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Wednesday, Aug. 21

Senior Menu: Hamburger cabbage roll hot dish, mixed vegetables, muffin, pears.

School Breakfast: Cereal.

School Lunch: Cheese stuffed breadstick with marinara sauce.

First day of school

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship at Rosewood Court, 10 a.m.

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

Thursday, Aug. 22

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

School Breakfast: Egg omelet

School Lunch: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes.

Boys golf at Milbank, 10 a.m.

Groton Daily Independent

PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460



Friday, Aug. 23

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

School Breakfast: Pancake on a stick.

School Lunch: French bread pizza, green beans.

Saturday, Aug. 24

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

Sunday, Aug. 25

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

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:30 a.m., and at Groton, 10:30 a.m.; coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.

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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.

Lilly Drug Cuts Diabetes Risk

Pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly's weight loss drug tirzepatide was found to reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by 94% among people with excess weight, according to a study released yesterday.

The three-year study is the longest completed study of the drug and involved observing the effects of the weekly injectable in more than 1,000 patients with prediabetes who were obese or overweight. The study showed those who took the highest weekly dose at 15 mg saw a nearly 23% reduction in body weight on average and a 94% reduced risk of developing diabetes compared with prediabetics who took a placebo and lost 2% of their body weight on average.

Tirzepatide is the active ingredient in Eli Lilly's weight loss drug Zepbound and its diabetes version Mounjaro—both of which have gained popularity due to their aid in weight loss. Eli Lilly is the world's most valuable pharmaceutical drugmaker with a \$900B market cap and has seen its shares rise over 60% this year.

Disney-Reliance Deal Scrutiny

India's antitrust commission cast doubt on a proposed \$8.5B merger between Disney's India operations and Indian giant Reliance, arguing the deal's current terms are anticompetitive. The Competition Commission of India sent private notices to the companies requesting further concessions within 30 days to keep the deal afloat.

The proposed deal would give the joint venture broadcast rights for top leagues in cricket, the country's most popular sport. Roughly 100 million people tune in for matches in the renowned Indian Premier League with a total fanbase of over 750 million (more than double the US population). The new entity would control 40% of all TV advertising market share in India, with over 120 channels and two streaming services.

Reliance is India's largest public company by market capitalization and is owned by the billionaire Ambani family. Disney CEO Bob Iger claimed the move would de-risk Disney's operations in India amid growing competition.

World's Oldest Person Dies

Maria Branyas Morera, the world's oldest known person, has died at the age of 117, her family announced yesterday. Born on March 4, 1907, in San Francisco, she moved to Catalonia, Spain, at age 8. Morera witnessed major historical events, including two world wars and the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic, and she became the oldest known survivor of COVID-19 at age 113. She was active on social media as "Super Àvia Catalana" (or Super Catalan Grandma), amassing nearly 19,000 followers.

There are approximately 722,000 centenarians—those aged 100 and older—globally, with 108,000 in the US. Supercentenarians—those aged 110 and older—are rare, with about 250-300 worldwide and roughly 60-70 known in the US. Morera credited her longevity to enjoying nature, good company, avoiding toxic people, luck, and genetics.

Some studies suggest the maximum human lifespan could be between 120 and 150 years. The oldest verified person to have ever lived died in 1997 at 122. The current oldest living person is now 116-year-old Tomiko Itooka from Japan.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

"Call Her Daddy" podcast host Alex Cooper signs three-year exclusive deal with SiriusXM for a reported \$125M.

Beyoncé launches SirDavis, a new whiskey in partnership with Moët Hennessy.

Jennifer Lopez files for divorce from Ben Affleck after two years of marriage.

Democratic National Convention brings in 20 million viewers across 13 networks on its first night, edging the Republican National Convention's 18.1 million night one viewers; both of this year's figures top viewership in 2020.

World No. 1 men's tennis player Jannik Sinner will avoid a ban despite twice testing positive for an anabolic steroid; the US Open is set to begin next week.

Science & Technology

Chinese robotics startup Unitree reveals \$16K humanoid robot the company says is ready for mass production.

Herpetologists discover how python hearts withstand the digest stress of giant meals; the animals' heart tissue was found to become less stiff to accommodate extra blood flow during feeding sessions.

Tree study suggests ancient humans began migrating into the South Pacific as early as 50,000 years ago; timing of when humans reached modern-day Australia remains an open debate.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close lower (S&P 500 -0.2%, Dow -0.2%, Nasdaq -0.3%); S&P 500, Nasdaq end eight-day win streak, longest rally of 2024.

Gold prices reach record high, surpassing \$2,525 per ounce.

OpenAI strikes deal with Condé Nast, allowing the company access to content from Vogue, The New Yorker, Vanity Fair, and others for ChatGPT and upcoming Google competitor SearchGPT.

Justice Department declines to challenge Alaska Air's \$1B Hawaiian Airlines acquisition; deal still needs approval by Department of Transportation.

Politics & World Affairs

Former President Barack Obama headlines night two of the Democratic National Convention following speeches by Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff, Sen. Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), and more; see updates.

Panama begins repatriating migrants traveling through the Darién Gap on US-funded trips to their home countries, beginning with 29 Colombians; Biden administration has provided \$6M to program designed to deter migrant travel to the US.

Israel's military says it has recovered the bodies of six hostages from Khan Younis in Gaza.

Israeli strike on school in Gaza City kills at least 12 people, hundreds missing; Israel says Hamas used site as command center.

South Dakota Judicial Branch Warns About Jury Duty Scam

PIERRE, S.D.—The South Dakota Unified Judicial System is warning the public about a phone or email scam in which individuals pose as law enforcement and falsely claim that the recipient has missed jury duty, owes fines and will be arrested if they don't pay.

The scam, which claims people are in imminent danger of arrest for missing jury duty, is designed to create panic and pressure victims into providing personal information or making immediate payments to avoid arrest. If you receive a jury duty related call or email, do not provide any personal information or send money.

South Dakota's circuit courts send jury duty summons to people via mail, not by phone or email. While failure to report for jury duty can result in fines, the court will never call you to demand money. The court also does not accept payment via gift cards, pre-paid cards, wire transfers or cryptocurrency deposits.

Anyone who receives a jury duty scam phone call or email should report it to the Consumer Protection Division of the South Dakota Office of the Attorney General at 1-800-300-1986 or consumerhelp@state.sd.us.

If you have questions regarding whether you have been summoned for jury duty with South Dakota's circuit courts, contact your local Clerk of Courts office. For contact information visit https://uj.s.sd.gov/Circuit_Court/Default.aspx.

Flags at Half-Staff Statewide for National Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem ordered that flags be flown at half-staff statewide from sunrise until sunset on Wednesday, August 21, 2024, for National Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day.

"For too long, drug addiction has robbed people of hope and a reason to go on. Fentanyl has made this crisis worse than ever, creating seemingly unstoppable addiction with overdose far too easy and too common," said Governor Kristi Noem. "South Dakota will continue doing our part to stop those behind this chemical assault on our nation: the drug cartels and the Chinese Communist Party."

According to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control, South Dakota has the fewest annual overdose deaths per-capita of any state.

"We won't settle for a mere decrease in overdose deaths – we don't say 'good enough' in South Dakota. We will continue to raise awareness of this crisis and provide resources to those that are struggling," continued Governor Noem.

For assistance with addiction and substance abuse, visit the SD Behavioral Health website.

Girls soccer team runs past Garretson

Groton Area's girls soccer team scored four goals in each half en route to an 8-0 win over Garretson. The game was played Tuesday in Groton.

Laila Roberts scored two early goals - one at the 35:26 mark and the other at the 32:52 mark. Jerica Locke scored with 32:05 left in the first half and Ryelle Gilbert scored with 6:20 left in the first half.

Roberts scored again with 7:14 left in the game. Kennedy Hanson assisted McKenna Tietz for a goal with 4:12 left and Tietz soloed a goal with 2:54 left. The final score was set up by a penalty kick by Jerica Locke with Elizabeth Fliehs kicking it in for the final goal at 30 seconds left in the game.

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Avantara Groton, Groton Ford, BK Custom T's & More, R&M Farms/Rix Farms, John Sieh Agency, Agtegra, Jungle Lanes & Lounge, Dacotah Bank, Groton Chamber, The Meathouse in Andover, Groton Ag Service.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

'Hope is making a comeback': The Obamas make the case for Kamala Harris

BY: JACOB FISCHLER - AUGUST 21, 2024 12:20 AM

CHICAGO — As he did in his first speech to a Democratic National Convention 20 years ago, former President Barack Obama emphasized the connections binding Americans together and called for a more positive national atmosphere on the second night of this year's convention Tuesday, while rallying Democrats to campaign for Vice President Kamala Harris.

At the United Center, in a convention hosted by their hometown, Obama and former first lady Michelle Obama, who spoke immediately before the former president, scattered references to the 2008 and 2012 White House races he won as they made the case for Harris.

"America, hope is making a comeback," Michelle Obama said, referring to the theme of her husband's 2008 campaign and tying it to Harris.

The energy among the Democrats since Harris became a presidential candidate a month ago could be described as "the contagious power of hope," she said.

The couple also trained criticism on Republican nominee former President Donald Trump, painting him as an agent of division and calling for voters to reject him in favor of a more inclusive nation.

"Donald Trump wants us to think that this country is hopelessly divided between us and them," Barack Obama said. "Between the real Americans, who of course support him, and the outsiders who don't."

He called for Americans to turn aside that point of view.

Republicans in their response also sought to tie Harris to Obama.

"Democrats want to evoke memories of 2008," Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Whatley said in a written statement. "But this isn't Barack Obama's Democrat Party — Kamala Harris is even more dangerously liberal."

Michelle Obama's change in tone

In a marked shift from her convention speeches eight and four years ago, when she encouraged Democrats to take the moral high road in response to Trump's attacks, Michelle Obama took a much more confrontational tone Tuesday night toward the Republican nominee.

"Who's gonna tell him the job he is currently seeking might just be one of those Black jobs?" she said, in reference to a comment Trump had made about immigrants taking "Black jobs."

Harris would be the second Black president, after Obama.

Earlier, with veiled shots at Trump, the former first lady contrasted him with Harris.

Harris "understands that most of us will never be afforded the grace of failing forward," she said. "Who will never benefit from the affirmative action of generational wealth. If we bankrupt a business or choke in a crisis, we don't get a second, third or fourth chance."

Some Republicans have called Harris, a Black and South Asian woman, a "DEI hire," an implication that her race and gender were more important than her career and character qualifications. Trump gained an inheritance from his father, who was also a real estate developer.

Trump oversaw bankrupted businesses before he entered politics. And Democrats have said he bungled the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Barack Obama also leveled attacks on Trump, calling him "a 78-year-old billionaire who has not stopped whining about his problems since he came down off his golden escalator" when he announced his 2016 presidential bid.

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Trump alternative

Both Obamas said Harris provided a strong alternative to Trump. Not born into privilege like Trump, she has the empathy he lacks, Barack Obama said. "In other words, Kamala Harris won't be focused on her problems," he said. "She'll be focused on yours." Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, Harris' running mate, also provided a counterbalance to Trump, Obama said, adding that he loved Walz's authentic Midwestern persona. Both Obamas called on Democrats to work hard for Harris' cause over the 11 weeks until Election Day. Michelle Obama made "do something" a refrain of her speech. "You know what we need to do," the former first lady said. "Michelle Obama is asking you — no I'm telling y'all — to do something. This election is going to be close. In some states, just a handful of votes in every precinct could decide the winner."

Biden tribute

Barack Obama dedicated the first portion of his roughly half-hour speech to honoring his vice president, President Joe Biden. Biden guided the country out of the COVID-19 pandemic and led a strong economic recovery while lowering health care costs, Obama said. And Biden deserved credit for sacrificing his political ambition by bowing out of his reelection race, he said. "At a time when the other party had turned into a cult of personality, we needed a leader who was steady, and brought people together and was selfless enough to do the rarest thing there is in politics: putting his own ambition aside for the sake of the country," Obama said. "History will remember Joe Biden as a president who defended democracy at a time of great danger." He nodded along as the crowd chanted "Thank you, Joe."

Appealing to unity

Both Obamas repeated slogans from campaigns that had his name on the ballot and his presidency, seeking to tie his historic election victory to Harris' campaign. "On health care, we should all be proud of the progress we made through the Affordable Care Act," Barack Obama said, referring to the major health care law he championed in his first term. "I noticed, by the way, that since it became popular they don't call it Obamacare no more." Harris "knows we can't stop there," he continued, and would work to lower drug costs. He also called for Americans to focus on common bonds. "The ties that bind us together are still there," he said. "We still coach Little League and look out for our elderly neighbors. We still feed the hungry in churches and mosques and synagogues and temples." In his keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention, Obama also invoked Little League to stress national unity. "The vast majority of us do not want to live in a country this bitter and divided," he said Tuesday. "We want something better. We want to be better." The excitement for the Harris campaign showed that was a popular idea, he added. To close his speech, he invoked the first president nominated at a Chicago convention, elected in the most bitterly divided period of American history — Abraham Lincoln. "As much as any policy or program, I believe that's what we yearn for: A return to an America where we work together and look out for each other, a restoration of what Lincoln called, on the eve of civil war, 'our bonds of affection,' when America taps what he called 'the better angels of our nature,'" he said. "That's what this election is all about."

Jacob covers federal policy as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.

Harrisburg says NOPE to state prison wastewater deal

Governor's adviser says project could move forward with settlement ponds

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - AUGUST 20, 2024 10:16 PM

HARRISBURG — The Harrisburg City Council rejected an agreement Tuesday evening that would allow the state to connect its proposed men's prison to the city's wastewater treatment facility, but a state official said the decision wouldn't prevent the state from moving forward.

The vote came after months of pushback from some locals opposed to the proposed prison location near the city, culminating in a tense council meeting. It was attended by over 100 people, many of them members of the local opposition group, Neighbors Opposing Prison Expansion (NOPE).

Some residents described the proposed deal as the state "dangling a carrot" in front of the city.

"Have you looked over this thing with a fine-tooth comb? Have you really dove into it? Because I guarantee there is fine print," said Sam Eiesland, a NOPE member with land near the proposed prison site.

Ryan Brunner, a senior policy adviser to Governor Kristi Noem, attended the council meeting. He said the state is looking at two wastewater options: connecting to the city's system, or building settlement lagoons.

"That's it," Brunner said. "Those are the options."

Tobin Morris, vice president of Colliers Securities, has worked with the city and state. He was invited to offer a neutral perspective.

Morris told the council it would gain from the deal. He said the state would pay \$7.1 million to the city upfront, which could be used to pay off debt on municipal water projects, ultimately lowering residents' water bills by 20% to 30%. Plus, wastewater service payments from the state would net the city about \$500,000 annually.

Some residents testified that the long-term costs of the prison outweigh the benefits.

"We always think about economic development, we always think about taxes, but we need to think about quality of life," said Lincoln County Commissioner James Jibben. "If you lose quality of life, you never get that back."

Some residents shared their concern that becoming a "prison town" would hurt future development and that prisoners and their families would stick around the area.

The state Department of Corrections announced last fall that it had selected a parcel of state-owned farmland about 6 miles south of Harrisburg to build a men's prison. The announcement surprised neighboring landowners.

The Legislature has set aside \$569 million for the project over the past several years while awaiting a final cost estimate. The 1,500-bed facility would largely replace the Sioux Falls penitentiary, which dates to 1881.

NOPE members filed a lawsuit last November challenging the state's ability to bypass local zoning regulations. A judge heard arguments in January but has not issued a decision.

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.

Lawmakers make it official: Annual fees for medical pot businesses will jump 70%

Health department says price hike is meant in part to address future needs

BY: JOHN HULT - AUGUST 20, 2024 4:27 PM

Lawmakers voted 4-1 on Tuesday to finalize a nearly 70% hike to the price of a medical marijuana business license.

Sen. Red Dawn Foster, D-Pine Ridge, was the lone member on the Legislature's Rules Review Committee to oppose the increase. The price change was made possible by a bill passed this winter at the urging of

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the state Department of Health, which administers the state's medical marijuana program.

The current fee is capped at \$5,310, an inflation-adjusted figure to the original \$5,000 annual fee set by lawmakers in 2021, the year after voters opted to endorse a medical pot program for the state.

The change puts the annual price at \$9,000.

Emily Kerr, the program's administrator, told the committee that the price change is meant to cover the program's administrative costs. The health department has three new employees who oversee the program, doing things like processing marijuana card applications, inspecting dispensaries and grow operations, and investigating complaints.

"The program has grown and been utilized at a rate that was much faster than initially projected," Kerr said.

The state is averaging about 13,000 cardholders at any given time, Kerr said. She also told lawmakers that there are 68 dispensaries in the state, 38 cultivation sites, 18 manufacturing sites and two independent testing facilities.

"Those require thorough review of initial annual renewal applications, providing technical guidance and customer service, as well as our inspection program to investigate complaints, to make sure that we're getting in there at least annually, if not more," Kerr said.

Sen. Jim Mehlhaff, R-Pierre, moved to finalize the rule change with the higher fee.

"The industry is supportive of the fee increase," Mehlhaff said. "Not necessarily loving it, but understanding it."

The change is expected to return \$346,860 in increased revenue in the first, partial year, and \$490,770 a year in increased revenue after that.

'New money'

Kerr also spoke on Monday about the fee increase during a meeting of the state's Medical Marijuana Oversight Committee, on that day offering more details on the work of the program's employees as she explained the increase.

"We feel this is necessary to sustain the operations of the program, because we are funded completely by fees through cardholders and establishments," Kerr said.

Cardholder fees will not be increased through the rule change.

Marijuana industry lobbyist Jeremiah Murphy told the committee that the industry understands the setup and appreciates the help the three new employees offer, "but my client paid for those."

A 70% jump in fees, he said, is higher than South Dakotans might expect in other areas.

"That's really quite a jump in an anti-tax, anti-overregulation state like South Dakota, but that was our commitment, because they wrote that law to say that it will be fully self-funding," Murphy said.

Murphy also said the program is a significant source of sales tax revenue in a market that wasn't paying them before. Murphy cited statistics from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that put the number of marijuana users in South Dakota at 93,000 or more. Some of those users are served by tribal programs – Murphy guessed around 19,000 – with another 13,000 in the state program. Those buying on the illicit market aren't paying sales tax, he said.

The oversight committee also learned that marijuana card applications have leveled off and even declined after an initial spike – something industry leaders attribute to the growth in the market for hemp-derived marijuana alternatives.

Patient advocate Brad Jurgenson asked on Monday why the program would increase fees if it hadn't lost money in the prior year. Kerr replied that the price needs to go up to keep pace with ongoing costs and to make sure health department employees can process applications and manage inspections efficiently.

During Tuesday's rules hearing, Sen. Foster sounded a similar note, asking Kerr if the permit fee increase was based on calculations or "arbitrary."

Kerr told Foster that the department calculated its needs, but also said the fee increase was designed to be high enough to help the department avoid annual visits to the rules committee.

"While this is a big jump, we don't necessarily want to go before the Legislature to talk about fluctuations," Kerr said.

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

Democrats trying to reverse election losses in rural America urge focus on economy

BY: JACOB FISCHLER - AUGUST 20, 2024 8:25 PM

CHICAGO — Democrats should focus on pocketbook issues to win back rural voters, speakers including Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear said at a Rural Council meeting at the Democratic National Convention Tuesday.

Beshear urged the group of rural Democrats to reject social issues and a left-right ideological framing. Most voters, he said, were not worried about political labels, but about jobs, health care, transportation, school quality and safety.

The Republicans dominating rural districts and states, Beshear and other speakers said, were not delivering on those issues.

"With Republicans going through the extreme ends that they are on every issue, now is our time to both run and govern on those issues that matter the most," he said. "And when we do that, we don't move a state or the country to the right or the left. We move it forward for every single American."

The event, one of the dozens of official events for party delegates and candidates a few miles from the national program broadcast from the United Center, was infused with the idea that rural campaigns are not Democrats' strongest, with hints that rural issues may be outside the mainstream of an increasingly urban Democratic Party.

"I think we're the most courageous Democrats in America," former Sen. Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota said.

But speakers also projected hope that the party could reverse a decades-long trend of losses in rural areas, including in November's presidential election, largely through the selection of Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz as Kamala Harris' running mate.

Walz, several speakers said, is uniquely able to reach voters in rural areas.

"I dare the Republicans to say we are the elite party," Heitkamp said. "I dare them to say that we don't know and we don't have people in our party who care about rural America. I dare them to say that we are not rural."

Beshear acknowledged he had been considered for Harris' running mate, for which he said he was grateful.

"I'm proud that a governor from rural America was a candidate in that veepstakes," he said.

But he called Walz "a great governor" who would be "a great vice president."

The speakers urged Democrats not to abandon rural areas as unwinnable, but to contest every election.

"We have to keep organizing and investing in red states and rural America," Caroline Gleich, a candidate for U.S. Senate from Utah, said. "Because we can and we will win."

Not served by Republicans

Despite their dominance in rural elections, Republicans have let down constituents from those areas, Beshear, Heitkamp and other speakers said.

U.S. House Republicans are delaying passage of a new farm bill, the once-every-five-years law authorizing farm subsidy and education programs, Heitkamp said. A bloc of far-right Freedom Caucus members never vote for the farm bill because of its price tag, despite its importance for rural communities, she said.

Former President Donald Trump started trade wars, which hurt U.S. farmers' capacity for exports, and botched the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. Deputy Agriculture Secretary Xochitl Torres Small

said.

Torres Small won a New Mexico House seat in 2018.

"I was elected in the middle of the time when Donald Trump was president," she said. "In the middle of the trade wars that were causing farmers to lose money, in the middle of rural hospitals worried about closing their doors because Donald Trump took too long to recognize the crisis of COVID."

Alternative Democratic messaging

Explicit in the message from the event was that overtly partisan messaging could turn off rural voters, who are often not strongly political.

And implicit was that national Democrats' shift to the left on social issues this century could distract from messaging rural voters might find more appealing.

Beshear, a popular Democrat who twice won gubernatorial elections in a red state, called himself a "proud pro-choice governor" and a "proud pro-diversity governor" at the top of his remarks before describing nonpartisan appeal.

"We run as proud Democrats — and folks, aren't we proud Democrats?" Beshear said, prompting cheers from the crowd. "But the moment we take those hats off we serve every single American."

"This is our chance, yes, to be proud Democrats, but to show everyone in this country, Republican, independent, Democrat or other, that there is room for them in this campaign," he said. "That there is room for them with us."

And Heitkamp, in communicating support for LGBTQ rights, demonstrated some unfamiliarity with the subject, stumbling over the phrase "LGTBQ+ neighbors."

Speaking with reporters after his remarks, Beshear said Harris and her agenda represent the people who'd attended the meeting.

"Kamala Harris represents working people," he said, praising her recently released economic policy plan. "The plans that I see are plans that will work for everybody."

Warm welcome for Gwen Walz

Walz's wife, Minnesota first lady Gwen Walz, made an unannounced visit to the event.

She received a warm reception from the crowd as she told of growing up in a small town and meeting her husband when both were public school teachers.

And she related a story meant to display small-town values.

As a high school English teacher, she tutored a star player on the football team coached by Tim Walz. The student, once a problem in class, continued his tutoring and eventually graduated.

"Tim Walz and I see education and see people one individual at a time, making a difference, one person by one person, and letting that ripple out," she said. "We cannot underestimate the power of seeing and recognizing individuals."

Jacob covers federal policy as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.

South Dakota health care providers' inspection reports made publicly available

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - AUGUST 20, 2024 2:25 PM

Inspection reports for all South Dakota health care providers are now publicly accessible online, the state Department of Health announced recently.

"This effort is to ensure transparency and help families and consumers make informed decisions regarding the care and placement of their loved ones," the department said in an email.

The newly available inspection reports, covering July 2023 to the present, are available on the state

Health Department's website. The reports come from rural clinics, long-term care facilities, hospitals and other types of facilities. Not including nursing home reports, which were already publicly available online, the website hosted 114 licensure survey reports as of earlier this month, of which 65 included one or more instances of non-compliance.

Justin Hinker is the vice president of post-acute care for the South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organizations. He said that by the time instances of non-compliance are reported on the website, they have most likely been reinspected and are in compliance.

The reports show a variety of non-compliance, such as a rural clinic not servicing fire extinguishers annually and having some expired vaccines, and a hospice facility failing to review patients' medication regimens, which could lead to severe drug interactions.

Hinker said South Dakotans should treat the reports as a resource.

"I always encourage people to go and visit," he said. "This is just one tool people can use. It does not necessarily reflect the exact level or quality of care people are receiving."

Biden delivers late-night farewell to Democrats as he passes the torch to Harris

BY: JACOB FISCHLER - AUGUST 20, 2024 12:46 AM

CHICAGO — After waiting nearly an hour to deliver a scheduled-for-prime-time speech that was pushed to nearly 11:30 p.m. Eastern time, President Joe Biden waited an extra three minutes at the lectern on the first night of the Democratic National Convention as chants from party faithful drowned out his attempts to begin.

When planning for the convention began, Biden was expected to speak, as the party's nominee, on the final night.

Instead, he spoke Monday as a leader a few months away from retirement, and as a bridge to new Democratic leadership.

"I love my job," he said as he approached the end of his remarks. "But I love my country more."

In the final minutes of perhaps the final major political speech in a half-century-long career, Biden quoted a song by Gene Scheer.

"America, America, I gave my best to you," he said.

Early and often as he spoke, the thousands of Democratic delegates at the United Center voiced their appreciation, delaying and interrupting him with chants of "We love Joe."

Hours after another crowd, protesters opposed to Biden's handling of Israel's war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip, gathered outside the convention hall, Biden gave his strongest remarks to date on the conflict, calling for a cease-fire. He conceded the protesters "have a point."

Biden's address provided a glimpse of what an acceptance speech for a second Democratic nomination might have looked like. But instead of promising what he would do in a second term, he said Vice President Kamala Harris would continue the administration's work.

Biden endorsed Harris as his replacement on the Democratic ticket when he withdrew from the race last month under pressure from Democratic leaders, following his debate performance in June.

In a moment that seemed to surprise Biden, Harris and second spouse Doug Emhoff joined the president and first lady on stage directly after the speech.

'The best volunteer'

Throughout the address, Biden promoted his own record and said Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, possessed the same values and character that would lead to policies Democrats want.

"I promise I'll be the best volunteer the Harris and Walz campaign has ever seen," he said.

Much of his remarks were also focused on the Republican nominee, former President Donald Trump,

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whom Biden defeated in the 2020 election.

Biden's appearance was bumped out of the prime-time block, as scores of earlier speakers and performers forced Democrats' debut night further and further off schedule. Some had to be rescheduled.

"Because of the raucous applause interrupting speaker after speaker, we ultimately skipped elements of our program to ensure we could get to President Biden as quickly as possible so that he could speak directly to the American people," convention officials said in a statement.

"We are proud of the electric atmosphere in our convention hall and proud that our convention is showcasing the broad and diverse coalition behind the Harris-Walz ticket throughout the week on and off the stage."

Infrastructure, gun safety, prescription drugs

Biden promoted his record over nearly four years in office. The country was no longer in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

He said wages were trending up and inflation was moving down, though he noted there was still more to do on those issues.

He delivered a massive infrastructure bill, signed a bipartisan gun safety law and worked to bring costs of prescription drugs down.

Promoting the successes of his administration, Biden highlighted Harris' role.

When he mentioned the passage of a major Democratic bill in 2022 to boost clean energy production, cap some prescription drug costs and other measures, the crowd responded with a chant of "Thank you, Joe."

"Thank you, Kamala, too," Biden replied.

Middle East

Biden also said he had much still to do and addressed an issue that has divided Democrats during the past year of his presidency: Israel's war in Gaza.

He said his administration was working to get humanitarian aid into Gaza.

"And finally, finally, finally deliver a cease-fire and end this war," he said, pounding the lectern with his fist. "Those protesters out in the street, they have a point. A lot of innocent people are getting killed on both sides."

On other issues, he said Harris and Walz would continue his work.

"Kamala and Tim will make the child tax cut permanent," he said, referring to a COVID 19-era provision that increased a tax credit for families.

Contrast with Trump

Biden called Trump a tool of authoritarian leaders, such as Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Biden repeated a story he told throughout the 2020 campaign that he decided to run for president and challenge Trump's reelection after Trump excused a deadly rally of white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Biden rejected political violence and professed a commitment to enduring democracy, a theme he sounded in his 2020 campaign that only gained more relevance after the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by Trump supporters who sought to keep him in the White House.

Trump has again not said he would accept the results of an election loss, Biden said.

Electing Harris was a necessary step in protecting democracy, he said.

"Democracy has prevailed, democracy has delivered," he said. "And now, democracy must be preserved."

Union message

As he has through much of his half-century in national politics, Biden appealed to union members, a traditional Democratic constituency.

"Wall Street didn't build America," he said. "The middle class built America, and unions built the middle

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class.”

He said he was proud to have walked the picket line with striking member of the United Auto Workers. Earlier in the evening, UAW President Shawn Fain in remarks to the crowd praised Biden for making history as the first president to walk a picket line.

Passing the torch

Speakers throughout the evening praised Biden for his record in office and for passing the torch to Harris. Delaware Sen. Chris Coons, a Biden ally who took Biden’s seat in the Senate after Biden was elected vice president, said Biden helped the nation recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and the Jan. 6 attack.

“On behalf of our nation, Joe, for your courage in fighting for our democracy, we thank you,” Coons said. “On behalf of our Democratic Party, for fighting for our Democratic values, we thank you.”

First lady Jill Biden said the president worked for causes larger than himself, which she was reminded of as she saw him “dig deep into his soul and decide to no longer seek reelection and endorse Kamala Harris.”

U.S. Rep. James Clyburn of South Carolina, the third-ranking Democrat in the House for years, also praised Biden’s decision to make Harris his running mate, and to endorse her when he dropped out.

Talking to reporters after his official remarks, Clyburn said a Harris victory in November would book-end Biden’s role in Black presidential history. After serving eight years as vice president to the first Black president, Clyburn said, Biden chose the first Black vice president, Harris.

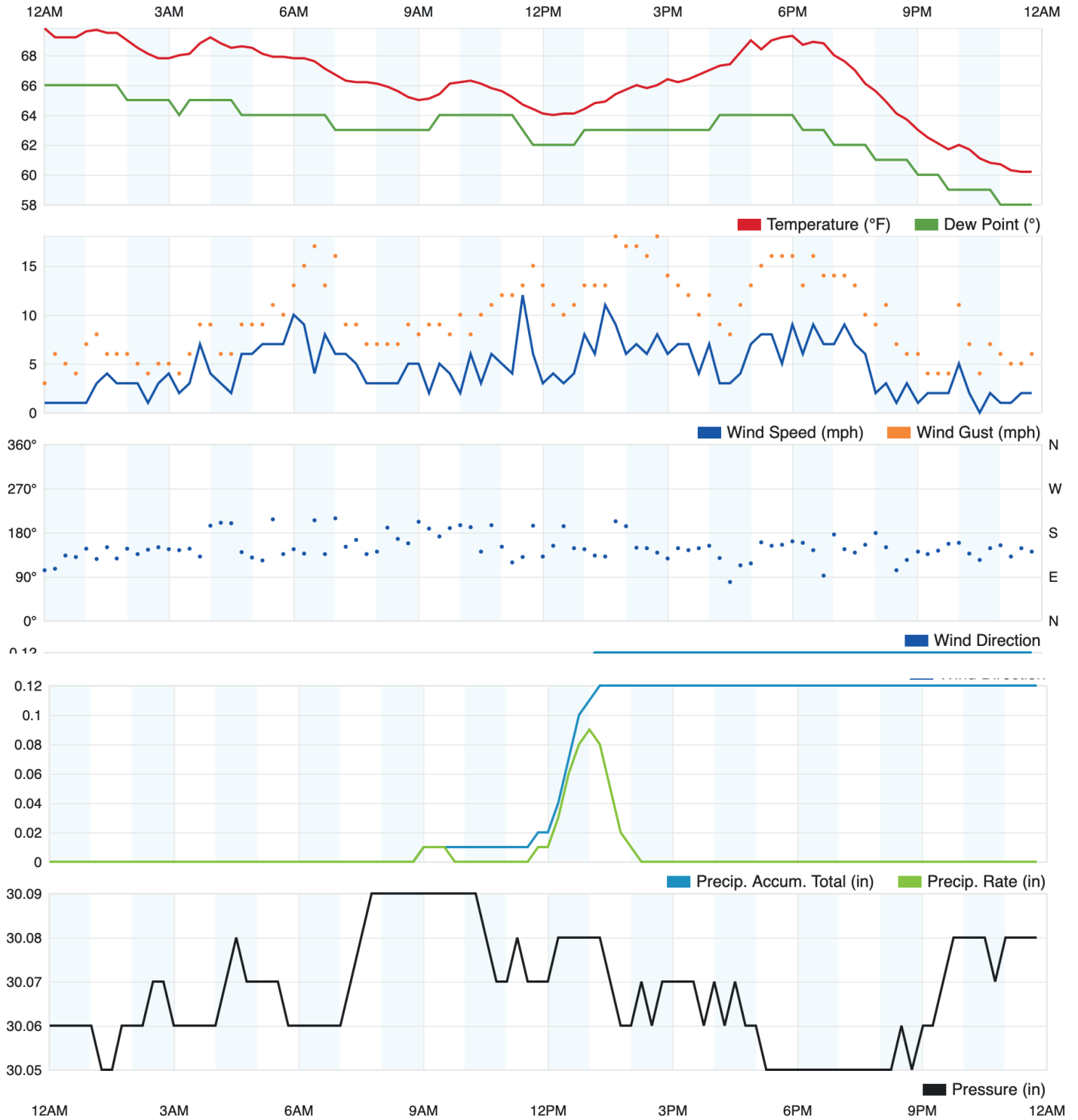
If Harris wins the November election, Clyburn said, “Joe Biden goes down in history as probably the most transformational president this country’s ever had.”

Jacob covers federal policy as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



High: 80 °F

Partly Sunny
then Mostly
Sunny and
Breezy

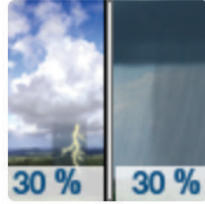
Tonight



Low: 66 °F

Breezy.
Mostly Cloudy
then Chance
T-storms

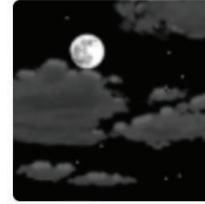
Thursday



High: 85 °F

Breezy.
Chance
T-storms then
Chance

Thursday
Night



Low: 62 °F

Partly Cloudy

Friday



High: 87 °F

Mostly Sunny



Storm Threat Each Of The Next Three Days

August 21, 2024
4:30 AM

One Inch Hail And TS Wind Gusts To 60 MPH Are The Primary Severe Weather Threats Within the Darker Green Areas

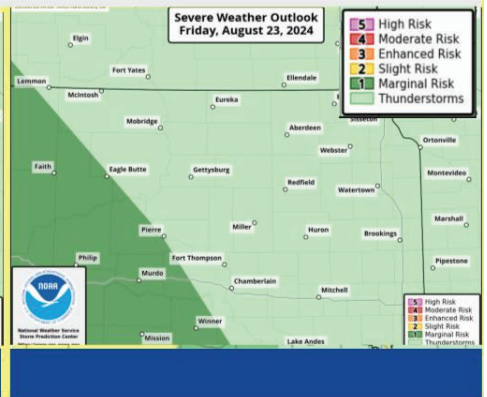
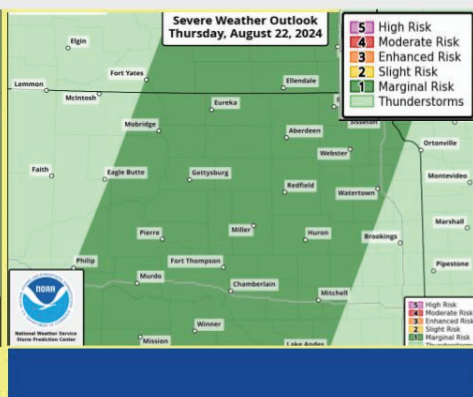
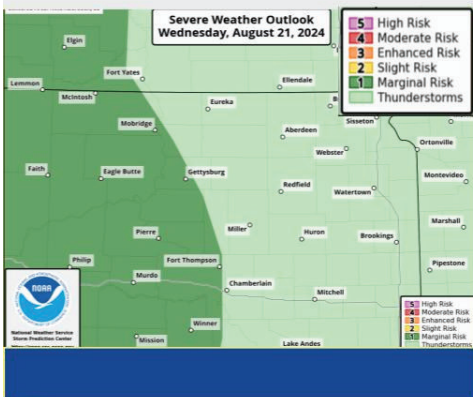
Trends

- Thunderstorm chances increase over central and north central South Dakota by early this evening
- A frontal boundary drifting into eastern South Dakota Thursday afternoon places the majority of thunderstorm threat east of the Missouri River valley
- Isolated to widely scattered thunderstorms will once again be possible on Friday, mainly across western/southern South Dakota

Wednesday Severe Weather Outlook

Thursday Severe Weather Outlook

Friday Severe Weather Outlook



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

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Today and tonight, the focus for potentially strong to severe thunderstorms will be across western and central South Dakota. A boundary that moves toward the James River valley in eastern South Dakota becomes the potential focusing mechanism for thunderstorm development by late in the day on Thursday. Then, the threat area seems to shift back to portions of western and southern South Dakota Friday.

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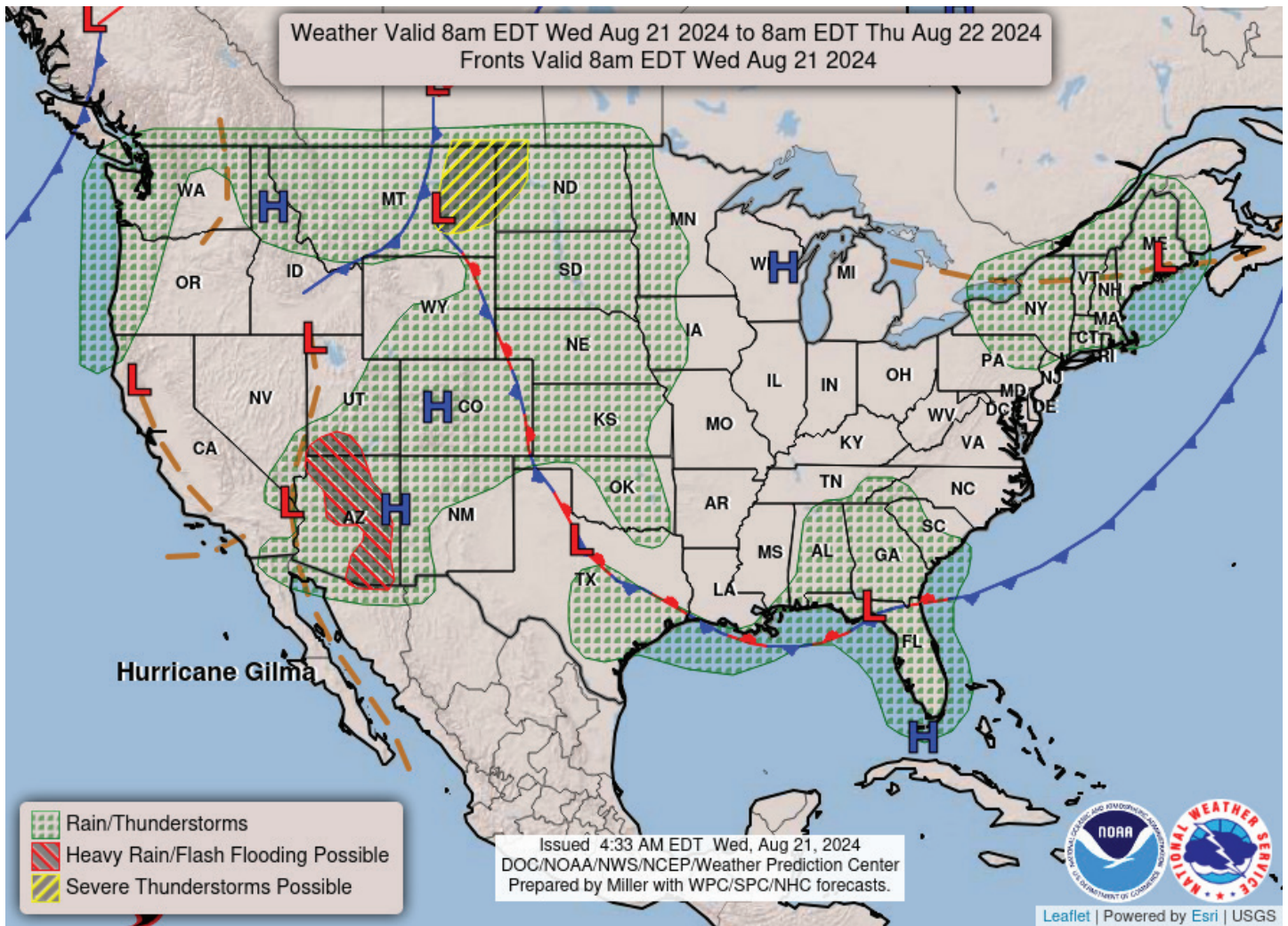
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 70 °F at 6:09 PM
Low Temp: 60 °F at 11:19 PM
Wind: 19 mph at 2:34 PM
Precip: : 0.12

Day length: 13 hours, 50 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 105 in 1947
Record Low: 37 in 2004
Average High: 82
Average Low: 56
Average Precip in Aug.: 1.52
Precip to date in Aug.: 4.25
Average Precip to date: 15.62
Precip Year to Date: 19.14
Sunset Tonight: 8:30:42 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:41:12 am



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Today in Weather History

August 21, 1989: Baseball size hail caused near 100 percent crop damage to Correll in Big Stone County to 10 miles north of Appleton. Most of Swift County also received 4 to 8 inches of rain.

August 21, 2007: Thunderstorms produced large hail in southeastern South Dakota, mainly near the Missouri River, during the late afternoon and early evening of August 21st. Enormous hail fell in the Dante area in Charles Mix County, including a state record size hailstone certified as 6 and 7/8 inches in diameter, with a circumference of 18 inches and a weight of one pound. The most massive stone was verified at 6 1/8 inches in diameter with a weight of 1.25 lbs. Damage included holes in roofs, broken rafters, broken awnings, numerous broken windows and dented vehicles, damaged siding, divots in the ground up to 12 inches long and 3 inches deep, and damaged crops. The state record hailstone was broken on July 23rd, 2010 with the United States record hailstone in Vivian.

1856: The Charter Oak was an unusually large white oak tree growing from around the 12th or 13th century until it fell during a windstorm on this day in 1856. According to tradition, Connecticut's Royal Charter of 1662 was hidden within the hollow of the tree to thwart its confiscation by the English governor-general. The oak became a symbol of American independence and is commemorated on the Connecticut State Quarter.

1883: An estimated F5 tornado caused extensive damage to Rochester Minnesota on this day. The enormous roar was said to have warned most Rochester residents, as the massive funnel cut through the north side of town. Over 135 homes were destroyed, and another 200 damaged. Many of the 200 plus injuries were severe, and other deaths probably occurred but not listed as part of the 37 total mentioned. This damaging tornado eventually led to the formation of the Mayo Clinic.

1888 - A tornado swarm occurred in Maryland and Delaware. Many waterspouts were seen over Chesapeake Bay. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1893 - Four hurricanes are observed in the Atlantic Ocean at the same time. Over a century would pass, 1998 before four hurricanes would again rage together in the Atlantic.

1918 - A tornado struck Tyler, MN, killing 36 persons and destroying most of the business section of the town resulting in a million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1983 - The temperature at Fayetteville, NC, soared to 110 degrees to establish a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Early morning thunderstorms produced severe weather in eastern Iowa and west central Illinois. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 82 mph at Moline IL, and tennis ball size hail at Independence IA. Rock Island IL was drenched with 3.70 inches of rain. Total damage for the seven county area of west central Illinois was estimated at twelve million dollars. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms spawned several tornadoes in Iowa, produced wind gusts to 63 mph in the Council Bluffs area, and drenched Sioux Center IA with up to 6.61 inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather from Kansas to Minnesota and North Dakota. Thunderstorms in Minnesota produced baseball size hail from Correll to north of Appleton. Thunderstorms in north central Kansas produced wind gusts higher than 100 mph at Wilson Dam. Thunderstorms around Lincoln NE produced baseball size hail and up to five inches of rain, and Boone NE was deluged with five inches of rain in an hour and a half. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1994 - Hurricane John, about 345 miles south of Hilo, Hawaii had winds of 175 mph and pressure at 920 millibars or 27.17 inches of mercury, making it one of the strongest hurricanes ever in the Central Pacific. The 31-day existence made John the longest-lasting tropical cyclone recorded in both the Pacific Ocean and worldwide, surpassing both Hurricane Tina's previous record in the Pacific of 24 days in the 1992 season and the 1899 San Ciriaco hurricane's previous world record of 28 days in the 1899 Atlantic season. John was also the farthest-traveling tropical cyclone in both Pacific Ocean and worldwide, with distance traveled of 7,165 miles, out-distancing previous record holders Hurricane Fico in the Pacific of 4,700 miles in the 1978 season and Hurricane Faith worldwide of 6,850 miles in the 1966 Atlantic season.



THE GAMBLERS

In the Middle Ages there was a group of men who called themselves The Gamblers. Wherever there was sickness or suffering, plagues or pestilence they would take their lives into their own hands – gamble against all odds – to help others. They willingly gambled with their lives for the good of others.

But they were not the first to do this. The Apostle Paul talks about one of his co-workers: Epaphroditus. In speaking of him, he wrote, “he risked his life for the work of Christ and he was at the point of death while trying to do for me the things you couldn’t do because you were far away.”

We do not know very much about Epaphroditus. We do know that he delivered money to Paul while he was in prison. We do know that he helped Paul during a time of great physical and financial need. We do know that he became sick while he was staying with Paul. And we do know that Paul trusted him to deliver a most important “thank-you” letter to the church at Philippi.

The world honors those who are recognized for being rich, athletic, wealthy, entertaining, and intelligent. But here we see God recognizing and honoring a servant. And Paul also said, “Welcome him with Christian love, great joy, and be sure to honor people like him.” A simple servant, honored eternally, for taking a risk for God.

Prayer: We are reminded, Lord, of those who do for You what few are willing to do. Thank You for the missionaries who serve You quietly. Honor them greatly. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Welcome him in the Lord’s love and with great joy, and give him the honor that people like him deserve. Philippians 2:25-30

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.20.24

5 20 26 49 51 24

MegaPlier: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$527,000,000

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 53
DRAW: Mins 57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.19.24

16 21 41 48 49 4

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$7,340,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 8 Mins 56
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
08.20.24

8 12 24 39 40 6

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 23 Mins 56
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.17.24

12 16 25 31 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 23 Mins 56
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.19.24

22 48 50 57 69 1

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 52 Mins 57
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 08.19.24

1 2 15 23 28 10

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$20,000,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 52 Mins 57
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

Collapsed rail bridge gets first of 2 controlled blasts in clean up after severe flooding

NORTH SIOUX CITY, S.D. (AP) — Half of a collapsed rail bridge connecting South Dakota and Iowa was blasted in a controlled demolition, part of the process to remove the bridge months after it fell into the river, swollen from severe flooding.

The steel bridge over the Big Sioux River connected North Sioux City, South Dakota, with Sioux City, Iowa. It was partially underwater after heavy rains in late June brought record high river crests in the two states, along with Minnesota and Nebraska.

The blast on the South Dakota side of the bridge, owned by BNSF Railway, occurred Monday morning, according to reports from broadcast station KTIV in Sioux City, Iowa. Officials established a perimeter on both sides of the river, closing nearby roads and advising people to stay away.

“At 9 a.m. local time, charges were successfully used to cut the bridge span into sections, allowing it to fall into the river for removal,” Kendall Sloan, BNSF communications director, said in a statement.

“The condition and position of the failed spans made controlled blasting the safest way to remove them,” Sloan added.

Sloan said crews will use a crane to remove the fallen pieces over the next week, and a second controlled blast will target the Iowa side of the bridge, likely in September.

Amy McBeth, public affairs director for BNSF, told KTIV that the controlled demolition needed to happen in two parts because a causeway is needed on both sides to allow the heavy equipment near the river.

The design process for a new bridge is underway and the rebuild is expected to take about nine months.

South Dakota Supreme Court denies bid to exclude ballots initially rejected from June election

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has rejected an effort to exclude more than 100 absentee ballots that had initially been rejected but were later counted in the state’s June election.

The leader of a conservative election group and an unsuccessful Republican legislative candidate asked the court last month to order the top election official in Minnehaha County, home to Sioux Falls, to “revert to the unofficial vote count totals” without the 132 ballots, and “to conduct a thorough review” of registered voters in two precincts, among other requests.

The court on Friday denied the pair’s request, meaning the ballots, which a recount board later included, will stand.

In June, South Dakota Canvassing President Jessica Pollema had challenged ballots in the two precincts. She alleged that voter registration forms were either incomplete or listed addresses that weren’t where voters actually lived, in violation of state and federal law. One precinct board denied her challenge. The other, in a legislative district represented by all Democrats, rejected 132 of 164 challenged ballots.

The challenge drew the attention of Secretary of State Monae Johnson’s office, which had advised a county official that the challenged items didn’t meet state law.

Putin’s slow response to the Kursk attack could test the patience of some of his backers in Russia

By EMMA BURROWS Associated Press

A year ago this week, President Vladimir Putin strode onto a stage in the Kursk region to commemorate the 80th anniversary of one of the Soviet army’s proudest moments in World War II.

Addressing a rapt audience that included soldiers fresh from fighting in Ukraine, Putin called the decisive

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victory in the Battle of Kursk "one of the great feats of our people."

Now, as Russia prepares to celebrate the 81st anniversary of that 1943 battle on Friday, Kursk is again in the news — but for a very different reason.

On Aug. 6, Ukrainian forces made a lightning push into the region, seizing villages, taking hundreds of prisoners and forcing the evacuation of tens of thousands of civilians. Russia was caught unprepared by the offensive and reportedly is drafting conscripts to repel some of Ukraine's most battle-hardened units.

Putin has a history of responding slowly to various crises in his tenure, and he has so far played down the attack. But 2 1/2 years after launching a war in Ukraine to remove what he called a threat to Russia, it is his own country that seems more turbulent.

He appeared uneasy at an Aug. 12 televised meeting of his security staff about Kursk, cutting off the acting regional governor who had started listing the settlements seized by Ukraine. The president and his officials referred to "the events in the Kursk region" as a "situation," or "provocation."

State media fell into line, showing evacuees queueing for aid or donating blood, as if the events in Kursk were a humanitarian disaster and not the largest attack on Russia since World War II.

In his 24 years in power, Putin has portrayed himself as the only person who can guarantee Russia's security and stability, but that image has suffered since the war began.

Russian cities have come under drone attacks and shelling from Kyiv's forces. Mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin launched a brief uprising last year to try to oust his military leaders. Gunmen stormed a Moscow concert hall and killed 145 people in March.

The Kremlin has given tacit approval to a wide-ranging purge of Defense Ministry officials, with many facing corruption charges. Lower-level officers also are being arrested on fraud charges, including Lt. Col. Konstantin Frolov, a decorated airborne brigade commander. "I would rather be in Kursk ... than here," he said while being marched in handcuffs into a Moscow police station.

In another reminder that fortunes in Russia can change quickly, authorities started criminal cases against other officials and are seeking to confiscate land from some of the country's wealthiest people in a posh area outside Moscow near a Putin residence.

While state TV drives the still-strong support for Putin despite setbacks like the Kursk incursion, it's harder to gauge the opinions of his key constituency — Russia's elites.

Putin is dependent on their acquiescence, said Ekaterina Schulmann, a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center in Berlin.

"The calculation that's going on in their heads 24/7 is whether the status quo is to their advantage or not," she said.

Since the war began, life for those elites — Putin's inner circle, top bureaucrats, security and military officials, and business leaders — has gotten worse, not better. While many have been enriched by the war, they have fewer places to spend their money because of Western sanctions.

The question they are asking themselves about Putin, Schulmann said, "is whether the old man is still an asset or already a liability."

Russia's elites could be described as being in a state of "unhappy compliance," said Nigel Gould-Davies, senior fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. They are discontented with the status quo, he said, but fearful about who would win if there were to be a leadership struggle.

They could be hoping, the analysts said, that Putin's reaction to the events in Kursk fits a pattern in which he is initially slow to respond to a crisis before eventually managing to prevail.

It's something seen since his earliest days in power — starting with the sinking 24 years ago of a nuclear submarine that was named for the Battle of Kursk.

On Aug. 19, 2000, less than a year after Putin became president, the Kursk sank in the Barents Sea after one of its torpedoes exploded, killing all 118 sailors aboard. Putin stayed on vacation early in the crisis — setting off widespread criticism — and waited five days before accepting Western offers of help that might have saved some sailors who initially survived the explosion.

Putin also appeared sluggish in responding to the June 2023 uprising by Wagner chief Prigozhin in what became the most serious challenge to his authority yet.

After the mutiny fizzled, Prigozhin initially was allowed to remain free, but Schulmann said Putin eventually "got the last laugh" when the mercenary leader was killed a month later in a still-mysterious crash on his private plane.

As the Ukrainian offensive enters its third week, Putin sought to keep to his schedule and even embarked on a two-day trip to Azerbaijan, without mentioning the crisis. On Tuesday he briefly referred to it, promising "to fight those who commit crimes in the Kursk region."

With domestic dissent stifled and with the media firmly under his control, Putin can afford to make the "absolutely cynical" decision to ignore what is happening in the Kursk region, Schulmann said.

Still, Putin's hold on power "is unlikely to be weakened as a result of this humiliation," wrote Eugene Rumer, senior fellow and the director of the Carnegie Russia and Eurasia Program, in a commentary. "The entire Russian political and military establishment is complicit in his war and responsible for this disaster."

The longer the Ukrainian offensive goes on, however, the more military and political challenges it presents.

Russia appears to be struggling to find suitable forces to repel the Ukrainian assault. Despite promising that conscripts wouldn't be sent to the front, Russia is deploying them to the Kursk region with not enough training, according to a human rights group that helps draftees.

Analysts say reserves also are being called up, so that Russia can avoid pulling troops from Ukraine's Donbas region, where Moscow's forces are making slow progress.

The manpower shortage has seen authorities trying to entice Russians to serve by offering large salaries, drafting convicted criminals from prisons and recruiting foreigners inside the country.

As Ukraine presses its offensive, it could become difficult for the Kremlin to ignore the many consequences of the war. A key question, Gould-Davies said, is what happens if Russia's elites conclude that the conflict is "unwinnable or if ... it will never end while Putin is in power."

In Sudzha, a Russian town in the Kursk region now controlled by Ukrainian troops, the suffering of residents was clear. AP reporters on a Ukrainian government-organized trip last week saw shelled buildings, a damaged natural gas pumping station, and elderly residents huddled in basements with their belongings and food — images similar to what's been seen in Ukraine for the past 29 months.

It's unclear for now whether the second battle of Kursk, like the first one, will become a turning point in the war that Putin launched.

But, Schulmann said, as one of a "series of unfortunate events, it adds up to the impression that things are not going well."

Tim Walz, Bill Clinton to speak at Democratic convention's third day

By STEVE PEOPLES, JONATHAN J. COOPER and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Vice presidential nominee Tim Walz and former President Bill Clinton will headline the Democratic National Convention on Wednesday, the third day of the party's choreographed rollout of a new candidate, Kamala Harris, and her pitch to voters.

In a delicate balancing act, Harris and the parade of Democrats speaking on her behalf all week are looking to harness the exuberance that has swept over their party since President Joe Biden stepped aside while making clear to their supporters that the election will be a fierce fight and frustratingly close.

"So much is on the line in this election," Harris said Tuesday in Milwaukee, where she spoke at a professional basketball arena in battleground Wisconsin as the convention continued 90 miles away in Chicago. "And understand, this not 2016 or 2020. The stakes are higher."

And in Chicago hours later, former President Barack Obama offered his own caution: "Make no mistake, it will be a fight," Obama said. For all the energy and memes and rallies that have defined the campaign since Harris became the nominee, Obama said, "this will still be a tight race in a closely divided country."

Harris is working to stitch together a broad coalition in her bid to defeat Republican former President Donald Trump this fall. She is drawing on stars like Obama and his wife, former first lady Michelle Obama, and other celebrities, officials from the far left to the middle, and even some Republicans to boost her

campaign.

And while the theme of Tuesday was “a bold vision for America’s future,” the disparate factions of Harris’ evolving coalition demonstrated, above all, that they are connected by a deep desire to prevent a second Trump presidency.

Convention organizers dubbed the theme for Wednesday “a fight for our freedoms,” a nod to the concept around which Harris has organized her campaign. She frames Trump as a threat to abortion rights and personal choices, but also to democracy itself.

Walz’s job Wednesday when he accepts the nomination is to introduce himself to Americans who had never heard of the Minnesota governor until Harris plucked him from relative obscurity to join her ticket. His goofy, folksy, Midwestern dad aura has endeared him to Democrats and balanced Harris’ coastal background.

In the intense scrutiny that comes with a presidential campaign, Walz has faced repeated questions about embellishing his background. His wife, Gwen Walz, this week clarified that she did not undergo in vitro fertilization but used other fertility treatments after Republicans pointed to multiple times her husband talked publicly about his family’s reliance on IVF. JD Vance, the Republican vice presidential candidate, called Tim Walz a liar.

Republicans have also pointed to a 2018 comment in which Walz refers to weapons “that I carried in war” while talking about gun violence. Though he served in the National Guard for 24 years, Walz did not deploy to a war zone.

Clinton, meanwhile, is a veteran of the political convention speech — and famously longwinded. He bored the audience with his keynote address at the 1988 Democratic convention, when he was the young, little-known governor of Arkansas. It damaged his reputation, but he recovered and when he next spoke at a convention four years later it was to accept the Democratic nomination.

Moscow sees one of Ukraine’s largest drone attacks as fighting rages in Kursk and eastern Ukraine

MOSCOW (AP) — Moscow came under one of the largest attacks yet by Ukrainian drones since the start of fighting in 2022, Russian authorities reported Wednesday, saying they destroyed all of those headed toward the capital.

The drone attacks come as Ukrainian forces are continuing to push into Russia’s western Kursk region. “This was one of the biggest attempts of all time to attack Moscow using drones,” Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyenin said on his Telegram channel. He said strong defenses around the capital made it possible to shoot down all the drones before they hit their intended targets.

Russia downed 45 Ukrainian drones overnight, including 11 over the Moscow region.

Some Russian social media channels shared videos of drones apparently being destroyed by air defense systems, which then set off car alarms.

Alexander Bogomaz, the governor of the Bryansk region, which borders Ukraine, reported a “mass” attack on his region but said that all 23 drones were destroyed.

While Ukraine has been bogged down in a land conflict in eastern Ukraine in which the Russians have been driving forward slowly at a heavy cost to both sides, Kyiv has also been attacking Russia with drones. Ukraine has targeted oil refineries and airfields in an attempt to weaken Russia’s fighting potential, and also has targeted the capital several times.

The daring incursion into Russia has raised morale in Ukraine with its surprising success and changed the dynamic of the fighting. But it’s uncertain how long Ukraine will be able to hold the territory it has seized in Kursk.

It has also opened up another front in a fight where Ukrainian forces were already badly stretched. The gains in Kursk come as Ukraine continues to lose ground in its eastern industrial region of Donbas.

The Institute for the Study of War, a think tank based in Washington, said in its daily report late Tuesday that the Ukrainians had made additional advances in their incursion in Kursk, now in its third week.

The Russian state news agency Tass reported that 31 people had died since Ukraine's attack on Russia began Aug. 6, citing an unnamed source in the medical service — figures which are impossible to verify. It said 143 people had suffered injuries, of whom 79 were hospitalized, including four children.

Ukraine's attacks on three bridges over the Seym River in Kursk, in areas it does not control, could potentially trap Russian forces between the river, the Ukrainian advance and the Ukrainian border. Already they appear to be slowing down Russia's response to the Kursk incursion.

Ukrainian forces appear to be striking Russian pontoon bridges and pontoon engineering equipment over the Seym in an area west of the Ukrainian advance point, the Washington think tank said.

Though few details are available, Ukraine appears to be actively seeking to hinder Russians from crossing the river.

Satellite photos from Planet Labs PBC analyzed Wednesday by The Associated Press showed a significant fire on the Seym near the village of Krasnooktyabrskoe.

The blaze appeared on the northern bank of the river on Tuesday, with another fire seemingly in the village itself. Such fires are common after strikes and often signify where ongoing front-line combat is taking place.

Plaything or peril? Brazilian kites are endangering lives and prompting a push for a national ban

By ELÉONORE HUGHES Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Two groups of men stood on opposite rooftops perched on a hillside overlooking Rio de Janeiro's Ipanema beach, taunting one another. It was a macho showdown between opponents wielding unlikely weapons — kites.

On this July morning in the impoverished neighborhood, they were using taut, sharp-edged kite lines — known as "cerol" in Portuguese — to slash their opponents' lines, ripping their kites from the sky.

Kite fighting has caused horrific injuries and even deaths, and a bill moving through Brazil's Congress is seeking to prohibit the manufacture, sale and use of the razor-sharp lines nationwide, with violators facing one to three years in prison and a hefty fine.

The lines are already outlawed in some congested areas of Brazil, including Rio, but that didn't appear to trouble the men jousting with their kites above Ipanema; indeed, some of those flouting the law were police officers. A couple of them called kites their therapy.

"That's the logic of kite flying: cutting another person's line," said Alexander Mattoso da Silva, a military police officer with bulging, tattooed biceps. He goes by "Jarro" and in 2014 he traveled to France to test his mettle at an international kite festival, where he won the kite-fighting competition.

"We always try to fly the kites in suitable places to not put anyone at risk. There's no risk here, because the kite falls into the woods," Jarro said, pointing to the tree-covered mountain above which the kites were dancing. Still, there were narrow pedestrian alleyways below.

Kites have a long history in Brazil and are particularly popular in Rio's favelas, the poor neighborhoods often clinging to the mountains overlooking and surrounding the city, where a cottage industry uses bamboo and tissue paper to produce kites.

For many, kites evoke childhood and light-hearted diversion. And some do fly kites simply to feel the wind's tug upon a harmless cotton string. But attached to cutting lines, kites can be fatal, particularly when sweeping across highways where speeding motorists struggle to spot them.

While kite-fighting competitions are held safely in designated areas in countries like France and Chile, in Brazil, its widespread, unregulated use has caused numerous accidents over the years.

To try to fend off the danger, motorcyclists affix thin antenna-like posts equipped with razors at the front of their bikes to snip wayward kite lines. The company that administers one of Rio's main highways regularly hands them out to motorcyclists.

But cases of motorcyclists having a limb severed or throat slit remain common, leading several Brazilian

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states to pass laws regulating the lines, according to political consulting firm Governmental Radar. The federal bill to outlaw the razor-sharp lines nationwide was approved by Congress' lower house in February, and is now heading toward a Senate vote.

In June, Ana Carolina Silva da Silveira was riding on the back of a motorcycle when a line slashed her neck.

"I went to the hospital screaming that I didn't want to die," the 28-year-old lawyer said. "I'm really happy that I'm alive."

There's no official data on the number of injuries and deaths nationwide caused by cutting lines. However, since 2019, there have been more than 2,800 reports of illegal use of the lines in Rio state alone, according to the MovRio Institute, a non-profit that runs a hotline.

In Brazil, kites are ubiquitous, with kite flying even recognized as a cultural and historical heritage by legislation passed by Rio's municipal assembly in 2021. Some say kites were brought to Brazil by the country's Portuguese colonizers. But others note they were used in Africa, and that the legendary Palmares community of runaway slaves in the northeast deployed them to warn of danger.

Kite flying was so popular that kids called school vacations "the time of kites," Luiz Antônio Simas, a historian who specializes in Rio's popular culture, told a packed bar near the Maracana soccer stadium during a lecture on kite history.

For decades, children filled socks with glass shards and put them on train tracks to be ground up. They mixed the resulting powder with glue to smear on their kite lines, often bloodying their fingers. Artisanal methods have mostly given way to large reels of industrially made lines that are even more efficient at cutting.

State laws regarding cutting lines differ across Brazil. Rio confines legal use to a few areas, known as "kitedromes," located far from homes, roads and highways, while other states have blanket bans.

Rio's military police said 10 people were detained between January and July for breaking the city's kite line law. Last week, Rio's municipal guard seized eight reels left behind by a group of fleeing kite-fighters at Recreio dos Bandeirantes beach, a popular site for the sport, it said in an email.

But many say authorities tend to turn a blind eye.

"Often, the police don't even stop criminals. Imagine someone flying a kite," said Carlos Magno, president of Rio's association of kite fliers.

In July, Magno traveled to the capital, Brasilia, to lobby lawmakers to reject the bill moving through Congress. It allows competitions, but without the sharp lines he and other kiting aficionados say are essential.

Paulo Telhada, the bill's sponsor in the lower house, says any exceptions would mean more lives and limbs lost.

"Between life and sports, I'm in favor of life," Telhada told The Associated Press.

Kelly Christina da Silva couldn't agree more. Her son Kevin was killed in 2015 after a kite line caught him in the neck as he rode a motorcycle. Earlier that day, the 23-year-old had signed papers to rent a home for himself and his fiancé.

"My son's life was destroyed. Because of a game," da Silva, 50, said in an interview, her voice cracking as she wiped away tears in Rocha Miranda, a city on Rio's periphery.

"He already had a wedding planned. ... The money that paid for my son's funeral was the money for the house he was going to live in."

She joined a campaign called "Cerol Kills" urging Rio authorities to enforce the existing law and federal lawmakers to adopt the national ban.

Magno maintains that cutting lines can be used safely in designated areas, just as guns are at target-shooting ranges.

"It should be banned in the street; we recognize that it's dangerous," he said. "But millions of people practice this sport and hundreds of thousands of people earn a living directly or indirectly from it. So we can't do away with it."

In 2020, Leonardo Durães was riding his motorbike when a razor-sharp line slashed his chin; he got 33 stitches and a deep scar is still visible today.

Even he supports kite championships as long as they are held in suitable places. "As soon as a situation is inflicting harm, including causing fatal victims, that's when your playtime's over," he said.

Bus carrying Shiite pilgrims from Pakistan to Iraq crashes in Iran, killing at least 28 people

By NASSER KARIMI Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — A bus carrying Shiite pilgrims from Pakistan to Iraq crashed in central Iran, killing at least 28 people, an official said Wednesday.

The crash happened Tuesday night in the central Iranian province of Yazd, said Mohammad Ali Malekzadeh, a local emergency official, according to the state-run IRNA news agency.

Another 23 people suffered injuries in the crash, 14 of them serious, he added. He said all the bus passengers hailed from Pakistan.

There were 51 people on board at the time of the crash outside of the city of Taft, some 500 kilometers (310 miles) southeast of the Iranian capital, Tehran.

Iranian state television later broadcast images of the bus, turned upside down on the highway with its roof smashed in and all its doors open. Rescuers stepped gingerly through the broken glass and debris littering the road.

In the state TV report, Malekzadeh blamed the crash on the bus brakes failing and a lack of attention by its driver.

In Pakistan, authorities described those on the bus as coming from the city of Larkana in Pakistan's southern Sindh province.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he was "deeply saddened" by the crash and that diplomats were providing assistance to those affected.

"My thoughts are with the bereaved families," Sharif said on the social platform X.

Iran has one of the world's worst traffic safety records with some 17,000 deaths annually. The grave toll is blamed on wide disregard for traffic laws, unsafe vehicles and inadequate emergency services in its vast rural areas.

The pilgrims had been on their way to Iraq to commemorate Arbaeen.

Arbaeen — Arabic for the number 40 — marks the death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Hussein, at the hands of the Muslim Umayyad forces in the Battle of Karbala, during the tumultuous first century of Islam's history. Hussein was seen by his followers as the rightful heir of the prophet's legacy. When he refused to pledge allegiance to the Umayyad caliphate, he was killed in the battle, cementing the schism between Sunni and Shiite Islam.

Pilgrims gather in Karbala, Iraq, in what's regarded as the largest annual public gathering in the world. The event draws tens of millions of people each year. Already, Iranian police said 3 million pilgrims had left the country's borders for Karbala.

A separate bus crash early Wednesday in Iran's southeastern Sistan and Baluchestan province killed six people and injured 18, authorities said.

Blinken ends latest Mideast visit without a cease-fire, warning 'time is of the essence'

By JULIA FRANKEL and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken ended his ninth visit to the Middle East since the war in Gaza began without securing any major breakthrough for a cease-fire deal, warning on Tuesday that "time is of the essence" even as Hamas and Israel signaled that challenges remain.

After meetings in fellow mediating countries Egypt and Qatar, Blinken said that because Israel has accepted a proposal to bridge gaps with the militant group, the focus turns to doing everything possible to

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"get Hamas on board" and ensure both sides agree to key details on implementation.

"Our message is simple. It's clear and it's urgent," he told reporters before leaving Qatar. "We need to get a cease-fire and hostage agreement over the finish line, and we need to do it now. Time is of the essence."

There has been added urgency after the recent targeted killings of militant leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah in Iran and Lebanon, both attributed to Israel, and vows of retaliation that have sparked fears of a wider regional war.

Few details have been released about the so-called bridging proposal put forth by the U.S., Egypt and Qatar. Blinken said it is "very clear on the schedule and the locations of (Israeli military) withdrawals from Gaza."

Hamas earlier Tuesday called the latest proposal a reversal of what it had agreed to, accusing the U.S. of acquiescing to new conditions from Israel. There was no immediate U.S. response to that.

Blinken's comments on ending his latest Israel-Hamas peace mission were notably bare of the optimism that Biden administration officials expressed going into his trip, and earlier.

The upbeat tone through much of the spring and summer — with U.S. officials at times describing a cease-fire and hostage deal as nearer than ever — reflected necessary messaging, at least in part, said Jonathan Panikoff, director of the Scowcroft Middle East Security Initiative at the Atlantic Council's Middle East Program.

"If they don't project optimism then it won't create ... even the potential for sufficient momentum to keep things going," Panikoff said.

Americans have little alternative to continuing to push Israel and Hamas to agree to a negotiated end to fighting, but it's fundamentally about Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, who helped mastermind the Oct. 7 attacks, Panikoff said. And they are "the two people that have been, frankly, most skeptical from the beginning" about making peace.

Netanyahu, meanwhile, met with right-wing groups of families of fallen soldiers and hostages in Gaza. The groups, which oppose a cease-fire deal, said he told them Israel will not abandon two strategic corridors in Gaza whose control has been an obstacle in the talks. Netanyahu's office did not comment on their account.

A senior U.S. official rejected as "totally untrue" that Netanyahu had told Blinken that Israel would never leave the Philadelphi and Netzarim corridors. Such statements are "not constructive to getting a cease-fire deal across the finish line," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss Blinken's private diplomatic talks.

Blinken's meetings in Egypt, which borders Gaza, and in Qatar, which hosts some Hamas leaders in exile, came a day after he met Netanyahu. Wide gaps appeared to remain between Israel and Hamas, though angry statements often serve as pressure tactics during negotiations.

Both men have seen their political standing improve at home, as Israelis turn their attention from the war in Gaza to a threatened wider conflict with Iran and Hezbollah, and as Hamas further consolidates Sinwar's leadership of the group. That's lessened the pressure on both to close a deal, Panikoff said.

And while the U.S. could try restricting arms sales to Israel to push it to end the war with Hamas, Panikoff argued that risks making Netanyahu dig in his heels further, instead.

Netanyahu's meeting with the families came as Israel's military said it recovered the bodies of six hostages taken in Hamas' Oct. 7 attack that started the war, bringing fresh grief for many Israelis who have long pressed Netanyahu to agree to a cease-fire that would bring remaining hostages home.

New protests were held Tuesday. "The longer they're there, the more body bags we get," said one protester, Adi Israeli, in Tel Aviv.

Israel's military said it recovered the six bodies in an overnight operation in southern Gaza, saying they were killed when troops were operating in Khan Younis. Hamas says some captives have been killed in Israeli airstrikes, though returning hostages have talked about difficult conditions, including lack of food or medications.

The recovery of the remains also is a blow to Hamas, which hopes to exchange hostages for Palestinian prisoners, an Israeli withdrawal and a lasting cease-fire.

The military said it had identified the remains of Chaim Perry, 80; Yoram Metzger, 80; Avraham Munder, 79; Alexander Dancyg, 76; Nadav Popplewell, 51; and Yagev Buchshtav, 35.

Kibbutz Nir Oz, the farming community where Munder was among around 80 residents seized, said he died after "months of physical and mental torture." Israeli authorities previously determined the other five were dead.

Hamas is still believed to be holding around 110 hostages captured during the Oct. 7 attacks, when militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians. Israeli authorities estimate around a third are dead. Over 100 other hostages were released during last year's cease-fire in exchange for Palestinians imprisoned in Israel.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count. The war has caused widespread destruction and forced the vast majority of Gaza's 2.3 million residents to flee their homes, often multiple times. Aid groups fear the outbreak of polio and other diseases.

An Israeli airstrike Tuesday killed at least 12 people at a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City. The Palestinian Civil Defense, first responders operating under the Hamas-run government, said around 700 people had been sheltering at the Mustafa Hafez school. Israel's military said the strike targeted Hamas militants who had set up a command center there.

"We don't know where to go ... or where to shelter our children," said Um Khalil Abu Agwa, a displaced woman.

An Israeli airstrike in Deir al-Balah hit people walking down the street and seven were killed, including a woman and two children, according to an Associated Press journalist who counted the bodies. Another airstrike in central Gaza killed five children and their mother, according to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, where an AP journalist counted the bodies.

Palestinians displaced by recent Israeli evacuation orders crowded into already teeming areas. One child in Deir al-Balah slept on cardboard as insects flew around his face.

"Are they going to dig the ground and dump us there, or put us on a boat and throw us in the sea? I don't know," said one man, Abu Shady Afana.

Pro-Palestinian protesters clash with police near Chicago's Israeli consulate on second night of DNC

By SOPHIA TAREEN, JAKE OFFENHARTZ, JOEY CAPPELLETTI and LEA SKENE Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Multiple pro-Palestinian demonstrators were arrested Tuesday after clashing with police during a protest that began outside the Israeli consulate and spilled out onto the surrounding streets on the second night of the Democratic National Convention.

The intense confrontations with officers began minutes into the demonstration, after some protesters — many dressed in black, their faces covered — charged at a line of police that had blocked the group from marching. They eventually moved past the officers, but were penned in several times throughout the night by police in riot gear who did not allow protesters to disperse.

The Chicago chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, which provided legal observers for Tuesday's protests, said at least 72 people were arrested.

A large portion of the arrests happened at the end of the night, as police pinned the remaining demonstrators — some of whom said they were trying to get home — in a plaza and blocked them from leaving. Police Superintendent Larry Snelling denied that police had "kettled" protesters, a tactic that involves corraling demonstrators in a confined area, which is banned under a federal consent decree.

Snelling, who has been present at all major demonstrations during the convention, praised his officers' handling of the protests, calling the response proportional.

"We have people who showed up here to commit acts of violence," he told reporters late Tuesday. "They wanted chaos."

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When asked to detail the violent acts, he said the demonstrators walked right into police officers. He declined to give the number of arrests, saying he did not have a final total.

Earlier in the evening, some demonstrators set an American flag on fire in the street as the celebratory roll call for Vice President Kamala Harris took place inside the United Center about 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) away.

As protesters regrouped and approached a line of police in riot gear in front of a Chicago skyscraper that houses the Israeli consulate, an officer said into a megaphone, "You are ordered to immediately disperse." A woman in the front of the march shouted back with her own megaphone: "We're not scared of you."

A man in Chicago Bulls hat, his face covered by a balaclava, called on protesters to "shut down the DNC." The group, which is not affiliated with the coalition of over 200 groups that organized Monday's protests, advertised the demonstration Tuesday under the slogan of "Make it great like '68," invoking the anti-Vietnam War protests that seized the city during the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

The atmosphere with rows of police in riot gear was a stark contrast to a day earlier when thousands of pro-Palestinian activists, including families pushing babies in strollers, marched near the convention site calling for a ceasefire.

Police kept protesters confined to a block of Madison Street, a normally bustling downtown thoroughfare where traffic was halted on both ends Tuesday evening.

Law enforcement had closed down most of the entrances to the building on Tuesday, allowing commuters to come in only one entrance where armed officers were also posted. Many of the building's shops were closed. Martha Hill, a spokeswoman for the Metra commuter rail service, said train service was running as normal.

The consulate has been the site of numerous demonstrations since the war in Gaza began in October. It is in a building connected to the Ogilvie Transportation Center, a major commuter rail station.

Mohammed Ismail, a 29-year-old psychiatry resident who lives in Chicago, described the police presence as "excessive," and questioned why the group had been blocked from marching. He said he joined the protest to urge Democrats to cease funding to Israel.

"It's not right that we're sending our tax money to fund an ongoing slaughter, an ongoing genocide," Ismail said. "We're a part of this conflict because our money is paying for it."

Meanwhile, the sites of demonstrations from the previous night were largely quiet. Thirteen people were arrested during Monday's protests, most them related to a "brief breach" of security fencing "within sight and sound of the United Center," Snelling said.

Israel supporters, including some relatives of people kidnapped by Hamas, gathered earlier in the day at a pro-Israel art installation not far from the consulate to call on U.S. leaders to continue backing Israel and pushing for the release of hostages. The art installation included giant milk cartons bearing photos of some of the hostages.

Elan Carr, CEO of the Israeli-American Council, condemned the pro-Palestinian protesters who have descended on Chicago this week, calling them "fringe crazies" and demanding that U.S. leaders "stand unequivocally with the state of Israel."

More protests were planned throughout the week. However, attendance at the main rally on Monday was far below estimates of organizers who had predicted more than 20,000 would show up.

Snelling said Monday's crowd was around 3,500 people and that the vast majority of those protesters were peaceful.

Obamas close DNC's second night with rousing Harris endorsement and pointed warnings about Trump

By STEVE PEOPLES, JONATHAN J. COOPER and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Warning of a difficult fight ahead, former President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama on Tuesday called on the nation to embrace Kamala Harris in urgent messages to the Democratic National Convention that were at times both hopeful and ominous.

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"America, hope is making a comeback," the former first lady declared. She then tore into Republican Donald Trump, a sharp shift from the 2016 convention speech in which she told her party, "When they go low, we go high."

"His limited and narrow view of the world made him feel threatened by the existence of two hardworking, highly educated, successful people who also happened to be Black," Michelle Obama said of Trump.

Barack Obama, the first Black president in U.S. history, insisted the nation is ready to elect Harris, who is of Jamaican and Indian heritage and would be the nation's first female president. He also called Trump "a 78-year-old billionaire who hasn't stopped whining about his problems since he rode down his golden escalator nine years ago."

"It's been a constant stream of gripes and grievances that's actually gotten worse now that he's afraid of losing to Kamala," he said.

The fiery messages from two of the Democratic Party's biggest stars underscored the urgency of the moment as Harris works to stitch together a broad coalition in her bid to defeat Trump this fall. The vice president is drawing on stars like the Obamas and other celebrities, officials from the far left to the middle, and even some Republicans to boost her campaign.

And while the theme of the night was "a bold vision for America's future," the disparate factions of Harris' evolving coalition demonstrated, above all, that they are connected by a deep desire to prevent a second Trump presidency.

In an appearance perhaps intended to needle Trump, his former press secretary Stephanie Grisham — now a harsh critic of her former boss — also took the convention stage.

Trump "has no empathy, no morals and no fidelity to the truth," Grisham said. "I love my country more than my party. Kamala Harris tells the truth. She respects the American people. And she has my vote."

Sens. Chuck Schumer, the Senate Democratic leader, and Bernie Sanders, the Vermont independent beloved by progressives, both praised Harris.

Schumer called on voters to elect another Democratic majority to the U.S. Senate. "She can't do it alone," he said of a prospective President Harris.

Sanders, a self-described democratic socialist, said he was eager to work with Harris in the White House as well. Their policy goals, he said, are "not a radical agenda."

As Democrats addressed the nation from Chicago, Harris faced an estimated 15,000 people in battleground Wisconsin in the arena where Republicans held their convention last month. She said that she was running "a people-powered campaign."

"Together we will chart a new way forward," the vice president said in remarks that were partially broadcast to the DNC. "A future for freedom, opportunity, of optimism and faith."

Still, it was not all serious on the second night of the four-day convention.

A symbolic roll call in which delegates from each state pledged their support for the Democratic nominee turned into a party atmosphere. A DJ played a mix of state-specific songs — and Atlanta native Lil Jon ran out during Georgia's turn to his hit song with DJ Snake, "Turn Down for What," to the delight of the thousands inside the cavernous United Center.

And various speakers offered personal stories about Harris, who has served as a California senator and vice president, but remains largely unknown among many voters.

Second gentleman Doug Emhoff, who would become the nation's first gentleman if his wife wins the presidency, shared details about his relationship with the vice president — their cooking habits, their first date and her laugh, which is often mocked by Republican critics.

"You know that laugh. I love that laugh!" Emhoff said as the crowd cheered. Later, he added, "Her empathy is her strength."

Trump, meanwhile, was out on the campaign trail as part of his weeklong swing-state tour during the Democratic convention. He went to Howell, Michigan, on Tuesday and stood aside sheriff's deputies as he labeled Harris the "ringleader" of a "Marxist attack on law enforcement" across the country.

"Kamala Harris will deliver crime, chaos, destruction and death," Trump said in one of many generaliza-

tions about an America under Harris.

Throughout their convention, Democrats have sought to balance a message of unity with an embrace of diversity.

Barack Obama's speech Tuesday night made perhaps the most forceful case for that model as a logical step forward for a bitterly divided nation. In contrast to the party's rhetoric in the recent past around race, Obama framed the Democrats' approach as "a new way forward" for a modern society in contrast to a "divisive," "old" and "tired" strategy of vision offered by the party's chief opponent, Trump.

Michelle Obama also addressed race directly as she jabbed Trump, referencing a comment he made in a June debate.

"Who's going to tell him that the job he's currently seeking might just be one of those 'Black jobs'?" she said. "It's his same old con: doubling down on ugly, misogynistic, racist lies as a substitute for real ideas and solutions that will actually make people's lives better."

Barack Obama returned to the convention stage 20 years after making his first appearance at a national convention, a 2004 appearance in Boston that propelled him into the national spotlight ahead of his successful presidential run. And he praised President Joe Biden, who ended his reelection bid last month and endorsed Harris.

"History will remember Joe Biden as a president who defended democracy at a moment of great danger," Obama said Tuesday as the crowd chanted, "Thank you, Joe." "I am proud to call him my president, but even prouder to call him my friend."

Harris, meanwhile, cast the election in dire, almost existential terms. She implored Americans not to get complacent in light of the Supreme Court decision carving out broad presidential immunity, a power she said Trump would abuse.

She has also seized on Trump's opposition to a nationally guaranteed right to abortion.

"They seemingly don't trust women," she said of Trump and his Republican allies. "Well, we trust women."

The vice president's speech in Milwaukee evoked some of the same themes that underlaid Biden's case for reelection before he dropped out, casting Trump as a threat to democracy. Harris argued that Trump threatens the values and freedoms that Americans hold dear.

Trump said he would be a dictator only on his first day in office, a quip he later said was a joke, and has vowed as president to assert more control over federal prosecutions, an area of government that has traditionally been left to the Justice Department.

Someone with that record "should never again have the opportunity to stand behind the seal of the president of the United States," Harris said. "Never again."

Voters in Arizona and Montana can decide on constitutional right to abortion

By SEJAL GOVINDARAO and AMY BETH HANSON Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Voters in Arizona and Montana will be able to decide in November whether they want to protect the right to an abortion in their state constitutions.

The Arizona Supreme Court ruled Tuesday that a 200-word summary that abortion advocates used to collect signatures for a ballot measure is valid, clearing the way for the issue to remain on the ballot.

Montana Secretary of State Christi Jacobsen on Tuesday certified Montana's constitutional initiative for the November ballot.

Under both measures, abortions would be allowed until fetal viability — the point at which a fetus could survive outside the womb, typically around 24 weeks.

In Arizona, there are some exceptions for post-viability abortions to save the mother's life or to protect her physical or mental health. Montana's measure allows later abortions if needed to protect the mother's life or health.

Montana's initiative would enshrine in the constitution a 1999 state Supreme Court ruling that found the constitutional right to privacy includes the right of a patient to receive an abortion from a provider of their

choice. Supporters sought to protect the right as Republican lawmakers passed bills to restrict abortion rights.

Voters in more than a half-dozen states will be deciding abortion measures this fall. The U.S. Supreme Court removed the nationwide right to abortion with a 2022 ruling, which sparked a national push to have voters decide.

"Since Roe was overturned, extreme anti-abortion politicians have used every trick in the book to take away our freedoms and ban abortion completely," Martha Fuller, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Montana, said in a statement. "During that time, we have been working together to put this issue before voters."

Recent decisions from the Arizona Supreme Court come ahead of a Thursday ballot printing deadline. Montana's ballot must be certified by Thursday.

Arizona's justices sided with Republican lawmakers in a separate case concerning the abortion ballot measure last week to allow a voter information pamphlet to refer to an embryo or fetus as an "unborn human being." That language will not appear on the ballots.

In another case, the justices ruled a legislative proposal to let local police make arrests near the state's border with Mexico will appear on the ballot for voters to decide. The court had rejected a challenge from Latino groups that argued the ballot measure violated a rule in the state constitution that says legislative proposals must cover a single subject.

In the latest abortion measure case, Arizona Right to Life sued over the petition summary, arguing it was misleading.

The high court justices rejected that argument, as well as the claim that the petition summary for the proposed amendment failed to mention it would overturn existing abortion laws if approved by voters. The court in its ruling states that "(r)easonable people" can differ over the best way to describe a key provision of a ballot measure, but a court should not entangle itself in those disputes.

"Regardless of the ruling, we are looking forward to working with our pro-life partners across the state to continue to inform voters about this ambiguous language," said Susan Haugland, spokesperson for Arizona Right to Life.

Arizona for Abortion Access, which launched the initiative, said the ruling is a "huge win" and advocates will be working around the clock to encourage voters to support it.

"We are confident that this fall, Arizona voters will make history by establishing a fundamental right to abortion in our state, once and for all," the group said in a statement.

The Arizona secretary of state's office recently certified 577,971 signatures — far above the number required to put the question before voters.

Democrats have made abortion rights a central message since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in 2022 — and it is a key part of their efforts in this year's elections.

Your audience is filled with Republicans. The Democratic convention is underway. How to cover it?

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

The Democratic convention presents Fox News Channel with a delicate challenge: how to cover a party suddenly enthused about its election chances when much of the network's audience has a different political viewpoint.

During the Democrats' first two days, Fox personalities called the proceedings "boring" and filled with "a lot of hate." There was a focus on demonstrations outside the arena while many of the speakers inside went unheard on the air. Presidential nominee Kamala Harris was given nicknames like "the princess" and "comrade Kamala."

"We're at the DNC," Sean Hannity quipped, "so you don't have to be."

Fox's telecast illustrated the challenges inherent in covering news events on networks that are filled with

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both breaking news and partisan political talk, sometimes mashed up — where opinion personalities like Hannity, MSNBC's Rachel Maddow and CNN's Van Jones freely mix with reporters and blur boundaries. During the GOP convention last month, the liberal-leaning MSNBC cut off Nikki Haley in favor of a discussion about how she debased herself, and ignored Ron DeSantis entirely.

The feel-good Republican gathering gave Fox News the biggest convention audience ever for a cable network, a feat at a time when millions of Americans are pulling the plug on subscriptions, and a staggering audience of 10.4 million people for the opening moments of former President Donald Trump's acceptance speech, the Nielsen company said.

No one expects such numbers this week for Fox, where 93 percent of people who called it their main news source identified as Republican in a 2019 Pew Research Center survey. Fox's audience has shown a marked tendency to tune away from news that doesn't reflect its beliefs, such as the Jan. 6 committee hearings.

For Monday's DNC coverage, Fox had 2.5 million viewers, compared to 6.9 million for the first night of the GOP session a month ago.

Not mincing words

Hosts on "The Five," Fox's most-watched show, were nothing if not direct in setting the stage for the Democrats' week. "You can't believe anything the Democrats tell you," Jesse Watters said. "Everything is a lie ... There is no joy here. The only joy is that Joe's gone."

Watters said "no one believes" that the economy is good, or that polls showing Harris rapidly making up ground against Trump since replacing Biden at the top of the ticket are real. Later Monday evening, Watters declared the event boring, saying "this is like a convention your boss makes you go to." Hannity described the convention as "far-left radical protesters outside and manufactured unity, deception and lying inside."

Fox hosts uniformly rejected the Democrats' interpretation that Biden had committed a selfless act by giving up his re-election bid and called the president's appearance on Monday more humiliating than valedictory. "You had to wrestle this job away from him like it was car keys from a drunk," said Greg Gutfeld, who called former President Obama the "Barack-stabber."

Harris was depicted as an inexperienced, risky choice. Onscreen messages, or chyrons, during Laura Ingraham's show drove home the point: "Dems Overconfident in Their Unproven Backup," read one. Others: "Kamala's All Vibe, No Substance" and "Comrade Kamala Fails Econ 101."

"This is like booking tickets on the Titanic," analyst Keith Kellogg said.

During most of Hannity's show on Tuesday, an onscreen camera was focused on a non-violent protest outside of the convention. "The convention has been full of a lot of hate," Hannity said, "instead of the politics of joy, which you've been promised."

Who made it and who didn't

Fox News has made room for Democrats willing to come on its shows this week for interviews, including Harris campaign co-chair Cedric Richmond, Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, U.S. Rep. Debbie Dingel and U.S. Sen. Mark Kelly. Fox said it has seen a 40% increase in bookings of Democrats compared with last year, and that its sister business network presents full coverage of convention speeches.

Fox says it has the same footprint on the ground for the DNC in Chicago as it did for the Republican convention in Chicago last month. It rejects the notion that it is unwilling to show the Democrats' point of view.

"You can't access the engaged and politically diverse audience with the scale that FNC provides anywhere else," Fox said in a statement.

Fox carried Biden's speech in its entirety Monday night, as well as some other moments including Harris' short, surprise address, which occurred during Hannity's show. Both Barack and Michelle Obama were carried on Tuesday night. Speeches by Hillary Clinton and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez — both deeply unpopular with many in Fox's audience — were also carried in full. Fox's Dana Perino said Ocasio-Cortez made a great speech, "but it didn't make any sense."

Several podium appearances covered elsewhere went unheard on Fox News Channel: Olympics basketball coach Steve Kerr, UAW President Shawn Fain, Rev. Jesse Jackson, U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, U.S. Rep. Jamie Raskin, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth. Fox analyst Brit Hume complained that a group of women who talked about abortion policy went on too long — even though the network did not follow their remarks.

Tim Graham, director of media analysis for the conservative Media Research Center, said Fox programs to its audience in much the same way that Nicolle Wallace and Rachel Maddow say they won't show Trump because of concerns that he'll lie, "but it's because they don't want to watch it."

Brian Stelter, author of "Network of Lies: The Epic Saga of Fox News, Donald Trump and the Battle for American Democracy," said that while Fox News Channel recognized the news importance of the convention, he saw it as reluctant to give its viewers an unvarnished view of what was being said.

"Fox did very little listening and a lot of talking," he said.

Interestingly, there was an effort by the campaigns Monday to reach beyond friendly territory: The Harris campaign ran a commercial on Fox, while Trump advertised on CNN.

Fox has been particularly sensitive about not threatening audience loyalty. Concerns about its audience's anger with Fox following coverage of the 2020 presidential election were cited in evidence presented by Dominion Voting Systems in its defamation suit against Fox. That suit was settled when Fox agreed to pay \$787 million.

Bill Clinton's post-presidential journey: a story told in convention speeches

By ANDREW DeMILLO Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — In Bill Clinton's prime-time speech at the Democratic National Convention in 1988, the young governor of Arkansas bored delegates so thoroughly that they cheered when he said, "in closing..." Many years later, as a former president whose legacy had made a comeback, Clinton aided Barack Obama's reelection with a 2012 convention address that earned him a nickname as the "secretary of explaining stuff."

The 78-year-old Clinton, a veteran of convention speeches over the past four decades, knows as well as anyone the difference between a good and a disastrous performance. What's less certain as he prepares to deliver his 12th convention speech Wednesday is the impact he'll have on a party trying to prevent Donald Trump from returning to the White House.

Clinton's political journey, from Little Rock to the White House and later to elder statesman status, can be traced in part through his evolving role at the Democratic National Convention — for better or worse. Credited with reviving Democrats' fortunes when he was elected in 1992 and as the last president to leave office with a budget surplus, Clinton remains a rock star for many Democrats. But for others, his legacy has been complicated, both by evolving views about his centrist brand of politics and about the scandal involving sex and power that nearly ended his presidency.

This time around, as Democrats look to end Trump's political career, allies and experts regard Clinton as a valuable messenger for Vice President Kamala Harris on the economy, with a recent AP-NORC poll showing that Americans are somewhat more likely to trust Trump than the Democratic Party's nominee on economic issues.

"Nobody has the ability to encapsulate very complex issues on the economy and explain it in ordinary terms — he's the best at that — on why it matters to you and everybody," said Terry McAuliffe, former Virginia governor and longtime friend of Bill and Hillary Clinton.

But the former president's influence may be waning, especially as he addresses a party that has moved to the left of his centrist politics on issues like crime and trade.

Though he spoke at the 1980 and 1984 conventions, Clinton made his first national splash when he formally nominated then-Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis at the 1988 convention. It didn't go well.

What was supposed to be a 15-minute speech went twice as long, with delegates losing interest.

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"It was thirty-two minutes of total disaster," he later wrote in his 2004 autobiography, "My Life."

Clinton rebounded with a self-deprecating appearance on Johnny Carson's late night show, where the host welcomed him by placing an hourglass on the desk. Clinton ended his appearance by playing saxophone with the show's band.

"He quickly redeemed himself," said Skip Rutherford, a longtime friend and former head of Clinton's presidential foundation.

That set the stage for Clinton's next two convention speeches, first as the party's nominee in 1992 where he proclaimed he still believed "in a place called Hope." And in 1996, seeking reelection, he vowed to build "a bridge to the 21st century."

"He walks on the stage being the most experienced convention speaker there," Rutherford said. "But I still bet he talks about the future."

But Clinton's stature as ex-president has evolved over the years, buffeted both by politics and the evolution of his legacy.

Part of that reflects how the #MeToo movement revived talk over Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky, a young White House intern, which led to his impeachment by the House. Lewinsky in 2018 said although it wasn't sexual assault, the relationship constituted a "gross abuse of power."

In 2000, as Clinton came to the end of his second term as president, he ceded the spotlight to his vice president, Al Gore, who looked to distance himself from the scandal and Clinton's impeachment. Gore highlighted his own marriage with a long on-stage kiss with Tipper Gore, emphasizing the contrast between the two men. (The Gores split up a decade later.)

Gore lost the presidency to George W. Bush in a race so close it was ultimately settled by the Supreme Court. The historically narrow margin has fueled debate ever since about whether Clinton's role in the campaign should have been handled differently.

Clinton's convention role was complicated again eight years later, after Hillary Clinton lost a bitter primary fight to Obama. He spoke at the 2008 convention in Denver, but Obama had little interest in dwelling on the ex-president's legacy, and Clinton's speech was the undercard on the same night Joe Biden delivered his speech as the party's vice-presidential nominee.

Clinton's most memorable speech since then came in 2012, when he delivered a point-by-point take-down of Republicans' economic plans. The speech earned him the "secretary of explaining stuff" moniker from Obama. He also delivered a heartfelt speech on behalf of his wife at the 2016 convention during her presidential bid.

Clinton's presidential library remains a popular tourist draw in Little Rock nearly 20 years since it opened, and his foundation last year announced plans to expand it to include Hillary's personal archives. He also plans to release another memoir after the election.

But Clinton's star power may be dimmer when compared with Obama. About 6 in 10 Democrats see Obama as the best recent president, according to a 2023 Pew Research Center poll that asked U.S. adults which president has done the best job over the past 40 years. About 2 in 10 Democrats selected Clinton.

That comes as the party has moved away from the center-left politics embraced for most of his presidency by Clinton, who won over moderates with policies like his welfare overhaul and North American Free Trade Agreement, which Trump and others have argued sent thousands of jobs overseas.

"I would say he's a diminished figure, there's no doubt about that, in the Democratic Party," said Nelson Lichtenstein, a historian of the Clinton administration at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Clinton also could be outshined by his wife, who remains popular in the party eight years after her unsuccessful White House run. Hillary Clinton was greeted by wild and sustained applause that lasted for more than two minutes as she addressed the convention on Monday.

And Bill Clinton's record has received new scrutiny from fellow Democrats in recent years. The 1994 crime bill he signed that imposed tougher criminal sentences and provided incentives for states to build more prisons has been criticized as a blunt instrument of mass incarceration that ruined the lives of thousands of people who could have been redeemed with less harsh punishment. Biden faced questions over his support of the legislation during the Democratic primaries four years ago.

Paul Begala, a Democratic strategist and former Clinton adviser, said the former president remains an asset for the party.

"I think he's very much an elder statesman and he's a beloved figure, with a particular credibility on the economy," Begala said. "If I were a campaign manager, I'd send him anywhere."

That may make his speech useful in connecting Harris with moderate voters who don't want to vote for Trump but may be receptive to his claim that she's too liberal.

"I think the 'secretary of explaining' things still has work to do," said Russell Riley, co-chair of the presidential oral history program at the University of Virginia's Miller Center. "If you give him some time, he can explain damn near anything and can make sometimes unappealing choices seem to be not just logical but inescapable."

She didn't see her Black heritage in crossword puzzles. So she started publishing her own

By DEEPTI HAJELA Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — It started a couple of years ago when Juliana Pache was doing a crossword puzzle and got stuck.

She was unfamiliar with the reference that the clue made. It made her think about what a crossword puzzle would look like if the clues and answers included more of some subjects that she WAS familiar with, thanks to her own identity and interests — Black history and Black popular culture.

When she couldn't find such a thing, Pache decided to do it herself. In January 2023, she created black-crossword.com, a site that offers a free mini-crossword puzzle every day. And Tuesday marked the release of her first book, "Black Crossword: 100 Mini Puzzles Celebrating the African Diaspora."

It's a good moment for it, nearly 111 years after the first crossword appeared in a New York newspaper. Recent years have seen an increasing amount of conversation around representation in crossword puzzles, from who's constructing them to what words can be used for answers and how the clues are framed. There's been a push to expand the idea of the kinds of "common knowledge" players would have to fill them out.

"I had never made a crossword puzzle before," Pache, 32, said with a laugh. "But I was like, I can figure it out."

And she did.

Made 'with Black people in mind'

Each puzzle on Pache's site includes at least a few clues and answers connecting to Black culture. The tagline on the site: "If you know, you know."

The book is brimming with the kinds of puzzles that she estimates about 2,200 people play daily on her site — squares made up of five lines, each with five spaces. She aims for at least three of the clues to be references to aspects of Black cultures from around the world.

Pache, a native of the New York City borough of Queens with family ties to Cuba and the Dominican Republic, had a couple of goals in mind when she started. Primarily, she wanted to create something that Black people would enjoy.

I'm "making it with Black people in mind," she said. "And then if anyone else enjoys it, they learn things from it, that's a bonus but it's not my focus."

She's also trying to show the diversity in Black communities and cultures with the clues and words she uses, and to encourage people from different parts of the African diaspora to learn about each other.

"I also want to make it challenging, not just for people who might be interested in Black culture, but people within Black culture who might be interested in other regions," she said. "Part of my mission with this is to highlight Black people from all over, Black culture from all over. And I think ... that keeps us learning about each other."

What, really, is 'general knowledge'?

While on the surface it might just seem like a game, the knowledge base required for crosswords does say something about what kind of knowledge is considered "general" and "universal" and what isn't, said

Michelle Pera-McGhee, a data journalist at The Pudding, a site that focuses on data-driven stories.

In 2020, Pera-McGhee undertook a data project analyzing crossword puzzles through the decades from a handful of the most well-known media outlets. The project assessed clues and answers that used the names of real people to determine a breakdown along gender and race categories.

Unsurprisingly, the data indicated that for the most part, men were disproportionately more likely than women to be featured, as well as white people compared to racial and ethnic minorities.

It's "interesting because it's supposed to be easy," Pera-McGhee said. "You want ... ideally to reference things that people, everybody knows about because everyone learns about them in school or whatever. ... What are the things that we decide we all should know?"

There are efforts to make crosswords more accessible and representative, including the recently started fellowship for puzzle constructors from underrepresented groups at The New York Times, among the most high-profile crossword puzzles around. Puzzle creators have made puzzles aimed at LGBTQ+ communities, at women, using a wider array of references as Pache is doing.

Bottom line, "it is really cool to see our culture reflected in this medium," Pache said.

And, Pera-McGhee said, it can be cool to learn new things.

"It's kind of enriching to have things in the puzzle that you don't know about," she said. "It's not that the experience of not knowing is bad. It's just that it should maybe be spread out along with the experience of knowing. Both are kind of good in the crossword-solving experience."

Fannie Lou Hamer rattled the Democratic convention with her 'Is this America?' speech 60 years ago

By EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris is accepting the Democrats' presidential nomination Thursday, exactly 60 years after another Black woman mesmerized the nation with a televised speech that challenged the seating of Mississippi's all-white delegation to the 1964 Democratic National Convention.

The testimony of Fannie Lou Hamer to the credentials committee in Atlantic City, New Jersey, was vivid and blunt.

She described how she was fired from her plantation job in retaliation for trying to register to vote and brutalized in jail for encouraging other Black people to assert their rights. She told of arbitrary tests that white authorities imposed to prevent Black people from voting and other unconstitutional methods that kept white elites in power across the segregated South.

"All of this is on account of we want to register, to become first-class citizens," Hamer told the committee.

Whether every eligible citizen can vote and have their vote be counted is still an open question in this election, said U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson, who is speaking Wednesday at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. He got his first practical experience in democracy at Hamer's urging in 1966, when he was a college student in Mississippi and she recruited him to register other Black voters.

Hamer has already been the subject of appreciation this week, as the Democrats' convention began Monday.

"Our challenge as Americans is to make sure that this experiment called democracy is not just for the the landed gentry or the wealthy, but it is for everybody," said Thompson, who led the House committee that investigated the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

'Is this America?'

Hamer was raised in cotton fields of the Mississippi Delta and became a sharecropper. She joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and helped organize Freedom Summer, a campaign to educate and register Black voters. With Mississippi conducting whites-only primaries, activists formed the racially integrated Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party to confront leading Democrats on a national stage.

"If the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America," Hamer told the credentials committee. "Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, where we have to asleep with our telephones off of the hooks because our lives be threatened daily, because we want to live as

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decent human beings, in America?"

President Lyndon B. Johnson hastily called a news conference during Hamer's testimony to try to divert attention from divisions that could alienate white voters in the South. TV cameras cut away, but networks showed her speech later.

Top Democrats said Hamer's group could seat two delegates, but that was too little for the Freedom Democrats. And it was too much for the regular Mississippi delegation, which fled the convention without declaring loyalty to LBJ, and eventually left for good as conservative Democrats across the South, including segregationists, switched to the Republican party.

Leslie-Burl McLemore was one of the Freedom delegates and recalls how determined they were.

"I knew in my mind, because I'm 23 years old and I'm vice chair of the Freedom Democratic Party, I'm not going to accept that damn compromise," the retired political science professor at Jackson State University said recently at the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in Jackson.

"We had four white folk in our delegation and the white folks didn't have no Black folk in their delegation," McLemore said. "So, hey, we had God on our side."

Risking beatings and death

Other organizers included Ella Baker, Bob Moses, and David J. Dennis Sr. Only days before the 1964 convention, Dennis gave an impassioned eulogy at the funeral of James Chaney, the Freedom Summer volunteer who was killed along with Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman by Ku Klux Klansmen in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

That violence was fresh when Hamer testified about being evicted after trying to register to vote in 1962. She said the plantation owner told her, "We're not ready for that in Mississippi."

Hamer also recounted being jailed and beaten in 1963 in Winona, Mississippi, at the command of white law enforcement officers, after she and several other Black people returned from a voter education workshop. The beating permanently damaged her eyes, legs and kidneys.

On Tuesday, the first Mississippi Freedom Trail marker outside the state was unveiled in Atlantic City to commemorate the Freedom Democrats. Another marker, dedicated in June in Winona, recognizes the jail beatings. Euvester Simpson was 17 in 1963, and shared a cell with Hamer. She said she heard Hamer being whipped in another room.

"Mrs. Hamer told me she was in a lot of pain," Simpson said, recalling how she soothed Hamer with damp rags and the gospel song, "Walk With Me."

"Her back was hurting. Her hands were bleeding. She was swollen, because she had used her hands to kind of guard her back," Simpson said.

"State-sanctioned violence" is among the many issues from Hamer's 1964 testimony that still resonate, said Keisha N. Blain, a Brown University historian. She cited the July 6 shooting death of Sonya Massey, a Black woman, by a deputy who responded to her 911 call.

"This theme is still lingering, even if the specific circumstances are different," Blain said.

Advocating for bodily autonomy

While Hamer didn't make it part of her testimony at the convention, she also was an advocate for bodily autonomy. A white doctor had performed a hysterectomy without her consent when she had a uterine tumor removed in 1961. Such treatment of Black women was so common in the South that Hamer called it a "Mississippi appendectomy."

Blain noted in her 2021 book, "Until I Am Free: Fannie Lou Hamer's Enduring Message to America," that Hamer feared both abortion and birth control were "white supremacist tools to regulate the lives of impoverished Black people and even prevent the growth of the Black population."

Hamer kept speaking after the convention, famously saying she was "sick and tired of being sick and tired" over how long America was taking to ensure fair treatment. Another year went by before Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and then nearly another year before the Supreme Court upheld the law.

A 2013 Supreme Court ruling dismantled a significant part of the Voting Rights Act — the requirement for states with a history of racial discrimination in voting, mainly in the South, to get federal approval before changing the way they hold elections. "Many communities across the nation are grappling with attempts

at voter suppression," Blain said.

Hamer also advocated for fair treatment of Black farmers. The Biden administration in late July announced more than \$2 billion in direct payments to Black and minority farmers who faced discrimination from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

GOP vice presidential nominee JD Vance called this "disgraceful," suggesting it is racist against white people. But Thompson said Black landowners had been refused credit and denied support from the USDA for many years. "The people who ran the federal agencies were part and parcel to the system of disenfranchisement," Thompson said.

Still an inspiration

Wil Colom, a Mississippi lawyer who now serves on the Democratic National Committee and is in Chicago for the convention, was a teenager when he heard Hamer speak at a church in Ripley, Mississippi, in October 1964. The church was burned after her appearance. Colom said the speech was "electrifying" and motivated him to challenge segregation at theaters and swimming pools.

Colom said he visited Hamer at her modest home in Ruleville before she died of cancer at 59 in 1977.

"She had no perception, which surprised me, of what an important figure she had become," Colom said.

The Freedom Democrats helped lead the way to President Barack Obama's election in 2008 and now to Harris' nomination, Dennis said.

"To me, it's all connected," Dennis said. "It's like a relay race. One baton moving to the next."

Vance and Walz are still relatively unknown, but the governor is better liked, an AP-NORC poll finds

By LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Tim Walz and JD Vance have vaulted themselves out of national obscurity as they hustle to introduce themselves to the country, but the senator from Ohio has had a rockier start than the Minnesota governor.

A poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research shows that Walz had a smoother launch as a running mate to Vice President Kamala Harris than Vance did for former President Donald Trump. About one-third of U.S. adults (36%) have a favorable view of Walz, who will introduce himself to his party when he speaks at the Democratic National Convention on Wednesday. About one-quarter (27%) have a positive opinion of Vance. Significantly more adults also have an unfavorable view of Vance than Walz, 44% to 25%.

Both are well-liked so far within their own parties, while independents are slightly more likely to have a positive view of Walz than Vance, but most don't know enough about either one yet.

Both VP candidates still need to work to become better known — about 4 in 10 Americans don't know enough about Walz to have an opinion about him, and roughly 3 in 10 don't know enough about Vance. Still, both are much better known than they were before they were selected as vice presidential nominees.

Democrats like Walz, but many key groups don't know enough

As Walz prepares to speak at the convention, about 6 in 10 Democrats said they have a favorable opinion of him, including about 4 in 10 whose opinions are "very favorable." Roughly 3 in 10 don't know him well enough to have an opinion. This is the first measure of Walz's favorability in an AP-NORC poll, but other polls showed he was virtually unknown nationally before he was chosen.

Many key Democratic coalitions still don't know much about Walz. About 4 in 10 women don't know enough to have an opinion of him, and about 4 in 10 young adults under age 45 say the same. About half of Black adults and roughly 4 in 10 Hispanic adults don't know enough to say whether they like him, either. Many lower-income adults and those without college degrees also don't have a view of Walz.

Data from AP VoteCast shows that when he ran for governor in 2022, Walz won with the support of women, young voters, union households, those living in the suburbs, and people in urban areas. He split the support of white voters and men — two groups where the Harris-Walz team will try to undercut Trump's

advantage. He lost rural voters in the state, as well as households with military veterans.

Samantha Phillis, a 33-year-old home care nurse and mother of four from Mankato, Minnesota, has known Walz for years. She attended Mankato West High School when Walz was a teacher there, and she was in the Gay-Straight Alliance when he was the faculty adviser. Since he became governor, she said, his policies have been "tremendous" for three of her children with disabilities. As a parent, she appreciated his program to provide free school meals for children.

"He was a great asset to Mankato West, and we are huge fans of him. As far as Minnesota goes, he's done great things for my family," Phillis said. "I'm really encouraged to see what he could help Kamala Harris do as her vice president."

Phillis said she was always planning to vote for the Democratic candidate but has been thrilled by the energy and momentum Walz added to the campaign.

"Now that Gov. Walz is on the ticket, I'm all in."

Vance's favorability has risen among Republicans

The new AP-NORC polling shows that in the weeks since Vance was selected as Trump's running mate, Republicans have gotten to know him better and have developed a generally positive view. About 6 in 10 Republicans now have a very or somewhat favorable opinion of Vance, a sharp rise since a mid-July poll conducted before the Ohio senator was announced as Trump's running mate. In that poll, only about 3 in 10 had a favorable view of him, and about 6 in 10 Republicans said they didn't know enough about Vance to have an opinion.

In the most recent poll, about 2 in 10 Republicans have an unfavorable view of Vance, and about one-quarter say they don't know enough about him to have an opinion.

Adults older than 45 are somewhat more likely than younger ones to have a positive opinion of Vance, 32% to 22%.

Data from AP VoteCast shows that when Vance ran for Senate in Ohio in 2022, he earned the support of many groups that have become the bedrock of Trump's political base. About 6 in 10 male voters in the state supported Vance, as well as voters age 45 and over. He also outperformed with young men compared to Republicans nationally. About 6 in 10 male voters under 30 voted for Vance in Ohio, compared to about half for Republican candidates nationwide.

Mary Lynch, a 62-year-old Republican from Marquette, Michigan, said she's followed Vance through TV interviews since before he ran for Senate. She said her positive view of him has only grown the more she learns about him. She appreciates his support for family-related policies, like anti-abortion measures and school choice.

Lynch supported Republican Nikki Haley during the GOP primaries, but she plans to vote for Trump in November. She likes Trump's policies, but she struggles with his personality. She sees Vance as a strong future leader for the Republican Party.

"I like (Vance's) personality a lot. He says things nicer. He doesn't use hyperbole," Lynch said. "If Trump wins with JD Vance, I look forward to having JD Vance run for president next."

A double dose of Obama firepower, a doting spouse and a dance party: Takeaways from Day 2 of the DNC

By JOSH BOAK and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — The Democratic National Convention's second night showcased a double dose of Obama firepower to validate Vice President Kamala Harris and deliver an unsparing indictment of Republican Donald Trump. The convention also served up a raucous roll call of states that was essentially one big dance party.

Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, ducked out of Chicago to hold a rally just up the interstate in Milwaukee, wooing voters in battleground Wisconsin. It was a recognition that, regardless of whatever good vibes may exist at the convention, Democrats expect this presidential election to be razor-close.

Here are some takeaways from the convention's second night.

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The ex-presidents club

If the Republican convention was all about Trump, the Democrats on Tuesday wanted to put Harris in a pantheon with past presidents.

The biggest validators of the night were former President Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle. The latter linked Harris with her husband by telling the rapt crowd, "America, hope is making a comeback."

Barack Obama, for his part, reached back to his own 2004 convention speech to tie Harris to his legacy. "I am feeling hopeful -- because this convention has always been pretty good to kids with funny names who believe in a country where everything is possible," he said.

It wasn't just the Obamas making the case for the vice president. The grandsons of Jimmy Carter and John F. Kennedy also portrayed her as the natural heir of past Democratic leaders.

As groundbreaking as Harris' candidacy is as the first woman of color to be her party's nominee, these speeches by an ex-president and presidential progeny were all about linking her to a broader historical arc and evoking the excitement of Obama's 2008 run that Harris hopes to replicate.

Diverting from the high road

The Obamas did not hold back in lacing into Trump. Michelle Obama's well-worn adage from years past that "when they go low, we go high" no longer seemed operative.

Barack Obama called Trump "a 78-year-old billionaire who hasn't stopped whining about his problems since he rode down his golden escalator nine years ago."

Michelle Obama also took a personal swipe, saying: "For years, Donald Trump did everything in his power to try to make people fear us. His limited and narrow view of the world made him feel threatened by the existence of two hardworking, highly educated, successful people who also happened to be Black."

Playing off her famous line about Republicans going low, Michelle Obama suggested that Trump was going "small" and that "it's unhealthy, and quite frankly, it's un-presidential."

DNC dance party

Political conventions technically happen so that delegates can nominate presidential and vice presidential candidates.

This year, the Democrats took care of that job in advance. But that didn't stop them from holding a ceremonial do-over and turning it into a raucous dance party.

DJ Cassidy strode on stage in a bright blue double-breasted suit and spun tunes for every state as they nominated Harris and Walz. Minnesota got "1999" by native son Prince, Kansas got "Carry on Wayward Son" by, well, Kansas. "Born in the U.S.A." by Bruce Springsteen played as New Jersey weighed in.

Usually it was governors or state party chairs calling out the votes, but some states passed the mic to make serious points. Kate Cox, who unsuccessfully sued her home state of Texas while seeking an abortion for a non-viable fetus, announced Texas' votes. A survivor of the 2017 Las Vegas strip gun massacre announced Nevada's votes.

The roll call highlight was when Atlanta rapper Lil Jon strode through the United Center to the beats of "Turn Down for What," his song with DJ Snake, and rapped his support for Harris and Walz.

Democrats are eager to highlight how Harris' ascension has energized the party. The roll call fit that vibe. America's blind date with Doug Emhoff

Doug Emhoff wants America to love his wife as much as he does.

His convention speech Tuesday night focused on their love story and offered a personal glimpse meant to pull in voters, too. He dished on the deets of their first phone call, after he left her a rambling voicemail that she still makes him listen to every year on their anniversary.

"I love that laugh," he said adoringly, a rebuttal to Trump's criticism of Harris' laughter.

As Harris flew back to Chicago from Milwaukee after her rally there, Air Force Two spent an extra 10 minutes in the air so she could watch her husband speak, according to an aide.

Emhoff said he "just fell in love fast" with Harris, adding that she finds "joy in pursuing justice" and "stands up to bullies." It's not how most husbands describe their partners, but, then, Emhoff is trying to convince voters that the woman he's been married to for 10 years this Thursday knows how to take on

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Trump.

A message for Republicans: It's OK to quit Trump

The Democrats are making a play for disaffected Trump voters — and they used one of his former White House staffers to make their case.

Stephanie Grisham worked in various roles in the Trump White House, including communications director and press secretary, allowing Democrats to argue that those who know Trump best have seen him at his worst.

"He has no empathy, no morals, and no fidelity to the truth," Grisham said. "I couldn't be part of the insanity any longer."

Kyle Sweetser, a Trump voter from Alabama, told the convention the former president's tariffs made life harder for construction workers like him. Republican Mayor John Giles of Mesa, Arizona, also spoke about why he's backing Harris. Giles sees Trump's policies as hurting cities like his.

A weighty prop to drive home the Democrats' message on Project 2025

Each day of the DNC is to feature a speaker brandishing an oversized tome designed to represent the Project 2025 policy book from the conservative Heritage Foundation.

Project 2025 is on one hand a very typical Washington effort, uniting a bunch of wonks and activists to map out a potential agenda for the next president. In this case, the authors include many officials who served in Trump's administration and remain close to the candidate. Its organizers say they've gotten dozens of conservative groups to sign on to the push, making it far more meaningful than the average collection of policy papers.

Democrats use Project 2025 as shorthand for their warnings about what might transpire in a second Trump term, particularly potential revisions to civil service rules to ensure more of the federal workforce is loyal to the president. But it's also got page after page of other proposals, grist for attacks from the convention podium.

On Tuesday, it was Pennsylvania state Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta's turn to wave the big book. "It is a radical plan to drag us backwards," he declared.

Michigan Sen. Gary Peters didn't wield the prop, but name-checked the initiative.

And Harris chimed in from Milwaukee, telling the rally crowd, "Can you believe they put that thing in writing?"

Democrats turn their roll call into a dance party with celebrities, state-specific songs and Lil Jon

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Convention roll call votes can be staid and cheesy, but Democrats turned theirs into the ultimate dance party on Tuesday.

DJ Cassidy stood onstage in what appeared to be a double-breasted satin suit of royal blue, spinning a special song for each state and territory awarding their delegates to Vice President Kamala Harris at the Democratic National Convention. What America got was a mashup of an elite karaoke night: Detroit native Eminem's "Lose Yourself" for Michigan, Dropkick Murphys' "I'm Shipping Up to Boston" for Massachusetts and Tupac Shakur's "California Love" for California.

Georgia brought out one of its natives in person: Atlanta's Lil Jon striding through Chicago's United Center to the beats of "Turn Down for What," his song with DJ Snake.

In short, Democrats were determined to put the party in political party, part of their broader effort to project joy and positive energy even as they issue dire warnings about the need to beat Republican nominee Donald Trump.

The party last used a video roll call during the pandemic-restricted 2020 convention that famously had Rhode Island featuring its state dish, calamari, creating the pressure to do something bigger this year. (The chef holding that iconic tray of calamari later turned out to be a Trump supporter.)

This year's roll call vote featured the party's emerging political stars like Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer,

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Maryland Gov. Wes Moore and Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear. Movie director Spike Lee was there for New York, while the actor Sean Astin, who starred in the Notre Dame-set football movie "Rudy," was with the Indiana delegation.

The musical choices were something of a risk. The 1996 Democratic convention in Chicago infamously featured delegates gyrating awkwardly to "Macarena (Bayside Boys Remix)" by the Spanish pop duo Los del Río. Video of the Macarena still circulates among political diehards nearly three decades later.

Florida's delegation played Tom Petty's anthem to hard-headedness, "I Won't Back Down," in casting its delegates for Harris — a not-too-subtle jab at the state's Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis. Petty was born in the Florida city of Gainesville. DeSantis used the song as the theme of his failed Republican presidential primary this cycle, and it was part of the name of a super PAC that spent lavishly in his losing cause.

"Florida is worth fighting for," state Democratic chairwoman Nikki Fried declared, arguing that her state is worth national Democrats campaigning for despite it moving hard to the right and likely to go for Trump in November.

Alabama, obviously, got "Sweet Home Alabama" by Lynyrd Skynyrd. Alaska announced their backing of Vice President Kamala Harris to "Feel It Still" by Portugal. The Man, a band from Wasilla, where Republican Sarah Palin was once mayor.

Minnesota went with "1999" by Paisley Park's own Prince. Indiana, with Astin by the microphone, went with Gary native Michael Jackson's "Don't Stop 'til You Get Enough." Nevada played "Mr. Brightside" by The Killers, the synth pop band from Las Vegas. Kansas went with "Carry On My Wayward Son" by the rock band Kansas. New Jersey went with Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA."

"Under one groove nothing can stop us now," DJ Cassidy said over Springsteen's anthem.

Despite the festive mood, the roll call announcements did contain some serious moments. Texas' Kate Cox had her request for an abortion during a troubled pregnancy rejected by that state's supreme court, forcing her to go to another state for the procedure. But Cox announced on the floor that she was again pregnant and the baby was due in January.

Under Democratic Party rules, only Harris garnered enough signatures to be entered into nomination. Votes for any other person or uncommitted votes were tallied as "present" during the virtual roll call earlier this month. Tuesday night's "celebratory" vote is following that earlier roll call's vote total.

The Latest: Day 2 of the DNC features the Obamas and second gentleman Doug Emhoff

By The Associated Press undefined

Day two of the Democratic National Convention has begun.

Former President Barack Obama, former first lady Michelle Obama and second gentleman Doug Emhoff spoke at the DNC, a day after the unofficial farewell for President Joe Biden, who served eight years as Obama's vice president. Biden won't be in the hall to see his former running mate speak, as he departed Chicago Monday after delivering his own speech.

With President Biden having addressed delegates, the week's full focus now turns to Vice President Kamala Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov Tim Walz.

Follow the AP's Election 2024 coverage at: <https://apnews.com/hub/election-2024>.

Here's the Latest:

Obama warns about the danger of polarization

Obama pleads for civility and community in the nation's coarse public and online discourse, warning, "We chase the approval of strangers on our phones; we build all manner of walls and fences around ourselves and then wonder why we feel so alone."

Appealing to Americans to make meaningful connections, he said, "We don't trust each other as much because we don't take the time to know each other — and in that space between us, politicians and algorithms teach us to caricature each other and troll each other and fear each other."

Obama echos the golden rule: 'Our fellow citizens deserve the same grace we hope they'll extend to us'

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Obama encouraged Democrats to listen to those who disagree with them and fight for the votes of those who have differences with them.

"We start thinking that the only way to win is to scold and shame and out yell the other side," Obama said. "That approach may work for the politicians who just want attention and thrive on division. But it won't work for us."

Obama urged his party not to rush to pass judgment on those with values that are different from theirs, saying, "That's how we can build a true Democratic majority."

He added: "Our fellow citizens deserve the same grace we hope they'll extend to us."

That's a joke

While praising Harris repeatedly and even leading a chant of "Yes she can!" Obama also talked almost wistfully about the progress made under his administration's signature health care law, the Affordable Care Act.

He used the law's formal title, but then joked of Republicans, "Since it's become popular, they don't call it Obamacare no more."

Obama sneaks in some Easter eggs

The former president is bringing back some of his signature campaign lines, including a "Fired up, Ready to go" call, talk of "hope" and an instruction to voters — "Do not boo, vote" — when the crowd jeered a reference to Trump.

Obama heralds the 'fight' ahead

The former president warned the crowd at the DNC that even though "the torch has been passed" to Harris, the work for Democrats is not yet done.

"For all the incredible energy we've been able to generate over the last few weeks, this will still be a tight race in a closely divided country — a country where too many Americans are still struggling and don't believe government can help," he said.

"Make no mistake, it will be a fight," Obama said. For all the energy and memes and rallies, he said, "this will still be a tight race in a closely divided country."

The last election was decided by 40,000 votes across three states.

'Kids with funny names'

Former President Obama began his speech with self-deprecation but also used one of his favorite lines about being an up-and-coming politician with a funny name.

"I am the only person stupid enough to speak after Michelle Obama," he joked.

Obama then added, "I'm feeling hopeful because this convention has always been pretty good to kids with funny names who believe in a country where anything is possible."

That was a reference to the difficulty some have had in pronouncing his and Kamala Harris' name — a problem some had with Obama's when he was just emerging on the national stage.

Obama heaps praise upon his former running mate

Obama is highlighting Biden's record in one of the only significant discussions of his accomplishments since he turned over the convention to Harris on Monday night.

He praised Biden for being "selfless enough to do the rarest thing there is in politics: putting his own ambition aside for the sake of the country."

"History will remember Joe Biden as an outstanding president who defended democracy at a moment of great danger," Obama said. "I am proud to call him my president, but even prouder to call him my friend."

President Obama seeks to lend Harris his political capital

Former President Barack Obama sought to recapture the energy of his 2008 run for office and lend it to Harris' campaign effort this time around. "I don't know about you, but I'm feeling fired up! I'm feeling ready to go," Obama said. "I'm feeling hopeful because this convention has always been pretty good to kids with funny names who believe in a country where anything is possible."

Michelle Obama welcomes her husband Barack Obama to the stage

"Before I go, I have one more job tonight," Michelle Obama said after concluding her speech before

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introducing "somebody who knows a whole lot about hope."

She introduced Barak Obama who she said still wakes up every day thinking about what he can do for the country. The couple hugged warmly, kissed and then held their clasped hands skyward as the former president took the stage.

'They are still only human'

Michelle Obama is using Harris' and Walz's first names, belying not only her personal relationships with the nominees but also perhaps helping voters develop their own deeper perspective of them as people. It came as Obama went on to talk about how politicians aren't infallible and will make mistakes.

In closing, Michelle Obama sought to warn Democrats not to become "their own worst enemies," nitpicking qualities about Harris and Walz.

"Kamala and Tim have lived amazing lives. I am confident they will lead with compassion, inclusion and grace," Obama said. "But they are still only human. They're not perfect. And like all of us, they will make mistakes."

Michelle Obama: 'Going small is never the answer'

Even as she attacked Trump, Michelle Obama sought to capture a flavor of the energy from her 2016 convention address when she encouraged Democrats to take the high road against Donald Trump: "When they go low, we go high."

She warned Tuesday that Trump's policies and rhetoric "only makes us small. And let me tell you ... going small is never the answer."

She added: "Going small is petty ... it's unhealthy ... and quite frankly, it's un-presidential." She called Harris and running mate Tim Walz "good, big-hearted people."

Michelle Obama made a series of not-so-subtle jabs at Donald Trump

Without ever mentioning Trump's name, Michelle Obama made mention of what she called his "privilege" to "failing forward."

"We will never benefit from the affirmative action of gender, race or wealth," she said. "We don't have the luxury of whining or cheating others to get ahead."

Obama tweaked Trump for his history of attacking her and her husband, drawing rave applause from Democrats.

"His limited and narrow view of the world made him feel threatened by the existence of two hardworking, highly educated, successful people who also happened to be Black," she said.

"Who's going to tell him that the job he's currently seeking might just be one of those "Black jobs?"

Obama said she was last in Chicago to bury her mother

Former first lady Michelle Obama is giving a touching tribute to her mother, Marian Robinson, who died earlier this year.

She called her mother the woman who "set my moral compass high and showed me the power of my own voice."

"I still feel her loss so profoundly," she said.

Marian Robinson was an integral part of the Obamas' years in the White House, where she lived with them and helped raise the then first-couples' two daughters.

"I wasn't even sure I'd be sturdy enough to stand before you tonight but my heart compelled me to because of the sense of duty that I feel to honor her memory and remind us all not to squander the sacrifices our elders make to give us a better future," the former first lady said.

Many — but not all — delegates in the floor and first-tier sections are still on their feet as Obama continues her remarks. Standing or sitting, most seem to be listening and paying attention, with little side chatter quieted.

Former first lady Michelle Obama gets a heroine's welcome at the DNC

Obama, a Chicago native from the city's South Side, took the stage in a sleeveless Navy dress to wild and raucous applause.

"Hope is making a comeback," she said.

She tied the energy in the Democratic party to her husband's campaign 16 years ago. "Something won-

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derfully magical is in the air, isn't it," she said. "It's the contagious power of hope."

"American, hope is making a comeback."

Emhoff says Harris will 'lead with joy and toughness'

Emhoff told the crowd that Thursday marked his and Harris' 10th wedding anniversary.

He joked that that meant he'd have to hear the embarrassing voicemail again — but also said he'd hear her give a speech accepting the Democratic presidential nomination.

"With your help, she'll lead with joy and toughness. With that laugh and that look," he said.

Sen. Tammy Duckworth strolled onto the stage

Before Emhoff to the stage, Illinois Sen. Tammy Duckworth, who lost both her legs when the Black Hawk helicopter she was piloting in Iraq was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade and typically uses a wheelchair, walked out on stage under her own power on prosthetic legs, drawing cheers from the crowd at the DNC.

Duckworth was speaking about how she was able to have two daughters with the help of in vitro fertilization, a procedure that some Republicans have threatened after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade. "Every American deserves the right to be called "Mommy" or "Daddy" without being treated like a criminal," Duckworth said. "Kamala Harris believes that."

Emhoff shares his personal biography

Emhoff is mixing his personal story and detailing his background with praise for his wife.

"She's showing you what you already know, she is ready to lead," Emhoff said, imploring the crowd that Harris will bring joy and also a steady hand to the White House.

Emhoff described being McDonald's employee of the month and said he's still best friends with the people he grew up with and that their group chat "is probably blowing up right now."

Emhoff gently tried to defuse Republican political attacks against the way his wife laughs, telling the convention, "You know that laugh, I love that laugh!"

Republicans have roundly mocked Harris' laugh, which sometimes erupts during awkward moments. Trump even toyed with giving her the nickname Laffin' Kamala Harris.

The second gentleman stresses his middle-class upbringing for a national audience

Emhoff detailed at the Democratic National Convention how he was the son of two Brooklynites who have been married for nearly seven decades, and that the family moved to New Jersey when he was a kid because of opportunities for his father, who worked in the shoe business.

When his dad got another new job, Emhoff said, the family moved across the country to Los Angeles, where money was tight enough that he worked at McDonald's for extra money while in high school. Harris has also played up her experience working at McDonald's on the campaign trail, lately.

Emhoff said he used loans and help from his dad to get through law school and went to work as a lawyer where he met "the guys in my fantasy football league" where his team name is still Narvana, a shoutout to its 1990s roots.

Mesa, Arizona's Republican mayor says Americans must put 'country first'

John Giles, the mayor of Mesa, Arizona, and a registered Republican addressed the Democratic convention and explained why he was rejecting his party's presidential nominee, Trump.

"I have a confession to make, I'm a lifelong Republican," Giles said, before adding. "But I feel more at home here than in today's Republican Party."

Mesa is Arizona's third largest city, a Phoenix suburb with more than 500,000 people. It was settled by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who remain influential even as the city's Latino and Asian population has grown rapidly.

Giles said, "We all need an adult in the White House" and that the country saw when Trump was elected in 2016 what it was like not to have one.

The mayor said Biden and Harris reached across the aisle and pushed policies that benefitted his city. He said he was like the majority of the Americans, in the political middle: "Let's put our country first."

Harris' complicated prosecutorial history

While Harris is eager to tout her prosecutorial background, her record on criminal justice matters is

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nuanced and complicated. When she was first elected to the Senate in 2016, she presented herself as a "progressive" prosecutor and called for the elimination of cash bail.

But previously she pursued the parents of chronically truant students, sought higher bail amounts and aggressively prosecuted drug crimes, earning her the nickname of "Copala."

As attorney general, she appealed convictions that judges had ordered thrown out. Her office fought a court order mandating the release of state prisoners due to overcrowding. She also opposed legislation requiring her office to investigate shootings involving police and declined to back statewide standards for the use of body cameras by local law enforcement.

Alsobrooks praised Harris' record as a prosecutor

Angela Alsobrooks, the Democratic nominee for Senate in Maryland, praised Harris' record as a prosecutor. "She put rapists, child molesters and murders behind bars," said Angela Alsobrooks, the Democratic nominee for Senate in Maryland and a former prosecutor herself.

Harris has leaned into her years as San Francisco district attorney and California attorney general, presenting it as a leading credential in her race against Trump, who was recently convicted of dozens of felonies in a New York hush money case.

"Getting justice for others isn't a power trip for her," Alsobrooks said. "It's a sacred calling. Kamala Harris knows how to keep criminals off the street."

And, Alsobrooks predicted in a jab directed at Trump, "She'll keep one out of the Oval Office."

Several protestors outside the DNC have been taken into custody

Multiple people have been taken into custody following an intense demonstration and march by pro-Palestinian protestors outside the Israeli consulate in Chicago.

Some demonstrators set an American flag on fire in the street as the celebratory roll call for Harris took place inside the United Center about 2 miles away.

As protestors regrouped and approached a line of police in riot gear in front of a Chicago skyscraper that houses the Israeli consulate, an officer said into a megaphone, "You are ordered to immediately disburse." A woman in the front of the march shouted back with her own megaphone: "We're not scared of you."

FACT FOCUS: JD Vance and the child tax credit

Sen. Chuck Schumer, of New York, claimed that Republican vice presidential nominee Sen. JD Vance "didn't even show up to vote" on a bill to expand the child tax credit and restore some tax breaks for businesses.

Vance indeed did indeed skip the August vote. The bill failed to advance in the Senate as Republicans largely opposed the measure, arguing that they would be in a position to get a better deal next year, The Associated Press reported at the time.

But there's more to the story. Vance has also said he would support expanding the child tax credit, currently at \$2,000, to \$5,000. He said the Senate vote was a "show vote," when bills are designed to fail but allow parties to highlight issues before voters.

Angela Alsobrooks, Maryland senate candidate and longtime Harris friend, takes the stage

Angela Alsobrooks, a friend to Harris of 14 years who is running to become Maryland's first Black U.S. senator in a competitive race, has taken the convention stage. The Maryland seat is critical if Democrats want to maintain control of the Senate.

Alsobrooks, who is the chief executive of Maryland's second-most populous county in the suburbs of the nation's capital, wrote on social media earlier in the day that she looks forward to sharing why Harris "is going to make an incredible President of the United States." Both women are former prosecutors.

The Prince George's County executive is running in a heavily Democratic state against popular former Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican. Hogan won the governorship and was reelected in a state where Democrats outnumber Republicans 2-1, but the GOP has not won a Senate seat in Maryland in more than 40 years. The race is being closely watched, because it could determine control of the Senate. Harris made a campaign stop for Alsobrooks in June in Prince George's.

Alsobrooks would become the nation's third Black woman to be elected to the Senate. Harris was the second Black woman elected to the chamber.

New Mexico governor touts Harris' record on health care

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New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham is using her time at the DNC podium to argue for Harris' ability to deliver on campaign promises, specifically when it comes to issues related to health care.

Lujan Grisham focused much of her remarks around arguing that Harris as president can lower drug costs and protect abortion rights for women.

"Either these guys don't get it, or they just don't care," the two-term Democrat said, of Trump and Vance and their take on such issues' importance.

Gov. JB Pritzker laces into Trump

JB Pritzker, the deep-pocketed governor of Illinois who was instrumental in bringing the Democratic convention to Chicago, used most of his speech to slam Trump.

Pritzker started by noting that Harris "spent some of her early life" in Illinois, which has produced past presidents including Barack Obama.

"We claim her too," Pritzker declared, before pivoting to evoking hometown hero and basketball legend Michael Jordan in slamming Trump.

Pritzker said the former president "claims to be very rich. But take it from an actual billionaire, Trump is rich in only one thing, stupidity."

"These guys aren't just weird," Pritzker said. "They're dangerous."

Bernie Sanders plays the hits

It's a new convention, but much of Sen. Bernie Sanders' messaging is the same he's been delivering for several political cycles. A one-time Democratic challenger to both Biden and Harris, Sanders appeared on the DNC stage Tuesday to chants of his name by convention goers.

In his 2016 presidential campaign, Sanders often ranted against billionaires and promised that he'd aim to implement policies that would somewhat even out the economy, a message he returned to in his remarks. Sanders also called in large part for the removal of big money from election funding.

"Billionaires in both parties should not be able to buy elections, including primary elections," he said.

The Vermont progressive also laid out a series of liberal policy goals for the party if Harris were to win the president and Democrats control Congress next year. The list included expanding Medicare and raising the national minimum wage.

"I look forward to working with Kamala and Tim to pass this agenda," Sanders said. "And let's be clear. This is not a radical agenda."

Harris pauses speech when someone in the crowd appears to be in distress

"We need a medical assistant here," she said. "We need a nurse. We need a medic here, please."

She asked her supporters to clear a path so medics could reach the person needing assistance.

Then she declared to applause: "We're going to be OK. We're going to be alright."

Then she added: "This is who we are. This is what we're about, looking out for each other," using the moment to continue the contrast she was drawing with Trump.

Harris wrapped up her roughly 25-minute remarks in Milwaukee with one of the signature call-and-response mantras of her campaign: "When we fight, we win."

In Milwaukee, Harris emphasizes the hard work ahead for her supporters

"We know this is going to be a tight race until the very end," Harris said. "We have hard work ahead of us but we like hard work. Hard work is good work. And with your help, this November we will win."

She then began laying out the contrast between herself and Trump: one vision "focused on the future" and another "focused on the past."

Navarro compares Trump to dictators

Navarro, a co-host of ABC's "The View" and a longtime Republican critic of Trump, also sought to paint a parallel between Trump and dictators in countries like her native Nicaragua.

"Let me tell you what communist dictators do," Navarro said. "They attack the free press, they call them the enemy of the people."

She added, "They refuse to accept legitimate elections when they lose and call for violence to stay in power."

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Ana Navarro rallies the pet lovers

Political commentator Ana Navarro evoked a now familiar Democratic political attack line against Republicans, sticking up for the nation's pets.

"Kamala Harris, she likes dogs. And my dog ChaCha likes her," Navarro said as a picture of Harris with her dog flashed on the convention floor screen. To loud cheers, she continued, "Dogs are good judges of character. So are cats."

That was a reference to Trump's running mate, JD Vance, once deriding "childless cat ladies," a past remark that has roiled the GOP campaign since he was chosen.

"We cannot elect a president who does not like dogs or hangs around with people who shoot them," Navarro deadpanned. That was an allusion to Trump, who doesn't have any pets, and to another leading Republican, South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem who killed a dog, detailing it in her own memoir.

Prime-time speeches are underway

Pivoting to the next portion of the night, convention organizers played a video showing notable times Harris as VP has voted to break a tie in the Senate. That included the Inflation Reduction Act, one of Biden's signature legislative achievements.

Sen. Chuck Schumer has begun speaking and will be followed by high-profile Democrats including Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, Gov. JB Pritzker of Illinois and former President Barack Obama.

Harris makes surprise video appearance as roll call wraps

It was never really in doubt, but after the celebratory roll call, Rea confirmed Harris' nomination as Democrats' top-of-the-ticket pick. Harris was officially nominated earlier this month in a virtual roll call of delegates.

Following the roll call, Rea tossed to incoming video from Harris' and Walz's campaign appearance in Milwaukee, where the two are on stage in the same arena that hosted Republicans last month for their convention. They entered the stage to Beyoncé's "Freedom," which has become an anthem for the campaign.

"I thank everyone there and here for believing in what we can do together," Harris said.

That split screen moment created a powerful visual for Harris: two arenas simultaneously full of her supporters.

Green Bay Packers shoutout met with boos in Chicago

When Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers took his turn at the mic during Democrats roll call vote Tuesday, he name-checked the Green Bay Packers football team.

That did not sit well in Chicago, the DNC's host city, where utterances of support for the Packers are often taken as fighting words by long-suffering Chicago Bears fans.

Evers was showered with boos after name-checking the Packers.

In their long-running Midwestern rivalry, the Packers routinely best the Bears, winning 107 games to the Bears' 95.

Texas Democrats spotlight abortion rights

Texas Democrats used their roll call moment to bring light to the issue of abortion rights, with TV actress and Texas native Eva Longoria introducing former Planned Parenthood president Cecile Richards.

Kate Cox, who was denied emergency abortion care by the Texas Supreme Court, told conventiongoers about her experience after the overturning of Roe v. Wade. "Because of these abortion bans I had to flee my home," Cox said in an emotional moment.

"There's nothing pro-life about letting women suffer and even die." She added that she is now pregnant and her baby is due in January, in time to see Harris sworn in as president.

Two notable absences from the roll call

The ceremonial state-by-state roll call at the DNC offers elected officials and up-and-coming political figures a chance to shine on a big stage, often taking the opportunity to deliver short, fiery speeches before casting their state's votes for the Democratic nominee.

What was notable, however, is who wasn't present: two vulnerable Democratic senators in tough reelection races who steered clear of their party's festivities.

Sens. Jon Tester of Montana and Sherrod Brown of Ohio, were nowhere to be seen when their states

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cast their votes.

Both Montana and Ohio are states Trump won and the two are considered among Democrats most endangered senators.

Jewish protesters and allies block Israeli consulate in Chicago, demanding a cease-fire in Gaza

A few dozen protesters chanting "Free, free Palestine!" gathered outside a skyscraper that houses the Israeli consulate for a pro-Palestinian demonstration on the second night of the Democratic National Convention. Some carried Palestinian flags, while many others wore black and covered their faces.

The consulate, located about 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) from the United Center, has been the site of numerous demonstrations since the war in Gaza began in October. It is in a building connected to the Ogilvie Transportation Center, a major commuter rail station.

Dozens of Chicago police officers were posted outside the building, where law enforcement had closed down most of the entrances to the building on Tuesday, allowing commuters to come in only one entrance where armed officers were also posted. Many of the building's shops were closed. Martha Hill, a spokeswoman for the Metra commuter rail service, says train service is running as normal.

Harris to talk about Roe v. Wade in Milwaukee

Harris plans to draw attention to Trump saying Monday he had "no regrets" about appointing the Supreme Court justices who overturned Roe v. Wade and ended the constitutional right to abortion, according to an excerpt of the speech she plans to give in Milwaukee.

"That's because he hasn't had to face the consequences," Harris plans to say. "Women and families have. Well, we will make sure he does face the consequence at the ballot box this November."

As they awaited Harris' speech, her supporters listened to the Chicago convention's roll call blasting from the arena speakers.

The odd couple

They may be a somewhat unlikely pair, but DNC Secretary Jason Rae and DJ Cassidy are tag-teaming the celebratory roll call of states.

Rae calls out the states and territories as they come up in the voting order, and Cassidy chimes in with occasional commentary as he flips from track to track for each batch of delegates.

A tale of two gatherings

Walz opened his remarks at the Milwaukee rally by noting that the Fiserv Forum is where Republicans held their national convention in July and nominated Republican Trump for president.

The Minnesota governor talked about how good Republicans felt when their gathering had concluded, then added: "Well, trust me Milwaukee. A hell of a lot can change in four weeks," he said as the crowd burst into cheers.

Brinkmanship isn't lost during the roll call

New Hampshire's delegation declared itself home of the nation's "first primary" except that the Democrats gave that honor to South Carolina this cycle.

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy declared, "We're from Jersey, baby. And you're not."

Missouri saluted its Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs at the expense of all the country's other teams.

Film director Spike Lee joined New York Democrats to deliver the state's 298 votes to Harris. Lee, who is a staple courtside at the Knicks games, was joined by Gov. Kathy Hochul and Sens. Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand.

Why California and Minnesota passed during the roll call

California and Minnesota, the home states of Vice President Kamala Harris and her running mate, Tim Walz, have passed during the convention roll call — letting the party roll on.

This year's roll call has been unlike any in political history. But one tradition held, the one mandating that the home state of the nominee generally passes, then goes near the end to pass the deciding vote to formally clinch the nomination.

This year, Minnesota, where Walz is governor, could get the count close and let Harris' California and its motherlode of delegates put her over the top as the Democratic nominee.

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Sean Astin joins Indiana delegation

Actor Sean Astin, best known for playing the titular Notre Dame football player in "Rudy," joined the Indiana delegation to help cast its 86 delegates for Harris and Walz.

"I want what's best for Indiana and that means electing Kamala Harris the first woman president of the United States of America," Astin said.

Florida won't back down

Florida's delegation played Tom Petty's anthem to hard-headedness, "I Won't Back Down," in casting its delegates for Harris — a not-too-subtle jab at the state's Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis.

DeSantis used the song as the theme of his failed Republican presidential primary this cycle, and it was the name of a Super PAC that spent lavishly in his losing cause.

"Florida is worth fighting for," state Democratic chairwoman Nikki Fried declared, arguing that her state is worth national Democrats campaigning for despite its hard shift to the right and likeliness to go for Trump in November.

Delegates show off their home-state tunes

Decked out in blue satin, DJ Cassidy is spinning a special song for each state in the roll call at the Democratic Convention.

Alabama, obviously, got "Sweet Home Alabama" by Lynyrd Skynyrd. Alaska announced their backing of Vice President Harris to "Feel It Still" by Portugal. The Man, a band from Wasilla. Florida committed its delegates to "I Won't Back Down" by Tom Petty, who was born in Gainesville. The rapper Lil Jon appeared over the music of DJ Snake's "Turn Down for What" ahead of Georgia awarding its delegates to Harris.

Lil Jon makes a surprise appearance during Harris roll call

In a surprise appearance, rapper Lil Jon joined the Georgia delegation to help deliver its 123 votes for Harris. The rapper's hit song 'Get Low' has become a sort of rally cry for the Harris-Walz campaign in the last few weeks.

'Present'

Under Democratic Party rules, only Harris garnered enough signatures to be entered into nomination. Votes for any other person or uncommitted votes were tallied as "present" during the virtual roll call earlier this month. Tuesday night's "celebratory" vote is following that earlier's roll calls vote total.

The roll call begins

Democrats are holding a "celebratory" roll call vote to nominate Harris on the second night of their convention in Chicago. The party held a virtual vote on Aug. 6 that made her the party's official nominee. Tuesday's vote is taking place with a DJ and light show in the United Center arena.

Protesters expected at the Israeli consulate in Chicago

Dozens of Chicago police officers are posted outside a skyscraper that houses the Israeli consulate where an evening demonstration is expected.

The building also is home to one of the city's major transportation hubs.

Police had closed down most of the entrances on Tuesday, allowing commuters to come in only one entrance where armed officers were also posted. Many of the building's shops were closed.

Martha Hill, a spokesperson for the Metra commuter rail service, says train service is running as normal.

Proceedings came to a literal standstill for the DNC group photo

It may have been an awkward several moments of pseudo-silence, but Democratic delegates have sat for their official 360-degree portrait.

It's somewhat of a tradition for photographer Abbas Shirmohammadi to use a more-than-century-old camera to take delegates' photo.

For several minutes, delegates were admonished to stay in their seats and not to move as a panoramic photo was taken around the United Center.

Perched atop a ladder, Shirmohammadi turned a modern camera, then an older model, around the arena as delegates were instructed to look toward the center and stay still.

"I congratulate all of you," Shirmohammadi said to applause when his images had been completed.

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"Thank you for your patience."

Shirmohammadi is a 4th generation photographer and, according to a bio associated with a talk he gave at the National Press Club, has been involved in creating images of numerous presidential inaugurations and Democratic conventions.

After Monday night delays, Democrats are now ahead of schedule

After Night 1 ran so long, the second night of the Democratic convention has raced out far ahead of its early schedule.

A series of speeches and video montages wrapped quickly and organizers began setting up for a state-by-state roll call about 35 minutes before it had been scheduled to begin.

Harris already formally clinched the Democratic nomination in a virtual vote earlier this month, but, per tradition, each state's delegation will have a chance to symbolically pledge its delegates to her on the convention floor.

Organizers promised tweaks to the schedule to keep Tuesday's program moving. It's early yet, but so far they've kept that promise.

Teamsters members make DNC appearance absent President Sean O'Brien

While Teamsters President Sean O'Brien chose to speak at the Republican convention at Trump's invite, members of his union decided to appear at the Democratic convention to say they're with Vice President Harris. It was another jab at Trump for claiming to back workers even as his administration tried to restrict the power of organized labor, a sign of how Harris hopes to diminish his backing from blue-collar voters.

"If they win, working people like my friends here from the Teamsters will pay the price," said Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., with several Teamsters by his side.

Kenneth Stribling, a retired Teamster, then explained how the Biden administration had helped rescue the financially troubled pensions of union members like himself as part of its pandemic aid.

"They got it done without one single Republican vote in Congress," Stribling said. "They saved over 1 million pensions."

The DNC pivots away from Biden

President Joe Biden was the star of the DNC on Monday night as he delivered his swan song to his party after 50 years in elected office. He was a bit player as the convention's second evening got started.

"The torch has been passed to a new generation," former New Orleans mayor and White House official Mitch Landrieu opened the second night's program saying. The first hour of speeches featured praise of Harris and criticism of Trump, but only passing reference to the unpopular Democratic incumbent. The praise and thanks to Biden for stepping aside that permeated the Monday program yielded only to minor mentions of the "Biden-Harris administration."

It was the latest sign of Biden's waning influence in the party as he prepares to leave the White House in January.

Democrats highlight former Trump voters who switched to supporting Harris

For the second in as many nights, the Democratic convention has frequently featured stories from ordinary voters, who talked about voting for Trump in 2016 or 2020 or both, but said they wouldn't do so again.

The voters, filmed in what to be in their homes in states around the country, described being fed up with Trump's criminal conviction, his frequent lying for political gain and his leading a mob that attacked the U.S. Capitol in January 2021.

The effort recalled Republicans, who during their convention featured frequent videos of "everyday Americans" to fire up their own crowd last month in Milwaukee.

Trump's former press secretary backs Harris

Trump's former White House press secretary says she used to be a "true believer" who spent holidays with the Trump family, but now she's backing Harris.

Stephanie Grisham told Democratic delegates that Trump "mocks" his supporters behind closed doors and "has no empathy, no morals and no fidelity to the truth."

This fall, Grisham said she's backing Harris because the Democrat "tells the truth, she respects the

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American people and she has my vote.”

Grisham resigned from her White House post following the Jan. 6, 2021, assault on the U.S. Capitol, the first senior staffer to do so that day.

She held no press briefings as Trump’s press secretary, explaining “unlike my boss, I never wanted to stand behind that podium and lie.”

Common feels ‘fortunate’ to have Kamala Harris

Rapper Common performed his hit song “Fortunate.” In the second verse, he changed the lyrics to say, “Fortunate, yo, we got the gold in Paris, we fortunate, y’all, for Kamala Harris.” The Chicago native also added in several ad-libs about “Chi Town” as the host city of the DNC.

“I thank God for this moment in time where Kamala Harris will change the world for the better with love, hope and grace,” he said as he introduced the song. Grammy-winning gospel singer Jonathan McReynolds joined Common on stage, singing some of his song “God is God” between verses and vocalizing to “Fortunate.”

Common, a Grammy and Oscar-winning musician and actor, is no stranger to political advocacy. He endorsed Biden in 2020 and performed at his rallies and had previously supported Obama’s campaigns. He also performed poetry at an event at the White House in 2011 at Obama’s invitation.

The performance, which was followed by a funky instrumental rendition of “Tell Me Something Good,” signaled the convention’s shift out of its country music moment Monday into a focus on R&B and hip-hop.

Democrats throw the book at Trump (again)

One of Democrats’ favorite new political props, a massive book labeled Project 2025, made a repeat appearance at the second night of the DNC.

On Tuesday, Malcolm Kenyatta, a Pennsylvania state representative and rising Democratic star, totted the book out onto the convention stage before roasting Trump and his running mate Sen. JD Vance.

“Usually Republicans want to ban books, but now they are trying to shove this down our throats,” Kenyatta said.

In a sign of how unpopular Project 2025 is with the public, Trump has disavowed the effort. Still, it was crafted by many leading conservatives who would likely hold influential positions in a future Trump administration.

The book made its first appearance on Monday when Michigan state Sen. Mallory McMorrow walked on stage and dropped the hefty tome on the top of the speaking lectern.

Presidential grandsons stump for Harris

Grandsons of former Presidents Jimmy Carter and John F. Kennedy cast Vice President Harris in the same image as their famous family members.

“Kamala Harris carries my grandfather’s legacy,” said Jason Carter. “She knows what is right.”

He said the 99-year-old former president wishes he could be in attendance. “His body may be weak tonight, but his spirit is stronger than ever,” Carter said. “My grandfather can’t wait to vote for Kamala Harris.”

Jack Schlossberg, Kennedy’s grandson, said like when his grandfather was elected in 1960, “Once again, the torch has been passed to a new generation,” he said. “She believes in America like my grandfather did — that we do things not because they are easy, but because they are hard.”

Patti LaBelle performs ‘You Are My Friend’

The DNC crowd didn’t get James Taylor singing “You’ve Got a Friend” but they did get another music legend — R&B star Patti LaBelle — singing “You Are My Friend.”

LaBelle sang the stirring number during a memorial segment as the proceedings began for the evening. “God bless America, Kamala Harris!” she called out at the end.

This isn’t the first time at the DNC for LaBelle — she wowed the crowd two decades ago at the 2004 convention with her rendition of Sam Cooke’s “A Change Is Gonna Come.”

Last month, LaBelle kicked off her 8065 Tour at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles — “80 years of life, 65 years in music.” And in June, she sang “Oh, People” on the White House lawn for President Joe Biden’s Juneteenth concert, joined by Gladys Knight among other artists.

And we’re off

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Night 2 of the Democratic National Convention has kicked off in Chicago, with organizers moving up the start time by half an hour to try and keep the program from running as far behind schedule as it did on the opening night.

On Monday, the convention opened late and never got back on schedule, with President Joe Biden delivering the featured speech around 11:30 p.m. on the East Coast.

Organizers promised more tweaks in the schedule to keep things moving more quickly on Tuesday.

Democrat campaign group breaks fundraising record

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee announced that it raised \$17.6 million in July, making the Committee's year-to-date total a record \$107.1.

"The American people are hearing Democrats' message of lowering costs, growing the middle class, and defending their rights, and they are showing up to support this forward-looking agenda," said DCCC Chair Suzan DelBene in a statement. The DCCC is the campaign arm of Democrats in the House of Representatives.

Maryland senate candidate and longtime Harris friend Angela Alsobrooks will speak on DNC Night 2

Angela Alsobrooks, a friend to Harris of 14 years who is running to become Maryland's first Black U.S. senator in a competitive race, will be speaking at the convention as a candidate. The Maryland seat is critical if Democrats want to maintain control of the Senate.

Alsobrooks, who is the chief executive of Maryland's second-most populous county in the suburbs of the nation's capital, wrote on social media earlier in the day that she looks forward to sharing why Harris "is going to make an incredible President of the United States." Both women are former prosecutors.

The Prince George's County executive is running in a heavily Democratic state against popular former Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican. Hogan won the governorship and was reelected in a state where Democrats outnumber Republicans 2-1, but the GOP has not won a Senate seat in Maryland in more than 40 years. The race is being closely watched, because it could determine control of the Senate. Harris made a campaign stop for Alsobrooks in June in Prince George's.

Alsobrooks would become the nation's third Black woman to be elected to the Senate. Harris was the second Black woman elected to the chamber.

UAW president believes union households will support Harris

United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain is confident that more union households will vote Democratic this year, as he's aggressively contrasting the record of the Biden-Harris administration with Trump's time in the White House.

"We need to expose him for the fraud that he is and speak truth to that," Fain said to a group of reporters. "So long as he's a candidate, I'm not going to be shy about it. Not going to be quiet about it ... I feel that's my obligation to working-class people, to our membership to do that."

Fain has framed the election as a battle between the working class and wealthy elites, saying that Trump as president tried to quash unionization efforts and failed to protect worker rights despite his blue-collar outreach. By contrast, both Harris and Biden have stood with the UAW during last year's strike.

Biden made it a priority as part of the strike settlement for the automaker Stellantis to resume and expand operations in Belvidere, Illinois, though Fain says the company is now dragging its feet on the commitment in a way that he says could violate the contract. It's a sign that union action could play a big role for voters in key states such as Wisconsin and Michigan.

Obama will make the case for Harris during his DNC address

Former President Barack Obama will use his remarks tonight to make the case for Harris' election and lay out the task before Democrats in the coming 10 weeks.

That's according to an Obama aide who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss his speech in advance. Obama will also make the case for the values of the party and nation he believes are at stake in the race against Trump.

The speech comes as Obama plans to increase his political activity this fall to support Democrats up and down the ticket.

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20.3 million viewers tuned into the DNC on Monday

Democrats reached an estimated 20.3 million television viewers for the first night of their national convention, the Nielsen company said. That compares to the 18.3 million Republicans reached on the first night of their convention last month.

Nielsen tallied the audience from 13 separate networks that televised the event from 10 p.m. Eastern until the end of President Biden's speech after midnight.

Most people, 4.6 million, watched on MSNBC with CNN coming in second, Nielsen said.

The key night for political watchers will be Thursday when Vice President Harris delivers her acceptance speech for the top of the Democratic ticket. Last month, Trump, less than a week removed from an assassination attempt, reached 25.3 million for his speech.

No credible danger following bomb threat, Secret Service and Chicago PD report

The U.S. Secret Service and Chicago Police Department found no credible dangers after checking into bomb threats made Tuesday at "a number of locations" in downtown Chicago where the Democratic National Convention is taking place.

Law enforcement cleared the affected areas and are continuing to assess any reported threats.

Gov. Pritzker denies 2024 presidential aspirations

Democratic Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker denies seriously considering running for the presidency in 2024, though he's flattered people talked about him in that context.

Earlier this summer following Biden's decision not to seek reelection and subsequently endorse Harris for the presidency, Pritzker was one of several Democrats whose names were tossed around as potential challengers to the vice president.

He said at the CNN-Politico Grill that the background plotting that some assumed he'd been doing in the shuffle of Biden stepping down was "not occurring." He said he likes being governor but didn't rule out running for president in the future.

Pritzker said he had campaigned with Biden and DNC officials to hold this year's convention in Chicago and was happy about how it was going so far.

"As you all can see, Chicago's a great city to have a convention," Pritzker said. But when asked if he's angling to host another one in 2028, he said that would be premature.

"We aren't starting a bidding process yet," he said.

Voter Voice: 'You just can't live in fear'

Sharon Gross, 70, gathered with a crowd along a nearby road to watch Trump's motorcade arrive in and leave Howell. With sunny skies and 70-degree weather, Gross said she enjoyed waiting with the crowd about three hours before former President Trump's arrival.

Gross said that a friend of hers did not want to attend the event due to fear of violence following the attempt on Trump's life last month. "You just can't live in fear," Gross said.

Her husband Jay Gross, 86, is a Livingston County Commissioner. He watched Trump's speech inside the Sheriff's Office equipment garage and hoped to have Trump sign his MAGA hat, but he was not close enough to ask.

"I agreed with him 1,000%," he said after Trump's remarks. "For me, the two big issues are the border — immigration issues — and the economy."

James Taylor isn't mad about getting bumped from the DNC stage

Singer James Taylor said it was an honor to be at the Democratic convention despite his performance getting cut for time.

Taylor was to have sung his 1971 hit "You've Got a Friend" accompanied by cellist Owen Young and singers Kenya Hathaway and Matthew Johnson before President Biden's speech on Monday night. But convention officials said they had to make cuts because of the "raucous applause" that was interrupting speakers and prolonging the program.

"It became clear, as the evening unfolded, that there wouldn't be time for our 'You've Got a Friend' with cello and voices," Taylor said in a statement Tuesday. "Maybe the organizers couldn't anticipate the wild response from the floor of the United Center."

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He added, "Anyway, sorry to disappoint. But a great and inspirational, quintessentially American moment. We were honored to be there."

Gen Z congressman's political start shares similarities with the oldest sitting US president
Florida Democratic Rep. Maxwell Frost, the first Gen Z member of Congress, has more in common with the oldest president in U.S. history than some might think.

Onstage at the CNN-Politico Grill, the 27-year-old Frost recalled relating to Biden over entering politics at a young age. Frost got elected to the House at 25, and Biden was elected to the Senate at 29.

"He called me when I first won my race, and we talked about the similarities," Frost said. "We spoke about his experiences going through that."

Frost said he thinks Gen Z cares about Biden's legacy and called himself a "big Joe Biden fan." But he now supports Vice President Kamala Harris, with whom he said he shares something else: a diverse background.

"We talk about intersectionality and all these different things, but for someone like Kamala Harris, this is her life. Being mixed race. Understanding different cultures," Frost said. "And this is what our country is. Me too."

Trump says Harris supports defunding the police

Turning to the men gathered behind him in uniform, he asked "do you want to be defunded?" Some in the crowd booed at the question.

Turning to the DNC, Trump said Harris must have been laughing when President Joe Biden spoke in Chicago on Monday night.

"It was a vicious violent overthrow of a president of the United States," he said of Biden's decision to not seek reelection.

At Michigan event, Trump entered to light applause and whistles as he took the podium

"Nice people by the way," he said in greeting.

About 100 people including uniformed and non uniformed officers gathered inside an equipment hanger at the sheriff's office, according to his campaign.

Trump spoke against a backdrop of sheriff's vehicles, police shields, red and blue lights and signs that read "Michigan is Trump Country."

Trump quipped that he has the back of the "blue" as well as those in brown, a reference to the sheriff's department law enforcement officers who stood behind him in brown uniforms as he began his remarks.

RFK Jr. shows up too late to testify against Democrats' ballot challenge in Pennsylvania

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. showed up too late to testify Tuesday in a court case in Pennsylvania where Democratic activists are trying to bar him from the ballot for president in the premier battleground state, prompting testy exchanges between the judge and Kennedy's lawyer.

Lawyers for the two Democratic activists who filed the challenge say Kennedy's candidacy paperwork states a fake home address — an allegation being aired in other state courts — and falls short of the signature-gathering requirement applied by state law to third-party candidates.

Kennedy showed up an hour and 40 minutes late, blaming a canceled flight from Massachusetts to Harrisburg, and never testified after Commonwealth Court Judge Lori Dumas chose to proceed without him as a witness.

"This is the first that I'm hearing about this," Dumas said when told about Kennedy's absence. Shortly after Kennedy arrived, the judge adjourned the hearing and did not say when she'll rule.

Read more about Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s case

Top reproductive rights group enthusiastic that Harris can win in November

Vice President Kamala Harris was "an hour one endorsement" for Emily's List, a group that advocates for Democratic women who support abortion rights running for office, said president Jessica Mackler at a Tuesday news briefing in Chicago.

"We've seen firsthand how accomplished, qualified, and ready she is to win and also to lead this country forward," Mackler said.

Reproductive and abortion rights have consumed U.S. politics since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the landmark Roe v. Wade decision, stripping away the constitutional right to abortion. Harris has promised

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to codify the federal right to the procedure.

"The Dobbs decision fundamentally changed the political landscape," and having Harris instead of President Joe Biden at the top of the Democratic ticket kickstarted political enthusiasm, especially for women under 45, according to Mackler.

"These women are excited about Kamala Harris," she said.

Israel supporters gather in downtown Chicago

Israel supporters, including some relatives of people kidnapped by Hamas, gathered at a pro-Israel art installation Tuesday morning in downtown Chicago to call on U.S. leaders to continue backing Israel and pushing for the release of hostages.

The art installation included giant milk cartons bearing photos of some of the hostages.

"We are here to sound a voice," Michael Herzog, Israeli ambassador to the United States, told the small crowd. "We are here to keep the issue of the hostages high on the agenda."

He noted that 319 days have passed since the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas. "We need to call on Hamas to let our people go," he said, prompting the crowd to chant "let them go."

Elan Carr, CEO of the Israeli-American Council, condemned the pro-Palestinian protesters who have descended on Chicago this week, calling them "fringe crazies" and demanding that U.S. leaders "stand unequivocally with the state of Israel."

Consul General of Israel to the Midwest Yinam Cohen said he was disappointed by the "institutional support of the city of Chicago for the anti-Israel protests."

DNC roll call will be ceremonial, but expected to be festive nonetheless

Democratic delegates already voted virtually to nominate Harris as their presidential nominee.

Regardless, they're still holding a celebratory in-person roll call vote on Tuesday — and it's expected to be a party.

The roll call will feature a live DJ playing songs to represent each of the 57 delegations present, a convention spokesperson said. It also will feature music, lights, visuals and special effects.

The spokesperson said those present in person or tuning in from home can expect to hear a range of diverse voices during the roll call, including elected officials at all levels of government and delegates who will share moving personal stories.

The roll call will start with Delaware — Biden's home state — and end with California and Minnesota, home states to Harris and Walz.

In Michigan, Republican senate candidate speaks to law enforcement before Trump's arrival

Mike Rogers, who cinched the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate earlier this month, spoke to law enforcement for about an hour and a half ahead of Trump's scheduled arrival.

"We will have your back," he said to applause from the crowd of about 50 while standing in front of banners that read "Make America Safe Again."

The Michigan U.S. Senate race is one of several that could determine the control of the chamber in the fall.

Trump will speak Tuesday afternoon at the Livingston County Sheriff's Office on law enforcement and crime.

Multiple Michigan sheriffs criticized the Biden and Harris administration over border policy, speaking about the effects drug trade and fentanyl in their communities. Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott listed a series of recent crimes in remarks he said were committed by people in the country illegally, suggesting the crimes could have been prevented if the perpetrators were stopped from entering the country.

"Come November, make the obvious choice, reelect Donald Trump," Abbott said.

Secret Service looking into bomb threats in downtown Chicago

The U.S. Secret Service was checking into bomb threats made Tuesday at "various locations" in downtown Chicago where the Democratic National Convention is taking place.

Law enforcement was screening the affected areas and examining the credibility of the threat, according to a message from the joint information center established for the convention.

A reporter for Fox 32 in Chicago said in a post on X that their station received an email making a pipe bomb threat at four hotels in downtown Chicago.

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Vance talks crime at campaign event in Kenosha, Wisconsin

Republican vice presidential candidate JD Vance took the stage about 10 minutes early at a rally outside the county courthouse in Kenosha, Wisconsin, on Tuesday.

Kenosha was the site of several days of protests against police brutality that turned violent in 2020. Illinois teen Kyle Rittenhouse shot three protesters during one of the demonstrations, killing two of them. A jury later acquitted Rittenhouse of homicide and endangerment charges after he argued he fired in self-defense.

The GOP held him as a symbol of gun rights. Vance used the setting to attack Kamala Harris as soft on crime. He said that feeling safe is an American birthright and promised that he and Trump would end sanctuary cities for people in the country illegally, deport those who are violent and push for the death penalty for drug dealers.

He also called for tougher prosecutors and pledged to end frivolous lawsuits against police.

"All this stuff is common sense," he said.

Vance also took questions directly from reporters in the press area. Asked for his thoughts on the Democratic National Convention taking place only about 60 miles south in Chicago, Vance decried that city's murder rate. He also dinged Harris for not taking questions from reporters like he was doing and instead always making sure a teleprompter stands between her and the public.

State Sen. Mallory McMorrow says oversized Project 2025 book will be seen again at DNC

Michigan State Sen. Mallory McMorrow kicked off her speech at the opening night of the Democratic National Convention with a bang, slamming down an oversized hardcover copy of the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 book on the podium.

The book, which McMorrow joked in an interview weighs as much as her 3-year-old daughter, is filled entirely with actual text from Project 2025, the term used for the Heritage Foundation's nearly 1,000-page handbook for the next Republican administration.

The idea to create an oversized version of Project 2025 first came about several weeks ago when Vice President Kamala Harris' campaign manager, Julie Chavez Rodriguez, contacted McMorrow about speaking about Project 2025 at the convention.

McMorrow said she had never spoken to an arena full of people before and wanted to come up with something that would "play well both at home and in the arena."

According to McMorrow, Monday night won't be the last appearance of the massive Project 2025 book at the convention. It will be displayed by various speakers throughout the week, with a designated "keeper of the book" ensuring its safekeeping in the interim.

"There will be others who pick up the book baton," McMorrow said. "That won't be the last time you see that Cheesecake Factory menu."

Broadway stars form group to back Harris

A list of Broadway heavy hitters — including Audra McDonald, Kristin Chenoweth, Sara Bareilles, Tony Kushner and Sarah Paulson — have gathered to back the Democratic ticket, creating the volunteer group Broadway for Harris.

The group says it will use phone banks, canvass, social media and host special fundraising events to increase voter participation in key swing districts. A Democratic National Convention watch party on Thursday in Manhattan will launch the group.

Members include more than 70 industry leaders, current and former Broadway performers, producers, writers, directors, choreographers and marketing specialists. A public Zoom call has been set for Aug. 26 to learn about how fans can get involved.

The group includes actors Rachel Brosnahan, Adrienne Warren, Idina Menzel, John Leguizamo, Billy Porter and Alan Cumming; songwriters Alan Menken, Jeanine Tesori, Stephen Schwartz and Benj Pasek and Justin Paul; playwrights David Henry Hwang and Jeremy O. Harris; and producers Jordan Roth, Thomas Schumacher and Jeffrey Seller.

At Trump's campaign event

Asked about a comment Trump has made several times through the years at political events about using

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the U.S. military to help control urban crime, Rep. Byron Donalds said that "saying something at a rally is not public policy. It's not."

"If you go to his website, you're not going to find that written in stone on the website under what he's going to do the help solve crime issues," Donalds added.

According to campaign policy positions listed on his website, Trump "has committed to deploying federal assets, including the National Guard, to restore law and order when local law enforcement refuses to act."

Walz: 'We're not going to make that mistake again'

Democratic vice presidential candidate Tim Walz says he listened to Hillary Clinton address the party's convention Monday night and couldn't help but imagine "how different things could have been in 2016, if we'd gotten the work done."

"We're not going to make that mistake again," Walz said at a meeting of the convention's Women's Caucus.

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul says Harris nomination could be barrier breaking moment

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul called the nomination of Vice President Kamala Harris a historic, potentially barrier breaking moment for women in politics during a gathering of the Democrat's Women's Caucus.

Hochul referenced past trailblazing Democratic women like Rep. Shirley Chisholm, a Jamaican American New Yorker who ran for president in 1968, and Geraldine Ferraro, who served as the party's presidential nominee in 1984.

"Maybe this means that women can do more than be the supporting cast," Hochul said.

"There will be no more barriers. That'll be proof that every little girl can be whatever she wants because someone came before," Hochul said. She urged the audience to prevent a "Trump travesty" this year.

At a JD Vance event in Wisconsin

Republican U.S. Senate candidate Eric Hovde warmed up a crowd of about 150 people waiting for Sen. JD Vance outside the county courthouse in Kenosha, Wisconsin, on Tuesday by bashing Kamala Harris' public safety record.

He accused her of allowing San Francisco to slide into crime during her tenure as district attorney there. He called her stint as California attorney general a failure, accusing her of allowing the rise of sanctuary cities for undocumented immigrants, sex trafficking and drug use. She's also been unable to control the influx of undocumented immigrants across the southern U.S. border during her time as vice president, he said.

"She has a history of failure," Hovde said.

Chicago police superintendent: 'We're up to the challenge' as more protests expected

Chicago Police Superintendent Larry Snelling said there was a "brief breach" of security fencing "within sight and sound of the United Center" on Monday evening.

He said 13 people were arrested on charges ranging from criminal trespass and resisting and obstructing an arrest to aggravated battery of police officers.

Speaking at a news conference Tuesday morning, Snelling praised officers' actions, saying they didn't overreact. "Our officers showed great restraint," he said.

He said an estimated 3,500 protesters participated in the march and rally, and just a small group breached the security fence.

"I'm not going to tie that event — what happened with the breach — with the entirety of the protest," he said, saying the vast majority of protesters were peaceful.

Snelling said more protests are expected as the week goes on, and his department is prepared to de-escalate situations whenever possible.

"Again, we're up to the challenge," he said. "The city is up to the challenge."

Harris campaign ties Trump event in Michigan town to far-right demonstration

Donald Trump is hosting an event Tuesday tied to the theme of "Make America Safe Again" in a Michigan city that has long been linked to the Ku Klux Klan.

Howell, a city of about 10,000 people, is a Republican stronghold west of Detroit. Nicole Matthews-Creech, executive director of the Livingston Diversity Council, said the public perception of the area has been stained by its past as the decades-long residence of a KKK grand dragon from the 1970s to the 1990s.

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A Trump campaign spokesperson said they didn't know about the KKK link and chose the location because it's part of the Detroit media market and has a supportive sheriff in what the campaign considers an important area.

Last month, a group of about a dozen masked demonstrators marched through downtown Howell and dispersed after a library board member confronted the group at the Howell Carnegie District Library, according to a news release from the city of Howell, the Livingston Diversity Council and the Howell Area Chamber of Commerce.

Another group of people, similarly dressed, were seen at an interstate overpass nearby. Video from the overpass appears to show someone yell, "We love Hitler, we love Trump," according to reporting by the Livingston Daily.

Matthews-Creech said it hasn't been confirmed if the two groups were one and the same.

Harris' campaign played up the connection between Trump's past remarks on far-right demonstrations, including comments he made about white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017, and the recent demonstration.

"Trump's actions have encouraged them, and Michiganders can expect more of the same when he comes to town," Harris for President Michigan Communications Director Alyssa Bradley said in a statement several days before his visit.

The Trump campaign denied any connection to white supremacy.

"Did the media write this same story when Joe Biden visited Howell in 2021, or when Kamala Harris visits cities where racist protests and marches have occurred in the past?" Karoline Leavitt, national press secretary for the Trump campaign, said in a statement.

New security measures in Chicago a day after activists clashed with police

A Chicago park, which had erupted into chaos during the first day of the Democratic National Convention as several dozen activists clashed with police, was calm Tuesday morning but now fortified with new security to prevent further breaches.

During a march of several thousand calling for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war, the group paused at a park a block from the convention center. Several dozen activists then broke away from the larger group, breaching police fencing before being pushed back by officers, leading to multiple arrests.

On Tuesday morning, an extra line of fencing was installed at the park and the tall metal barriers were reinforced to prevent protesters from lifting and removing the panels in the future. No police officers or protesters were present at the park early Tuesday.

Closer to downtown Chicago, security was tighter than usual — including law enforcement officers with weapons slung across their bodies — outside the office building that houses the Israeli consulate and a major city transportation hub. Metal barricades were set up and an officer said they were preparing for a 7 p.m. demonstration.

Most of the largest demonstrations have been organized by the Coalition to March on the DNC, which has focused on calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. But smaller protests have popped up around the city, including disruptions at the convention's welcome party at Navy Pier.

Harris campaign blames convention process for party platform that wasn't updated

The Harris campaign is blaming a long-established process at the convention for a party platform that was approved without being updated to reflect that the vice president replaced President Joe Biden at the top of the Democratic ticket.

Convention delegates on Monday approved a sweeping set of Democratic policy goals for the next four years that repeatedly referred to Biden seeking reelection. Party officials spent more than a year compiling the platform delegates were to consider, but they also approved it days before Biden dropped out of the race and endorsed Harris.

No effort was then made to change it before it was approved on the convention floor.

"Obviously, the platform was voted on before the switch here, and so it's part of the process as it played out," Harris campaign communications director Michael Tyler told reporters at a Tuesday morning briefing at the convention.

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Rep. Byron Donalds says Harris and Walz don't support law enforcement enough
Rep. Byron Donalds is warning against the negative effect he says Harris and Walz would have on American policing if elected to the White House.

The Florida Republican said Tuesday at a Trump campaign media availability that Harris and Walz don't support law enforcement ranks strongly enough. Donalds said Harris, a former prosecutor, "incentivized states to move toward cashless bail," a policy he said "creates a turnstile for criminals to be arrested and go right back out on the streets."

Donalds is among the Trump surrogates offering Republican counterprogramming in Chicago as Democrats gather for the DNC.

Donalds also said Walz had a delayed response to the Minneapolis violence after the killing of George Floyd, noting that the areas affected by violence "mostly are inhabited by Black people and Hispanic people — that's what was burning."

Donalds also made brief mention of the Day 1 DNC delays that meant a late start to Biden's speech but paused before he levied more specific criticism of the president: "It's a shame to do that to somebody — well, I'm going to stop there."

North Carolina governor says he isn't concerned by Harris shifting stances on hot-button issues
North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper says it's a sign of growth since she last ran for president in 2019.

Harris has dropped her opposition to fracking and her onetime support for progressive proposals like Medicare-for-all and the "Green New Deal" in recent weeks.

"I think the policy and how it affects people is always important, but clearly the character of the candidate can be more important," said Cooper, speaking at an event hosted by Bloomberg at the Democratic National Convention.

Cooper, who leads a key battleground state has known Harris since they both were state attorneys general. Cooper noted Harris had a seat at the table as President Joe Biden passed major legislation in their first two years in office and said the vice president "saw the give and the take."

"And I think that's just part of growing as an elected official and growing as a candidate and being a president for everybody," he added.

To avoid running late again, DNC organizers plan to start earlier on 2nd day

Organizers are planning an earlier start to day two of the Democratic National Convention in hopes avoiding scheduling that ran hours late and into the wee hours of the night on day one.

DNC director Alex Hornbrook said Tuesday morning that "we made some real-time adjustments last night" and "we're working with our speakers and making some other adjustments this evening" including starting at 5.30 p.m. local time in Chicago "to make sure that we stay on track."

During a briefing with reporters, Hornbrook ducked a question about speakers who were canceled on night one as the program ran long — including a performance by acclaimed singer-songwriter James Taylor — would be rescheduled. He said only, "Our program team is working very hard right now to ensure that we can be on schedule" without providing further details.

President Joe Biden gave Monday's night key address, but didn't take the stage until around 11:30 p.m. on the East Coast, and the program didn't wrap up until well after midnight for a large chunk of the audience watching around the country.

Trump's campaign is getting started on Day 2 of its counterprogramming around the DNC

Ahead of a news conference at the Trump Hotel Chicago, placards were on display with statistics on homicide rates in various U.S. cities under the heading "Kamala Crime Crisis."

Rep. Byron Donalds of Florida, one of Trump's top U.S. House allies and surrogates, is expected to give remarks and take media questions.

North Carolina governor says he feels good about Democrats' chances of winning his state

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper says he has "that 2008 feeling" about Democrats' chances of winning his state with Vice President Kamala Harris on the top of the ticket.

Speaking at an event hosted by Bloomberg at the Democratic National Convention, Cooper pointed to demographic shifts that have made the state more amenable to Democrats, but also a contentious race

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to replace him in the governor's mansion that will generate its own "bottom-up" effect on the ticket.

Cooper acknowledged that he didn't have the same optimism about his state just weeks ago when Biden was at the top of the ticket.

"Democrats were not united," said Cooper said, before Biden dropped out. "I'm grateful for his decision to do that because it brought everybody together."

Cooper pointed to the rave reception for Biden at the convention's opening night to say, "Everyone loves President Biden." But he added of Biden's decision to step aside: "It was the time to do this, it was the time to make history."

The DNC won't only feature speeches by Democrats

The Harris campaign announced Tuesday that several Republican leaders will also offer remarks in Chicago, including former U.S. Rep. Adam Kinzinger of Illinois, former Georgia Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan and the mayor of Mesa, Arizona, John Giles.

Also speaking are former Trump White House staffers Olivia Troye, a former national security official, and Stephanie Grisham, who was a White House press secretary.

Grisham said she knows Harris will "defend our freedoms and represent our nation with honesty and integrity."

"I never thought I'd be speaking at a Democratic convention," she said in a statement. "But, after seeing firsthand who Donald Trump really is, and the threat he poses to our country, I feel very strongly about speaking out."

Harris travels to Milwaukee for a rally before returning to Chicago in the evening

The Harris campaign said Tuesday it will spotlight "trusted messengers" from key battleground states over the convention's three remaining days. They include Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto of Nevada; Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, Sen. Gary Peters and Rep. Elissa Slotkin of Michigan; Sen. Bob Casey of Pennsylvania and Sen. Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin. From Arizona, Sen. Mark Kelly will speak along with John Giles, the Republican mayor of Mesa.

Gov. Roy Cooper of North Carolina — a state that voted for Trump in 2020 but is now a major pickup opportunity for Harris — will be among the final speakers before Harris accepts the Democratic presidential nomination on Thursday.

After DNC speech, President Biden and his family arrive in California

President Joe Biden and his family are spending the rest of this week in California at the Santa Ynez Valley ranch of longtime Democratic donor and medical device mogul Joe Kiani.

The Bidens arrived at the property of Kiani, the founder of Masimo and Cercacor Laboratories, early Tuesday after Biden delivered his address Monday at the opening day of the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

Biden has called Kiani "one of my closest friends," and the president in 2021 appointed his billionaire host to the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

Kiani has also previously hosted the president's son, Hunter, at the 8,000-acre property.

Masimo's companies have been locked in a costly legal dispute with Apple. Kiani has accused Apple of violating patents for their watches from his companies, which pioneered technology related to measuring blood-oxygen levels.

DNC panelists discuss war in Gaza as Harris tries to ease tension with pro-Palestinian activists

The Democratic Party has been riven for months by the war in Gaza, giving rise to a protest movement that threatened Biden's electoral coalition.

But with Biden gone from the race and Vice President Kamala Harris now leading the party, there were some indicators at the Democratic National Convention on Monday that Harris is taking more assertive steps to ease that tension.

In what organizers called a first, party activists were given space at the convention to hold a forum to discuss the plight of people in Gaza, who've been under Israeli bombardment since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack and its taking of hostages, as well as to share deeply personal — and often heartrending stories — about family members lost in the conflict.

Though their core demands — a cease-fire and withholding U.S. support for Israel's prosecution of the war — remain unmet, the decision to allow activists to hold a forum amounted to the offering of an olive branch by Harris. And it's one that many doubted Biden would have extended if he were still the nominee.

[Read more about the panel discussion](#)

US intelligence officials say Iran is to blame for hacks targeting Trump, Biden-Harris campaigns

U.S. intelligence officials said Monday they were confident that Iran was responsible for the hack of Donald Trump's presidential campaign, casting the cyber intrusion as part of a brazen and broader effort by Tehran to interfere in American politics and undermine faith in democratic institutions.

Although the Trump campaign and private-sector cybersecurity investigators had previously said Iran was behind the hacking attempts, it was the first time the U.S. government had assigned blame for the attack.

The joint statement from the FBI and other federal agencies also indicated that Iran was responsible for attempts to hack Vice President Kamala Harris' campaign, saying hackers had "sought access to individuals with direct access to the Presidential campaign of both political parties."

The goal of the hacking and other activities, federal officials said, was not only to sow discord but also to shape the outcome of elections that Iran perceives to be "particularly consequential in terms of the impact they could have on its national security interests."

[Read more about the Trump campaign hack](#)

Montana becomes eighth state with ballot measure seeking to protect abortion rights

By AMY BETH HANSON Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — Voters will get to decide in November whether they want to protect the right to an abortion in the constitution of Montana, which on Tuesday became the eighth state to put the issue before the electorate this fall.

The Montana Secretary of State's Office certified that the general election ballot will include the initiative on abortion rights. All but one of the eight states are seeking to amend their constitutions.

Montana's measure seeks to enshrine a 1999 Montana Supreme Court ruling that said the constitutional right to privacy protects the right to a pre-viability abortion by a provider of the patient's choice as Republican lawmakers have tried to overturn the ruling, especially after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in 2022 and left the abortion issue up to the states.

"Since *Roe* was overturned, extreme anti-abortion politicians have used every trick in the book to take away our freedoms and ban abortion completely," Martha Fuller, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Montana, said in a statement. "During that time, we have been working together to put this issue before voters."

Republican lawmakers in Montana passed a law in 2023 saying the right to privacy does not protect the right to an abortion. It has yet to be challenged in court.

Opponents of the initiative made several efforts to try to keep it off the ballot, and supporters took several of the issues to court.

Republican Attorney General Austin Knudsen initially determined that the proposed ballot measure was legally insufficient. After the Montana Supreme Court overruled him, Knudsen rewrote the ballot language to say the proposed amendment would "allow post-viability abortions up to birth," eliminate "the State's compelling interest in preserving prenatal life" and potentially "increase the number of taxpayer-funded abortions."

The high court ended up writing its own initiative language for the petitions used to gather signatures, and signature-gatherers reported that some people tried to intimidate voters into not signing.

The Secretary of State's Office also changed the rules to say the signatures of inactive voters would not count, reversing nearly 30 years of precedent. The office made computer changes to reject inactive voters' signatures after they had already been collected and after counties began verifying some of them.

Supporters again had to go to court and received an order, and additional time, for counties to verify

the signatures of inactive voters. Inactive voters are people who filled out a universal change-of-address form but did not update their address on their voter registration. If counties sent two pieces of mail to that address without a response, voters are put on an inactive list.

Supporters ended up with more than 81,000 signatures, about 10.5% of registered voters. The campaign needed just over 60,000 signatures and to qualify 40 or more of the 100 state House districts by gathering the signatures of at least 10% of the number of people who voted for governor in 2020 in that district. The initiative qualified in 59 districts.

Republican lawmakers have made several attempts to challenge the state Supreme Court's 1999 ruling, including asking the state Supreme Court to overturn it. The Republican controlled Legislature also passed several bills in 2021 and 2023 to restrict abortion access, including the one saying the constitutional right to privacy does not protect abortion rights.

Courts have blocked several of the laws, such as an abortion ban past 20 weeks of gestation, a ban on prescription of medication abortions via telehealth services, a 24-hour waiting period for medication abortions and an ultrasound requirement — all citing the Montana Supreme Court's 1999 ruling.

Last week the state Supreme Court ruled that minors in Montana don't need parental permission to receive an abortion, overturning a 2013 law.

Seven states have already put abortion questions before voters since Roe was overturned — California, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Montana Ohio and Vermont — and in each case abortion supporters won.

In 2022, Montana voters rejected a referendum that would have established criminal charges for health care providers who do not take "all medically appropriate and reasonable actions to preserve the life" of an infant born alive, including after an attempted abortion. Health care professionals and other opponents argued that it could have robbed parents of precious time with infants born with incurable medical issues if doctors are forced to attempt treatment.

Trump campaigns to 'make America safe again' as Democratic convention zeroes in on his felony record

By ISABELLA VOLMERT and BILL BARROW Associated Press

HOWELL, Mich. (AP) — Former President Donald Trump pledged Tuesday to "Make America Safe Again" while campaigning in Michigan as the Democrats who gathered in Chicago to nominate Kamala Harris branded him a career criminal.

As part of a battleground campaign swing designed to counter the Democratic National Convention, Trump stood alongside sheriff's deputies in the city of Howell and labeled Harris, a former San Francisco district attorney and California attorney general, as the "ringleader" of a "Marxist attack on law enforcement" across the country.

"Kamala Harris will deliver crime, chaos, destruction and death," Trump said in one of many generalizations about an America under Harris. "You'll see levels of crime that you've never seen before. ... I will deliver law, order, safety and peace."

Trump has sought in recent weeks to blunt the enthusiasm that Harris has attracted since President Joe Biden ended his reelection campaign and endorsed her. That has involved both dark predictions about what electing Harris would mean for the country and efforts by Trump's advisers to set up events where he can try to draw specific policy contrasts. On Tuesday in Michigan, the subject was crime and public safety.

"Our policemen and women have the backs of law-abiding citizens every day," Trump said. "When we go back to the White House, you're going to see support the likes of which you haven't seen, certainly in four years."

In excerpts released before his speech, Trump's campaign also said he would call for the death penalty for child rapists and child traffickers; he did not mention that during his remarks.

A campaign official who was not authorized to speak publicly said after Trump's appearance that the former president will make those additional formal policy announcements after the Democratic convention,

when the campaign expects they can get more attention.

Trump's event Tuesday was his latest billed as focused on a specific issue. But on these occasions, Trump has spent considerable time attacking Harris personally and taking shots at Biden, and the same was true after their appearances Monday at the Democratic convention.

"I watched last night in amazement as they tried to pretend everything was great," Trump said, singling out inflation and the U.S.-Mexico border as topics Democrats glossed over. "We have a fool as president," he said of Biden.

Trump presented a bleak portrait of life in the U.S. and the threat of a Harris presidency, though he was short on specifics and heavy on hyperbole.

"It's just insane," Trump said. "You can't walk across the street to get a loaf of bread. You get shot, you get mugged, you get raped, you get whatever it may be. And you've seen it, and I've seen it, and it's time for a change."

Trump making such claims, surrounded by supportive law enforcement officers, stood in stark contrast to the Democrats' convention. Speaker after speaker found ways Monday night in Chicago to remind Americans that Trump is the first former president ever convicted of felony crimes, has been found civilly liable for sexual assault, and still faces multiple indictments, including for his efforts to overturn his 2020 defeat to Biden.

Rep. Jasmine Crockett of Texas skewered Trump on Monday night as "a career criminal, with 34 felonies, two impeachments and one porn star," a reference to his payments to an adult film actress at issue in his New York conviction for business fraud.

As the crowd roared, Crockett kept going, hailing Harris as a former prosecutor who "has a resume" while Trump "has a rap sheet."

The derision reached its peak as Hillary Clinton, whom Trump defeated in 2016, stood back from the podium and smiled as delegates chanted: "Lock him up! Lock him up!" — a turnabout from Trump supporters' chants about Clinton eight years ago despite the former secretary of state having never been charged with any crime.

He once poached the wild animals of Zimbabwe. Now he preaches against it

By FARAI MUTSAKA Associated Press

CHIREDDZI, Zimbabwe (AP) — Tembanechako Mastick and a group of men scanned bushes near their village in southeast Zimbabwe, on the hunt for the den of hyenas that had recently attacked livestock. Scattered fragments of goat bones showed the way, and Mastick peeped cautiously into a deep hole in the earth.

"They are probably gone from here, but not far because they see plenty of food in this area," Mastick said. Some of his companions suggested sealing the hole, while others argued for trying to burn out any animals inside.

In the past, Mastick, 47, might have been willing. He grew up hunting in his community's tradition, and though he grew crops and raised livestock in later years, turned to poaching when recurring droughts made farming less viable. But then he was caught late last year taking small game in the nearby Save Valley Conservancy, one of the largest private game reserves in Africa, and spent nearly three months in jail, where he said a program aimed at turning poachers into conservationists changed his outlook.

At the hyena den, Mastick warned the others against killing animals, whether for meat or revenge. It's a message he's been giving since he was freed, urging his fellow villagers to rely on crops and livestock instead for food and income.

"I began to realize that animals are for the benefit of the entire community, so poaching is a selfish act," Mastick said in an interview. "I can kill a zebra today and eat it or sell the meat, but I am the only one who benefits. But if tourists come to view that same zebra, it is the entire community that benefits from

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the income.”

It’s not an easy message to give. Across the southern African country, conflicts between humans and animals are increasing as wildlife habitat gets squeezed by repeated droughts, illegal hunting and tree-cutting, and conversion of forested areas into farmland.

In response, elephants raid and graze vegetable gardens irrigated from scarce well water. Lions, hyenas, wild dogs and jackals target cattle and goats — people’s only safeguard against hunger and extreme poverty after an El Nino-induced drought that withered corn and sorghum crops. Donkeys that are crucial for labor and public transport aren’t safe from attacks, either.

Fencing for livestock is rudimentary, typically made from tree branches or sometimes thorny bushes. Villagers try to ward off animals by banging pots, beating drums or burning old tires or a foul-smelling “cake” made from dried cow dung, ground chiles and used oil.

The country’s parks agency said it has gotten between 3,000 and 4,000 distress calls from communities battling nuisance animals in the past three years, which works out to an annual average that’s up from 900 calls in 2018. The conflicts are likely to intensify as the country heads toward drier months ahead, said Tinashe Farawo, a spokesman for the Zimbabwe National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority.

It hasn’t always been like this.

Mastick recalls good times — bountiful harvests of corn, millet and cotton putting money in the pocket. Wild animals stayed in the forests.

“The only animals we encountered were the ones we hunted for meat. I grew up a hunter, I would set up a snare and in no time I would be collecting,” he recalled, holding the skull of a donkey in his hand, the only body part hyenas left behind after eating the animal.

He said problems started when the country embarked on a haphazard land reform program in 2000 that saw people settling in wildlife territory, including setting up farming plots inside the conservancy. Save Valley Conservancy, named for the river it borders, says it has lost more than 30 percent of the wildlife habitat on its 750,000 acres (303,514 hectares). Meanwhile, droughts devastated the grasslands and forests around Mastick’s village.

“Before that we barely had altercations with lions. It was taboo because wildlife was abundant. But due to the famine, lions began targeting our livestock. Elephants also became a problem, hyenas too,” he said.

Grazing land for livestock became inadequate. People from neighboring villages now routinely cross the shallow and largely sandy bed of the once-roaring Save River with donkey-drawn carts carrying wood illegally logged from the conservancy, further depleting wildlife habitat.

Dingani Masuku, the community liaison manager for Save Valley Conservancy said “there is a link” with climate change, noting that the area is one of the country’s driest and hardest-hit regions.

“All resources are scarce. So we have to compete (with animals) for those resources. We are competing for everything actually,” he said. “The resources are getting leaner and leaner ... the animals have to get where there are people and they look for survival in there.”

In Chiredzi, a semi-arid area about 500 kilometers from the capital of Harare, Mastick often has to calm infuriated villagers.

Mastick understands the pain of losing livestock. He starts each day by counting his own cattle, goats and donkeys. He once had 45 goats; now he has only 10, the rest eaten by wild animals. Some of his surviving animals bear the marks of attacks. Mastick does, too — his body is riddled with animal bites, including lacerations from a leopard attack he encountered while on an illegal hunt.

“Without crop harvests we have to turn to livestock to raise money for school fees, food and other necessities so people are justified to be angry,” he said at his homestead — a few mud houses whose grass thatching is falling off. “But I help them understand that killing the animals is not a solution.”

Part of his message is that jail is difficult. Mastick said his family suffered greatly while he was behind bars since he was the only breadwinner; some of his 20 children stopped going to school.

But he learned new skills while in jail, including carpentry, which now provides his living. At his workshop, he uses tree branches and dry palm tree leaves to make chairs and tables that are a hit with tourists and

locals. The workshop is often a hive of activity with men milling around, some learning the trade so they can try to eke out their own living. Mastick uses the platform to spread awareness. He also speaks at village gatherings such as funerals and community meetings.

There's no hard data on poaching in the region, but Mastick said the number of men poaching from his village has fallen since he began his efforts.

Masuku said Mastick's past gives him credibility.

"People know that he has been through it, he has been there and that poaching does not pay and that is why he is reforming," Masuku said. "His new line of work as a carpenter is also helping inspire others that they can lean on something other than poaching to survive."

Ukraine has destroyed or damaged all 3 bridges over Russia's Seym River, Russian sources say

By ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian forces have either destroyed or damaged all three of the bridges over the Seym River in western Russia, according to Russian sources, as Kyiv's incursion into western Russia entered its third week Tuesday.

Kyiv's incursion into Russia's Kursk region is changing the trajectory of the war and boosting morale among Ukraine's war-weary population, though the ultimate outcome of the incursion — the first attack on Russia since World War II — remains impossible to predict.

Even as Ukraine hails its success on Russian territory, the Russian push in eastern Ukraine is poised to claim another key center, the city of Pokrovsk.

Ukraine's attacks on the three bridges over the Seym River in Kursk could potentially trap Russian forces between the river, the Ukrainian advance and the Ukrainian border. Already they appear to be slowing down Russia's response to the Kursk incursion, which Ukraine launched on Aug. 6.

Over the weekend, Ukraine's Air Force commander posted two videos of bridges over the Seym being hit, and satellite photos by Planet Labs PBC analyzed Tuesday by The Associated Press confirmed that a bridge in the town of Glushkovo had been destroyed.

A Russian military investigator confirmed Monday that Ukraine had "totally destroyed" one bridge and damaged two others in the area. The full extent of the damage remained unclear.

"As a result of targeted shelling with the use of rocket and artillery weapons against residential buildings and civilian infrastructure in the Karyzh village ... a third bridge over the Seym River was damaged," the unnamed representative for Russia's Investigative Committee said in a video published on the Telegram channel of Russian state TV anchor Vladimir Solovyov.

Russian military bloggers Vladimir Romanov and Yuri Podolyaka and several high-profile pro-war Telegram channels in Russia also claimed that the third bridge had been targeted and damaged. Podolyaka's post was shared by Roman Alekhin, an advisor to Kursk's acting regional governor.

Since the incursion into the Kursk region began, the Ukrainian army has captured 1,263 square kilometers (488 square miles) and 93 settlements, Ukraine's top military commander said Tuesday — up from 1,000 square kilometers (386 square miles) a week ago. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi made the remarks while meeting with local officials.

Following a meeting with Syrskyi later Tuesday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a video address that the Ukrainian army was achieving "set goals" in Kursk.

Zelenskyy said in recent days that the operation is aimed at creating a buffer zone that can prevent future attacks on his nation from across the border, and that Ukraine is capturing a large number of Russian prisoners of war that it hopes to exchange for captured Ukrainians.

TASS, a Russian state news agency, reported that 17 people have died and 140 have been injured in Ukraine's incursion, citing an unnamed source in the Russian medical service. Of 75 people hospitalized, four are children.

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Russia's Ministry of Emergency Situations said Tuesday afternoon that more than 500 people had left dangerous areas in the Kursk region over the past 24 hours. In total, more than 122,000 people have been resettled since the Ukrainian attack began, it said.

In another example of Ukraine taking the war to Russian soil, a massive fire burned for the third consecutive day after an oil depot was hit by Ukrainian drones.

The fire at the depot in the town of Proletarsk burned across an area of a hectare (2 1/2 acres), according to Russian state news agencies. There were 500 firefighters involved in the operation, and 41 of them already have been hospitalized with injuries, according to TASS, citing local officials.

Ukraine's Army General Staff claimed responsibility Sunday for attacking the oil depot, which was used to supply the needs of Russia's army, calling it a measure "to undermine the military and economic potential of the Russian Federation."

Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the Ukrainians of "trying to destabilize our country" and compared them to terrorists.

"We will punish the criminals. There can be no doubt about that," Putin said Tuesday. He was meeting with mothers of children killed in the 2004 Beslan school attack by Islamic militants that left more than 330 people dead.

Ukraine's incursion has exposed Russian vulnerabilities according to analysts and Ukrainian officials.

Zelenskyy said Monday that he believes Ukraine's actions would help to dispel Western fears of offering more robust military aid to Kyiv. Some allies have been handing over weapons slowly and imposing limits on how they can be used, fearing that crossing a Russian "red-line" could lead to escalation, even nuclear escalation.

"We have now achieved an extremely important ideological shift: the naive and illusory concept of so-called 'red lines' regarding Russia that dominated the assessments of the war by some of our partners has crumbled these days somewhere near Sudzha," the president said, referring to a seized Russian town under Ukrainian control.

Much remains unknown about Ukrainian operations in Russia but satellite images provide some clues.

Pontoon bridges — temporary bridges used by militaries when formal bridges are blown out — could be seen in the satellite images provided by Planet Labs PBC in two different positions along the Seym River in recent days. The pontoons likely were built by Russian troops trying to supply forces around the Ukrainian advance.

One pontoon bridge appeared along the serpentine path of the river between Glushkovo and the village of Zvannoye on Saturday, but not in images taken Monday. On Monday, smoke could be seen rising along the banks of the river nearby — typically the sign of a strike.

Meanwhile along the frontline in eastern Ukraine, Russia continued to bear down on the city of Pokrovsk, one of Ukraine's main defensive strongholds and a key logistics hub in the Donetsk region, forcing Kyiv's forces to pull back and Ukrainian civilians to flee their homes. Its capture would compromise Ukraine's defensive abilities and supply routes and would bring Russia closer to its stated aim of capturing the entire Donetsk region.

Russia's relentless six-month slog across the region following the capture of Avdiivka, has cost both sides heavily in troops and armor.

Russia wants control of all parts of Donetsk and neighboring Luhansk, which together make up the Donbas industrial region.

Also on Tuesday, four teenagers were injured after Russian forces struck a park in Ukraine's southern Zaporizhzhia region, local Gov. Ivan Fedorov said on Telegram. A 15-year-old later died in hospital, according to the office of Ukraine's prosecutor general. It was not immediately clear what weapon was used, but Fedorov said the impact site was just meters away from a children's playground and cafe.

In the neighboring Kherson region, Russian strikes wounded four men and a 14-year-old boy, local authorities reported. Meanwhile, in Russia's southern Belgorod region, a Ukrainian drone attack injured a civilian man, according to local Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov.

Jennifer Lopez files for divorce from Ben Affleck after 2 years of marriage

By JOCELYN NOVECK and ANDREW DALTON Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — After a relationship that spanned two decades, two engagements, two weddings and headlines too numerous to count, Jennifer Lopez has filed for divorce from Ben Affleck.

The filing Tuesday in Los Angeles brought to an apparent end a celebrity coupling — or at least the second installment of it — that dazzled from the very heights of the pop culture firmament and emblazoned countless tabloid covers. The pair became known, even before such power-couple portmanteaus were ubiquitous, as “Bennifer.”

Court records showed Lopez filed the petition Tuesday in Los Angeles Superior Court. The news was first reported by the TMZ website. TMZ reported further that Lopez listed the date of separation as April 26, 2024. It added that she did not mention any prenuptial agreement.

After meeting, falling in love and getting engaged in the early 2000s — and starring together in 2003’s infamous “Gigli” and 2004’s “Jersey Girl” — the couple parted ways, blaming in part the pressure of the public eye.

But to the delight of many and perhaps the skepticism of others, they reunited two decades later and married — twice — in 2022.

“Love is beautiful. Love is kind. And it turns out love is patient. Twenty years patient,” wrote Lopez, announcing their first, quickie Las Vegas wedding that July, and signing off as Jennifer Lynn Affleck.

“Stick around long enough and maybe you’ll find the best moment of your life in a drive through in Las Vegas at 12:30 in the morning in the tunnel of love drive through with your kids and the one you’ll spend forever with,” she wrote in her newsletter.

The couple had flown to Las Vegas, lined up with their license with four other couples and were wed just after midnight at A Little White Wedding Chapel, where Lopez said a Bluetooth speaker played their brief march down the aisle. She called it the best night of the couple’s lives.

A month later, they had a much grander wedding at Affleck’s house in Georgia, in front of friends and family.

Both of them had been previously married. Affleck, 52, married Jennifer Garner, with whom he shares three children, in 2005. They divorced in 2018.

Lopez, 55, had been married three times before. She was briefly married to Ojani Noa from 1997-1998 and to Cris Judd from 2001-2003. She and singer Marc Anthony were married for a decade, having wed in 2004, and share 14-year-old twins. She started dating former baseball player Alex Rodriguez in 2017, but the couple called off their engagement in 2021.

All along, it had been Lopez who was more vocal in describing her and Affleck’s journey. When asked earlier this year whether she was harder on herself because her relationships had been so high-profile, Lopez agreed.

“Oh yeah. 100%. It’s made me doubt myself and really feel bad about myself at times. Made me feel like I wanted to quit at times. But at the end of the day, I feel like you kind of have to do this thing where you learn how to navigate it,” she told The Associated Press. “You take the things that could be constructive about that and use it, and the rest you kind of just throw away as kind of like haterations or, you know, other things like that and just be like, ‘Whatever. I know who I am, I know what I want to do.’”

Affleck himself expressed admiration for her self-possession, telling the AP last year that he agreed with the idea that Hollywood was unsure how to capitalize on her wide-ranging talent.

“I think she’s in her prime,” Affleck said then. “She’s doing extraordinary work in large measure because she’s taking that step to take responsibility for what she’s doing rather than say, ‘This is what I’m being offered.’”

Lopez is starring in the upcoming “Unstoppable,” under Affleck and Matt Damon’s Artists Equity banner.

In May, she starred in the Netflix movie "Atlas." At the end of the month, she suddenly canceled her 2024 North American tour, saying she was "heartsick and devastated" to be letting fans down but the move was necessary. "Jennifer is taking time off to be with her children, family and close friends," organizers said in a statement.

The tour was to be her first in five years, in support of her first solo album in a decade, "This Is Me... Now" and its companion film, a fictionalized look at her long love life, and a documentary.

"When I was a girl they'd ask me what I'd be. A woman in love is what I grew up wantin' to be," Lopez sang on the title track.

The album, she said, was inspired by her rekindled relationship with Affleck. But the film was more "about your journey as a person, it's about one person's journey and what it takes to get from heartbreak back to love. Or a hopeless romantic's journey in their search for love." In the movie, she played a character called The Artist who, similarly, had decided as a child what she wanted to be when she grew up: "in love."

But the road was rocky. In an early scene, The Artist is on the back of a motorcycle, riding across a beach, with a hunky man, face shielded. Then the motorcycle crashes.

"Not all love stories have a happy ending," she says.

Las Vegas hospitality workers at Venetian reach tentative deal on first-ever union contract

By RIO YAMAT Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Thousands of hospitality union workers on the Las Vegas Strip have reached a tentative deal with the Venetian and Palazzo resorts, a first for employees at the sprawling Italian-inspired complex that opened 25 years ago and quickly became a Sin City landmark.

The Culinary Workers Union announced Tuesday on the social platform X that the deal came together around 6:30 a.m. after a year of negotiations. It covers over 4,000 hotel and casino workers, from housekeepers and cocktail servers to bartenders and porters.

In a short video shared by the union, a housekeeper at the Venetian said the pending contract is proof that "things change if we actually voice our concern and have a group of people that back us up."

"First-time contract for Venetian," she said, smiling. "It's a very historical event. It's something we can be proud of."

The deal needs to be approved by the union's rank and file. Bethany Khan, a union spokesperson, said it mirrors the major wins secured in recent contracts awarded to 40,000 hospitality workers at 18 Strip properties owned or operated by casino giants MGM Resorts International, Caesars Entertainment and Wynn Resorts.

Those wins included a 32% pay increase over five years, housekeeping workload reductions and improved job security amid advancements in technology and artificial intelligence.

The bump in pay under those contracts will amount to an average \$35 hourly wage by the end of the contracts, according to the union. Workers at these properties were making about \$26 hourly with benefits before winning their latest contracts in November.

Described by the Culinary Union as their "best contracts ever," the deals ended lengthy labor disputes that had brought the threat of a historic strike to the Strip as the city prepared to debut its new Formula One racetrack.

Patrick Nichols, Venetian's president and CEO, said in a statement that the company looks forward to its workers ratifying the contract.

"The Venetian Resort Las Vegas has a long history of respecting our Team Members and putting their needs and interests at the center of our decision-making process," Nichols said.

The Venetian opened in 1999 and the adjoining Palazzo in 2007. Gondolas gliding through canals both outside near Las Vegas Boulevard sidewalks and indoors through a plaza with stores and restaurants have made it a Sin City landmark.

The union says it is now turning its attention to winning five-year contracts for workers at the massive Sphere venue and at Fontainebleau Las Vegas, the Strip's newest megaresort. Negotiations just off the Strip at the nearby Virgin Hotels are also ongoing.

University of Kentucky to disband diversity office after GOP lawmakers pushed anti-DEI legislation

By BRUCE SCHREINER Associated Press

The University of Kentucky will disband its office promoting diversity and inclusion efforts in response to questions from policymakers that its focus on identity has stifled political discussions, its president said Tuesday.

The action on the Lexington, Kentucky, campus comes after state lawmakers debated whether to limit diversity, equity and inclusion practices at public universities. Republican supermajorities in the Kentucky House and Senate were unable to resolve differences on the issue before ending this year's session in April, but the matter has been expected to resurface when lawmakers reconvene early next year.

In the school's preemptive action, units housed in the shuttered Office for Institutional Diversity will be shifted elsewhere on campus, including into a newly created Office for Community Relations, UK President Eli Capilouto said in a campuswide email. The restructuring won't result in job losses, he said.

Capilouto stressed that the school's core values remain intact — to protect academic freedom and promote a "sense of belonging" for everyone on campus, regardless of background or perspective.

"But we've also listened to policymakers and heard many of their questions about whether we appear partisan or political on the issues of our day and, as a result, narrowly interpret things solely through the lens of identity," the campus president said. "In so doing, the concern is that we either intentionally or unintentionally limit discourse. I hear many of those concerns reflected in discussions with some of our students, faculty and staff across our campus."

Universities in other states have been grappling with similar issues, he noted.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Rodney Bennett on Tuesday announced plans to dissolve the school's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Bennett was hired last year and is the first Black person to lead Nebraska's flagship public university campus.

"I fully grasp the weight of this decision and its implications, but a centralized approach to this work is no longer right for our institution," Bennett said in a public letter.

Bennett said he's splitting the task of "supporting and building a sense of community and belonging" between several other offices.

"It is incumbent on each of us to foster a welcoming environment for all members of our community," he said.

Bennett's announcement would seem to contradict the University of Nebraska system's stance only months ago during testimony on a legislative bill that would have banned diversity, equity and inclusion efforts at Nebraska state colleges and universities. The system's interim chancellor at the time, Chris Kabourek, testified against the bill.

"We are concerned about how this bill would impact our ability to compete for students, for faculty and staff," Kabourek told lawmakers. "I think we all value diversity and the benefits of being welcoming. Certainly, that's the kind of environment we strive and want to create on our campuses."

The Nebraska bill failed to advance after dozens of critics testified against the proposals.

The quest to limit DEI initiatives gained momentum this year in a number of statehouses in red states. For instance, Iowa's Republican-led Legislature approved a budget bill that would ban all DEI offices and initiatives in higher education that aren't necessary to comply with accreditation or federal law.

Republican lawmakers in Missouri have proposed numerous bills targeting "diversity, equity and inclusion" initiatives in higher education and state government. Though the legislation hasn't passed, the efforts have put pressure on institutions to make changes. The University of Missouri recently announced that it is dissolving its "Inclusion, Diversity and Equity" division and dispersing the staff among other departments.

In Kentucky, GOP lawmakers at the forefront of DEI debates said Tuesday that they welcomed the action taken by UK and urged other public universities to take similar steps.

"A true elimination of these DEI policies in our public universities will end the division they promote, and allow our colleges and universities to be the true bastion of free thought we need them to be," Republican state Sen. Mike Wilson said in a statement.

Opponents of the anti-DEI bills in Kentucky warned that the restrictions on campuses could roll back gains in minority enrollments and stifle campus discussions about past discrimination.

On its website, UK's Office for Institutional Diversity said its mission was to "enhance the diversity and inclusivity of our university community through the recruitment and retention of an increasingly diverse population." It says that initiatives promoting diversity-related experiences can help ensure success in an "interconnected world."

In outlining the restructuring at UK, the university will not mandate centralized diversity training at the college or unit level, Capilouto said. It won't place required diversity statements in hiring and application processes, he said, and websites will be free of political positions to ensure impartiality.

"This should in no way be construed as impinging upon academic freedom," UK's president added. "Faculty decide what to teach as part of formal instruction and where discovery should take them as scholars in their areas of expertise."

FTC's bid to ban noncompete agreements rejected by federal judge in Texas

By ALEX VEIGA AP Business Writer

A federal judge in Texas has blocked a new rule from the Federal Trade Commission that would have made it easier for employees to quit a job and work for a competitor.

In a ruling Tuesday, U.S. District Judge Ada Brown granted a motion for summary judgement filed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other plaintiffs, and rejected the FTC's own petition for a judgement in its favor.

In reaching his decision, Brown concluded that that the FTC "exceeded its statutory authority" in making the rule, which the judge called "arbitrary and capricious." The judge also concluded that the rule would cause irreparable harm.

As a result of the court's decision, the FTC won't be able to enforce its rule, which was set to go into effect on Sept. 4, according to the judge's ruling.

Still, the decision does not prevent the agency from addressing noncompete agreements through "case-by-case" enforcement actions, said Victoria Graham, an FTC spokesperson.

The FTC is also considering appealing the court's decision, Graham said.

The FTC voted in April to prohibit employers nationwide from entering into new noncompete agreements or enforcing existing noncompetes, saying the agreements restrict workers' freedom and suppress wages.

But companies opposing the ban argue they need noncompete agreements to protect business relationships, trade secrets and investments they make to train or recruit employees.

Apart from the Texas case, companies sued the FTC in Florida and Pennsylvania to block the rule.

In the Florida lawsuit, which was brought by a retirement community, the court granted a preliminary injunction, prohibiting enforcement of the rule just for the plaintiff, but not any other company.

In the Pennsylvania lawsuit, the court concluded that the plaintiff, a tree company, failed to show it would be irreparably harmed by the ban and that the company wasn't likely to win the case.

The divergent rulings mean the issue could end up working its way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Final report outlines missed opportunities to stop Maine's deadliest shooting

By PATRICK WHITTLE and DAVID SHARP Associated Press

LEWISTON, Maine (AP) — Both the Army Reserve and police missed opportunities to intervene in a gunman's psychiatric crisis and initiate steps to seize weapons from the spiraling reservist responsible for the deadliest shootings in Maine history, according to the final report released Tuesday by a special commission created to investigate the attacks, which killed 18 people.

The independent commission, which held 16 public meetings, heard from scores of witnesses and reviewed thousands of pages of evidence, reiterated its earlier conclusion that Maine law enforcement officers had authority under the state's yellow flag law, but didn't use it, to seize reservist Robert Card's guns and put him in protective custody weeks before the shootings.

The 215-page report also faulted the Army Reserve for failing to do more to ensure Card's health and deal with his weapons. And it pointed out that no one used New York's red flag law to initiate steps to seize the gunman's weapons when he was hospitalized last summer, even though the law had been used on non-New York residents before.

The commission, created by Gov. Janet Mills, a Democrat, announced its conclusions at Lewiston City Hall, less than 3 miles (5 kilometers) from the two sites where the shootings took place Oct. 25, 2023.

"Our ability to heal — as a people and as a state — is predicated on the ability to know and understand, to the greatest extent possible, the facts and circumstances surrounding the tragedy in Lewiston. The release of the independent commission's final report marks another step forward on that long road to healing," the governor said in a statement.

Although the report contained no major surprises, the commission's chair, Daniel Wathen, noted the facts laid out in the document can be used by others to make changes to prevent future tragedies.

Megan Vozzella, who lost her husband two weeks shy of their first anniversary, expressed through an American Sign Language interpreter that she wants accountability for those who failed to act to stop the shootings.

"We are dealing with grief, loss of our loved ones. And it's a journey. All we can do is learn from this and make our lives better," she said, likening the process to dealing with broken pieces. "It's like we're walking through the shards," she said.

Ben Gideon, a lawyer for Vozzella and other relatives of those who died, described the shootings as the product of a dangerous intersection of gun ownership and mental illness with failures to intervene that were outlined in the report.

"At the end of the day, what happened here was a pairing of someone who was known to be paranoid, delusional and suffering from a diagnosed psychosis with someone who owned numerous weapons of warfare," Gideon said.

The commission began its work a month after the mass shootings by Card, who killed his victims at a bowling alley and a bar and then took his own life. Over nine months, there has been emotional testimony from family members and survivors of the shooting, law enforcement officials, U.S. Army Reserve personnel and others.

The commission praised the swift response by police to the shootings but also noted what Wathen, a former chief justice of Maine's highest court, described Tuesday as "utter chaos" as hundreds of law enforcement officers arrived to search for the gunman. The only recommendation issued by the commission was for state police to conduct an after-action review.

Family members and fellow reservists said Card had exhibited delusional and paranoid behavior months before the shootings. He was hospitalized by the Army during training in July 2023 in New York, where his unit was training West Point cadets, but Army Reserve officials acknowledged that no one made sure Card was taking his medication or complying with his follow-up care at home in Bowdoin, Maine.

The starkest warning came in September text from a fellow reservist: "I believe he's going to snap and do a mass shooting."

The commission report contained new details of Card's time at a private psychiatric hospital — Four Winds in Katonah, New York — where Card acknowledged having a "hit list" and officials planned to ask a judge to extend Card's hospitalization. But the court hearing never happened, and his psychiatrist felt the hospital's request would have been unsuccessful, given Card's stabilization and progress and his agreement to continue medications and participate in therapy. The psychiatrist thought he was safe to discharge after 19 days.

The report also took up New York's red flag law but didn't reach a conclusion on whether it should have been used to remove Card's weapons while he was in New York. An Army health care worker testified he didn't think he could initiate action to remove guns from someone who was not a New York resident. The report, however, noted that petitions were successfully initiated under New York's extreme risk protection law against nonresidents, though it was unclear if the law could have been enforced at the time in Maine.

Army officials conducted their own investigation after the shootings that Lt. Gen. Jody Daniels, then the chief of the Army Reserve, said found "a series of failures by unit leadership." Three Army Reserve leaders were disciplined for dereliction of duty, according to the report. The Army said in a statement Tuesday that it's "committed to reviewing the findings and implementing sound changes to prevent tragedies like this from recurring."

The commission report noted that the last call to Card's cellphone was from the Army Reserve Psychological Health Program the day before the shooting. He hung up when the caller identified herself. That same day, he also received the last of five emails from the Army Reserve Medical Management Center; he didn't respond to any of them, the report said.

After the shootings, Maine's Legislature passed new gun laws for the state, which has a tradition of hunting and firearms ownership, after the shootings. A three-day waiting period for gun purchases went into effect this month.

In addition to Wathen, the seven-member commission included two former federal prosecutors; two additional former judges, including a former member Maine's highest court; the state's former chief forensic psychologist; and a private psychiatrist who is an executive at a psychiatric hospital.

'Hitting kids should never be allowed': Illinois bans corporal punishment in all schools

By JOHN O'CONNOR AP Political Writer

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — This school year, Illinois will become just the fifth state in the nation to prohibit corporal punishment in all schools.

Legislation that Gov. JB Pritzker signed into law this month bans physical punishment in private schools while reiterating a prohibition on the practice in public schools implemented 30 years ago.

When the ban takes effect in January, Illinois will join New Jersey, Iowa, Maryland and New York in prohibiting paddling, spanking or hitting in every school.

State Rep. Margaret Croke, a Chicago Democrat, was inspired to take up the issue after an updated call by the American Association of Pediatrics to end the practice, which it says can increase behavioral or mental health problems and impair cognitive development. The association found that it's disproportionately administered to Black males and students with disabilities.

"It was an easy thing to do. I don't want a child, whether they are in private school or public school, to have a situation in which corporal punishment is being used," Croke said.

Croke was also disturbed by the Cassville School District in southwest Missouri. After dropping corporal punishment in 2001, it reinstated it two years ago as an opt-in for parents. Croke wanted to send a clear message that "it never was going to be OK to inflict harm or pain on a child."

Much of the world agrees.

The World Health Organization has decreed the practice "a violation of children's rights to respect for physical integrity and human dignity." In 1990, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

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established an obligation to "prohibit all corporal punishment of children."

The U.S. was the convention's lone holdout. Americans seemingly take a pragmatic view of the practice, said Sarah A. Font, associate professor of sociology and public policy at Penn State University.

"Even though research pretty consistently shows that corporal punishment doesn't improve kids' behavior in the long run — and it might have some negative consequences — people don't want to believe that," Font said. "People kind of rely on their own experience of, 'Well, I experienced corporal punishment. I turned out fine.' They disregard the larger body of evidence."

U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy, a Connecticut Democrat, last year introduced legislation, co-sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin of Illinois, to ban corporal punishment in any school receiving federal funds. It was assigned to a Senate committee for a public hearing in May 2023 but has seen no further action.

The U.S. Supreme Court has also rejected constitutional claims against the practice. When junior high pupils in Dade County, Florida, filed a lawsuit challenging physical discipline, the court ruled in 1977 that Eighth Amendment protection against cruel and unusual punishment was reserved for people convicted of crimes; it did not apply to classroom discipline.

Today, 17 states technically allow corporal punishment in all schools, although four prohibit its use on students with disabilities. North Carolina state law doesn't preclude it but every school district in the state blocked its use in 2018. Illinois lawmakers in 1994 stopped the practice in public schools.

Among states that have completely outlawed it, New Jersey took the unusual step of barring corporal punishment in all schools in 1867. Iowa eliminated it in private schools in 1989. Maryland and New York stopped private school use in 2023.

Private school advocates, who vehemently oppose state intervention, did not oppose the new law.

Schools in the Catholic Conference of Illinois do not use corporal punishment, executive director Bob Gilligan said.

"It's an anachronistic practice," he said.

Ralph Rivera, who represents the Illinois Coalition of Nonpublic Schools, said he's unaware of any member school that uses the practice. While the group usually opposes state meddling in its classrooms, Rivera said, objecting to a corporal punishment ban on principle is a tough sell.

"Even if they don't do it, they told us to stay out of it, because it doesn't look good when you say, 'No, we want to be able to spank children,'" Rivera said.

The law does not apply to home schools. Home-schooled students are subject to the same rules during school hours as those they face after school.

For student athletes, discipline or correction on the football field or the volleyball court would have to go beyond the pale to qualify as corporal punishment, Croke explained during floor debate on the measure last spring.

"We talked in committee about a situation in which maybe a coach said, 'Run laps,'" Croke said. "I do not believe this would apply by any means because when we tell a kid to run laps, the goal is not necessarily to inflict pain."

Legislative debate, nonetheless, included Republican concern that imposing the requirement on private schools could facilitate rules affecting, for instance, curriculum or religious teachings.

Croke, whose school-age child attends Catholic school, said her intent was not to open the door to state regulation of private education but rather to "keep kids out of harm's way."

"There's a red line there, that hitting kids should never be allowed," Croke said.

Obama made his DNC debut 20 years ago. He's returning to make the case for Kamala Harris

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

Barack Obama was days shy of his 43rd birthday and months from being elected to the U.S. Senate when he stepped onto a Boston stage at the 2004 Democratic National Convention.

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A state lawmaker from Illinois, he had an unusual profile to be a headline speaker at a presidential convention. But the self-declared "skinny kid with a funny name" captivated Democrats that night, going beyond a requisite pitch for nominee John Kerry instead to introduce the nation to his "politics of hope" and vision of "one United States of America" not defined or defeated by its differences.

Kerry lost that November to Republican President George W. Bush. But Obama etched himself into the national consciousness, beginning a remarkable rise that put him in the Oval Office barely four years later. And now, eight years removed from the presidency, Obama returns Tuesday night to the Democratic convention as the elder statesman with a different task.

Speaking in his political hometown of Chicago, the nation's first Black president will honor President Joe Biden's legacy after his exit from the campaign while making the case for another historic figure, Vice President Kamala Harris. It's poised to be a significant moment as she takes on former President Donald Trump in a matchup that features the same cultural and ideological fissures Obama warned against two decades ago.

"President Obama is still a north star in the party," said Illinois Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton, who credits the 44th president with helping her become her state's first Black woman lieutenant governor.

Besides Harris herself on Thursday, Stratton said, no voice this week is more integral to stirring Democrats, reaching independents and cajoling moderate Republicans than the former president.

"He knows how to get across the finish line," she said.

Former first lady Michelle Obama, who is popular enough in her own right that some Democrats floated her as an alternative to Biden, will be speaking Tuesday night as well.

Laying the groundwork

Barack Obama's two decades in public life have been defined by seminal speeches. His body of work features a range of tone and purpose — an array of choices as he seeks to strike the right balance for Harris as she tries to become the first woman, second Black person and first person of South Asian descent to reach the presidency.

In 2004, Obama used his invitation from Kerry and then-Democratic Chairman Terry McAuliffe to mix lofty themes with storytelling, humor and his biography as the son of a Black man from Kenya and a white woman from Kansas.

"Let's face it, my presence on this stage is pretty unlikely," Obama told delegates and a national television audience.

McAuliffe, however, remembered Obama as an obvious rising star. "I'd known him ... done events for him" as he ran for U.S. Senate, McAuliffe said in an interview. Still, no one could have foreseen Obama's performance and the reaction — because he'd never been on such a stage.

"It was an electrifying moment," McAuliffe recalled. "It obviously laid the groundwork for him to be successful, the nominee and candidate in 2008."

In 16 minutes — shorter than a typical nomination acceptance, inaugural address or State of the Union — Obama told his origin story, framed the 2004 election and talked up Kerry and his running mate, John Edwards. Obama was short on policy, but his sweeping indictment of divisive politics struck a chord.

"There is not a liberal America and a conservative America; there is the United States of America. There is not a Black America and a White America and Latino America and Asian America; there's the United States of America," he said in perhaps the most well-remembered passage. "Do we participate in a politics of cynicism or do we participate in a politics of hope?"

Two-and-a-half-years later, Obama reprised that theme when he launched his presidential campaign before thousands of supporters gathered outside the Illinois capital of Springfield. His campaign motto: Hope and Change.

Pennsylvania Lt. Gov. Austin Davis, the first Black person to occupy his office in the commonwealth, recalled watching that winter scene as a high school student. "That was the moment that clicked with me," Davis said and, later on, "helped me to believe that I could achieve these things that I've achieved."

A different tone

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If idealistic, even nebulous themes brought Obama to the White House door, it was bare-knuckled politics and ice-water realism that got him through it.

In March 2008, then-candidate Obama was being pilloried for his friendship with his Black pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, who had a record of critiquing the nation's history of white supremacy. At issue, in part, was a video clip of Wright declaring "God, Damn America" from the pulpit of Obama's home church.

This time, soaring rhetoric wouldn't do. Obama hand wrote a nearly 38-minute address explaining his relationship with Wright, with the context of U.S. history and race relations in the early 21st century.

"I can no more disown him than I can disown the Black community," Obama said, while rejecting Wright's "view that sees white racism as endemic and that elevates what is wrong with America above all that we know is right with America."

The speech, titled "A More Perfect Union," was rife with nuance — a risk in presidential politics. But it worked.

Obama's convention address that August certainly featured his characteristic promises of hope and change. The venue and crowd — 84,000 people in the Denver Broncos' football stadium — affirmed his celebrity status. Another takeaway, though, was Obama's blitz on Republican nominee John McCain. Having spent weeks resisting calls from Democrats to go after the Vietnam war hero, Obama hammered the Arizona senator as a rubber-stamp for the outgoing Bush administration, out-of-step with most Americans and weak on the world stage.

"You know, John McCain likes to say that he'll follow (9/11 mastermind Osama) bin Laden to the gates of Hell, but he won't even follow him to the cave where he lives," Obama said at one point.

It would preview Obama's most unsparing speech, his 2020 appearance at Democrats' virtual convention. Speaking on behalf of Biden, his onetime vice president, Obama framed Trump as fundamentally unfit for office. It was the most scathing indictment of a sitting president by one of his predecessors in modern U.S. history.

"This administration has shown it will tear our democracy down if that's what it takes to win," Obama said, almost five months before Trump's supporters attacked the U.S. Capitol in an effort to prevent Biden's certification as the 2020 election winner.

Weight of history

McAuliffe said Obama's role Tuesday, in part, is to reinforce the message of multiple presidents: Biden spoke Monday and President Bill Clinton speaks Wednesday.

"They're going to talk about what happens when you get a Democratic president," McAuliffe said, especially on the economy. It's Obama's turn, McAuliffe said, to join Clinton as "explainer in chief" — a nod to Clinton's 2012 convention speech when Obama was seeking reelection. The idea, McAuliffe said, is to set up Harris as the natural Democratic successor.

For her part, Stratton said she expects to see the man she has seen connect with voters individually and en masse. A volunteer on Obama's 2012 reelection campaign, she remembers the then-president visiting his campaign's Hyde Park office in Chicago on Election Day.

"He was funny and down to earth" as he shook hands with volunteers and then began calling voters himself, she recalled.

Four years earlier, Stratton and her four daughters were among the throngs in Chicago's Grant Park for Obama's first presidential victory speech. "Strangers were hugging and crying," she said. "We saw this Black family come out, knowing they were headed to the White House. It was a remarkable moment."

On Tuesday, she said, there is space for Obama to bring heat on Trump, talk directly to American voters and honor the magnitude of Harris' moment.

"He was a historic candidate and president. He knows what this is like," Stratton said. "There will be this sweet moment of the first Black president passing the baton."

Prospect of player pay another wrinkle for HBCU schools, where big NIL deals still taking root

By JOHN ZENOR AP Sports Writer

Marc Smith was relaxing in his basement when he got an alert on his phone. An athlete at his alma mater, Grambling State, had posted on social media about not having enough food and needing help.

That incident led Smith to form the Icon 1901 Collective in April 2022 to help Grambling athletes land paid endorsement deals at the school best known for iconic football coach Eddie Robinson. Smith searched and couldn't find a single historically Black college or university with a collective focused on name, image or likeness compensation so he expanded Icon 1901 to represent HBCU athletes elsewhere as well.

"These kids want to be inclusive in the NIL space and many of the universities don't have the resources," Smith said.

Outside the biggest and wealthiest athletic programs, the financial strain of offering robust NIL options to college athletes is a constant concern and is often especially pronounced at HBCUs. The four major HBCU conferences recently agreed to work together to increase the value of HBCUs and send more athletes to the pros, but now there is a new wrinkle.

The mammoth \$2.8 billion antitrust settlement agreed to by the NCAA and the biggest conferences in the nation includes the prospect of schools paying athletes directly starting as early as 2025. Revenue sharing is a new and daunting factor for all schools with modest resources, including HBCUs.

"There may be some questions about how are they going to be able to navigate this, but if past experience is any indication they will find a will and a way based on alumni coming together to figure out a way to push these institutions forward," said Texas Southern Professor J. Kenyatta Cavil, who studies HBCU athletics.

Less money to work with

Only a handful of Black colleges have NIL collectives to help arrange deals for athletes, though efforts have grown in the past year or so as alumni have rallied and in the wake of Deion Sanders' football coaching tenure at Jackson State.

Many HBCU schools don't rake in nearly as much money from sports as their Championship Subdivision peers. Out of 64 FCS schools, none reported less total athletic revenue in 2023 than Mississippi Valley State's \$4.8 million, according to Knight-Newhouse. Eight of the bottom 11 were HBCUs.

Alcorn State, like Grambling and Mississippi Valley part of the Southwestern Athletic Conference, reported \$7.9 million. That compares to James Madison's \$68 million at the top of the list (not accounting Ivy League schools).

Big picture

SWAC Commissioner Charles McClelland said he doesn't know what the athletics landscape will look like down the road. But he knows big-money schools and conferences don't either, and that whatever happens will ultimately trickle down to his league and the rest of the FCS.

The SWAC and Southeastern Conference are both headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama. That affords McClelland and SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey chances to meet and discuss the potential changes.

"One thing he said to me, he said, 'Charles, we have the same problems. There might just be differences in zeroes at the end of those problems. We're all in this thing together,'" McClelland said. "We have to share ideas. And what better opportunity to learn and grow than to share ideas with the SEC from the Southwestern Athletic Conference standpoint?"

Dollars and departures

Prairie View A&M football coach Bubba McDowell said his SWAC program lost a half-dozen top players because of NIL money. His school didn't have it, others did. He is leery of what revenue sharing might do to recruiting and retention of players at HBCUs.

"It's going to hurt big time," McDowell said. "That's what these kids are looking for and that's what society has done for these young men. I'm not against that. I've said from Day 1, if we're going to do this thing, let's do it the right way. We just still haven't figured out how to do it the right way."

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McDowell and his SWAC peers are realistic. Unless their name is Sanders, now at Colorado, top recruits were likely headed elsewhere anyway.

Now they are also more likely to develop and then lose players who are missed or not recruited by bigger programs out of high school. Alabama State coach Eddie Robinson Jr. (no relation to the former Grambling coach) went from a walk-on with the Hornets to a second-round NFL draft pick at the same school.

The Hornets' leading receiver, Kisean Johnson, left for Western Kentucky after last season.

"We're still looking for the same type of kid," Robinson said. "It's just a matter of can we hold on to them once they develop into that player. That's kind of the part that you don't like."

Rich on tradition

There's no denying the tradition and passionate fan bases of HBCUs. The Bayou Classic between Grambling and Southern drew nearly 65,000 fans to the Superdome in New Orleans last season. The Magic City Classic pitting Alabama State and Alabama A&M brought 52,000-plus to Legion Field in Birmingham.

"I think once you become part of the HBCU family you're going to go to all of those big games and it's more than just, 'I went 2,000 miles away from home, I got a big check and then I never go back to the school again,'" Robinson said. "Once you start coming to Alabama State, you come to the Magic City Classic, you're going to be 50 years old coming back to the Magic City Classic. It's going to be part of what you do."

FCS challenges

Black colleges are hardly alone in their uncertainty about how to handle sharing revenue with athletes. Athletic directors below the Power Four leagues are grappling with three major financial topics: Less annual money from the NCAA because of the damages portion of the settlement; establishing the best options for a limited donor base so their school has a shot at landing athletes with NIL deals; and figuring out how much they can take on should their school decide to pay athletes.

"As a general sense, FCS football programs are struggling to retain talent because they do not have established NIL collectives or partners," said Blake Lawrence, CEO of Opendorse.com, an NIL marketplace. "I think there's a growing need for those programs in the HBCU and beyond to have a real answer to, how do we retain talent by leveraging NIL? It will become a growing need."

HBCU teams and collectives

Opendorse partners with dozens of schools across all three NCAA divisions that have or are trying to develop NIL collectives. That group includes HBCUs Jackson State, Delaware State and Howard.

The Icon Collective's web site reads: "For years, the Black athlete has built wealth with their skills on the field and some have written their way into history via their universities and on the national level."

Smith said he and his team aren't trying to make HBCU athletes wealthy. He said his collective represents some 350 athletes from 45 Black colleges, just under half of the 107 total, according to the Labor Department. He said the deals typically range from \$500 to \$1,000 per athlete and often run for 3-6 months.

"We're not here to make millionaires or make school free for kids. I'm here to lessen the burden," Smith said.

His son, Jayden, landed a \$20,000 deal with math tutoring company Mathnasium in October 2023. Jayden Smith plays baseball for Xavier University of Louisiana, an NAIA school, and does things like promotional videos on YouTube.

Grambling basketball player Jimel Cofer received a deal with Buffalo Wild Wings after his layup sent the Tigers into overtime in an eventual win over Montana State in a First Four game of the NCAA Tournament. Marc Smith said the deal was worth \$5,000.

Krispy Kreme locations in Tallahassee, Florida, have offered a "Dean Dozen" special named after Florida A&M running back Kelvin Dean, who was the Celebration Bowl offensive MVP.

Players' perspective

Alabama State quarterback Andrew Body, a Texas Southern transfer, said he had some interest from Bowl Subdivision schools while in the transfer portal. Going to those might have meant some NIL money, but he said he is being patient and focusing on a potential pro career, saying "getting paid in college right now kind of takes a little hunger away from your game."

"It's tough to compete with (NIL money) but the thing I think the kids are really missing on most is, if

you do what you've got to do on the field, some type of connections, revenue, whatever it may be are going to come your way," Body said.

Grambling State quarterback Myles Crawley, the preseason SWAC offensive player of the year, said in July that he didn't have a NIL deal but noted "there's nothing like the HBCU experience."

"I grew up around the HBCU coaching so I always said I wanted to start at the HBCU and finish," Crawley said. "I'm building a culture for the next guy to understand that they can make it from an HBCU. The money might be different but as far as culture, there's nothing like HBCUs."

Ohio lawsuit seeks rewrite of redistricting ballot language dubbed 'biased, inaccurate, deceptive'

By JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The Ohio Supreme Court should step in on behalf of voters and order a rewrite of ballot language for a fall redistricting measure that "may be the most biased, inaccurate, deceptive, and unconstitutional" the state has ever seen, argues a lawsuit filed late Monday.

Citizens Not Politicians, the campaign advancing November's Issue 1, and two individuals brought the promised litigation against the Ohio Ballot Board and Republican Secretary of State Frank LaRose, the state's elections chief and the panel's chair.

"This Court's intervention is needed to ensure that Ohio voters are provided with the truthful and impartial ballot title and ballot language required by law so that they can exercise their right to determine for themselves whether to amend the Ohio Constitution," the lawsuit says.

The proposed amendment, advanced by a robust bipartisan coalition, calls for replacing the state's troubled existing political map-making system, which produced seven sets of Statehouse and congressional maps that were declared unconstitutionally gerrymandered to favor Ohio's ruling Republicans. It would replace the existing redistricting commission — made up of four lawmakers, the governor, the auditor and the secretary of state — with a 15-person citizen-led commission of Republicans, Democrats and independents. Members would be selected by retired judges.

At issue in this case is ballot language the ballot board approved Friday along party lines. Among other things, it would describe the proposed constitutional amendment, which seeks to "ban partisan gerrymandering," as creating a 15-member Citizens Redistricting Commission that would be "required to gerrymander" Ohio's legislative and congressional districts.

Republican state Sen. Theresa Gavarone, who moved to add that particular phrasing, said the context met the Oxford English Dictionary definition of "gerrymander."

In its lawsuit, Citizens Not Politicians said the approved ballot language "gets it entirely backward," since their proposal bans partisan manipulation of the maps. "It does so by ensuring that the plans adopted by the Commission seek to approximate the statewide partisan preferences of Ohioans while drawing geographically contiguous districts that reflect communities of interest," the lawsuit says,

Redistricting is the process of dividing a state into new districts for conducting elections, typically to reflect updated population figures from the decennial U.S. Census. Gerrymandering is defined as: "to manipulate the boundaries of an electoral constituency so as to favor one party or class."

The litigation alleges the gerrymandering language and numerous other phrases contained in the 900-word ballot description violate provisions of the Ohio Constitution that require ballot language to properly identify what is being proposed and prohibit wording that may "mislead, deceive, or defraud the voters."

Other than the change advanced by Gavarone, it was developed by LaRose and his staff in what he has described as a painstaking process aimed at accuracy and fairness.

The lawsuit calls it "an absolute fusillade of falsehoods." It contends that the wording misdescribes the partisan affiliation requirements of commission members, inaccurately suggests the amendment would limit Ohioans' rights to "freely express their public opinions," and falsely states that it would prohibit "any citizen" from filing a lawsuit against the plan "in any court."

"Every single paragraph of the ballot language includes misleading and biased language that further serves to sway voters against the Amendment," it states.

The ballot board under LaRose has faced several recent lawsuits against its ballot language, alleging the wording was misleading or defective.

Last August, the Republican-majority court invalidated a portion of the wording approved to describe a constitutional amendment guaranteeing access to abortion and other forms of reproductive care — though it let stand much of the challenged phrasing. During an unsuccessful U.S. Senate run last year, LaRose revealed that he had consulted prominent anti-abortion groups while drafting the language.

In June 2023, justices ordered the panel to reword its description of a divisive August constitutional amendment that would have made amending Ohio's constitution harder.

Both LaRose and Gavarone left Friday's ballot board without speaking to reporters. Instead, they recorded a 35-minute podcast with Republican Ohio Senate President Matt Huffman's communications chief, John Fortney, defending the ballot board's actions and blasting the fall proposal — which they have dubbed "Political Outcomes Over People." — as undemocratic, overbroad and unwieldy.

Amid legal clashes, Ohio's 2022 elections went forward under unconstitutional maps.

That year, Republicans won 10 of Ohio's 15 congressional seats under the unconstitutional U.S. House map, though Democrats netted several notable wins. The disputed Statehouse maps yielded even larger Republican supermajorities.

LaRose pointed to those election results during the podcast as evidence Ohio's system is working.

"Listen, when the voters of Ohio have created a supermajority of Republicans in the House and a supermajority of Republicans in the Senate, and they've given every statewide office to Republicans, I think they're telling us something," LaRose said on the show. "I think they're telling us they prefer conservative public policy and they prefer us to operate in that manner."

Hammerheads (the garden variety) pose a threat to earthworms

By JESSICA DAMIANO Associated Press

Earthworms, as we know, are garden champions, cleaning the soil by eating their weight in organic matter every day and aerating it as they wriggle around, creating tunnels to ease root growth. They also improve soil moisture, remove fungal spores and stimulate microbial activity, which benefits plant health.

But there's another weird worm out there that's toxic, deadly to our beloved earthworms and nearly impossible to kill: Allow me to introduce you to the hammerhead worm.

As its name would imply, the narrow, snakelike flatworm has a head built like that of a hammerhead shark. And it's hardly a newcomer, believed to have hitched a ride to the U.S. from Southeast Asia with a shipment of plants around 1900.

Usually 2 to 3 inches in length with vertical stripes running the length of their bodies, the invertebrates can grow up to 15 inches long. And they're a force to be reckoned with.

Although they are ravenous earthworm hunters, hammerheads are coated in the same paralytic neurotoxin present in pufferfish, which keeps birds and other insects from preying on them. This gives them a decisive advantage in the food chain.

That chemical coating is toxic to pets and would likely irritate your skin if you were to pick up a worm. To add insult to injury, their bodies contain parasitic nematodes, tiny roundworms that feed on plants and can parasitize humans, animals and beneficial insects.

As carnivorous cannibals, the worms eat snails, slugs and each other (no love lost there), as well as earthworms, the loss of which would pose a catastrophic threat to farms and gardens.

Hammerhead worms are hermaphroditic, so they reproduce without a mate. But that's not the only way they multiply: Their favorite party trick is detaching a portion of their rear ends and leaving them on plants, where, within 10 days -- presto, chango! -- those little butts grow heads and become offspring. If you were to chop a hammerhead worm to bits, each would grow into a new hammerhead worm. Don't do it.

The slithering pests love heat and humidity, so they initially made their homes in Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Texas. But greenhouses are also hot and humid, so the worms have been inadvertently transported on nursery plants to gardens in Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington, D.C. They've also been found in Hawaii and Ontario, Canada.

Preferring to hide under leaf litter, shrubs, rocks and logs, the worms can go largely unnoticed. But if you spot one, don't squash or cut it (that would just make more). The only way to kill hammerhead worms is to pour salt or vinegar on them.

August's supermoon is the first of four lunar spectacles

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Monday's supermoon is the first of four this year.

During a supermoon, the full moon inches a little closer than usual to Earth. A supermoon isn't bigger, but it can appear that way in the night sky, although scientists say the difference can be barely perceptible.

September's supermoon will coincide with a partial lunar eclipse. October's will be the year's closest approach, and November's will round out the year.

More a popular term than a scientific one, a supermoon occurs when a full lunar phase syncs up with an especially close swing around Earth. This usually happens only three or four times a year and consecutively, given the moon's constantly shifting, oval-shaped orbit.

Kenyan man being held over the discovery of dismembered female bodies escapes from police custody

By EVELYNE MUSAMBI Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — A suspect who police said confessed to killing 42 women and was being detained over the discovery of dismembered bodies in Kenya's capital has escaped from police custody, officials said Tuesday.

Mohamed Amin, the head of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, said Collins Jumaisi Khalusha escaped along with 12 other inmates of Eritrean nationality who had been arrested for being in the country illegally.

Acting police inspector general Gilbert Masengeli said disciplinary measures have been taken against eight officers, including the area and station commanders and officers who were on duty.

"Our preliminary investigations indicate that the escape was aided by insiders considering that officers were deployed accordingly to guard the station," he said.

A police report said the inmates escaped early Tuesday morning after they cut through wire mesh in the cell and scaled the perimeter wall. The escape was discovered as breakfast was being taken into the cell.

Khalusha, 33, was being detained at the police station after a court allowed detectives seven more days to investigate his alleged crimes before charging him.

Khalusha was arrested in July after 10 bodies and several body parts were found wrapped in plastic sacks in the Kware area of Nairobi.

Police said Khalusha confessed to killing 42 women, including his wife.

"This was a high-value suspect who was to face serious charges. We are investigating the incident and will take action accordingly," Amin said.

Khalusha's lawyer, John Maina Ndegwa, told journalists his client was tortured and forced to confess and maintained he was not guilty.

Ndegwa told the AP that he last spoke to Khalusha on Friday when he was presented in court.

"I'm also confounded by the news," he said.

The police station from which the suspects escaped was cordoned off with crime scene tape and senior police officers visited it on Tuesday afternoon.

Two other suspects who were arrested after being found with cellphones belonging to some of the deceased women are to return to court next Monday.

Police in July said the bodies were discovered after relatives of one missing woman said they had a dream in which she told them to search in a quarry.

The relatives asked a local diver to help and he discovered the bodies wrapped in sacks. Six bodies were identified after DNA tests, but several body parts remain unidentified.

Joe Biden's exit, talk of the glass ceiling, a nod to Gaza protesters. Takeaways from DNC's Day 1

By WILL WEISSERT and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — The Democratic National Convention's first night showcased speeches from the last Democrat to lose to Donald Trump and the last one to beat him.

Hillary Clinton spoke hopefully of finally breaking the "glass ceiling" to elect a female president. Joe Biden laced into Trump and directly acknowledged the concerns of protesters against the war in Gaza who demonstrated a few blocks from the convention hall.

Here are some takeaways from the first night of the convention.

Biden begins long political exit

President Joe Biden wrapped up the convention's opening night by beginning his long political farewell with an address that both framed his own legacy and signaled he was ready to start ceding control of the party to Vice President Kamala Harris.

He took the stage to a long, raucous ovation from delegates hoisting "We love Joe" placards and told them in turn, "I love you!" After the affectionate opening, Biden spent long stretches of his 50-minute speech hitting Trump, returning to a key theme of the reelection campaign he's no longer running.

Biden ticked through many of his administration's achievements, including a major public works package and climate program, and shared the credit with Harris. He said picking Harris as his running mate was the best decision he ever made and promised to be the "best volunteer" that Harris and running mate Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz have ever seen.

His closing message to those still listening as the convention stretched late into the night: "I gave my best to you for 50 years."

A surprise Harris appearance to pay tribute to Biden

The vice president made an unscheduled appearance onstage to pay tribute to Biden ahead of his own address to the convention. She told the president, "Thank you for your historic leadership, for your lifetime of service to our nation, and for all you'll continue to do."

On a night meant to honor the president who stepped aside to make way for Harris, the vice president added, "We are forever grateful to you."

Gaza gets little attention inside DNC hall — except from Biden

Thousands of marchers churned through Chicago's streets protesting U.S. support for Israel during the war in Gaza. But inside the convention hall, the combustible issue went largely unmentioned until Biden got to the microphone.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez got cheers when she praised Harris for working "tirelessly to get a cease-fire in Gaza and get the hostages home." Sen. Raphael Warnock of Georgia made a brief allusion to the conflict.

A handful of delegates who ran on an "uncommitted" ticket protesting Biden's position on the war unfurled a banner during his speech that read "Stop Arming Israel." But it was blocked by supporters waving Biden signs before it was wrestled away and the lights over that section of the audience were shut off.

Biden himself addressed the issue head-on, saying he'd keep working to "end the war in Gaza and bring peace and security to the Middle East."

"Those protesters out in the streets have a point," Biden said. "A lot of innocent people are being killed,

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on both sides.”

The crowd cheered, and for a moment the war didn't seem like it was dividing the party at all.

Clinton revives talk of breaking that 'glass ceiling'

Clinton was greeted with wild and sustained applause that lasted for more than two minutes before she quieted the crowd. She delivered a fiery speech hoping that Harris could do what she could not — become the first woman president by beating Trump.

Clinton evoked her 2016 concession speech by referencing all the “cracks in the glass ceiling” that she and her voters had achieved. And she painted a vision of Harris “on the other side of that glass ceiling” taking the oath of office as president.

She closed her speech with a striking desire for someone who's stood at the pinnacle of American politics and power: “I want my grandchildren and their grandchildren to know I was here at this moment. That we were here and that we were with Kamala Harris every step of the way.”

Clinton dipped into traditional political attacks in her speech, including mocking Trump's criminal record. That led to chants of “lock him up” — mirroring the ones that Trump's supporters directed at Clinton in 2016.

Tracing a line from Jesse Jackson to Kamala Harris

An early theme of the evening was celebrating the Rev. Jesse Jackson, a longtime civil rights leader in Chicago and former presidential candidate in 1984 and 1988. Many Democrats credit him with blazing a trail that helped Barack Obama win the White House in 2008 and Kamala Harris become the first woman of color nominated for the presidency.

Jackson was saluted from the stage by several speakers, including Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson and California Rep. Maxine Waters. There was a video montage of Jackson's career and legacy that played before the 82-year-old Jackson himself came to the stage in a wheelchair, thrusting his arms skyward and grinning. Jackson has been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

During the 1984 Democratic convention in San Francisco, Jackson gave a speech declaring that America is “like a quilt: Many patches, many pieces, many colors, many sizes, all woven and held together by a common thread.” The address became known as the “Rainbow Coalition” speech, and Jackson used momentum from it to seek the Democratic nomination again in 1988.

Harris has called Jackson “one of America's greatest patriots.”

Remember COVID? Democrats don't want voters — or Trump — to forget

Democrats opted to shine the convention spotlight on the harrowing subject of the coronavirus pandemic.

It was a reflection of Democratic frustration at how Trump has portrayed his tenure in office as a golden age for the country, even though hundreds of thousands of Americans died of COVID-19 during the last year of his term.

There are plenty of risks for Democrats in hammering the pandemic. Even more people died of the virus during Biden's presidency than during Trump's, voters have shown an eagerness to move on and some preventative measures championed by Democrats — like school closures and masking — are not popular in retrospect.

Still, the lineup of early speakers focused on Trump's performance during the pandemic. Minnesota Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan recalled how her brother was the second person in Tennessee to die of the disease and how she couldn't visit him or hold a memorial service. Rep. Lauren Underwood of Illinois, a nurse, said of Trump: “He took the COVID crisis and turned it into a catastrophe. We can never ever let him be our president again.”

Rep. Robert Garcia, whose mother and stepfather died of the disease in 2020, recalled Trump's missteps and concluded with one of the slogans of Harris' young campaign: “We are not going back.”

Democrats one-up Republicans on labor

Trump's convention last month featured a rare appearance from a union leader at such a GOP event: Teamsters President Sean O'Brien. That's reflective of how Trump's populism has cut into Democrats' advantage with union households.

In that speech, O'Brien did not endorse Trump. But he criticized both major political parties for not doing enough to help working people.

Democrats didn't invite O'Brien to their convention, but they countered with a half-dozen other union leaders onstage Monday. And then Shawn Fain, head of the United Auto Workers, led a blistering chant of "Trump's a scab!" while wearing a red T-shirt emblazoned with those words.

Fain noted that Biden visited a UAW picket line last year and, when autoworkers struck in 2019, Harris, not Trump, walked the picket lines. "Donald Trump is all talk and Kamala Harris walks the walk," Fain said.

Same-sex couples and LGBTQ+ activists rally in Nepal's capital during the annual Pride parade

By BINAJ GURUBACHARYA Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — Hundreds of LGBTQ+ people and their supporters rallied in Nepal's capital Tuesday during the annual Pride parade, the first since gay couples were able to register same-sex marriages officially in the Himalayan nation following a Supreme Court order in Nov 2023.

The annual event brings together the sexual minority community and their supporters in Kathmandu during the Gai Jatra festival.

Tuesday's rally was participated by a government minister, diplomats and officials, which began at the city's tourist hub and went around its main streets.

"Gai Jatra festival is a festival that is a long tradition that has been carried for years and we all are here to help preserve and continue the tradition, and as a sexual minority are doing our part to save the tradition. We also celebrate the day as a pride parade," said Bhumika Shrestha, a gay rights activist who was at the parade.

The Gai Jatra festival is celebrated to remember family members who have passed away during the year but has long had colorful parades that brought in sexual minorities to join the parade.

After years of struggle, gay couples were able to register same-sex marriages for the first time in Nov 2023 following a Supreme Court order that directed the government to make arrangements for the registration of marriages for same-sex couples.

Sexual minority rights activists have long sought to amend laws to permit same-sex marriage and end provisions that limit marriage to heterosexual couples.

Nepal has undergone a transformation since a court decision in 2007 asked the government to make changes in favor of LGBTQ+ people. People who do not identify as female or male are now able to choose "third gender" on their passports and other government documents. The constitution, adopted in 2015, also explicitly states that there can be no discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Today in History: August 21, Nat Turner launches rebellion

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 21, the 234th day of 2024. There are 132 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Aug. 21, 1831, Nat Turner launched a violent slave rebellion in Virginia, resulting in the deaths of at least 55 white people; scores of Black people were killed in retribution in the aftermath of the rebellion, and Turner was later executed.

Also on this date:

In 1858, the first of seven debates took place between Illinois senatorial contenders Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas.

In 1911, Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" was stolen from the Louvre Museum in Paris. (It was recovered two years later in Italy.)

In 1944, the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union and China opened talks at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington that helped pave the way for establishment of the United Nations.

In 1959, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed an executive order making Hawaii the 50th state.

In 1983, Filipino politician Benigno Aquino Jr. was assassinated as he exited an aircraft at Manila Inter-

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national Airport. (His widow, Corazon Aquino, would become president of the Philippines three years later.)

In 1991, a hardline coup against Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev collapsed in the face of a popular uprising led by Russian Federation President Boris N. Yeltsin.

In 1992, an 11-day siege began at the cabin of white separatist Randy Weaver in Ruby Ridge, Idaho, as government agents tried to arrest Weaver for failing to appear in court on charges of selling two illegal sawed-off shotguns; on the first day of the siege, Weaver's teenage son, Samuel, and Deputy U.S. Marshal William Degan were killed.

In 1993, in a serious setback for NASA, engineers lost contact with the Mars Observer spacecraft as it was about to reach the red planet on a \$980 million mission.

In 2000, rescue efforts to reach the sunken Russian nuclear submarine Kursk ended with divers announcing none of the 118 sailors had survived.

In 2010, Iranian and Russian engineers began loading fuel into Iran's first nuclear power plant, which Moscow promised to safeguard to prevent material at the site from being used in any potential weapons production.

In 2015, a trio of Americans, U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Spencer Stone, National Guardsman Alek Skarlatos and college student Anthony Sadler, and a British businessman, Chris Norman, tackled and disarmed a Moroccan gunman on a high-speed train between Amsterdam and Paris.

In 2017, Americans witnessed their first full-blown coast-to-coast solar eclipse since World War I, with eclipse-watchers gathering along a path of totality extending 2,600 miles across the continent

In 2018, Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer and fixer, pleaded guilty to campaign-finance violations and other charges; Cohen said Trump directed him to arrange the payment of hush money to porn star Stormy Daniels and former Playboy model Karen McDougal to fend off damage to his White House bid. (Trump was found guilty of 34 felony counts of falsifying business records related to the payments in May 2024.)

In 2020, a former police officer who became known as the Golden State Killer, Joseph James DeAngelo, told victims and family members in a Sacramento courtroom that he was "truly sorry" before he was sentenced to multiple life prison sentences for a decade-long string of rapes and murders.

Today's Birthdays: Rock and Roll Hall of Famer James Burton is 85. Singer Jackie DeShannon is 83. Film director Peter Weir is 80. Football Hall of Famer Willie Lanier is 79. Actor Loretta Devine is 75. Two-time Heisman Trophy winner Archie Griffin is 70. Actor Kim Cattrall is 68. Former NFL quarterback Jim McMahon is 65. Rock musician Serj Tankian (System of a Down) is 57. Actor Carrie-Anne Moss is 57. Google co-founder Sergei Brin is 51. Singer Kelis (kuh-LEES') is 45. TV personality Brody Jenner is 41. Olympic gold medal sprinter Usain (yoo-SAYN') Bolt is 38. Country singer Kacey Musgraves is 36. Soccer player Robert Lewandowski is 36. Actor Hayden Panettiere (pan'-uh-tee-EHR') is 35. Comedian-singer-filmmaker Bo Burnham is 34.