief Pete Arredondo and former school officer Adrian Gonzales have pleaded not guilty to multiple charges of child abandonment and endangerment. A Texas state trooper in Uvalde who had been suspended was reinstated to his job earlier this month.

In an interview this week with CNN, Arredondo said he thinks he's been "scapegoated" as the one to blame for the botched law enforcement response.

Some of the families have called for more officers to be charged and filed federal and state lawsuits against law enforcement, social media, online gaming companies, and the gun manufacturer that made the rifle the gunman used.



## **A mass circumcision is marketed to tourists in a remote area of Uganda. Some are angrily objecting**

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press

NEAR MOUNT ELGON, Uganda (AP) — The dancers shook their hips to the beat of drummers who led the way, anticipating the start of mass circumcision among the Bamasaaba people of Uganda's mountainous east.

Yet the frolicking in the streets belied a dispute brewing behind the scenes as some locals questioned their king over the very public presentation of Imbalu, the ritualized circumcision of thousands of boys every other year in this remote community near Uganda's border with Kenya.

Could it be turned into a carnival, put on for the gaze of foreigners? Or should it remain a sacred ceremony in which families quietly prepare their sons to face the knife with courage?

The king, known as the Umukuuka, had his way ahead of the Aug. 3 ceremonial inauguration at a park in the town of Mbale, arguing for a traditional festival that also looked attractive to visitors. The organizers of Imbalu received over \$120,000 in financial support from the Ugandan government and a corporate sponsor.

In an interview with the AP, the Umukuuka asserted that organizing a modern Imbalu was challenging and defended his decision to market the ritual as a tourist event in line with Uganda's national development plan.

"Everything is changing as the population expands. People may not manage to follow the cultural processes," he said, citing the economic hardship and commercialization he said were diluting the communal aspect of Imbalu. "But we are fighting through the clan system that (Imbalu) remains intact."

But the Ugandan government's intervention has raised eyebrows among many Bamasaaba and underscored angst over the most important ceremony for this ethnic group of four million Ugandans. Some who spoke to the AP said they felt the Umukuuka, in his first year in office, was trivializing Imbalu by exposing it to outside interests.

"Our leadership is being hijacked by" national political leaders, said Wasukira Mashate, an elder who is a custodian of Bamasaaba cultural property, charging that the Umukuuka was missing the counsel of clan leaders with real spiritual authority.

"I don't think they are having any role" in Imbalu, he said, speaking of clan leaders. "It was for our own benefit culturally, but now it is becoming a national event because the government of Uganda has captured it."

At the ceremonial inauguration, an angry crowd gathered outside the totemic shrine of the clan that historically has launched Imbalu by cutting the first candidates. Clan members pointed to the young mixed-breed bull tethered to the grass as offensive, saying only a local breed would suffice as an appropriate sacrifice to the gods.

"This cow is exotic. We are Bamasaaba, and he brought us a white animal," said Kareem Masaba, speaking of the Umukuuka. "He has insulted us. His predecessors used to come into the shrine and participate in the rituals, but this man will not come here. He is disrespecting us."

The dispute over the sacrificial animal delayed the inauguration into the late afternoon as anger grew among men wielding machetes, sharp sticks and other crude weapons. The Umukuuka, seated not far away in a tent among dignitaries from elsewhere in Africa, did not budge. Clan members retaliated by refusing to present the first group of initiates before the Umukuuka, a former forestry officer whose real name is Jude Mudoma.

The mass circumcisions will last until the end of 2024.

The tribal initiation of boys into adulthood has long been controversial in African countries such as South Africa, where incidents of botched, deadly circumcisions among Xhosa-speaking people have inspired campaigns for safe clinical circumcision. Among the Bamasaaba, whose cutting method is just as violent, there have been no calls to end the practice. The strongest adherents see Imbalu as more important than ever amid widespread infant circumcision in hospital settings. They say those boys who are not initiated in the tribal way risk suffering lifelong social delinquency.

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Tribal circumcision is performed by a traditional surgeon wielding a knife usually fashioned from melted nails. Bamasaaba hundreds of kilometers away in the Ugandan capital of Kampala are known to hunt down Imbalu dodgers they then cut by force. The bodies of uncircumcised men can be violated before burial.

Circumcision "helps us to be strong," said Peter Gusolo, a traditional surgeon, gesticulating to express his people's purported sex prowess. Those who resist circumcision will be cut "even if (they) are dying," he said. "We circumcise you at night. We bury you in the morning."

He added, "We cannot bury you in the land of the Bamasaaba without (being circumcised). No, no, no. It is in the constitution of the culture of the Bamasaaba. ... It is a curse if you bury into the land people who are not circumcised."

Gusolo, whose family lives in a house on the side of a hill planted with arabica coffee plants, spent days isolating himself in a cave and postponing intimacy with his wife so that he could be possessed by the spirit of Imbalu. Even though men like Gusolo wield certificates issued by local health authorities to prove their skill, the title is hereditary. The surgeons say they cannot afford to be flippant with their work because the wounds they inflict will not heal if they are not spiritually strong.

The first candidate for initiation this year was a teenager whose face had been smeared with mud and the dregs of homemade beer. He spread his legs and unblinkingly stared at the sky while a swarm of frenzied people around him pushed and shoved, demanding courage. The surgeon, applying no anesthetic, took hold of the boy and skinned him with a swift movement of his hands. A member of the boy's family, aiming to protect the boy from the threat of witchcraft, collected the skin and took it home.

Emmanuel Watundu, the father of a 17-year-old boy who was among the first to be cut, said he stood by Imbalu, describing it as the life-changing event his son asked for. But he criticized what he saw as a carnival atmosphere by "peer groups (who) normally behave differently than we used to."

Outside Watundu's house, where a crowd had gathered, drunken people of all ages danced wildly, and one woman briefly exposed her breasts. A politician seeking a seat in the national assembly had a procession marching in the dirt road. Boys fondled girls and swung legs at them.

Watundu said the street dancers he saw were "from different areas" and that most people attending Imbalu came "to do business." He said of the Ugandan government's involvement that it had "given some bad picture" about the Umukuuka's role as the chief organizer of Imbalu.

Wilson Watira, who chaired the Imbalu organizing committee, defended the government's role as a supporter of Bamasaaba tradition. The exuberant street processions left people feeling joyful, he said.

"When it comes to performance of culture, of culture itself ... it remains culture. We only want to show the world that even when we are performing this culture, it can also attract other people," he said.

In the past, people thought the ritual was barbaric and brutal, Watira said.

"It's the reason why we said, 'No, we are not barbaric. We can make this thing very attractive, and you will enjoy it.'"

## **The US Navy's warship production is in its worst state in 25 years. What's behind it?**

By DAVID SHARP Associated Press

The Navy's ability to build lower-cost warships that can shoot down Houthi rebel missiles in the Red Sea depends in part on a 25-year-old laborer who previously made parts for garbage trucks.

Lucas Andreini, a welder at Fincantieri Marinette Marine, in Marinette, Wisconsin, is among thousands of young workers who've received employer-sponsored training nationwide as shipyards struggle to hire and retain employees.

The labor shortage is one of myriad challenges that have led to backlogs in ship production and maintenance at a time when the Navy faces expanding global threats. Combined with shifting defense priorities, last-minute design changes and cost overruns, it has put the U.S. behind China in the number of ships at its disposal — and the gap is widening.

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Navy shipbuilding is currently in "a terrible state" — the worst in a quarter century, says Eric Labs, a longtime naval analyst at the Congressional Budget Office. "I feel alarmed," he said. "I don't see a fast, easy way to get out of this problem. It's taken us a long time to get into it."

Marinette Marine is under contract to build six guided-missile frigates — the Navy's newest surface warships — with options to build four more. But it only has enough workers to produce one frigate a year, according to Labs.

Where have all the workers gone?

One of the industry's chief problems is the struggle to hire and retain laborers for the challenging work of building new ships as graying veterans retire, taking decades of experience with them.

Shipyards across the country have created training academies and partnered with technical colleges to provide workers with the skills they need to construct high-tech warships. Submarine builders and the Navy formed an alliance to promote manufacturing careers, and shipyards are offering perks to retain workers once they're hired.

Andreini trained for his job at Marinette through a program at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. Prior to that, he spent several years as a production line welder, making components for garbage trucks. He said some of his buddies are held back by the stigma that shipbuilding is a "crappy work environment, and it's unsafe."

But that's not the reality, he said. His health benefits are better than at his previous job, he'll be getting a pension for the first time, and there's an opportunity to acquire skills even more advanced than what he received during his initial training.

Plus, Andreini says, he feels like he's serving his country.

"It makes me happy to be able to do my part, and possibly make sure sailors and some of my friends in the service come home safely," said Andreini, whose father was in the Navy in Vietnam.

Alonie Lake, also a welder, fellow graduate of the technical college's program and a single mom, is happy for a job with long-term stability — something Marinette's backlog of Navy contracts virtually guarantees.

Lake, 32, said she thinks a lot of younger people are interested in jobs in the trades "and the satisfaction of working with their hands to create tangible results."

Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro recently underscored the importance of training programs during commencement ceremonies at a community college in Maine. The college has partnered with nearby Portsmouth Naval Shipyard to teach workers the skills needed to repair nuclear submarines.

"It is incumbent upon all of us to consider how we can best lend our talents and, in the case of the graduates, their newly developed skills, to build up our great nation for all Americans, and defend against the threats and challenges of today," he said.

Once workers are hired, will they stay?

The Navy is trying to help shipyards ensure that once new workers are trained and hired, they stick around in a tight labor market.

In Wisconsin, part of \$100 million in Navy funding that's being provided to Marinette Marine is being used for retention bonuses at the shipyard, whose past employee retention was described by Del Toro as "atrocious."

The shipyard, which employs more than 2,000 workers, is providing bonuses of up to \$10,000 to keep workers, said spokesperson Eric Dent. "The workforce shortage is definitely a problem and it's a problem across the board for all shipyards," he said.

Retention is a concern even for shipyards that have met their goals, including Huntington Ingalls Industries, which makes destroyers and amphibious warships in Mississippi and aircraft carriers and submarines in Virginia.

The company is creating training partnerships with colleges and public schools at all grade levels. Enhancements in Mississippi include more than a million square feet (92,900 square meters) of covered work area, cooldown and hydration stations, and a second dining area with a Chick-fil-A. Huntington Ingalls also collaborated with the Navy and the city of Newport News, Virginia, to build a new parking garage for

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workers and sailors.

A problem decades in the making

Much of the blame for U.S. shipbuilding's current woes lies with the Navy, which frequently changes requirements, requests upgrades and tweaks designs after shipbuilders have begun construction.

That's seen in cost overruns, technological challenges and delays in the Navy's newest aircraft carrier, the USS Ford; the spiking of a gun system for a stealth destroyer program after its rocket-assisted projectiles became too costly; and the early retirement of some of the Navy's lightly armored littoral combat ships, which were prone to breaking down.

The Navy vowed to learn from those past lessons with the new frigates they are building at Marinette Marine. The frigates are prized because they're less costly to produce than larger destroyers but have similar weapon systems.

The Navy chose a ship design already in use by navies in France and Italy instead of starting from scratch. The idea was that 15% of the vessel would be updated to meet U.S. Navy specifications, while 85% would remain unchanged, reducing costs and speeding construction.

Instead, the opposite happened: The Navy redesigned 85% of the ship, resulting in cost increases and construction delays, said Bryan Clark, an analyst at the Washington-based think tank Hudson Institute. Construction of the first-in-class Constellation warship, which began in August 2022, is now three years behind schedule, with delivery pushed back to 2029.

The final design still isn't completed.

Shifting threats and changing plans

Complicating matters further is something out of the Navy's control: the changing nature of global threats.

Throughout its history, the Navy has had to adapt to varying perils, whether it be the Cold War of past decades or current threats including war in the Middle East, growing competition from Chinese and Russian navies, piracy off the coast of Somalia and persistent attacks on commercial ships by Houthi rebels in Yemen.

And that's not all. The consolidation of shipyards and funding uncertainties have disrupted the cadence of ship construction and stymied long-term investments and planning, says Matthew Paxton of the Shipbuilders Council of America, a national trade association.

"We've been dealing with inconsistent shipbuilding plans for years," Paxton said. "When we finally start ramping up, the Navy is shocked that we lost members of our workforce."

The Navy insists it's taking the shipbuilding problems seriously.

"The Navy's role in defending our nation and promoting peace has never been more expansive or mattered more," said Lt. Kyle Hanton, a spokesperson for Del Toro's office. "We continue to work with our industry partners to identify creative solutions to solving our common challenges."

## Latinos are excited about Harris, but she has work to do to win the crucial voting bloc, experts say

By FERNANDA FIGUEROA Associated Press

Latino voters and leaders say they are enthusiastic about Kamala Harris as the Democratic presidential nominee, but for her to win their crucial support, they want to know where she stands on issues like the economy, immigration and education.

Vanessa Cruz Nichols, an assistant professor of political science at Indiana University, said Harris has considerable potential to appeal to Latino voters but is going to have to win over independents and those planning not to vote in the November election.

"She's got some work to do, reintroduce herself, let people know where she stands on a variety of issues," Cruz said. "She will have to work aggressively to appeal to voters, especially young Latino voters who are even more nonpartisan, more willing to either sit out an election or vote for a third-party candidate."

As the nation's largest minority group — 19.5% of the total population, according to the 2020 census —



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Latinos form a key voting bloc in what's shaping up to be a tight presidential election. Harris, the daughter of immigrants, has won the backing of influential Latino groups, and some feel her success hinges on energizing young Latino voters.

Maria Teresa, president of Voto Latino, said Harris' jumping into the race has sparked a "coalescing of the community." In focus groups that the organization started after President Joe Biden announced he would drop out of the race, more than half of young Latinos who initially said they were voting for a third party said they were shifting to vote for the Democratic Party, Teresa said.

"There is no path to the White House without specifically the young Latino vote," she said. "Our path to a different direction of the country is through young people."

More than 6 in 10 Latinos voters supported Biden in 2020, according to AP VoteCast, and 35% supported former President Donald Trump. However, a July poll from Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that only about 4 in 10 Latinos said they were somewhat or very optimistic about the future of the Democratic Party, and about one-quarter said the same about the Republican Party.

According to the same survey, Hispanic adults are divided in their opinions on Harris, with 44% holding a favorable view and 43% holding an unfavorable view. But about half of Hispanic adults said they would be satisfied with Harris as the Democratic nominee, up from 15% earlier in July.

After watching the presidential debate between Trump and Biden, Peruvian Mexican small-business owner Guillermo Francisco Cornejo, 35, said he was not going to vote in the presidential election. That changed when Biden stepped down and endorsed Harris. But Cornejo's decision is mostly guided by fear of what Trump will do if he wins, he said.

"Now it's like, yeah, for sure I will vote Democrat," said Cornejo, adding that he sees Harris as "very well-qualified" to be commander in chief. "If Trump gets elected, he's turning this country into Latin America in the way he does politics and everything."

On Friday, the League of United Latin American Citizens endorsed Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, through its political arm, the LULAC Adelante PAC, the first time the country's oldest Latino civil rights group has endorsed a presidential candidate since its founding in 1929.

"We can trust them to do what is right for our community and the country," Domingo Garcia, chairman of LULAC Adelante PAC and LULAC's immediate past president, said in a statement. "The politics of hate mongering and scapegoating Latinos and immigrants must be stopped!"

Harris was criticized for comments she made in 2021 telling migrants not to come to the U.S, when she was tasked with overseeing diplomatic efforts to deal with issues spurring migration in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras as well as pressing them to strengthen enforcement on their own borders.

But Harris' being a daughter of immigrants provides a sense of representation to many Latino families, which could help her get their vote, civic engagement advocates say.

Pascale Small, 35, a Costa Rican American who is a daughter of immigrants and a single mother of three Afro-Latina girls, said Harris appeals to her because of her family's background and her "commitment to ensuring that we are healing and growing as a country."

"She has a spirit of service, which I really admire and really appreciate. She has an amazing pursuit of equity and that is really important to me as I am raising my children," said Small, who wants to see the vice president address issues such as climate change, education, the economy and immigration reform.

Maca Casado, the Hispanic media director with the Harris campaign, said Harris has a record of supporting Latinos and the issues they care about, like health care and gun violence.

"Vice President Harris' campaign knows Latinos' political power and is the only campaign working aggressively to make the case because we won't take their votes for granted," Casado said.

But Bob Unanue, the Hispanic Leadership Coalition chairman for the America First Policy Institute said Trump — not Harris — continues to show commitment to issues that resonate with the Hispanic community such as job growth, education freedom, parental rights and securing the border.

"Unlike Kamala Harris, who has failed to address the crisis at our southern border ... and continues promoting failed economic policies, Trump offers a vision of prosperity and safety that many Hispanic voters are rallying behind," Unanue said.

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Experts have said Harris' pick of Walz will help the campaign appeal to voters in the important battleground states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

Teresa, the Voto Latino president, said in a statement that Walz has a strong record of defending democracy, voting rights and standing up for working families in Minnesota — values that align with those of the Latino community. Harris also has an opportunity to make her case in states like Pennsylvania with a large Puerto Rican population, which as U.S. citizens can vote once they move to a state, Teresa said.

Charlotte Castillo, managing director of Poderistas, a nonprofit organization focused on increasing civic participation by Latinas, said the announcement that Harris would be the Democratic nominee energized so many in the Latino community, which will be critical as in previous elections.

"I think in particular Latinas, typically we like to say, are the CEOs of their families. They are really driving the decisions for their families and have a huge influence on that," Castillo said. "So, I certainly think that Latinas have the potential to make a real outsized impact."

Castillo said whichever party is consistent in their outreach to Latino voters will get their vote.

"Once the community is engaged, they remain engaged," Castillo said. "Both parties need to start knocking on doors and doing it more consistently."

## Former students and colleagues recall high school teachers Tim and Gwen Walz as allies and advocates

By MICHAEL GOLDBERG and MARGERY A. BECK Associated Press

MANKATO, Minn. (AP) — Jacob Reitan said he told Gwen Walz he was gay before he told his parents.

Reitan was a student in 1999 at Mankato West High School in Minnesota, where Walz and her husband, Tim, were teachers. In her classroom, Gwen Walz had announced at the start of his sophomore year that her class was a safe place for gay students.

"I'd never heard a teacher ever talk about gay issues from the front of the classroom," recalled Reitan, now a 42-year-old lawyer in Minneapolis. "That act meant the world to me. It made me feel welcome in the place where I'm supposed to learn."

Gwen Walz's unwavering support was shared by her husband, who moved to Minnesota from rural Nebraska long before the Democrat became a congressman, governor and Vice President Kamala Harris' choice to be her running mate in her 2024 presidential campaign.

It was Tim Walz whom Reitan approached about starting a Gay-Straight Alliance at the high school. Having the backing of the football team's defensive coordinator — a straight, married man and soldier in the Army National Guard — gave the plan a boost.

Walz, a world geography teacher, offered to be the group's faculty adviser. That mattered, Reitan said, to a young man who had had his car window broken and a gay slur scrawled on his family's driveway.

But he said that is how Walz treated all students.

"He had the ability to talk about issues of bullying in a way that helped both the bully and the bullied," Reitan said. "He made clear that bullying makes no sense. It doesn't help anybody. And it made the school safer for me."

In introducing Walz as her running mate, Harris shared that story. But Walz's advocacy for the LGBTQ community has not been met with universal approval in the days since he joined the ticket. Some Republican elected officials and conservative commentators have cited Walz's opposition to bans on gender affirming care for minors as proof that he is too liberal to be vice president.

Tiffany Justice of Moms for Liberty, a parental rights group that has pushed to restrict the discussion of LGBTQ issues in schools, contended in a recent interview with Fox News that Walz is "the most anti-parent candidate that Kamala Harris could have chosen."

His approach stands in sharp contrast to actions taken in states such as Florida, Alabama and Iowa that have acted to restrict open discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity in schools.

Reitan said the high school's administration supported forming the club and that there was surprisingly little blowback. A few parents called and threatened to keep their kids out of school, he said, but the

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principal at the time simply replied that the school would mark those students absent.

Such criticism is rare among those who have spoken publicly about their experiences with Walz at Mankato West. Former students say Walz's classes felt like a bridge to the wider world.

"He made the world feel smaller and more approachable," said Nicole Griensewic, a student in Walz's geography class. "And so he would talk about China like it wasn't so far away and it wasn't so foreign."

Griensewic's brother had been bullied, she said, but he felt comfortable enough with Tim and Gwen Walz that he joined them on an educational trip with other students to China.

"Dare I say, there's a lot of toxic masculinity in the whole football realm," she said. "And to see someone who was a football coach, but also saying, 'Hey, we're going to respect everyone. And I absolutely won't put up with any of that crap.' That was really bold."

Adam Segar said Walz found a spot for him on the football team despite problems he had adding weight and muscle. Segar said that approach was commonplace with Walz — trying to make sure students and athletes who might not fit a traditional mold found a place.

"I think that's what Tim brought to small-town America was, you know, the willingness to have an open mind and ask the students to make sure that they did too," Segar said.

Ann Vote remembers Walz as an extrovert who was passionate not just about teaching kids, but learning from them. He supported her vision for a unique prom theme that was not included in the school vendor's premade prom kits and required nearly all the decor to be made by hand.

The theme was "In Our Wildest Dreams," which, Vote joked, seemed to foreshadow Walz's trajectory.

When he subbed for one of her classes, he showed a video that he continuously stopped so he could excitedly explain various elements of it.

"He was just so passionate and engaged in what we were to be learning at a time when a lot of teachers put videos on to give themselves a break," said Vote, who spent 12 years as a social studies teacher before becoming a motivational speaker. "Many of us at that school later became teachers."

The current high school principal, Sherri Blasing, did not teach with Walz, but she and her family lived next door to him for 22 years. When Blasing's four children became teenagers, her family found themselves short on transportation. Walz gave them an old Buick they named "Laverne" that she said was a testament to Walz's generosity.

"You see that common theme with Tim over and over again," Blasing said, "That he values every person for who they are, and he is going to do what he can to help them be the best that they can be."

John Considine, an offensive lineman on the school's 1999 state championship team, had Walz for geography class. Considine would often cut his lunch break short to show up early so the two could chat.

In the late 1990s, before cellphones permeated campus life, Walz invented expressions that some students came to call "Mr. Walz-isms."

One such Mr. Walz-ism that stuck with Considine was "11 to the ball." The phrase called for cohesion among all 11 players on the football field.

Pat Ryan got to know Walz as a colleague while teaching speech and theater. Ryan was in on a faculty prank aimed at the newly hired Walz that did not quite go as planned. Thanksgiving was around the corner, and the veteran teachers gave Walz what appeared to be a certificate for a free turkey from a local grocery store.

The certificate was a fake, and the teachers waited outside the store ready to have a laugh at Walz's expense.

Instead, Walz emerged from the store with a free turkey. He said Walz won people over that way.

"That's how charming he is," Ryan said. "You're going to have a hard time finding anyone who knows him and doesn't like him."

For Reitan, the connection was more personal. But he believes everything he knows about Walz translates into the world of politics.

"He is so authentic. He is exactly what he seems to be," Reitan said. "Tim Walz understands that being different is OK. Being different is part of the diversity of the schoolyard and the classroom, but also

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part of the diversity of our nation."

## Today in History: August 12, Charlottesville car attack

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, Aug. 12, the 225th day of 2024. There are 141 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Aug. 12, 2017, a driver sped into a crowd of people peacefully protesting a white nationalist rally in the Virginia college town of Charlottesville, killing 32-year-old Heather Heyer and injuring more than a dozen others. (The attacker, James Alex Fields, was sentenced to life in prison on 29 federal hate crime charges, and life plus 419 years on state charges.)

Also on this date:

In 1867, President Andrew Johnson sparked a move to impeach him as he defied Congress by suspending Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, with whom he had clashed over Reconstruction policies. (Johnson was acquitted by the Senate.)

In 1898, fighting in the Spanish-American War came to an end.

In 1909, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, home to the Indianapolis 500, first opened.

In 1944, during World War II, Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., eldest son of Joseph and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, was killed with his co-pilot when their explosives-laden Navy plane blew up over England.

In 1953, the Soviet Union conducted a secret test of its first hydrogen bomb.

In 1960, the first balloon communications satellite — the Echo 1 — was launched by the United States from Cape Canaveral.

In 1981, IBM introduced its first personal computer, the model 5150, at a press conference in New York.

In 1985, the world's worst single-aircraft disaster occurred as a crippled Japan Airlines Boeing 747 on a domestic flight crashed into a mountain, killing 520 people. Four passengers survived.

In 1990, fossil collector Sue Hendrickson found one of the largest and best preserved Tyrannosaurus Rex skeletons ever discovered; nicknamed "Sue" after Hendrickson, the skeleton is now on display at Chicago's Field Museum.

In 1994, in baseball's eighth work stoppage since 1972, players went on strike rather than allow team owners to limit their salaries.

In 2000, the Russian nuclear submarine Kursk and its 118-man crew were lost during naval exercises in the Barents Sea.

In 2013, James "Whitey" Bulger, the feared Boston mob boss who became one of the nation's most-wanted fugitives, was convicted in a string of 11 killings and dozens of other gangland crimes, many of them committed while he was said to be an FBI informant. (Bulger was sentenced to life; he was fatally beaten at a West Virginia prison in 2018, hours after being transferred from a facility in Florida.)

In 2022, Salman Rushdie, the author whose writing led to death threats from Iran in the 1980s, was attacked and stabbed in the neck by a man who rushed the stage as he was about to give a lecture in western New York.

Today's Birthdays: Investor and philanthropist George Soros is 94. Actor George Hamilton is 85. Singer-musician Mark Knopfler (Dire Straits) is 75. Singer Kid Creole (Kid Creole and the Coconuts) is 74. Film director Chen Kaige is 72. Jazz guitarist Pat Metheny is 70. Actor Bruce Greenwood is 68. Basketball Hall of Famer Lynette Woodard is 65. Rapper Sir Mix-A-Lot is 61. Actor Peter Krause (KROW'-zuh) is 59. Tennis Hall of Famer Pete Sampras is 53. Actor-comedian Michael Ian Black is 53. Actor Yvette Nicole Brown is 53. Actor Casey Affleck is 49. Boxer Tyson Fury is 36. Actor Lakeith Stanfield is 33. NBA All-Star Khris Middleton is 33. Actor Cara Delevingne (DEHL'-eh-veen) is 32. Tennis player Stefanos Tsitsipas is 26.