

Groton Daily Independent

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Friday, Sept. 13

School Breakfast: Breakfast cookie.
School Lunch: Pizza crunchers, peas.
Senior Menu: Taco salad, mexican rice with beans, breadstick, cherry fluff.
Football at Milbank, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 14

7th/8th at Matchbox Tournament, Aberdeen
Soccer hosts Vermillion: Girls at 1 p.m., Boys at 2:30 p.m.

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



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

Sunday, Sept. 15

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; choir, 6 p.m.

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

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

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

Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.

United Methodist: Conde Worship, 8:30 a.m.; Groton worship, 10:30 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday School Kick-off event, 9 a.m.; Third Graders receive Bibles, 10:3 a.m.; Picnic potluck, 11:30 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.

Boeing Workers Strike

Boeing's 33,000 production workers voted overwhelmingly to strike yesterday, with over 90% of members rejecting the company's proposal of a 25% wage hike over four years. The work stoppage is a blow to new CEO Kelly Ortberg, brought on last month to restore faith in the company amid a series of safety lapses.

While Boeing's proposed pay hike fell below the 40% production workers called for, the union had recommended workers accept the deal. In announcing vote results, however, the union characterized the work stoppage as an unfair labor strike, citing alleged safety violations on the production floor.

The strike, which began overnight, is expected to be costly. Boeing is the US' single largest exporter by dollar value, generating close to \$80B in revenue each year in commercial and military aircraft, weapons, and related products and services. When production workers last went on strike in 2008, the 52-day work stoppage cost the company an estimated \$100M per day in deferred revenue.

Historic Spacewalk

SpaceX's Polaris Dawn mission made history yesterday as billionaire Jared Isaacman and SpaceX engineer Sarah Gillis completed the first private spacewalk. The pair exited their Crew Dragon capsule roughly 450 miles above Earth in new SpaceX-designed spacesuits.

Before the walk, the crew underwent a two-day pre-breathe process—breathing pure oxygen to purge nitrogen from the bloodstream—while decreasing cabin pressure to reduce the risk of decompression sickness. All four crew members wore spacesuits, which operate at a lower pressure than the spacecraft's interior, and the entire capsule needed to be depressurized as it lacks an airlock. The mission is also conducting 36 scientific experiments from 31 institutions, including studies on radiation exposure, motion sickness, and eye health. Many aim to contribute to NASA's Human Research Program and provide insights into deeper space travel.

OpenAI o1

Artificial intelligence startup OpenAI released its latest flagship large language model yesterday, dubbed OpenAI o1, its first major product debut since the May reveal of GPT-4o. The new model and a more cost-effective, limited version are currently only in preview for paying users and have a weekly message limit.

OpenAI o1—previously hyped as the Strawberry model—reportedly differs from other models by the strength of its "reasoning" capability. OpenAI says the model breaks down queries into discrete steps before offering an answer, privately refining the response. The model was trained via reinforcement learning, an approach that teaches the system via rewards and penalties. The text-based model surpassed GPT-4o on math and coding abilities and cannot currently access the web.

Over 200 million people use ChatGPT products monthly, and the company boasts nearly 60% of the market share in AI search. The product debuts as OpenAI announced a new fundraising round valuing it at \$150B Wednesday.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The 76th Primetime Emmy Awards air Sunday (8 pm ET, ABC); see predictions.

Tuesday's presidential debate hauls in 67 million viewers, a 31% increase over June's debate between President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump.

Harvey Weinstein indicted on additional sex crimes charges in New York; Weinstein is awaiting a retrial for his 2020 conviction overturned in April.

Las Vegas Aces' A'ja Wilson breaks all-time WNBA single-season scoring record, topping the mark set last year by Seattle Storms' Jewell Loyd.

Science & Technology

US health officials approve hearing assistance feature for Apple's AirPods Pro 2, making them the first over-the-counter hearing aid software device.

Physicists demonstrate ability to control the wobble of the nucleus of a single atom; technique may allow storage of quantum information.

Hardt Hyperloop successfully tests hyperloop train concept in Europe; train was levitated and launched through a roughly 1,400-foot-long airless tunnel.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +0.8%, Dow +0.6%, Nasdaq +1.0%); S&P 500 posts four-day winning streak.

US average 30-year fixed-rate mortgage falls to lowest level since February 2023 at 6.2%.

European Central Bank cuts interest rates for second time in three months, lowering key rate to 3.5% from 3.75%.

Amazon increases pay for contracted delivery drivers amid renewed unionization effort; national average earnings for drivers to rise roughly 7% year-over-year.

Politics & World Affairs

Former President Donald Trump rules out second debate with Vice President Kamala Harris.

Springfield, Ohio, receives bomb threats, closes government buildings after unverified claims in the city about Haitian migrants eating locals' pets.

New York City police commissioner Edward Caban resigns after federal agents seize his phone in ongoing criminal probe into members of Mayor Eric Adams' (D) administration; probe reportedly tied to corruption in nightclub enforcement.

Idaho Supreme Court rules man accused of murdering four University of Idaho students in 2022 will stand trial in Boise, moving case out of Latah County—where the crime occurred—over concerns of pre-trial prejudice in the community.

Hot Springs takes next steps in push for prosperity

Bart Pfankuch

South Dakota News Watch

HOT SPRINGS, S.D. – Patrick Richards grew up near this Southern Black Hills city and has now – at age 43 – returned to settle down and raise a family.

He and his wife, Alison, were living in Las Vegas until recently when they decided the Hot Springs area would be a better place to raise their 3-year-old son, Dexter, and any other siblings who may come along.

And yet, the couple thinks the city could be improved and be even more accommodating to young parents – and health nuts – like themselves if it had a trail system that allowed for longer rides or walks through the entire community.

“They need more access to hiking and biking trails and a better trail system overall,” Alison Richards said as the family played at School Street Park. “They could get more people outside to really enjoy Hot Springs.”

That kind of grassroots input is likely to arise again as the Hot Springs community undergoes an upcoming resident survey aimed at creating a long-range plan for growth and improvement.

Hot Springs agreed to be part of a pilot project called Engage South Dakota, which involves South Dakota News Watch and the Cheisman Center for Democracy at the University of South Dakota using journalism and community engagement to identify the community’s top challenges and potential solutions.

The effort is largely based on successful masterplanning efforts across the state in Watertown.

Hot Springs ready to learn, and to grow

Based on interviews conducted by News Watch with leaders and residents of Hot Springs, many in this city of 3,600 people about 50 miles south of Rapid City said the time is right and the will is there to undertake the survey and ultimately implement good ideas that rise to the surface.

“I wonder sometimes if I actually have a good sense of the community, so I’d be very interested to see what a survey comes back with,” said Mayor Bob Nelson, 70, now in his third two-year term as mayor. “We are seeing much younger folks in town, and they’re going to be the future as a community. And we need to understand what it is they’re looking for. And how we might be able to provide that?”



Nestled among the ridges of the southern Black Hills, on Sept. 9, 2024, the city of Hot Springs, S.D., has numerous scenic vistas within its borders. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch / South Dakota News Watch)

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The city has operated under a cloud of uncertainty for nearly a decade over the potential closure of its Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Hot Springs also faces some demographic issues that could make it more difficult to foster growth and to attract younger residents.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau:

- One-third, or 34%, of Hot Springs' population is 65 or older, nearly double the state-wide rate.
- The median age is 56, almost 20 years higher than statewide.
- About 18% of Hot Springs residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, well below the statewide average of 32%.
- The city's annual median family income is \$47,400, far lower than the statewide median of \$69,700.
- The poverty rate is 27%, double the rate statewide.

However, Nelson said Hot Springs is a stable, hospitable place to live and work.

His wish list for change would include more restaurants, even as the city has seen a recent burst of new eateries. He also would seek better parks and playground equipment, and maybe a soccer complex with seating for parents and fans. He said he is pleased with how the nearly complete redo of U.S. 385 through town has widened traffic lanes and added a sense of newness in the city.

On a larger scale, Nelson sees the same challenges facing Hot Springs as in many other South Dakota cities and towns – a need for more affordable housing, a stronger local workforce and curtailing attitudes that discourage growth and development.

Nelson said the efforts of Gov. Kristi Noem to attract new residents to the state have hurt the ability of locals to afford housing, as the newcomers are able to pay more than asking price in many cases.

The housing market is so tight in Hot Springs that the local hospital, the Fall River Health Services, has lost needed new employees because the health care workers could not find suitable housing. And the city administrator in Hot Springs has had to commute to work from Rapid City since November due to a lack of housing options.

Nelson said he is open to supporting new ideas from residents and other community leaders as long as the community retains key values of freedom, limited government and conservatism.

Improve properties, highlight history

Lindsay Luper, an adviser with Edward Jones Financial in Hot Springs, said she and her husband, Dustin, have found the area to be a beautiful, friendly place to raise and educate their three children.

But Luper also sees areas for improvement.

The city could better celebrate and promote its history, much like she has seen to the north in Deadwood.



Mayor Bob Nelson, on Sept. 9, 2024 in Hot Springs, S.D., shows how a new elevated sidewalk on River Street allows unfettered views of Fall River. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch / South Dakota News Watch)

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Some properties could use sprucing up, including the famed sandstone buildings, some of which are wearing down due to age. The city needs more day care slots to help attract new families. And it could use some nightlife to lure more young people, she said.

Luper said she also worries that the city has an underlying drug abuse problem that isn't spoken of, and that it probably needs a new jail.

Luper, whose husband ranches on their homestead about 20 miles out of town, said she sees Hot Springs as a gem in the Southern Black Hills.

"It's beautiful here, and the area is so gorgeous. You just go for a walk, and you're gonna see how pretty it is, and I personally love the history of the area," she said.

But Luper added that she feels the city is ripe for growth, new ideas and new energy.

"I will say it's come a long ways, even in these last five years, like you can kind of see people are having a little bit more of an open mind about growth, and where that really was a hard thing in the past," she said.

Selling the region to employers

As executive director of the Southern Hills Economic Development Corp., a large part of Andrea Powers' job is to sell Hot Springs as a location for business relocations, expansions or startups.

Among the city's main attractions, she said, is its strong outdoors offerings and waterways, its scenic beauty and small-town vibe, and its unique history as a town where people came for the therapeutic values of the local hot springs.

Powers said Hot Springs needs to spruce up buildings that have become worn, including the red sandstone structures that require expensive and careful restoration.

"Preservation is economic development," she said.

Powers said she hopes the city can expand its educational offerings, including in the skilled trades, lure new employers to town and enhance the city's reputation as a top-level tourism destination.

After residents complete an online survey about their community and its needs, Powers along with Chiesman researchers will take additional input from people at a public gathering on Monday, Oct. 7, at The Space in Hot Springs.

Chiesman will then compile a report summarizing its findings and the proposed solutions town leaders and residents come up with.

Resident ideas and action will be critical in determining a path forward for the community, but it will be worth it if progress results both for individuals and the city as a whole, Powers said.

"In rural communities, people have to step up," she said. "Because the big questions are, 'How big do we want to get, and what do we want the city to look like?' Because the objective for all of us is simply that we want everyone to thrive."

This story was produced by South Dakota News Watch, an independent, nonprofit news organization.



The Veterans Affairs Medical Center on Sept. 9, 2024 in Hot Springs, S.D., has been under threat of closure for nearly a decade. (Photo: Bart Pfankuch / South Dakota News Watch)

Groton Area takes down Roncalli in three sets



Rylee Dunker
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

Groton Area's volleyball team posted a 3-0 win over Aberdeen Roncalli in action played Thursday in Groton. It was Roncalli's only three-set loss this season. Their two losses were in four sets.

The first set was tied 12 times and there were 10 lead changes before the Tigers outscored Roncalli at the end, 5-2, for the win. The Tigers had a six point run in the middle of the second set and posted a 25-15 win. Roncalli led early at 3-0, but once Groton Area got the 4-3 lead, the Tigers never trailed after that in the third set, going on to win, 25-20.

Rylee Dunker finished with 17 kills (30-33), and one block. Chesney Weber had eight kills (21-25), four ace serves, 22 assists, 10 digs and one block. Jaedyn Penning had eight kills (16-17), two ace serves and 17 digs. Faith Traphaen had three kills, Taryn Traphagen had four kills and one block, Laila Roberts had one kills and two ace serves, Elizabeth Flihs had 14 assists and one ace serve and Jerica Locke had 29 digs.

McKenna O'Keefe led the Cavaliers with nine kills (33-38), Ava Hanson had five kills and two blocks, Morgan Helms had five kills (23-24, one ace serve (11-11) and 12 digs,

Kylee Voelleer had one kill, one ace serve and 13 digs, Ava Danielson had seven assists and Kara Olivier had one kill.

The match was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Agtegra, Avantara Groton, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom T's & More, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Dan Richardt from Groton Ford, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Lanes & Lounge, Krueger Brothers, R&M Farms/Rix Farms and The Meathouse in Andover.

Groton Area won the junior varsity sets by identical scores of 26-24. Liby Althoff had six kills and two ace serves, McKenna Tietz had five kills and one ace serve, Kella Tracy had five kills, Emerlee Jones had four kills, Talli Wright and Sydney Locke each had one kill and one ace serve and Makenna Krause had two kills and one ace serve.

Sophia Feickert led Roncalli with five kills and one block, Ava Danielson had four kills and two ace serves, Cambry Feickert had two kills and two ace serves, Gabby Thomas and Kara Olivier each had one kill and Ava Meyers had one ace serve.

The junior varsity game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Dorene Nelson.

Roncalli won the C match by identical scores of 25-17.

The Tigers will host Clark/Willow Lake next Thursday.

- Paul Kosel



Chesney Weber
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Jaedyn Penning
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Jerica Locke
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Laila Roberts
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Pictured in back, left to right, are Easton Eckern, Logan Pearson, Keegan Harry, Jacob Tewksbury, Becker Bosma, Carter Simon and Jayden Schwan; in front, left to right, are Jace Johnson, Hayden Harder, Liem Johnson, Treyton Smith, Jarrett Erdmann and Brevin Flihs.

(Courtesy Photo)

Groton golfers take first in Groton tournament

Groton Area placed five golfers in the top 15 as the team won the Groton Area Invitational held Thursday at the Olive Grove Golf Course.

Brevin Flihs took third with a 79, Becker Bosma was sixth with an 81, Carter Simon was seventh with an 82, Logan Pearson was 11th with an 86, Jarrett Erdmann was 13th with an 86, Jace Johnson was 22nd with a 92, Jayden Schwan was 23rd with a 93,

Groton Area won the team title with 328 points followed by Sioux Valley with 334, Aberdeen Roncalli with 335, Milbank with 339, Sisseton had 381 and Redfield had 416.

- Paul Kosel

Power Dam Road Fire in Mellette County

Mellette County, SD — The Power Dam Road Fire continues to burn in Mellette County, with strong south winds pushing the fire northward. The fire is currently located in the river bottom of the White River on the south bank, posing a significant threat to surrounding areas.

As a precautionary measure, the town of Okaton has been evacuated, along with several ranches located south of the White River earlier this afternoon. Local authorities are urging residents in areas north of the White River, including Belvidere, Murdo, and Okaton, along Interstate 90, to stay informed about the fire's status and be prepared to follow evacuation instructions if necessary.

Local, state, and federal firefighting units from across western South Dakota are actively working to combat the fire. In addition to firefighting crews, local farmers, ranchers, and citizens have mobilized to assist by shuttling water and creating fire lines using heavy equipment. Local transportation assets are also contributing to the containment efforts.

Comments on proposed content standards to be heard

PIERRE, S.D. -- The South Dakota Board of Education Standards (BOES) will meet Monday, Sept. 16, at 9 a.m. at the Dakota Events Center in Aberdeen to hear public comment on three proposed content standards. The subject areas are the following:

English Language Arts
K-8 Computer Science
Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings

The Department of Education (DOE) is responsible for preparing content standards for each grade, and the BOES hosts hearings to give the public the opportunity to provide input regarding the proposed standards.

This is the first of four hearings on the proposed standards. The other three hearings will be held throughout the 2024-25 school year at board meetings in Sioux Falls, Pierre, and Rapid City. The board will take final action on the proposed standards at the last meeting.

In addition to making public comment at the four hearings, members of the public can submit written comment at any time, up until the final hearing, online.

The proposed standards were developed through the recommendations made by work groups and the DOE. Members of the work groups consisted of K-12 educators, postsecondary representatives, parents, and other stakeholders.

To access the proposed standards and to provide public comment online, visit the DOE's Content Standards: Under Review webpage. Comments sent by mail should be directed to the Department of Education, ATTN: Shannon Malone, 800 Governor's Drive, Pierre, SD 57501.

Secretary of State Provides Information Regarding Absentee Voting

(Pierre, S.D.) – Secretary of State Monae L. Johnson would like to provide important information regarding absentee voting in the November 5, 2024 General Election.

The absentee voting period for South Dakota’s 2024 General Election will begin September 20, 2024. To request an absentee ballot, voters must submit an absentee ballot application form to their county auditor. Absentee ballot application forms may be requested from the county auditor or found on the Secretary of State’s website: <https://sdsos.gov/elections-voting/voting/absentee-voting.aspx>. To account for mail processing and delivery times, voters are encouraged to request an absentee ballot as soon as possible and return the ballot to the county auditor allowing sufficient time for delivery.

Voters may verify whether they have already requested an absentee ballot and check the status of their absentee ballot by contacting their county auditor or searching the Voter Information Portal (VIP) on the Secretary of State’s website: <https://vip.sdsos.gov/VIPLogin.aspx>.

Voters submitting an absentee ballot application form must include a photocopy of an acceptable photo identification card or have the form notarized, as per SDCL 12-18-6.1. Acceptable photo identification cards include a South Dakota driver’s license or non-driver ID card, tribal ID, passport, student ID issued by a South Dakota high school or college, or any other photo ID issued by the United States government. Please contact your county auditor if you have any questions: <https://vip.sdsos.gov/CountyAuditors.aspx>.

Voters also have the option to absentee vote in-person up to the day before the election or vote in-person on Election Day. For those looking to absentee vote in-person, please contact your county auditor for office hours. On Election Day, polls will be open from 7:00am to 7:00pm local time. Information on polling locations and sample ballots may be found on the Voter Information Portal (VIP) on the Secretary of State’s website.

Names Released in Moody County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: Interstate 29, mile marker 119, 13 miles south of Brookings, SD

When: 5:35 p.m., Sunday, September 8, 2024

Vehicle 1: 2012 Toyota RAV4

Driver 1: Nathan Howard O'Brien, 21-year-old male from Brookings, SD, minor injuries

Seatbelt Use: Yes

Vehicle 2: 2000 Honda VT1100CT

Driver 2: James Edward Formanek, 57-year-old male from Watertown, SD, fatal injuries

Helmet Use: Under investigation

Moody County, S.D.- A 57-year-old man died Sunday, September 8, from injuries sustained in a two-vehicle crash 13 miles south of Brookings, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates Nathan H. O'Brien, the driver of a 2012 Toyota Rav4 SUV, was traveling northbound on Interstate 29 near mile marker 119 when the vehicle in front of him made a sudden lane change, revealing a motorcycle that appeared to be leaving the shoulder to reenter traffic. The SUV collided with the motorcycle, driven by James E. Formanek. The motorcycle entered the east ditch where it rolled, separating Formanek from the motorcycle. O'Brien lost control of the SUV, entered the east ditch and rolled.

O'Brien was transported to a nearby hospital with minor injuries. Formanek was pronounced deceased at the scene.

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

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

New website helps consumers connect with local producers

PIERRE, SD – It's no secret that consumers are hungry for safe, healthy, sustainable, locally grown food. South Dakota's small scale and urban producers are stepping up to the plate by learning how to improve their land, their environment, and their communities while producing nutritious food. Now the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition and its partners have launched a new website to help local producers and consumers find each other.

The South Dakota Fresh Connect website (www.sdfreshconnect.com) allows producers and farmers markets to create free accounts and public profiles to list their available products on a map. Consumers, restaurants, markets, and other organizations can also create free accounts to locate the nearest sources for the goods they need and directly contact the producers. Users can narrow their searches by location and specific products.

"South Dakota Fresh Connect is the ultimate platform for connecting South Dakota consumers with our local, farm-fresh produce," said SDSHC Soil Health Technician Chris Goldade, who also owns and operates Flat Rock Farms near Westport, SD. "The detailed farm profile allows us to showcase our unique growing practices and the quality of our offerings. With free search capabilities, anyone can easily find our contact information and discover the freshest, healthiest food available. By using Fresh Connect, we can introduce new, exciting products to our local residents and support a thriving local food economy."

The website will also list resources and educational opportunities to help small scale and urban farmers improve their soil, drought resilience, and operational sustainability.

SDSHC is able to provide the South Dakota Fresh Connect website with assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Intensifying Soil Health Knowledge and Implementation of Urban Agriculture Project.

To learn more about the website and create a free account, visit www.sdfreshconnect.com. To learn more about the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition and its mission to improve the state's soils and communities, visit www.sdsoilhealthcoalition.org or contact the Coalition at sdsoilhealth@gmail.com or 605-280-4190.



Press

What time of day should you take your medicine?

By Mayo Clinic Press Editors

Did I take my statin this morning for my high cholesterol? Or was that the pill for my diabetes? Maybe I should just stop taking my antidepressant, since it's hard to remember this many pills.

If your day is interrupted by thoughts like these, it may be time to sit down and make a daily medicine schedule.

Keeping track of medicines can be tricky, especially if you're treating several health conditions. The more medicines you take, the easier it is to make a mistake.

But with a few tips and tricks, even managing multiple conditions can become a smooth routine. Here's how to figure out what works for you.

Build a schedule around your day

For many people, having a schedule they can look at each day makes taking medicines more manageable. Here's how to make one:

Gather a list of your medicines. Include prescriptions as well as medicines you use without a prescription, like supplements. Double-check to see that your list matches the one in the system at your healthcare team's office.

Create a blank chart. You can draw your own or download free templates from the internet.

Split your daily schedule into segments that match your routines. For example, you may have morning medicines and bedtime medicines. Experts recommend taking medicines fewer than 4 times a day. Twice a day is most manageable.

Start with medicines that are time specific

Some medicines have to be taken at a certain time each day. It may be helpful to add these medicines to your schedule first, since they have less wiggle room.

For example, proton pump inhibitors, when prescribed to help reduce stomach acid, may work best if taken before or during a meal. Certain statins, which treat high cholesterol or high blood pressure, are most effective if taken at bedtime. Other statins should be taken with food.

Find the most convenient time to take other medicines

For medicines that can be taken any time each day, find a time that's convenient and easy. Sometimes that may mean grouping medicines together. For example, you might be more likely to remember your daily vitamin if you take it at the same time as your nighttime blood pressure pill.

But you should also consider the side effects of certain medicines. For example:

If your antidepressant makes you sleepy, take it before bed.

Steroid for your arthritis keeping you up at night? Take it in the morning.

If a certain medicine causes nausea, you may feel better if you take it after eating.

You can add each medicine to your chart until it's complete. You may need to adjust times once you try it for a week or so, to find what works best for you.

Learn tricks for remembering to take your medicine

Once you have a schedule for your medicines, try these tips for remembering to take them.

Make your chart hard to miss. Tape it somewhere you'll see it every day, like the inside of your coffee cupboard or next to your bathroom mirror.

Use a pill box. This can keep you organized whether you're at home or traveling. Be sure to ask your healthcare team first, as some medicines should not be stored in pill boxes.

Tie your medicines to another routine. If you often forget your medicines but always remember to brush your teeth, put your pill bottles next to your toothbrush.

Set an alarm. You may get distracted and forget your medicine — but your phone never will.

Ask for help. Have a loved one help you create your medicine routine. They also may help remind you to take your medicine if you forget.

Use an app to manage prescriptions. People who use a mobile app on their phone are less likely to forget to take their medicine.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Jet fuel company with plan for Lake Preston acquires additional site in North Dakota

Plant location would let Gevo sequester carbon without pipeline, could replace SD if needed

BY: JOHN HULT - SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 11:23 AM

The Colorado company that aims to build a \$1 billion sustainable aviation fuel plant near Lake Preston in South Dakota has announced a \$210 million deal to buy a North Dakota ethanol plant and use it for the same purpose.

Gevo's news release on the acquisition calls the Red Trail Energy deal "synergistic" with its plans in South Dakota, but also says the Richardton, North Dakota, facility is "an ideal Net-Zero site for future sustainable aviation fuel."

The North Dakota facility, which produces about 64 million gallons of ethanol each year, was the first ethanol plant in the nation to voluntarily set up a carbon capture and sequestration operation.

The plant sits atop the Broom Creek Formation, the underground rock formation where Summit Carbon Solution's proposed pipeline would transport liquified carbon dioxide for storage. That means Gevo would be able to sequester carbon from a jet fuel plant without the aid of the pipeline, if it isn't built.

Gevo leadership has repeatedly signaled that it could move its home base for jet fuel production to another state unless the controversial carbon capture pipeline is approved. The company now plans to build out a jet fuel operation at Red Trail regardless of what happens in South Dakota. On Thursday morning, CEO Patrick Gruber confirmed in a statement that the North Dakota facility could become the jet fuel home base if the multi-state pipeline project falls through.

"If there is no hope of a CCS pipeline ever in South Dakota, we'd have to consider this," Gruber wrote.



Red Trail Energy near Richardton, North Dakota, is being acquired by Gevo, a company that is developing sustainable jet fuel. (Amy Dalrymple/

North Dakota Monitor)

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"We currently believe that a pipeline in SD will eventually get done. This acquisition gives breathing room though."

A Gevo investor relations presentation released Thursday says the North Dakota facility has the potential to increase its carbon sequestration fivefold.

The land has 5,800 acres of "pore space" leases for underground sequestration, making it possible to move from its current total of 160,000 metric tons of carbon sequestered each year to a million metric tons.

All staff will remain at the North Dakota plant, Gruber said, and the company will need to make additional hires to build out a jet fuel operation.

Uncertain future for pipeline a question mark for Lake Preston plans

Gevo's proposed Net Zero-1 plant in Lake Preston would produce ethanol and transform it into low-emission jet fuel. The company hopes to secure a nearly \$1 billion federal loan guarantee from the U.S. Department of Energy to fund its construction, and has spent millions to buy the land and prepare the site.

The company wants to cash in on sustainable jet fuel subsidies on offer from some states and from the federal government to help airlines hit their declared emissions reduction targets.

Gevo would unlock the emission reduction incentives through sustainable, digitally tracked farming practices from its contracted corn producers, a wind energy farm to power its Lake Preston operations, and by connecting to the proposed Summit Carbon Solutions pipeline.

But the pipeline remains mired in controversy across the Upper Midwest. Landowner opposition colored the losses of 11 of the incumbent South Dakota lawmakers ousted in the spring primary election, and sparked a ballot initiative that could undo a legislative compromise meant to maintain a path for its construction while boosting compensation for counties and landowners along its route.

The \$8 billion pipeline would capture some of the carbon produced by nearly 60 ethanol plants across the Dakotas, Iowa, Nebraska and Minnesota, and sequester it underground in North Dakota, in the same area of Red Trail Energy's ethanol plant. Summit hopes to capitalize on federal tax credits incentivizing the removal of heat-trapping carbon from the atmosphere.

Gevo donated \$167,000 to support efforts to convince voters to support the pipeline law at the ballot box in November.

Acquisition moves needle on Gevo stock price

Summit was denied a permit from the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission after a similar project, the now-scuttled Navigator CO2 Ventures, failed to earn commission approval. Summit has stated its intention to reapply.

Iowa regulators approved a construction permit for Summit in August. This week, a group of that state's Republican lawmakers announced a lawsuit seeking to block it.

Regardless of the outcome of that litigation, the South Dakota vote on pipeline regulations or the shape of Gevo's future operations in Lake Preston, the news of its North Dakota acquisition has accomplished one of the company's stated goals: boosting its stock price.

Gruber and other executives have spent months complaining of what they see as an unfairly low valuation during earnings calls and investor relations presentations.

Its stock price has hovered between 60 and 73 cents a share for more than a year, putting it at risk of ejection from the NASDAQ stock exchange for long-term failure to maintain a price higher than \$1. Last month, the company got an extension from NASDAQ that gives it until Feb. 25 to stay at \$1 or above for 10 consecutive business days.

As of 9 a.m. Thursday morning, Gevo's stock price had jumped 10 cents from the day before, to 84 cents.

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.

North Dakota judge vacates state abortion ban, ruling it unconstitutional

BY: MARY STEURER, NORTH DAKOTA MONITOR - SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 11:59 AM

A judge vacated North Dakota's abortion ban in a Thursday ruling, finding the law unconstitutionally vague and an infringement on medical freedom.

South Central Judicial District Court Judge Bruce Romanick's order came as part of a lawsuit challenging the law brought by reproductive health care doctors and an abortion clinic last year.

Romanick's ruling declared the law "unconstitutionally void for vagueness" and found that "pregnant women in North Dakota have a fundamental right to choose abortion before viability exists."

The ban, enacted by the Legislature in 2023, makes abortion illegal in all cases except rape or incest if the mother has been pregnant for less than six weeks, or when the pregnancy poses a serious physical health threat.

The plaintiffs, which include reproductive health care doctors and the Moorhead, Minnesota-based Red River Women's Clinic, in their complaint said the law not only infringes on individual rights, but also puts health care providers in danger by not specifying when an abortion could be performed for health reasons.

Attorneys for the state have previously argued that the law is not unlawfully vague, and was written with extensive input from North Dakota's medical community — including some of the plaintiffs.

Tammi Kromenaker, director of the Red River Women's Clinic, said Thursday's decision gives her hope. "I feel like the court heard us when we raised our voices against a law that not only ran counter to our state constitution, but was too vague for physicians to interpret and which prevented them from providing the high quality care that our communities are entitled to," Kromenaker said.

The clinic had been North Dakota's sole abortion clinic but moved from Fargo to Minnesota after a prior abortion ban went into effect.

The ban, which was adopted with overwhelming support by both chambers of the Republican-dominated Legislature, established penalties of up to five years in prison and a maximum fine of \$10,000 fine for any health care professionals found in violation of the law.

The North Dakota Supreme Court last year struck down a similar abortion law adopted by lawmakers in 2007.

That law, often referred to as a "trigger ban," went into effect after the U.S. Supreme Court in 2022 overturned the federal right to abortion established by *Roe v. Wade*.

The state is expected to appeal the decision.

State Sen. Janne Myrdal, R-Edinburg, who sponsored the 2023 bill that created the ban, blasted the



The Burleigh County Courthouse is pictured on Thayer Avenue in Bismarck, North Dakota, on March 13, 2024. (Michael Achterling/North Dakota Monitor)

judge's ruling Thursday. She said lawmakers had worked to fix legal issues the North Dakota Supreme Court had identified in the trigger ban.

North Dakota's Legislature meets again in 2025 but Myrdal said the focus should be on defending the law that was passed in 2023.

"The losers today are the unborn children and their moms and dads, not any activists. There's no winner in this," she said.

Romanick announced earlier this year he would retire and not seek reelection in November. The former Burleigh County prosecutor was first elected in 2000 and reelected in 2012 and 2018.

"Judge Romanick will go into his retirement after a long career having made the wrong decision on the most important case he's ever had," Myrdal told the North Dakota Monitor.

Meanwhile, North Dakota's Democratic-NPL Party called the ruling a "victory for women's reproductive rights."

"North Dakotans deserve the freedom to make deeply personal health care decisions without interference from government extremists," Rep. Karla Rose Hanson, D-Fargo, said in a statement. "This law was especially cruel for victims of sexual violence — providing a rape and incest exception but only within six weeks, before most women know they're pregnant."

Mary Steurer is a reporter based in Bismarck for the North Dakota Monitor. A native of St. Louis, Steurer previously worked as the local government reporter for the Casper Star-Tribune newspaper in Wyoming.

Man pleads guilty to shooting electricity and pipeline facilities

BY: JEFF BEACH - SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 6:00 AM

A Canadian man has pleaded guilty to charges related to shooting at energy facilities in North Dakota and South Dakota.

Cameron Monte Smith pleaded guilty in federal court Wednesday to two counts of destruction of an energy facility, one count in each state.

Smith faces up to 20 years in prison for each count.

Court documents show that Smith caused more than \$1.2 million in damage by shooting with a high-powered rifle at the Wheelock substation near Ray in northwest North Dakota in May 2023.

The substation is operated by Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative. The shooting knocked out power to more than 240 people, The Bismarck Tribune has reported.

Smith caused more than \$495,000 in damage to a transformer and pump station of the Keystone Pipeline in eastern South Dakota's Clark County in July 2022, court records show. The Keystone Pipeline, operated by TC Energy, carries oil from Canada through North Dakota and South Dakota to facilities in Illinois and Texas.

"Cameron Smith orchestrated and executed attacks on critical energy infrastructure in North and South Dakota using a high-powered rifle," said U.S. Attorney Alison Ramsdell. "Thanks to our partners in the District of North Dakota, the FBI, ATF, and the National Security Division, this defendant has been held to account for his criminal activity, and he will now be subject to serious time in federal prison."



(Photo illustration by Getty Images)

Court records say the final damage estimates had not yet been determined.

Smith had also been charged with possession of a firearm and possession of ammunition by an illegal alien, but those charges are expected to be dropped under a plea agreement. Smith was alleged to have possessed a .450-caliber Bushmaster rifle and 9 mm Sig Sauer pistol.

A sentencing hearing is scheduled for Dec. 16 in Bismarck.

Smith's defense attorney did not respond to an email request for comment late Wednesday.

North Dakota Monitor Deputy Editor Jeff Beach is based in the Fargo area. His interests include agriculture, renewable energy and rural issues.

Additional security will be in place for Jan. 6, 2025 certification of presidential vote

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT - SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 2:08 PM

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Capitol Police are welcoming a special security designation from the Department of Homeland Security for Jan. 6, 2025, when Congress will gather to certify the Electoral College vote count for the winner of the presidential election.

The last time Congress undertook the responsibility, a pro-Trump mob attacked the building, eventually breaking through police barricades, severely injuring officers and disrupting the process.

The rioters were spurred on by false claims from former president and current Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump that he won the 2020 election when he had in fact lost both the popular vote and the Electoral College.

Members of Congress and then-Vice President Mike Pence were evacuated or told to shelter in place in their offices as one of the most secure buildings in the country was overrun.

Federal prosecutors have since secured convictions or plea deals for hundreds of the people who attacked law enforcement and obstructed Congress' responsibility to certify the vote that day.

United States Capitol Police Chief Tom Manger released a written statement Thursday saying the "National Special Security Event designation will further strengthen our work to protect the Members of Congress and the legislative process."

"The United States Capitol Police has been preparing for the January 6 count, as well as the Inauguration, for several months," Manger added. "We have made hundreds of changes and improvements over the past three years, and we are confident that the Capitol will be safe and secure."

National Special Security Events, or NSSEs, are somewhat expected for major events, like State of the Union speeches, presidential inaugurations and the presidential nominating conventions that the Democrats and Republicans hold every four years.

This, however, will be the first time that one has been issued for Congress' certification of the Electoral College vote.

The designation means the U.S. Secret Service will be the lead federal law enforcement agency planning security for the event, despite it being held in the U.S. Capitol, where USCP typically holds the top jurisdiction.

"National Special Security Events are events of the highest national significance," Eric Ranaghan, special agent in charge of the U.S. Secret Service's Dignitary Protective Division, said in a written statement released Wednesday. "The U.S. Secret Service, in collaboration with our federal, state, and local partners are committed to developing and implementing a comprehensive and integrated security plan to ensure the safety and security of this event and its participants."

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

Some lawmakers upset after Noem awards millions to project they refused to pay for Governor using money from state's Future Fund to help build shooting range

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 7:00 PM

While legislators were passing a law in March requiring more information from Republican Gov. Kristi Noem about a fund she controls, Noem was awarding \$13.5 million from the fund to a project legislators had declined to financially support.

Some legislators didn't find out about the spending until this week, when

South Dakota Searchlight learned about it and told them.

The money will go toward the construction of a \$20 million, state-owned shooting range in a rural area north of Rapid City. The Department of Game, Fish and Parks is also counting on private fundraising to help the project.

Game, Fish and Parks spokesman Nick Harrington said in a statement that the shooting range will "attract new visitors to the state and increase opportunities for firearms-related industries to expand in South Dakota."

The \$13.5 million awarded by Noem is from the Future Fund, which is supported by a tax on employers and spent at the discretion of the governor.

Legislators have denied requests to fund the shooting range with money from the state budget. State Sen. Reynold Nesiba, D-Sioux Falls, said Noem's decision "demonstrates the need for greater transparency and legislative oversight of the Future Fund." He called the shooting range a "pet project" for Noem that "excites few outside her political base."

"The Legislature has rejected this gun range project multiple times," Nesiba said. "She is using the Future Fund to circumvent the will of the Legislature."



A rendering of a proposed state shooting range in Meade County. The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks is leading development of the project. (Courtesy of GF&P)

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Bipartisan reaction

The frustration with the governor cuts across the political aisle.

"We already killed the shooting range legislation, because they never presented a business plan. Still haven't," said Sen. Ryan Maher, R-Isabel. "How many people are going to run this thing? Clean the bathrooms? Pick up trash? Shell casings? They still have not answered any of that."

Maier sponsored a bill that was adopted during last winter's legislative session requiring the Governor's Office to report twice per year to legislators about Future Fund spending. Noem signed that bill on March 14 — the same month, according to her Governor's Office of Economic Development, that she authorized \$13.5 million from the Future Fund for the shooting range.

Lawmakers contacted this week by South Dakota Searchlight said they have not yet received a Future Fund report as required by the new law.

Maier's bill arose after Noem faced criticism for other uses of the fund, including at least \$5 million she awarded for a workforce recruitment campaign starring herself and \$2.5 million for the Governor's Cup rodeo in Sioux Falls.

The fund is supported by a tax, described by the state as an "investment fee," that's collected from employers in conjunction with payroll taxes for unemployment benefits. In 2023, nearly 30,000 South Dakota employers paid \$23 million into the Future Fund.

The late Gov. George Mickelson convinced lawmakers to create the Future Fund in 1987. State law says the fund must be used "for purposes related to research and economic development for the state." The fund is held by the Governor's Office of Economic Development, but unlike other funds managed by the office, the Future Fund is not overseen by a board of citizen appointees.

A controversial range

The shooting range is being built on about 400 acres, roughly 15 miles north of Rapid City and 25 miles southeast of Sturgis. It's expected to open in the fall of 2025 and will include areas for long-range shooting, clay target shooting and tactical training. State officials say it will host national shooting competitions.

The Department of Game, Fish and Parks initially said in 2021 that the project would cost about \$9.9 million. That grew to \$12 million in 2022. Then the state paused the project when calls for bids attracted only one. The project price tag had ballooned to about \$20 million by the time the state broke ground in December 2023.

The department said it had received \$5.1 million in pledges and donations toward the project as of April.

Some lawmakers opposing previous attempts to fund the range argued state funds should be prioritized for more pressing infrastructure needs. They also said the project should fund itself with private donations, and scale down as needed.

"Why would the state want to compete with privately owned, taxpaying enterprises?" then-Rep. Dean Wink, R-Howes, now a state senator, asked his fellow lawmakers during a House floor debate in 2022. He argued shooting sports opportunities already exist in the area, but programs to address some other public needs do not.

Some landowners near the project, including Matt Kammerer, say it's unnecessary and will burden local governments with extra infrastructure and public safety costs.

"There are shooting ranges all around here already," he said. "Nobody needs this."

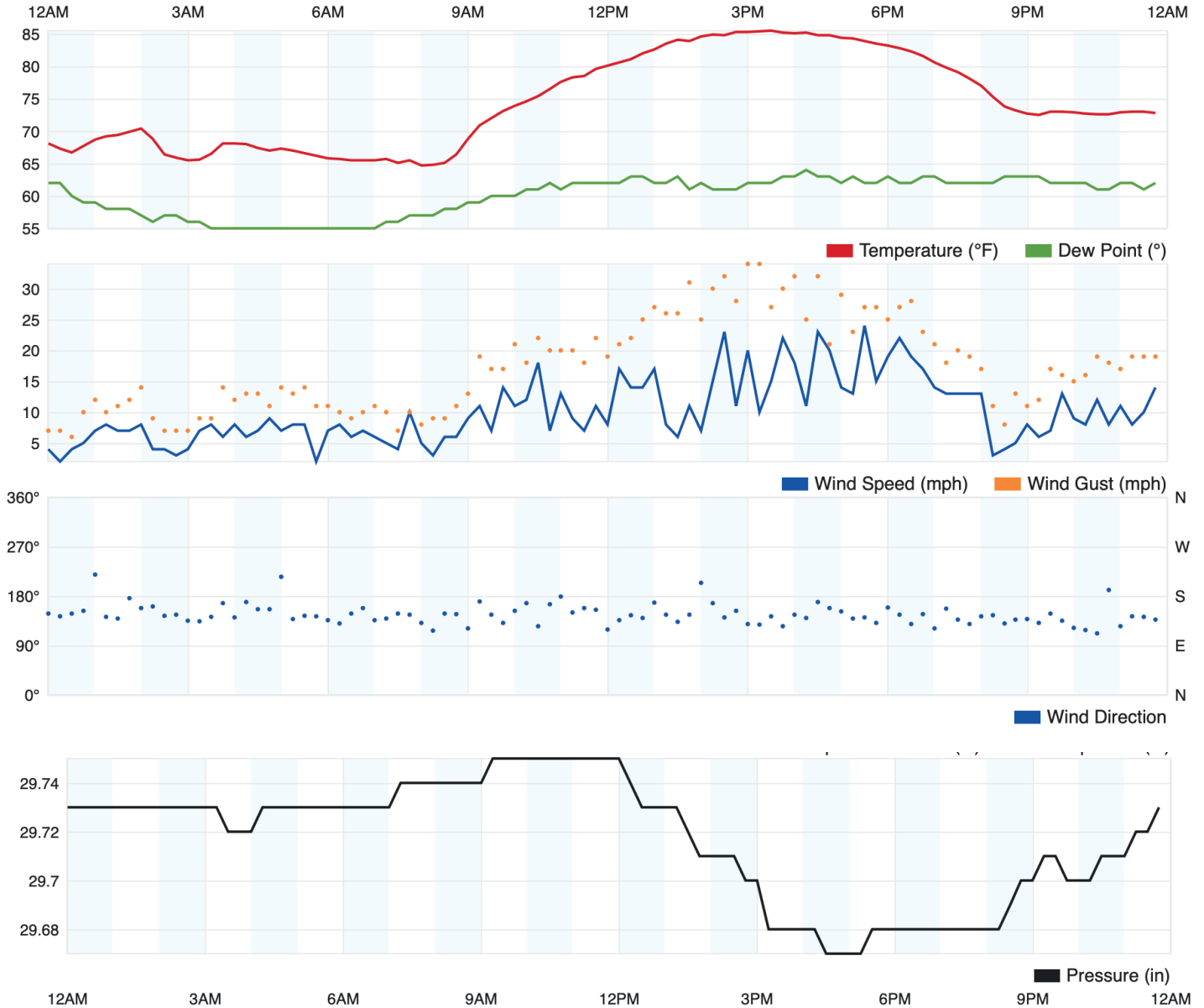
Shooting sports enthusiast and Second Amendment advocate King Cavalier, of Sturgis, said providing a public place to exercise gun rights is important to ensuring U.S. democracy continues. Shooting events will result in a sales tax boom, he added, making the complex a smart investment for the state.

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

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



High: 83 °F

Breezy.
Mostly Sunny
then Chance
T-storms

Tonight



Low: 57 °F

Chance
T-storms then
Partly Cloudy

Saturday



High: 82 °F

Sunny

Saturday Night



Low: 63 °F

Partly Cloudy

Sunday



High: 86 °F

Sunny



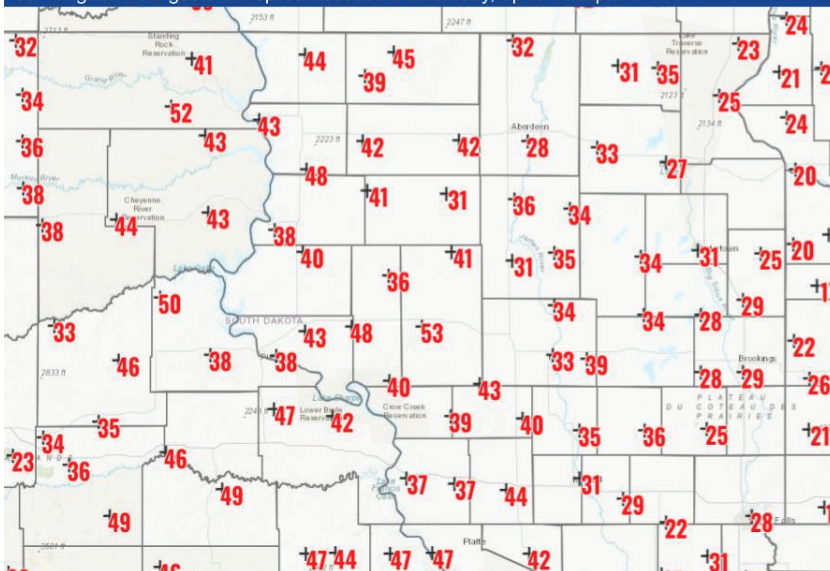
Update on Windy Conditions

September 12, 2024
1:22 PM

- ★ Current wind gust observations are plotted below. *Some areas are observing greater than 50 mph gusts!*
- ★ Sustained southeast winds of 30 mph with gusts up to 50 mph will continue through the rest of the day today.
- ★ A Wind Advisory remains in effect for the James River Valley and west until 10pm tonight.
- ★ Higher wind gusts will spread eastward on Friday, up to 40 mph.

Maximum Wind Gust Forecast (mph)

	9/12 Thu			9/13 Fri				Maximum	
	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am		12pm
Aberdeen	40	39	35	33	32	39	40	37	40
Britton	38	38	35	35	31	38	39	37	39
Brookings	33	31	31	30	28	25	28	30	33
Chamberlain	47	46	45	41	37	35	35	33	47
Clark	37	37	36	36	28	35	36	36	37
Eagle Butte	47	47	39	30	28	23	22	21	47
Ellendale	41	41	33	33	32	38	39	37	41
Eureka	51	48	43	41	41	39	39	35	51
Gettysburg	48	47	41	38	36	37	37	32	48
Huron	41	39	38	37	35	33	35	35	41
Kennebec	46	46	44	39	32	36	36	31	46
McIntosh	51	51	45	28	25	23	23	23	51
Milbank	30	30	28	26	20	23	26	29	30
Miller	45	44	39	38	31	38	39	37	45
Mobridge	46	46	43	37	29	32	30	25	46
Murdo	48	48	45	38	32	30	29	24	48
Pierre	46	45	41	33	29	31	30	25	46
Redfield	39	38	35	36	31	36	36	35	39
Sisseton	33	35	29	29	25	30	31	32	35
Watertown	35	33	32	32	25	31	35	35	35
Webster	40	40	36	37	28	37	40	40	40
Wheaton	30	30	30	30	25	26	28	28	30



Current wind observations have shown gusts greater than 50 miles per hour in places over Central South Dakota. A Wind Advisory is currently in effect until 10PM CDT. Gusty conditions will continue through Friday.

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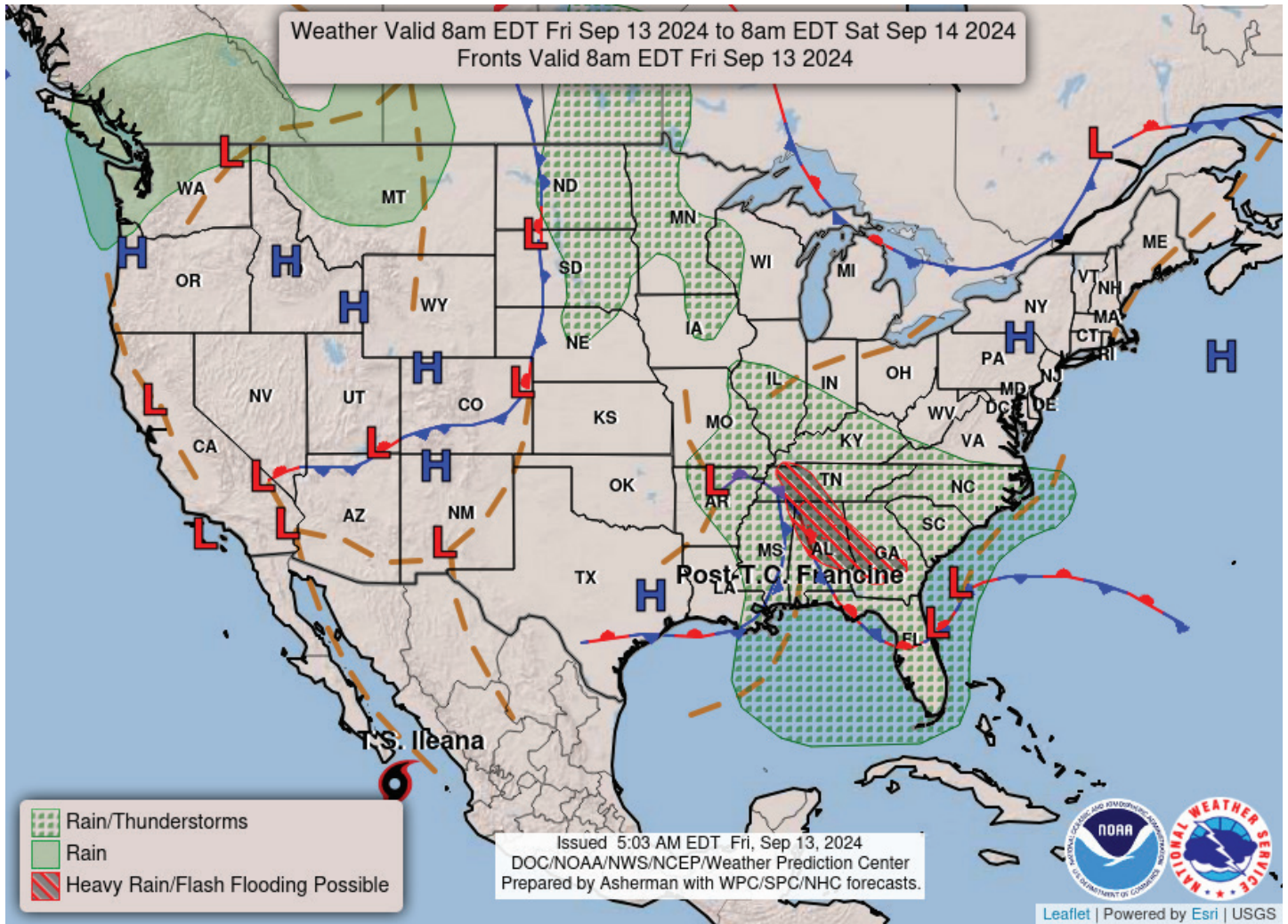
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 86 °F at 2:50 PM
Low Temp: 64 °F at 8:04 AM
Wind: 34 mph at 3:00 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 97 in 1927
Record Low: 26 in 1902
Average High: 76
Average Low: 48
Average Precip in Sept.: 0.88
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.01
Average Precip to date: 17.22
Precip Year to Date: 19.42
Sunset Tonight: 7:48:06 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:09:11 am

Day length: 13 hours, 40 minutes



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Today in Weather History

September 13, 1928: An estimated F4 tornado traveled across Yankton and Turner County. An entire farm was swept away just as the family was about to enter the storm cellar. A man and his daughter were killed. A woman was killed in the town of Davis, in Turner County. Nine homes were destroyed, 52 were damaged, and 13 people were injured in Davis.

1823: A strong category 1 or low category 2 hurricane struck near New Orleans, Louisiana and went toward Baton Rouge. Its strongest impacts occurred west of New Orleans.

1922 - The temperature at El Azizia in Libya soared to 136 degrees to establish a world record. To make matters worse, a severe ghibi (dust storm) was in progress. (The Weather Channel)

1928 - Hurricane San Felipe crossed Puerto Rico resulting in the highest winds, the heaviest rains, and the greatest destruction in years. The hurricane produced much damage in the Virgin Islands, and later hit the Bahamas and Florida. (David Ludlum)

1944: The destroyer USS Warrington was sunk by the Great Atlantic Hurricane 300 miles east of Cape Canaveral, Florida. 247 men were lost in the tragedy.

1978: Little Rock, Arkansas saw 8.10 inches of rain which caused major flash flooding. Ten people were killed.

1984 - Hurricane Diana, after making a complete loop off the Carolina coast, made landfall and moved across eastern North Carolina. Diana deluged Cape Fear with more than eighteen inches of rain, and caused 78 million dollars damage in North Carolina. (Storm Data)

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the northeastern U.S. Flooding was reported in Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Greenwood NY received 6.37 inches of rain. A dike along a creek at Prattsburg NY gave way and a two million dollar onion crop left on the ground to dry was washed away. The prolonged rains in the eastern U.S. finally came to an end late in the day as a cold front began to push the warm and humid airmass out to sea. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988: Hurricane Gilbert smashed into the Cayman Islands, and as it headed for the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico strengthened into a monster hurricane, packing winds of 175 mph. The barometric pressure at the center of Gilbert reached 888 mb, a record for any hurricane in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, or the Atlantic Ocean until Hurricane Wilma in 2005. Gilbert covered much of the Gulf of Mexico, producing rain as far away as the Florida Keys.

1989 - Unseasonably cool weather prevailed over the Central Plains Region, with a record low of 29 degrees at North Platte NE. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the Pacific Northwest, with a record high of 96 degrees at Eugene OR. Thunderstorms over south Texas produced wind gusts to 69 mph at Del Rio, and two inches of rain in two hours. (National Weather Summary) 2008: Hurricane Ike made landfall as a Category 2 storm near Galveston, Texas.

2017: The NWS Office in Reno, Nevada, issued their first tornado warning since July 21st, 2014.



MISTAKES ARE NOT FATAL

The new bank president decided that he would meet individually with each employee to introduce himself. He wanted them to know that he was very interested in their work and how important they were to the success of the bank.

After introducing himself to all of the employees, he asked one of them to come to his office. After she sat down, he asked, "How long have you been working here?"

Proudly she responded, "Forty years. And in all that time I've only made one little mistake."

"That's fine," he grumbled. "But in the future, be more careful."

We all make mistakes. And there are at least three things we can do about them:

We can promise never to make another one. That, however, is impractical since we know that promise would be impossible to keep.

We can give up and never try to do anything else again as long as we live. And we know that's impractical because life goes on.

Or we can learn from our mistakes and profit from them as though they were our teachers. When things do not work out as intended, we can go to God in prayer and ask for His wisdom which is available upon request.

Prayer: Lord, Your Word assures us that "if we need wisdom and want to know what to do" all we need to do is ask. May we learn to seek Your counsel and insight. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. James 1:5-9

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:

09.10.24

1 2 16 24 66 6

MegaPlier: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 16 Mins 5
DRAW: Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.11.24

2 9 10 12 24 7

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$8,860,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 31
DRAW: Mins 5 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.12.24

23 32 38 41 44 18

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 46 Mins
DRAW: 5 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.11.24

1 15 17 21 25

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$29,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 46
DRAW: Mins 5 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.11.24

6 9 15 17 20 3

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 15
DRAW: Mins 5 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

09.11.24

10 12 55 65 67 3

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$152,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 15
DRAW: Mins 5 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
- 07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary Salad Luncheon
- 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

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Christian def. North Central, 25-21, 25-23, 16-25, 16-25, 15-12

Avon def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-20, 25-15, 25-19

Bridgewater-Emery def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-17, 25-9, 25-16

Britton-Hecla def. Deuel, 21-25, 25-14, 25-23, 25-9

Burke def. St Mary's, Neb., 25-14, 25-16, 24-26, 25-20

Castlewood def. Iroquois-Lake Preston, 25-14, 25-16, 25-21

Chamberlain def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-14, 25-6, 25-20

Clark-Willow Lake def. Webster, 25-8, 20-25, 25-12, 25-21

Colman-Egan def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 3-0

Corsica/Stickney def. James Valley Christian, 25-12, 25-6, 25-17

Custer def. Hot Springs, 15-25, 25-16, 25-19, 27-25

Dell Rapids St Mary def. Canistota, 25-19, 25-12, 25-10

Dupree def. Bison, 25-18, 25-11, 21-25, 25-17

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Canton, 27-25, 25-21, 25-13

Estelline-Hendricks def. Arlington, 23-25, 23-25, 25-18, 25-23, 15-8

Ethan def. Menno, 26-24, 25-17, 25-23

Gayville-Volin High School def. Freeman, 25-10, 25-9, 25-13

Gregory def. Wagner, 25-23, 25-21, 12-25, 23-25, 15-7

Groton def. Aberdeen Roncalli, 25-23, 25-15, 25-20

Hamlin def. Milbank, 25-22, 25-21, 25-18

Harding County def. Edgemont, 25-22, 18-25, 25-17, 25-14

Herreid-Selby def. Timber Lake, 25-15, 25-14, 25-8

Hitchcock-Tulare def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-22, 25-22, 25-19

Ipswich def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-17, 25-17, 25-15

Kadoka def. Wall, 25-16, 25-19, 23-25, 25-12

Lennox def. Madison, 25-22, 25-18, 25-23

Lyman def. New Underwood, 26-24, 25-4, 25-11

Mobridge-Pollock def. Leola-Frederick High School, 25-12, 25-14, 25-13

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Hanson, 25-21, 25-17, 25-9

Parkston def. Sanborn Central-Woonsocket, 25-15, 25-15, 25-17

Platte-Geddes def. Bon Homme, 25-16, 10-25, 25-21, 17-25, 15-12

Potter County def. Faulkton, 3-2

Sioux Falls Christian def. West Central, 25-18, 25-9, 25-9

Sioux Falls Lutheran def. Oldham-Ramona-Rutland, 25-13, 25-21, 25-14

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Tea, 25-16, 25-13, 25-15

Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-19, 25-16, 25-20

Sioux Falls Washington def. Yankton, 25-16, 25-12, 25-20

Sisseton def. Redfield, 25-18, 25-10, 19-25, 25-14

Stanley County def. Philip, 25-17, 21-25, 25-21, 27-29, 15-10

Tri-Valley def. Vermillion, 25-16, 25-19, 25-13

Tripp-Delmont-Armour def. Kimball-White Lake, 21-25, 21-25, 25-13, 25-22, 16-14

Warner def. Northwestern, 25-20, 25-22, 25-13

Watertown def. Brandon Valley, 25-11, 25-22, 25-21

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Wessington Springs def. Howard, 25-14, 25-17, 25-18
Tournament Game=
Garretson def. McCook Central-Montrose, 25-21, 25-8, 25-19

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press
PREP FOOTBALL=
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte/Tiospaye Topa 30, St. Francis Indian 22
Lower Brule 34, White River 0
Marty 42, Crow Creek Tribal School 0
Todd County 46, Mahpiya Luta Red Cloud 8
Winnebago, Neb. def. McLaughlin, forfeit

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Russia expels 6 British diplomats it accuses of spying and 'subversive activities'

By The Associated Press undefined

Russia on Friday accused six British diplomats of spying and said it decided to expel them, an announcement that comes as tensions between Moscow and the West grow during an intensified push by Ukraine to loosen restrictions on using weapons provided by the U.S. and Britain to strike Russia.

Russia's Federal Security Service said in an online statement Friday that a decision was made to withdraw their accreditations, and Russian state TV quoted an official from the security service known as the FSB as saying a decision was made to expel them. The U.K. said the expulsions took place last month.

The move comes as Prime Minister Keir Starmer visits Washington for talks with President Joe Biden that will include Ukraine's request to use Western-supplied weapons against targets inside Russia.

Starmer said on his way to the U.S. that Britain does not "seek any conflict with Russia." "Russia started this conflict. Russia illegally invaded Ukraine. Russia could end this conflict straight away," he told reporters.

"Ukraine has the right to self-defense and we've obviously been absolutely fully supportive of Ukraine's right to self-defense — we're providing training capability, as you know. But we don't seek any conflict with Russia — that's not our intention in the slightest," he said.

The FSB said it received documents indicating that the diplomats were sent to Russia by a division of the U.K. Foreign Office "whose main task is to inflict a strategic defeat on our country," and that they were involved in "intelligence-gathering and subversive activities."

Based on these documents and "in response to numerous unfriendly steps by London," the Russian Foreign Ministry withdrew the accreditation of the diplomats, the FSB said, without identifying them. It warned that if other diplomats are found to be carrying out "similar actions," the agency "will demand early termination of their missions" to Russia.

Russian state TV said in a report that the six diplomats had met with independent media and rights groups that have been declared "foreign agents" — a label the Russian authorities have actively used against organizations and individuals critical of the Kremlin.

Britain called the allegations against the diplomats "completely baseless." It said the expulsions happened weeks ago, linking them to Britain's decision in May to revoke the credentials of an attaché at Moscow's London embassy and to impose a five-year time limit on all Russian diplomats in Britain.

In May the U.K. expelled Russia's defense attaché in London, alleging he was an undeclared intelligence officer, and closed several Russian diplomatic properties in Britain that it said were being used for spying.

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About a week later, Russia reciprocated and expelled Britain's defense attaché.

"The Russian authorities revoked the diplomatic accreditation of 6 U.K. diplomats in Russia last month, following action taken by the U.K. government in response to Russian state directed activity across Europe and in the U.K.," the Foreign Office said in a statement. "We are unapologetic about protecting our national interests."

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said in an online statement that "We fully agree with the assessments of the activities of the British so-called diplomats expressed by the Russian FSB. The British Embassy has gone far beyond the limits outlined by the Vienna Conventions." She said the diplomats were carrying out "subversive actions aimed at causing harm to our people."

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said breaking off diplomatic relations with the U.K. is not on the table right now.

Expulsions of diplomats — both Western diplomats working in Russia and Russian diplomats working in Western countries — have become increasingly common since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

Russian news outlet RBC counted last year that Western countries and Japan expelled a total 670 Russian diplomats between the beginning of 2022 and October 2023, while Moscow expelled 346 diplomats in response. According to RBC, it was more than in the previous 20 years combined.

Boeing factory workers go on strike after rejecting contract offer

By DAVID KOENIG, MANUEL VALDES and LINDSEY WASSON Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Aircraft assembly workers walked off the job early Friday at Boeing factories near Seattle and elsewhere after union members voted overwhelmingly to go on strike and reject a tentative contract that would have increased wages by 25% over four years.

The strike started at 12:01 a.m. PDT, less than three hours after the local branch of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers announced 94.6% of voting workers rejected the proposed contract and 96% approved the work stoppage, easily surpassing a two-thirds requirement.

The labor action involves 33,000 Boeing machinists, most of them in Washington state, and is expected to shut down production of the company's best-selling airline planes. The strike will not affect commercial flights but represents another setback for the aerospace giant, whose reputation and finances have been battered by manufacturing problems and multiple federal investigations this year.

The striking machinists assemble the 737 Max, Boeing's best-selling airliner, along with the 777, or "triple-seven" jet, and the 767 cargo plane at factories in Renton and Everett, Washington. The walkout likely will not stop production of Boeing 787 Dreamliners, which are built by nonunion workers in South Carolina.

Outside the Renton factory, people stood with signs reading, "Historic contract my ass" and "Have you seen the damn housing prices?" Car horns honked and a boom box played songs such as Twisted Sister's "We're Not Gonna Take It" and Taylor Swift's "Look What You Made Me Do."

The machinists make \$75,608 per year on average, not counting overtime, and that would rise to \$106,350 at the end of the four-year contract, according to Boeing.

However, the deal fell short of the union's initial demand for pay raises of 40% over three years. The union also wanted to restore traditional pensions that were axed a decade ago but settled for an increase in new Boeing contributions of up to \$4,160 per worker to employee 401(k) retirement accounts.

Under the rejected contract, workers would have received \$3,000 lump sum payments and a reduced share of health care costs. Boeing also had met a key union demand by agreeing to build its next new plane in Washington state.

Several workers said they considered the wage offer inadequate and were upset by a recent company decision to change the criteria on which annual bonuses are paid. Toolmaker John Olson, 45, said he has received a 2% percent raise during his six years at Boeing.

"The last contract we negotiated was 16 years ago and the company is basing the wage increases off of wages from 16 years ago," Olson said. "They don't even keep up with the cost of inflation that is currently happening right now."

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Boeing responded to the strike announcement by saying it was "ready to get back to the table to reach a new agreement."

"The message was clear that the tentative agreement we reached with IAM leadership was not acceptable to the members. We remain committed to resetting our relationship with our employees and the union," the company said in a statement.

Very little has gone right for Boeing this year, from a panel blowing out and leaving a gaping hole in one of its passenger jets in January to NASA leaving two astronauts in space rather sending them home on a problem-plagued Boeing spacecraft.

As long as the strike lasts, it will deprive the company of much-needed cash it gets from delivering new planes to airlines. That will be another challenge for new Boeing CEO Kelly Ortberg, who six weeks ago was given the job of turning around a company that has lost more than \$25 billion in the last six years and fallen behind European rival Airbus.

Ortberg made a last-ditch effort to salvage a deal that had unanimous backing from the union's negotiators. He told machinists Wednesday that "no one wins" in a walkout and a strike would put Boeing's recovery in jeopardy and raise more doubt about the company in the eyes of its airline customers.

"For Boeing, it is no secret that our business is in a difficult period, in part due to our own mistakes in the past," he said. "Working together, I know that we can get back on track, but a strike would put our shared recovery in jeopardy, further eroding trust with our customers and hurting our ability to determine our future together."

The head of the union local, IAM District 751 President Jon Holden, said Ortberg faced a difficult position because machinists were bitter about stagnant wages and concessions they have made since 2008 on pensions and health care to prevent the company from moving jobs elsewhere.

"This is about respect, this is about the past, and this is about fighting for our future," Holden said in announcing the strike.

The vote also was a rebuke to Holden and union negotiators, who recommended workers approve the contract offer. Holden, who had predicted workers would vote to strike, said the union would survey members to decide which issues they want to stress when negotiations resume.

Depending on how long the strike lasts, suspension of airplane production could prove costly for the beleaguered Boeing. An eight-week strike in 2008, the longest at Boeing since a 10-week walkout in 1995, cost the company about \$100 million daily in deferred revenue.

Before the tentative agreement was announced Sunday, Jefferies aerospace analyst Sheila Kahyaoglu estimated a strike would cost the company about \$3 billion based on the 2008 strike plus inflation and current airplane-production rates.

Solomon Hammond, 33, another Renton toolmaker, said he was prepared to strike indefinitely to secure a better contract.

Boeing's offer "just doesn't line up with the current climate. The wages are just too low," Hammond said. "I make \$47 an hour and work paycheck to paycheck. Everything costs more."

Vietnam typhoon death toll rises to 233 as more bodies found in areas hit by landslides and floods

By HAU DINH and DAVID RISING Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — The death toll in the aftermath of a typhoon in Vietnam climbed to 233 on Friday as rescue workers recovered more bodies from areas hit by landslides and flash floods, state media reported.

Flood waters from the swollen Red River in the capital, Hanoi, were beginning to recede, but many neighborhoods remained inundated and farther north experts were predicting it could still be days before any relief is in sight.

Typhoon Yagi made landfall Saturday, starting a week of heavy rains that have triggered flash floods and landslides, particularly in Vietnam's mountainous north.

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Across Vietnam, 103 people are still listed as missing and more than 800 have been injured.

Most fatalities have come in the province of Lao Cai, where a flash flood swept away the entire hamlet of Lang Nu on Tuesday. Eight villagers turned up safe on Friday morning, telling others that they had left before the deluge, state-run VNExpress newspaper reported, but 48 others from Lang Nu have been found dead, and another 39 remain missing.

Roads to Lang Nu have been badly damaged, making it impossible to bring in heavy equipment to aid in the rescue effort.

Some 500 personnel with sniffer dogs are on hand, and in a visit to the scene on Thursday, Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh promised they would not relent in their search for those still missing.

"Their families are in agony," Chinh said.

Coffins were stacked near the disaster site in preparation for the worst, and villager Tran Thi Ngan mourned at a makeshift altar for family members she had lost.

"It's a disaster," she told VTV news. "That's the fate we have to accept."

In Cao Bang, another northern province bordering China, 21 bodies had been recovered by Friday, four days after a landslide pushed a bus, a car and several motorcycles into a small river, swollen with floodwaters. Ten more people remain missing.

Experts say storms like Typhoon Yagi are getting stronger due to climate change, as warmer ocean waters provide more energy to fuel them, leading to higher winds and heavier rainfall.

The effects of the typhoon, the strongest to hit Vietnam in decades, were also being felt across the region, with flooding and landslides in northern Thailand, Laos and northeastern Myanmar.

In Thailand, 10 deaths have been reported due to flooding or landslides, and Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra flew to the north on Friday to visit affected people in the border town of Mae Sai. Thailand's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation warned of a continuing risk of flash floods in multiple areas through Wednesday, as new rain was expected to increase the Mekong River's levels further.

International aid has been flowing into Vietnam in the aftermath of Yagi, with Australia already delivering humanitarian supplies as part of \$2 million in assistance.

South Korea has also pledged \$2 million in humanitarian aid, and the U.S. Embassy said Friday it would provide \$1 million in support through the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID.

"With more heavy rain forecast in the coming days, USAID's disaster experts continue to monitor humanitarian needs in close coordination with local emergency authorities and partners on the ground," the embassy said in a statement. "USAID humanitarian experts on the ground are participating in ongoing assessments to ensure U.S. assistance rapidly reaches populations in need."

The typhoon and ensuing heavy rains have damaged factories in northern provinces like Haiphong, home to electric car company VinFast, Apple parts suppliers and other electronic manufacturers, which could affect international supply chains, the Center for Strategic and International Studies said in a research note.

"Though 95 percent of businesses operating in Haiphong were expected to resume some activity on September 10, repair efforts will likely lower output for the next weeks and months," CSIS said.

What to know about North Korea's unveiling of its uranium enrichment facility

By KIM TONG-HYUNG and HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — In a significant show of defiance against the United States, North Korea on Friday provided the outside world with a rare view into a secretive facility built to enrich uranium for nuclear bombs as leader Kim Jong Un called for a rapid expansion of his nuclear weapons program.

Here's a look at what we know about the facility and North Korea's capabilities for producing bomb fuel. What are we seeing?

North Korea's official Rodong Sinmum newspaper published several photos showing Kim talking with scientists and military officials in a hall tightly packed with gray centrifuge tubes that were about the height

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of his shoulders. The North didn't specify where the facility is located or when Kim went there.

Experts say the North Korean photos likely disclosed a centrifuge room at one of its two known plants in the towns of Yongbyon and Kangson, both near Pyongyang, which had been linked to uranium enrichment activities. While North Korea is believed to have other hidden uranium sites, it was unlikely that they were showcased publicly through visits by Kim, whose activities are closely monitored and analyzed by the outside world.

Yang Uk, an analyst at South Korea's Asan Institute for Policy Studies, said the number of centrifuges shown in the North Korean photos would be about 1,000. That happens to be roughly the number of centrifuges it would take to produce enough uranium for a single bomb -- about 20 to 25 kilograms -- when the devices are fully operated year-round.

It was the first time the North has disclosed a uranium enrichment facility since 2010, when it allowed a group of Stanford University scholars led by nuclear scientist Siegfried Hecker to tour its centrifuge facility in Yongbyon.

How worried should we be?

As foreign experts and government officials closely securitized the reports and visuals from North Korea, it wasn't immediately clear whether the country was communicating something significantly new about its bomb fuel technologies.

But the news was a stark reminder of a known but growing threat, as Kim continues to speed up the expansion of his nuclear weapons and missile programs amid halted diplomacy with Washington and Seoul.

Kim in recent months has repeatedly called for an "exponential" expansion of his country's nuclear arsenal to counter what he perceives as external U.S.-led threats. The photos released on Friday were likely intended to demonstrate that the country has the bomb fuel capacity to match the ambitions of its leader, experts say.

Kim has since 2022 been accelerating the expansion of his nuclear-capable missile systems, which include weapons designed to strike both the U.S. mainland and American allies in Asia.

North Korea's progress in its uranium enrichment program is a major concern for rivals and neighbors. Highly enriched uranium is easier than plutonium to engineer into a weapon. And while plutonium facilities are large and produce detectable radiation, making them easier for satellites to detect, uranium centrifuges can be operated almost anywhere, including small factories, caves, underground tunnels or other hard-to-reach places.

Yang said it's estimated that North Korea could be operating around 10,000 uranium centrifuges across multiple sites, which account for the core of the country's nuclear program that likely produces enough fuel to make around 12 to 18 bombs a year. By 2027, North Korea would possibly amass enough fuel to produce about 200 bombs, he said.

In a report this week, Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said his agency has monitored continued activities at both Yongbyon and Kangson facilities.

Grossi said that at Yongbyon, IAEA had observed water outflows from the cooling water system of the light-water reactor and other indications consistent with the operation of 5-megawatt reactor and the reported centrifuge enrichment facility. The light-water reactor could be an additional source of weapons-grade plutonium along with the widely known 5-megawatt reactor, observers say.

He said that in 2024, a new annex to the main building in the Kangson complex was built, expanding the available floorspace.

Where do we stand on nuclear diplomacy?

Former U.S. President Donald Trump's administration had an opportunity to slow the expansion of North Korea's nuclear program while he engaged in high-stakes diplomacy with Kim starting in 2018. However, the talks broke down after their second summit in 2019, when the Americans rejected North Korean demands for major sanctions relief in exchange for the dismantling of the Yongbyon complex, which was seen as just a partial surrender of its nuclear capabilities.

Nuclear talks remain stalled as Kim vows to push his nuclear ambitions further in the face of deepening confrontations with Washington. Experts say Kim's long-term goal is to force the United States into

accepting the idea of the North as a nuclear power and negotiating economic and security concessions from a position of strength.

Some have speculated that he might try to drum up pressure in a U.S. election year, possibly with a long-range missile demonstration or a nuclear test detonation.

Kim's visit to the nuclear facility was somewhat reminiscent of highly public visits by former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the country's Natanz uranium enrichment plant, after the country declared in 2006 that it was resuming enrichment that had been suspended for three years.

After years of difficult negotiations, Iran and six world powers led by the United States announced a comprehensive nuclear agreement in 2015 that outlined long-term restrictions on Iran's nuclear program and the removal of many international sanctions.

However, the deal collapsed in 2018 when Trump unilaterally withdrew Washington from the agreement, calling it the "worst deal ever." The West has struggled to find a new deal with Iran, whose advancing nuclear program now enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

US and British leaders meet as Ukraine pushes to ease weapons restrictions

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — United States President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer are meeting Friday amid an intensified push by Ukraine to loosen restrictions on using weapons provided by the U.S. and Britain to strike Russia.

The talks come amid signs that the White House could be moving toward a shift in its policy, and as Russia's President Vladimir Putin warned that Ukraine's use of long-range weapons would put NATO at war with Moscow.

Ukrainian officials renewed their pleas to use Western-provided long-range missiles against targets deeper inside Russia during this week's visit to Kyiv by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.K. Foreign Secretary David Lammy. Blinken said he had "no doubt" that Biden and Starmer would discuss the matter during their visit, noting the U.S. has adapted and "will adjust as necessary" as Russia's battlefield strategy has changed.

The language is similar to what Blinken said in May, shortly before the U.S. allowed Ukraine to use American-provided weapons just inside Russian territory. The distance has been largely limited to cross-border targets deemed a direct threat out of concerns about further escalating the conflict.

While the issue is expected to be at the top of the leaders' agenda, it appeared unlikely that Biden and Starmer would announce any policy changes during this week's visit, according to two U.S. officials familiar with planning for the leaders' talks who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss the private deliberations.

In addition to Blinken, Biden also has hinted a change could be afoot. In an exchange with reporters earlier this week about whether he was ready to ease weapons restrictions on Ukraine, he responded, "We're working that out now."

Putin warned Thursday that allowing long-range strikes "would mean that NATO countries, the United States, and European countries are at war with Russia. ... If this is so, then, bearing in mind the change in the very essence of this conflict, we will make appropriate decisions based on the threats that will be created for us."

His remarks were in line with the narrative the Kremlin has actively promoted since early in the Ukraine war, accusing NATO countries of de-facto participation in the conflict and threatening a response.

Earlier in the year, Putin warned that Russia could provide long-range weapons to others to strike Western targets in response to NATO allies allowing Ukraine to use their arms to attack Russian territory, saying it "would mark their direct involvement in the war against the Russian Federation, and we reserve the right to act the same way."

Starmer, in response to the Russian leader's Thursday comments, said on his way to the U.S. that Britain

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does not seek any conflict with Russia.

"Russia started this conflict. Russia illegally invaded Ukraine. Russia could end this conflict straight away," Starmer told reporters. "Ukraine has the right to self-defense and we've obviously been absolutely fully supportive of Ukraine's right to self-defense — we're providing training capability, as you know."

"But we don't seek any conflict with Russia — that's not our intention in the slightest," Starmer said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has pressed U.S. and allied military leaders to go much further. He argues that the U.S. must allow Ukraine to target Russian air bases and launch sites far from the border as Russia has stepped up assaults on Ukraine's electricity grid and utilities ahead of the coming winter.

Zelenskyy also wants more long-range weaponry from the United States, including the Army Tactical Missile System, known as ATACMS, for strikes in Russia.

ATACMS wouldn't be the answer to the main threat Ukraine faces from long-range Russian glide bombs, which are being fired from more than 300 kilometers (185 miles) away, beyond the ATACMS' reach, said Lt. Col. Charlie Dietz, Pentagon spokesperson.

American officials also don't believe they have enough of the weapon systems available to provide Ukraine with the number to make a substantive difference to conditions on the ground, one of the U.S. officials said.

During a meeting of allied defense ministers last week, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said he did not believe providing Ukraine with long-range weapon systems would be a game-changer in the grueling war. He noted that Ukraine has already been able to strike inside Russia with its own internally produced systems, including drones.

"I don't believe one capability is going to be decisive, and I stand by that comment," Austin said.

"As of right now, the policy has not changed," Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, Pentagon press secretary, said Thursday.

Starmer said he was visiting Washington for "strategic meetings to discuss Ukraine and to discuss the Middle East." It's the prime minister's second meeting with Biden since his center-left government was elected in July.

It comes after Britain last week diverged from the U.S. by suspending some arms exports to Israel because of the risk they could be used to break international law. Both countries have downplayed their differences over the issue.

Biden and Starmer's meeting also comes ahead of this month's annual meeting of global leaders at the United Nations General Assembly. The Oval Office meeting was scheduled in part to help the two leaders compare notes on the war in Ukraine, languishing efforts to get a cease-fire deal in Gaza and other issues ahead of the U.N. meeting.

The White House also has sought in recent days to put a greater emphasis on the nexus between the war in Ukraine and conflict in the Middle East sparked after Iranian-backed Hamas militants in Gaza launched attacks on Israel on Oct. 7.

The Biden administration said this week that Iran recently delivered short-range ballistic weapons to Russia to use against Ukraine, a transfer that White House officials worry will allow Russia to use more of its arsenal for targets far beyond the Ukrainian front line while employing Iranian warheads for closer-range targets.

In turn, the U.S. administration says Russia has been tightening its relationship with Iran, including by providing it with nuclear and space technology.

"This is obviously deeply concerning," White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said of the missile transfer. "And it certainly speaks to the manner in which this partnership threatens European security and how it illustrates Iran's destabilizing influence now reaches well beyond the Middle East."

North Korea gives a glimpse of a secretive uranium-enrichment facility as Kim pushes for more nukes

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea offered a rare glimpse into a secretive facility to produce weapons-grade uranium as state media reported Friday that leader Kim Jong Un visited the area and called for stronger efforts to “exponentially” increase its number of nuclear weapons.

It’s unclear whether the site is at North Korea’s main Yongbyon nuclear complex, but it’s the North’s first disclosure of a uranium-enrichment facility since it showed one at Yongbyon to visiting American scholars in 2010. While the latest unveiling is likely an attempt to apply more pressure on the U.S. and its allies, the images released by North Korean media of the area could provide outsiders with a valuable source of information for estimating the amount of nuclear ingredients that North Korea has produced.

During a visit to the Nuclear Weapons Institute and the facility producing weapons-grade nuclear materials, Kim expressed “great satisfaction repeatedly over the wonderful technical force of the nuclear power field” held by North Korea, the official Korean Central News Agency reported.

KCNA said Kim went around the control room of the uranium enrichment facility and a construction site that would expand its capacity for producing nuclear weapons. North Korean state media photos showed Kim being briefed by scientists while walking along long lines of centrifuges. KCNA didn’t say when Kim visited the facilities or where they are located.

KCNA said Kim stressed the need to further augment the number of centrifuges to “exponentially increase the nuclear weapons for self-defense,” a goal he has repeatedly stated in recent years. It said Kim ordered officials to push forward the introduction of a new type of centrifuge.

Kim said North Korea needs greater defense and preemptive attack capabilities because “anti-(North Korea) nuclear threats perpetrated by the U.S. imperialists-led vassal forces have become more undisguised and crossed the red line,” KCNA said.

South Korea’s Unification Ministry strongly condemned North Korea’s push to boost its nuclear capability. A ministry statement said North Korea’s “illegal” pursuit of nuclear weapons in defiance of U.N. prohibitions is a serious threat to international peace. It said North Korea must realize it cannot win anything with its nuclear program.

North Korea first showed a uranium enrichment site in Yongbyon to the outside world in November 2010, when it allowed a visiting delegation of Stanford University scholars led by nuclear physicist Siegfried Hecker to tour its centrifuges. North Korean officials then reportedly told Hecker that 2,000 centrifuges were installed and running at Yongbyon.

Satellite images in recent years have indicated North Korea was expanding a uranium enrichment plant at Yongbyon. Nuclear weapons can be built using either highly enriched uranium or plutonium, and North Korea has facilities to produce both at Yongbyon. Some U.S. and South Korean experts believe North Korea is covertly running at least one other uranium-enrichment plant.

It’s not clear exactly how much weapons-grade plutonium and highly enriched uranium have been produced at Yongbyon and elsewhere. In 2018, a top South Korean official told parliament that North Korea was estimated to have already manufactured 20-60 nuclear weapons, but some experts say the North likely has more than 100. Estimates of how many nuclear bombs North Korea can add every year vary, ranging from six to as many as 18.

“For analysts outside the country, the released images will provide a valuable source of information for rectifying our assumptions about how much material North Korea may have amassed to date,” said Ankit Panda, an expert with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

“Overall, we should not assume that North Korea will be as constrained as it once was by fissile material limitations. This is especially true for highly enriched uranium, where North Korea is significantly less constrained in its ability to scale up than it is with plutonium,” Panda said.

In 2018, Hecker and Stanford University scholars estimated North Korea’s highly enriched uranium inven-

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tory was 250 to 500 kilograms (550 to 1,100 pounds), sufficient for 25 to 30 nuclear devices.

The North Korean photos released Friday showed about 1,000 centrifuges. When operated year-round, they would be able to produce around 20 to 25 kilograms (44 to 55 pounds) of highly enriched uranium, which would be enough to create a single bomb, according to Yang Uk, a security expert at Seoul's Asan Institute for Policy Studies.

The new-type centrifuge Kim wants to introduce is likely an advanced carbon fiber-based one that could allow North Korea to produce five to 10 times more highly enriched uranium than its existing ones, said Lee Choon Geun, an honorary research fellow at South Korea's Science and Technology Policy Institute.

Since 2022, North Korea has sharply ramped up its weapons testing activities to expand and modernize its arsenal of nuclear missiles targeting the U.S. and South Korea. Analysts say North Korea could conduct a nuclear test explosion or long-range missile test ahead of the U.S. presidential election in November with the intent of influencing the outcome and increasing its leverage in future dealings with the Americans.

"Overall, the message they are trying to send is that their nuclear capability is not just an empty threat, but that they are continuing to produce (bomb fuel)," Yang said. "And who are they speaking to? It could obviously be South Korea but also certainly the U.S."

Kim's recent nuclear drive comes as North Korea is deepening its military cooperation with Russia. The U.S. and South Korea have accused North Korea of supplying badly needed conventional arms to support Russia's war in Ukraine in return for military and economic aid.

On Friday, a Russian delegation led by the country's Security Council secretary, Sergei Shoigu, traveled to North Korea and met Kim for talks on bilateral and international issues, Russian media reported. In July 2023, Shoigu, then defense minister, visited North Korea and met Kim.

China is raising its retirement age, now among the youngest in the world's major economies

BEIJING (AP) — Starting next year, China will raise its retirement age for workers, which is now among the youngest in the world's major economies, in an effort to address its shrinking population and aging work force.

The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the country's legislature, passed the new policy Friday after a sudden announcement earlier in the week that it was reviewing the measure, state broadcaster CCTV announced.

The policy change will be carried out over 15 years, with the retirement age for men raised to 63 years, and for women to 55 or 58 years depending on their jobs. The current retirement age is 60 for men and 50 for women in blue-collar jobs and 55 for women doing white-collar work.

"We have more people coming into the retirement age, and so the pension fund is (facing) high pressure. That's why I think it's now time to act seriously," said Xiujian Peng, a senior research fellow at Victoria University in Australia who studies China's population and its ties to the economy.

The previous retirement ages were set in the 1950's, when life expectancy was only around 40 years, Peng said.

The policy will be implemented starting in January, according to the announcement from China's legislature. The change will take effect progressively based on people's birthdates.

For example, a man born in January 1971 could retire at the age of 61 years and 7 months in August 2032, according to a chart released along with the policy. A man born in May 1971 could retire at the age of 61 years and 8 months in January 2033.

Demographic pressures made the move long overdue, experts say. By the end of 2023, China counted nearly 300 million people over the age of 60. By 2035, that figure is projected to be 400 million, larger than the population of the U.S. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences had previously projected that the public pension fund will run out of money by that year.

Pressure on social benefits such as pensions and social security is hardly a China-specific problem. The U.S. also faces the issue as analysis shows that currently, the Social Security fund won't be able to pay

out full benefits to people by 2033.

"This is happening everywhere," said Yanzhong Huang, senior fellow for global health at the Council on Foreign Relations. "But in China with its large elderly population, the challenge is much larger."

That is on top of fewer births, as younger people opt out of having children, citing high costs. In 2022, China's National Bureau of Statistics reported that for the first time the country had 850,000 fewer people at the end of the year than the previous year, a turning point from population growth to decline. In 2023, the population shrank further, by 2 million people.

What that means is that the burden of funding elderly people's pensions will be divided among a smaller group of younger workers, as pension payments are largely funded by deductions from people who are currently working.

Researchers measure that pressure by looking at a number called the dependency ratio, which counts the number of people over the age of 65 compared to the number of workers under 65. That number was 21.8% in 2022, according to government statistics, meaning that roughly five workers would support one retiree. The percentage is expected to rise, meaning fewer workers will be shouldering the burden of one retiree.

The necessary course correction will cause short-term pain, experts say, coming at a time of already high youth unemployment and a soft economy.

Some of the comments on social media when the policy review was announced earlier in the week reflected this anxiety.

But of the 13,000 comments on the Xinhua news post announcing the news, only a few dozen were visible, suggesting that many others had been censored.

European politicians say migration is out of control. The numbers tell a different story

By RENATA BRITO Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Unauthorized migration to European Union countries dropped significantly overall in the first eight months of this year, even as political rhetoric and violence against migrants increased and far-right parties espousing anti-immigration policies made gains at the polls.

There was, however, a spike in migrant arrivals to the Canary Islands, a Spanish archipelago close to the African coast that is increasingly used as an alternate stepping stone to continental Europe.

Irregular migration dominated the European parliamentary elections in June and influenced recent state elections in eastern Germany, where a far-right party won for the first time since World War II. The German government this week announced it was expanding border controls around its territory following recent extremist attacks.

What do the numbers show?

Despite the heated debates, irregular crossings over the southern borders of the EU — the region that sees the most unauthorized migration — were down by 35% from January to August, according to the latest preliminary figures compiled by the United Nations International Organization for Migration.

Nearly 115,000 migrants — less than 0.03% of the EU's population — have arrived without permission into the EU via Mediterranean and Atlantic routes so far this year, compared to 176,252 during the same period last year, the U.N. says. In contrast, more than a million people, most of them fleeing conflict in Syria, entered the EU in 2015.

Data shared by the EU's border and coast guard agency Frontex shows a similar trend: Unauthorized crossings over the region's southern borders fell 39% overall this year compared to last year.

"The emergency is not numerical this year, nor was it last year," Flavio di Giacomo, a spokesperson with the IOM office for the Mediterranean, told The Associated Press.

Camille Le Coz, an associate director of the nonprofit Migration Policy Institute in Europe, said irregular migration is "getting way too much attention compared to the scope of the issue and compared to other

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issues Europe should be tackling, such as climate change.”

The most commonly used route for migrants is from North Africa, across the dangerous Central Mediterranean to Italy. Yet roughly 64% fewer migrants disembarked in Italy this year than during the same period in 2023, according to IOM and Frontex numbers.

Experts say that’s a result of the EU-supported crackdown in Tunisia and Libya, which comes at a price for migrants, many of whom are systematically rounded up and dumped in the desert.

How long the downward trend will hold remains to be seen, however. Smugglers are always quick to adapt and find new routes around border controls. In the Eastern Mediterranean, the second-most-used route, smuggling networks are now using speedboats in increasingly aggressive ways to avoid controls and targeting islands farther away from the Turkish coast in the central Aegean, according to Greek authorities.

The number of migrants arriving in Greece by sea and overland during the first eight months of the year rose by 57%, U.N. data shows.

An alarming spike in the Atlantic

Meanwhile, irregular migration from West Africa to the Canary Islands via the Atlantic, the third-most-used route, has more than doubled: More than 25,500 migrants — mostly from Mali, Senegal and other West African countries — had arrived in the islands as of Aug. 31, the U.N. says.

Countless other migrants have gone missing along the route, where rough winds and strong Atlantic currents work against them. Several migrant boats, carrying only the remains of Malian, Mauritanian and Senegalese citizens, have been found this year drifting as far away as the Caribbean and off Brazil. Precise numbers are hard to verify, but the Spanish migrant rights group Walking Borders has reported more than 4,000 dead or missing.

The trend has Spanish authorities on alert for the fall, when conditions in the Atlantic are most favorable for the journey. The treacherousness of the route seems to have done little to dissuade would-be migrants, whose ranks have swelled to include people from Syria and Pakistan, according to rescuers.

“There are situations that need to be addressed, like the situation in the Canary Islands,” Le Coz acknowledged.

A humanitarian crisis

The adult migrants who successfully make it to the Canaries usually keep moving, headed for the promise of jobs and safety in mainland Spain or other European countries farther north. But that is not the case for thousands of unaccompanied minors. Under Spanish law, these young migrants must be taken under the wing of the local government, leading to overcrowded shelters and a political crisis. Earlier this year, island leaders fought unsuccessfully to have other regions of Spain share the responsibility.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez recently traveled to three West African countries in an attempt to curb migration. In Senegal, he and President Bassirou Diomaye Faye signed agreements to promote temporary work opportunities in Spain for Senegalese nationals and vocational training in Senegal. They also agreed to step up police cooperation.

No magic solutions

Current anti-immigrant sentiments notwithstanding, Europe’s aging population, declining birth rates and labor shortages have only increased the need for immigrant workers to sustain pensions and boost economic growth.

And as long as migrants lack opportunities in their own countries, their exodus will continue. Add to this the growing instability and conflict in parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia that have displaced millions.

“There is no magic deterrence,” Le Coz said. “Migrants end up taking the toll of all of this: They are risking their lives, doing jobs in Europe where they face uncertain legal status for years and are vulnerable to all sorts of exploitation.”

While long-term solutions to tackle unauthorized migration are being implemented, such as temporary work programs for migrants, they are still falling short.

“That’s one step in the right direction, but this needs to happen at a much larger scale, and they need the private sector to be more involved,” Le Coz added.

Boeing machinists vote to strike after rejecting pay increases of 25% over 4 years

By DAVID KOENIG and MANUEL VALDES Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Machinists at Boeing voted Thursday to go on strike, another setback for the giant aircraft maker whose reputation and finances have been battered and now faces a shutdown in production of its best-selling airline planes.

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers said 94.6% of voting workers rejected the contract, which would have raised pay 25% over four years, and 96% approved the strike, easily surpassing a two-thirds requirement.

The strike by 33,000 machinists was set to begin at one minute after midnight Friday morning.

"This is about respect, this is about the past, and this is about fighting for our future," IAM District 751 President Jon Holden said in announcing the vote.

Boeing responded that it was "ready to get back to the table to reach a new agreement."

"The message was clear that the tentative agreement we reached with IAM leadership was not acceptable to the members. We remain committed to resetting our relationship with our employees and the union," the company said in a statement.

Very little has gone right for Boeing this year, from a panel blowing out and leaving a gaping hole in one of its passenger jets in January to NASA leaving two astronauts in space rather sending them home on a problem-plagued Boeing spacecraft.

As long as the strike lasts, it will deprive Boeing of much-needed cash that it gets from delivering new planes to airlines. That will be another challenge for new CEO Kelly Ortberg, who six weeks ago was given the job of turning around a company that has lost more than \$25 billion in the last six years and fallen behind European rival Airbus.

Ortberg made a last-ditch effort to salvage a deal that had unanimous backing from the union's negotiators. He told machinists Wednesday that "no one wins" in a walkout, and that a strike would put Boeing's recovery in jeopardy and raise more doubt about the company in the eyes of its airline customers.

"For Boeing, it is no secret that our business is in a difficult period, in part due to our own mistakes in the past," he said. "Working together, I know that we can get back on track, but a strike would put our shared recovery in jeopardy, further eroding trust with our customers and hurting our ability to determine our future together."

Workers were in no mood to listen.

Holden said Ortberg faced a difficult position because machinists are bitter about stagnant wages and concessions they have made since 2008 on pensions and health care to prevent the company from moving jobs elsewhere.

"It's hard to make up for 16 years," he said.

The vote was also a rebuke to Holden and union negotiators, who recommended that workers approve the contract offer. Holden, who predicted that workers would vote to strike, said the union will survey members to decide what issues they want to stress when negotiations resume.

Union members posted complaints about the deal all week on social media, often demanding bigger raises. On Thursday, several dozen blew whistles, banged drums and held up signs calling for a strike as they marched to a union hall near Boeing's 737 Max plant in Renton, Washington.

"As you can see, the solidarity is here," said Chase Sparkman, a quality-assurance worker. "I'm expecting my union brothers and sisters to stand shoulder to shoulder, arm in arm, and let our company know that, hey, we deserve more."

The machinists make \$75,608 per year on average, not counting overtime, and that would rise to \$106,350 at the end of the four-year contract, according to Boeing.

However, the deal fell short of the union's initial demand for pay raises of 40% over three years. The union also wanted to restore traditional pensions that were axed a decade ago but settled for an increase in Boeing contributions to employee's 401(k) retirement accounts.

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Boeing worker Adam Vogel called the 25% raise “a load of crap. We haven’t had a raise in 16 years.” Broderick Conway, another quality-assurance worker and 16-year Boeing employee, said the company can afford more.

“A lot of the members are pretty upset about our first offer. We’re hoping that the second offer is what we’re looking for,” he said. “If not ... we’re going to keep striking and stand up for ourselves.”

The head of Boeing’s commercial-airplanes business, Stephanie Pope, tried this week to discourage the blue-collar workers from thinking that a strike would result in a better offer from the company.

“We bargained in absolute good faith with the IAM team that represents you and your interests,” she said. “Let me be clear: We did not hold back with an eye on a second vote.”

Voting took place at union halls in Washington state, Portland, Oregon, and a smattering of other locations.

Boeing believed it offered a significant benefit to the union by promising to build its next new plane in the Puget Sound area if workers ratified the contract. That plane — not expected until sometime in the 2030s — would replace the 737 Max. It was a key win for union leaders, who want to avoid a repeat of Boeing moving production of Dreamliners from the Seattle area to South Carolina.

The strike will stop production of the 737 Max, Boeing’s best-selling airliner, along with the 777 or “triple-seven” jet and the 767 cargo plane at factories in Renton and Everett, Washington, near Seattle. It likely will not affect Boeing 787 Dreamliners, which are built by nonunion workers in South Carolina.

TD Cowen aerospace analyst Cai von Rumohr said before the vote that it is realistic based on the history of Boeing strikes — the last two were in 1995 and 2008 — to figure that a walkout would last into mid-November, when workers’ \$150 weekly payments from the union’s strike fund might seem low going into the holidays.

A strike that long would cost Boeing up to \$3.5 billion in cash flow because the company gets about 60% of the sale price when it delivers a plane to the buyer, von Rumohr said.

Holden told members Monday the union got everything it could in bargaining and recommended approval of the deal “because we can’t guarantee we can achieve more in a strike.” But many of the rank-and-file remembered the concessions on pensions, health care and pay.

“They are upset. They have a lot of things they want. I think Boeing understands that and wants to satisfy a fair number of them,” said von Rumohr, the aerospace analyst. “The question is, are they going to do enough?”

Boeing has seen its reputation battered since two 737 Max airliners crashed in 2018 and 2019, killing 346 people. The safety of its products came under renewed scrutiny after a panel blew out of a Max during a flight in January.

And now it faces a strike that could cause it to fall farther behind European rival Airbus in orders and deliveries of new jetliners.

A scenic California mountain town walloped by a blizzard is now threatened by wildfire

By ERIC THAYER, EUGENE GARCIA, AMY TAXIN and OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ Associated Press
RUNNING SPRINGS, Calif. (AP) — In the Southern California mountain town of Running Springs, residents live between two scenic lake resorts — a seemingly serene spot but one also caught between the swings of devastating winter snowstorms and menacing summer wildfires.

Niko Rynard is currently evacuated from his home due to the Line Fire, which has charred 58 square miles (150 square km) since the weekend.

About a year and a half ago, the director of the Running Springs Area Chamber of Commerce raced down the mountains during a break in the relentless snowfall his neighbors came to call “Snowmageddon.” Roads were blocked for days.

The 29-year-old, who moved to the area nine years ago from the East Coast, is now staying with friends nearby but said others are shelling out hundreds of dollars to cram into hotel rooms until it’s safe to return.

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The blaze is one of three major wildfires that have ravaged the mountains east of Los Angeles, destroying dozens of homes and forcing the evacuations of thousands of people. While California is only now confronting the height of wildfire season, the state already has seen nearly three times as much acreage burn than during all of 2023.

Much of this, Rynard said, "comes with the territory" and is part of living in a beautiful area. He said long-time residents have told him the massive wildfires are cyclical, much like the snow.

To add to people's rattled nerves, Southern California was rocked by a 4.7-magnitude earthquake Thursday morning.

Running Springs is dubbed the "gateway to the San Bernardino Mountains" and perched more than a mile high. The town was among the communities snowed in when a blizzard walloped the area in 2023. Now, the community has been doused with bright fire-red retardant to protect it.

"It can be tough to live in these environments," said Dawn Rowe, a San Bernardino County supervisor whose district covers mountain communities. "It's beautiful — a lot of people come to visit and they find they might want to relocate for one reason or another. I would encourage everybody to spend an amount of time doing their due diligence."

The Line Fire is burning through dense vegetation that grew after two back-to-back wet winters that included snowstorms that caused tree branches to break, leaving behind a lot of "dead and down fuel," said Cal Fire Operations Section Chief Jed Gaines. Another wildfire threatened the mountain community of Wrightwood about a 50-mile (80-kilometer) drive to the west.

The fires have threatened tens of thousands of homes and other structures across Southern California since they escalated during a triple-digit heat wave over the weekend. Cooler weather was helping firefighters slowly gain the upper hand in battling the blazes. No deaths have been reported, but at least a dozen people, mainly firefighters, have been treated for injuries, mostly heat-related, authorities said.

In one daring rescue caught on video, Cal Fire Riverside County Battalion Chief Mike Martinez saved a lone woman walking within feet of the Airport Fire in Orange County, driving his SUV up to the edge of the blistering flames so she could enter the vehicle.

"This is one of those moments ... you hope you never come across," he told the Los Angeles Times. "I've been doing this for almost 30 years. We're used to extreme fire behavior but to see a civilian walking down the middle of the street was surreal."

Jason Anderson, district attorney for San Bernardino County, said Thursday that nine arson-related charges have been filed against a suspect accused of starting the Line Fire.

"This is particularly galling in a community that unfortunately over the last couple of years has dealt with the scourge of wildfires," he told reporters, adding that the suspect's vehicle has been linked to three areas where fires were started.

The suspect is due to be arraigned in court on Friday.

The full extent of the damage caused by the wildfires remains unclear. The three blazes are:

— The Airport Fire in Orange County, which has burned more than 36 square miles (93 square kilometers). The fire was 5% contained Thursday morning and was reportedly sparked by workers using heavy equipment in the area. Ten firefighters and two residents were injured in the blaze, according to the Orange County Fire Authority. The fire has been difficult to tame because of the steep terrain and dry conditions — and because some areas hadn't burned in decades.

— The Line Fire in the San Bernardino National Forest, which was 18% contained Thursday and has threatened more than 65,000 homes. The blaze has injured three firefighters.

— The Bridge Fire east of Los Angeles, which grew tenfold in a day and has burned 80 square miles (207 square km), torched at least 33 homes and six cabins and forced the evacuation of 10,000 people. The cause of the fire is not yet known. It remained zero percent contained Thursday.

In northern Nevada, the worst danger appears to have passed near Reno where a wildfire on the Sierra's eastern front forced 20,000 evacuations over the weekend. The blaze closed all schools for four days and threatened to burn over the top of the mountains into the Lake Tahoe basin.

Part of the state highway from Reno to Tahoe remained closed Thursday. Authorities further relaxed

evacuation orders after 600 firefighters held fire lines despite winds gusting up to 70 mph (112 kph) the day before and bolstered containment of the 9-square-mile (23-square-kilometer) Davis Fire, now estimated at 37%. Most of the 8,000 residents that began the day under evacuation orders were downgraded to evacuation warnings, allowing them to begin to return to their homes.

"All containment lines ... are holding at this time," Jason Clawson, an operations section chief for the federal firefighting team said at a briefing in Reno late Thursday. "Absolutely no concerns. We have crews, equipment, engines all spread out around the entire fire."

Brazil Indigenous group hails a sacred cloak's homecoming after centuries in Europe

By ELÉONORE HUGHES Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Indigenous chants and the rattle of maracas resounded Thursday in a Rio de Janeiro park, where Brazil's Tupinambá people gathered to celebrate the homecoming of a sacred cloak absent for some 380 years.

Made of feathers from the scarlet ibis, the artifact from northeastern Brazil resided in Copenhagen until the Danish National Museum donated the cloak to its Brazilian counterpart.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Indigenous Peoples Minister Sonia Guajajara attended a ceremony at Brazil's National Museum atop a hill in the Boa Vista Park.

"It is impossible not to appreciate the beauty and strength of this centuries-old and well-preserved piece, even after so much time outside Brazil, abroad. It is our commitment to preserve this heritage," Lula said, addressing dozens of Indigenous people plus others of the general public.

Celebrations to welcome the cloak have been underway since last week. The Tupinambá traveled 28 hours overland from the northeastern state of Bahia to enter the museum where it hangs in carefully calibrated lighting and temperature conditions to ensure its preservation. There, they conducted rituals and prayers with the cloak they view as a living ancestor rather than an object.

Reconnecting with the cloak, which was once central to certain ceremonies, was "really wonderful," Jamopoty Tupinambá, one of the group's leaders, said Wednesday near their encampment in the park. "The emotion was too much. The enchanted ones arrived, too," she said, referring to spiritual ancestors.

Some at the encampment pounded drums on the parched grass amid drifting incense smoke, adorned in feathered headdresses. Anticipation and excitement due to the momentous occasion hung in the air.

The cloak stands at nearly four feet tall, and the Dutch took it from Brazil in about 1644, according to a statement from Brazil's federal government. It has been in Denmark's National Museum for 335 years, it said.

"In the process of colonization, he (the cloak) was taken away abruptly, violently, taking from the people what represented their greatest strength," said Yakuy Tupinambá, an elder of the Indigenous group.

Centuries later, in 2000, the museum in Copenhagen lent the cloak to an exhibition in Sao Paulo. That's when Jamopoty's mother, Amotara Tupinambá, first saw it.

"When she arrived there, she felt great emotion. The cloak showed her, 'I am here.' ... She was amazed," Jamopoty recalled. The notion of petitioning for the cloak's permanent return was born.

Years later, Glicéria Tupinamba, from a village in Bahia state, traveled to Copenhagen to help identify pieces they have in their collection. The idea of securing its homecoming gathered pace.

Museums across Europe are under pressure to repatriate cultural objects. For years, the Greek have demanded the return of sculptures from the Parthenon temple on the Acropolis, which currently reside in the British Museum. French President Emmanuel Macron oversaw the much-trumpeted restitution of colonial-era treasures to Benin in 2021. Since then, France has sent little else of significance amid critics' claims such moves would empty France's cherished museums.

Denmark's National Museum has received three repatriation requests in the past decade, head of research Christian Sune Pedersen told The Associated Press. They responded positively to two, including that of Brazil, deciding to donate one of its five feathered cloaks partly to help rebuild Brazil's national museum

that was ravaged by flames in a devastating 2018 fire.

Bringing it back to Brazil was a complicated operation coordinated between the foreign affairs ministry, Brazil's embassy in Denmark, the national museums of both countries and Tupinambá leaders.

Extreme care was required to avoid damaging the delicate feathers, and its sealed box was only opened once in an air-conditioned environment, said João Pacheco de Oliveira, an anthropologist and curator of the National Museum's ethnographic collections.

It marks the first time that an Indigenous artifact of such significance has been returned to Brazil, he said.

"The expectation is that this will create new possibilities for donations or even repatriation," he said.

Lula's government took office in 2023, pledging to defend Indigenous groups' land rights and established a ministry for Indigenous peoples. Such action stood in contrast to his predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro, who refused to expand Indigenous land.

However, many Indigenous people have bemoaned the slow pace of Lula's government to expel illegal miners and land-grabbers from their territories, and to establish new ones.

In a nod to their frustration, Indigenous Peoples Minister Guajajara said Thursday she wishes the number of demarcated territories were higher.

"We really need this number to reflect the desire of the various Indigenous peoples, who — like the Tupinambá cloak, our relative, whose return we celebrate today — want to return home," she told the crowd.

The Tupinambá are among those asking for their land to be recognized as an Indigenous reserve and given formal protection, a process known as demarcation. Brazil's justice ministry is analyzing their request, according to a June statement from Brazil's Indigenous affairs agency, known as FUNAI.

The cloak's return is even more significant in that context, said Jamopoty Tupinambá.

"The cloak for us is the strength of the people. When he left, the people were weakened. Now he is bringing strength for the demarcation of his territory."

Solar storms may cause faint auroras overnight in parts of Northern Hemisphere

By ADITHI RAMAKRISHNAN AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Solar storms may bring faint but visible auroras to the Northern Hemisphere starting late Thursday and extending into early Friday morning.

But, experts say, don't expect power grids and communications to be disrupted much.

People in Canada and northern U.S. states including Alaska, Washington, Montana, North Dakota and Minnesota may be able to see faint colorful displays, according to the current space weather forecast.

If the moderate solar storms become more intense as nighttime approaches, people as far south as Illinois and New York might be able to glimpse the phenomenon.

"All the stars have to align" for that to happen, said Erica Grow Cei, spokesperson for the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

To spy the spectacle, wait for skies to get dark and then go outside, ideally away from bright city lights. Taking a picture with a smartphone camera may also reveal hints of the aurora that aren't visible to the naked eye.

The sun's magnetic field is at the peak of its 11-year cycle, making storms and aurora displays more frequent. Unusually strong solar storms in May produced vibrant aurora displays across the Northern Hemisphere.

The night storms are expected to be less intense, but could cause brief disruptions to precision GPS machinery like what farmers use to harvest crops, Grow Cei said.

In swing states, Harris touts Republican endorsements while Trump leans into incendiary rhetoric

By BILL BARROW, CHRIS MEGERIAN and JONATHAN J. COOPER Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump launched campaign blitzes Thursday with dramatically different approaches to attracting swing-state voters who will decide the presidential contest.

In North Carolina, Democratic nominee Harris used rallies in Charlotte and Greensboro to tout endorsements from Republicans who have crossed the aisle to back her. She also promised to protect access to health care and abortion, while delighting her partisan crowds with celebrations of her debate performance Tuesday, taking digs at Trump and cheerleading for her campaign and the country.

"We're having a good time, aren't we?" Harris declared, smiling as her boisterous crowd chanted: "USA! USA! USA!"

In the border state of Arizona, the Republican Trump pitched a tax exemption on all overtime wages, adding it to his previous proposals to not tax tips or Social Security income. But the former president squeezed those proposals, along with a nonspecific pledge to lower housing costs, into a stemwinding speech marked by his most incendiary rhetoric on immigration and immigrants themselves, name-calling of Harris and others, and a dark, exaggerated portrait of a nation Trump insisted is in a freefall only he can reverse.

"I was angry at the debate," Trump said, mocking commentators' description of his performance Tuesday. "And, yes, I am angry," he said, because "everything is terrible" since Harris and President Joe Biden are "destroying our country." As he repeated the word "angry," Trump's crowd in Tucson answered with its own "USA! USA! USA!" chants.

The competing visions and narratives underscored the starkly different choices faced by voters in the battleground states that will decide the outcome. Harris is casting a wide net, depending on Democrats' diverse coalition and hoping to add moderate and even conservative Republicans repelled by the former president. Trump, while seeking a broad working-class coalition with his tax ideas, is digging in on arguments about the country — and his political opponents — that are aimed most squarely at his most strident supporters.

That could become a consistent frame for the closing stretch of the campaign after Trump shut the door on another debate. That potentially could have been another seminal moment during a year that already has boomeranged around milestones like Trump's criminal conviction by a New York jury, Trump surviving an assassination attempt, Biden ending his reelection bid amid questions about his age, and Harris consolidating Democratic support to become the first woman of color to lead a major-party ticket.

"There will be no third debate," Trump said Thursday, counting his June matchup against Biden in the total, and insisting he had won his lone encounter with Harris on Tuesday in Philadelphia.

The post-debate blitz reflected the narrow path to 270 Electoral College votes for both candidates, with the campaign already having become concentrated on seven swing states: Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Harris' itinerary Thursday put her in a state Trump won twice, but his margin of 1.3 percentage points in 2020 was his closest statewide victory. Arizona, meanwhile, was one of Trump's narrowest losses four years ago. He won the state in 2016.

In North Carolina, Harris took her own post-debate victory lap, and her campaign already has cut key moments of the debate into ads. But Harris warned against overconfidence, calling herself an underdog and making plain the stakes.

"This is not 2016 or 2020," she said in Charlotte. "Just imagine Donald Trump with no guardrails."

She touted endorsements from Republican former Vice President Dick Cheney and his daughter, former Rep. Liz Cheney, both of whom have deemed Trump a fundamental threat to American values and democracy.

"Democrats, Republicans and independents are supporting our campaign," Harris said in Charlotte, praising

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the Cheneys and like-minded Republicans as citizens who recognize a need to “put country above party and defend our Constitution.”

Yet she also made a full-throated defense of the Affordable Care Act, the 2010 law commonly called “Obamacare” and passed over near-unanimous Republican opposition. She mocked Trump, who has spent years promising to scrap the ACA but said at their debate that he still has no specific replacement in mind.

“He said, ‘concepts of a plan,’” Harris said. “Concepts. Concepts. No actual plan. Concepts. ... Forty-five million Americans are insured through the Affordable Care Act. And he’s going to end it based on a concept.”

She saddled Trump again with the Supreme Court’s decision to end a woman’s federal right to abortion, paving the way for Republican-led states to severely restrict and in some cases effectively ban the procedure.

“Women are being refused care during miscarriages. Some are only being treated when they develop sepsis,” Harris said of states with the harshest restrictions.

The vice president added her usual broadsides against Project 2025, a 900-page policy agenda written by conservatives for a second Trump administration. Trump has distanced himself from the document, though there is a notable overlap between it and his policies — and, for that matter, some of the policy aims of Republicans like the Cheneys.

Harris’ approach in Charlotte and Greensboro tracked perhaps her widest path to victory: exciting and organizing the diverse Democratic base, especially younger generations, nonwhite voters and women, while convincing moderate Republicans who dislike Trump that they should be comfortable with her in the Oval Office, some policy disagreements notwithstanding. That’s the same formula Biden used in defeating Trump four years ago, flipping traditionally GOP-leaning states like Arizona and Georgia and narrowing the gap in North Carolina.

Trump, meanwhile, appears to bet that his path back to the White House depends mostly on his core supporters, plus enough new support from working- and middle-class voters drawn to his promises of tax breaks.

A raucous crowd cheered his new promise to end taxes on overtime wages. The Harris campaign quickly labeled the proposal a “snake oil sales pitch,” noting the Trump administration abandoned Obama administration plans to vastly expand the number of workers eligible for overtime pay in favor of a less generous expansion. In a state where rising housing prices has been an acute issue since the COVID-19 pandemic, Trump also pledged to reduce housing construction costs by “30 to 50 percent” — a staggering drop that he did not detail beyond pledging to cut regulations and ban mortgages “for illegal aliens.”

“We are going to bring back the American dream bigger, better and stronger than ever before,” Trump said, beaming.

But he reserved most of 75 minutes at the podium for, in his words, anger. Mostly about an influx of migrants across the U.S. Southern border, but also about the ABC debate moderators he said were unfair in the debate he insisted he won. He singled out Linsey Davis, calling her “nasty” — the same word he would use to describe his 2016 Democratic rival Hillary Clinton.

Trump ticked through many of his usual immigration bromides, arguing that migrants in the U.S. illegally have “taken over” cities and suburbs. He again alluded to the debunked claims — fueled by right-wing actors on social media — that Haitian immigrants in Springfield, Ohio, are eating domesticated pets and fowl in public parks. Trump invoked the approval of Hungary’s authoritarian leader, Viktor Orban, and he elicited roars when he promised “largest deportation operation in the history of our country.”

Throughout his remarks, the former president mispronounced Harris’ first name, and he insisted she is both a Marxist and a fascist — ideologies that rest on opposite ends of the left-right political spectrum.

Gulf Coast residents still reeling from Hurricane Ida clean up mess left by Francine

By JACK BROOK and SARA CLINE undefined

DULAC, La. (AP) — Shortly after Hurricane Francine's storm surge flooded a cemetery in the Louisiana bayou town of Dulac, Lori-Ann Bergeron arrived Thursday to check on three generations of family graves. Their tombstones were fine, but neighboring caskets had emerged beside broken crosses and soggy flower bouquets.

"It's like this almost every time the water comes up, but this is the only place for them," said Bergeron, 51, who recalled her sister's casket being unearthed when Hurricane Rita ravaged the area in 2005.

"That was rough, trying to bury somebody twice," she said.

From cemeteries to homes to businesses and parks, Gulf Coast residents, many still reeling from the devastation of Hurricane Ida three years ago, were cleaning up the mess left by Francine, which struck Louisiana as a Category 2 hurricane Wednesday.

The storm knocked out power to hundreds of thousands of utility customers, sent a surge of water rushing into coastal communities and raised flooding fears in New Orleans and beyond.

"The human spirit is defined by its resiliency, and resiliency is what defines Louisiana," Gov. Jeff Landry told a news conference. "Certainly there are times and situations that try us, but it is also when we in this state are at our very best."

There were no reports of deaths or injuries, he said.

The storm, which drew fuel from exceedingly warm Gulf of Mexico waters, drenched a large swath of the South, including parts of Arkansas and Florida. Flash flooding threatened cities as far away as Atlanta, Jackson, Mississippi, Birmingham, Alabama and Memphis, Tennessee.

Francine slammed into the Louisiana coast Wednesday evening with 100 mph (155 kph) winds in coastal Terrebonne Parish, battering a fragile coastal region that has not fully recovered from a series of devastating hurricanes in 2020 and 2021. The system then moved at a fast clip toward New Orleans, lashing the city with torrential rain. The city awoke to widespread power outages and debris-covered streets.

Rushing water nearly enveloped a pickup truck in a New Orleans underpass, trapping the driver inside. A 39-year-old emergency room nurse who lived nearby waded into the waist-high water with a hammer, smashed the window and pulled out the driver. The rescue was captured live by WDSU.

"It's just second nature I guess, being a nurse, you just go in and get it done, right?" Miles Crawford told The Associated Press on Thursday. "I just had to get to get him out of there."

The water was up to the driver's head and rising, he said.

News footage from coastal communities showed waves from lakes, rivers and Gulf waters thrashing seawalls. Water poured into city streets in blinding downpours. Oak and cypress trees leaned in the high winds, and some utility poles swayed.

At the storm's peak, 450,000 people in Louisiana were without power, according to the Public Service Commission. Many of the outages were linked to falling debris, not structural damage. At one point, around 500 people were in emergency shelters, officials said.

"The amount of money invested in resilience has really made a difference, from the power outages to the number of homes saved," said Deanne Criswell, the Federal Emergency Management Agency administrator, who attended the governor's news conference.

In the coastal community of Cocodrie in southern Louisiana, where many families own seasonal homes along the bayou for fishing, police guarded a road to prevent looting as people cleaned their properties.

Brooks Pellegrin, 50, and his family cleared muck out of their camp site, a two-story structure with a large dock on a canal about 14 miles (22 kilometers) from the Gulf of Mexico. They worked well into Thursday afternoon raking marsh grass and spraying down muddy floors after a 10-foot (3-meter) storm surge washed away the building's back wall, porch and much of the boat deck.

"We built everything up so we wouldn't have to do this. This one brought in a lot more water than Ida," Pellegrin said. "It packed a lot more punch than I was expecting."

For many in the area bordered by bayous, swamps, lakes and the Gulf of Mexico, threats of flooding and hurricanes have become a way of life, Lafourche Parish Sheriff Craig Webre said.

Water comprises about a quarter of the area in the parish, which is home to about 97,000 people south of New Orleans. In 2021, Ida made landfall in the southern point of the parish as a Category 4 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 150 mph (241 kph).

That storm was "cataclysmic" and "the most significant hurricane" to impact the area. Following the 2021 storm, 90% of homes in the area needed a roof replacement and many houses were damaged beyond repair, Webre said.

Over the years, the area has become more resilient against storms, improving drainage and pumping stations and replacing roofs that can better withstand hurricane-force winds. Residents also are evacuating quicker when there are significant storm threats, Webre said.

"This population is very resilient. They're very independent. They're very pioneering," he said.

Longtime Mexican drug cartel leader set to be arraigned in New York

NEW YORK (AP) — Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada, the powerful longtime leader of Mexico's Sinaloa drug cartel, is scheduled to be arraigned Friday in New York on a 17-count indictment accusing him of narcotics trafficking and murder.

Sought by American law enforcement for more than two decades, Zambada has been in U.S. custody since July 25, when he landed in a private plane at an airport outside El Paso in the company of another fugitive cartel leader, Joaquín Guzmán López, according to federal authorities.

Zambada later said in a letter that he was forcibly kidnapped in Mexico and brought to the U.S. by Guzmán López, the son of the imprisoned Sinaloa co-founder Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán.

U.S. prosecutors in Brooklyn have asked the judge to detain Zambada permanently while he awaits trial. If convicted on all charges, Zambada, 76, faces a minimum sentence of life in prison and would be eligible for the death penalty.

In a letter to the judge, prosecutors called Zambada "one of the world's most notorious and dangerous drug traffickers."

"The defendant maintained an arsenal of military-grade weapons to protect his person, his drugs, and his empire," they wrote. "His heavily armed private security forces were used as his personal bodyguards and as protection for drug shipments throughout Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, and beyond. Moreover, he maintained a stable of 'sicarios,' or hitmen, who carried out gruesome assassinations and kidnappings aimed at maintaining discipline within his organization, protecting against challenges from rivals, and silencing those who would cooperate with law enforcement."

That included ordering the murder, just months ago, of his own nephew, the prosecutors said.

Zambada pleaded not guilty to the charges at an earlier court appearance in Texas.

His surprise arrest has touched off fighting in Mexico between rival factions in the Sinaloa cartel. Gun-fights have killed several people. Schools in businesses in Culiacan, the capital of Sinaloa, have closed amid the fighting. The battles are believed to be between factions loyal to Zambada and those led by other sons of "El Chapo" Guzmán, who was convicted of drug and conspiracy charges and sentenced to life in prison in the U.S. in 2019.

It remains unclear why Guzmán López surrendered to U.S. authorities and brought Zambada with him. Guzmán López is now awaiting trial on a separate drug trafficking indictment in Chicago, where he has pleaded not guilty to drug trafficking and other charges in federal court.

Tua Tagovailoa sustains concussion after hitting head on turf in Dolphins' loss to Bills

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Sports Writer

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP) — Miami Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa sustained a concussion for the third time in his NFL career, leaving his team's game Thursday night against Buffalo after running into defensive back Damar Hamlin and hitting the back of his head against the turf.

Tagovailoa remained down for about two minutes before getting to his feet and walking to the sideline after the play in the third quarter. He made his way to the tunnel not long afterward, looking into the stands before smiling and departing toward the locker room.

The Dolphins needed almost no time before announcing it was a concussion. The team said he had two during the 2022 season, and Tagovailoa was diagnosed with another concussion when he was a college player at Alabama.

Dolphins coach Mike McDaniel said Tagovailoa would get "proper procedural evaluation" and "appropriate care" on Friday.

"The furthest thing from my mind is, 'What is the timeline?' We just need to evaluate and just worry about my teammate, like the rest of the guys are," McDaniel said. "We'll get more information tomorrow and take it day by day from here."

Some players saw Tagovailoa in the locker room after the game and said they were encouraged. Tagovailoa spoke with some players and then went home after the game, McDaniel said.

"I have a lot of love for Tua, built a great relationship with him," said quarterback Skylar Thompson, who replaced Tagovailoa after the injury. "You care about the person more than the player and everybody in the organization would say the same thing. Just really praying for Tua and hopefully everything will come out all right."

Tagovailoa signed a four-year, \$212 million extension before this season — a deal that makes him one of the highest-paid players in the NFL — and was the NFL's leading passer in Week 1 this season. Tagovailoa left with the Dolphins trailing 31-10, and that was the final score.

"If you know Tua outside of football, you can't help but feel for him," Bills quarterback Josh Allen said on Amazon following the game. "He's a great football player but he's an even greater human being. He's one of the best humans on the planet. I've got a lot of love for him and I'm just praying for him and his family, hoping everything's OK. But it's tough, man. This game of football that we play, it's got its highs and it's got its lows — and this is one of the lows."

Tagovailoa's college years and first three NFL seasons were marred by injury, though he positioned himself for a big pay bump with an injury-free and productive 2023 as he led the Dolphins into the playoffs. He threw for 29 touchdowns and a league-best 4,624 yards last year.

When, or if, he can come back this season is anyone's guess. Tagovailoa said in April 2023 that the concussions he had in the 2022 season left him contemplating his playing future. "I think I considered it for a time," he said then, when asked if he considered stepping away from the game to protect himself.

McDaniel said it's not his place to say if Tagovailoa should return to football. "He'll be evaluated and we'll have conversations and progress as appropriate," McDaniel said.

Tagovailoa was hurt Thursday on a fourth-down keeper with about 4:30 left in the third. He went straight ahead into Hamlin and did not slide, leading with his right shoulder instead.

Hamlin was the player who suffered a cardiac arrest after making a tackle during a Monday night game in January 2023 at Cincinnati, causing the NFL to suspend a pivotal game that quickly lost significance in the aftermath of a scary scene that unfolded in front of a national television audience.

Tagovailoa wound up on his back, both his hands in the air and Bills players immediately pointed at him as if to suggest there was an injury. Dolphins center Aaron Brewer quickly did the same, waving to the sideline.

Tagovailoa appeared to be making a fist with his right hand as he lay on the ground. It was movement consistent with something that is referred to as the "fencing response," which can be common after a

traumatic brain injury.

Tagovailoa eventually got to his feet. McDaniel grabbed the side of his quarterback's head and gave him a kiss on the cheek as Tagovailoa departed. Thompson came into the game to take Tagovailoa's spot.

"I love Tua on and off the football field," Bills edge Von Miller said. "I'm a huge fan of him. I can empathize and sympathize with him because I've been there. I wish him the best."

Tagovailoa's history with concussions — and how he has since worked to avoid them — is a huge part of the story of his career, and now comes to the forefront once again.

He had at least two concussions during the 2022 season. He was hurt in a Week 3 game against Buffalo and cleared concussion protocol, though he appeared disoriented on that play but returned to the game.

The NFL later changed its concussion protocol to mandate that if a player shows possible concussion symptoms — including a lack of balance or stability — he must sit out the rest of the game.

Less than a week later, in a Thursday night game at Cincinnati, Tagovailoa was concussed on a scary hit that briefly knocked him unconscious and led to him being taken off the field on a stretcher.

His second known concussion of that season came in a December game against Green Bay, and he didn't play for the rest of the 2022 season. After that, Tagovailoa began studying ways where he may be able to fall more safely and protect himself against further injury — including studying jiu-jitsu.

"I'm not worried about anything that's out of my hands," McDaniel said. "I'm just worried about the human being."

Trump campaigns in Western states as Harris focuses on critical Pennsylvania

By MICHELLE L. PRICE and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Former President Donald Trump will campaign Friday in Western states as his opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris keeps her focus on one of the biggest battleground prizes in the East, Pennsylvania.

Trump is scheduled to hold what's being billed as a news conference in the morning at his Los Angeles-area golf club before heading to northern California for a fundraiser, followed by a rally in Las Vegas, the largest city in swing state Nevada.

Harris, meanwhile, heads to Johnstown and Wilkes-Barre on Friday as she tries to capitalize on her momentum after Tuesday night's debate. It's her second day of back-to-back rallies after holding two events in North Carolina, another swing state, on Thursday.

While speaking in Charlotte, Harris took a victory lap for her debate performance in which she needled Trump and kept him on the defensive. Recounting one moment while campaigning in North Carolina, she mocked Trump for saying he had "concepts of a plan" for replacing the Affordable Care Act.

"Concepts. Concepts. No actual plan. Concepts," she said as the crowd roared with laughter.

Her campaign said she raised \$47 million from 600,000 donors in the 24 hours after her debate with Trump.

Harris said the candidates "owe it to voters to have another debate." But Trump said he won't agree to face off with her again.

Trump's morning event will mark the second Friday in a row that the Republican has scheduled a news conference, though at his last appearance in New York, the former president didn't take any questions. Instead, the Republican for nearly an hour railed against women who have accused him of sexual misconduct over the years, resurrecting the allegations in the public eye days before his debate with Harris.

It's unclear whether Trump plans to speak about any subject in particular at Friday's news conference, but his campaign has added more to his schedule since early August as he tries to contrast himself with Harris. She has not held a news conference since becoming a presidential candidate and the Democrat has only sat for one in-depth interview.

Her campaign has said she will start doing more interviews with local media outlets concentrated in battleground states.

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After appearing at his golf club in upscale Rancho Palos Verdes, Trump will head to a fundraiser in the afternoon in the Bay Area town of Woodside that is being hosted by billionaire software developer Tom Siebel and his wife, Stacey Siebel. Tom Siebel is the second cousin once removed of Jennifer Siebel Newsom, the wife of California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat and surrogate for Harris.

Attendees will pay at least \$3,300 per person or raise \$10,000 for the campaign, according to an invitation. Top-tier donors will get a photo, reception and roundtable, paying \$500,000 for a couple to be on the host committee or \$150,000 per person to be a co-host.

It's Trump's second fundraising stop in California in as many days as he tries to make up fundraising ground against Harris.

Even before she raked in cash after the debate, the vice president reported raising \$361 million in August from nearly 3 million donors, her first full month as a candidate after replacing President Joe Biden. Trump brought in \$130 million over the same period. Harris' campaign reported that it started September with \$109 million more on hand than Trump's did.

On Friday night, he heads to Las Vegas, where he'll have a rally in the city's downtown area. Trump was in the city last month for a brief stop to promote his proposal to end federal taxes on workers' tips, something that's expected to especially resonate in the tourist city, where much of the service-based economy includes workers who rely on tips. He announced a new proposal Thursday to end taxes on overtime pay.

The swing state is one that Trump narrowly lost in 2016 and 2020 and is among about half a dozen that both campaigns are heavily focused on.

The Republican presidential ticket has visited Clark County, Nevada, four times since June. Trump has held campaign events in Las Vegas three times, while his running mate, Sen. JD Vance, held a rally in suburban Henderson in July.

The Democratic ticket also has visited four times, although two of those campaign events were by President Joe Biden before he dropped out of the race. Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, had a joint rally in Las Vegas last month, and Walz visited the city again Tuesday.

Former drilling foe Harris now says she supports it. 'Sprint to the middle' or climate betrayal?

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Even as she promoted her efforts to boost clean energy, Vice President Kamala Harris said in Tuesday's debate that the Biden-Harris administration has overseen "the largest increase in domestic oil production in history because of an approach that recognizes that we cannot over rely on foreign oil."

The comment by Harris, a longtime climate hawk who backed the original Green New Deal, surprised supporters and opponents alike — and conflicted with frequent boasts by Harris and President Joe Biden that they are champions in the fight to slow global warming.

After former President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Biden-Harris administration reentered the global pact aimed at reducing emissions. The administration also set a target to slash U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and moved to accelerate renewable energy projects and shift away from fossil fuels.

Liam Donovan, a Republican strategist, said it was notable that at a debate in energy-rich Pennsylvania, Harris chose to "brag about something that President Biden has barely acknowledged — that domestic fossil fuel production under the Biden administration is at an all-time high." Crude production averaged 12.9 million barrels a day last year, eclipsing a previous record set in 2019 under Trump, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

The statement was "another sign of Harris' sprint to the middle" on energy policy and other issues, Donovan said.

Harris went one step further, rebranding the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act — the administration's signature climate law — as a boon to fracking and other drilling, thanks to lease-sale requirements inserted

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into the bill by independent West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, a key swing vote in the Senate and a strong supporter of the fossil fuel industry.

Harris's comments disappointed some in the environmental community.

"Harris missed a critical opportunity to lay out a stark contrast with Trump and show young voters that she will stand up to Big Oil and stop the climate crisis," said Stevie O'Hanlon, a spokesperson for the Sunrise Movement, one of the groups behind the Green New Deal.

"Harris spent more time promoting fracking than laying out a bold vision for a clean energy future," O'Hanlon said. "Young voters want more from Harris" on climate change, she added. "We want to see a real plan that meets the scale and urgency of this crisis."

Her group is working to turn out young voters, "but we hear people asking every day, 'What are Democrats going to do for us?'" O'Hanlon said. "To win, Harris needs to show young people she will fight for us."

Other environmental groups were less critical, citing the looming threat to climate action posed by Trump, who rolled back more than 100 environmental protections during his term as president.

"There is only one presidential candidate who is a champion for climate action and that is Kamala Harris," said Alex Glass, a spokesperson for Climate Power, a liberal advocacy group. Harris "laid out a clear vision to invest in clean energy jobs and lower costs for working families," Glass said.

By comparison, she said Trump "will do the bidding of his Big Oil donors."

Glass cited the conservative Project 2025, written by Trump allies, saying it will put millions of clean-energy jobs at risk and let oil companies "profiteer and pollute." Trump has denied a direct connection to Project 2025 but has endorsed some of its key ideas.

Mike Sommers, president and CEO of the American Petroleum Institute, the oil and gas industry's top lobbying group, said Harris' comment in support of fracking reflected political reality in the closely contested election. "You have to be for fracking to be elected president in 2024," he said. "That's good news for our industry and great news for American consumers."

Asked why he was so confident about the need to support fracking, Sommers offered a one-word answer: "Pennsylvania."

Not only is it a key swing state in the election, Pennsylvania also "is the beating heart of the natural gas industry in this country," Sommers said, second only to Texas in total production.

"You don't win Pennsylvania without supporting fracking, and you don't win the presidency without Pennsylvania," Sommers said.

In the debate, Trump disputed Harris's claim that she will not try to ban fracking, but Sommers said he takes Harris at her word and welcomes her support for fracking and oil drilling more generally.

Asked if he was concerned about Harris' past actions suing oil companies, Sommers said no. The oil and gas industry supports 11 million jobs, he said, and the price of gasoline "is determined by economics — supply and demand. There is no man behind the curtain" rigging prices.

As California attorney general, Harris "won tens of millions in settlements against Big Oil and held polluters accountable," her campaign says. Her platform includes a promise to "hold polluters accountable to secure clean air and water for all."

Trump, meanwhile, has vowed to rescind unspent funds from the climate law and other programs, and said he will target offshore wind projects. He said Harris would move to restrict onshore oil and gas production if elected.

"They'll go back to destroying our country, and oil will be dead, fossil fuel will be dead," Trump said.

A president's power to restrict fracking, even on federal lands, is limited, and barring the practice on private land would require an act of Congress.

Congress targets Chinese influence in health tech. It could come with tradeoffs

By DIDI TANG and HAVEN DALEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A California biotechnology company that helps doctors detect genetic causes for cancer is among those that could be cut out of the U.S. market over ties to China, underscoring the possible tradeoffs between health innovation and a largely bipartisan push in Congress to counter Beijing's global influence.

The competition between the world's superpowers is hitting Complete Genomics, whose employees, some in white lab coats stitched with U.S. flag arm patches, spin samples in test tubes and huddle around computers in San Jose. Its founder and chief scientific officer said he's frustrated that geopolitics is interfering with science.

"It's just a loss for the research and for the industry," Radoje Drmanac said.

The U.S. House this week overwhelmingly passed the BIOSECURE Act, which cites national security in preventing federal money from benefiting Complete Genomics and four other companies linked to China. They work with U.S. drugmakers to develop new medications or help doctors diagnose diseases.

It is part of a sweeping package of bills aimed at countering China's influence and power, especially in technology, that Congress largely backed this week. The biotech measure, which cleared the House with a 306-81 vote, now heads to the Senate.

Supporters say the legislation is necessary to protect Americans' health care data, reduce reliance on China in the medical supply chain and ensure the U.S. gains an edge in the biotech field, which both countries call crucial to their economy and security.

Opponents say the bill, which would ban China-linked companies from working with firms that receive U.S. government money, would delay clinical trials and hinder development of new drugs, raise costs for medications and hurt innovation.

Rep. Brad Wenstrup, an Ohio Republican and the bill's sponsor, said House approval was the first step in protecting Americans' genetic data and reversing the trend of relying on Beijing for gene testing and basic medical supplies.

"For too long, U.S. policy has failed to recognize the twin economic and national security threats posed by China's domination of particular markets and supply chains," he said.

Rep. James Comer, a Kentucky Republican who chairs the House Oversight Committee, said it's necessary to protect U.S. interests before these companies "become more embedded in the U.S. economy, university systems and federal contracting base."

Rep. Jim McGovern, D-Mass., argued that the legislation, which he opposed, should not name specific companies without due process, saying, "If one of these five companies does not belong on the list, too bad, Congress doesn't like you, and that's that."

Drmanac of Complete Genomics, a subsidiary of China-based company MGI, said the privacy of Americans' personal information is not a concern because his company's instruments are only connected to local U.S. servers.

The company also has argued that Congress should broadly apply data protection standards and requirements rather than targeting a small subset of companies.

Some analysts see the issue as more about industry competition than protecting people's personal information from the Chinese government.

"You want to make sure that American pharmaceutical companies and biotechnology companies are on an even footing in terms of their ability to compete both inside the U.S. market and then also abroad," said Andrew Reddie, a public policy professor at the University of California, Berkeley, who studies the intersection of technology, politics and security and founded the Berkeley Risk and Security Lab.

Complete Genomics is listed in the legislation along with BGI, MGI, WuXi AppTec and WuXi Biologics. MGI is a spinoff of BGI, a heavyweight genomics company based in China that offers genetic sequencing services for research purposes in the U.S.

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BGI Group called the bill "a false flag targeting companies under the premise of national security" and said, "We strictly follow rules and laws, and we have no access to Americans' personal data in any of our work."

MGI said the bill would "serve only to stifle competition and foster a monopoly in DNA testing."

WuXi AppTec and WuXi Biologics work as contractors providing research, development and manufacturing services for U.S. drugmakers. Such services are considered crucial for American pharmaceutical companies to develop and make new drugs.

WuXi AppTec said it and others in the industry are concerned about the bill's impact on biotechnology innovation, drug development, patient care and health care costs. It urged the Senate not to move forward without addressing "these serious consequences."

In filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, dozens of U.S. biotech companies have flagged the BIOSECURE Act as a concern, saying it could have major effects on the pharmaceutical supply chain because of the industry's extensive partnerships with Chinese companies.

Drugmaker Eli Lilly says its third-party suppliers are "sometimes the sole global source for a component" but it has been working to move some development and manufacturing closer to home, which typically takes several years "due to scientific and regulatory complexity and the need to ensure process and product quality."

BIO, the largest advocacy group for U.S. biotech companies and research institutions, supports the bill, saying it reinforces the industry's national security imperative.

The bill, which gives U.S. companies eight years to break ties with Chinese firms, has provided "a reasonable timeframe" for the decoupling, group CEO John Crowley said.

Too much? Many Americans feel the need to limit their political news, AP-NORC/USAFacts poll finds

By DAVID BAUDER and LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — When her husband turns on the television to hear news about the upcoming presidential election, that's often a signal for Lori Johnson Malveaux to leave the room.

It can get to be too much. Often, she'll go to a TV in another room to watch a movie on the Hallmark Channel or BET. She craves something comforting and entertaining. And in that, she has company.

While about half of Americans say they are following political news "extremely" or "very" closely, about 6 in 10 say they need to limit how much information they consume about the government and politics to avoid feeling overloaded or fatigued, according to a new survey from the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and USAFacts.

Make no mistake: Malveaux plans to vote. She always does. "I just get to the point where I don't want to hear the rhetoric," she said.

The 54-year-old Democrat said she's most bothered when she hears people on the news telling her that something she saw with her own eyes — like the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol — didn't really happen.

"I feel like I'm being gaslit. That's the way to put it," she said.

Sometimes it feels like 'a bombardment'

Caleb Pack, 23, a Republican from Ardmore, Oklahoma, who works in IT, tries to keep informed through the news feeds on his phone, which is stocked with a variety of sources, including CNN, Fox News, The Wall Street Journal and The Associated Press.

Yet sometimes, Pack says, it seems like a bombardment.

"It's good to know what's going on, but both sides are pulling a little bit extreme," he said. "It just feels like it's a conversation piece everywhere, and it's hard to escape it."

Media fatigue isn't a new phenomenon. A Pew Research Center survey conducted in late 2019 found roughly two in three Americans felt worn out by the amount of news there is, about the same as in a poll taken in early 2018. During the 2016 presidential campaign, about 6 in 10 people felt overloaded by

campaign news.

But it can be particularly acute with news related to politics. The AP-NORC/USAFacts poll found that half of Americans feel a need to limit their consumption of information related to crime or overseas conflicts, while only about 4 in 10 are limiting news about the economy and jobs.

It's easy to understand, with television outlets like CNN, Fox News Channel and MSNBC full of political talk and a wide array of political news online, sometimes complicated by disinformation.

"There's a glut of information," said Richard Coffin, director of research and advocacy for USAFacts, "and people are having a hard time figuring out what is true or not."

Women are more likely to feel they need to limit media

In the AP-NORC poll, about 6 in 10 men said they follow news about elections and politics at least "very" closely, compared to about half of women. For all types of news, not just politics, women are more likely than men to report the need to limit their media consumption, the survey found.

White adults are also more likely than Black or Hispanic adults to say they need to limit media consumption on politics, the poll found.

Kaleb Aravzo, 19, a Democrat, gets a baseline of news by listening to National Public Radio in the morning at home in Logan, Utah. Too much politics, particularly when he's on social media sites like TikTok and Instagram, can trigger anxiety and depression.

"If it pops up on my page when I'm on social media," he said, "I'll just scroll past it."

Pope ends Asia trip with same message at the start: Interfaith tolerance to heal troubled world

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — Pope Francis wrapped up his visit to Singapore on Friday by praising its tradition of interfaith harmony, closing out his four-nation trip through Asia with the same message of tolerance that he delivered at the start.

Francis presided over a gathering of young people from some of the religious traditions that are present in Singapore, where mosques, Buddhist temples and Christian churches stand side-by-side among the city-state's iconic skyscrapers.

In a sign he was enjoying himself, Francis ditched his speech and urged the youths to take risks, even if it means making mistakes. But he came back to the topic at hand to make his main point about the need for people of different faiths to engage in constructive dialogue rather than insist on the righteousness of their particular beliefs.

"All religions are a path to arrive at God," he said. "They are like different languages to arrive there. But God is God for all."

It was Francis' last event before he boarded the Singapore Airlines A35-900 plane for the 12-hour, 35-minute flight back to Rome to complete the longest and farthest trip of his pontificate.

Francis was in Singapore to encourage its Catholics, who make up about 3.5% of the population of just under 6 million, while highlighting Singapore's tradition of interfaith coexistence. According to a 2020 census, Buddhists make up about 31% of the population, Christians 19% and Muslims 15%, while about a fifth of the population claimed no religious belief whatsoever.

History's first Latin American pope offered an overwhelmingly positive message in one of the world's wealthiest countries, praising Singapore's economic development and making only one public appeal: that it treat its immigrant workers with dignity and a fair wage.

In his public remarks, he avoided any controversial issues such as Singapore's use of capital punishment, which Francis has declared is "inadmissible" in all circumstances. Francis has raised the church's opposition to death penalty while visiting countries where it is used, including Bahrain. But at least in his public remarks, Francis made no mention of it while in Singapore, perhaps a show of deference to his hosts during a trip that is likely being closely watched in China, where the Vatican is seeking better ties.

Francis' 11-day journey took him to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and East Timor before Singapore. The

32,814 kilometers (20,390 miles) by air clocked for the trip make it the longest and farthest of his pontificate, and one of the longest ever papal voyages in terms of days on the road and distances travelled. Only some of St. John Paul II's trips in the 1980s were longer.

As war rages in Gaza, Israel's crackdown on West Bank insurgency is killing Palestinian youths

By ADAM GELLER and JALAL BWAITEL Associated Press

JENIN, West Bank (AP) — In the web of battered, sunbaked streets winding up the hillside, bloodshed is as unrelenting as the heat. So it is not hard to see why, when raid sirens and gunfire erupted yet again on a morning in late May, 15-year-old Mahmoud Hamadneh turned his bike down an alley that held the promise of refuge.

The narrow lane, a few hundred yards from his school, looks like an urban oasis, shaded by olive branches that reach across walls on either side. On a recent afternoon the cooing of doves and whine of cicadas amplified its stillness. Only the faded stain of Mahmoud's blood in the pavement and a stone, hand-lettered with his name, betrayed the illusion.

"He didn't do anything. He didn't make a single mistake," says Amjad Hamadneh, whose son, a buzz-cut devotee of computer games, was one of two teens killed that morning in the opening minutes of a raid by Israeli forces.

"If he'd been a freedom fighter or was carrying a weapon, I would not be so emotional," says his father, an unemployed construction worker. "But he was taken just as easily as water going down your throat. He only had his books and a pencil case."

Jenin's refugee camp has long been notorious as a hotbed of Palestinian militancy, raided repeatedly by Israeli forces who have occupied the West Bank since seizing control in their 1967 war with neighboring Arab states. During the two-day raid that began the morning of May 21, Israeli troops traded fire with Palestinian gunmen. Militant groups said eight of the 12 Palestinians killed were their fighters.

But the casualties that day, and many others in recent months, went beyond armed men engaged in the region's seemingly endless conflict. As the world's attention focuses on the far more deadly war in Gaza less than 80 miles away, scores of Palestinian teens have been killed, shot and arrested in the West Bank, where the Israeli military has waged a monthslong crackdown.

More than 150 teens and children 17 or younger have been killed in the embattled territory since Hamas' brutal attack on communities in southern Israel set off the war last October. Most died in nearly daily raids by the Israeli army that Amnesty International says have used disproportionate and unlawful force.

Youths represent almost a quarter of the nearly 700 Palestinians slain in the West Bank since the war began, the most since the violent uprising known as the Second Intifada in the early 2000s. More than 20 Israeli civilians and soldiers have been killed in the territory since October.

At the same time, Israel, which has long jailed Palestinians from the West Bank without charge, has extended that practice to many more teens. After October, food deprivation, overcrowding of cells and other mistreatment escalated sharply, the recently released and advocates say.

It is clear from statements by the Israeli military, insurgents and families in the West Bank that a number of the Palestinian teens killed in recent months were members of militant groups.

Many others were killed during protests or when they or someone nearby threw rocks or home-made explosives at military vehicles. Still others appear to have been random targets. Taken together, the killings raise troubling questions about the devaluation of young lives in pursuit of security and autonomy.

Grief over those deaths has been shadowed by trepidation. Israeli raids won't eliminate militant groups, survivors say. Instead, some fear, the pain of losing so many youths risks the opposite — pulling siblings, friends and classmates left behind into the region's vortex of vengeance.

An intense crackdown

After Hamas killed 1,200 people in Israel last October and took 250 others hostage, long-smoldering tensions exploded.

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Israel responded with a sweeping military campaign in Gaza that Palestinian authorities say has killed more than 40,000 people. That has fueled anger and insurgency in the West Bank, where Israeli forces police about 3 million Palestinians while assigned to protect 500,000 Jewish settlers.

The embattled territory was already seeing deadly clashes before the war began. But Israel's military has significantly stepped up raids in the months since, characterized by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as part of the larger battle in Gaza and along the border with Lebanon to permanently disable militant groups that have long threatened his country's security.

"I can assure you one thing: What has been is not what will be," he told commanders during a June meeting in the West Bank. "We will change this reality."

A military spokesman said the Israeli army makes great efforts to avoid harming civilians during raids and "does not target civilians, period." He said human rights groups focus on a few outlier cases.

Military operations in the West Bank are fraught because forces are pursuing militants, many in their teens, who often hide among the civilian population, said the spokesman, Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani.

"In many cases many of them are 15, 16 years old who are not wearing uniforms and might surprise you with a gun, with a knife," he said.

But critics say the crackdown is shaped by retribution, not only military strategy.

"The pressure is similar to post-Second Intifada, but there's something different. And that something different is Oct. 7th," says Nadav Weiman, a former Israeli army sniper who leads Breaking the Silence, an anti-occupation veterans' group that gathers testimony from soldiers assigned to the West Bank and Gaza.

Throughout the military ranks "there is a feeling of revenge," he says. Many soldiers view Palestinians "as an entity. They are not individuals. So you unleash your anger everywhere."

The crackdown extends to the military's treatment of jailed teens, says Ayed Abu Eqtaish of Defense for Children International-Palestine, an advocacy group. Israeli authorities have declared it a terrorist organization, alleging ties to a Palestinian nationalist faction.

With the military holding more teens without charge in grim conditions, while restricting communication, families are increasingly uncertain of their wellbeing, Eqtaish says.

"After Oct. 7," he says, "everything deteriorated."

War in an instant

Even before Israel launched a major military operation in the West Bank in late August, its troops had raided Jenin dozens of times since the war began.

Yet throughout the city's urbanized refugee camp, where concrete homes wedge against one another on streets ripped up by military bulldozers, there are many indicators that militants remain entrenched.

Signs at the perimeter of the camp, opened in 1953 to house Palestinians who fled or were driven from what is now Israel in the war following its establishment, mark the territory of the Jenin Brigades, an umbrella organization of militant groups.

Guards stop cars they don't recognize, especially those with Israeli plates. Posters of smiling young men armed with assault rifles – tributes to militants killed in clashes – decorate walls and utility poles.

For years, Amjad Hamadneh and wife Kholoud planned for the day they would take their children away from all this. In the meantime, their home in the uppermost reaches of the camp – with a grandfather clock presiding over the living room and bedrooms filled with children's toys and son Mahmoud's beloved computer -- kept them on the fringes of conflict.

Most days Amjad, 46, left home around 3:30 a.m. to reach a construction job in northern Israel. That income was lost when Israel suspended work permits for Palestinians last October. By then, though, he'd begun building a home on a plot near the city of Nablus.

The couple envisioned a place that would last for decades, with apartments for their twin sons and daughter when they eventually married. To help pay for it, they moved the boys from a private academy to the public Al Karamah school at the base of the hill.

"All of my work, all of my life was for them," Amjad says.

On the morning of May 21, a Tuesday, the Hamadneh brothers rushed off to make a scheduled final exam. Down the hillside, Osama Hajir, a former classmate who had dropped out of school to work, left

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home on his motorcycle to begin a day of deliveries. It was just after 7:30 a.m.

In Jenin, though, any hour can see the camp morph into a war zone.

It might start like it did one recent afternoon, when a guard outside the camp's Ottoman Era train depot mentioned that unmarked military vehicles had been spotted on the outskirts.

A minute or two later sirens began screaming, warning that special forces were already in the camp. Shopkeepers yanked down their gates. Fleeing residents drove against one-way traffic. Many were still seeking shelter when the sound of gunfire sliced through the summer air.

When the sirens erupted that morning in May, Amjad Hamadneh says, he called Mahmoud on his cell-phone and was relieved to hear that the brothers had reached their school, behind walls painted with student murals.

Then son Ahmed called back to say that the principal had dismissed classes. As students poured into the street, the brothers were separated in the chaos.

Rushing for their electric bikes, classmate Karam Miazneh saw Mahmoud ahead of him. Both were still within a few hundred yards of the school when witnesses say a sniper in an upper floor window of a recently completed apartment building began firing at people and cars below.

Karam veered into an alley, raising a textbook overhead to show he was a student, as four bullets ripped past him. Then a fifth exploded into his shoulder and he dropped to the ground.

At the mouth of the next block, four bullets hit Mahmoud as he raced toward the alley walls, before another pierced his skull. He was the third student from his school killed in a raid since the war began.

A few blocks away, his former classmate, Osama, lay fatally wounded on the pavement. The dead that morning also included a teacher from the primary school next to Mahmoud's and a doctor from the hospital down the street.

"Now when I hear the sound of sirens I go to my room and stay there," says Karam, showing the shrapnel and bone fragments doctors removed from his shoulder. "I'm still in fear that they will come to shoot me and kill me."

The Israeli army said in a statement to the AP that it has stepped up raids since Oct. 7 to apprehend militants suspected of carrying out attacks in the West Bank and that "the absolute majority of those killed during this period were armed or involved in terrorist activities at the time of the incident."

Immediately after the May raid, a spokesman for the army said it had carried out the operation with Israeli border police and the country's internal security agency, destroying an explosive device laboratory and other structures used by militants. But police recently declined to comment, and three weeks after the AP asked the military to answer questions about the May raid, an army spokesman said he was unable to comment until he could confer with police.

When Amjad Hamadneh heard his son had been wounded, he sped through Jenin's twisting streets, drawing gunfire as he neared the hospital. But Mahmoud was already gone. The grief was so intense, his father says, that he couldn't bear to remain in the building.

"God has given and God has taken away," he told his wife as he ushered her away.

Nearby, Osama's father, Muhamad, broke down as he leaned over his son's body. Months earlier he'd snapped a photo of the smiling teen beside graffiti touting Jenin as "the factory of men," tirelessly cranking out fighters in the resistance against Israel. Now, he pressed that same, still-smooth face between his hands.

"Oh, my son. Oh, my son," he sobbed. "My beautiful son."

Punishing conditions

In a village a half-hour's drive from Jenin, Qasam Masarweh recounts an odyssey that began months before the war. On that night, he lost his right hand to an Israeli stun grenade. But in the weeks after Oct. 7, the soft-spoken teen says, his encounter with the military turned even more punishing.

"Before Oct. 7 there were six of us in the cell. Afterwards, there were 12," says Masarweh, who was held for months without charge in Israel's Megiddo Prison. "There were beatings. There was no food. Our clothes were taken from us. There were so many ways of humiliation."

Since its war with Hamas began, Israel has more than doubled the number of Palestinians jailed without

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charge, known as administrative detention. The vast majority are men.

But the number of teens in administrative detention has also increased sharply. Of more than 200 Palestinian youths 17 or younger in military prisons in June, 75 were in administrative detention, the most since watchdog groups began collecting figures. Last year at the same time, 18 youths were being held without charge.

Like their adult counterparts, teens released recently report severe mistreatment following the October attack.

"The big change is definitely in detention conditions. The gloves have really come off," said Gerard Horton, co-founder of Military Court Watch, which gathers testimony from Palestinian prisoners.

"We never used to document that much violence in relation to children. There was some, but it wasn't commonplace," he says.

Israeli officials have acknowledged toughening treatment of Palestinian prisoners since October, while still abiding by international law. A spokesperson for far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, whose ministry oversees prisons, said that policy, intended to deter terrorism, does not provide any special conditions for prisoners 17 and under.

"They are terrorists just like any other terrorists, there's no difference," said the spokesman, Yedidya Grossman.

Masarweh, who turned 18 late last year, says his odyssey began in June 2023, the night before his last high school exam. As he walked home from meeting friends, military vehicles entered his village of Rumannah, firing an object that landed at his feet. Assuming it contained tear gas, he reached down to throw it away.

When the grenade exploded, it blew off most of his right hand. Discharged after nine days in a Jenin hospital, he stopped to visit an aunt in the refugee camp. When a raid began, soldiers stormed the house, beating the teen before taking him into custody.

Masarweh, who says he hoped to become a veterinarian before losing his hand, was ordered held for four months without charge. After Oct. 7, treatment turned even harsher. Authorities immediately reduced food and took away blankets and soap. They packed his cell with prisoners, all 17 or younger, requiring half to sleep on the floor.

A 17-year-old arrested in a raid on the Qalquilya refugee camp told Horton's group that after Oct. 7 guards confiscated all personal belongings from prisoners, denying them time outside or showers.

Another said guards removed window panels, making cells uncomfortably chilly for prisoners left only with what they'd been wearing at the time of their arrest.

The mistreatment, Masarweh says, continued until late November when guards cuffed his remaining hand and took him from the cell for questioning. After telling an investigator he did not know why he had been arrested, he was transferred to another prison without explanation.

Finally, after midnight, Red Cross officials entered to tell him he would be released in a deal trading Palestinian prisoners for Israeli hostages.

Back at home, Masarweh says he still worries about the new arrivals that more seasoned prisoners called "cubs," who he left behind. With the stump at the base of his arm wrapped in gauze, he is uncertain about how he will earn a living.

"It's already hard enough to take care of yourself with two hands," he says. "Imagine doing it with one."
Boys of war

On the June afternoon that 17-year-old Issa Jallad was killed, video from a neighbor's security camera shows, he was on a friend's motorbike with an Israeli armored vehicle in close pursuit.

Was the teen – declared a holy warrior on a poster outside his family's Jenin home showing him cradling an assault rifle – armed that day? Exactly what happened in the moments before he was shot?

The grainy tape, reviewed by The Associated Press days after the June 6 raid, and others from nearby cameras, raise but do not fully answer difficult questions about where he fit in a conflict with no clear boundaries.

"We were going to have one celebration and now we will have two," says his sister, Rania, 24, whose

marriage had long been planned for three days after the raid. "My wedding and the martyrdom of my brother."

It's clear that a number of Palestinian youths killed in recent months belonged to militant groups. Many others died in countless scenarios where lines between civilian and combatant are blurred. Some threw rocks or home-made explosives at military vehicles. Others served as lookouts. Some hung near militants, aspiring to one day join their ranks.

"All of this generation, not only my son, if you ask them what they want to be, they will say 'I want to be a militant and defend my country,'" says Mawaheb Morei, the mother of a 15-year-old killed in an October drone attack. The family says he was hanging out in a cemetery where several militants were present.

Two years before her son was killed, Morei says, she confiscated and dismantled a plastic rifle he used to play fighter. But that did nothing to dissuade him.

The Israeli army, responding to questions from the AP about the killing of Jallad in the June raid, said that its soldiers had spotted two militants handling a powerful explosive device. When the pair tried to flee, troops opened fire and "neutralized them." It said the circumstances of the incident are under review.

But an Israeli human rights group, B'Tselem, says its review of multiple security camera videos showed Jallad and his friend were well-removed from where troops and militants clashed, and that the pair posed no threat.

Jallad's brother, Mousa, says the teen had gone out to move a car so it wouldn't be hit by a military vehicle. His sister said the family is proud of him and that when she has children they will carry on the resistance.

"We all expected to be in this situation," Mousa Jallad said as neighbors came to pay condolences. "I knew this could happen. It could happen to any of us."

Burying the young

The old cemetery, with a water dispenser under shade trees for weary mourners, had run out of space. So last year residents cleared a lot across the road from an elementary school, turning it into a graveyard for Jenin's most recent casualties.

It is filling fast.

A row back from where the Hamadnehs buried their son in May rests a 14-year-old classmate who died in a November raid. Two graves over, a stone plastered with the photo of a smiling boy in a bowtie memorializes an 8-year-old killed days later while accompanying youths who threw rocks at military vehicles.

Just beyond, banners picturing dead men and boys, many holding assault rifles, line a wall. One honors a 17-year-old militant. Another mourns 15-year-old Eid Morei, who told his mother he wanted to become one.

Since Mahmoud Hamadneh was killed, his siblings ask frequently to visit his grave. His younger sister now sleeps in his bed so her surviving brother, Ahmed, will not be in the room alone. But there is no filling the emptiness of Mahmoud's absence.

"I feel like I cannot breathe. We used to do everything together," Ahmed says. His father listens closely, despairing later that such grief could drive the teen into militancy. If the risk is so clear to a Palestinian father, he says, why don't Israeli soldiers see it?

"They think that if they kill us that people will be afraid and not do anything," he says. "But when the Israelis kill someone, 10 fighters will be created in his place."

Federal review of Uvalde shooting finds Border Patrol missteps but does not recommend discipline

By VALERIE GONZALEZ and JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

U.S. Border Patrol agents who rushed to the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, in 2022 failed to establish command and had inadequate training to confront what became one of the nation's deadliest classroom attacks, according to a federal report released Thursday. But investigators concluded the agents did not violate rules and no disciplinary action was recommended.

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The roughly 200-page report from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Professional Responsibility does not assign overarching blame for the hesitant police response at Robb Elementary School, where a teenage gunman with an AR-style rifle killed 19 students and two teachers inside a fourth-grade classroom. Nearly 200 U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers were involved in the response, more than any other law enforcement agency.

The gunman was inside the classroom for more than 70 minutes before a tactical team, led by Border Patrol, went inside and killed the shooter.

Much of the report — which the agency says was initiated to “provide transparency and accountability” — retells the chaos, confusion and numerous police missteps that other scathing government reports have already laid bare. Some victims' family members bristled over federal investigators identifying no one deserving of discipline.

“The failure of arriving law enforcement personnel to establish identifiable incident management or command and control protocols led to a disorganized response to the Robb Elementary School shooting,” the report stated. “No law enforcement official ever clearly established command at the school during the incident, leading to delays, inaction, and potentially further loss of life.”

Customs and Border Protection said in a statement that investigators “concluded none of the CBP personnel operating at the scene were found to have violated any rule, regulation, or law, and no CBP personnel were referred for disciplinary action.”

Families of the victims have long sought accountability for the slow law enforcement response.

Jesse Rizo, whose niece Jacklyn Cazares was one of the students killed, said that while he hadn't seen the report, he was briefed by family members and was disappointed to hear that it held no one accountable.

“We've expected certain outcomes after these investigations, and it's been letdown after letdown,” said Rizo, a member of Uvalde's school board.

Federal officials said the report aimed to determine if agents complied with relevant rules and laws, and if anything could improve their performance in the future.

The report catalogs an array of breakdowns and paints a scene of disorder.

One Border Patrol agent said he couldn't determine who was in command because there were so many agencies. Another agent told investigators he was working an overtime shift when he rushed to the school and was allegedly told by a state trooper, “The chief is in the room with the guy.” He said that led him to believe it was a standoff, so he began directing traffic.

Some Border Patrol agents drove more than 70 miles (113 kilometers) to the school, which is located near the U.S.-Mexico border. One agent told investigators the scene looked “like a Hollywood movie with all the lights and chaos.” Another supervisor said he looked for a command post but no one knew where it was.

According to messages between agents in the Border Patrol's tactical unit, one agent wrote at 11:44 a.m., “Get everyone to Robb school in Uvalde. There's a possible/shooting guy with AK/AR.” A minute later, an agent sends a message: “Barricaded subject is what their calling it.”

Among the findings in the report was that agents' active shooter training had not addressed dealing with a shooter behind a locked door or assessing medical needs.

Nearly 400 local, state and federal officers responded, including over 90 state police officials. Multiple federal and state investigations have laid bare cascading problems in law enforcement training, communication, leadership and technology, and questioned whether officers prioritized their own lives over those of children and teachers.

Two of the responding officers now face criminal charges. Former Uvalde school Police Chief Pete Arredondo and former school officer Adrian Gonzales have pleaded not guilty to multiple charges of child abandonment and endangerment. Last week, Arredondo asked a judge to throw out the indictment. He has said he should not have been considered the incident commander and has been “scapegoated” into shouldering the blame for law enforcement failures that day.

Last month, the city released a massive collection of audio and video recording from the day of the shooting, including 911 calls from students inside the classroom. On Wednesday, Uvalde police said an employee was put on paid leave after the department discovered additional video that has not yet been made public. The city has not said what the video shows.

Loose electrical cable found on ship that caused Baltimore bridge collapse

By LEA SKENE Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Investigators working to pinpoint the cause of Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse discovered a loose cable that could have caused electrical issues on the Dali, the massive cargo ship that lost power and disastrously veered off course before striking the bridge.

When disconnected, the problematic cable triggered an electrical blackout on the ship similar to what happened as it approached the bridge on March 26, according to new documents released Wednesday by the National Transportation Safety Board.

The documents don't include any analysis or conclusions, which will be released later in the board's final report. A spokesperson for the board declined to comment as the investigation is ongoing.

The Dali was leaving Baltimore bound for Sri Lanka when its steering failed because of the power loss. It crashed into one of the bridge's supporting columns, destroying the 1.6-mile span and killing six members of a roadwork crew.

Safety investigators released a preliminary report earlier this year that documented a series of power issues on the ship before and after its departure from Baltimore. But the new records offer more details about how its electrical system may have failed in the critical moments leading up to the deadly disaster.

The Dali first experienced a power outage when it was still docked in Baltimore. That was after a crew member mistakenly closed an exhaust damper while conducting maintenance, causing one of the ship's diesel engines to stall, according to the earlier report. Crew members then made changes to the ship's electrical configuration, switching from one transformer and breaker system — which had been in use for several months — to a second that was active upon its departure.

That second transformer and breaker system is where investigators found the loose cable, according to investigative reports.

Investigators also removed an electrical component from the same system for additional testing, according to a supplemental report released in June. They removed what is called a terminal block, which is used to connect electrical wires.

Engineers from Hyundai, the manufacturer of the ship's electrical system, said the loose cable could create an open circuit and cause a breaker to open, according to a 41-page report detailing tests completed on the Dali in the weeks after the collapse. The engineers disconnected the cable as part of a simulation, which resulted in a blackout on the ship.

Hyundai sent engineers from its headquarters in South Korea to help with the investigation in April.

The new documents also included various certificates issued after inspections of the Dali pertaining to its general condition and compliance with maritime safety regulations.

"It's pretty clear that they think they've found an issue that could cause a blackout," said Tom Roth-Roffy, a former National Transportation Safety Board investigator who focused on maritime investigations. He said the loose cable was in a critical place within the electrical system.

He also noted that investigators have clearly taken a thorough approach and documented their findings well. The new documents suggest they found very few other problems as they combed through the various systems and machinery aboard the Dali.

In terms of whether the loose connection suggests inadequate maintenance of the ship or other problems with the crew, Roth-Roffy said it seems like a toss-up. Checking hundreds or thousands of wires is a tedious and time-consuming process, he said, and there are any number of factors that could cause connections to loosen over time, including the constant vibrations on a ship.

"To say that this should have been detected is probably true but somewhat unrealistic," he said. "But the ship's crew has ultimate responsibility for the proper maintenance and operation of the ship."

The Dali left Baltimore for Virginia in late June. It was scheduled to undergo repairs there, and local media reported last week that it will sail to China, likely sometime later this month.

Father of Ohio boy asks Trump not to invoke his son's death in immigration debate

By PATRICK AFTOORA ORSAGOS, MIKE CATALINI and JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press
SPRINGFIELD, Ohio (AP) — The father of an Ohio boy killed last year when a Haitian immigrant driver hit a school bus is imploring Donald Trump and other politicians to stop invoking his son's name in the debate about immigration.

Nathan Clark spoke Tuesday at a Springfield City Council hearing — the same day that the former president and Vice President Kamala Harris debated, and the city in Ohio exploded into the national conversation when Trump repeated false claims demonizing Haitian immigrants there, saying they eat pets.

"This needs to stop now," Nathan Clark said. "They can vomit all the hate they want about illegal immigrants, the border crisis and even untrue claims about fluffy pets being ravaged and eaten by community members. However, they are not allowed, nor have they ever been allowed, to mention Aiden Clark from Springfield, Ohio. I will listen to them one more time to hear their apologies."

Eleven-year-old Aiden Clark was killed in August last year when a minivan driven by Hermanio Joseph veered into a school bus carrying Aiden and other students. Aiden died and nearly two dozen others were hurt.

In May, a Clark County jury deliberated for just an hour before convicting Joseph of involuntary manslaughter and vehicular homicide. He was sentenced to between nine and 13 1/2 years in prison. A motion to stay his sentence pending an appeal was denied in July.

Trump's campaign and others, including his running mate, JD Vance, have cited Aiden's death in online posts. On Monday, the Trump campaign posted "REMEMBER: 11-year-old Aiden Clark was killed on his way to school by a Haitian migrant that Kamala Harris let into the country in Springfield, Ohio." On Tuesday, Vance posted: "Do you know what's confirmed? That a child was murdered by a Haitian migrant who had no right to be here."

Clark's death got wrapped up in a swirl of false rumors on Monday about Haitian immigrants eating pets. Then Tuesday, Trump repeated the statements, which local officials and police have said are not supported by evidence.

Clark declined to comment further on Thursday. A message seeking a response to Clark's statement was left with representatives of Trump.

Vance's spokesperson said in a statement that Harris owed an apology over her border policies and added that the Clark family was in Vance's prayers.

Clark also mentioned Republican senate candidate Bernie Moreno in his speech. Moreno campaign spokesperson Reagan McCarthy said it was Harris and Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown who should apologize and criticized their handling of the border.

Four government buildings and two schools were evacuated in the city Thursday after a bomb threat was emailed to multiple city agencies and media outlets, Springfield police chief Allison Elliott said. City officials said the buildings included Springfield City Hall, a local office of the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, a licensing bureau and a driver's exam station. The city is working with the FBI to determine the source of the threat. Officials didn't specify whether the threats had to do with the discussions about immigration.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre on Thursday condemned the conspiracies regarding Haitians as "hate speech." She deferred to the local police department regarding any threats to the Springfield community, but she described the situation as "an attempt to tear apart communities" and an "insult to all of us as Americans."

Pastors from Springfield churches gathered Thursday to address the effects of the false rumors.

Vile Dorsainvil, the executive director of the Haitian Community Help and Support Center, attended the event and said it was necessary to bring peace to the community.

People have to understand each other, he said.

Many Haitians have come to the U.S. to flee poverty and violence. They have embraced President Joe Biden's new and expanded legal pathways to enter, and they have shunned illegal crossings, accounting

for only 92 border arrests out of more than 56,000 in July, according to the latest data available.

The Biden administration recently announced an estimated 300,000 Haitians could remain in the country at least through February 2026, with eligibility for work authorization, under a law called Temporary Protected Status. The goal is to spare people from being deported to countries in turmoil.

On Tuesday, Ohio Republican Gov. Mike DeWine said he would send law enforcement and millions of dollars in healthcare resources to the city of Springfield, which has faced a surge in temporary Haitian migrants. DeWine said some 15,000 Haitians have arrived in the city of about 59,000 people since 2020 under the Temporary Protected Status program, and he urged the federal government to do more to help affected communities.

Republican Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost also drew attention to the crisis on Monday when he directed his office to research legal avenues — including filing a lawsuit — to stop the federal government from sending “an unlimited number of migrants to Ohio communities.”

New York City lawmakers approve bill to study slavery and reparations

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City lawmakers approved legislation Thursday to study the city’s significant role in slavery and consider reparations to descendants of enslaved people.

If signed into law, the package of bills passed by the City Council would follow in the footsteps of several other municipalities across the U.S. that have sought ways to address the country’s dark history, as well as a separate New York state commission that began working this year.

New York fully abolished slavery in 1827. But businesses, including the predecessors of some modern banks, continued to benefit financially from the slave trade — likely up until 1866. The lawmakers behind the proposals noted that the harms caused by the institution are still felt by Black Americans today.

“The reparations movement is often misunderstood as merely a call for compensation,” Council Member Farah Louis, a Democrat who sponsored one of the bills, told the City Council on Thursday. She explained that systemic forms of oppression are still impacting people through redlining, environmental racism and services in predominantly Black neighborhoods that are underfunded.

The bills still need to be signed by Democratic Mayor Eric Adams. City Hall signaled his support in a statement calling the legislation “another crucial step towards addressing systemic inequities, fostering reconciliation, and creating a more just and equitable future for all New Yorkers.”

The bills would direct the city’s Commission on Racial Equity to suggest remedies to the legacy of slavery, including reparations. It would also create a truth and reconciliation process to establish historical facts about slavery in the state.

One of the proposals would also require that the city install an informational sign on Wall Street in Manhattan to mark the site of New York’s first slave market, which operated between 1711 and 1762. A sign was placed nearby in 2015, but Public Advocate Jumaane D. Williams, a Democrat who sponsored the legislation, said its location is inaccurate.

The commission would work with the existing state commission, which is also considering the possibility of reparations. A report from the state panel, which held its first public meeting in late July, is expected in early 2025. The city effort wouldn’t need to produce recommendations until 2027.

The city’s commission was created out of a 2021 racial justice initiative during then-Mayor Bill de Blasio’s administration, which also recommended the city track data on the cost of living and add a commitment to remedy “past and continuing harms” to the city charter’s preamble.

“Your call and your ancestors’ call for reparations had not gone unheard,” Linda Tigani, executive director of the racial equity commission, said at a news conference ahead of the council vote.

A financial impact analysis of the bills estimated that the studies would cost \$2.5 million.

New York is the latest city to study reparations. Tulsa, Oklahoma, where a notorious massacre of Black residents took place in 1921, announced a similar commission last month.

Evanston, Illinois, became the first city to offer reparations to Black residents and their descendants in

2021, including distributing some payments of \$25,000 in 2023, according to PBS. The eligibility was based on harm suffered as a result of the city's discriminatory housing policies or practices.

San Francisco approved reparations in February, but the mayor later cut the funds, saying that reparations should instead be carried out by the federal government. California budgeted \$12 million for a reparations program that included helping Black residents research their ancestry, but it was defeated in the state's Legislature this month.

The US is preparing criminal charges in Iran hack targeting Trump, AP sources say

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department is preparing criminal charges in connection with an Iranian hack that targeted Donald Trump's presidential campaign in a bid to shape the outcome of the November election, two people familiar with the matter said Thursday.

It was not immediately clear when the charges might be announced or whom precisely they will target, but they are the result of an FBI investigation into an intrusion that investigators across multiple agencies quickly linked to an Iranian effort to influence American politics.

The prospect of criminal charges comes as the Justice Department has raised alarms about aggressive efforts by countries including Russia and Iran to meddle in the presidential election between Trump and Democratic nominee Kamala Harris, including by hacking and covert social media campaigns designed to shape public opinion.

Iran "is making a greater effort to influence this year's election than it has in prior election cycles and that Iranian activity is growing increasingly aggressive as this election nears," Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen, the Justice Department's top national security official, said in a speech Thursday in New York City.

"Iran perceives this year's elections to be particularly consequential in impacting Iran's national security interests, increasing Tehran's inclination to try to shape the outcome," he added.

The Trump campaign disclosed on Aug. 10 that it had been hacked and said Iranian actors had stolen and distributed sensitive internal documents. At least three news outlets — Politico, The New York Times and The Washington Post — were leaked confidential material from inside the Trump campaign. So far, each has refused to reveal any details about what it received.

Politico reported that it began receiving emails on July 22 from an anonymous account. The source — an AOL email account identified only as "Robert" — passed along what appeared to be a research dossier that the campaign had apparently done on the Republican vice presidential nominee, Ohio Sen. JD Vance. The document was dated Feb. 23, almost five months before Trump selected Vance as his running mate.

The FBI, the office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency subsequently blamed that hack, as well as an attempted breach of the Biden-Harris campaign, on Iran.

Those agencies issued a statement saying that the hacking and similar activities were meant to sow discord, exploit divisions within American society and influence the outcome of elections.

The statement did not identify whether Iran has a preferred candidate, though Tehran has long appeared determined to seek retaliation for a 2020 strike Trump ordered as president that killed an Iranian general.

The two people who discussed the looming criminal charges spoke on condition of anonymity to The Associated Press because they were not authorized to speak publicly about a case that had not yet been unsealed.

The Washington Post first reported that charges were being prepared.

Justice Department officials have been working to publicly call out and counter election interference efforts. The response is a contrast to 2016, when Obama administration officials were far more circumspect about Russian interference they were watching that was designed to boost Trump's campaign.

"We have learned that transparency about what we are seeing is critical," Olsen, the Justice Department

official, said Thursday.

"It helps ensure that our citizens are aware of the attempts of foreign government to sow discord and spread falsehoods — all of which promotes resilience within our electorate," he added. "It provides warnings to our private sector so they can better protect their networks. And it sends an unmistakable message to our adversaries — we've gained insight into your networks, we know what you're doing, and we are determined to hold you accountable."

Last week, in an effort to combat disinformation ahead of the election, the Justice Department charged two employees of RT, a Russian state media company, with covertly funneling a Tennessee-based content creation company nearly \$10 million to publish English-language videos on social media platforms with messages in favor of the Russia government's interests and agenda.

An earthquake shakes the Los Angeles area as wildfires rage nearby

By JAIMIE DING, AMY TAXIN and EUGENE GARCIA Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — As wildfires raging in the mountains cast an orange glow behind the downtown Los Angeles skyline, Southern California residents were jolted awake Thursday by another reminder of Mother Nature's might.

It was an all-too-familiar feeling for locals when a 4.7 magnitude earthquake rattled the Los Angeles area, unleashing boulders onto a Malibu road, shaking Santa Monica's 1909 wooden pier and waking some people from bed. No injuries or damages were immediately reported.

The quake happened as the region has been dealing with three major wildfires burning east of Los Angeles that torched dozens of homes and forced thousands to evacuate. The blazes erupted during a blistering heat wave that has just subsided.

"It's a garden-variety Southern California earthquake," California Institute of Technology seismologist Lucy Jones said.

The U.S. Geological Survey said it was centered 4 miles (7 kilometers) north of Malibu and was about 7 miles (11 kilometers) below the surface. The jolt was felt as far as 45 miles (72 kilometers) away in Orange County, where people reported items moving in their homes. It was followed by several smaller aftershocks.

Officials around the region said authorities were surveying for damage, but had not found anything major.

Malibu Councilmember Bruce Silverstein said he has lived in the community for 13 years and this was the hardest quake yet, but nothing broke.

"Our house shook for about two or three seconds. I was concerned the windows were going to pop," Silverstein said.

A camera at the 115-year-old Santa Monica Pier, about 12 miles (19 kilometers) from Malibu, showed several seconds of intense shaking during the quake. Several morning newscasts also captured the earthquake live as cameras shook in television studios.

A crew was working on clearing large boulders that rolled onto Malibu Canyon Road, near the epicenter, KTLA-TV reported

The earthquake occurred closest to the Malibu fault, but was also near the Anacapa fault, Jones said. Earthquakes below magnitude 5.0 are too small to be definitively associated with large faults that are mapped at the earth's surface.

Rene Vasquez, manager at The Country Kitchen breakfast place in Malibu, said the shaking lasted a few seconds and kitchen staff ducked outside as a precaution.

"It wasn't that bad," Vasquez said. "Thank God nothing fell."

At a Starbucks on the Malibu coast, surfer Albert Daniel was drinking coffee and wondered if the glass ceiling might come crashing onto him. Afterward, he was hoping for some big waves.

"It's actually pretty calm," Daniel said. "We did get a bunch of sets coming in but they were very small."

Trudy Novicki, who was visiting from San Clemente, was about to meditate on the balcony of her hotel room when she felt the shake.

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"I thought a truck had run into the building," she said. Her daughter, who was visiting from Florida, said it was her first earthquake and thought it was a train.

People, including several celebrities, took to social media to post they were awakened by a jolt.

Hotel heiress and media personality Paris Hilton wrote on X, "That #Earthquake was scary." Reality TV star Khloe Kardashian posted: "Damn that was a big one."

Some residents said they were alerted by the state's earthquake early warning system.

A number of quakes have been felt in the area in recent months, including a 4.4 magnitude earthquake in August that rattled nerves from the Los Angeles area to San Diego, swaying buildings, knocking items off shelves and setting off car alarms. The temblor caused a pipe to burst at the ornate 1927 Pasadena City Hall building.

In February, a magnitude 4.6 earthquake was felt in Malibu that occurred south of Thursday's earthquake.

Thursday's event was the 14th earthquake sequence of magnitude 4.0 in Southern California this year. While this is above the average of eight to 10 per year in the past few decades, it's too soon to tell whether the increased activity is statistically significant, said Jones, the Caltech seismologist. The previous highest number was 13 earthquakes of this size in 1988.

The recent bout of quakes does not indicate whether a larger, more destructive earthquake is arriving soon, but residents should be prepared for more aftershocks. There is a 1 in 20 chance that another earthquake of 4.7 magnitude or higher will occur, U.S. Geological Survey geophysicist Morgan Page told the Los Angeles Times.

Judge tosses some counts in Georgia election case against Trump and others

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The judge overseeing the Georgia election interference case against Donald Trump and others on Thursday tossed out three counts in the indictment — including two counts brought against the former president — saying that they lie beyond the state's jurisdiction.

The case against Trump and others who are appealing an order allowing Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis to continue prosecuting the case is on hold while that appeal is pending. But Fulton County Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee issued orders Thursday based on motions filed by two defendants, Shawn Still and John Eastman, who are not part of that appeal, meaning the case against them is not paused.

In the Georgia case — one of four criminal prosecutions against the Republican presidential nominee — a grand jury in August 2023 returned a 41-count indictment against Trump and 18 others, accusing them of participating in a wide-ranging conspiracy to illegally try to overturn Trump's narrow loss in the 2020 presidential election in Georgia. Four people pleaded guilty last year after reaching deals with prosecutors.

Trump and other defendants tried to get Willis and her office removed from the case, arguing that a romantic relationship she had with Nathan Wade, the special prosecutor she hired to lead the case, created a conflict of interest. McAfee ruled that there was not a conflict of interest that warranted Willis' disqualification, as long as Wade left the case. Trump and others have appealed, and the Georgia Court of Appeals is scheduled to hear arguments in December.

The judge in March had thrown out six counts of the indictment, a ruling that prosecutors are appealing. Even with a total of nine counts quashed, 32 counts remain, including an overarching racketeering charge brought against all of the defendants.

At issue in Thursday's ruling are two counts having to do with the filing of a document with the federal court in Atlanta that declared that Trump had won the state of Georgia and 16 Republicans who signed the document were the "duly elected and qualified electors" from the state.

One of the counts charges three of those Republicans, including Still, with filing false documents. The other charges Trump and others, including Eastman, with conspiracy to file false documents.

McAfee wrote that punishing someone for filing certain documents with a federal court would "enable a state to constrict the scope of materials assessed by a federal court and impair the administration of

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justice in that tribunal to police its own proceedings." He conclude that those two counts must be quashed "as beyond the jurisdiction of this State."

The third count charges Trump and Eastman with filing false documents, saying they "knowingly and unlawfully" filed a lawsuit with the federal court in Atlanta while "having reason to know" that the document included at least one "materially false" statement about the 2020 election in Georgia.

McAfee cited case law that says complaints filed in federal court fall within the scope federal perjury statutes and said the charge must be quashed.

A spokesman for Willis said prosecutors are reviewing the order and declined to comment.

Buddy Parker, a lawyer for Eastman, in an email applauded McAfee's ruling. Steve Sadow, Trump's lead attorney, also celebrated the dismissal of two charges against the former president, saying in an email that Trump and his Georgia legal team "have prevailed once again."

Lawyers for Eastman, Still and other defendants had argued that the Republicans who acted as electors for Trump were within their rights and were acting as provided for by the federal Electoral Count Act. McAfee wrote that that statute is intended to govern the counting of electoral votes by Congress and that the state's prosecution is not barred because it doesn't impair that vote counting. While the Trump electors may have believed their actions were legal, that is a matter for trial and not a pretrial motion, the judge wrote.

In a separate order Thursday, McAfee rejected Eastman and Still's attempt to dismiss the broad racketeering count in the indictment. That count is supported by 161 alleged acts that defendants are accused of engaging in to accomplish a common goal of challenging Trump's electoral loss.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in July that former presidents have absolute immunity from prosecution for official acts that fall within their "exclusive sphere of constitutional authority" and are presumptively entitled to immunity for all official acts. McAfee noted that his rulings do not take that into account because those issues have not yet been fully briefed or argued by the parties in the case before him.

Harvey Weinstein indicted on additional sex crimes charges ahead of New York retrial

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Disgraced ex-movie mogul Harvey Weinstein has been indicted on additional sex crimes charges in New York ahead of a retrial in his landmark #MeToo case, Manhattan prosecutors said at a court hearing Thursday.

The indictment will remain under seal until Weinstein is arraigned on the new charges, which could happen as early as Sept. 18. Assistant District Attorney Nicole Blumberg disclosed in court that the indictment charges "Mr. Weinstein with additional crimes" and that multiple accusers are prepared to testify against him.

Weinstein, 72, is recovering from emergency heart surgery Monday at a Manhattan hospital to remove fluid on his heart and lungs and was not at Thursday's hearing.

Prosecutors retrying Weinstein's overturned rape conviction disclosed last week that they had begun presenting to a grand jury evidence of up to three additional allegations against Weinstein, dating as far back as the mid-2000s.

They include alleged sexual assaults at the Tribeca Grand Hotel, now known as the Roxy Hotel, and in a Lower Manhattan residential building between late 2005 and mid-2006, and an alleged sexual assault at a Tribeca hotel in May 2016.

Because the indictment is under seal, it was not known whether the new charges involved some or all of the additional allegations.

"We don't know anything," Weinstein's lawyer, Arthur Aidala, said outside court. "We don't know what the exact accusations are, the exact locations are, what the timing is."

In April, New York's highest court overturned Weinstein's 2020 conviction on rape and sexual assault charges involving two women and ordered a new trial. Weinstein's retrial is tentatively scheduled to begin Nov. 12.

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Prosecutors said they would seek to combine any new charges with ones previously brought against Weinstein so that they could be tried together. Weinstein's lawyers oppose that, arguing that prosecutors were seeking to bolster their original case with additional charges involving other accusers.

Aidala said Weinstein's defense team won't be ready to go to trial in November on the new charges. By law, he said, they'll have 45 days to file court papers challenging the prosecution's request to try the original and new indictments at the same time, pushing the fight into the weeks before a possible trial.

Weinstein's new charges come after prosecutors in Britain announced last week that they would no longer pursue charges of indecent assault against Weinstein, who was the most prominent villain of the #MeToo movement in 2017 when women began going public with accounts of his behavior.

Weinstein, who co-founded the film and television production companies Miramax and The Weinstein Company, has long maintained that any sexual activity was consensual.

Also Thursday, Judge Curtis Farber granted a defense request to have the ailing Weinstein remain at Bellevue Hospital indefinitely instead of being moved back to the infirmary ward at New York City's Rikers Island jail complex. Farber also ordered Weinstein's attending physician at Rikers Island to testify at a closed-door hearing about the ex-studio boss' health issues.

Weinstein's surgery Monday came after his third trip to Bellevue Hospital to have fluid drained, Farber said. He has a variety of maladies requiring medication and treatment that causes him to retain water in his arms, legs, abdomen and around his heart, and he needs constant monitoring to ensure the buildup of fluids isn't deadly, the judge said.

"If Mr. Weinstein dies because no one has taken the authority to stop what may be the death of Mr. Weinstein because of this back-and-forth transfer from one institution to another, it would be a miscarriage of justice to say the least," Weinstein's lawyer Barry Kamins told Farber. "It would be a travesty of justice."

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's office had signaled for months that new charges were imminent against Weinstein, who was once one of the most powerful people in Hollywood, having produced films such as "Pulp Fiction" and "The Crying Game."

In July, prosecutors told a judge they were actively pursuing claims of rape that occurred in Manhattan within the statute of limitations. They said some potential accusers who were not ready to come forward during Weinstein's first New York trial had indicated they were now willing to testify.

In vacating Weinstein's conviction, New York's Court of Appeals ruled that the trial judge, James M. Burke, unfairly allowed testimony against him based on allegations from other women that were not part of the case. Burke is no longer on the bench.

Prosecutors have said one of the accusers in that case, Jessica Mann, is prepared to testify against Weinstein again. In a statement, she said the new charges "show that this Grand Jury, like so many others, can see clearly through his facade for what he truly is: a predator who must be held accountable for his crimes."

"For those who continue to have the courage to come forward against Harvey, you are not alone," Mann said. "I will stand alongside you as we fight for a future where monsters like Harvey no longer hide in our closets, they sit alone behind bars."

It's unclear if the second accuser, Mimi Haley, would participate. Her lawyer, Gloria Allred, declined to comment.

The Associated Press does not generally identify people alleging sexual assault unless they consent to be named, as Haley and Mann did.

Weinstein, who had been serving a 23-year sentence in New York when his conviction was quashed, was convicted in Los Angeles in 2022 of another rape.

His 16-year prison sentence in that case still stands, but his lawyers appealed in June, arguing he did not get a fair trial in Los Angeles. Weinstein has remained in custody in New York's Rikers Island jail complex while awaiting the retrial.

Trump rules out another debate against Harris as her campaign announces \$47M haul in hours afterward

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

Donald Trump on Thursday ruled out another presidential debate against Kamala Harris as her campaign announced a massive fundraising haul in the hours after the two candidates met on stage.

Trump, the Republican nominee, posted on Truth Social that "THERE WILL BE NO THIRD DEBATE!" following Tuesday's debate against Harris and his June debate against President Joe Biden. In rejecting another debate, the former president suggested that a "prizefighter" who loses a bout is always the one to call for a rematch.

A day earlier, he had said, "I just don't know," to the question of whether he would meet Harris for another debate. Some Republicans, including the No. 2 GOP Senator John Thune, have urged Trump to debate against Harris again.

While he could still change his mind, his announcement means that Tuesday's meeting will likely be the only time voters will see the two debate each other before the November election. More than 67 million people watched the Trump-Harris debate.

Harris, the Democratic nominee, said during a rally in North Carolina on Thursday she believes that she and the former president "owe it to voters" to debate again. Meanwhile, her campaign revealed that it had raised \$47 million from nearly 600,000 donors in the 24 hours after her Tuesday debate against Trump.

"This historic, 24-hour haul reflects a strong and growing coalition of Americans united behind Vice President Harris' candidacy that knows the stakes this November, and are doing their part to defeat Donald Trump this November," campaign chair Jen O'Malley Dillon said.

The Tuesday debate was the first time that Trump and Harris had met, and the vice president largely controlled the tenor, goading Trump into agitated responses that contained exaggerations and mistruths. It came two months after Trump's debate against Biden, whose unsteady performance and meandering answers led him to end his reelection bid and endorse Harris as his replacement on the ticket.

Trump raised doubts earlier in the campaign as to whether he would debate Harris at all. The two eventually agreed on the Tuesday debate on ABC.

Trump called Harris a "no-show" for a debate date that had been proposed earlier this month. Instead of an event with Harris, Trump ended up going on Fox News for a solo town hall with host Sean Hannity. Fox News has issued invitations to both campaigns for a debate in October.

Money rolls in on US election bets after judge clears the way

By WAYNE PARRY Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — People began betting Thursday on which political party would win control of Congress in the November elections after a judge's ruling allowing the wagers — the only ones to be legally approved by a U.S. jurisdiction.

New York startup company Kalshi began taking what amounts to bets on the outcome of the November congressional elections after a judge refused to block them from doing so.

The ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Jia Cobb in Washington enabled the company, at least temporarily, to offer prediction contracts across the country — essentially yes-or-no bets — on which party will win control of the Senate and the House in November.

"The Kalshi community just made history, and I know we are only getting started," said Tarek Mansour, a co-founder of the company. "Now is finally the time to allow these markets to show the world just how powerful they are at providing signal amidst the noise, and giving us more truth about what the future holds."

But the activity could prove short-lived. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission, an independent federal body which last year prohibited the company from offering such bets, said it would appeal the ruling as quickly as possible, citing the possibility of people trying to manipulate the election for financial purposes.

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Kalshi did not say whether it intends to offer bets beyond the ones posted Thursday for congressional races, including potentially taking bets on the presidential race.

It also was not immediately clear whether sports books or online casinos would seek to offer similar political bets in light of the ruling.

Prices on Kalshi's so-called predictive contracts varied throughout the early afternoon. As of mid-afternoon, a bet on the Republicans to win control of the Senate was priced at 76 cents; a \$100 bet would pay \$129. A bet on the Democrats to win control of the House was priced at 63 cents, with a \$100 bet paying out \$154.

Better Markets, a nonprofit organization that says it advocates for the public interest in financial markets, called the development "a dangerous move that opens the floodgates to unprecedented gambling on U.S. elections, eroding public trust in both markets and democracy."

Contrasting his client with foreign companies who take bets from American customers on U.S. elections without U.S. government approval, Roth said Kalshi is trying to do things the right way, under government regulation.

"It invested significantly in these markets," he said during Thursday's hearing. "They spent millions of dollars. It would be perverse if all that investment went up in smoke."

But Raagnee Beri, an attorney for the commission, said allowing such bets could invite malicious activities designed to influence the outcome of elections and undermine already fragile public confidence in the voting process.

"These contracts would give market participants a \$100 million incentive to influence the market on the election," she said. "There is a very severe public interest threat."

She used the analogy of someone who has taken an investment position in corn commodities.

"Somebody puts out misinformation about a drought, that a drought is coming," she said. "That could move the market on the price of corn. The same thing could happen here. The commission is not required to suffer the flood before building a dam."

Thursday's ruling will not be the last word on the case. The commission said it will appeal on an emergency basis to a Washington D.C. circuit court, and asked the judge to stay her ruling for 24 hours. But the judge declined, leaving no prohibition in place on the company offering election bets, at least in the very near term.

The company already offers yes-no positions on political topics including whether a government shutdown will happen this year, whether a new Supreme Court justice will be confirmed this year, and whether President Joe Biden's approval rating will be above or below a certain level by the end of the year.

The Kalshi bets are technically not the first to be offered legally on U.S. elections. West Virginia permitted such bets for one hour in April 2020 before reversing itself and canceling those betting markets, deciding it had not done the proper research beforehand.

2nd Circuit rejects Donald Trump's request to halt postconviction proceedings in hush money case

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A federal appeals court has rejected Donald Trump's request to halt postconviction proceedings in his hush money criminal case, leaving a key ruling and the former president's sentencing on track for after the November election.

A three-judge panel of the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan cited the postponement last week of Trump's sentencing from Sept. 18 to Nov. 26 in denying his motion for an emergency stay.

The sentencing delay, which Trump had sought, removed the urgency required for the appeals court to consider pausing proceedings.

Messages seeking comment were left for Trump's lawyers and the Manhattan district attorney's office, which prosecuted the case.

Trump appealed to the 2nd Circuit after a federal judge last week thwarted the Republican nominee's request to have the U.S. District Court in Manhattan seize control of the case from the state court where

it was tried.

Trump's lawyers said they wanted the case moved to federal court so they could then seek to have the verdict and case dismissed on immunity grounds.

The trial judge, Juan M. Merchan, announced the delay last Friday and said he now plans to rule Nov. 12 on Trump's request to overturn the verdict and toss out the case because of the U.S. Supreme Court's July presidential immunity ruling.

Merchan explained that he was postponing the sentencing to avoid any appearance that the proceeding "has been affected by or seeks to affect the approaching presidential election in which the Defendant is a candidate."

Trump was convicted in May on 34 counts of falsifying business records to conceal a \$130,000 hush money payment to porn actor Stormy Daniels just before the 2016 presidential election. Trump denies Daniels' claim that she and Trump had a sexual encounter a decade earlier and says he did nothing wrong.

Falsifying business records is punishable by up to four years behind bars. Other potential sentences include probation, a fine or a conditional discharge, which would require Trump to stay out of trouble to avoid additional punishment.

An ER nurse says it was 'second nature' to rescue a man trapped in hurricane floodwaters

By KEVIN MCGILL Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Perhaps it was fate that a man's pickup truck got trapped in rising floodwaters unleashed by Hurricane Francine not far from where Miles Crawford lives.

The 39-year-old off-duty emergency room nurse is professionally trained in saving lives — quickly — and that's exactly what he did the moment he saw what was happening Wednesday night in his New Orleans neighborhood.

Crawford grabbed a hammer from his house and ran to the underpass where the truck was stuck, wading through swirling waist-high water to reach the driver. When he got there, he saw that the water was already up to the man's head. There was no time to waste.

He told the driver to move to the back of the truck's cab since the front end of the pickup was angled down in deeper water. Gripping the hammer, he smashed out the back window and hauled the man out, at one point grabbing him just as he began to fall into the rushing water.

"It was kind of instinctive," Crawford told The Associated Press. "Didn't take much to break the window and pull the guy out."

About 10 minutes later, the pickup was fully submerged.

Crawford, an ER nurse at University Medical Center, said he got out of the water as soon as the man was safe and never did get his name. Crawford cut his hand in the rescue — a TV station that filmed it showed him wearing a large bandage — but that was not a big deal for someone used to trauma.

"It's just second nature, I guess, being a nurse, you just go in and get it done, right?" Crawford said. "I just had to get him out of there." ____

Associated Press writers Jeff Martin in Atlanta and Lisa J. Adams Wagner in Evans, Georgia, contributed to this report.

Blinken wraps up Ukraine-focused Europe trip in Poland with arms requests on the table

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WARSAW (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken wrapped up a three-nation, Ukraine-focused European tour in Poland on Thursday after hearing repeated appeals from Ukrainian officials to use Western-supplied weaponry for long-range strikes inside Russia.

Blinken traveled to Warsaw after spending a day in Kyiv with British Foreign Secretary David Lammy

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during which they pledged to bring the Ukrainian requests to their leaders.

U.S. President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer are to meet in the United States on Friday amid signs both Washington and London are growing more receptive to allowing the Ukrainians to use their arms to hit targets farther inside Russia than previously okayed.

"As what Russia's doing has changed, as the battlefield has changed, we've adapted," Blinken said at a news conference in Warsaw.

Biden has allowed Ukraine to fire U.S.-provided missiles across the border into Russia in self-defense, but has largely limited the distance they can be fired.

Just last week Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin met with Ukraine president Volodymyr Zelenskyy and pushed back on the long-range ask, noting that Ukraine has already been able to strike inside Russia with its own internally produced systems including drones.

One of the key requests from Kyiv is to strike with U.S.-produced Army Tactical Missile Systems, or ATACMS. The Pentagon has noted they wouldn't be the answer to the main threat Ukraine faces from long-range Russian fired glide bombs, which are being fired from more than 300 kilometers away, beyond the ATACMS reach, said Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Charlie Dietz.

In addition, the U.S. supply of ATACMS missiles, which can cost up to \$1.5 million each depending on the variant, are "finite," Dietz said. "We need to be judicious about where and when they are deployed."

At Ramstein Air Base last week Austin said the arguments the Ukrainians have used for long range strikes are like the discussions the U.S. had with Ukraine over Abrams tanks. While those systems were ultimately provided, they are currently not being used.

"I don't believe one specific capability will be decisive, and I stand by that comment," Austin said in Germany.

At the Pentagon Thursday, press secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder would not say if Austin's views had changed since last week.

"As of right now, the policy has not changed. I'll just leave it there," Ryder said.

In Warsaw, Blinken said, "One of the purposes of my visit to Kyiv yesterday was to hear from our Ukrainian partners what they believe they need now to deal with the current battlefield, including in eastern Ukraine and other parts of the country"

"I can tell you that as we go forward we will do exactly what we have already done, which is we will adjust as necessary ... in order to defend against Russian aggression," Blinken said.

He delivered a similar message in Kyiv a day earlier. In both cases, the language was similar to that which he used in May, shortly before the U.S. green-lit Ukrainian use of U.S. weapons just inside Russian territory.

The diplomatic visit unfolded as Russia's bigger and better-equipped army bears down on Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region and conducts aerial attacks on cities across the country using missiles, glide bombs and drones that claim many civilian casualties.

NATO member Poland, which shares a border with Ukraine, has been supportive of the Ukrainians and Blinken heard requests for easing weapons-use restrictions from Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski.

Sikorski argued that Ukraine should be allowed to use Western weapons against Russia in self-defense, because "Russia is committing war crimes by attacking civilian targets."

"Missiles that hit these civilian targets are fired from bomber aircraft from over the territory of Russia. These bombers take off from airfields on Russia's territory," Sikorski said. "A victim of aggression has the right to defend itself."

"So I believe that Ukraine has the right to use Western weapons to prevent war crimes," Sikorski added.

Blinken also met in Warsaw with President Andrzej Duda and Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who share Sikorski's pro-Ukraine stance.

On Wednesday, Blinken and Lammy announced that the United States and Britain had pledged nearly \$1.5 billion in additional aid to Ukraine during their visit to Kyiv. Blinken announced more than \$700 million in humanitarian aid, while Lammy confirmed that his country would provide another \$782 million in assistance and loan guarantees.

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Much of the effort was aimed at bolstering the energy grid that Russia has repeatedly pounded ahead of an expected difficult winter.

Ukraine's wish list is long and non-military assistance is certainly on it, but Ukrainian officials made clear their most important ask is for easing restrictions on where Western weapons can be used. Air-raid sirens sounded repeatedly during the visit, causing delays in their schedule and forcing them to cancel a wreath-laying ceremony.

Blinken said he would bring the discussion with Zelenskyy about the missiles "back to Washington to brief the president" and that Biden and Starmer will "no doubt" talk about the issue when they meet in Washington.

Relations between Ukraine and its Western partners have been increasingly strained by Kyiv's repeated appeals for the West's authorization to use long-range weapons from the United States and other allies to strike targets deeper inside Russia.

That issue took on added urgency after Russia's latest reported acquisition of ballistic missiles from Iran, but Western leaders have so far balked at Ukraine's request, fearing that, if granted, it could escalate the war.

Zelenskyy has said that he has a plan for victory which includes several components, including goals Ukraine hopes to achieve on the battlefield as well as diplomatic and economic aims.

In late August he described Ukraine's incursion into Russia's Kursk region as part of that plan, saying it had removed the Russian threat from Ukraine's Kharkiv, Sumy and Chernihiv regions. He has said he hopes to present the plan to both Harris and Trump in September, not knowing which will win the presidency.

"Let's count on some strong decisions, at least," Zelenskyy said Wednesday. "For us, it's very important."

US House clears a largely bipartisan package of bills to counter China

By DIDI TANG and ELSIE CHEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. House this week approved a sweeping package of bills to counter China's influence, shoring up a largely bipartisan push to ensure America comes out ahead in the competition between the world's superpowers.

The efforts would ban Chinese-made drones, limit China-linked biotech companies from access to the U.S. market, strengthen sanctions and deepen ties with Asian countries. The campaign to target Beijing this week shows how curbing China's power has emerged as a rare issue of political consensus.

But some measures did pass along party lines, with Republicans arguing the need to protect national security when it comes to everything from education to farmland, and Democrats raising concerns about discrimination. The advocacy group Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote also warned about "overly broad anti-China rhetoric."

One contentious measure seeks to revive a Trump-era program to root out Beijing's spying in American universities and institutes. The bills all still need Senate approval.

"The House sent a powerful, bipartisan message to the Chinese Communist Party: the United States will not sit idly by," said Republican Rep. John Moolenaar, chair of the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington has said the measures would damage bilateral relations and U.S. interests. "China deplores and firmly opposes this and has lodged serious representations to the U.S. side," spokesman Liu Pengyu said.

Here's a look at key topics that the legislation focused on this week:

Technology

Tech dominated the measures, reflecting a "laser-focused" approach to limit the spread of Chinese technology in the U.S. and prevent Beijing from accessing American innovations, said Craig Singleton, senior China fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies think tank.

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The House backed a bill to prevent federal money from flowing to five biotech companies with Chinese ties, described as necessary to protect Americans' health data and reduce reliance on China for U.S. medical supplies.

Another bill that cleared the House would outlaw, on national security grounds, devices from Chinese drone maker DJI, a dominant player in the global market.

"Allowing artificially cheap DJI drones to monopolize our sky has decimated American drone manufacturing and given our greatest strategic adversary eyes in our sky," said Rep. Elise Stefanik, R-N.Y.

To patch a loophole in export controls, the House backed an amendment that supporters say would cut off remote Chinese access — such as through cloud computing services — to advanced U.S. technology to develop artificial intelligence and modernize its military.

Spying at schools

A bill passed along party lines would direct the Justice Department to curb spying by Beijing on U.S. intellectual property and academic institutions and go after people engaged in theft of trade secrets, hacking and economic espionage.

It's House Republicans' attempt to revive the China Initiative, a Trump-era program meant to curb China's spying in U.S. universities and research institutes. It ended in 2022 after multiple unsuccessful prosecutions of researchers and concerns that it had prompted racial and ethnic profiling.

The measure "brings back the shameful China Initiative, which is the new McCarthyism," said Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif. She criticized the program for assuming that "researchers and scholars in America should be investigated if they had a nexus with China, such as being born there or having relatives from there."

Rep. Lance Gooden, a Texas Republican and bill sponsor, called racism claims baseless.

Another controversial bill would restrict federal funding to universities with cultural institutes funded by the Chinese government or programs linked to certain Chinese schools.

Rep. Michael Guest, R-Miss., called Beijing's influence inside American schools "one of our nation's most glaring vulnerabilities." Fellow Mississippi Rep. Bennie Thompson, a Democrat, argued the measure could shut down legitimate academic programs, such as exchange students, study-abroad opportunities, guest lectures and sports events.

Farmland and electric cars

Several Democratic lawmakers also raised bias concerns about a measure that flags as "reportable" land sales involving citizens from China, North Korea, Russia and Iran.

The bill also would add the agriculture secretary to the U.S. Committee on Foreign Investment, which reviews the national security implications of foreign transactions.

China "has been quietly purchasing American agricultural land at an alarming rate, and this bill is a crucial step towards reversing that trend," said Rep. Dan Newhouse, a Republican from Washington state.

The National Agricultural Law Center estimates 24 states ban or limit foreigners without residency and foreign businesses or governments from owning private farmland. The interest emerged after a Chinese billionaire bought more than 130,000 acres near a U.S. Air Force base in Texas and another Chinese company sought to build a corn plant near an Air Force base in North Dakota.

The House also narrowly approved an effort to exclude Chinese electric cars from receiving clean-vehicle tax credits. "America's working families should not be forced to subsidize a nation whose decades of unfair trade practices and government subsidies have led to lost jobs, shuttered factories and hollowed out communities right here at home," said Rep. Jason Smith, a Missouri Republican.

Rep. Dan Kildee, a Michigan Democrat, said the bill's "unclear restrictions" would make it unworkable and "leave the auto industry and batter manufacturers to pull back their U.S. investments."

Diplomacy

The House backed several measures to boost sanctions on China and deepen ties with Asia-Pacific countries to counter China's influence.

One could lead Hong Kong's representative offices in the U.S. to close by stripping them of diplomatic privileges if the territory is deemed to have lost autonomy from mainland China.

To deter Chinese aggression toward the self-governed island of Taiwan, a bill goes after the financial assets of Chinese officials and their immediate families.

Addressing concerns over Beijing's rising military influence, a resolution cleared the House to recognize the importance of cooperation with South Korea and Japan.

Salman Rushdie's memoir about his stabbing, 'Knife,' is a National Book Award nominee

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Salman Rushdie's "Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder," his explicit and surprisingly resilient memoir about his brutal stabbing in 2022, is a nominee for the National Book Awards. Canada's Anne Carson, one of the world's most revered poets, was cited for her latest collection, "Wrong Norma."

The National Book Foundation, which presents the awards, released long lists of 10 Thursday for nonfiction and poetry. The foundation announced the lists for young people's literature and books in translations earlier in the week and will reveal the fiction nominees on Friday. Judges will narrow the lists to five in each category on Oct. 1, and winners will be announced during a Manhattan dinner ceremony on Nov. 20.

Rushdie, 77, has been a literary star since the 1981 publication of "Midnight's Children" and unwittingly famous since the 1988 release of "The Satanic Verses" and the death decree issued by Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for the novel's alleged blasphemy. But "Knife" brings him his first National Book Award nomination; he was a British citizen, based in London, for "Midnight's Children" and other works and would have been ineligible for the NBAs. Rushdie has been a U.S. citizen since 2016.

Besides "Knife," the nonfiction list includes explorations of faith, identity, oppression, global resources and outer space, among them Hanif Abdurraqib's "There's Always This Year: On Basketball and Ascension," Rebecca Boyle's "Our Moon: How Earth's Celestial Companion Transformed the Planet, Guided Evolution, and Made Us Who We Are" and Jason De León's "Soldiers and Kings: Survival and Hope in the World of Human Smuggling."

The other nonfiction nominees were: Eliza Griswold's "Circle of Hope: A Reckoning with Love, Power, and Justice in an American Church," Kate Manne's "Unshrinking: How to Face Fatphobia," Ernest Scheyder's "The War Below: Lithium, Copper, and the Global Battle to Power Our Lives," Richard Slotkin's "A Great Disorder: National Myth and the Battle for America," Deborah Jackson Taffa's "Whiskey Tender" and Vanessa Angélica Villarreal's "Magical/Realism: Essays on Music, Memory, Fantasy, and Borders."

Along with Carson's "Wrong Norma," poetry nominees include Pulitzer Prize winner Dianne Seuss' latest, "Modern Poetry"; Fady Joudah's elliptically titled "(...)"; Dorianne Laux's "Life on Earth"; Gregory Pardlo's "Spectral Evidence"; and Rowan Ricardo Phillips' "Silver."

Others on the poetry list were Octavio Quintanilla's "The Book of Wounded Sparrows," m.s. RedCherries' "mother," Lena Khalaf Tuffaha's "Something About Living" and Elizabeth Willis' "Liontaming in America."

How social media became a storefront for fake pills as families struggle

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

Fentanyl overdoses have become a leading cause of death for minors in the last five years or so, even as overall drug use has dropped slightly. In a 2022 analysis of fentanyl-laced prescription pills, the DEA found that six out of 10 contained a potentially lethal dose of the drug.

And social media, where tainted, fake prescription drugs can be obtained with just a few clicks, is a big part of the problem. Experts, law enforcement and children's advocates say companies like Snap, TikTok, Telegram and Meta, which owns Instagram, are not doing enough to keep children safe.

In 2022, two weeks after she turned 17, Coco left home just outside New York City to meet with a dealer she'd messaged through Instagram who promised to sell her Percocet, her mom, Julianna Arnold, recalled

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recently. She never made it home. She was found dead the next day, two blocks from the address that the guy had provided her.

Whatever the dealer gave Coco, her mother said, was not Percocet. It was a fake pill laced with fentanyl, which can be lethal in a dose as small as the tip of a pencil.

Mikayla Brown lost her son Elijah, who went by Eli, to a suspected fentanyl overdose in 2023, two weeks after his 15th birthday. His father found him unresponsive on a September morning last year. His cause of death was accidental fentanyl overdose. But he wasn't trying to buy fentanyl, he was looking for Xanax, and, like Coco, ended up with tainted pills that killed him.

A few taps away

While data on the prevalence of drug sales on social platforms is hard to come by, the National Crime Prevention Council estimates that 80% of teen and young adult fentanyl poisoning deaths can be traced to some social media contact.

In a sweeping 2023 report on the problem, Colorado's attorney general called the availability of fentanyl and other illicit substances online "staggering."

"Due to their ubiquity, convenience, and lack of regulation, social media platforms have become a major venue for drug distribution," the report said. "Where once a teen might have had to seek out a street dealer, hassle friends, or learn to navigate the dark web to access illicit drugs, young people can now locate drug dealers using their smartphones — with the relative ease of ordering food delivery or calling a ride-share service."

Accidental overdoses in the U.S. have decreased slightly each year since 2021 according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Paul DelPonte, executive director and CEO of the National Crime Prevention Council, attributes this partly to more education and awareness about the issue. Among young people ages 0 to 19, there were 1,622 overdose deaths in 2021, then 1,590 in 2022, and 1,511 last year.

The decline, DelPonte said, is "very small."

Companies respond

In a statement, Meta said drug dealers "are criminals who stop at nothing to sell their dangerous products. This is a challenge that spans across platforms, industries, and communities, and it requires all of us working together to address it."

The company added that it works with law enforcement and proactively took down 2 million pieces of content, 99.7% before they were reported in the first three months of 2024.

Meta says it blocks and filters "hundreds" of terms associated with illicit drug sales and links to recovery and substance abuse resources when possible. But drug dealers and other bad actors constantly shift their strategies, coming up with fresh ways to avoid detection.

Snap, in a statement, said it is "heartbroken by the fentanyl epidemic and are deeply committed to the fight against it."

"We've invested in advanced technology to detect and remove illicit drug-related content, work extensively with law enforcement helping to bring dealers to justice, and continue to raise awareness and evolve our service to help keep our community safe. Criminals have no place on Snapchat," said Jacqueline Beauchere, Global Head of Platform Safety at the company.

Lawsuits and regulation

While it can happen on any social media site, experts often single out Snapchat as a particularly dangerous platform, something the company vehemently disagrees with. In October 2022, a group of parents who say their children bought fentanyl from drug dealers they met through Snapchat sued the company for wrongful death and negligence, calling it a "haven for drug trafficking."

Advocates are hoping that regulation of tech companies could help address the problem, as it might help with other dangers kids face on social media. In July, the Senate passed the Kids Online Safety Act, legislation designed to protect children from dangerous online content. It still awaits a vote in the House. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., and Sen. Roger Marshall, R-Kan., meanwhile, introduced a bill that would require social media companies to report illicit fentanyl, methamphetamine and fake pill activity occurring

on their platforms to law enforcement.

"We must do more at the federal level to combat the flow of fentanyl into our communities, and it starts by holding social media companies accountable for their part in facilitating illicit drug sales," Shaheen said.

Georgia Republican leader seeks policy changes after school shooting but Democrats want more

By JEFF AMY and CHARLOTTE KRAMON Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Georgia's state House speaker says lawmakers in 2025 will consider new policies to foster student mental health, detect guns and encourage people to safely store guns after a school shooting killed four at a high school northeast of Atlanta.

But Republican Jon Burns of Newington is stopping short of Democratic demands that include universal background checks, a mandate to safely lock up guns and a "red flag" law letting the state temporarily take guns from someone in crisis.

The proposals made Thursday by Burns are the first policy response to the Sept. 4 shooting at Apalachee High School in Winder.

"While House Republicans have already made significant investments to strengthen security in our schools, increase access to mental healthcare, and keep our students safe, I am committed to not only continuing this work but pursuing additional policies that help ensure a tragedy like this never happens in our state again," Burns wrote.

The gambit by the Republican leader comes as he tries to protect his party's 102-78 majority in the state House in November's elections. Arguments over gun policy could influence a handful of competitive seats in Atlanta's northern suburbs, including three held by Republican incumbents.

At least one of those vulnerable Republicans, state Rep. Deborah Silcox of Sandy Springs, said in a statement Thursday that she would go further than Burns, backing universal background checks.

A spokesperson for Republican Gov. Brian Kemp, who called the shooting "our worst nightmare," said Kemp would review any proposals, but said the investigation is still turning up new information. A spokesperson for Republican Lt. Gov Burt Jones said he is preparing a response.

Teachers Richard Aspinwall, 39, and Cristina Irimie, 53, and students Mason Schermerhorn and Christian Angulo, both 14, died in the shooting. Nine others were injured — seven of them shot.

Democrats have been slamming Republicans, arguing the violence is an outgrowth of the GOP loosening Georgia's gun laws.

"What makes this more devastating than it already is is knowing that we had the policy tools to prevent this tragedy from ever happening in the first place," Rep. Saira Draper of Atlanta said Friday as she and fellow Democrats demanded a special legislative session on gun violence. "And that we did not use them because my Republican colleagues chose to gamble with our children's lives rather than face the wrath of the gun lobby."

Investigators say the shooting was carried out by 14-year-old Colt Gray, charged as an adult with four counts of murder. Authorities charged his 54-year-old father, Colin Gray, with second degree murder, involuntary manslaughter and cruelty to children. Investigators allege Colin Gray gave his son access to a semiautomatic AR-15-style rifle when he knew the teen was a danger to himself and others.

Burns said he wants to consider information sharing among police, schools and mental health workers, a nod to the fact that Colt and Colin Gray were questioned in 2023 by a Jackson County sheriff's deputy over an online post threatening a school shooting. Jackson County Sheriff Janis Mangum has said her office didn't find enough evidence to bring charges. It's unclear if Colt Gray's earlier schools were notified about the threats.

"We are aware that a breakdown in communication between school systems and law enforcement officials allowed the shooter's prior history to slip through the cracks upon his transfer to Apalachee High School," Burns wrote.

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The speaker also said he wants to expand mental health care for students. The state's voluntary Apex program steers students toward counseling. The program covered 540,000 of Georgia's 1.75 million students in 2022-2023, about 31%.

Burns also wants to examine ways to catch guns before they enter schools. Some schools are using camera systems and artificial intelligence to try to detect guns instead of metal detectors.

The speaker proposes increasing penalties for threats against schools, saying he wants to crack down on copycat threats seen since the shooting. Criminal penalties would apply only to those charged as adults, and most threat makers have been arrested as juveniles.

Finally, Burns said House Republicans would again promote safe firearm storage. The House passed legislation this year to create a state income tax credit of up to \$300 for the purchase of gun safes, trigger locks, other security devices or the costs of courses on safe firearms handling. The Senate preferred a bill exempting gun safes and other safety devices from state sales tax. Both bills failed after the chambers couldn't agree.

Democrats gained little traction on legislation that would have created a misdemeanor crime for negligently failing to secure firearms accessed by children. Rep. Michelle Au, a Johns Creek Democrat, has promised to bring back that measure.

The speaker said he's open to other proposals, saying the House will "examine every reasonable idea and solution to protect and defend the most vulnerable among us — our children — while also protecting the right and privilege of our citizens to protect their families and property."

Burns argued that previous school safety efforts reduced the toll at Apalachee, helping pay for wearable panic buttons that alerted authorities and school resource officers who responded.

State lawmakers and Kemp earlier approved multiple rounds of one-time security grants, totaling \$184 million.

The budget that began July 1 includes more than \$100 million in ongoing funding, enough to provide \$47,000 a year to each public school for safety. Schools can use that for chosen security purposes, though Kemp has said he wanted it to help underwrite a security officer for each school.

Tech billionaire pulls off first private spacewalk high above Earth

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A tech billionaire popped out from a SpaceX capsule hundreds of miles above Earth and performed the first private spacewalk Thursday, a high-risk endeavor once reserved for professional astronauts.

Tech entrepreneur Jared Isaacman teamed up with SpaceX to test the company's brand new spacesuits on his chartered flight. The daring feat also saw SpaceX engineer Sarah Gillis going out once Isaacman was safely back inside.

This spacewalk was simple and quick — the hatch was open barely a half hour — compared with the drawn-out affairs conducted by NASA. Astronauts at the International Space Station often need to move across the sprawling complex for repairs, always traveling in pairs and lugging gear. Station spacewalks can last seven to eight hours; this one clocked in at less than two hours.

Isaacman emerged first, joining a small elite group of spacewalkers who until now had included only professional astronauts from a dozen countries.

"Back at home, we all have a lot of work to do. But from here, it sure looks like a perfect world," Isaacman said as the capsule soared above the South Pacific. Cameras on board caught his silhouette, waist high at the hatch, with the blue Earth beneath.

The commercial spacewalk was the main focus of the five-day flight financed by Isaacman and Elon Musk's company, and the culmination of years of development geared toward settling Mars and other planets.

All four on board donned the new spacewalking suits to protect themselves from the harsh vacuum. They launched on Tuesday from Florida, rocketing farther from Earth than anyone since NASA's moonwalkers. The orbit was reduced by half — to 460 miles (740 kilometers) — for the spacewalk.

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This first spacewalking test involved more stretching than walking. Isaacman kept a hand or foot attached to the capsule the whole time as he flexed his arms and legs to see how the spacesuit held up. The hatch sported a walker-like structure for extra support.

After roughly 10 minutes outside, Isaacman was replaced by Gillis to go through the same motions. The SpaceX engineer bobbed up and down in weightlessness, no higher than her knees out of the capsule, as she twisted her arms and sent reports back to Mission Control.

Each had 12-foot (3.6-meter) tethers but did not unfurl them or dangle at the end unlike what happens at the space station, where astronauts routinely float out at a much lower orbit.

More and more wealthy passengers are plunking down huge sums for rides aboard private rockets to experience a few minutes of weightlessness. Others have spent tens of millions to stay in space for days or even weeks. Space experts and risk analysts say it's inevitable that some will seek the thrill of spacewalking, deemed one of the most dangerous parts of spaceflight after launch and reentry but also the most soul-stirring.

This operation was planned down to the minute with little room for error. Trying out new spacesuits from a spacecraft new to spacewalking added to the risk. So did the fact that the entire capsule was exposed to the vacuum of space.

There were a few glitches. Isaacman had to manually pull the hatch open instead of pushing a button on board. Before heading out, Gillis reported seeing bulges in the hatch seal.

Scott "Kidd" Poteet, a former Air Force Thunderbird pilot, and SpaceX engineer Anna Menon stayed strapped to their seats to monitor from inside. All four underwent intensive training before the trip.

It went by "in the blink of an eye," said SpaceX commentator Kate Tice.

Congratulations streamed in after the spacewalk concluded at one hour and 46 minutes — or a full swing and then some around Earth.

"Today's success represents a giant leap forward for the commercial space industry," NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said via X.

Isaacman, 41, CEO and founder of the Shift4 credit card-processing company, has declined to disclose how much he invested in the flight. It was the first of three flights in a program he's dubbed Polaris; this one was called Polaris Dawn. For SpaceX's inaugural private flight in 2021, he took up contest winners and a cancer survivor.

Until Thursday, only 263 people had conducted a spacewalk, representing 12 countries. The Soviet Union's Alexei Leonov kicked it off in 1965, followed a few months later by NASA's Ed White.

Young women are more liberal than they've been in decades, a Gallup analysis finds

By LINLEY SANDERS and AMELIA THOMSON-DEVEAUX Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Young women are more liberal than they have been in decades, according to a Gallup analysis of more than 20 years of polling data.

Over the past few years, about 4 in 10 young women between the ages of 18 and 29 have described their political views as liberal, compared with two decades ago when about 3 in 10 identified that way.

For many young women, their liberal identity is not just a new label. The share of young women who hold liberal views on the environment, abortion, race relations and gun laws has also jumped by double digits, Gallup found.

Young women "aren't just identifying as liberal because they like the term or they're more comfortable with the term, or someone they respect uses the term," said Lydia Saad, the director of U.S. social research at Gallup. "They have actually become much more liberal in their actual viewpoints."

Becoming a more cohesive political group with distinctly liberal views could turn young women into a potent political force, according to Saad. While it is hard to pinpoint what is making young women more liberal, they now are overwhelmingly aligned on many issues, which could make it easier for campaigns to motivate them.

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Young women are already a constituency that has leaned Democratic — AP VoteCast data shows that 65% of female voters under 30 voted for Democrat Joe Biden in 2020 — but they are sometimes less reliable when it comes to turnout.

Young women began to diverge ideologically from other groups, including men between 18 and 29, women over 30 and men over 30, during Democrat Barack Obama's presidency. That trend appears to have accelerated more recently, around the election of Republican Donald Trump, the #MeToo movement and increasingly successful efforts by the anti-abortion movement to erode abortion access. At the same time, more women, mostly Democrats, were elected to Congress, as governor and to state legislatures, giving young women new representation and role models in politics.

The change in young women's political identification is happening across the board, Gallup found, rather than being propelled by a specific subgroup.

Taylor Swift's endorsement Tuesday of Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris, after her debate against Trump, illustrated one of the issues where young women have moved to the left. In Swift's Instagram announcing the endorsement praised Harris and running mate Tim Walz for championing reproductive rights.

The Gallup analysis found that since the Obama era, young women have become nearly 20 percentage points more likely to support broad abortion rights. There was a roughly similar increase in the share of young women who said protection of the environment should be prioritized over economic growth and in the share of young women who say gun laws should be stricter.

Now, Saad said, solid majorities of young women hold liberal views on issues such as abortion, the environment, and gun laws.

Young women are "very unified on these issues ... and not only do they hold these views, but they are dissatisfied with the country in these areas, and they are worried about them," she said. That, she added, could help drive turnout.

"You've got supermajorities of women holding these views," she said, and they are "primed to be activated to vote on these issues."

USPS' long-awaited new mail truck makes its debut to rave reviews from carriers

By DAVID SHARP and RON HARRIS Associated Press

ATHENS, Ga. (AP) — The Postal Service's new delivery vehicles aren't going to win a beauty contest. They're tall and ungainly. The windshields are vast. Their hoods resemble a duck bill. Their bumpers are enormous.

"You can tell that (the designers) didn't have appearance in mind," postal worker Avis Stonum said.

Odd appearance aside, the first handful of Next Generation Delivery Vehicles that rolled onto postal routes in August in Athens, Georgia, are getting rave reviews from letter carriers accustomed to cantankerous older vehicles that lack modern safety features and are prone to breaking down — and even catching fire.

Within a few years, the fleet will have expanded to 60,000, most of them electric models, serving as the Postal Service's primary delivery truck from Maine to Hawaii.

Once fully deployed, they'll represent one of the most visible signs of the agency's 10-year, \$40 billion transformation led by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, who's also renovating aging facilities, overhauling the processing and transportation network, and instituting other changes.

The current postal vehicles — the Grumman Long Life Vehicle, dating to 1987 — have made good on their name, outlasting their projected 25-year lifespan. But they're well overdue for replacement.

Noisy and fuel-inefficient (9 mpg), the Grummans are costly to maintain. They're scalding hot in the summer, with only an old-school electric fan to circulate air. They have mirrors mounted on them that — when perfectly aligned — allow the driver to see around the vehicle, but the mirrors constantly get knocked out of alignment. Alarmingly, nearly 100 of the vehicles caught fire last year, imperiling carriers and mail alike.

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The new trucks are being built with comfort, safety and utility in mind by Oshkosh Defense in South Carolina.

Even tall postal carriers can stand up without bonking their heads and walk from front to back to retrieve packages. For safety, the vehicles have airbags, 360-degree cameras, blind-spot monitoring, collision sensors and anti-lock brakes — all of which are missing on the Grummans.

The new trucks also feature something common in most cars for more than six decades: air conditioning. And that's key for drivers in the Deep South, the desert Southwest and other areas with scorching summers.

"I promise you, it felt like heaven blowing in my face," Stonum said of her first experience working in an air-conditioned truck.

Richard Burton, another driver, said he appreciates the larger payload area, which can accommodate bigger packages, and the fact that he doesn't have to crouch, helping him avoid back pain. The old trucks also had a habit of breaking down in traffic, he added.

Brian Renfroe, president of the National Letter Carriers Association, said union members are enthusiastic about the new vehicles, just as they were when the Grummans marked a leap forward from the previous old-school Jeeps. He credited DeJoy with bringing a sense of urgency to get them into production.

"We're excited now to be at the point where they're starting to hit the streets," Renfroe said.

The process got off to a rocky start.

Environmentalists were outraged when DeJoy announced that 90% of the next-gen vehicles in the first order would be gas-powered. Lawsuits were filed demanding that the Postal Service further electrify its fleet of more than 200,000 vehicles to reduce tailpipe emissions.

"Everybody went nuts," DeJoy said.

The problem, DeJoy said, wasn't that he didn't want electric vehicles. Rather, the expense of the vehicles, compounded by the costs of installing thousands of charging stations and upgrading electrical service, made them unaffordable at a time when the agency was reporting big operating deficits every quarter.

He found a way to further boost the number of electric vehicles when he met with President Joe Biden's top environmental adviser, John Podesta. That led to a deal in which the government provided \$3 billion to the Postal Service, with part of it earmarked for electric charging stations.

In December 2022, DeJoy announced that the Postal Service was buying 106,000 vehicles through 2028. That included 60,000 next-gen vehicles, 45,000 of them electric models, along with 21,000 other electric vehicles. He pledged to go all-electric for new purchases starting in 2026.

"With the climate crisis at our doorsteps, electrifying the U.S. government's largest fleet will deliver the progress we've been waiting for," said Katherine Garcia of the Sierra Club, which sued the Postal Service before its decision to boost the volume of electric vehicle purchases.

Between the electric vehicles, reduced tailpipe emissions from optimized mail routes and other changes, the agency anticipates cutting carbon emissions by 40% by 2030, DeJoy said. The route revisions will also save money.

This summer the Postal Service's environmental battles came full circle as the White House honored it with a Presidential Federal Sustainability Award, marking the end of "an interesting journey," DeJoy said.

The honor signifies the agency's ability to work through complex problems — be they operational, financial, technical, political or of a public policy nature, he said.

"It comes from forging forward," he said. "Keep moving."

The Amazon's Ashaninka tribe restored their territory. Now they aim to change the region

By FABIANO MAISONNAVE and JORGE SAENZ Associated Press

APIWTXA VILLAGE, Brazil (AP) — It was just before dawn when the Ashaninka people, wearing long, tunic-like dresses, began singing traditional songs while playing drums and other instruments. The music drifted through Apiwtxa village, which had welcomed guests from Indigenous communities in Brazil and

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neighboring Peru, some having traveled three days. As the sun rose, they moved beneath the shadow of a huge mango tree.

The dancing, which would last until the following morning, marked the end of the annual celebration recognizing the Ashaninka territory along the winding Amonia River in the western Amazon. The multi-day, nearly around-the-clock festivities included the ritual of drinking ayahuasca, the sacred psychedelic brew, archery tournaments, climbing towering acai palm trees and face-painting with red dye.

What was once a gathering to commemorate the Ashaninka has evolved into a showcase of what they have done: the village's self-sufficiency, which comes from growing crops and protecting its forest, is now a model for an ambitious project to help 12 Indigenous territories in western Amazon, amounting to 640,000 hectares (1.6 million acres), about the size of the U.S. state of Delaware.

In November, the Organization of Indigenous People of the Jurua River, known by the Portuguese acronym OPIRJ, secured \$6.8 million in support from the Amazon Fund, the world's largest initiative to combat rainforest deforestation. With Apiwtxa as the model, the grant is geared toward improving Indigenous land management with an emphasis on food production, cultural strengthening and forest surveillance.

"We are expanding everything that we did at Apiwtxa to an entire region," said Ashaninka and OPIRJ leader Francisco Piyãko, speaking in front of his home in Apiwtxa. "This is not only about implementing a project. What is at stake is cultural change. This is essential to protect life, the territory and its peoples."

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of a series of on how tribes and Indigenous communities are coping with and combating climate change.

Indigenous groups have long argued that they are in the best position to conserve and protect forests, having been successful stewards of lands for thousands of years. Indigenous land management is increasingly a central policy discussion at climate talks as global warming worsens and other methods to protect forests, such as carbon credit schemes, have largely not been successful.

In Brazil, Indigenous territories comprise 23% of the Amazon region, which is roughly the size of South Africa and largely covered with old-growth rainforests that store large quantities of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that drives climate change when released into the atmosphere. In 2022, only 2% of all deforestation in the Amazon happened inside Indigenous territories, most by non-Indigenous land-grabbers. In Ashaninka's Amonia territory, the deforested area today is 0.03%, underscoring the tribe's successful forest management.

Thirty-two years ago, when the Brazilian government recognized the Ashaninka's territorial rights, the area where Apiwtxa sits was a sprawling cattle farm run by non-Indigenous settlers. Loggers had degraded the remaining forest, depleting the region of mahogany and other valuable trees. Indigenous families lived scattered and in fear. With few options, some worked for farmers and loggers in slave-like conditions.

The land demarcation, which forced outsiders to leave, opened the door to reforestation and cultural rebirth. The Ashaninka transferred their main village, Apiwtxa, to an abandoned pasture in a strategic location for surveillance. In the following years, the village leadership, spearheaded by Francisco Piyãko's father, Antônio, and his siblings, set up a governance system focused on the collective good and self-sufficiency, according to an article coauthored by anthropologist Carolina Comandulli and the Apiwtxa Association.

In Apiwtxa today, each one of the 80 families must take care of an area of forest that includes fruit trees and medicinal plants. Around the village, there are also agricultural plots with cassava, potato, banana and other produce. Over the years, the Ashaninka have replanted trees such as mahogany.

Apiwtxa's expansive traditional huts are surrounded by fishponds and land that combines crops and forest, providing food for their school, cotton for clothing, the vine that yields the sacred Ayahuasca hallucinogenic brew, urucum trees for dye extraction, palm trees to build thatched roofs, medicinal plants and embauba trees that provide strings for bows.

The land management systems sustain various dimensions of Ashaninka's daily lives, said Comandulli, the anthropologist.

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"They support their autonomy, which is something they value greatly," she said. "They seek food sovereignty, aim to control their own house construction, medical healing and engage in the economic process of market relations, by which handicrafts become a source of income."

Just as important, the Ashaninka created a strategy of developing relationships with neighboring communities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to create a "buffer zone," as well as to reach institutions outside the region.

Wewito Piyãko, president of the Apiwtxa Association and Francisco's brother, said that successful management, including stopping invasions from outsiders like loggers or miners, required working both within their territory and beyond.

"That's why we created this policy of working with the surrounding areas, so they understand what we are doing is for our benefit and theirs, too," said Piyãko.

The Ashaninka started expanding efforts beyond their territory in 2007, founding the Yorenka Atame, or Knowledge of the Forest Center, close to the nearest town, Marechal Thaumaturgo, a three-hour boat trip from Apiwtxa. There, the Ashaninka created a project integrating crops and forest preservation, a small factory to process fruit and a venue for events with non-Indigenous allies.

In 2015, the Amazon Fund granted the Apiwtxa Association, led by the Piyãko clan, \$2.2 million to improve agroforestry in its territory and extend the experience to other Indigenous tribes and riverine communities. It was the first time that the fund, backed mostly by Norway but also by the U.S. and other countries, financed an Indigenous organization.

The next year, Isaac Piyãko, brother of Wewito and Francisco Piyãko, was elected mayor of Marechal Thaumaturgo, a town of 17,000 people, mostly non-Indigenous, historically run by business owners who profited from rubber-tapping and families with ties to logging and cattle ranching. It was the first, and so far only, time that an Indigenous leader had become a mayor among the 22 municipalities of Acre state. In 2020, Piyãko was reelected.

Francisco said the Ashaninka leader's candidacy was based on the same principle as OPIRJ's project: to spread their experience to the entire region, including non-Indigenous areas. One of the Apiwtxa's projects that became municipal policy under Isaac has been the purchase of local school meals from small farming families, thus reducing industrialized products such as canned sardines brought from thousands of kilometers (miles) away.

Despite that success, climate change has impacted local production, making it one more issue the Ashaninka must confront. Last year, during record drought in the Amazon, the Amonia River's water was so warm that for the first time the Ashaninka stopped bathing in it and thousands of fish died. This year, Amazon communities are again suffering from widespread drought.

"The culprits for this live far from us," said Francisco, speaking about climate change, which historically industrialized nations have been most responsible for. "But if we start pointing fingers, we'll waste a lot of energy and solve nothing. Instead, we're focusing on adaptation. We're identifying the best places to build houses and grow crops, improving access to water and managing fire risks."

Another beneficiary of the OPIRJ project is the Apolima-Arara territory. It is located in a stretch of the Amonia River between Apiwtxa and Marechal Thaumaturgo and is one of Brazil's most recently demarcated Indigenous lands. President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva signed its designation into law in April 2023, following a two-decade struggle for recognition.

The Apolima-Arara, who participated in the Ashaninka's festivities along with Yawanawa, Huni Kuin, and other tribes, are dealing with some of the same problems faced by their neighbors decades ago. Part of their territory has been deforested by non-Indigenous people, and they are working to improve their agricultural production. The main village, Nordeste, has largely eliminated surrounding pasture by planting trees.

So far, the OPIRJ project has provided agricultural equipment and a boat for territorial surveillance.

"Apiwtxa is an example to us. No Indigenous people retook their territory easily," Apolima-Arara leader José Angelo Macedo Avelino said from inside the village's collective hut, accompanied by other tribe members. "Apiwtxa suffered just like us, and now their territory is recovered. We plan to do the same."

The debate opened voters' eyes in suburban Philadelphia and Harris is getting a closer look

By MIKE CATALINI Associated Press

BRISTOL, Pa. (AP) — The presidential debate this week was the final affront to Rosie Torres' lifelong Republicanism. She said her allegiance to Donald Trump, already strained by his stand on abortion, snapped in the former president's "eye opener" encounter with Kamala Harris.

It's time to put "country before party," Torres, 60, said Wednesday in Bristol, a riverfront town in suburban Philadelphia. Trump left her frustrated after his appearance recently at Arlington National Cemetery when a member of his staff pushed a cemetery official, she said.

"I still was willing to vote for Donald Trump," Torres said. "But you know, I think that what he did at the cemetery for the veterans — that was very disrespectful. I feel like our country is being disrespected."

In Bucks County, a critical area in a vital swing state, the debate is producing a lot of hard thinking about what to do in November. Millions of Americans elsewhere have made up their minds but in purple Pennsylvania, plenty of voting choices are still in play.

In interviews in Bristol and Langhorne, another longtime Republican came away from the debate intrigued but not sold on Harris, a young first-time voter is going for Trump, and a Democrat is still trying to shake the image in his head of people eating pets after Trump's "moronic" talking point on that subject Tuesday night.

A closer look at what voters in a key part of the country are thinking after what could be the only presidential debate:

She's still shopping

There's Mary Nolan, 70, of Bensalem, a registered Republican for 50 years who voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016 and Trump in 2020. She has more thinking to do after a debate in which Harris both impressed and frustrated her.

"I wasn't happy with Biden-Trump," she said of the options before President Joe Biden abandoned his reelection campaign. "I didn't feel we had any good choices. And I'm still not sure we do. We might. But I still want to see more about Kamala Harris."

She said she and her husband, who's registered as a Democrat, split their party registrations so they could have a say as a family in primary elections. Immigration, the economy (she said she had just paid \$6 for a pound of butter) and the infrastructure bill that Biden signed into law were her top issues.

"I like that Kamala Harris does say I am going to be the president for everyone," Nolan said. "I don't think our politicians say that often."

She figures she'll make her voting decision by the end of October, just days before the election. Meanwhile, she's aggressive about collecting information.

"I take different opinions from all over. I don't do any blogs. It's simply news. Different interest groups like AARP."

Her political ideology? "I think the world is changing fast, and I'm still in my values from 1960," Nolan said. What values?

"Family, home, morals. You know, our kids don't have the upbringing that you did or I did because the streets are different now. I think if someone would say, you know, this is what I'm going to do to improve life in the United States, I definitely would vote for them."

She said she thought Harris had a good debate, but dodged some things.

"I did not like that she avoided questions. She talked around them when they asked her direct questions about abortion. There was one about abortion. There was another about immigration. And there were a couple that said, hey, you've been here three and a half years, but you haven't done those things that you're saying are so important. Why not? She ran off into her talking points and never gave a direct answer."

But Harris gave her a good impression. Trump did not.

"I think yesterday, definitely Kamala Harris presented herself very well. She's dignified. ... She would be a good representative of our country."

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Trump? "I think his policies are good. I just want a more stable, dignified president." She wants "someone that doesn't yell and scream and call people names."

This Democrat saw history unfold

Terry Culleton, 68, of Langhorne, Pennsylvania, is a retired high school English literature teacher and was reading "Autocracy, Inc." by Anne Applebaum at a cafe Wednesday morning. His support for labor, then for civil rights and human rights, made him a Democrat.

He thought Harris held her own against Trump and articulated her plans well.

But what really stuck with him was Trump's false comments about immigrants in Ohio eating pets.

"So moronic a thing to say and to repeat that I just can't get it out of my head that somebody would go on national TV and state that," he said.

He said he got a sense of history unfolding watching the debate last night.

"I think it's democracy versus something close to totalitarianism. I think it's a matter of supporting democratic governments as opposed to supporting the kind of governments that (Russian President Vladimir) Putin is trying to export, which Trump has no problem with, as far as I can tell."

Inflation led her to Trump

Kelli Surline of Langhorne was at a café with her fiancé and young daughter who wore an Eagles kelly green T-shirt. She described herself as politically unengaged until the pinch of higher prices got to her. She didn't watch the debate, in part, because she's made up her mind.

"I'm 28 years old and I've never seen the country this bad ever," she said. "So I made the choice to get my voter's registration, and I'm definitely voting for Trump."

She talked about how difficult it has been to get ahead.

"We wanted to get a place together," Surline said, motioning to Geoffrey Trush, 40, her fiancé. "We're not able to do that." Instead, she's living with her mom. Unaffordable prices make it "a struggle every week."

He was once a Democrat

Ron Soto, 86, of Levittown, Pennsylvania, is a longtime Trump supporter and retired tractor-trailer driver and Army veteran who left the Democratic Party in the 1990s for the GOP after coming to realize he disagreed with Bill and Hillary Clinton's positions.

He said he tuned into the debate Tuesday, his hound dog, Sam, by his side, after watching the Phillies game.

Illegal immigration is a major issue for him and Harris didn't win him over.

"The biggest issue is I don't like her, and I don't like Joe Biden."

Saying he served in the Army from 1955 to 1963, Soto asked: "What the hell did I stick my neck out for? Why? So you can give it away? The Democrats can open the gates, the floodgates, and tell the whole world. You're welcome. Come on in." He added: "These people have ruined this country."

She had her fill of politics

Christine Desumma, 50, a former Trump voter and the owner of a salon on Bristol's quaint shop-lined street, expressed frustration with both parties and said she won't be voting at all in November. She said her taxes were lower when Trump was in office and recalled the sting of COVID-19 shutdowns.

She got fed up, particularly with social media and Facebook. Online debates, she said, were driving a wedge within her own family, and she's washing her hands of it.

"I just made the decision that I'm not going to vote and I don't want to hear it," she said. "Now I choose to not watch, not pay attention." She's found another pursuit.

"I'm studying yoga," she said. "I got myself back."

Most Americans don't trust AI-powered election information: AP-NORC/USAFacts survey

By ALI SWENSON and LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Jim Duggan uses ChatGPT almost daily to draft marketing emails for his carbon removal credit business in Huntsville, Alabama. But he'd never trust an artificial intelligence chatbot with

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any questions about the upcoming presidential election.

"I just don't think AI produces truth," the 68-year-old political conservative said in an interview. "Grammar and words, that's something that's concrete. Political thought, judgment, opinions aren't."

Duggan is part of the majority of Americans who do not trust artificial intelligence-powered chatbots or search results to give them accurate answers, according to a survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and USAFacts. About two-thirds of U.S. adults say they are not very or not at all confident that these tools provide reliable and factual information, the poll shows.

The findings reveal that even as Americans have started using generative AI-fueled chatbots and search engines in their personal and work lives, most have remained skeptical of these rapidly advancing technologies. That's particularly true when it comes to information about high-stakes events such as elections.

Earlier this year, a gathering of election officials and AI researchers found that AI tools did poorly when asked relatively basic questions, such as where to find the nearest polling place. Last month, several secretaries of state warned that the AI chatbot developed for the social media platform X was spreading bogus election information, prompting X to tweak the tool so it would first direct users to a federal government website for reliable information.

Large AI models that can generate text, images, videos or audio clips at the click of a button are poorly understood and minimally regulated. Their ability to predict the most plausible next word in a sentence based on vast pools of data allows them to provide sophisticated responses on almost any topic — but it also makes them vulnerable to errors.

Americans are split on whether they think the use of AI will make it more difficult to find accurate information about the 2024 election. About 4 in 10 Americans say the use of AI will make it "much more difficult" or "somewhat more difficult" to find factual information, while another 4 in 10 aren't sure — saying it won't make it easier or more challenging, according to the poll. A distinct minority, 16%, say AI will make it easier to find accurate information about the election.

Griffin Ryan, a 21-year-old college student at Tulane University in New Orleans, said he doesn't know anyone on his campus who uses AI chatbots to find information about candidates or voting. He doesn't use them either, since he's noticed that it's possible to "basically just bully AI tools into giving you the answers that you want."

The Democrat from Texas said he gets most of his news from mainstream outlets such as CNN, the BBC, NPR, The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. When it comes to misinformation in the upcoming election, he's more worried that AI-generated deepfakes and AI-fueled bot accounts on social media will sway voter opinions.

"I've seen videos of people doing AI deepfakes of politicians and stuff, and these have all been obvious jokes," Ryan said. "But it does worry me when I see those that maybe someone's going to make something serious and actually disseminate it."

A relatively small portion of Americans — 8% — think results produced by AI chatbots such as OpenAI's ChatGPT or Anthropic's Claude are always or often based on factual information, according to the poll. They have a similar level of trust in AI-assisted search engines such as Bing or Google, with 12% believing their results are always or often based on facts.

There already have been attempts to influence U.S. voter opinions through AI deepfakes, including AI-generated robocalls that imitated President Joe Biden's voice to convince voters in New Hampshire's January primary to stay home from the polls.

More commonly, AI tools have been used to create fake images of prominent candidates that aim to reinforce particular negative narratives — from Vice President Kamala Harris in a communist uniform to former President Donald Trump in handcuffs.

Ryan, the Tulane student, said his family is fairly media literate, but he has some older relatives who heeded false information about COVID-19 vaccines on Facebook during the pandemic. He said that makes him concerned that they might be susceptible to false or misleading information during the election cycle.

Bevellie Harris, a 71-year-old Democrat from Bakersfield, California, said she prefers getting election information from official government sources, such as the voter pamphlet she receives in the mail ahead

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of every election.

"I believe it to be more informative," she said, adding that she also likes to look up candidate ads to hear their positions in their own words.

Today in History: September 13, Rabin and Arafat sign Oslo Accord

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, Sept. 13, the 257th day of 2024. There are 109 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Sept. 13, 1993, at the White House, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat shook hands after signing an accord granting limited Palestinian autonomy.

Also on this date:

In 1788, the Congress of the Confederation authorized the first national election and declared New York City the temporary national capital.

In 1948, Republican Margaret Chase Smith of Maine was elected to the U.S. Senate; she became the first woman to serve in both houses of Congress.

In 1971, a four-day inmate rebellion at the Attica Correctional Facility in western New York ended as police and guards stormed the prison; the ordeal and final assault claimed the lives of 32 inmates and 11 hostages.

In 1997, a funeral was held in Kolkata, India, for Nobel peace laureate Mother Teresa.

In 2008, crews rescued people from their homes in an all-out search for thousands of Texans who had stayed behind overnight to face Hurricane Ike.

In 2010, Rafael Nadal beat Novak Djokovic to win his first U.S. Open title and complete a career Grand Slam.

In 2021, school resumed for New York City public school students in the nation's largest experiment of in-person learning during the coronavirus pandemic.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Barbara Bain is 93. Nobel Peace Prize laureate Óscar Arias is 84. Rock singer David Clayton-Thomas (Blood, Sweat & Tears) is 83. Actor Jacqueline Bisset is 80. Singer Peter Cetera is 80. Actor Jean Smart is 73. Record producer Don Was is 72. Chef Alain Ducasse is 68. Rock singer-musician Dave Mustaine (Megadeth) is 63. Olympic gold medal sprinter Michael Johnson is 57. Filmmaker Tyler Perry is 55. Fashion designer Stella McCartney is 53. Former tennis player Goran Ivanisevic (ee-van-EE'-seh-vihch) is 53. Country musician Joe Don Rooney (Rascal Flatts) is 49. Singer-songwriter Fiona Apple is 47. Actor Ben Savage is 44. Soccer player Thomas Müller is 35. Rock singer Niall Horan (One Direction) is 31. Actor Lili Reinhart (TV: "Riverdale") is 28.