

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Sunday, Sept. 22

### FIRST DAY OF AUTUMN

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

St. John's Lutheran: Worship 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.

## Monday, Sept. 23

School Breakfast: Breakfast sliders.

## Groton Daily Independent

PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

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



School Lunch: Turkey gravy, mashed potatoes.  
Senior Menu: Hot pork sandwich, cucumber salad, baked beans, sherbert, fruit.

Cross Country at Clear Lake, 4 p.m.

JH Football hosts Oakes, 4:30 p.m., one game

JV Football hosts Oakes, 5:30 p.m.

3rd/4th and 5th/6th Football hosts Redfield - 6PM

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

Pantry open, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., community center.

Senior Citizens meet at the community center, potluck, noon to 3 p.m.

## Tuesday, Sept. 24

School Breakfast: egg omelets.

School Lunch: Pasta with meat sauce, bread stick.

Senior Menu: Chicken cordon bleu hotdish, Cauliflower and broccoli, pears, whole wheat bread.

Volleyball hosts Warner: 7th/C at 5 p.m., 8th/JV at 6 p.m., varsity to follow

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

Pantry open, Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

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## No. 24 Wolves Challenge No. 8 Wildcats in Saturday NSIC Loss

Aberdeen, S.D. – The No. 24 Northern State University volleyball team suffered their first loss of the 2024 season on Saturday to No. 8 Wayne State. Despite a 3-set match, the Wolves battled with the Wildcats in a number of long rallies.

### THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score Match: NSU 0, WSC 3

Records: NSU 9-1 (1-1 NSIC), WSC 8-2 (2-0 NSIC)

Attendance: 829

### HOW IT HAPPENED

The Wildcats took the match with set scores of 25-19, 25-19, and 25-18

Northern tallied 37 kills, while Wayne recorded 38, and the Wolves notched a game leading 79 digs

In addition, NSU recorded 36 assists, five blocks, and three aces

Hanna Thompson and Natalia Szybinska led the team with 12 and 11 kills respectively, followed by Morissen Samuels with nine

Thompson hit a team leading .407, suffering just one hitting error in the match

Abby Meister led three Wolves in double figures with 22 digs, followed by Keri Walker and Sara Moberg with 17 and 12 respectively

Abby Brooks and Samuels led the team at the net with five and four block each, and Mia Hinsz rounded out the team leaders with two aces

### NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Hanna Thompson: 12 kills, .407 attack%

Morissen Samuels: 9 kills, 5 digs, 4 blocks

Keri Walker: 32 assists, 17 digs

Sara Moberg: 12 digs, 4 assists

### UP NEXT

Northern travels south next Friday and Saturday for a pair of matches against Southwest Minnesota State and Augustana. Start times are set for 6 p.m. on Friday in Marshall and 2 p.m. on Saturday in Sioux Falls.

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## Northern Falls to No. 18 Augustana in Mid-day Match-up

Sioux Falls, S.D. – The Northern State University football team fell to No. 18 Augustana University Saturday afternoon on the road.

### THE QUICK DETAILS

Final Score: NSU 7, AU 41

Records: NSU 0-4 (0-3 NSIC), AU 2-1 (2-0 NSIC)

Attendance: 3395

### HOW IT HAPPENED

Augustana took a 34-0 lead in the first and second quarters, notching 13 points in the first and 21 in the second

Northern broke through with under a minute in the second on an 8-yard pass to Ty Wiley from Colton Hackel

Neither team scored in the third and Augustana recorded their final touchdown of the contest at 3:36 in the fourth

The Wolves recorded 139 yards of total offense in the game

The defense notched two interceptions, with 17 return yards, and two sacks for a loss of 12 yards

Hackel threw for 102 total yards, recording one touchdown, while Hank Kraft led the team with 40 yards rushing

Jacob Van Landingham and Wyatt Block led the receiving game with 34 and 30 yards respectively, each recording a 20-yard long

Four the fourth straight game, Jake Adams led the defense with 15 tackles, including ten solo stops

Ivan Martin followed with a career high eight tackles, while Luke Gunderson and Charlie Larson notched seven each

Larson and Logan Grossinger tallied the teams two sacks, while Lynden Williams and Kegan Mountain each added an interception

### NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Jake Adams: 15 tackles, 10 solo tackles

Tom Ellard: 328 yards punting, 73-yard long, 46.9 yards per punt

Ty Wiley: 60 kick return yards, 21 yards receiving, 1 touchdown

### UP NEXT

Northern State returns to Dacotah Bank Stadium for the 2024 Ag Bowl next Saturday. Kick-off is set for 6 p.m. against Winona State.

## Names Released in Haakon County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: SD Highway 34, mile marker 128, 34 miles northwest of Philip, SD

When: 12:46 a.m., Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Vehicle 1: 2001 Freightliner TR

Driver 1: Jose Antonio Perez Martinez, 59-year-old male from Humble, TX, serious, non-life-threatening injuries

Seatbelt Use: No

Passenger 1: Nolberto Garcia Hernandez, 51-year-old male from Odessa, TX, no injuries

Seatbelt Use: No

Vehicle 2: 1996 Freightliner TR

Driver 2: Gianni Estevez Garcia, 25-year-old male from Fort Myers, FL, fatal injuries

Seatbelt Use: Yes

Haakon County, S.D.- A Florida man died early Wednesday morning when his semi collided with another semi in a two-vehicle crash 34 miles northwest of Philip, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates Jose Antonio Perez Martinez, the driver of a 2001 Freightliner, was parked in the lane of travel with its emergency flashers on near mile marker 128 on SD Highway 34 in Haakon County, SD. Gianni Estevez Garcia, the driver of a 1996 Freightliner heading the same direction, struck the back of the parked semi. Martinez was moving about the cab during the collision and suffered serious, non-life-threatening injuries. A passenger, Nolberto Garcia Hernandez, was outside of the vehicle at the time and uninjured. Gianni Garcia sustained fatal injuries.

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

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

## Names Released in Beadle County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle and pedestrian fatal crash

Where: US Highway 14, mile marker 319, two miles east of Wessington, SD

When: 12:55 p.m., Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Vehicle 1: 2023 International MV607

Driver 1: Eric James Kunkel, 47-year-old male from Mitchell, SD, minor injuries

Seatbelt Use: Under investigation

Vehicle 2: 2022 Dodge Ram

Driver 2: Tiburcio Gonzalez Jr, 27-year-old male from Mathis, TX, minor injuries

Seatbelt Use: Under investigation

Passenger 1: Jose Gabriel Mendoza Naba, 32 year-old male from Mathis, TX, minor injuries

Seatbelt Use: Under investigation

Pedestrian/Construction Flagger: Sandra Guerra Ceballos, 44-year-old female from Eddyville, NE, fatal injuries

Beadle County, S.D.- A construction zone worker died Tuesday from injuries sustained in a two-vehicle crash two miles east of Wessington, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates Tiburcio Gonzalez Jr, the driver of a 2022 Dodge Ram, was traveling westbound on US Highway 14 near mile marker 319 and entered a construction zone. Sandra Guerra Ceballos, a construction worker 'Flagger,' was on on-scene directing westbound traffic to slow down and stop. Gonzalez had stopped as directed. As Eric James Kunkel, the driver of a 2023 International MV607, approached from the same direction, he collided with the Dodge, and then struck Ceballos.

Ms. Ceballos suffered fatal injuries. The two drivers and a passenger in the 2022 Dodge Ram, Jose Gabriel Mendoza Naba, sustained minor injuries and were transported to a nearby hospital.

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.

## Volleyball team takes fourth at Hamlin Tournament

Groton Area's volleyball team took fourth place at the Hamlin Tournament held Saturday. Groton Area defeated Tiospa Zina, 2-0, then lost to Dell Rapids, 2-0, and to Castlewood in the third place match, 2-0.

In the first match with Tiospa Zina, Jaedyn Penning and Jerica Locke both racked up eight ace serves for the Tigers. Penning added two kills to her tally. Chesney Weber had five kills while Taryn Traphagen had four, Faith Traphagen and Rylee Dunker each had three kills, Talli Wright had three ace serves, Elizabeth Flihs had two ace serves, Sydney Locke had an ace serve and Kella Tracy had one kill.

Maya Deutsch had two kills for Tiospa Zina while Journee Haley had one kill and Harmony Rodlund had one ace serve.

Set scores were 25-7 and 25-8.

Then the Tigers took on the number one and undefeated Dell Rapids Quarriors. The first set was close all the way to the end with the set being tied 15 times and there were five lead changes with the biggest lead during the match being two points. Groton Area had the 21-20 lead but Dell Rapids battled back to get the 25-23 win. Dell Rapids never trailed in the second set, winning it, 25-15.

Taryn Traphagen had six kills, Faith Traphagen had six kills and one block, Chesney Weber had six kills and one ace serve, Rylee Dunker had two kills and two blocks, Kella Tracy had one kill and Jaedyn Penning had one ace serve.

Madelynn Henry led the Quarriors with 10 kills and one block, Clara Justice had three kills and one ace serve, Karlie Ingalls had four kills, Lauryn Kloth had two kills, one block and one ace serve, Elin Schoenhard had two blocks, two ace serves and one kill, Sophi Randall had two kills and two ace serves and Sylea Sykes had one kill.

In the third place match, the first set against Castlewood was tied five times and there were three lead changes. Castlewood went on to win the first set, 25-19.

Groton Area led in the second set with the help of a seven point rally to take at 13-4, but Castlewood would battle back and would tie the set at 16 and took a 23-19 lead. Groton fought back to make it one point set at 23-22, but Castlewood would win it, 25-22.

Jaedyn Penning led Groton Area with seven kills and two ace serves while Chesney Weber had seven kills, Taryn Traphagen and Rylee Dunker each had three kills and a block, Faith Traphagen had two kills, Kella Tracy had one kill and Sydney Locke and Elizabeth Flihs each had one ace serve.

Cassidy Kirwan led Castlewood with seven kills and two ace serves, Emerson Carter had six kills and a block, Claire Horn had four kills and an ace serve, Ava Ruml had three kills and three blocks, Cyndi Kudrno had one kill and Dayton Knecht had one ace serve.

All three matches were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Agtegra, Avantara Groton, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom T's & More, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Harry Implement, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Lanes & Lounge, Krueger Brothers, R&M Farms/Rix Farms and The Meathouse in Andover.

## Hot Springs edges Groton Area in boys soccer

Hot Springs took a 2-0 lead at half time and hung on for the 2-1 win over Groton Area in boy soccer action played Saturday in Groton. Will Erickson scored with 15:55 left in the first half and Azbayar Bayambanorov would score before the half was over with. Easton Weber scored for Groton Area with 24:47 left in the game.

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Agtegra, Avantara Groton, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom T's & More, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Full Circle Ag, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Harry Implement, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Lanes & Lounge, Krueger Brothers, R&M Farms/Rix Farms and The Meathouse in Andover. Internet was provided by JVT. Jeslyn Kosel ran the camera.



## THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, "We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?" And he recognized it and said, "It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces." Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days. ❧

GENESIS 37: 32-34

Detail of "Jacob Weeping for Joseph,"  
Marc Chagall, 1956



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## BIBLE

## TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Esarhaddon (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. In Esther 2, what was Hegai “the keeper” of regarding King Ahasuerus? *Holy Grail, Weapons, The women, Grain of the fields*

3. What New Testament person was the “voice of one crying in the wilderness”? *Judas, Jude, Jehovah, John the Baptist*

4. From Proverbs 22, what is bound up in the heart of a child? *Foolishness, Mischief, Love, Rebellion*

5. In biblical times, what were small copper coins called? *Pennies, Shekels, Mites, Paschals*

6. From Judges 10, who had 30 sons that rode 30 donkeys? *Elijah, Jair, Ezekiel, Job*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) The women, 3) John the Baptist, 4) Foolishness, 5) Mites, 6) Jair

*“Test Your Bible Knowledge,” a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.*



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**FLASH GORDON**

YEARS AGO.

ALL MY LIFE, I DREAMED OF OVERTHROWING MING. RESTORING MY FAMILY'S THRONE. WINNING THE LOVE OF PRINCESS AURA.

THEN A MAN FELL FROM THE STARS AND BEGAN DOING ALL THAT WITHOUT HESITATION.

OH, HOW I WANTED TO HATE HIM.

I AM BARIN, KING OF THE FREE MONGO, AND RIGHT NOW MY PALACE IS UNDER ATTACK--

--FROM THE SO-CALLED "TRUE HEIRS OF MING."

MASKED COWARDS WHO CLAIM MY WIFE AURA AND I ARE PRETENDERS TO OUR THRONE.

DESPITE ALL THAT'S HAPPENED, FLASH GORDON SPRINGS TO OUR DEFENSE.

WE DRIVE THEM BACK--

--BUT IN THEIR RETREAT, THEY TAKE DALE ARDEN AS THEIR HOSTAGE.

AGAINST OUR WARNINGS, FLASH IS GOING TO GO FIND THE HEIRS AND RESCUE DALE.

OF COURSE.

KNOWING, POLITICALLY, WE CAN'T HELP HIM.

HE NEVER HESITATES. NEVER GIVES IN TO FEAR.

I COULDN'T HATE HIM IF I TRIED.

DAN SCHKADE 9-22-24

*NEXT: THE UNDERWORLD*

## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

OLDER AND HEAVILY-BUILT GOLFERS ARE GENERALLY ABLE TO COIL MORE FULLY AND SHIFT THEIR WEIGHT MORE EFFECTIVELY BY ALLOWING THE LEFT HEEL TO RISE ON THE BACKSWING.

LET THE HEEL COME UP IN RESPONSE TO BACKSWING BODY ACTION, RATHER THAN LIFTING IT DELIBERATELY. THEN REPLANT THE HEEL FIRMLY AS THE FIRST ACTION OF THE DOWNSWING.

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## How to Recognize Normal Versus High Blood Pressure

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have been confused about what normal blood pressure is for me (or anyone). I know there is some debate on what normal is today, but let us say that normal is 120/80 mm Hg. Does this mean that 110/90 mm Hg, 130/70 mm Hg, or 150/50 mm Hg is also normal? Is there any significance of the ratio between systolic and diastolic blood pressure? -- L.P.

ANSWER: Because so many people have high blood pressure, and the consequences of untreated or poorly treated high blood pressure include a risk for heart attacks and strokes, it's critically important to understand this thoroughly.

For a young, healthy person, the lower the blood pressure, the lower the risk of blood vessel damage that leads to these dreaded complications of heart attack and stroke. I routinely see people with blood pressures of 90/60 mm Hg who are just fine (although they are a bit more likely to faint).

But for middle-aged and older people, we define blood pressure as normal when the systolic (first or top number) pressure is less than 120 mm Hg and the diastolic (the second or bottom number) is less than 80 mm Hg. Elevated blood pressure is when the systolic pressure is between 120-129 mm Hg and the diastolic pressure is less than 80 mm Hg. It's considered hypertension when the systolic number is 130 mm Hg or greater, or the diastolic number is 80 mm Hg or greater.

So, all of the readings you proposed are hypertension -- not just elevated blood pressure.

Of course, the higher the reading (in general), the higher the risk of damage to the blood vessels and, after some years, the higher the risk of heart attacks or strokes. It's not the ratio of the systolic and diastolic numbers that is of interest; it's the difference between them (also called the pulse pressure). So, with the numbers you gave, the pulse pressures are 20, 60 and 100 mm Hg. Independent of blood pressure levels, a higher pulse pressure confers additional risk to the person, mostly because very stiff blood vessels cause a high pulse pressure. Different types of blood pressure medicines affect pulse pressure differently.

\*\*\*

DEAR DR. ROACH: Is a platelet count of 135,000 low or in the normal range for a 76-year-old male in good health, with no signs of abnormal bruising or bleeding? -- P.R.

ANSWER: The normal range for a platelet count is 150,000-450,000 per microliter, so 135,000 is just below the lower limit of normal. However, it's quite rare to have abnormal bleeding with a platelet count like this, even under stress like a surgical procedure.

About 2.5% of the healthy population will have a platelet count below 150,000, so a level of 135,000 may not represent any disease at all. Typically, the risk of spontaneous major bleeding becomes high when platelet levels drop below 30,000.

The most common cause of low platelets in older adults is an immune-mediated condition called "immune thrombocytopenia," but there are many possible causes, including medications, bone marrow diseases, and liver disease. For a 76-year-old, if repeat blood counts show that the platelet count is stable in the 100,000 range, most experts would not do further testing in absence of any symptoms.

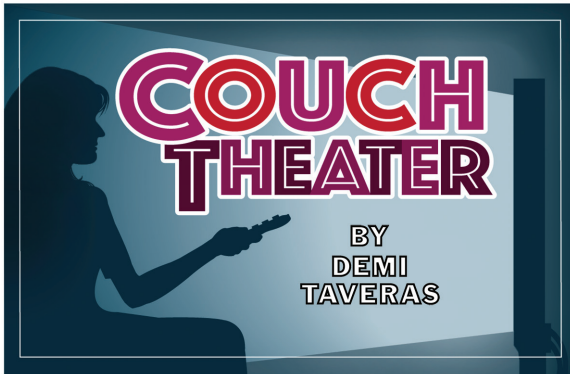
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to [ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu).

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**Brad Pitt, left, and George Clooney star in "Wolfs."** (Courtesy of MovieStillsDB)

"Wolfs" (R) -- Following its premiere at the recent Venice International Film Festival (where its main actors were looking quite snazzy, if I do say so myself), this action-comedy film starring George Clooney and Brad Pitt hits our screens on Sept. 27! Whether you missed the Clooney-Pitt

dynamic from the "Ocean's Eleven" trilogy or you're just a fan of the actors respectively, this film will definitely scratch your itch. The two Hollywood long-timers play two professional "fixers" who are separately called up to work on the same job. Although these lone wolves prefer to work alone, they actually find out that they make a pretty good (and entertaining) team. Amy Ryan ("The Office") and Austin Abrams ("Euphoria") co-star. (Apple TV+)

"Grotesquerie" (TV-MA) -- The start of the spooky season has arrived, thanks to none other than Ryan Murphy (creator of "American Horror Story"). For his latest horror series, he's once again employed the talents of Niecy Nash, who seems to be finding her footing in the horror genre as of late, after snagging an Emmy for Murphy's series, "Dahmer -- Monster." In this 10-episode series, Nash plays Lois Tryon, a detective battling alcoholism as a series of grotesque, seemingly connected crimes grip her town. After she gets put on the case, a local nun named Sister Megan (Courtney B. Vance) volunteers to work alongside Lois to uncover the perpetrator. If you're not yet exhausted by the media coverage of him and his special lady, keep a lookout for Travis Kelce, who makes his acting debut in the series. Premieres Sept. 25. (Hulu)

"Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story" (TV-MA) -- Speaking of Ryan Murphy and his "Monster" anthology series, the second season has just been released for viewers to binge. This season tells the true story of Lyle and Erik Menendez, two brothers who were convicted of murdering their parents, Jose and Kitty, back in 1989. While the basis of their conviction was rooted in the fact that the two brothers were trying to inherit their parents' wealth, there is so much more to their story, including a history of physical, emotional and sexual abuse from their parents. Last season, it was clear that Jeffrey Dahmer was a monster, but the monsters this time around appear to be Jose and Kitty. Javier Bardem ("Dune: Part Two") and Chloe Sevigny ("Feud: Capote vs. The Swans") play the cold-blooded couple, while Nicholas Chavez ("General Hospital") and Cooper Koch ("They/Them") portray the brothers. (Netflix)

"Wise Guy: David Chase and the Sopranos" (TV-MA) -- This two-part documentary series explores the making of the legendary HBO series "The Sopranos," which originally ran from 1999 until its sixth and final season in 2007. Viewers get an in-depth look at the show's creator, David Chase, and how his own relationship with his mother ultimately kickstarted the creation of the show. Several of the show's cast members chime in to provide their points of view of what it was like to work on the show, including Lorraine Bracco, who played Dr. Melfi; Edie Falco, who played Carmela Soprano; Michael Imperioli, who played Christopher Moltisanti; and Drea de Matteo, who played Adriana La Cerva. Out now! (Max)

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1. Which group had a hit with "Dancing Machine"?
2. Who released "Knock Three Times"?
3. Which group released "Bad to Me"?
4. Name the group that released "I Can't Get Next to You."
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Maybe I didn't treat you quite as good as I should have, Maybe I didn't love you quite as often as I could have."

Answers

1. The Jackson 5, in 1974. Michael helped popularize the robot dance with "Dancing Machine." The group netted a Grammy nom for Best R&B Performance for the song but

lost to Rufus and Chaka Khan.

2. Dawn, later known as Tony Orlando and Dawn, in 1970. Singing with the two Dawn ladies while on tour was supposed to be temporary, but was continued when all three liked the arrangement.

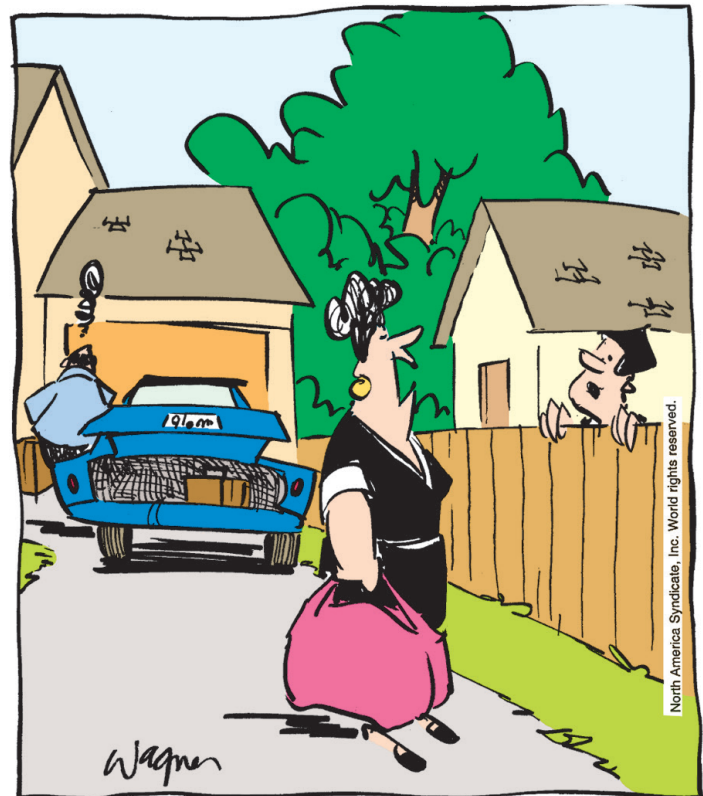
3. Billy J. Kramer & The Dakotas, in 1963. The song was written for the group by Beatle John Lennon and recorded at the Abbey Road Studios.

4. The Temptations, in 1969.

5. "Always on My Mind," by Gwen McCrae in 1972. Brenda Lee released a cover three months later, followed by Elvis Presley the same year and Willie Nelson in 1982.

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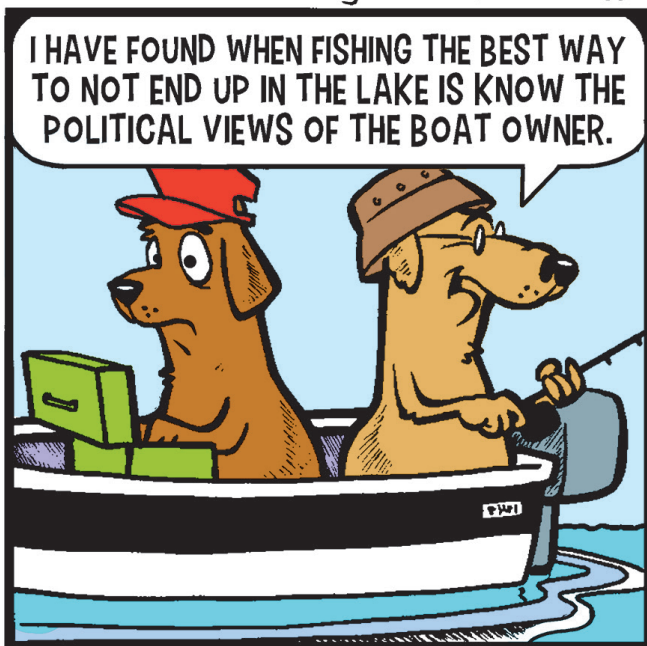
## GRIN *and* BEAR IT <sup>Wagner</sup>



"Roscoe didn't ask for directions, but several drivers did tell him where to go."

## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

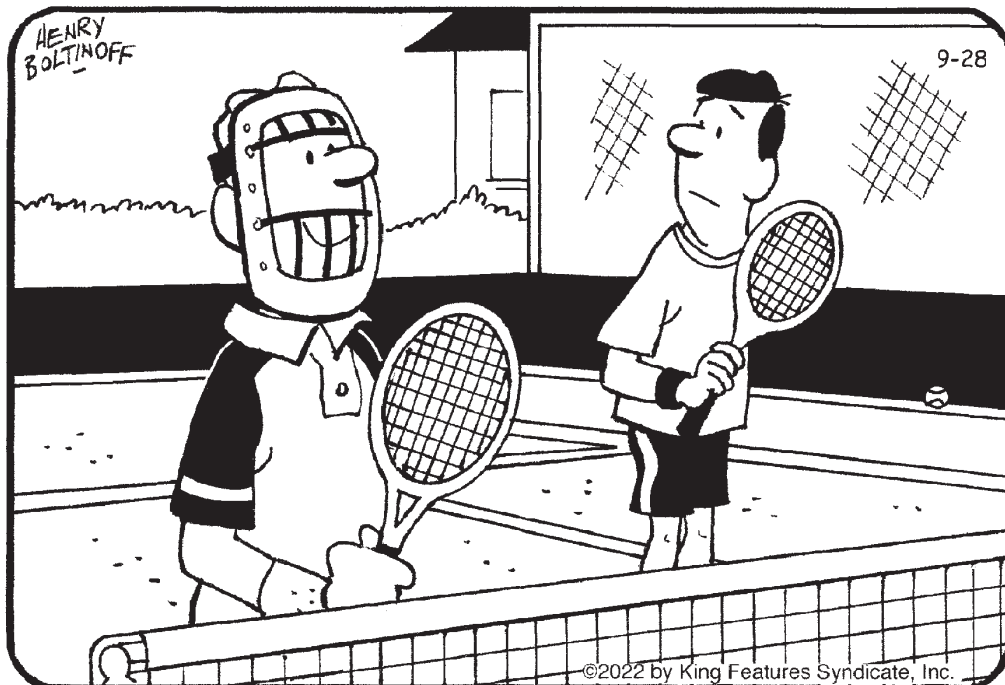


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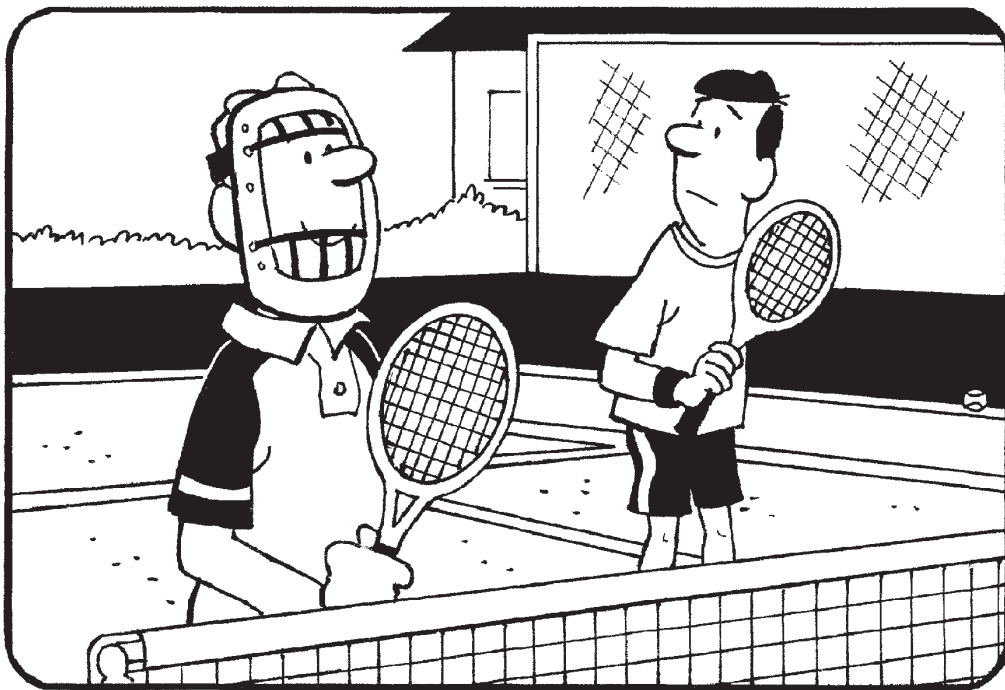
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## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY  
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Ball is moved. 3. Wristband is missing. 4. Facemask is different. 5. Fence is not as high. 6. Hedge is lower.

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\* With holidays on the way, money is getting tight in my household. This is a fun, creative way to save a bit of cash: Plan a no-spend weekend every month, where you don't spend any money on your activities. Challenge your children to help you plan it or take turns finding activities.

\* "To keep my sharp kitchen scissors in the kitchen, I tied a long piece of yarn to the handle and attached it to the handle of the drawer that I keep them in. Now, those scissors get used in the kitchen, or nowhere!" -- J.J. in Florida

\* Remove scuff marks from hard-surface floors (wood, linoleum, tile) with a clean tennis ball. If your floor has many scuffs, you can poke a hole in the tennis ball and insert it on the top of your broom handle. When you hit a scuff, flip your broom

over and rub. Most come off right away!

\* "Buy pretty dishtowels and tablecloths on clearance and clip them on curtain rods for a quick window treatment." -- T.C. in Texas

\* This is a great, natural solution for tightening your facial pores, and it feels wonderful on tired skin, too. Start by brewing a cup of rosehip tea and pouring it into an ice-cube tray to freeze. When it's all frozen, take out a cube. Wrap it inside of a washcloth, and wet just the spot where the cube is. Then rub it over your face.

\* "My kids use rewards charts for chores and good behavior, etc. I used to get some little toys at the dollar store for rewards, but I ended up at the local thrift store one day and noticed that there was plenty of nice small toys that were actually cheaper than at the dollar store! Plus, these nice things are getting one more use, and that's good for the environment, too!" -- A.K. in Pennsylvania

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Peron of Argentina
- 4 Siestas
- 8 First light
- 12 Bud
- 13 — Major
- 14 Actor Morales
- 15 German shepherd
- 17 Teen hangout
- 18 Resistance unit
- 19 Church topper
- 21 British party
- 24 Louvre treasures
- 25 Khan title
- 26 The "G" of LGBTQ
- 28 Doesn't buy

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
		18				19		20				
21	22				23		24					
25				26		27		28		29	30	31
32			33		34		35		36			
37				38		39		40		41		
			42		43		44		45			
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- 32 Clothing store section
- 34 Gender
- 36 Stratagem
- 37 Green sauce
- 39 Teeny
- 41 Shriver of tennis
- 42 Rainbow shape
- 44 A Karamazov brother
- 46 Stew flavorer
- 50 Chi follower
- 51 Genesis brother
- 52 Music school concerts

- 56 Only
- 57 Sharif of "Funny Girl"
- 58 Pool unit
- 59 Contain
- 60 Commanded
- 61 Messy room

### DOWN

- 1 Clean air org.
- 2 Kilmer of "Top Gun"
- 3 Losers
- 4 Eggnog sprinkling
- 5 "Entourage" agent
- 6 Unpaid TV ads
- 7 Dasher's boss
- 8 Agriculture goddess
- 9 Pronto
- 10 Humpty's perch
- 11 Egyptian river
- 16 Sashimi fish
- 20 Goof up
- 21 Pack (down)
- 22 Curved molding
- 23 Airline to Sweden
- 27 Evergreen type
- 29 Wedding
- 30 Despot

- 31 Big rig
- 33 Bought time
- 35 Deleted
- 38 Tram load
- 40 Realm
- 43 Ersatz chocolate
- 45 Follower (Suff.)
- 46 Wild party
- 47 "Peek- —!"
- 48 Holler
- 49 Disaster aid gp.
- 53 Scoundrel
- 54 Long. crosser
- 55 CIA operative

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## — King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

E	V	A		N	A	P	S		D	A	W	N
P	A	L		U	R	S	A		E	S	A	I
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M	E	N	S		S	E	X		R	U	S	E
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### Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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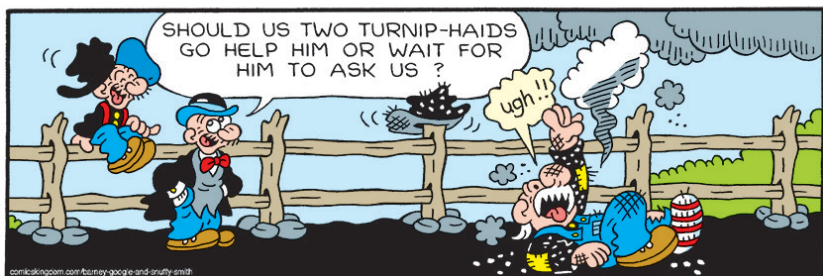
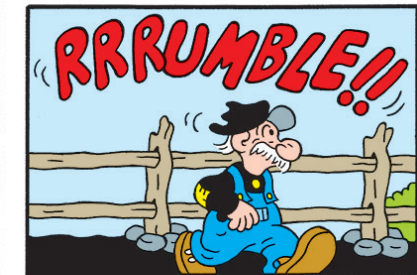
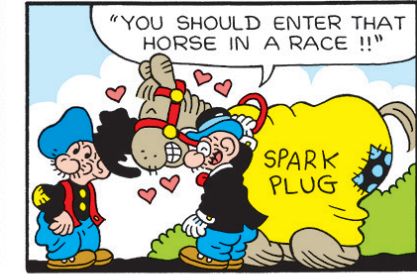
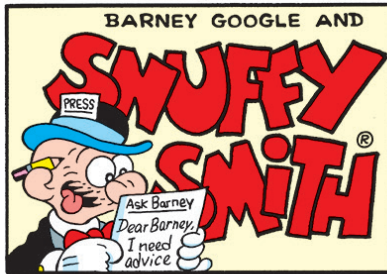
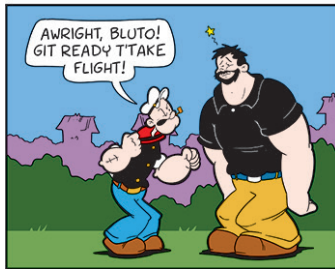
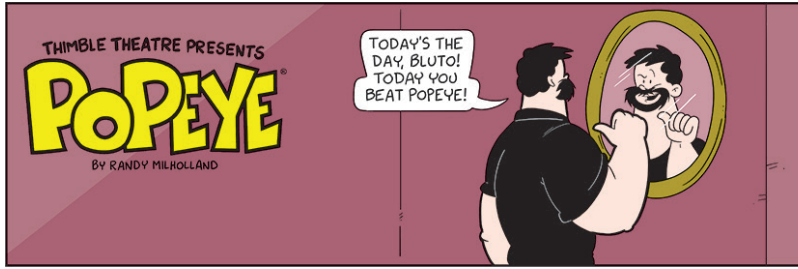
NICK DUBAY:  
UNCERTIFIED  
LIFE COACH

KOPERVAS



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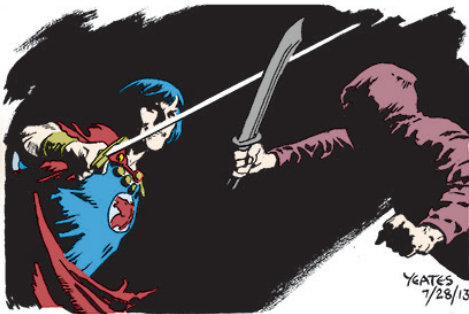
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HAL FOSTER'S  
**Prince Valiant**  
BY SCHULTZ AND YEATES

WHILE INSPECTING THE SHIP THAT WILL TAKE HIS FAMILY TO THE MISTY ISLES, VAL SEES A SHADOWY FIGURE CREEP BELOW DECK.

VAL KNOWS HIS QUARRY HOLDS THE ADVANTAGE AND, SURE ENOUGH, HE NEEDS ALL HIS REMARKABLE REFLEXES TO AVOID THE EXPECTED ATTACK.

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THE COMBAT IN THE DARK CABIN IS AS AWKWARD AS IT IS BRUTAL. EVEN SO, THERE IS SOMETHING IN THIS MYSTERIOUS SWORDPLAY THAT REMINDS VAL OF THE FAR EASTERN WORLD.

UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE SOMEONE MISSTEPS. UNFORTUNATELY, IT IS VAL WHO STUMBLES ...

15990

... ALLOWING THE SHADOW WARRIOR THE CHANCE TO BOLT UP THE STEPS, ONTO THE DECK ...

... AND OVER THE SHIP'S SIDE BEFORE THE TWO STUNNED GUARDS CAN REACT!

NEXT: Suspicion

## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

WOW... IT'S HOT OUT THERE

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HOW HOT IS IT?

PICKERING

I JUST SAW A CHICKEN LAY AN OMELETTE!!

## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### Scams are getting worse

The scams against seniors are getting worse, if that's even possible, and the thieves are becoming sneakier and more creative by the minute. We have to up our game to stay one step ahead of them and not fall victim.

It bears reviewing the typical scams. While some of these might seem to be repeats of scams that have already gone on for years, the differences are in the tactics the thieves are using.

Romance scams -- If you have a new online friend you've never met and they ask for money, it's a scam.

Computer repair -- You might get a pop-up message saying your computer has a virus and that you need to give them access to fix it. It's a scam.

Grandparent scams -- You'll get a call that is allegedly from your grandchild who is in jail and needs bail money. It's most likely a scam. Before something like this ever happens, create a code word you can use with family members as proof of who they are. A scammer won't know that secret word.

The government -- This one is all about fear, and you're made to think the IRS or the police are after you unless you send a payment, or that your Social Security number has been suspended. It's a scam.

Banks and account fraud -- This one is also about fear when you're told someone is trying to get into your account. Hang up. Call the bank and ask if they're looking for you. It's likely a scam.

Nowadays, you might not want to answer the phone if you don't recognize the number. If it's a real call and someone needs you, they'll leave a message.

Do an online search for "scams against seniors 2024" and learn all you can about the dozens of types of scams out there. The list is growing.

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1. What 1995 action thriller film starring Jean-Claude Van Damme centered on a terrorist plot at Pittsburgh's Civic Arena during Game 7 of the Stanley Cup Final?

2. Name the twin sisters who were on the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team together from 1997-98.

3. In a scandal dubbed "Crashgate," what Formula 1 driver alleged that he was told to intentionally crash his racecar to give an advantage to Renault teammate Fernando Alonso at the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix?

4. The Elmer Ferguson Memorial Award honors a reporter or columnist for excellence in coverage of what sport?

5. Snowboarder Ross Rebagliati, who had his men's giant slalom gold medal stripped (and later restored) after a positive drug test for cannabis at the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics, competed for what country?

6. What Baseball Hall of Fame catcher had his No. 23 jersey retired by the St. Louis Cardinals?

7. Name the Basketball Hall of Famer who holds the NBA record for most career personal fouls per game with 3.68.



by Ryan A. Berenz

## Answers

1. "Sudden Death."

2. Lorrie and Ronnie Fair.

3. Nelson Piquet Jr.

4. Ice hockey.

5. Canada.

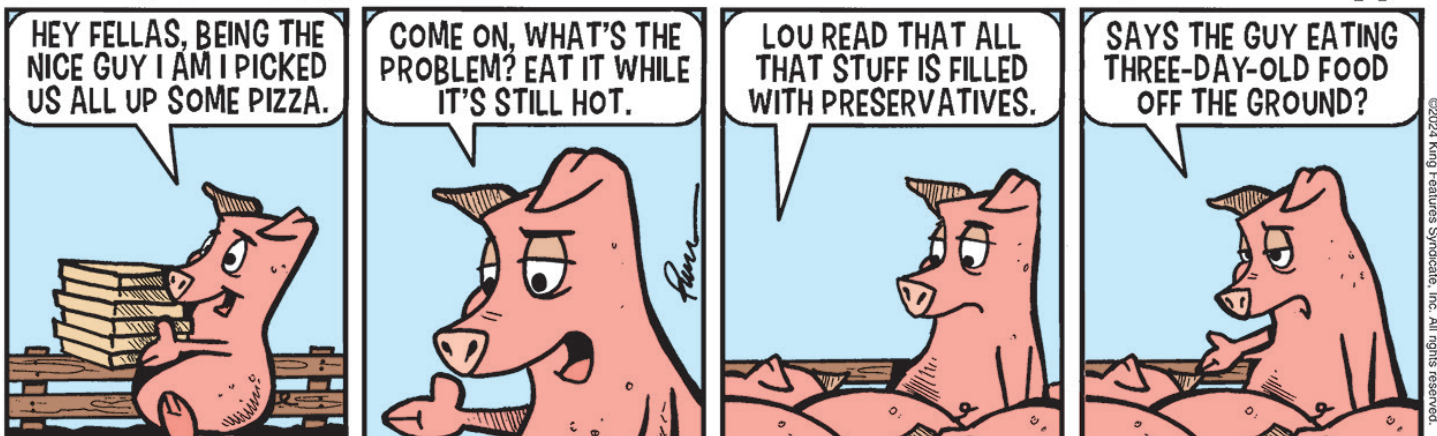
6. Ted Simmons.

7. Bailey Howell (3,498 personal fouls in 950 games played from 1959-71).

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





## How to photograph your pet

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I've been trying to take a picture of my cat "Jess" all summer long. But every photo looks terrible. Do you have any tips for taking good pictures of pets? -- Taylor H., Taos, New Mexico

DEAR TAYLOR: Patience and practice are your best friends when trying to get a great shot of your pet. Cats aren't known for their tolerance of sitting in one pose for very long (especially when you're trying to force them into a pose), and even well-trained dogs can't stay in place too long.

Study the techniques of good photography; you can look them up online. Composition is more important than the device you're using -- whether an expensive

camera or your smartphone.

Incorporate these guidelines into your pet photography:

- Opportunity: Rather than posing your pet, photograph them in their daily lives.
- Eye level: Position the camera lens at the same level as your pet's eyes, rather than aiming down at them.
- Focus: Make sure your device has a sharp focus on the pet's eyes. If the auto focus has trouble doing so, try angling slightly to one side so their snout isn't in the way.
- Natural light: Turn off the auto flash and rely on natural light, like sunlight or a warmly lit room. This keeps pets relaxed and gives a nice glow to the image.
- Background: Pay attention to what's behind your pet. An unscooped litter box behind Jess will really stand out when you're reviewing the photos.
- Unusual angles: Play around with different angles and perspectives when photographing your pet. Many won't work, but you might be surprised at the ones that look amazing.

Most important, have fun!

Send your tips, comments or questions to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).

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## Strange BUT TRUE

\* Octopus wrestling was a popular sport in the 1960s. A diver would fight an octopus in shallow water and drag it to the surface.

\* After an online vote in 2011, Toyota announced that the official plural of Prius is Prii.

\* Each spacecraft sent to Mars is scrubbed and inspected before dispatch as part of a strict planetary protection protocol meant to prevent contamination from Earth.

\* *Ophiocordyceps unilateralis*, a parasitic fungus, effectively turns ants into zombies. The fungus compels the ant to bite onto the underside of a low-hanging leaf, where it dies, and the fungus then sends a fruiting body out through the ant's head to disseminate spores.

\* Geckos can turn the stickiness of their feet on and off at will.

\* And speaking of feet, during World War II, the United States began rationing shoes. Citizens were allowed three pairs.

\* When Leonardo DiCaprio smashed his hand on the dinner table in "Django Unchained," he accidentally crushed a small stemmed glass with his palm and really began to bleed. He ignored it, stayed in character, and continued with the scene. Quentin Tarantino was so impressed that he used this take in the final print, and when he called cut, the room erupted in a standing ovation.

\* Though they are often used as vegetables in cooking, eggplants are botanically classified as berries.

\* Charles Richard Drew was a Black physician who developed blood banks for military personnel during World War II. He quit working for the Red Cross after he learned that the military separated blood donations by race.

\* The Dr. Seuss classic children's tale "Green Eggs and Ham" was banned in China from 1965 to 1991 for its "portrayal of early Marxism."

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "A good example has twice the value of good advice." -- Albert Schweitzer

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The lotus flower was sacred in many ancient cultures as a symbol of blessings and the renewal of life. The plants grow in the flood plains of slow-moving rivers and deltas, and can drop many seeds every year. While some seeds sprout quickly or are eaten by wildlife, the remaining seeds can stay dormant a long time within the sediment, even if it dries out completely. When water levels are renewed, the dormant seeds spring to life from the sediment and put on a magnificent display.

Sources: [www.segmation.com](http://www.segmation.com), [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)

– Brenda Weaver



by Freddy Groves

## Empty alcohol bottle in the pocket?

A big thumbs-up to the whistleblower who ratted out a Department of Veterans Affairs surgeon who was carrying an empty alcohol bottle. Specifically, the bottle fell out of the scrubs in the surgical locker room.

The report by the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG) is scary to read when it concerns somebody who is going to carve up human bodies with scalpels. The surgeon was reported and, no, just being in possession of an alcohol bottle doesn't specifically mean the surgeon was drinking on the job. But really, do you know anyone who carries around an empty alcohol bottle in their pocket who wasn't drinking? When nothing was done immediately, a whistleblower called the state licensing board as well as the OIG.

Meanwhile, the surgeon was transferred to a different medical function -- ordering prescriptions -- away from direct patient care and was told to keep away from patients. The head of the facility believed that placing medication orders did not constitute patient care, so it would be OK.

Except it was learned that the surgeon didn't understand "stay away from patients" and did contact a surgical patient -- and was transferred again to a different function.

The OIG's opinion was that yes, prescribing medications did constitute direct patient care, and finally the facility leader decided to go for suspension of the surgeon.

The OIG report is a lengthy exploration of how those in charge can take steps while not understanding the rules and, oh, by the way, the hospital indicated that the surgeon didn't actually treat any patients while banned from doing so. Except the OIG discovered paperwork that indicated the surgeon did indeed perform surgery on the same day that an empty alcohol bottle fell out of the pocket of the scrubs. When asked why they didn't report the multiple problems with patient care they witnessed at the surgeon's hands, staff indicated that they feared retaliation.

It took 11 months, but the facility leaders eventually canceled the surgeon's facility privileges while patients were potentially at risk the whole time.

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## Wishing Well®



6	2	3	2	4	6	3	7	8	6	5	3	5
P	N	H	O	H	R	I	L	S	O	Y	G	O
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M	M	F	H	I	E	L	U	A	O	I	R	E
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V	S	R	T	S	E	E	A	F	F	U	U	V
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T	N	I	T	A	O	B	L	F	R	R	L	E
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U	Y	I	E	E	O	O	S	A	S	V	C	U
6	5	7	5	7	5	2	4	5	3	5	3	6
O	I	N	V	N	E	R	D	C	E	R	S	N
4	8	5	6	5	7	2	5	4	6	5	6	6
A	U	I	T	S	Y	S	I	Y	A	S	C	T

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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1. U.S. STATES: Which state's nickname is The Hawkeye State?
2. MOVIES: What are the bad guys called in "Transformers"?
3. MYTHOLOGY: What happens to people when Medusa turns her gaze on them?
4. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of crocodiles in the water called?
5. FOOD & DRINK: What is the main ingredient in bouillabaisse (stew)?
6. ASTRONOMY: How old is our Sun?
7. TELEVISION: Where does Walter White live in "Breaking Bad"?
8. LITERATURE: The character named Ichabod Crane appears in which 19th-century story?
9. MEDICAL: What is a common name for onychocryptosis?
10. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Nova Scotia?

### Answers

1. Iowa.
2. Decepticons.
3. They turn to stone.
4. A float.
5. Seafood.
6. About 4.6 billion years old.
7. Albuquerque, New Mexico.
8. "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."
9. Ingrown toenail.
10. Halifax.

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South Dakota Governor

**Kristi Noem**



**South Dakota:** *Under God, the People Rule*

## Harvesting Our Own Food Supply

Growing up on our family farm and ranch, there were two time periods that were busiest: calving season in the spring and harvest in the fall. The time has come for farmers to harvest most of their crops. It's the fruit of their labor after a long growing season.

If farmers see good rainfall and fair weather, hopefully they have a strong harvest. If not, they pray for a better year next year. Unfortunately, many estimates show that 2024 will be one of the biggest drops in farm income on record due to drought in some parts of the country, severe storms in others (including here in South Dakota), and low commodity prices. I have worked on ag policy for 30 years – but this has been a hard year.

To make matters harder, that decline in farm income comes as prices remain persistently high for the basic necessities in life, like food, gasoline, and electricity. Farmers have to take care of their own families, too. And when farmers have smaller harvests, that means that the cost of those crops goes up at the grocery store.

Now more than ever, we need to thank our farmers for the work that they do, and we need to support them. They grow our food – we would be lost without them.

For that reason, I have made taking care of our ag producers a top priority as Governor of South Dakota. We've worked on numerous new laws and other actions to preserve agriculture for our next generation. We celebrate all our family farms, especially when they reach 100 years or more of ownership in the same family.

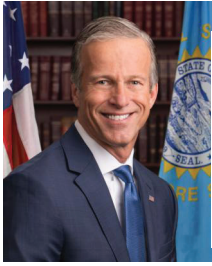
This past year, South Dakota passed the best bill in the nation to keep the Chinese Communist Party and other Evil Foreign Governments from owning our state's precious farm land. China would never allow us to buy land in their country – they don't even let their own people buy their land. We should not allow our enemies to become our neighbors.

I hope that other states follow our example. After all, South Dakota is just one state out of 50. Since passing that legislation, we just received our first report from my Department of Revenue, and there were no attempted purchases of ag land by Evil Foreign Governments in South Dakota. But we know that it is happening in other places. China's ownership of American ag land grew by more than 5,300% in just a 10-year period.

And this threat is taking on emerging forms. Water rights have increasingly become an issue as foreign countries have attempted to lease American farmland as a means of stealing our water. And Russia has been buying American cattle to bolster its own beef production with our superior cattle genetics. They want to be competitive with our own beef industry. If they succeed, they will make it much tougher for us to maintain control of our own food supply. As I have said many times, our enemies – especially China – are attempting to infiltrate every aspect of our way of life.

As long as America can feed itself, we control our own destiny. Food security is a matter of national security. We need a strong and diversified food supply, and we must not rely on other nations – much less nations that hate us – to provide our food.

So we need our farmers. We need them to do well, to keep their farms in business, and to continue growing and raising the food that we enjoy on our dinner tables every night. I pray that our farmers enjoy a fantastic harvest. And I will keep doing everything in my power to guarantee their ability to grow our food for years to come.



**JOHN THUNE**  
U.S. SENATOR FOR SOUTH DAKOTA

## On National Defense, We Can't Take Our Eye Off the Ball

Every day, American servicemen and women stand ready to defend our nation. They stay vigilant to counter any threat, and they and their families make innumerable sacrifices in service to our country. And it's their dedication and courage – and that of the generations of Americans who came before them – that have secured the freedoms we enjoy as Americans.

Providing for our nation's defense is the most important thing I do in Congress. But it's not a one-and-done exercise; we shouldn't expect that a one-time buildup will provide the military with everything it needs to keep the nation safe. Technology and tactics change, threats evolve, and even the strongest reputations fade if they're not backed up with substance. So maintaining a robust national defense has to be a permanent focus, year-in and year-out. It has to be a priority.

Unfortunately, we are not where we should be when it comes to national defense. The Commission on the National Defense Strategy recently released its assessment that "the U.S. military lacks both the capabilities and the capacity required to be confident it can deter and prevail in combat." Another report from the Strategic Posture Commission reads, "Today the United States is on the cusp of having not one, but two nuclear peer adversaries, each with ambitions to change the international status quo, by force, if necessary: a situation which the United States did not anticipate and for which it is not prepared."

While our preparedness lags, the world isn't getting any safer. We've seen an unnerving increased alignment among our adversaries. Russian and Chinese bombers flew together 200 miles off the coast of Alaska this summer. Iran and North Korea have both provided Russia with missiles to use in Ukraine. Then, there are the threats to our allies. In the South Pacific, China has grown increasingly aggressive toward Japan, the Philippines, and Taiwan. In the Middle East, our military continues to combat Iran-backed terrorists that have attacked commercial shipping and launched attacks against Israel, and Hamas still holds more than 100 hostages from its attack against Israel, including seven Americans.

There's no time to waste, yet Democrats have kept our national defense funding on the backburner. Every one of the Biden-Harris administration defense budget requests has failed to keep pace with inflation. And Senate Democrats have shown once again that the annual defense bills are near the bottom of their priority list. A bipartisan defense authorization was passed by the Armed Services Committee months ago, but week after week the Senate's business has largely been confirming Biden nominees and political show votes on bills going nowhere.

Our adversaries haven't put their national defense on the backburner, and neither should we. Inaction sends the wrong message to our adversaries and allies, not to mention it hamstringing our own military's ability to modernize and evolve with the threat environment. Failure is not an option. We owe America's servicemembers – and the national security imperatives of our great nation – more than last-minute legislating.

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## Safe Streets, Smarter Policies

### **BIG Update**

For years, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has said that sanctuary cities create a public safety threat and are one of the biggest impediments to ICE's public safety efforts. A sanctuary city's refusal to cooperate with ICE puts local law enforcement officers in danger.

After four years of the Biden border crisis, sanctuary cities have received tens of thousands of illegal immigrants. Biden's soft-on-crime and open border policies have made these communities, and others around them, less safe.

These cities have used taxpayer dollars to solve problems their own bad policies have made. This should not be the case. I voted to pass the No Bailout for Sanctuary Cities Act to ensure no taxpayer dollars are used to fund housing, food, and healthcare costs for illegal immigrants.

### **BIG Idea**

The South Dakota Auto Dealers Association knows how difficult it would be to limit vehicle emissions to meet the EPA's overly burdensome rule. This rule would effectively require two-thirds of all new cars to be electric vehicles by 2032. Not only do we not have the infrastructure to support this EV adoption, but it outpaces consumer demand and severely limits your options when purchasing a vehicle. This week I voted to end this unreasonable EPA rule.

### **BIG News**

I voted to keep our government funded and require proof of citizenship to vote in federal elections. We must ensure election integrity. Showing a photo ID is a commonsense way to do that. Recently, Oregon discovered hundreds of noncitizens were mistakenly registered to vote, compromising our election security.

Keeping the government funded and operating and safeguarding our voting process are essential tasks of my job in Congress.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries

PO Box 831313 - Ocala, FL 34483

1-352-216-3025

## Oh, For the Life of an Old Geezer

I am not given to complaining, except when I'm awake. That's according to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

Lately, I've been leaning towards a complaining attitude. I've reached the point of being an old geezer. I'm older than both of my grandfathers, and in three years, I'll be up to where my father was when he passed away.

I don't think of myself as old, just older.

There are some benefits to getting older, but I've discovered just as many negative aspects. I'm not as energetic as I used to be. I can't walk as fast as I used to. When someone talks to me, I have to think a bit about their name.

Don't let me get on about my health issues. When I was young, I didn't have all of these health issues, but now, I'm at that point in life where I do have health issues.

Seeing my doctors is second only to seeing The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. All the nurses in the various medical places I go know me by my first name. I don't know if that's good or if it's bad. I'm going to lean in the direction of good. After all, at my age I'm leaning in some direction.

When I was younger, I never thought about getting old. Every time I celebrated a birthday, it never occurred to me that this would continue until I became an old geezer. At the time, I used to make fun of my old grandfathers. Now, much to my disgust, I have become my old grandfathers.

I'm glad they're not alive to see that I have become just like them. They would've died laughing.

My father passed away when he was five years older than I am right now. So, in five years, I will be at my father's level. I'm unsure what level that is, and I do not even want to know.

I remember that, as kids, my siblings and I would sit around and laugh at our grandparents. I'm wondering if my grandchildren are sitting around laughing at me! I wouldn't blame them if they were.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I recently ate lunch together. I suppose we were celebrating something, but for the life of me, I can't remember what it was. We were at a restaurant enjoying ourselves.

When the waitress came to our table to take our order, she asked how we were, and I responded, "Well, for an old geezer, we were doing fine."

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She smiled at me and said, "Does that mean that you both are senior citizens?"

I usually take offense at that classification. But under the circumstances I nodded my head and said, "Yes, we are senior citizens but I prefer old geezers."

Looking at me, the waitress smiled and said, "You are in luck today. We have a senior citizen discount on everything on the menu."

I looked up at her and said, "Why, yes. We're both senior citizens."

"In that case, you can get a 20% discount on everything you order today."

She took our coffee order and then went to get it for us. As she was gone, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said, "Are we old geezers or senior citizens?"

I smiled and said, "Today we are senior citizens and tomorrow will go back to being old geezers."

"I guess it's only about the money for you," she smiled.

After thinking for a moment, I finally responded, "I've never heard of an old geezer discount. Have you?"

She shook her head and said, "I'll let you be a senior citizen today and will see what tomorrow might bring."

That next week, whenever we went out to a restaurant and, the waitress would say, "How are you doing today?" I would always respond by saying, "Do you have any senior citizen's discounts today?"

If they said "no," I would always respond by saying, "I'm just an old geezer today."

If they said "yes," I would respond by saying, "I'm a senior citizen today."

I'm trying to determine the differences between an old geezer and a senior citizen. Apart from the discount, I can't find any difference between the two. I'm an old geezer one day, and the next day, I have a senior citizen. Maybe I have the case of dementia.

At one restaurant this past week, the waiter came up and greeted me. I was having a rather crazy day, to put it mildly, so I told him, "I'm just an old geezer today."

"Well," said the waiter, "this is my last day here at this restaurant and so I'm going to give you an old geezer discount. You sorta remind me of my grandfather."

I was so sorry that The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage wasn't with me. We could have enjoyed a two-way ticket for the old geezer discount. She would have been happy, I think. If I keep from calling her an old geezer, my day is happy.

In thinking about this I remembered a verse in the Bible that addresses old age. "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing" (Psalm 92:14).

God still has work for me even as an old geezer. Finding that work is the joy of my life each day. This is not based on what I use to do, but what God has for me today.

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What is Kamala Harris's track record on environmental issues? – T.C., via email

Since the start of her political career, Kamala Harris has repeatedly proven her commitment to a wide variety of ecological matters. While she's taken a broad stance on climate change and other issues, throughout her career she prioritized environmental racism and the intersection of green policies with social justice. Harris has proven her mettle in prioritizing environmental justice throughout her management of climate disasters, her lawsuits against oil and gas companies, and passing legislation to promote climate equity and reduce environmental hazards in historically oppressed neighborhoods.

Harris has taken positive climate action ever since she created the nation's first environmental justice department during her time as San Francisco's district attorney (2004-2011). She only prosecuted a few small polluting companies, but it stood as an early example of how the justice system could address criminal polluters. When Harris became California's attorney general, she filed many more lawsuits against energy companies like ExxonMobil and Phillips 66, and even shut down one that had nine criminal charges against them. She also demonstrated a strong stance on the risks of climate change in Congress, where she was among a minority of senators who co-sponsored the Green New Deal in 2018. And she worked with Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to create the Climate Equity Act, to hold federal agencies accountable for their environmental actions, and emphasize investments to communities of color.

After being elected vice president, Harris furthered her green goals by promoting and supporting the Inflation Reduction Act, alongside other pieces of climate-positive legislation. She would also announce an American commitment to increasing renewable energy and energy efficiency at the COP28 climate talks, where she was the highest-ranking U.S. official. Harris continued to advocate for environmental justice by prioritizing the provision of equitable aid to marginalized groups of hurricane victims in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, in spite of some national pushback to aid richer neighborhoods first. She also actively campaigned for the replacement of lead drinking pipes in disadvantaged communities in Milwaukee and Newark, which have not historically been given a voice in the federal government.

Many eco-activists and groups have already announced their support for Kamala Harris in the coming election. If she is elected this November, the hope is that she'll double down on her goals for environmental justice and renewable energy by providing the capacity for pollution cuts in agriculture and heavy industry, and by shutting down Michigan's line 5, an oil line that has the potential to pollute large amounts of clean water in the event of a spill or leak.



**While Kamala Harris has always voted green and backed environmental initiatives, her focus within the movement is on environmental justice.** Credit: Gage Skidmore, FlickrCC

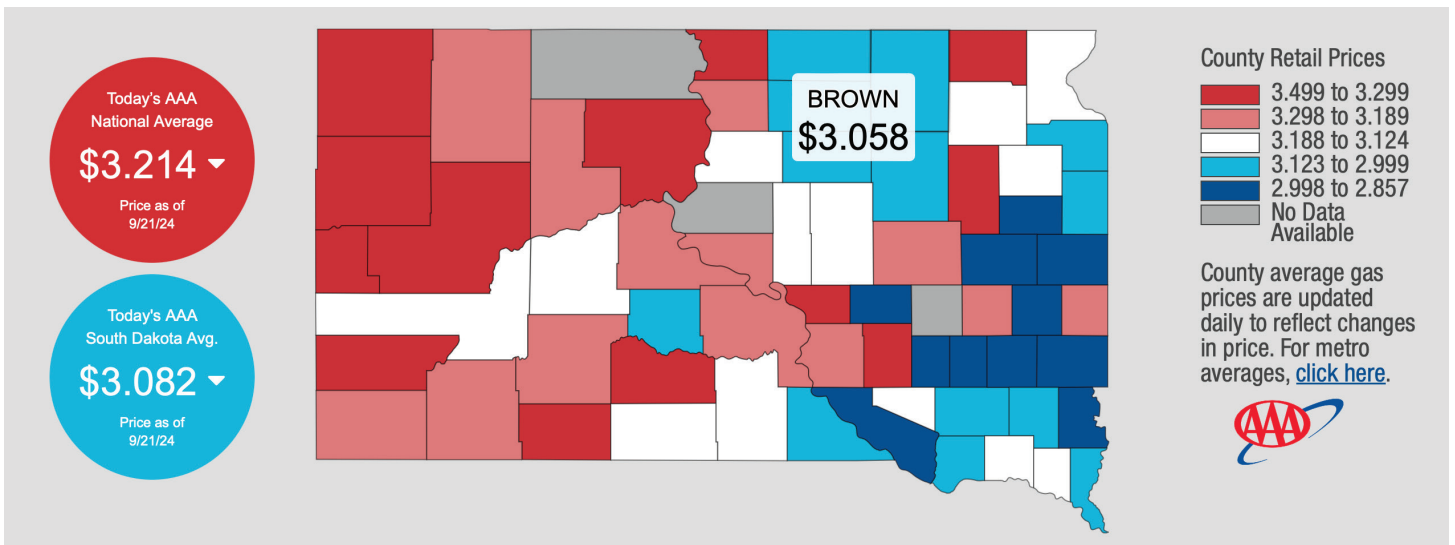
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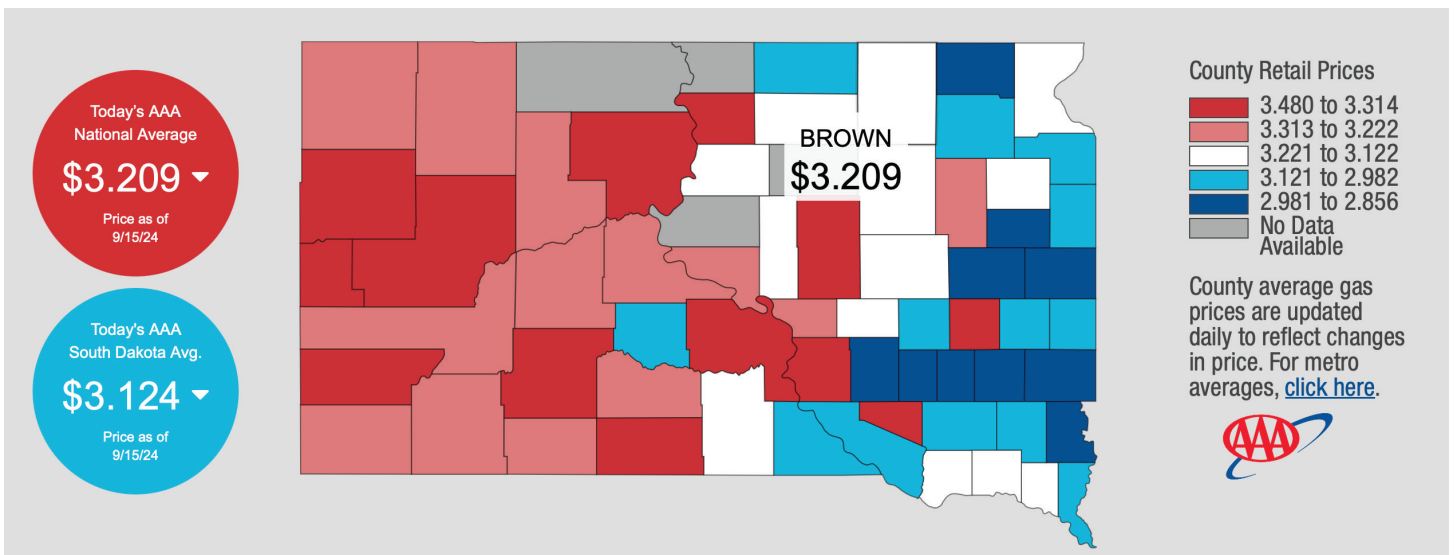
## South Dakota Average Gas Prices

	Regular	Mid-Grade	Premium	Diesel
Current Avg.	\$3.082	\$3.279	\$3.711	\$3.285
Yesterday Avg.	\$3.092	\$3.283	\$3.712	\$3.285
Week Ago Avg.	\$3.135	\$3.338	\$3.734	\$3.323
Month Ago Avg.	\$3.274	\$3.462	\$3.891	\$3.426
Year Ago Avg.	\$3.918	\$4.082	\$4.563	\$4.391

### This Week



### Last Week



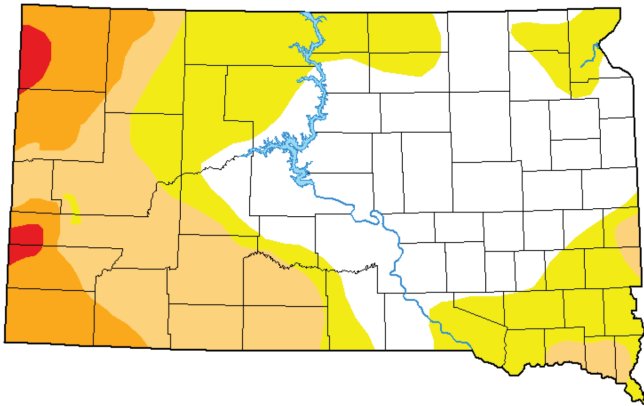
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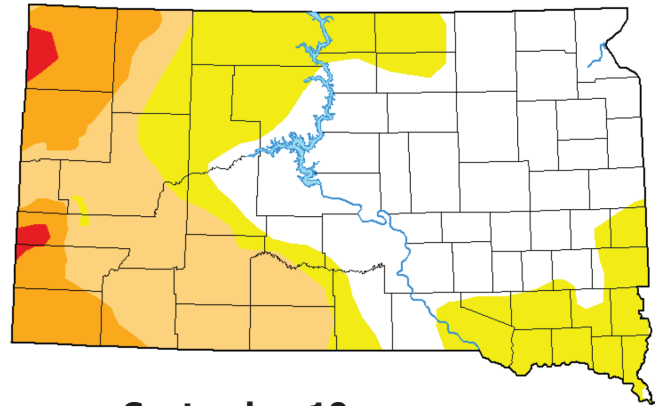
## Drought Classification

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

## Drought Monitor



September 17



September 10

Warm, mostly dry weather led to general expansion of abnormal dryness (D0) and various drought categories. Across the six-state region, topsoil moisture rated very short to short on September 15 ranged from 30% in North Dakota to 80% in Wyoming. In fact, values were above 50% in all states, except North Dakota. Some of the worst conditions—extreme drought (D3)—existed across northeastern Wyoming and southeastern Montana, an area still recovering from last month’s Remington and House Draw Fires, which collectively burned across more than 370,000 acres of vegetation, including rangeland. Wyoming led the region on September 15 with 70% of its rangeland and pastures rated very poor to poor, followed by Nebraska at 45% and South Dakota at 42%.





## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Before votes are counted, Republicans already have a near-majority in the Legislature**

**BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - SEPTEMBER 21, 2024 10:00 AM**

Before South Dakotans began early voting Friday for the Nov. 5 general election, the Republican Party already had a near-majority in next year's Legislature.

Seventeen Republicans are running unopposed for the 35-member Senate, which has one winner in each district.

Republicans are guaranteed another 35 seats in the 70-member House, which has two winners in each district. The guaranteed Republican seats are in districts where two candidates are running and both are Republicans, and in districts where three candidates are running and two are Republicans.

There's one unopposed Democrat running for Senate, and the Democratic Party is guaranteed at least two seats in the House.

All 105 seats in the Legislature are up for grabs in the election, and 43% of the them are already decided — an increase from 42% headed into the 2022 election.

Seventeen of the 45 unchallenged legislative candidates on the November ballot also went unchallenged in their party's June primary election. There were 44 Republican legislative primary races in June and one Democratic primary race.

Sixty-one candidates running for a state legislative seat in Nov. 5 election are women, while 98 are men.

Voters in South Dakota have plenty of other choices to make beyond legislative races. Ballots are lengthy, with seven statewide ballot questions, a U.S. House race and a Public Utilities Commission race, plus local races.

#### **Uncontested races and guaranteed seats**

The 45 unchallenged candidates for the Legislature in the Nov. 5 election:

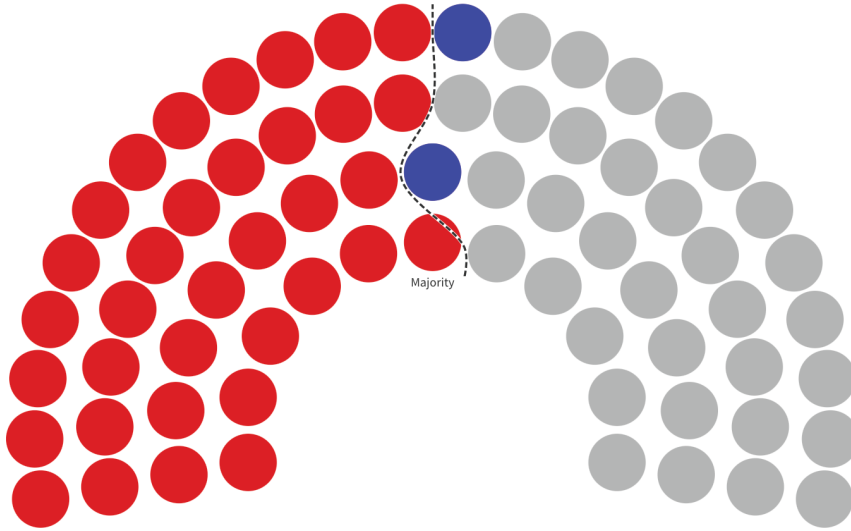
- District 1 Senate (Brown, Day, Marshall, Roberts counties): Michael Rohl, Republican
- District 2 Senate (Minnehaha County): Steve Kolbeck, Republican
- District 2 House (Minnehaha County): David Kull and John Sjaarda, Republican
- District 3 Senate (Brown County): Carl Perry, Republican
- District 4 Senate (Clark, Codington, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Roberts counties): Stephanie Sauder, Republican
- District 4 House (Clark, Codington, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Roberts counties): Kent Rose and Dylan Jordan, Republican
- District 6 Senate (Lincoln County): Ernie Otten, Republican
- District 7 Senate (Brookings County): Tim Reed, Republican
- District 8 Senate (Brookings, Kingsbury, Lake, Miner counties): Casey Crabtree, Republican
- District 9 Senate (Minnehaha County): Joy Hohn, Republican
- District 10 Senate (Minnehaha County): Liz Larson, Democrat
- District 13 House (Lincoln and Minnehaha counties): Tony Venhuizen and John Hughes, Republican
- District 16 Senate (Lincoln, Turner, Union counties): Kevin Jensen, Republican
- District 17 Senate (Clay and Union counties): Sydney Davis, Republican

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## Guaranteed House seats

In South Dakota's Nov. 5, 2024, general election



### Party

- Republican Party
- Democratic Party
- Undecided

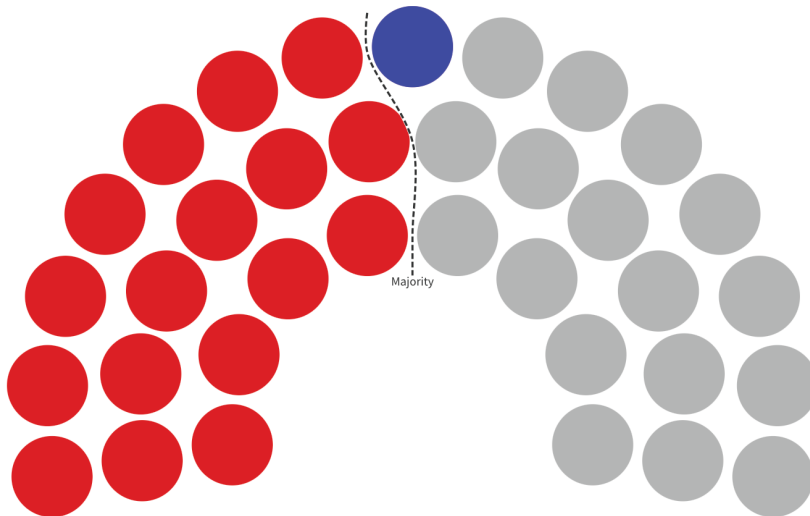
### Seats

35  
2  
33

Source: [South Dakota Secretary of State's Office](#)

## Guaranteed Senate seats

In South Dakota's Nov. 5, 2024, general election



### Party

- Republican Party
- Democratic Party
- Undecided

### Seats

17  
1  
17

Source: [South Dakota Secretary of State's Office](#)

District 19 House (Bon Homme, Hanson, Hutchinson, McCook, Turner counties): Drew Peterson and Jessica Bahmuller, Republican

District 20 Senate (Davison, Jerauld, Miner, Sanborn counties): Paul Miskimins, Republican

District 20 House (Davison, Jerauld, Miner, Sanborn counties): Jeff Bathke and Kaley Nolz, Republican

District 21 House (Aurora, Charles Mix, Douglas, Gregory, Tripp counties): Jim Halverson and Marty Overweg, Republican

District 22 House (Beadle, Clark, Spink counties): Kevin Van Diepen and Lana Greenfield, Republican

District 23 Senate (Brown, Campbell, Edmunds, Faulk, Hand, McPherson, Potter, Walworth counties): Mark Lapka, Republican

District 23 House (Brown, Campbell, Edmunds, Faulk, Hand, McPherson, Potter, Walworth counties): Scott Moore and Spencer Gosch, Republican

District 24 Senate (Haakon, Hughes, Hyde, Stanley, Sully counties): Jeff Mehlhaff, Republican

District 24 House (Haakon, Hughes, Hyde, Stanley, Sully counties): Will Mortenson and Mike Weisgram, Republican

District 25 House (Minnehaha and Moody counties): Les Heine-mann and Jon Hansen, Republican

District 28B House (Butte, Harding, Perkins counties): Travis Ismay, Republican

District 29 Senate (Meade County): John Carley, Republican

District 29 House (Meade County): Kathy Rice and Terri Jorgenson, Republican

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District 31 Senate (Lawrence County): Randy Deibert, Republican  
District 33 Senate (Meade and Pennington counties): Curt Voight, Republican  
District 33 House (Meade and Pennington counties): Curt Massie and Phil Jensen, Republican  
District 34 House (Pennington County): Mike Derby and Heather Baxter, Republican  
District 35 Senate (Pennington County): Greg Blanc, Republican

**The 10 House districts where one party has two of the three candidates in a two-winner race, thereby guaranteeing at least one seat for that party:**

District 3 House (Brown County): Democrat Erin Rudner and Republicans Brandei Schaefbauer and Al Novstrup

District 6 House (Lincoln County): Democrat Garret Campbell and Republicans Herman Otten and Aaron Aylward

District 8 House (Brookings, Kingsbury, Lake, Miner counties): Libertarian Greg Zimmerman and Republicans Rim Reisch and Tim Walburg

District 9 House (Minnehaha County): Democrat Beverly Froslic Johnson and Republicans Bethany Soye and Tesa Schwans

District 10 House (Minnehaha County): Republican Bobbi Andera and Democrats Kameron Nelson and Erin Healy

District 16 House (Lincoln, Turner, Union counties): Democrat Matthew Carl Ness and Republicans Karla Lems and Richard Vasgaard

District 17 House (Clay and Union counties): Democrat Ray Ring and Republicans Bill Shorma and Chris Kassin

District 27 House (Bennett, Jackson, Pennington, Oglala Lakota counties): Republican Liz May and Democrats Peri Pourier and Elsie Meeks

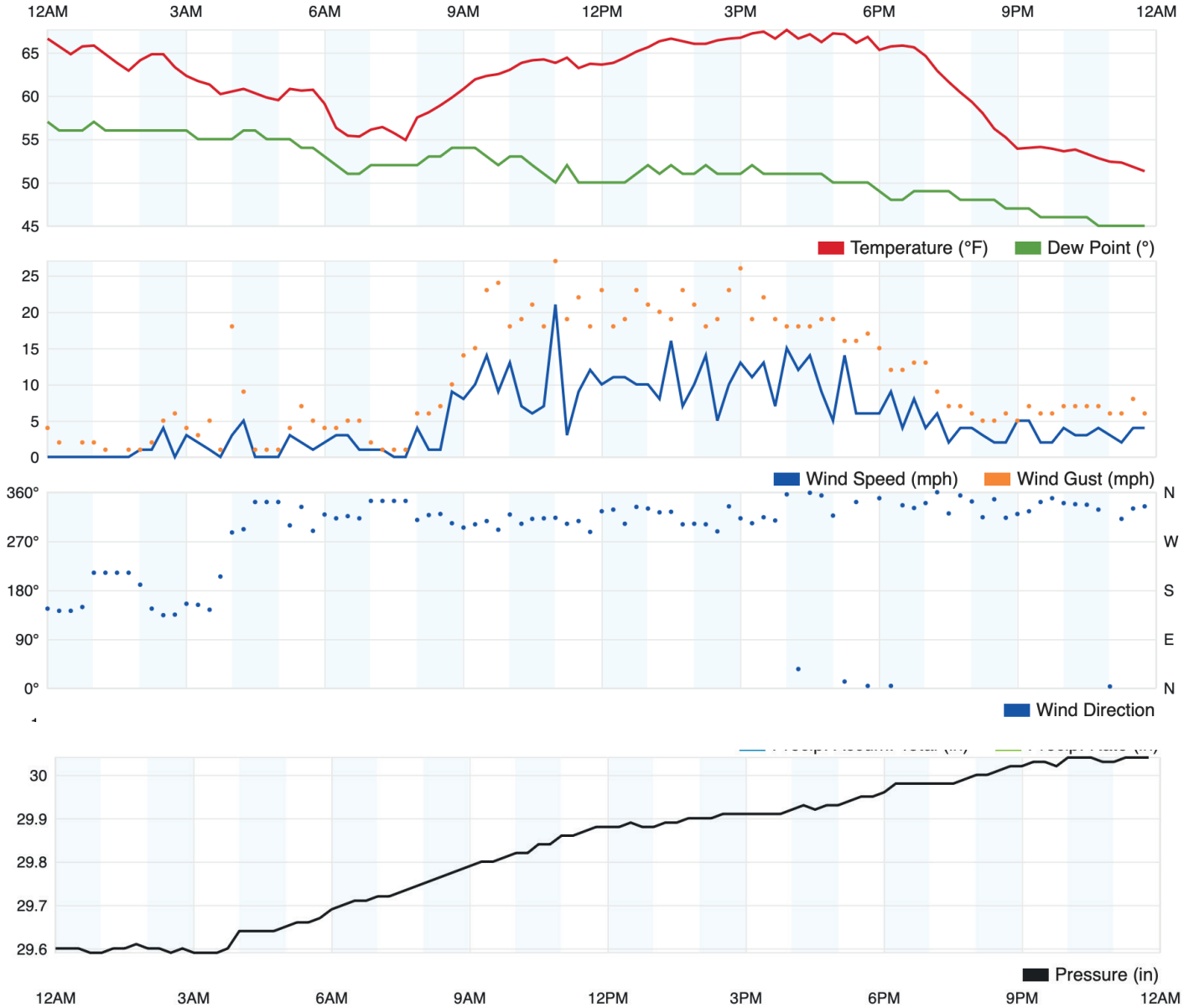
District 30 House (Custer, Fall River, Pennington counties): Democrat Susan Scheirbeck and Republicans Trish Ladner and Tim Goodwin

District 32 House (Pennington County): Democrat Nicole Uhre-Balk and Republicans Steve Duffy and Brook Kaufman

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



High: 68 °F

Sunny

Tonight



Low: 43 °F

Mostly Clear

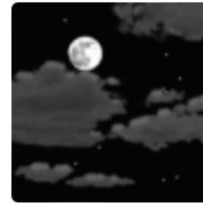
Monday



High: 75 °F

Sunny

Monday Night



Low: 48 °F

Partly Cloudy

Tuesday



High: 73 °F

Mostly Sunny

ABOVE AVERAGE TEMPS AHEAD

**Today**  
HIGHS: 65-70°F  
LOWS: 43-45°F  
SUNNY!

**Monday**  
HIGHS: 70-80°F  
LOWS: 46-50°F  
BECOMING CLOUDY

**Tuesday**  
HIGHS: 70-77°F  
LOWS: 46-51°F  
SKIES CLEARING

ABERDEEN, SD

SEPTEMBER 22, 2024 3:43 AM

Happy Fall Equinox! The next few days will feature above average temperatures and mostly sunny skies. Some clouds will creep in Monday afternoon/evening but are expected to clear by mid morning Tuesday. Expect highs in the 70s to around 80.

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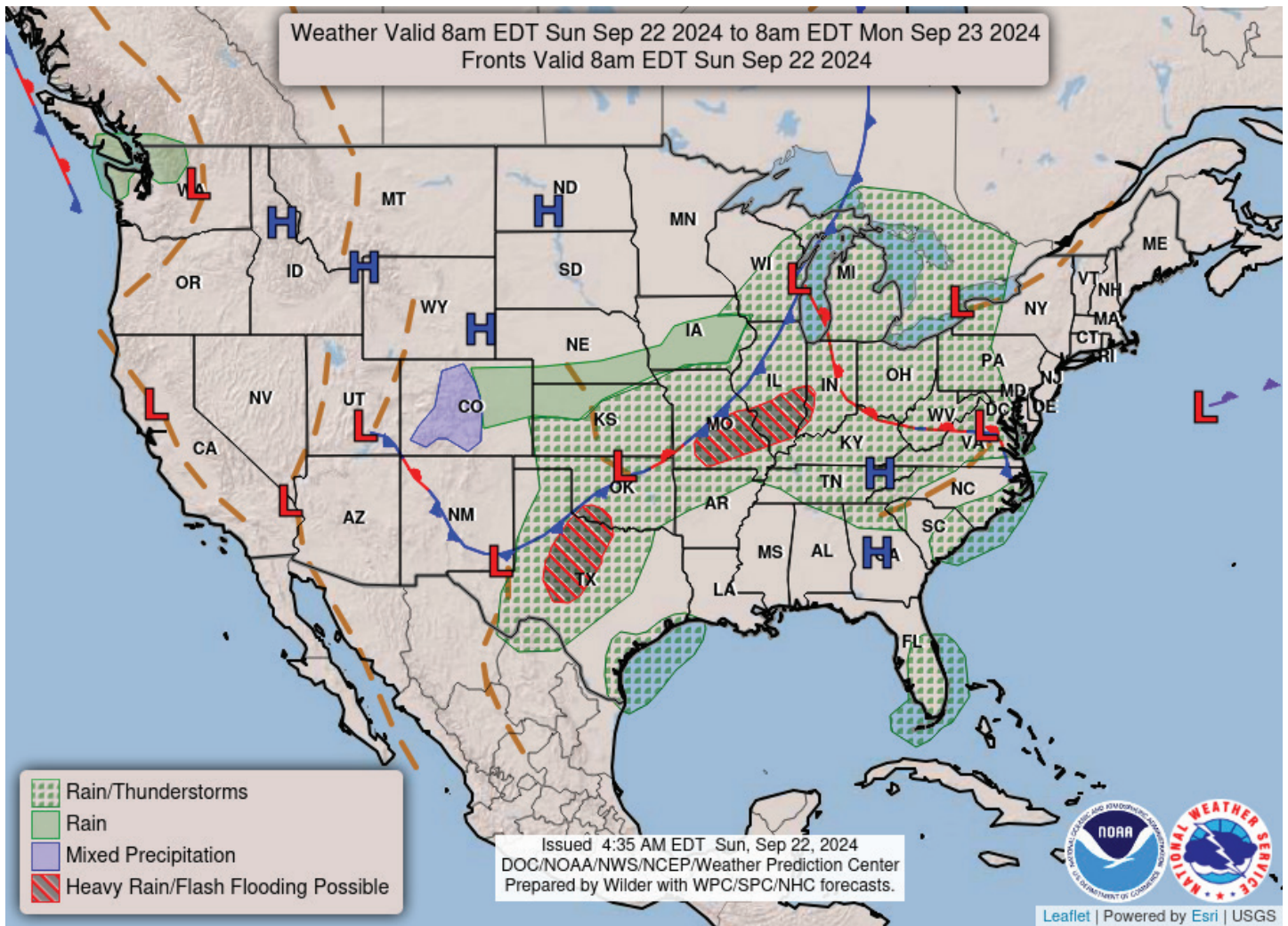
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 68 °F at 3:33 PM**  
**Low Temp: 52 °F at 11:27 PM**  
**Wind: 27 mph at 11:00 AM**  
**Precip: : 0.00**

## Today's Info

Record High: 103 in 1936  
Record Low: 20 in 1995  
Average High: 73  
Average Low: 44  
Average Precip in Sept.: 1.47  
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.24  
Average Precip to date: 17.81  
Precip Year to Date: 19.66  
Sunset Tonight: 7:30:42 pm  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:20:12 am

Day length: 13 hours, 11 minutes (lost 22 minutes since last Sunday)



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## Today in Weather History

September 22, 1936: Abnormally warm conditions brought record temperatures to much of central and northeast South Dakota along with west central Minnesota on this day in 1936. Temperatures rose into the upper 90s and lower 100s during the afternoon hours. Pierre and Watertown set record highs of 99 degrees. Mobridge and Sisseton warmed to record highs of 101 degrees. Finally, Kennebec and Aberdeen rose to record highs of 102 and 103 degrees, respectively.

1810: A tornado striking Fernhill Heath had a width between 0.5 to 1 mile; making it the widest path ever in Britain.

1890: A severe hailstorm struck Strawberry, Arizona. Five days after the storm hail still lay in drifts 12 to 18 inches deep.

1913 - Des Moines, IA, experienced their earliest freeze of record. (The Weather Channel)

1961 - Hurricane Esther made a near complete circle south of Cape Cod. The hurricane then passed over Cape Cod and hit Maine. Its energy was largely spent over the North Atlantic Ocean, however, heavy rains over Maine resulted in widespread local flooding of cellars, low roads, and underpasses. (David Ludlum)

1983 - Forty-one cities reported record cold temperatures during the morning. Houston, TX, hit 50 degrees, and Williston ND plunged to 19 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Hurricane Emily, the first hurricane to roam the Caribbean in nearly six years, made landfall over the Dominican Republic late in the day, packing 125 mph winds. Emily killed three persons and caused thirty million dollars damage. A record high of 92 degrees at Miami FL was their fifth in a row. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - An early morning thunderstorm produced baseball size hail at Plainview, in Hale County TX. Late in the evening more thunderstorms in the Southern High Plains Region produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Plainview TX and Crosby TX. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Hurricane Hugo quickly lost strength over South Carolina, but still was a tropical storm as it crossed into North Carolina, just west of Charlotte, at about 7 AM. Winds around Charlotte reached 69 mph, with gusts to 99 mph. Eighty percent of the power was knocked out to Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Property damage in North Carolina was 210 million dollars, and damage to crops was 97 million dollars. The strongest storm surge occurred along the southern coast shortly after midnight, reaching nine feet above sea level at ocean Isle and Sunset Beach. Hugo killed one person and injured fifteen others in North Carolina. Strong northwesterly winds ushered unseasonably cold air into the north central U.S., in time for the official start of autumn, at 8" 20 PM (CDT). Squalls produced light snow in northern Wisconsin. Winds in Wisconsin gusted to 52 mph at Rhinelander. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2005 - For the first time in the historical record, two hurricanes reached category-5 intensity in the Gulf of Mexico in a single season as Hurricane Rita intensified before making landfall (Katrina and Rita).

2006: The tristate area of Missouri, Illinois, and Kentucky was struck by the worst tornado outbreak in the recorded history during the month of September. One supercell produced a long-track F4 tornado across southeastern Missouri into southwestern Illinois. This tornado traveled 27.5 miles. 1890 - A severe hailstorm struck Strawberry, AZ. Five days after the storm hail still lay in drifts 12 to 18 inches deep. (The Weather Channel)

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## UNLIMITED!

George was well-known and highly esteemed by the members of his church. By the world's definition of success, he would be considered one who "had it made." He had a comfortable life, his children settled into good careers and was always available to serve the Lord whenever someone called upon him. He was well known for his faithfulness and fruitfulness.

Once he was asked, "What's the source of your energy? How can you do so much for so many and never seem to tire?"

After thinking for a moment he replied, "It's this – with Christ within me I refuse to accept any human limitations."

Paul once said, "I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be." What a goal for each of us to adopt: being what Jesus saved us for and wants us to be!

When we fully realize and accept all that He has called us to be and do, our lives will have no "human limitations." Often when an opportunity to serve Him comes our way, our first obstacle is to question our abilities or availability. But He never calls us to do anything that is beyond our potential. What He asks us to do, he will empower us to accomplish. Trust Him.

Prayer: Lord, may we have an unlimited view of what You would have us to be and do. Free us of self-imposed limitations that cause fear and failure. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Philippians 3:12-14

*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:  
09.20.24

20 21 40 49 55 11

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$62,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.21.24

1 4 8 37 45 7

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$9,560,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.21.24

7 21 31 41 44 5

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 14 Hrs 17 Mins  
20 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.21.24

6 16 26 30 31

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$38,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.21.24

4 17 37 46 49 19

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

NEXT DRAW:

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
09.21.24

17 19 21 37 45 14

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$208,000,000**

NEXT DRAW:

[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

### Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL=

Brandon Valley 46, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 7

St Thomas More 47, Custer 0

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

### Saturday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Bennett County def. Lyman, 25-19, 22-25, 25-13, 25-21

Castlewood def. Groton, 25-19, 25-23

Hill City def. Jones County, 25-7, 25-23, 25-13

Rapid City Christian def. Mahpiya Luta Red Cloud, 25-9, 25-10, 25-8

Sanborn Central-Woonsocket def. Oldham-Ramona-Rutland, 25-12, 25-20, 25-16

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Rapid City Stevens, 25-13, 25-15, 25-16

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Brookings, 25-9, 25-15, 25-19

Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Rapid City Central, 25-20, 25-12, 25-19

T F Riggs High School def. Tea, 32-30, 25-16, 18-25, 25-17

Wall def. Dupree, 25-14, 25-15, 26-24

Bon Homme Tournament=

Lennox def. Kimball-White Lake, 25-11, 25-18

Lennox def. Parker, 25-18, 25-21

Northwestern def. Gregory, 25-9, 25-14

Northwestern def. Kimball-White Lake, 25-15, 25-21

Northwestern def. Lennox, 25-18, 25-23

Northwestern def. Parker, 25-11, 25-7

Northwestern def. Parkston, 25-14, 25-13

Championship=

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Northwestern, 23-25, 28-26, 26-24

Bridgewater-Emery Tournament=

Bridgewater-Emery def. Canistota, 25-12, 25-21

Bridgewater-Emery def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-14, 25-18

Hamlin Tournament=

Castlewood def. Sisseton, 26-28, 25-20, 25-11

Dell Rapids def. Groton, 25-23, 25-15

Groton def. Tiospa Zina, 25-7, 25-8

Hamlin def. Castlewood, 25-23, 25-21

Hamlin def. Florence-Henry, 25-5, 25-13

Hamlin def. Sisseton, 26-24, 25-10

Sisseton def. Florence-Henry, 25-20, 25-18

Sisseton def. Tiospa Zina, 25-13, 25-19

Ipswich Tournament=

Ipswich def. Langford, 14-25, 25-19, 27-25

Ipswich def. Lemmon High School, 25-17, 25-15

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Ipswich def. Milbank, 25-23, 25-23  
Lake Preston Tournament=  
DeSmet def. Arlington, 25-17, 25-20  
DeSmet def. Flandreau, 16-25, 25-14, 25-16  
Estelline-Hendricks def. Flandreau, 25-13, 25-13  
Estelline-Hendricks def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-11, 25-18  
Sioux Valley def. DeSmet, 25-22, 25-20  
Sioux Valley def. Estelline-Hendricks, 25-21, 25-16  
Stanley County Tournament=  
Miller def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-2, 25-9  
Miller def. Mobridge-Pollock, 25-8, 25-13  
Miller def. Todd County, 25-12, 25-12  
Miller def. Winner, 25-12, 25-21

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

## RS frosh Vorhees runs through SE Louisiana leading No. 1 FCS S.D. State to 41-point win

HAMMOND, La. (AP) — Kirby Vorhees ran for 179 yards and scored three touchdowns in five carries and No. 1-ranked FCS South Dakota State defeated Southeast Louisiana 41-0 on Saturday.

Vorhees — a redshirt freshman who entered with 72 yards on 17 carries for his career — produced scoring runs of 80, 22 and 20 yards. His other two carries were for 39 and 18 yards.

Amar Johnson ran for 65 yards on 11 carries and scored a touchdown and Chase Mason ran for 56 yards on seven carries with a touchdown. The Coyotes (3-1) now have won 30 straight against FCS opponents.

The Coyotes outgained Southeast Louisiana (1-2) 417-186.

SDSU is the first No. 1 team to visit Strawberry Stadium since top-ranked McNeese came to Hammond in 2003.

## Giant sinkholes in a South Dakota neighborhood make families fear for their safety

By JACK DURA Associated Press

Stuart and Tonya Junker loved their quiet neighborhood near South Dakota's Black Hills — until the earth began collapsing around them, leaving them wondering if their home could tumble into a gaping hole.

They blame the state for selling land that became the Hideaway Hills subdivision despite knowing it was perched above an old mine. Since the sinkholes began opening up, they and about 150 of their neighbors sued the state for \$45 million to cover the value of their homes and legal costs.

"Let's just say it's really changed our lives a lot," Tonya Junker said. "The worry, the not sleeping, the 'what if' something happens. It's all of it, all of the above."

Sinkholes are fairly common, due to collapsed caves, old mines or dissolving material, but the circumstances in South Dakota stand out, said Paul Santi, a professor of geological engineering at the Colorado School of Mines. The combination of such large sinkholes endangering so many homes makes the Hideaway Hills situation one to remember.

"I can say just from having taught classes about case histories with geologic problems that this would be a case that will end up in textbooks," Santi said.

Crews built Hideaway Hills, located a few miles northwest of Rapid City, from 2002 to 2004 in an area previously owned by the state where the mineral gypsum was mined for use at a nearby state-owned cement plant.

Attorney Kathy Barrow, who represents residents who live in 94 subdivision homes, said the state sold

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the surface but held on to the subsurface, and it did not disclose it had removed the soil's natural ability to hold up the surface.

Some of the land slightly sunk over time after the subdivision was built, and a hole opened up beneath a back porch, but the situation escalated after a large sinkhole opened up in 2020 near where a man was mowing his lawn. That prompted residents to connect with Barrow and testing revealed a large, improperly sealed mine beneath the northeastern part of the subdivision, and a 40-foot-deep (12-meter-deep) pit mine in another corner of the neighborhood, Barrow said.

Since that first giant collapse, more holes and sinkings have appeared and there are now "too many to count," Barrow said. The unstable ground has affected 158 homes plus destabilized roads and utilities.

In one spot, an old truck can be seen in a hole beneath a house porch, still resting where a landowner pushed it into a mine cavern in the 1940s, Barrow said.

The area near the 2020 collapse has been vacated and gated off, but people still live in many of the other homes, usually because they can't afford to leave.

Residents are panicked but stuck, Barrow said.

"They're worried about school buses falling into a hole. They worry about their houses collapsing on their children in their beds at night," Barrow said. "I mean, you spend your whole life putting money and building equity in your home. It's your most prized asset, and these people's asset had become not only worthless but almost a negative because they're dangerous to live in."

An attorney for the state declined to comment, but the state has asked a judge to dismiss the case.

In court documents, the state entities being sued said they "would like to express their sincerest sympathies for many of the property owners" and called the sinkhole formation "tragic."

Still, the state argued that it wasn't the fault of officials.

"Those truly liable in this case are the developer, the initial realtor, and the numerous homebuilders who knowingly chose to build over an abandoned mine while purposefully hiding its existence from the homebuyers purchasing in Hideaway Hills," the state said.

In court documents, the state traced the area's mining history to the 1900s, noting a company that mined underground and on the surface before 1930. Beginning in 1986, the state-owned cement plant mined for several years.

The state claimed it wasn't liable for damages related to the underground mine collapse because the cement plant didn't mine underground and the mine would have collapsed regardless of the plant's activities. Around 1994, a horse farmer bought the land and then later sold the property to a developer who encountered a deep hole, the state said in documents.

The state said it couldn't have known that the developer, homebuilders and the county would move ahead with the neighborhood's development despite allegedly knowing about the past mining and underground voids.

In 2000, the South Dakota Legislature approved the sale of the state cement plant. A voter-approved trust fund created from proceeds of the sale stands at over \$371 million.

For the Junkers, the lawsuit is their best hope of escaping from a nightmare.

Tonya Junker said her husband was going to retire this year, but now he has to work longer, taking on two jobs to save money in case they are evacuated.

"That's a hard pill to swallow," she said.

The Junkers have lived 15 years together in the neighborhood, in a home built in 1929 and moved to the subdivision as one of the first homes in the neighborhood. They gutted and remodeled the structure and planned to make the three-bedroom, two-bathroom home their base for retirement.

Stuart Junker said he simply wants to be paid what his house is worth.

"It's just kind of disappointing that the state won't take care of us," he said. "I mean, this is their problem."

## Mass shooting kills 4, wounds many in nightlife area in Birmingham, Alabama

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — A mass shooting killed four people and wounded 18 others in a popular nightlife area in Birmingham, Alabama, with many of the victims caught in the crossfire, police said early Sunday. No one was immediately arrested, and police asked the public for information.

The shooting happened shortly after 11 p.m. Saturday in the city's Five Points South entertainment district, Officer Truman Fitzgerald said in an email.

Officers arriving at the scene found two men and a woman on a sidewalk with gunshot wounds, and they were pronounced dead there. An additional male gunshot victim was pronounced dead at a hospital, Fitzgerald said.

A preliminary investigation showed that "multiple suspects fired upon a large group of people who were outside in a public area," Fitzgerald said.

"Detectives believe the shooting was not random and stemmed from an isolated incident where multiple victims were caught in the crossfire," Fitzgerald said.

Injured people began showing up at hospitals, Fitzgerald said. By early Sunday, police had identified 18 other victims with injuries, some of them life-threatening.

There were no immediate arrests, and investigators had not yet determined the intended targets, Fitzgerald said. Anyone with information was asked to contact authorities, and a reward was possible, police said.

The Five Points South area contains entertainment venues, restaurants and bars and often is crowded on Saturday nights.

## Hezbollah hits back with more than 100 rockets across a wider and deeper area of Israel

By NATALIE MELZER and KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

NAHARIYA, Israel (AP) — Hezbollah launched more than 100 rockets early Sunday across a wider and deeper area of northern Israel, with some landing near the city of Haifa, as Israel launched hundreds of strikes on Lebanon. The sides appeared to be spiraling toward all-out war following months of escalating tensions.

The rocket barrage overnight was in response to Israeli attacks in Lebanon that have killed dozens, including a veteran Hezbollah commander, and an unprecedented attack targeting the group's communications devices. It set off air raid sirens across northern Israel, sending thousands of people scrambling into shelters.

One rocket struck near a residential building in Kiryat Bialik, a community near Haifa, wounding at least three people and setting buildings and cars on fire. Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service said that a total of four people were wounded by shrapnel in the barrage.

Avi Vazana raced to a shelter with his wife and 9-month-old baby before he heard the boom of the rocket hitting in Kiryat Bialik. Then he went back outside to see if anyone was hurt.

"I ran without shoes, without a shirt, only with pants. I ran to this house when everything was still on fire to try to find if there are other people," he said.

Lebanon's Health Ministry said that three people were killed and another four wounded in Israeli strikes near the border, without saying whether they were civilians or combatants.

Hezbollah responds to unprecedented blows

The barrage came after an Israeli airstrike in Beirut on Friday killed at least 45 people, including one of Hezbollah's top leaders as well as women and children. Hezbollah was already reeling from a sophisticated attack that caused thousands of pagers and walkie-talkies to explode just days earlier.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would take whatever action was necessary to restore security in the north and allow people to return to their homes.

"No country can accept the wanton rocketing of its cities. We can't accept it either," he said.

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The Israeli military said that it carried out a wave of strikes across southern Lebanon over the past 24 hours, hitting about 400 militant sites, including rocket launchers. Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani, an Israeli military spokesman, said those strikes had thwarted an even larger attack.

"Hundreds of thousands of civilians have come under fire across a lot of northern Israel," he said. "Today we saw fire that was deeper into Israel than before."

The military also said it had intercepted multiple aerial devices fired from the direction of Iraq, after Iran-backed militant groups there claimed to have launched a drone attack on Israel.

Israel's Health Ministry said that all hospitals in the north would begin moving operations to protected areas or shelters within the medical centers.

In a separate development, Israeli forces raided the West Bank bureau of Al-Jazeera, which it had banned earlier this year, accusing it of serving as a mouthpiece for militant groups, allegations denied by the pan-Arab broadcaster.

U.N. envoy warns that the region is on the brink of a catastrophe

Israel and Hezbollah have traded fire since the outbreak of the war in Gaza nearly a year ago, when the militant group began firing rockets in solidarity with the Palestinians and its fellow Iran-backed ally Hamas. The low-level fighting has killed dozens of people in Israel, hundreds in Lebanon, and displaced tens of thousands on both sides of the frontier.

Until recently, neither side was believed to be seeking an all-out war, and Hezbollah has so far stopped short of targeting Tel Aviv or major civilian infrastructure. But in recent weeks, Israel has shifted its focus from Gaza to Lebanon and vowed to bring back calm to the border so that its citizens can return to their homes. Hezbollah has said that it would only halt its attacks if there is a cease-fire in Gaza, which appears increasingly elusive.

The war in Gaza began with Hamas' Oct. 7 attack into Israel, in which Palestinian militants killed about 1,200 people and took around 250 others hostage. They are still holding around 100 captives, a third of whom are believed to be dead. Over 41,000 Palestinians have been killed, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. It doesn't say how many were fighters, but says women and children make up more than half of the dead.

Families of the hostages have raised fears that a war in the north would distract from their plight and further complicate the negotiations over their release.

The U.N. envoy for Lebanon called on all parties to pull back.

"With the region on the brink of an imminent catastrophe, it cannot be overstated enough: there is NO military solution that will make either side safer," Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert said in an X post.

Israeli media reported that rockets fired from Lebanon early Sunday were intercepted in the areas of Haifa and Nazareth, which are further south than most of the rocket fire to date. Israel canceled school across the north, deepening the sense of crisis.

Hezbollah says it is using new weapons

Hezbollah said that it had launched dozens of Fadi 1 and Fadi 2 missiles — a new type of weapon the group hadn't used before — at the Ramat David airbase, southeast of Haifa, "in response to the repeated Israeli attacks that targeted various Lebanese regions and led to the fall of many civilian martyrs."

In July, the group released a video with what it said was footage it had filmed of the base with surveillance drones.

Hezbollah also said it had targeted the facilities of the Rafael defense firm, which is headquartered in Haifa, calling it retaliation for the wireless devices attack. It didn't provide evidence, and the Israeli military declined to comment on the statement.

Hezbollah has vowed to retaliate against Israel for a wave of explosions that hit pagers and walkie-talkies belonging to Hezbollah members on Tuesday and Wednesday, killing at least 37 people — including two children — and wounding around 3,000. The attacks were widely blamed on Israel, which hasn't confirmed or denied responsibility.

On Friday, an Israeli airstrike took down an eight-story building in a densely populated neighborhood



in Beirut's southern suburbs as Hezbollah members were meeting in the basement, according to Israel. Among those killed was Ibrahim Akil, a top Hezbollah official who commanded the group's special forces unit, known as the Radwan Force.

Lebanese authorities say at least seven women and three children were killed in Friday's airstrike and that dozens more were wounded. It was the deadliest strike on Beirut since the monthlong war in 2006 between Israel and Hezbollah.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said that the attack broke up the group's chain of command while taking out Akil, who he said was responsible for Israeli deaths.

Akil had been on the U.S. most wanted list for years, with a \$7 million reward, over his alleged role in the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut and the taking of American and German hostages in Lebanon during the civil war in the 1980s.

## More shelter beds and a crackdown on tents mean fewer homeless encampments in San Francisco

By JANIE HAR Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Sidewalks once teeming with tents, tarps and people passed out next to heaps of trash have largely disappeared from great swaths of San Francisco, a city widely known for its visible homeless population.

The number of people sleeping outdoors dropped to under 3,000 in January, the lowest the city has recorded in a decade, according to a federal count.

And that figure has likely dropped even lower since Mayor London Breed — a Democrat in a difficult reelection fight this November — started ramping up enforcement of anti-camping laws in August following a U.S. Supreme Court decision.

Homelessness in no way has gone away, and in fact grew 7%, to 8,300 in January, according to the same federal count.

But the problem is now notably out of the public eye, raising the question of where people have gone and whether the change marks a turning point in a crisis long associated with San Francisco.

"We're seeing much cleaner sidewalks," said Terry Asten Bennett, owner of Cliff's Variety store in the city's historically gay Castro neighborhood, adding that she hates to see homeless people shuffled around.

"But also, as a business owner, I need clean, inviting streets to encourage people to come and shop and visit our city," she said.

Advocates for homeless people say encampment sweeps that force people off the streets are an easy way to hide homelessness from public view.

"Shelter should always be transitional," said Lukas Illa, an organizer with San Francisco's Coalition on Homelessness. "We shouldn't have folks be in there as the long-lasting solution."

Other California cities have also reported a drop in visible homelessness, thanks to improved outreach and more temporary housing. The beach city of Santa Cruz reported a 49% decline in people sleeping unsheltered this year, while Los Angeles recorded a 10% drop.

San Francisco has increased the number of shelter beds and permanent supportive housing units by more than 50% over the past six years. At the same time, city officials are on track to eclipse the nearly 500 sweeps conducted last year, with Breed prioritizing bus tickets out of the city for homeless people and authorizing police to do more to stamp out tents.

San Francisco police have issued at least 150 citations for illegal lodging since Aug. 1, surpassing the 60 citations over the entire previous three years. City crews also have removed more than 1,200 tents and structures.

Tracking homeless people is extremely difficult and where all the people once living on San Francisco's streets have gone is impossible to know.

There are still people sleeping on sidewalks, some with just a blanket, and tents continue to crop up under freeway overpasses and more isolated corners of the city. But tents that once sprouted outside

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libraries and subway stations, and went on endlessly for blocks in the Mission, downtown and South of Market districts, are gone. Even the troubled Tenderloin district has seen progress.

Steven Burcell, who became homeless a year ago after a shoulder injury cost him his job, moved into one of 60 new, tiny cabins in May after the car he was living in caught fire.

Mission Cabins is a new type of emergency shelter that offers privacy and allows pets. But like all shelters, it has rules. No drugs, weapons or outside guests are allowed. Residents must consent to their rooms being searched.

"At the beginning, it was rough, you know, going in and just getting adjusted to being searched and having them look through your bags," acknowledged Burcell, 51.

His tidy 65-square-foot (6-square-meter) room contains a twin bed, pairs of shoes lined by a door that locks and opens onto a sunny courtyard that, on a recent morning, was filled with the voices of children playing at the elementary school next door.

"To have your own space inside here and close the door, not sharing anything with anybody," he said, "it's huge."

But Burcell opposes encampment sweeps. He said two friends rejected beds because they thought — inaccurately, he said — the shelter would be infested with rodents. That did not stop crews from taking their tent and everything inside it.

"Now they have nothing. They don't have any shelter at all," he said. "They just kind of wander around and take buses, like a lot of people do."

Since 2018, San Francisco has added 1,800 emergency shelter beds and nearly 5,000 permanent supportive housing units, where people pay 30% of their income toward rent and the rest is subsidized, bringing the total to more than 4,200 beds and 14,000 units.

Breed, who first won office in June 2018, can claim credit for the expansion, although some plans were in place before she became mayor and her administration had huge financial help.

The money came from the federal government battling the pandemic and a California governor — and onetime San Francisco mayor — who made fighting homelessness and tent encampments his priority. Gov. Gavin Newsom has pumped at least \$24 billion into the effort since taking office in 2019, including a program to turn hotels into housing.

San Francisco also benefited from a controversial 2018 wealth tax on the city's tech titans that Breed opposed, saying companies would leave. There was no exodus and the pandemic overshadowed any fallout.

The funds have helped get people off the streets and tripled the annual budget of the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing from nearly \$300 million in 2018 to \$850 million this year.

But the department's budget is expected to dip below \$700 million next year, and that worries experts who say more is needed in a city where the median price of a home is \$1.4 million.

"We still have a housing market that is way too expensive for way too many people. And as long as that continues to be the case, we're going to see folks falling into homelessness," said Alex Visotzky, a policy fellow with the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Advocates for the homeless say that's why city officials need to invest in more affordable housing.

One such place is 835 Turk Street, a former hotel the city purchased and reopened two years ago as supportive housing. It's home to David Labogin, who lost his housing after his mother died.

"Of course, things could be a whole lot better," he said, sitting on a single bed, "but from where I came from, I got no complaints."

But housing takes longer to build, and converting old properties is not cheap. The city purchased 835 Turk for \$25 million and spent \$18 million — twice the estimated amount — rehabilitating it.

Until then, shelters are adapting, accommodating couples and people with pets.

It takes new residents about two weeks to adjust to the rules at Mission Cabins, said Steve Good, CEO of operator Five Keys. "A few rules to keep them safe is better than living on the street, where there aren't any rules," he said.

"Amen," said Patrick Richardson, 54, who stopped by to watch as Good was interviewed. He was on his way to a two-year college in Oakland where he is studying to be an X-ray technician.

Richardson had been sleeping on couches and pavement when an outreach worker offered him a cabin. His new home, he said, "rescued me."

## A Marxist lawmaker leads the vote count in Sri Lanka's presidential election

By KRISHAN FRANCIS and SHIEKH SAALIQ Associated Press

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — Marxist lawmaker Anura Kumara Dissanayake was leading Sri Lanka's presidential election after knocking out the incumbent liberal President Ranil Wickremesinghe from the race, as officials on Sunday began a second round of vote counting for the first time in the nation's history.

Dissanayake, whose pro-working class and anti-political elite campaigning made him popular among youth, was leading with 39% of the votes counted, followed by opposition leader Sajith Premadasa with 34%, according to tallies released by the Election Commission.

The election held Saturday is crucial as the country seeks to recover from the worst economic crisis in its history and the resulting political upheaval. Contested by 38 candidates, it was largely a three-way race between Dissanayake, Wickremesinghe and Premadasa.

Neither candidate has received more than 50% of the vote.

The Sri Lankan election system allows voters to select three candidates on their ballots in the order of their preference. If no candidate secures a majority, the top two will be retained and the ballots of the eliminated candidates will be checked for preferences given to either of the top two candidates, and those votes will be added to their respective tallies. The candidate with the highest number of votes after that will be declared the winner.

It was a strong showing for Dissanayake, who won just over 3% of votes in a previous presidential election in 2019, and suggests voters are fatigued with the old political guard, which has been accused of pushing Sri Lanka toward economic instability.

Wickremesinghe's Foreign Minister Ali Sabry congratulated Dissanayake on the social platform X and said he hopes he will "lead with a commitment to transparency, integrity, and the long-term good of the country."

"I wish Mr. Dissanayake and his team every success in their efforts to lead Sri Lanka forward," Sabry added.

Premadasa has not conceded defeat.

The election was a virtual referendum on Wickremesinghe's leadership of a fragile recovery, including restructuring Sri Lanka's debt under an International Monetary Fund bailout program after it defaulted in 2022.

Dissanayake, 55, leads the left-leaning coalition National People's Power, an umbrella of civil society groups, professionals, Buddhist clergy and students.

No major incidents were reported during the vote but authorities declared a countrywide curfew until midday Sunday as a precaution, police said.

There were 17 million eligible voters and final results are expected Sunday evening.

The government announced Thursday that it passed the final hurdle in debt restructuring by reaching an agreement in principle with private bond holders.

At the time of its default, Sri Lanka's local and foreign debt totaled \$83 billion. The government says it has now restructured more than \$17 billion.

Despite a significant improvement in key economic figures, Sri Lankans are struggling with high taxes and living costs.

Both Premadasa and Dissanayake say they will renegotiate the IMF deal to make austerity measures more bearable. Wickremesinghe has warned that any move to alter the basics of the agreement could delay the release of a fourth tranche of nearly \$3 billion that is crucial to maintaining stability.

Sri Lanka's economic crisis resulted largely from excessive borrowing on projects that did not generate revenue. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the government's insistence on using scarce foreign reserves to prop up the currency, the rupee, contributed to the economy's free fall.

The economic collapse brought a severe shortage of essentials such as medicine, food, cooking gas and fuel, with people spending days waiting in line to obtain them. It led to rioting in which protesters took over key buildings including the president's house, his office and the prime minister's office, forcing then-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and resign.

Wickremesinghe was elected by a parliamentary vote in July 2022 to cover the remainder of Rajapaksa's five-year term.

## **German chancellor's Social Democrats seek to hold off far right in Brandenburg state election**

BERLIN (AP) — A state election is taking place in Brandenburg on Sunday, three weeks after a far-right party made gains in two other states in eastern Germany.

Around 2.1 million people are registered to vote for a new state parliament in Brandenburg, the state that surrounds the German capital, Berlin.

Sunday's election is being watched closely for signs about the country's political direction.

The latest polls showed that the far-right Alternative for Germany is neck-and-neck with the Social Democrats, the party that has governed Brandenburg continuously since German reunification in 1990.

The Social Democrats, the largest party in Chancellor Olaf Scholz's three-way coalition government, are hoping to maintain control of their stronghold in the face of rising support for parties on the extreme right and left.

If the Social Democrats lose in Brandenburg, it would be seen as a bad omen for Scholz a year before a federal election that is due to be held on Sept. 28, 2025. Scholz lives in Potsdam, the capital of Brandenburg, and German political observers believe the chancellor's political future will be shaped by the results of Sunday's vote in Brandenburg.

The fate of the Brandenburg governor, Dietmar Woidke, is also hanging in the balance. He made it his goal for his Social Democrats to beat Alternative for Germany, or AfD, and vowed to resign should the AfD win.

"If I lose against the AfD, I am gone," Woidke said.

The Alternative for Germany won the most votes in the state of Thuringia and also did well in an election in Saxony on Sept. 1. A new party founded by a prominent leftist also made a strong impact, while the parties in Scholz's unpopular national government obtained extremely weak results.

That was the first time the far right won an election in Germany since World War II, and it dealt a heavy blow to Scholz's centrist coalition. It also generated concerns in Germany and abroad about the growing support for the extreme right in the largest European Union country, and a member of NATO.

The far-right party has gained support amid a growing backlash to large-scale migration to Germany over the past decade and several recent extremist attacks. Germany's economy, once a powerhouse, has been weakening, adding to a general feeling of malaise.

Sunday's vote follows a heated election campaign centered on the issues of migration, internal security and peace. Both the far right and the new leftist movement, the Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance, or BSW, want to end weapons deliveries to Kyiv as Ukraine tried to defend itself against Russia's full-scale invasion.

Even if the Alternative for Germany wins in Brandenburg, it is unlikely to govern because other parties have refused to work with it.

## New York City interim police commissioner says federal authorities searched his homes

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, JAKE OFFENHARTZ and DAVID B. CARUSO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City's interim police commissioner revealed late Saturday that federal authorities had executed search warrants at his homes the previous day.

Thomas Donlon, who became the interim commissioner just one week ago after the resignation of his predecessor, issued a statement on the search through the police department.

"On Friday, September 20, federal authorities executed search warrants at my residences. They took materials that came into my possession approximately 20 years ago and are unrelated to my work with the New York City Police Department," the statement said.

"This is not a department matter, and the department will not be commenting," he added.

The statement did not address what the investigation was about, which federal authorities were involved or what "materials" had been seized.

The unexplained and surprising search comes as the administration of New York City Mayor Eric Adams has been reeling from other federal law enforcement investigations.

Fabien Levy, the city's deputy mayor for communications, said: "As we have repeatedly said, we expect all team members to fully comply with any law enforcement inquiry."

Just a week ago, the previous police commissioner, Edward Caban, resigned after federal authorities seized his electronic devices as part of an investigation that also involved his brother, a former police officer.

Federal agents also have seized phones in recent weeks from the head of the city's public schools, a top deputy mayor, Adams' top public safety adviser and others. Previously, investigators searched homes connected to Adams' top campaign fundraiser and the Democrat's Asian affairs director.

Last autumn, federal agents also seized Adams' phone as he left an event.

Charges have not been brought in connection with any of those searches and it was unclear whether there was any connection to the search involving Donlon, who wasn't part of the Adams administration until a few days ago.

An FBI spokesperson declined to comment. An email seeking comment from a spokesperson for the U.S. attorney in Manhattan was not immediately returned. A text sent to Adams' top spokesperson late Saturday night also wasn't immediately returned.

Donlon spent decades with the FBI, where he worked on terrorism cases including the investigation into the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and a 2000 attack on a U.S. Navy destroyer.

Roughly 20 years ago he was a top counterterrorism official for the FBI in New York.

From 2009 to 2010, Donlon led New York state's Office of Homeland Security before going into the private sector security industry.

Adams appointed Donlon as his commissioner last week and he assumed the post on Sept. 13, one week ago Friday.

The choice of an outsider with a long career in federal law enforcement — but no history of working with the NYPD — seemed at the time to be a potentially stabilizing move for the police department after Caban's resignation.

Caban and his brother, James Caban, who runs a nightlife security business, had both denied any wrongdoing through their lawyers.

Through it all, Adams, who is in his first term, has said he won't be distracted by the investigations and will continue to serve the city.

## World leaders are gathering in New York for the U.N. General Assembly. The outlook is gloomy

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Facing a swirl of conflicts and crises across a fragmented world, leaders attending this week's annual U.N. gathering are being challenged: Work together — not only on front-burner issues but on modernizing the international institutions born after World War II so they can tackle the threats and problems of the future.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres issued the challenge a year ago after sounding a global alarm about the survival of humanity and the planet: Come to a "Summit of the Future" and make a new commitment to multilateralism — the foundation of the United Nations and many other global bodies — and start fixing the aging global architecture to meet the rapidly changing world.

The U.N. chief told reporters last week that the summit "was born out of a cold, hard fact: international challenges are moving faster than our ability to solve them." He pointed to "out-of-control geopolitical divisions" and "runaway" conflicts, climate change, inequalities, debt and new technologies like artificial intelligence which have no guardrails.

The two-day summit starts Sunday, two days before the high-level meeting of world leaders begins at the sprawling U.N. compound in New York City.

Whether it takes even a first step toward the future remains to be seen. There was no final agreement Saturday on its main outcome document — a lengthy pact that requires support from all 193 U.N. member nations to be adopted. Diplomats said Russia and a few others still had objections to the final text.

"Leaders must ask themselves whether this will be yet another meeting where they simply talk about greater cooperation and consensus, or whether they will show the imagination and conviction to actually forge it," said Agnès Callamard, the secretary-general of Amnesty International. "If they miss this opportunity, I shudder to think of the consequences. Our collective future is at stake."

This is the UN's biggest week of the year

The summit is the prelude to this year's high-level meeting, held every September. More than 130 presidents, prime ministers and monarchs are slated to speak along with dozens of ministers, and the issues at the summit are expected to dominate their speeches and private meetings, especially the wars in Gaza, Ukraine and Sudan and the growing possibility of a wider Mideast war.

"There is going to be a rather obvious gap between the Summit of the Future, with its focus on expanding international cooperation, and the reality that the U.N. is failing in Gaza, Ukraine and Sudan," said Richard Gowan, U.N. director for the International Crisis Group. "Those three wars will be top topics of attention for most of the week."

One notable moment at Tuesday's opening assembly meeting: U.S. President Joe Biden's likely final major appearance on the world stage, a platform he has tread upon and reveled in for decades.

At the upcoming meetings, U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield told reporters this week: "The most vulnerable around the world are counting on us to make progress, to make change, to bring about a sense of hope for them."

To meet the many global challenges, she said, the U.S. focus at the U.N. meetings will be on ending "the scourge of war." Roughly 2 billion people live in conflict-affected areas, she said.

Last September, the war in Ukraine and its president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, took center stage at the U.N. global gathering. But as the first anniversary of Hamas' deadly attack in southern Israel approaches on Oct. 7, the spotlight is certain to be on the war in Gaza and escalating violence across the Israeli-Lebanon border, which is now threatening to spread to the wider Middle East.

Iran supports both Hamas in Gaza and Lebanon's Hezbollah militants. Its new president, Masoud Pezeshkian, will address world leaders on Tuesday afternoon. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is scheduled to speak Thursday morning and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday afternoon.

Zelenskyy will get the spotlight twice. He will speak Tuesday at a high-level meeting of the U.N. Security

Council — called by the United States, France, Japan, Malta, South Korea and Britain — and will address the General Assembly on Wednesday morning.

They're trying to counter 'a world of grim statistics'

Slovenia, which holds the council's rotating presidency this month, chose the topic "Leadership for Peace" for its high-level meeting Wednesday, challenging its 15 member nations to address why the U.N. body charged with maintaining international peace and security is failing — and how it can do better.

"The event follows our observation that we live in a world of grim statistics, with the highest number of ongoing conflicts, with record high casualties among civilians, among humanitarians, among medical workers, among journalist," Slovenian U.N. Ambassador Samuel Zbogar told reporters. He cited a record-high 100 million people driven from their homes by conflict.

"The world is becoming less stable, less peaceful, and with erosion of the respect for the rules, it is sliding into the state of disorder," Zbogar said. "We have not seen this high need to rebuild trust to secure the future ever before."

A key reason for the Security Council's dysfunction is the deep division among its five veto-wielding permanent members. The United States, Israel's closest ally, is a supporter of Ukraine alongside Britain and France. Russia invaded Ukraine and has a military and economic partnership with China, though Beijing reasserted its longstanding support for every country's sovereignty without criticizing Russia in a recent briefing paper for the U.N. meetings.

French President Emmanuel Macron and Britain's new prime minister, Keir Starmer, will be at the United Nations this week along with Biden. But Russian President Vladimir Putin and China's President Xi Jinping are sending their foreign ministers instead. Neither Putin nor Xi attended last year, either.

Guterres, who will preside over the whole affair this week, warned that the world is seeing "a multiplication of conflicts and the sense of impunity" — a landscape where, he said, "any country or any military entity, militias, whatever, feel that they can do whatever they want because nothing will happen to them."

"And the fact that nobody takes even seriously the capacity of the powers to solve problems on the ground," he said, "makes the level of impunity (on) an enormous level."

## **Lack of birth certificates puts Cameroon's Indigenous people on the brink of statelessness**

By NGALA KILLIAN CHIMTOM Associated Press

MAYOS, Cameroon (AP) — The morning sun filtered through the forest canopy, casting dappled light on this village in Cameroon. For the Baka Indigenous community, it was a timeless image.

But a passing truck broke the silence and stirred up billows of dust, a reminder that the Baka now live an uneasy life along roadsides after being forced from their traditional homes.

The Baka and fellow Indigenous Bagyieli have lived in harmony with the forests of central Africa for generations. But mining and logging activities are encroaching, along with conservation areas, and government policy aims to integrate the ethnic groups into mainstream society.

Lives "were better when we were in the forest," said Rebecca Gwampiel, a 78-year-old Baka. She prepared yam porridge in front of a traditional hut constructed with arched saplings. In the dusty courtyard, children played football using bound banana leaves.

Among them was Francis, an 11-year-old who has quickly adapted to the new life and has aspirations. "I want to become a nurse," he declared. "I want to be able to treat my grandmother when she is sick."

But for many Baka children, such dreams go unfulfilled. Their lack of birth certificates poses a significant barrier — part of a wider global problem. They never saw the need for birth certificates when they barely interacted with the world beyond the forest. Even now, they live far from administrative centers and can rarely afford the transport to reach them.

"Without a birth certificate, he is stuck with me here in the village," said Francis' 61-year-old father, Bertrand Akomi. He himself was denied employment by a lumber company because he didn't have a birth certificate.

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The document remains elusive for the more than 120,000 members of Cameroon's Baka and Bagyieli communities. Without birth certificates, they cannot obtain national identity documents and are excluded from the full benefits of citizenship.

"When births are not registered, how can you identify yourself as Cameroonian?" asked Banmi Emmanuel Dingha, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Cameroon's National Assembly, calling the document crucial for accessing education, healthcare and employment opportunities.

There is hope for change. Earlier this summer, Dingha and colleagues in the Cameroon parliament passed a bill allowing the country to accede to two United Nations conventions relating to the recognition of stateless people.

That would "help to significantly reduce discrimination against persons who often are only victims of circumstances," the government said at the time.

Cameroon's actions are part of a commitment by African nations earlier this year to address the right to nationality and eradicate statelessness on the continent of more than 1.3 billion people.

The Indigenous people of Cameroon are mostly hunters and gatherers who are long used to easily crossing lightly guarded international borders in search of food and game.

"The Bakas are not only in Cameroon. You find them in Congo, you find them in the Central African Republic, you find them in Gabon and you find them in Equatorial Guinea. And many of them move across forests that straddle all these countries," Dingha said.

Sebastian Bissolababa, a teacher at a government school in Mayos, emphasized the urgency. Many Baka students can't move on to secondary education or beyond, and companies often require identification papers, closing another route to integration into society.

The Indigenous Bagyieli, who live some 590 kilometers away in the southern Campo region, face similar challenges.

There, Henri Lema of Nazareth village was returning from hunting, with a porcupine dangling from his spear. He joined his wife, Bilore Marie, in preparing the evening meal.

As he sliced the porcupine, he expressed frustration with the lack of identification documents and the trouble it causes with paramilitary forces and other authorities.

"Each time I have to travel to Kribi (the district administrative headquarters), gendarmes disturb me because I don't have an ID card," he said. "I have to pay a bribe each time. And that's money I don't even have."

Simlice Nguibaba is a senior government official in charge of, among other things, ensuring that the Bagyelis in Campo have access to nationality documents.

"In concrete terms, our actions are based on raising awareness, doing advocacy, monitoring and support for Bagyelis," he said.

Several other groups of Cameroonians also have risked statelessness.

The ongoing separatist crisis in the country's English-speaking North West and South West regions, and the Boko Haram insurgency in the Far North region, have triggered internal displacement, resulting in the loss of birth certificates and national identity cards for many people.

## Why an Alaska island is using peanut butter and black lights to find a rat that might not exist

By BECKY BOHRER Associated Press

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — On an island of windswept tundra in the Bering Sea, hundreds of miles from mainland Alaska, a resident sitting outside their home saw — well, did they see it? They were pretty sure they saw it.

A rat.

The purported sighting would not have gotten attention in many places around the world, but it caused a stir on St. Paul Island, which is part of the Pribilof Islands, a birding haven sometimes called the "Gala-



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pagos of the north" for its diversity of life.

That's because rats that stow away on vessels can quickly populate and overrun remote islands, devastating bird populations by eating eggs, chicks or even adults and upending once-vibrant ecosystems.

Shortly after receiving the resident's report in June, wildlife officials arrived at the apartment complex and crawled through nearby grasses, around the building and under the porch, looking for tracks, chew marks or droppings. They baited traps with peanut butter and set up trail cameras to capture any confirmation of the rat's existence — but so far have found no evidence.

"We know — because we've seen this on other islands and in other locations in Alaska and across the world — that rats absolutely decimate seabird colonies, so the threat is never one that the community would take lightly," said Lauren Divine, director of the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island's ecosystem conservation office.

The anxiety on St. Paul Island is the latest development amid longstanding efforts to get or keep non-native rats off some of the most remote, but ecologically diverse, islands in Alaska and around the world.

Rodents have been removed successfully from hundreds of islands worldwide — including one in Alaska's Aleutian chain formerly known as "Rat Island," according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. But such efforts can take years and cost millions of dollars, so prevention is considered the best defense.

Around the developed areas of St. Paul, officials have set out blocks of wax — "chew blocks" — designed to record any telltale incisor bites. Some of the blocks are made with ultraviolet material, which allow inspectors armed with black lights to search for glowing droppings.

They also have asked residents to be on the lookout for any rodents and are seeking permission to have the U.S. Department of Agriculture bring a dog to the island to sniff out any rats. Canines are otherwise banned from the Pribilofs to protect fur seals.

There have been no traces of any rats since the reported sighting this summer, but the hunt and heightened state of vigilance is likely to persist for months.

Divine likened the search to trying to find a needle in a haystack "and not knowing if a needle even exists."

The community of about 350 people — clustered on the southern tip of a treeless island marked by rolling hills, rimmed by cliffs and battered by storms — has long had a rodent surveillance program that includes rat traps near the airport and at developed waterfront areas where vessels arrive, designed to detect or kill any rats that might show up.

Still, it took nearly a year to catch the last known rat on St. Paul, which was believed to have hopped off a barge. It was found dead in 2019 after it evaded the community's initial defenses. That underscores why even an unsubstantiated sighting is taken so seriously, Divine said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is planning an environmental review to analyze eradicating the potentially tens of thousands of rats on four uninhabited islands in the far-flung, volcano-pocked Aleutian chain, hundreds of miles southwest of St. Paul. More than 10 million seabirds of varying species nest in the Aleutians.

The diversity and number of breeding birds on islands with established, non-native rat populations are noticeably low, the agency has said. Carcasses of least auklets and crested auklets, which are known for their noisy nesting colonies in rocky areas, have been found in rat-food caches on Kiska Island, one of the four islands, where rat footprints have been spotted on the wet, sandy shoreline.

If the agency moves ahead, it might take five years for the first of the projects to be launched, and given the intensive planning, testing and research required for each island, it could take decades to complete all of them, said Stacey Buckelew, an island invasive species biologist with Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge.

But such efforts are important steps to help seabirds already challenged by stresses including climate change, Buckelew said.

The success of what was long called Rat Island, a tract in the Aleutians roughly half the size of Manhattan, shows how effective eradication programs can be. Rats are believed to have first arrived with a Japanese shipwreck in the late 18th century. Fur traders introduced arctic foxes there the following century.

The foxes were eradicated in 1984, but it was nearly a quarter century later when wildlife agents and conservation groups killed off the rats by dropping poison pellets from a helicopter. Those involved said that without nesting seabirds, the island was eerily silent compared to the cacophony of other, rat-free islands, and it even smelled different.

Since the eradication of rats, researchers have found native birds benefiting, even documenting species thought to have been wiped out by rats. The island is once again known by the name originally bestowed by the Unangan people native to the Aleutians: Hawadax. Researchers have found tufted puffins, which dig burrows into cliff edges and are defenseless against rats or foxes, as well as eagle and falcon nests.

During surveys before the eradication, researchers heard no song sparrows, but during a 2013 trip their sounds were almost incessant, Buckelew said at that time.

Donald Lyons, director of conservation science with the National Audubon Society's Seabird Institute, described being in the Pribilof Islands and watching clouds of auklets return to their colonies in the evening — "tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of birds in the air at a given time."

He said officials were right to take the alleged sighting of a rat on St. Paul so seriously. He credited the largely Alaska Native communities in the Pribilofs for their efforts to keep invasive species out.

"It's just the abundance of wildlife that we hear stories or read historical accounts of, but really seldom see in kind of our modern age," he said. "And so it really is a place where I've felt the wonder, the spectacle of nature."

## **Hezbollah targets base near Haifa after Israeli strike in Beirut killed 37, including top commander**

By BASSEM MROUE and ABBY SEWELL Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — The Lebanese militant group Hezbollah announced that it fired a barrage of missiles at a military base deep inside Israel early Sunday following an Israeli airstrike more than a day earlier that killed at least 37 people, including one of the militant group's senior leaders as well as women and children.

It was not immediately clear if any of the rockets had hit their target. Israel's emergency medical services reported that a man was lightly wounded by shrapnel from a missile that was intercepted in a village in the lower Galilee.

Local media reported that rockets shot from Lebanon were intercepted in the areas of Haifa and Nazareth. The Israeli military said only that it had monitored the launch of "about ten rockets" from Lebanon, of which most were intercepted.

Hezbollah said it had launched "dozens of Fadi 1 and Fadi 2 missiles" - a new type of weapon the group had not used before - at the Ramat David airbase, southeast of Haifa, "in response to the repeated Israeli attacks that targeted various Lebanese regions and led to the fall of many civilian martyrs."

In July, the group had released a video with what it said was footage it had filmed of the base with surveillance drones.

Israel and Hezbollah had exchanged heavy fire on Saturday as rescue crews in Beirut searched the rubble of an apartment building that was leveled by the Israeli strike the day before.

Hezbollah has vowed to retaliate against Israel for a wave of apparently remotely detonated explosions that hit pagers and walkie-talkies belonging to Hezbollah members Tuesday and Wednesday, killing at least 37 people - including two children - and wounding around 3,000. The attacks were widely blamed on Israel, which has not confirmed or denied responsibility.

On Friday, an Israeli airstrike took down an eight-story building in a densely populated neighborhood in Beirut's southern suburbs as Hezbollah members were meeting in the basement, according to Israel. Among those killed was Ibrahim Akil, a top Hezbollah official who commanded the group's special forces unit the Radwan Force. Also killed was Ahmed Wahbi, a top commander in the group's military wing, the Israeli military said.

Lebanon's health minister, Firass Abiad, told reporters Saturday that at least seven women and three

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children were killed in Friday's airstrike on the building. He said another 68 people were injured, including 15 who were hospitalized.

It was the deadliest strike on Beirut since the bruising monthlong war in 2006 between Israel and Hezbollah, and the casualty count could grow, with 23 people still missing, a government official said.

Israel's defense minister, Yoav Gallant, said the attack thwarted the group's chain of command while taking out Akil, who he said was responsible for Israeli deaths and who was on the U.S. wanted list for years.

"This is our commitment to the fallen and their loved ones. This is our commitment to the residents of the north. And this is a clear message to all those who seek to harm us," he posted on X.

The Israeli government braced for an expected surge in Hezbollah rocket attacks by setting new caps on the size of gatherings and other restrictions in the north of the country, near Israel's border with Lebanon.

Hezbollah confirms more than a dozen operatives were killed

Akil, the main target, had been wanted by the U.S. for years for his alleged role in the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut and the taking of American and German hostages in Lebanon in the 1980s. The U.S. State Department last year announced a reward of up to \$7 million for information leading to his "identification, location, arrest, and/or conviction."

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan called Akil's death "a good outcome" and said he had "American blood on his hands" for the embassy attack.

"You know, 1983 seems like a long time ago," Sullivan said. "But for a lot of families and a lot of people, they're still living with it every day."

Wahbi was described as a commander who played major roles within Hezbollah for decades and was imprisoned in an Israeli jail in southern Lebanon in 1984. Hezbollah said he was one of the "field commanders" during a 1997 ambush in southern Lebanon that left 12 Israeli troops dead.

Hezbollah announced overnight that 15 of its operatives had been killed by Israeli forces, but it didn't how or where they died. Meanwhile, the Israeli army spokesperson, Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani, said Saturday 16 Hezbollah fighters were killed in Friday's strike.

Israel airstrikes and Hezbollah rocket attacks continue

Israel and Hezbollah engaged in heavy back-and-forth strikes on Saturday. The Israeli military confirmed that about 90 rockets had been fired at northern Israel and that Israel had struck more than 400 rocket launchers in Lebanon during the day.

Expecting a surge in rocket attacks, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, an Israeli defense spokesman, announced updated safety guidelines for areas north of Haifa, including caps on gatherings of 30 people in open spaces and 300 in enclosed spaces. Work and school can continue if people can reach protected areas in a timely manner. But since students and teachers in some places wouldn't be able reach shelters in the required time, Sunday classes were canceled in at least two border regions within an hour of the announcement.

Earlier this week, Israel's security cabinet said stopping Hezbollah's attacks on the country's north, which would allow displaced residents to return to their homes, is now an official war goal, as Israel considers a wider military operation in Lebanon that could spark an all-out conflict. Israel has since sent a powerful fighting force to its northern border.

Hezbollah has maintained that it will halt its strikes only when a cease-fire is reached between Israel and Hamas in Gaza,

Israel and Hezbollah have traded fire regularly since Hamas' Oct. 7 assault on southern Israel ignited the Israeli military's devastating offensive in Gaza. But previous cross-border attacks have largely struck areas in northern Israel that had been evacuated and less-populated parts of southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah bombardments preceded the Israeli strike

Friday's strike came hours after Hezbollah launched one of its most intense bombardments of northern Israel in nearly a year of fighting, largely targeting Israeli military sites. Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system intercepted most of the Katyusha rockets.

The militant group said its latest wave of rocket salvos was a response to Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon. However, it came days after mass explosions of Hezbollah pagers and walkie-talkies killed at least 37 people, including two children, and wounded roughly 3,000 others.

Abiad, the Lebanese health minister, said Saturday that hospitals across the country were filled with the wounded.

The pager and walkie-talkie attacks have been widely attributed to Israel, which hasn't confirmed or denied involvement. They marked a major escalation in the past 11 months of simmering conflict along the Israel-Lebanon border.

## **An Israeli strike on a school kills at least 22 people, Gaza Health Ministry says**

By WAFAA SHURAFU Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — An Israeli strike on a school in northern Gaza on Saturday killed at least 22 people, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, while the Israeli army said it targeted a Hamas command center in what used to be a school.

Another 30 were wounded in the strike on the school in the Zeitoun area of Gaza City, the ministry said in a statement. Most of the casualties were women and children, it said. It wasn't immediately clear which hospital the dead and injured were taken to.

Video taken by The Associated Press showed dozens of people including children digging through the rubble of the building — its ceilings caved in, walls knocked out and a mess of wires and metal rods visible. Outside, others gathered around shrouded bodies. Some covered their faces as they wept for relatives killed in the strike.

"A missile, a missile from the plane hit us, and another missile," said Ferial Deloul, who is displaced. "We saw the whole world covered with smoke and stones and we saw people and children cut up. ... What should we do? What is our fault for this to happen to us?"

The Israeli army said earlier Saturday that it struck Hamas' "command and control center, which was embedded inside a compound that previously served" as a school. It said steps were taken to limit harming civilians, including using precise munitions and aerial surveillance.

Also on Saturday, the Gaza Health Ministry said five of its workers were killed and five others wounded by Israeli fire that struck the ministry's warehouses in the southern Musbah area.

### Contesting narratives over the use of schools and hospitals

Since the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war, the Israeli army has struck several schools, packed with tens of thousands of Palestinians driven from their homes by Israeli offensives and evacuation orders. The conflict has left 90% of Palestinians in Gaza displaced, according to figures from the United Nations.

The military has continually accused Hamas of operating from within civilian infrastructure in Gaza, including schools, U.N. facilities and hospitals. The contesting narratives over the use of schools and hospitals go to the heart of the nearly yearlong conflict.

Earlier this month, an Israeli strike hit a school in the Nuseirat refugee camp, killing 14, according to Palestinian medical officials. The Israeli military said it was targeting Hamas militants planning attacks from inside the school.

In July, Israeli airstrikes hit a girls' school in Deir al-Balah, killing at least 30 people sheltering inside. Israel's military said it targeted a Hamas command center used to direct attacks against its troops and store "large quantities of weapons."

The war began when Hamas-led fighters killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in an Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel. They abducted another 250 people and are still holding around 100 hostages. Israel's campaign in Gaza has killed at least 41,000 Palestinians, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which doesn't differentiate between fighters and civilians.

### Escalating tensions in the region

Tensions soared in the region on Friday after an Israeli airstrike on a Beirut suburb in Lebanon killed dozens of people, including civilians and Ibrahim Akil, who was in charge of Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force. Also killed was Ahmed Wahbi, another senior commander in the group's military wing.

The strike came hours after Hezbollah launched one of its most intense bombardments of northern Israel

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in nearly a year of fighting. Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system intercepted most of the rockets. Israeli military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said Israel had struck more than 400 rocket launchers in Lebanon on Saturday.

Tens of thousands of Israelis demonstrated on Saturday night in Tel Aviv and at several smaller protests across the country, demanding a cease-fire and the return of the roughly 100 hostages still being held in Gaza. The protests, which happen every Saturday night, attracted a similar crowd compared to previous weeks despite the tense security situation on Israel's northern border.

## **Biden tells Quad leaders that Beijing is testing region at turbulent moment for Chinese economy**

By ZEKE MILLER and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

CLAYMONT, Del. (AP) — President Joe Biden told Indo-Pacific allies on Saturday that he believes China's increasing military assertiveness is an effort to test the region at a turbulent moment for Beijing.

Biden's comments were caught by a hot mic after he and fellow leaders of the so-called Quad delivered opening remarks before the press at a summit he's hosting near his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware. He said his administration sees Beijing's actions as a "change in tactic, not a change in strategy."

China is struggling to pull up its economy that was pummeled by the coronavirus pandemic and has seen an extended slowdown in industrial activity and real estate prices as Beijing faces pressure to ramp up spending to stimulate demand.

"China continues to behave aggressively, testing us all across the region, and it's true in the South China Sea, the East China Sea, South China, South Asia and the Taiwan Straits," Biden told Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. He added, "At least from our perspective, we believe (Chinese President) Xi Jinping is looking to focus on domestic economic challenges and minimize the turbulence in China's diplomatic relationships, and he's also looking to buy himself some diplomatic space, in my view, to aggressively pursue China's interest."

Starting with a trade war that dates back to 2018, China and the United States have grown at odds over a range of issues, from global security, such as China's claims over the South China Sea, to industrial policy on electric vehicle and solar panel manufacturing.

The administration has repeatedly spoken out about concerns about Chinese aggression toward Taiwan and more recently on the frequent clashes between Chinese and Philippine vessels in disputed areas of the South China Sea.

At the summit, the leaders agreed to expand the partnership among the Quad nations' coast guards to improve interoperability and capabilities, with Indian, Japanese and Australian personnel sailing on U.S. ships in the region. But U.S. officials would not say if those transits would include the contested South China Sea.

China also has longtime territorial disputes involving other claimants including Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei. U.S. officials worry about China's long-stated goals of unifying Taiwan with China's mainland and the possibility of war over Taiwan. The self-ruled island democracy is claimed by Beijing as part of its territory.

The leaders in a joint declaration issued following their talks expressed "serious concern about the militarization ... and coercive and intimidating maneuvers in the South China Sea."

Biden last month dispatched his national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, to Beijing for three days of talks with Chinese officials. Sullivan during that visit also met with Xi.

Both governments are eager to keep relations on an even keel ahead of a change in the U.S. presidency in January. And both sides have said they remain committed to managing the relationship, following up on a meeting between Xi and Biden in San Francisco last November.

The concerns about China were raised as Biden showed off a slice of his Delaware hometown to the leaders of Australia, Japan and India as he hosted what is likely the last gathering of the Indo-Pacific partnership that has grown in prominence under his White House tenure.

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When Biden began his presidency he looked to elevate the Quad, which until then had only met at the foreign minister level, to a leader-level partnership as he tried to pivot U.S. foreign policy away from conflicts in the Middle East and toward threats and opportunities in the Indo-Pacific. This weekend's summit is the fourth in-person and sixth overall gathering of the leaders since 2021.

"It will survive way beyond November," Biden told the leaders.

The president, who has admitted to an uneven track record as a scholar, also seemed tickled to get to host a gathering with three world leaders at the school he attended more than 60 years ago. He welcomed each of the leaders individually for one-on-one talks at his nearby home before they gathered at the school for talks and a formal dinner.

"I don't think the headmaster of this school thought I'd be presiding over a meeting like this," Biden joked to fellow leaders.

Albanese, Modi and Kishida came for the summit before their appearances at the U.N. General Assembly in New York next week.

"This place could not be better suited for my final visit as prime minister," said Kishida, who like Biden, is set to soon leave office.

Earlier, the president warmly greeted Kishida when he arrived at the residence on Saturday morning and gave the prime minister a tour of the property before they settled into talks.

White House officials said holding the talks at the president's house, which sits near a pond in a wooded area several miles west of downtown, was intended to give the meetings a more relaxed feel.

Sullivan described the vibe of Biden's one-on-one meeting with Albanese, who stopped by the house on Friday, as "two guys — one at the other guy's home — talking in broad strokes about where they see the state of the world." He said Biden and Albanese also swapped stories about their political careers.

The Australian leader remarked that the visit had given him "insight into what in my view makes you such an extraordinary world leader."

Modi also stopped by the house on Saturday to meet with Biden before the leaders gathered for their joint talks.

"There cannot be a better place than President Biden's hometown of Wilmington to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Quad," Modi said.

Biden and Modi discussed Modi's recent visits to Russia and Ukraine as well as economic and security concerns about China. Modi is the most prominent leader from a nation that maintains a neutral position on Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Biden and Kishida, who are both stepping away from office amid sliding public support, count the tightening of security and economic ties among the U.S., Japan and South Korea as one of their most significant accomplishments.

The improved relations between Japan and South Korea, two nations with a deep and complicated history that have struggled to stay on speaking terms, have come amid worrying developments in the Pacific, including strides made by North Korea in its nuclear program and concerns about China.

Biden during their face-to-face meeting commended Kishida for demonstrating "courage and conviction in strengthening ties" with South Korea, according to the White House. They also discussed China, Russia's war against Ukraine and emerging technology issues.

The U.S. and Japan are dealing with a rare moment of tension in the relationship. Biden, as well as presidential candidates Kamala Harris and Donald Trump, have opposed a \$15 billion bid by Japan's Nippon Steel to take over American-owned U.S. Steel.

Biden administration officials indicated this week that a U.S. government committee's formal assessment of the proposed deal has yet to be submitted to the White House and may not come until after the Nov. 5 election.

The summit declaration also condemned North Korea's continued ballistic missile testing and expressed "deep concern about countries that are deepening military cooperation with North Korea." The leaders were expected to discuss the issue in more depth over dinner.

The U.S. has publicized intelligence findings that show North Korea and Iran have provided Russia with

ballistic missiles and other weaponry for its war in Ukraine and that Moscow is in turn tightening its relationship with Pyongyang and Tehran.

The leaders announced their four countries are committing \$150 million for HPV vaccines, screening and therapeutics in the Indo-Pacific. Relatively few women in the region get screened for the virus that causes nearly all cervical cancers.

U.S. Navy doctors and nurses will also launch a program to train their Pacific counterparts on conducting cervical cancer screening and HPV vaccinations.

The announcement is related to Biden's Cancer Moonshot Initiative, a long-running passion project of the president and his wife, Jill Biden, aimed at reducing cancer deaths.

The Bidens' son Beau died in 2015 at age 46 of brain cancer.

## Trump appeals to women in return to North Carolina without Mark Robinson, a top in-state supporter

By MEG KINNARD and ERIK VERDUZCO Associated Press

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP) — Donald Trump returned to North Carolina on Saturday, stumping in the southern battleground state with direct appeals to women, claiming he would be a better champion for them than Vice President Kamala Harris, who is vying to become the first female president.

Trump campaigned in Wilmington, along the state's southern coast, without Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson, the GOP gubernatorial nominee and one of the former president's top surrogates in the state, following a CNN report about his alleged posts on a pornography website's message board. He did not mention Robinson during a speech that lasted just over an hour.

Robinson has denied writing the posts, which include lewd and racist comments, saying Thursday that he wouldn't be forced out of the race by "salacious tabloid lies." Trump's campaign has appeared to distance itself from Robinson in the wake of the CNN reporting, which the AP has not independently verified, saying in a statement that Trump "is focused on winning the White House and saving this country" and calling North Carolina "a vital part of that plan," without mentioning Robinson.

Democrats have seized on the opportunity to highlight Trump's ties to Robinson, with billboards showing the two together, as well as a new ad from Harris' campaign highlighting the Republican candidates' ties as well as Robinson's support for a statewide abortion ban without exceptions. According to Harris' campaign, it's their first ad effort related to tying Trump to a down-ballot race.

Both abortion rights and Robinson are electoral liabilities for Trump in a state he previously won twice. Already before CNN's report, Robinson was trailing in several recent polls to Democratic nominee Josh Stein, the state's attorney general. Polls show Trump and Harris locked in a close race here and nationally.

Trump downplays abortion as a campaign issue

In his first outdoor rally since the second apparent attempt to assassinate him, Trump argued women would be safer and more prosperous with him as president and would "no longer be thinking about abortion."

"I will protect women at a level never seen before. They will finally be healthy, hopeful, safe and secure," Trump said. "Their lives will be happy, beautiful, and their lives will be great again. So women, we love you. We're going to take care of you."

The former president said women won't have to think about abortion because decisions about regulating it are now left to the states. Many Republican-led states have taken steps to restrict or eliminate abortion access after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in 2022. Trump nominated three of the six justices who voted to overturn *Roe*.

North Carolina banned most abortions after 12 weeks last year, with Republicans in the state legislature overriding Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper's veto.

Voters overwhelmingly say they trust Harris to do a better job handling abortion policy, with 55% favoring her while 27% favored Trump in a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs

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Research.

Harris and Democrats running down ballot have highlighted stories of women who faced severe medical complications or death because they didn't get proper medical care from doctors worried about the impact of abortion laws. Harris on Friday blasted Trump as a threat to women's freedoms and their lives, warning in a speech in Georgia that Republicans would continue to target access to abortion if he returns to the White House.

"Trump is scared out of his mind that women will vote like our freedoms and our lives are on the line this November – and he should be, because that's exactly what we will do," Harris campaign Sarafina Chitika said in a statement after Trump's rally.

Trump also showed a gentler side, inviting two of his young grandchildren on stage. The former president lifted Carolina to the microphone, where she said "Make America great again" to cheers, followed by her older brother, Luke Trump, who said, "Vote for Grandpa." They're the children of Eric Trump, the former president's second son, and his wife, Lara Trump, a North Carolina native who is now serving as co-chair of the Republican National Committee.

Bulletproof glass surrounded Trump as he spoke, a new precaution for outdoor venues the Secret Service implemented after a bullet grazed Trump's ear during a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania.

Trump supporters dismiss the new claims against Robinson

A Republican has carried North Carolina in every general election since 1976 save one, when Barack Obama won the state in 2008. Trump won there in both his previous campaigns but by less than 1.5 percentage points over Democrat Joe Biden in 2020, the closest margin of any state that Trump won. That's part of why Democrats see the state as winnable this fall.

With neither Senate seat up for grabs, the gubernatorial contest has been North Carolina's marquee down-ballot race this year. Robinson has become a natural top surrogate for Trump in the state and a frequent presence at campaign events there, appearing with the nominee as recently as an event last month in Asheboro. Trump has long praised Robinson, who is Black, referring to him as "Martin Luther King on steroids."

Endorsing Robinson ahead of the GOP gubernatorial primary, Trump continued: "I think you're better than Martin Luther King. I think you are Martin Luther King times two."

Robinson has a long history of making inflammatory comments, including suggesting women who sought abortion "weren't responsible enough to keep your skirt down" and comparing abortion to slavery.

Charlie Kimball, a 46-year-old former construction worker from Burgaw, who said he is currently on disability, dismissed the new allegations against Robinson as "fake news."

"That's his personal life. Who cares?" Kimball said. "It's all hearsay ... It's not true. It's all speculation. Where's the proof?"

While more visits have been made by presidential contenders to the Rust Belt battlegrounds of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, both Harris and Trump have made multiple trips to North Carolina, highlighting the state's importance. Following Biden's departure from the race in July, Trump held his first large-scale rally there, turning his full focus toward Harris.

Wilmington is home to New Hanover County, which Biden won in 2020. But his margin over Trump in the county was among his slimmest in the state.

Julia Novotny, 55, of Wilmington, said she's come around to supporting Trump after initial reservations because of allegations that he's been sexually abusive to women, which he denies.

"He's classy, he's a gentleman, he looks good in a suit and he has strong values," Novotny said. "Everybody makes mistakes, and whether he did or didn't, I don't know, but you know what? Leave him alone. He's a good man. He wants to change this country. Our country is in the dirt, and the only man who pulls us out is Donald Trump."



## 'Ticking time bomb': Those who raised suspicions about Trump suspect question if enough was done

By BERNARD CONDON Associated Press

The more Chelsea Walsh talked to the eccentric fellow American who seemed to pop up in every square and cobblestone street of Ukraine's capital, the more she got creeped out.

Walsh was in Kyiv as a nurse and aid worker in the early days of the war in Ukraine. Ryan Routh was there to recruit foreign soldiers to fight the Russians. But Walsh never saw him make much progress and instead watched him grow increasingly angry and unhinged, kicking a panhandler, threatening to burn down a music studio that slighted him and speaking of his own children with seething hatred.

Just as troubling, she said, was Routh's obsessive, oddly specific plotting to assassinate Russian President Vladimir Putin, describing the various explosives, poisons and cross-border maneuvers that Routh would employ "to kill him in his sleep."

"Ryan Routh is a ticking time bomb," she recalled telling U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials in an hourlong interview upon returning to the United States at Dulles International Airport near Washington in June 2022. She says she later repeated her concerns in separate tips to both the FBI and Interpol, the international policing group.

"There is one person you need to watch," she said. "And that is Ryan Routh."

Walsh says she never heard back about her tips and she did not think much more about Routh until she saw him in the news last Sunday as the 58-year-old accused of stalking Donald Trump at the former president's golf course in West Palm Beach, Florida, in an apparent assassination attempt.

Walsh's account was one of at least four reports to the U.S. government that, while not direct threats to Trump, raised suspicions about Routh in the years leading up to his arrest. Others included a tip to the FBI in 2019 about Routh being in possession of a firearm after a felony conviction, an online report by an aid worker to the State Department last year questioning Routh's military recruiting tactics, and Routh's own interview with Customs and Border Protection about those efforts, prompting a referral for a possible inquiry by Homeland Security Investigations.

What was done in response that could have stopped Routh or at least put him under greater scrutiny is not entirely clear. The agencies involved either did not respond to queries from The Associated Press, have no record of such a report or had questions about whether the report warranted further investigation.

But some people are asking whether federal agencies are vigilant enough or even equipped enough to deal with a growing number of potential threats that are brought to their attention every day.

"Federal agencies ought to be on the highest alert to detect and combat these threats," said Republican Sen Chuck Grassley of Iowa, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. "Congress and the American people need assurance that the federal government is doing all it can."

Walsh, who lives just a few miles from Trump's golf course, said she cannot help but think all of this could have been avoided.

"The authorities have definitely dropped the ball on this," she said. "They were warned."

Sarah Adams, an ex-CIA officer who was behind the State Department tip, said she decided to act after learning Routh was trying to recruit former Afghan fighters with false promises of spots in the Ukrainian military.

She said she drafted a bulletin urging the 50 humanitarian aid groups she was helping in Ukraine to keep Routh at arm's length, and she had her company send a similar online report to the State Department.

"There was plenty to look into," said Adams, who lives in Tampa, Florida. "I don't know if they even assigned someone to work it."

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said there is no record of any complaints about Routh. He said he could not rule out that "someone didn't have a communication with somebody somewhere."

Similarly, Customs and Border Protection said it could not confirm Walsh had a meeting with one of its agents because it does not comment on individual cases. The FBI also declined to confirm Walsh's warning, citing a policy of not commenting on ongoing investigations. Interpol did not respond to a request

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for comment.

Walsh showed the AP notes that she took while talking to Customs and Border Protection, and a text she sent to a friend about her messages to the FBI and Interpol with a time stamp soon after she sent them.

Routh, a North Carolina construction worker who in recent years moved to Hawaii, was being held on weapons charges related to the Trump case. His federal public defender, Kristy Militello, did not respond to messages seeking comment.

A self-styled mercenary leader, Routh was never shy about speaking out to anyone who would listen about his dangerous, sometimes violent plans to insert himself into conflicts around the world.

He was interviewed by The New York Times, photographed by the AP and other news organizations and appeared in videos from Kyiv making his pitch for foreign fighters. He put out a self-published book last year on Amazon, "Ukraine's Unwinnable War," in which he writes of the wisdom of a well-timed killing of a world leader to change history.

"You are free to assassinate Trump," Routh wrote, referring to Iran in retaliation for the former president's decision to abandon the U.S. nuclear deal with that country. Routh went on to describe Trump, whom he had voted for in 2016, as a "fool" and "buffoon" for the riot at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and for pushing a negotiated settlement to the war in Ukraine.

Walsh said she initially found the wiry, floppy-haired Routh to be just bizarre. But as time went on, she got a darker vibe from the way Routh lurked in the streets, seemed to be everywhere and kept tabs on everyone.

She watched as Routh kicked a homeless man begging for money and then snarled, "The Ukrainians should be paying me for what I am doing here!" She said he talked of his grown children with such hatred — "I wish I never had them" — that it frightened her. She remembers how he threatened to burn down a music studio because people there laughed at him over a song he wrote.

"Ryan was the kind of guy who would blow up a building on Tuesday, just because he felt like it," Walsh said.

Routh's musings about killing Putin were echoed in his book published last year that describes an even more far-fetched plan for someone with no military experience: launching thousands of weaponized drones to flatten Putin's many residences.

But in the end, he wrote, the Ukrainians and disaffected Russians he hoped to recruit as accomplices lost their "courage and will" to pull it off.

In 2019, three years before Routh flew to Kyiv to build a foreign legion, the FBI followed up on a tip that he was in possession of a firearm despite felony convictions from years earlier.

But when questioned, the alleged tipster backed off and did not verify providing the initial information. The FBI then referred the matter to Hawaiian law enforcement for further investigation. Honolulu police confirmed this week they were looking into it.

In June 2023, Routh was pulled aside by Customs and Border Protection agents at the Honolulu airport when returning from Ukraine, Poland and Turkey, and asked about his activities overseas.

As first reported by the website Just the News and confirmed in congressional testimony this past week, documents show Routh told them he had been recruiting as many as 100 fighters from Afghanistan, Moldova and Taiwan, and that his wife was paying for his efforts.

Routh also gave agents a business card that claimed he was the director of a group called the International Volunteer Center.

The documents state that the agents referred Routh's case to Homeland Security Investigations for further scrutiny but it declined to pursue the matter.

In congressional testimony Wednesday, Katrina Berger, executive associate director of the agency, noted that it gets hundreds of such requests a day and that Routh's comments did not rise to the level to take him into "immediate custody."

Asked specifically to confirm whether a further investigation was declined, she said she was not sure and would look into it.

Routh's criminal history in his native Greensboro, North Carolina, includes a 2002 arrest for eluding a

traffic stop and barricading himself from officers with a fully automatic machine gun and a "weapon of mass destruction," which turned out to be an explosive with a 10-inch-long fuse.

In 2010, police searched a warehouse Routh owned and found more than 100 stolen items, from power tools and building supplies to kayaks and spa tubs. Police alleged in an affidavit that he was selling the items to purchase crack cocaine.

In both felony cases, court records show judges gave Routh either probation or a suspended sentence, allowing him to escape prison time.

Tracy Fulk, a now-retired Greensboro police officer who arrested Routh in the long-ago armed standoff, said she was not surprised by last week's news about Routh.

"Remembering all the alerts and run-ins and stuff," she said, "he was kind of 'out there.'"

## **New center-right government in France announced 2 months after divisive elections**

By THOMAS ADAMSON Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The French presidential palace unveiled a long-awaited new government Saturday dominated by conservatives and centrists. It came more than two months after elections that produced a hung parliament and deepened political divisions as France grapples with growing financial and diplomatic challenges.

A left-wing coalition secured the most seats in June-July parliamentary elections but failed to win a majority. Student groups and activists from the hard-left France Unbowed party held protests around the country Saturday against a government they say rejects the voters' will.

President Emmanuel Macron named conservative Michel Barnier as prime minister earlier this month even though Barnier's Republicans party had a poor showing in the elections, and Barnier put together the government after difficult negotiations. Macron approved, and it was announced at the presidential palace.

Marine Le Pen's far-right anti-immigration party National Rally has no seats in Barnier's government, but has enough votes in parliament to bring it down. The party won an indirect victory with the appointment of staunch conservative Bruno Retailleau as new interior minister, whose remit includes critical domestic issues like national security, immigration, and law enforcement.

The makeup and direction of France's government is important because the country is a leading voice in EU policy, among the biggest world's economies and a nuclear-armed, veto-wielding member of the U.N. Security Council.

The 39-member Cabinet includes primarily ministers from Macron's centrist alliance and the conservative Republicans.

Jean-Noël Barrot is the new foreign minister, a centrist politician known for his work in digital transformation and European affairs. He brings extensive experience in navigating complex international issues notably within the EU.

The new finance minister is Antoine Armand, an emerging figure in French politics now tasked with steering France's fiscal policies and managing the upcoming 2025 budget, amid pressure from Brussels to address France's mounting debt.

Sébastien Lecornu retains his post as defense minister. He has been instrumental in bolstering France's military capabilities, including modernizing defense systems and managing military aid to Ukraine. His leadership in defense will be crucial as France navigates its role within NATO and handles rising geopolitical tensions over the wars in Ukraine and the Mideast.

Barnier's ability to govern effectively is already under scrutiny, with his political opponents on the left vowing to challenge him at every turn and the far right saying it will monitor the government closely.

The left-wing New Popular Front alliance surprised many by winning the most seats in the risky snap elections that Macron called in the wake of a far-right victory in European Parliament elections.

But the New Popular Front was not given a chance to form a minority government, and refused to make concessions and join a more left-leaning government alliance.

Barnier, a 73-year-old political veteran known for his role as the European Union's Brexit negotiator, is no stranger to complex political tasks. However, forming a government that can survive in such a divided parliament will test his extensive experience and political acumen.

Barnier's first major political test will come on October 1, when he is set to deliver his general policy speech to the National Assembly.

## **FBI agents have boarded vessel managed by company whose other cargo ship collapsed Baltimore bridge**

By JONATHAN MATTISE and LEA SKENE Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Federal agents on Saturday boarded a vessel managed by the same company as a cargo ship that caused the deadly Baltimore bridge collapse, the FBI confirmed.

In statements, spokespeople for the FBI and the U.S. Attorney's Office in Maryland confirmed that authorities boarded the Maersk Saltoro. The ship is managed by Synergy Marine Group.

"The Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Criminal Investigation Division and Coast Guard Investigative Services are present aboard the Maersk Saltoro conducting court authorized law enforcement activity," statements from both the FBI and U.S. Attorney's Office said Saturday morning.

Authorities did not offer further specifics. The Washington Post first reported on federal authorities boarding the ship.

The raid came several months after investigators conducted a similar search of the Dali, the cargo ship that crashed into the bridge.

In a lawsuit filed Wednesday, the U.S. Justice Department alleged that Dali owner Grace Ocean Private Ltd. and manager Synergy Marine, both of Singapore, recklessly cut corners and ignored known electrical problems on the vessel, which lost power multiple times minutes before it crashed into a support column on the Francis Scott Key Bridge in March.

The Justice Department said mechanical and electrical systems on the massive ship had been "jury-rigged" and improperly maintained, culminating in the power outages and a cascade of other failures that left its pilots and crew helpless in the face of looming disaster. The ship was leaving Baltimore for Sri Lanka when its steering failed because of the power loss.

Six members of a road work crew were killed when the bridge crumbled into the water. The collapse also snarled commercial shipping traffic through the Port of Baltimore for months before the channel was fully reopened in June.

The Justice Department is seeking to recover more than \$100 million the government spent to clear the underwater debris and reopen the city's port.

The companies filed a court petition days after the collapse seeking to limit their legal liability in what could become the most expensive marine casualty case in history. Justice Department officials said there is no legal support for that bid to limit liability and pledged to vigorously contest it.

In its lawsuit, which also seeks punitive damages, the Justice Department argued that vessel owners and operators need to be "deterred from engaging in such reckless and exceedingly harmful behavior."

That includes Grace Ocean and Synergy themselves because the Dali has a "sister ship," authorities wrote in the claim.

The two companies "need to be deterred because they continue to operate their vessels, including a sister ship to the Dali, in U.S. waters and benefit economically from those activities," the lawsuit says.

Darrell Wilson, a Grace Ocean spokesperson, confirmed that the FBI and Coast Guard boarded the Maersk Saltoro in the Port of Baltimore on Saturday morning. Wilson has previously said the owner and manager "look forward to our day in court to set the record straight."

Like the Dali, the Singapore-flagged Saltoro was built by Hyundai in 2015.

According to the Justice Department lawsuit, major issues with the Dali's electrical system may have resulted from excessive vibrations on the ship that can loosen wires and damage connections. A prior

captain of the vessel had reported "heavy vibration" in his handover notes in May 2023, saying he had made similar reports to Synergy in the past, according to the complaint.

The lawsuit noted cracked equipment in the engine room and pieces of cargo shaken loose. The ship's electrical equipment was in such bad condition that an independent agency stopped further electrical testing because of safety concerns, according to the lawsuit.

The ship had also experienced power outages while it was still docked in Baltimore. Those blackouts are considered "reportable marine casualties" that must be reported to the U.S. Coast Guard, which authorities say never happened.

The Dali, which was stuck amid the wreckage of the collapse for months before it could be extricated and refloated, departed Norfolk, Virginia, on Thursday afternoon enroute to China on its first international voyage since the March 26 disaster.

Justice Department officials refused to answer questions Wednesday about whether a criminal investigation into the bridge collapse remains ongoing. FBI agents boarded the Dali in April.

## Vote count underway in Sri Lanka's presidential election after years of turmoil

By KRISHAN FRANCIS, SHEIKH SAALIQ and BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI Associated Press  
COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — Voting ended in Sri Lanka's presidential election Saturday as the country seeks to recover from the worst economic crisis in its history and the resulting political upheaval.

The election, contested by 38 candidates, was largely a three-way race among incumbent liberal President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Marxist-leaning lawmaker Anura Kumara Disanayake and opposition leader Sajith Premadasa.

There were no major incidents reported during the vote but authorities declared a nationwide curfew until Sunday morning as a precaution, police said.

There are 17 million eligible voters, and final results are expected Sunday.

They will show whether Sri Lankans approve of Wickremesinghe's leadership of a fragile recovery, including restructuring Sri Lanka's debt under an International Monetary Fund bailout program after it defaulted in 2022.

The government announced Thursday that it passed the final hurdle in debt restructuring by reaching an agreement in principle with private bond holders.

At the time of its default, Sri Lanka's local and foreign debt totaled \$83 billion. The government says it has now restructured more than \$17 billion.

Despite a significant improvement in key economic figures, Sri Lankans are struggling with high taxes and living costs.

Both Premadasa and Disanayake say they will renegotiate the IMF deal to make austerity measures more bearable. Wickremesinghe has warned that any move to alter the basics of the agreement could delay the release of a fourth tranche of nearly \$3 billion that is crucial to maintaining stability.

Voters hope for an end to instability

Most Sri Lankans voted with the economy in mind, hoping a new government will lead the way out of crisis and end entrenched corruption.

"I think corruption is one of the main reasons that led the country to the present pathetic condition. So, the next leader should pay attention to eliminate corruption and start building the country," said Chandrakumar Suriyaarachchi, a driver who voted in Saturday's election. "Our children deserve a better life."

Political experts say widespread disenchantment with the political old guard — widely blamed for Sri Lanka's economic instability — could mean no single candidate is able to secure 50% of votes as a first preference. In that scenario, the top two candidates move to a second round of counting that takes into account second-choice votes.

There are concerns that if a clear winner fails to emerge, the island nation could plunge into more instability.

Voter Visaka Dissanayake said he hopes Sri Lanka votes for a "strong leader, who will set the path for economic recovery."

"We have now come out of a very difficult situation. So, I hope the economic recovery will continue," Dissanayake said.

Rajapaksa political dynasty casts a long shadow

Sri Lanka's economic crisis resulted largely from excessive borrowing on projects that did not generate revenue. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the government's insistence on using scarce foreign reserves to prop up the currency, the rupee, contributed to the economy's free fall.

The economic collapse brought a severe shortage of essentials such as medicine, food, cooking gas and fuel, with people spending days waiting in line to obtain them. It led to rioting in which protesters took over key buildings including the president's house, his office and the prime minister's office, forcing then-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and resign.

Wickremesinghe was elected by a parliamentary vote in July 2022 to cover the remainder of Rajapaksa's five-year term. Now, Wickremesinghe is seeking another term to strengthen the gains.

However, many people accuse him of protecting members of the Rajapaksa family, whom they blame for the economic crisis.

Wickremesinghe, who was the only member of his party in Parliament, was elected mainly with the votes of Rajapaksa loyalists. They also supported him as members of his Cabinet and in voting for the reforms he proposed.

## Want to burn calories? Climbing stairs might be the most effective exercise for you

By STEPHEN WADE AP Sports Writer

TOKYO (AP) — If you're trying to lose weight and want a new way to do it, stair-climbing as a regular exercise — or just adding a few flights a day — might be for you.

It's accessible, and research shows it's more effective than walking on level ground.

"Overall, it is a fact that stair-climbing gets you fit faster and consumes more calories," said Lauri van Houten, vice president of the International Skyrunning Federation, which oversees a wide range of disciplines that involve vertical climbing.

This includes disciplines like mountain running above 2,000 meters (about 6,500 feet) or events like the Stairclimbing World Championships.

These competitions are for the very fit, but we're talking here about adding a few minutes of stair-climbing as a daily routine and raising awareness about its effectiveness for all ages.

"How many calories will I burn is the question everyone wants to know," van Houten said. "Here's the good news: The overall energy expenditure of the exercise depends on your weight. Therefore, the more you weigh, the more you burn."

Stair-climbing burns calories — fast

Research shows you burn about 20 times more calories going up stairs than walking on flat ground. Even going down stairs you burn roughly five times more, the muscles being worked to slow the body's descent.

That might be all you need to know if you are trying to lose weight.

Dr. Alberto Minetti, a physiologist and biomechanist at the University of Milan, has done extensive research of human locomotion — including stair-climbing.

"It is an exercise everybody can do," Minetti told The Associated Press. "You always have stairs nearby you — free of charge compared to a gym."

Minetti did the math to explain why going up stairs is so effective for burning calories in a short amount of time.

"To move 1 kilogram of body mass over 1 horizontal meter, you expend 0.5 calories," he said. "If you move 1 kilogram of body mass vertically on stairs it's 10 calories. So it's 20 times the calories moving vertically rather than horizontally."

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Trained as a physician, Minetti has spent his career in research rather than treating patients. He suggested “watching your speed” for the not-so-young and beginners. He does his own stair-climbing at his third-floor residence in Milan. He said he often takes a few deep breaths before ascending, which makes him feel fresher at the top.

In a scientific study, Minetti makes the point that using the arms in stair-climbing adds extra power. Handrails offer safety, too.

The journal notes that handrails are available in most stairwells in skyscrapers, which maximizes “the muscle mass involved and, consequently, the mechanical/metabolic power of the ascent” by getting the arms involved.

“They are relatively small muscles in the arms, but better than nothing,” Minetti said.

Stairs are everywhere

If stair-climbing was an Olympic sport, Suzy Walsham would own a handful of gold medals.

She’s won 10 races up New York’s Empire State Building — officially 1,576 stairs. She’s claimed titles in more than 100 international stair races, and was once regarded as the No. 1 woman in the discipline.

Five times, the Australian has won climbs up the Eiffel Tower.

This was all too easy, apparently.

When she was living in Singapore, Walsham climbed up her 29-story building — 37 consecutive times. It took over four hours, riding the elevator down each time after reaching the top with short breaks for coffee or water. She covered a vertical distance of 3,200 meters (10,500 feet).

But let’s get grounded. What are the advantages of stair-climbing as a regular exercise routine for the rest of us?

“You get a lot of bang for your buck,” Walsham told the AP. “Many people struggle to run as they age. The impact of running gets harder on the joints. But stair training is a great alternative.”

Stairs are everywhere — one flight, two flights at home, inside skyscrapers, in stadiums and arenas, at work, in shopping malls, in the subway.

One giant advantage of stair-climbing is it doesn’t take much time. It’s easy to build up, adding a few flights of stairs every day or week, and it improves balance.

On the down side, it’s not very scenic, particularly in the stairways of towering skyscrapers.

Stair-climbing can be worked into your daily routine

Yuri Yoshizumi won last year’s women’s division of the Stairclimbing World Championships in her native Osaka, Japan, a 285-meter (935 feet) climb — 1,610 stairs — that she finished in 10 minutes, 20.06 seconds.

“Stair-climbing is an easy sport for beginners and the general public to get into,” Yoshizumi told the AP in an email. “Elite athletes push themselves pretty hard, so it’s pretty tough. But it’s good for you to strengthen your muscles and your cardiovascular system in a short amount of time.”

She added another advantage, particularly living in a large metropolis like Osaka.

“It’s possible to do it in the city,” she said. “Just using the stairs instead of the escalators at (subway) stations and department stores is a good way to get some exercise.”

## For a week, New York will be center of money-focused fight to slow climate change

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The effort to save the pale blue dot called Earth is all about the green — that is, the money to finance a transition to renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

The annual Climate Week NYC and United Nations General Assembly combination is putting special emphasis on how to generate trillions of dollars to help poorer countries move away from gas, oil and coal that emit greenhouse gases and heat the planet. They also need financial aid to deal with the damage the warming is already causing.

There’s also a special U.N. summit of the future, which connects climate change and biodiversity to other pressing issues like war, and another U.N. special session on the threat of rising seas. And the presidents

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of climate negotiations in 2023, 2024 and 2025 are seeking to push nations into a new round of dramatic pollution cuts with their own efforts.

This week starts a two-month sprint in which three different cities on three different continents host high-level meetings that may be humanity's "last chance" to avoid exceeding globally agreed upon warming limits, according to one expert. After Climate Week in New York, Azerbaijan's capital of Baku hosts the U.N.'s 29th climate negotiation conference. Then, leaders of the 20 biggest countries head to Rio de Janeiro. And early next year, all the world's countries must submit new national targets to cut emissions of heat-trapping gases.

"A lot of the failure or success of (the landmark 2015 Paris climate agreement) is going to be determined in the next, eight or nine months as countries put forward their next round of" proposed emission reduction goals, said longtime climate negotiations analyst Alden Meyer of the European think tank E3G. "If these don't step up and meet the mark, it's really our last chance."

Yalchin Rafiyev, lead negotiator for the presidency of November's U.N. climate conference in Baku, said the week in New York is "a very important milestone event for us."

Not only will climate negotiators be in New York, but so will their bosses, their heads of states, Rafiyev told The Associated Press. So when often informal talks hit a snag or new ideas come up, especially on the sticky issue of finances, negotiators can quickly check with their leaders, which may help move things, he said.

Underscoring everything is the money to fix the problems.

"It's definitely about the greens," said World Resources Institute President Ani Dasgupta. "It is about greening the world and not getting the green to green the world."

And where better to talk about it than in New York City, the capital of capital, Dasgupta said.

Developing countries — where more than 80% of the world population lives — say that they need financial help to curb their increasing use of fossil fuels. Otherwise they can't afford to.

Poorer nations point to historical emissions — carbon dioxide stays in the air for hundreds of years — that came mostly from the industrialized world. Those wealthier countries now can more easily afford to switch to renewable energy such as solar and wind. As they do, close to two-thirds of current carbon dioxide emissions come from nations not considered industrialized.

This is the week that "the cries of the global majority will make it very loud and clear" that this climate financial help for poor nations is crucial, said PowerShift Africa's Mohamed Adow, a longtime climate analyst. They will do so on the floor of the U.N., at outside events during Climate Week and in one-on-one meetings between national leaders in town for the annual General Assembly, he said.

In 2009, rich nations set a goal of \$100 billion a year in government climate financial help to poor nations, but they didn't reach that mark until 2022, years late. The priority for the meeting in Azerbaijan is to come up with a new goal for money help. And rich and poor nations aren't close on how much it should be, who should pay and what type of financing should be included.

"Rich countries have failed in many of their previous promises and have kept putting it off, putting it off, pointing towards the new long-term finance goals, but they can't kick the can any further," Adow said.

Dasgupta called it a chicken-and-egg problem, with rich countries telling poor to go green before we talk about money, and poor nations saying we need money first.

Much more than 10 years ago when the Paris climate agreement was struck, people now realize climate finance is crucial to cutting emissions, Dasgupta said.

The success of 2025's climate negotiations, when the world will attempt to ratchet up its efforts to reduce carbon pollution in a major way, depends on what happens about finance in Baku this fall, said World Wildlife Fund's Fernanda Carvalho.

But the problem is the price tag. Most experts say that \$100 billion a year was far too low. Earlier this year, U.N. climate chief Simon Stiell said the annual financial need is \$2.4 trillion. Adow said the number should be determined not by politicians negotiating but what the countries need to get the job done.

"People argue 'Oh my God, we don't have \$2 trillion,'" Dasgupta said. But that's less than 2% of the



globe's GDP, he added. The world spends more on fossil fuel subsidies, Adow said.

Much of Climate Week involves companies and financial networks talking about their green credentials. Dasgupta said they need to step up, because the world's nations can't do more than \$1 trillion in direct funding.

"We need to get finance ministers talking to us and the masters of the universe, people who run New York City, the people who run private capital talking together to make this happen," Dasgupta said. "It is not just an environmental problem. It is how do we get the finance right for the transition. And it is lots of work to be done."

## **The US is more hands-off than usual in the Middle East. It fears making things worse**

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is taking a more hands-off approach than usual during a week of dramatic escalation between Israel and Hezbollah militants in Lebanon, with top U.S. officials holding back from full-on crisis diplomacy for fear of making matters worse.

The public restraint follows explosions of the militant group's pagers and walkie-talkies and an Israeli airstrike targeting a senior Hezbollah operative in Beirut, which threaten to spur all-out war between Israel and its enemies in the Middle East and doom already faltering negotiations for a cease-fire in the Hamas conflict in Gaza.

The escalation came even as two Biden administration officials stopped in the region this week to appeal for calm. It heightens the impression that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-right government is paying ever less attention to the mediation efforts of its key ally, despite depending on the U.S. for weapons and military support.

"The United States looks like a deer in the headlights right now," said Brian Katulis, a senior fellow for U.S. foreign policy at the Middle East Institute think tank in Washington. "In terms of words, deeds and action ... it's not driving events, it's reacting to events."

There has been no publicly acknowledged U.S. contact with Netanyahu since senior White House official Amos Hochstein visited Israel on Monday to warn against escalation. The first wave of device explosions — widely blamed on Israel, which didn't acknowledge responsibility — struck the next day.

And Gaza cease-fire negotiations were at such a delicate point that Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited only Egypt in a trip to the region this week because traveling to Israel in support of a deal might cause Netanyahu to say something that undermines the U.S.-led mediation, U.S. officials said.

Asked if the U.S. still had hope for a deal in Gaza — which the administration calls crucial to calming regional conflict — President Joe Biden said Friday that he did and his team is pressing for it.

"If I ever said it wasn't realistic, we might as well leave," Biden told reporters. "A lot of things don't look realistic until we get them done. We have to keep at it."

In the meantime, the White House and State Department have declined to comment publicly on the Hezbollah devices exploding Tuesday and Wednesday, killing at least 37 people and injuring thousands more, including civilians, in what analysts believe was a highly sophisticated Israeli intelligence operation.

Nor would they offer any assessment of an airstrike Friday in a densely populated part of Beirut — the deadliest such strike on Lebanon's capital in years — which killed a Hezbollah commander. The Israeli military said 15 other operatives also were killed. Lebanon's health ministry said Saturday the strike killed at least 31 people, including seven women and three children.

Netanyahu and Hamas have followed past rounds of direct U.S. diplomatic outreach with fiery rhetoric or surprise attacks that the U.S. sees as setting back the effort for a truce.

Blinken appeared to loop in the pager explosions as the latest example of that.

When mediators seem to make progress in a Gaza deal, often there's an "incident, something that makes the process more difficult, that threatens to slow it, stop it, derail it," Blinken said in Egypt, in response to reporters' questions about the pager attacks.

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There may yet be high-level contact with Netanyahu when he travels to New York for next week's U.N. General Assembly gathering of world leaders, said U.S. officials with knowledge of the discussions who spoke anonymously to discuss the administration's strategy. But the officials also acknowledge that the situation has become so precarious that taking a public stance either firmly in support or critical of Israel would probably do more harm than good.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Matthew Miller batted away a question about whether months of Biden administration visits to the Middle East without a cease-fire deal to show for them was making Blinken and other officials look like "furniture" in regional capitals.

"So far, we have been successful of keeping it from turning into an all-out regional war," Miller said. He credited U.S. messaging — sometimes through intermediaries, to Iran, its militia allies in the region and to Israel.

The Biden administration pointed out that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has been in contact this week with his Israeli counterpart, Yoav Gallant. Gallant's job, however, is said to be in jeopardy.

Critics accuse the administration of pushing a deal on Gaza that's repeatedly failed to win buy-in from the warring sides and has been outpaced by the growth of the conflict. The administration could do more diplomatically, including by working harder to rally Middle Eastern countries to intensify pressure on Israel, Iran and the latter's proxies to stop fighting, said Katulis, the Middle East Institute analyst.

U.S. officials rejected assertions that they have given up on either a Gaza cease-fire or preventing the conflict from spreading to all-out war in Lebanon.

"We'd be the first ones to recognize ... that we are not closer to achieving that than we were even a week or so ago," national security spokesman John Kirby said Friday.

"But ain't nobody giving up," Kirby said, reiterating that the U.S. was working with fellow mediators Qatar and Egypt to put together a final Gaza proposal to present to Israel and Hamas. "We're still going to keep the shoulder to the wheel. We're still going to keep trying on this."

## The Midwest could offer fall's most electric foliage but leaf peepers elsewhere won't miss out

By PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Fall is back, and bringing with it jack-o'-lanterns, football, pumpkin spice everything and — in some parts of the country — especially vibrant foliage.

Leaves around the northern U.S. are starting to turn orange, yellow and red, inspiring legions of leaf lovers to hop in their cars and travel to the countryside for the best look at fall's fireworks. Leaf peeping — the act of traveling to witness nature's annual kaleidoscope — contributes billions of dollars to the economy, especially in New England and New York.

But this year, some of the most colorful displays could be in the Midwest. AccuWeather, the commercial forecasting service, said in early September that it expects especially vibrant foliage in states such as Michigan and Illinois.

The service also said powerful, popping colors are expected in upstate New York and parts of Pennsylvania, while New England will follow a more typical color pattern. But that doesn't mean New England travelers will miss out.

Maine, the most forested state in the country, had "an abundance of daily sunshine with just the right amount of rainfall to set the stage for a breathtaking foliage season," said Gale Ross, the state's fall foliage spokesperson. Color change and timing depend on the weather in the fall, but cooler nighttime temperatures and shorter days should enhance the colors, Ross said.

"The growing season of 2024 has been excellent for trees, supporting tree health and resilience that should lead to brilliant fall colors throughout Maine," said Aaron Bergdahl, the state's forest pathologist.

Fall colors peak at different times around the U.S., with the foliage season sometimes starting not long after Labor Day in the far northern reaches of the country and extending into November further to the south. In Maine alone, peak foliage can arrive in the northern part of the state in late September and not

arrive in coastal areas until close to Halloween.

Leaf turn happens when summer yields to fall and temperatures drop and the amount of sunlight decreases. Chlorophyll in leaves then breaks down, and that allows their fall colors to shine through before leaf drop.

However, weather conditions associated with climate change have disrupted some recent leaf peeping seasons. A warming planet has brought drought that causes leaves to turn brown and wither before reaching peak colors.

Other enemies of leaf peeping include heat waves that cause leaves to fall before autumn arrives and extreme weather events like hurricanes that strip trees of their leaves. A summer heatwave in the Pacific Northwest in 2021 caused a condition called "foliage scorch" that prematurely browned leaves.

This year in Maine, leaf turn was still very sparse in most of the state as late September approached, but the state office of tourism was already gearing up for an influx of tourists. Northern Maine was already experiencing moderate color change. And neighboring New Hampshire was expecting about 3.7 million visitors — more than twice the state's population.

"It's no surprise people travel from all over the world to catch the incredible color," said NH Travel and Tourism Director Lori Harnois.

## **Euphoric two years ago, US anti-abortion movement is now divided and worried as election nears**

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

Just two years ago, leading anti-abortion activists were euphoric as the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, thus ending the nationwide right to abortion.

Now, with a presidential election fast approaching, their movement is disunited and worried. Within their own ranks, there is second-guessing and finger-pointing, plus trepidation that Election Day might provide new proof that their cause is broadly unpopular.

Michael New, an abortion opponent who teaches social research at The Catholic University of America, offered an overview of how the movement had fared since the Roe ruling in June 2022.

"Things have not necessarily unfolded as we would hope," he wrote in an email to The Associated Press. "There is certainly a sense among pro-life leaders that we should have had a stronger post-Roe game plan in place."

"I always remind fellow pro-lifers that we were never promised a smooth glide path to victory," he added. "There will certainly be setbacks and disappointments along the way."

A key reason for the wariness is the anti-abortion movement's recent losing streak on abortion-related ballot measures in seven states, including conservative Kansas and Kentucky. Nine more states will consider constitutional amendments enshrining abortion rights in the Nov. 5 election — Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada and South Dakota. In several of them, abortion opponents tried various unsuccessful strategies for blocking the measures.

"Pro-life people don't wear rose-colored glasses; we know we have a huge task ahead of us," Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life, told the AP. "Because of the massive amounts of money being dumped into the ballot measures from those allied with the abortion industry and the Democratic Party, it's an uphill battle."

"We will continue to educate, to make people aware of the catastrophic result if these measures pass," she added. "I have not seen flagging energy or any loss of determination among pro-life people."

Texas is among the Republican-governed states that have enacted near-total abortion bans. Yet nationally, Texas Right to Life president John Seago said, the anti-abortion movement "is in a critical chapter right now."

"Following a historic legal victory, we have realized that while we had enjoyed massive legislative and legal victories in the last decade, public opinion had not followed the same trajectory," he added.

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Troy Newman, who heads the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue, recently published an online opinion piece assailing the movement he's been a part of for 25 years.

"The tide has turned, and the pro-life message is now considered a political liability that could prevent President Trump's victorious return to the White House," Newman wrote.

"After evaluating the terrible mistakes of the pro-life movement over the last several years, I can only conclude that it is our fault," Newman wrote. "We have had over 50 years to change the culture's position on abortion only to have failed miserably."

In an interview with the AP, Newman blamed those in his own ranks for the predicament — saying some anti-abortion leaders should have been more adamant in their positions. "We lose the minute we stop focusing on the babies," he said.

Kristan Hawkins, leader of Students for Life of America, suggested via email that Newman's views were ill-suited to the post-Roe era. She said the students in her organization were embracing the challenges of a state-by-state playing field.

But she acknowledged the magnitude of the challenges.

"I actually believe the biggest threat is ourselves — our mindsets — which will lead to decreased recruitment, training, and mobilization of our grassroots army of love," she wrote recently in the conservative outlet Townhall.

"Look at the struggles we face this fall with several late-term abortion ballot referendums," she added. "Most will likely be a political loss for our movement because, in most states, a politically sophisticated, organized, and well-funded state-wide movement is not present."

Hawkins also acknowledged the anger among some anti-abortion activists over the inconsistent rhetoric on abortion coming from the Republican presidential ticket of former President Donald Trump and his running mate, Ohio Sen. JD Vance.

"I'm not here to make apologies for the Campaign and their political miscalculations, which are dividing us and could very well lead to their defeat," wrote Hawkins.

Trump nominated the Supreme Court members who were crucial to overturning Roe and called it "a beautiful thing to watch" as various states took different directions. He has been evasive on whether he would veto a federal abortion ban if Congress approved one; his "leave it to the states" approach conveys acceptance of the current patchwork map in which abortion is widely available in at least half the states.

Eligible to vote in Florida, Trump has criticized as too restrictive a new state law banning abortion after the first six weeks of pregnancy. But he said he would vote against the ballot measure that would make abortion legal until fetal viability.

Trump's support for a state-by-state solution was a factor in the decision of Charles Camosy, an anti-abortion Catholic academic, to declare he now feels politically estranged.

"The Republican Party has rejected our point of view. Democrats are running a candidate ( Kamala Harris ) who has made abortion rights a centerpiece of her campaign," Camosy, a medical humanities professor at Creighton University School of Medicine, wrote recently in The Atlantic.

"Pro-lifers — those who believe that protecting vulnerable and unborn life should be a primary policy priority — now do not fit in either major political party."

In an interview, Camosy said abortion-rights supporters were better prepared for the post-Roe era than their adversaries

"They were well-funded, they developed key relationships with the media," Camosy said, while some Republican-controlled legislatures — in his view — went too far with stringent abortion bans.

"I see this moment as an opportunity," Camosy wrote in The Atlantic. "Pro-life 3.0 must welcome people from multiple political and policy perspectives, working for both prenatal justice and social support for women and families."

Some other anti-abortion activists have forcefully renounced Trump, including leaders of End Abortion Ohio.

"We call on God-fearing American voters to withhold their votes from Trump until he evidences genuine

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repentance for his pro-abortion stance," said the group's executive director, Nicholas Kallis.

However, Ohio Right to Life president Mike Gonidakis is encouraging support for Trump.

"A vast majority of our statewide membership absolutely support President Trump and believe he would advance the protection of life at the federal level ... more than a Kamala administration would," he said. "It is not even close."

Other anti-abortion leaders have made similar calculations.

One example: Back in April, Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America, said she was "deeply disappointed" in Trump's willingness to leave abortion policy to the states.

These days, in a move potentially benefiting Trump, the group plans a \$92 million voter outreach program in battleground states depicting Harris and other Democratic candidates as "extremists" on abortion.

"It is imperative that the pro-life movement fully unify and mobilize to defeat this threat," Dannenfelser said.

Among those embracing Trump is Frank Pavone, who continues to lead Priests for Life despite being defrocked in 2022 after feuding with his bishop over his anti-abortion and partisan political activities.

"Trump has brought in far more people than he has alienated," Pavone said via email. "His statements have blunted the effectiveness of the dire, scare-mongering Democrat warnings that the Republicans will ban all abortions."

## Today in History: September 22, Lincoln issues preliminary Emancipation Proclamation

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Sunday, Sept. 22, the 266th day of 2024. There are 100 days left in the year. Autumn begins at 8:43 a.m. EDT.

Today in history:

On Sept. 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all enslaved people in Confederate states should be freed as of Jan. 1, 1863, if the states did not end the fighting and rejoin the Union.

Also on this date:

In 1776, during the Revolutionary War, Capt. Nathan Hale, 21, was hanged as a spy by the British in New York.

In 1957, Haitian women were allowed to vote for the first time, 153 years after Haiti became an independent country; François Duvalier was elected president.

In 1975, Sara Jane Moore fired two shots in an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate President Gerald R. Ford outside a San Francisco hotel, missing Ford by inches.

In 1980, the Persian Gulf conflict between Iran and Iraq erupted into a full-scale war that would continue for nearly eight years.

In 1985, rock and country music artists participated in "Farm Aid," a concert staged in Champaign, Illinois, to help the nation's farmers.

In 1993, 47 people were killed when an Amtrak passenger train fell off a bridge and crashed into Big Bayou Canot near Mobile, Alabama.

In 2014, the United States and five Arab nations launched airstrikes against the Islamic State group in Syria, sending waves of planes and Tomahawk cruise missiles against an array of targets.

In 2017, as the scale of the damage from Hurricane Maria started to become clearer, Puerto Rican officials said they could not contact more than half of the communities in the U.S. territory, where all power had been knocked out to the island's 3.4 million people.

Today's Birthdays: Singer-choreographer-actor Toni Basil is 81. Musician King Sunny Adé (ah-DAY') is 78. Football Hall of Famer Harold Carmichael is 75. Rock singer David Coverdale (Deep Purple, Whitesnake) is 73. Actor Shari Belafonte is 70. Singer Debby Boone is 68. Country singer June Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 68. Singer Nick Cave is 67. Singer Andrea Bocelli (an-DRAY'-ah boh-CHEL'-ee) is 66. Singer-

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musician Joan Jett is 66. Actor Scott Baio is 64. Actor Bonnie Hunt is 63. Actor Mireille Enos is 49. Soccer player Thiago Silva is 40. Actor Tatiana Maslany is 39. Actor Tom Felton is 37. Actor Teyonah Parris is 37. Olympic gold medal skateboarder Coco Yoshizawa is 15.