

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 1 of 79

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [4- Netters hand Great Plains Lutheran third loss](#)
- [6- Summer recreation topic at City Council meeting; gate approved](#)
- [8- Roncalli Marching Band Festival Information](#)
- [11- Groton Cross Country Pictures](#)
- [14- JV Football Stats vs. Clark/Willow Lake](#)
- [16- 59th Annual Buffalo Roundup Sets New Record in Attendance](#)
- [16- Buffer Strip Property Tax Incentive Deadline is Approaching](#)
- [17- Northern State University Rises in 2025 U.S. News Best Colleges Rankings](#)
- [17- SDDOT Reminds of October 1 Deadline for Hay Removal from Highway Ditches](#)
- [18- SD SearchLight: State defends decision to double-charge cannabis company](#)
- [20- SD SearchLight: South Dakota teachers' real wages have fallen recently, report says](#)
- [21- SD SearchLight: Housing: Where do Trump and Harris stand?](#)
- [24- SD SearchLight: North Carolina candidate's inclusion in Sioux Falls event divides SD Republican Party](#)
- [26- SD SearchLight: Tim Walz and J.D. Vance tangle in wonky, largely cordial vice presidential debate](#)
- [32- Weather Pages](#)
- [37- Daily Devotional](#)
- [38- Subscription Form](#)
- [39- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [40- Upcoming Groton Events](#)
- [41- News from the Associated Press](#)

Wednesday, Oct. 2

Senior Menu: Autumn soup, peas, chicken salad croissant, cinnamon apple sauce.
School Breakfast: Oatmeal.
School Lunch: Quesadillas, corn.
Picture Day
Groton Chamber meeting, noon, City Hall
Community Coffee Hour at United Methodist Church, 9:30 a.m.
Groton C&MA: Kids' Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study at 7 pm.

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



St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.; Sarah Circle, 5 p.m. (elect officers), League, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 3

Senior Menu: Macaroni and cheese with Kielbasa, Normandy blend, fruit, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Biscuits.
School Lunch: Taco burgers, tri tators.
Parent/Teacher Conferences (1:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.)
Cross Country at Sisseton Golf Course, 4 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m. (elect officers)

Friday, Oct. 4

Senior Menu: Beef stew, carrots, Waldorf salad, sherbet, buttermilk biscuit.
No School - Faculty Inservice
Football hosts Aberdeen Roncalli, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 5

Boys Soccer at Dakota Valley.
Girls Soccer at Garrison, 11 a.m.
Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 209 N Main
Pumpkin Fest, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Gypsy Day Parade in Aberdeen

© 2024 Groton Daily Independent

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 2 of 79

1440

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

Vice Presidential Face-Off

Sen. JD Vance (R) and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz (D) faced off last night for the first and only planned vice presidential debate of the 2024 election season.

The debate—moderated by CBS' Norah O'Donnell and Margaret Brennan—featured exchanges on issues including immigration, abortion, childcare, gun violence, and the economy. Vance and Walz took the opportunity to reintroduce themselves to the American public, and—in what analysts largely described as a civil and substantive debate—regularly highlighted areas of agreement, directing attack lines toward opponents at the top of the ticket.

Vance criticized the Biden-Harris administration on migrant border crossings and the cost of living. Walz pointed to the events of January 6th, challenging Vance to say who won the 2020 election.

With Election Day five weeks away, Vice President Kamala Harris is ahead of former President Donald Trump by roughly two percentage points.

Iran Fires into Israel

Iran launched around 180 ballistic missiles into Israel yesterday, killing one West Bank Palestinian and wounding two Israelis, in what Iran called retaliation for assassinations of leaders of allied proxy groups Hezbollah and Hamas. Israel's defense system, supported by the US Navy, intercepted most missiles.

The attack came a day after Israel launched a ground invasion into Lebanon, where Hezbollah is based, and nearly one year after Hamas—and subsequently Hezbollah—attacked Israel, prompting an ongoing war in Gaza. Israel warned residents of dozens of southern Lebanese towns yesterday to evacuate north as it continued to launch missiles into the country. Israeli-attributed device sabotage and artillery attacks in Lebanon have killed over 1,000 people in recent weeks, with millions displaced.

Israeli and US leaders vowed to retaliate against Iran for the barrage, which featured high-elevation ballistic missiles rather than the drones and cruise missiles deployed in a similar attack in April.

Ghost Ship Recovered

The wreck of the "Ghost Ship of the Pacific," or the USS Stewart (DD-224), has been found off the California coast, ending an 82-year mystery. The 314-foot-long vessel was found nearly 3,500 feet beneath the ocean's surface.

The Clemson-class destroyer was the only US Navy destroyer captured by Japanese forces during World War II. After the US scuttled and abandoned it near Java, Indonesia, in 1942, Japanese forces salvaged it and used it to escort naval convoys. After the war, the US Navy recommissioned the ship and ultimately sank it during target practice in 1946.

The wreck, sitting upright and intact, was located using advanced robotic sonar technology and underwater drones. The torpedo-shaped drones were able to survey 50 square miles of ocean floor in one day. Only about 26% of the ocean floor has been mapped in high definition, with goals to map the entire ocean floor by 2030.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 3 of 79

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Sean "Diddy" Combs to face 120 new allegations of sexual assault spanning over 20 years.
Lauryn Hill faces lawsuit from Fugees bandmate Pras Michél for fraud and breach of contract related to tour cancellations.

Twenty-five finalists for the 2024 National Book Awards announced; winners in each of the five categories to be announced Nov. 20.

CNN launches digital paywall, charging \$3.99 per month for unlimited access to web articles.

Frank Fritz, "American Pickers" star, dies at age 60 after suffering stroke in 2022.

John Amos, Emmy-nominated actor known for roles in "Roots" and "Good Times," dies at age 84.

Science & Technology

Breast cancer rates in women increased 1% annually over the past decade, with the steepest increase in women under 50; overall deaths have decreased by 44% since 1989.

MIT spinoff Liquid AI debuts "Liquid Foundation Models," a type of AI platform with a different computing architecture than existing industry leaders like OpenAI and Anthropic.

James Webb Space Telescope detects carbon dioxide on Pluto's largest moon; findings confirm theory Charon was formed from same proto-planetary disk as Pluto.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close lower (S&P 500 -0.9%, Dow -0.4%, Nasdaq -1.5%) as price of US crude oil rises over 2% on Middle East tensions.

US job openings rose to three-month high of 8 million in August, per Labor Department report.

Frito-Lay owner PepsiCo to buy tortilla-chip maker Siete Foods for \$1.2B—its first food acquisition in five years; deal expected to close in first half of 2025.

CVS Health to lay off 2,900 workers amid reports of healthcare giant potentially separating its retail pharmacy chain and Aetna health insurance business.

Politics & World Affairs

Rescue crews continue searching for survivors for fifth day as confirmed death toll from Hurricane Helene rises to at least 150 people across six states.

Helene, other storms dump over 40 trillion gallons of rain on Southeast US in five days—enough to fill 60 million Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Shelter-in-place ordered for residents east of Atlanta as massive smoke plume lingers from Sunday factory fire at chlorine plant in Conyers, about 25 miles southeast of downtown Atlanta.

Claudia Sheinbaum, Mexico's first female president and Jewish president, sworn into office.

Shigeru Ishiba confirmed as Japan's new prime minister; Ishiba unveils his cabinet, calls for snap election.

Netters hand Great Plains Lutheran third loss

Groton Area's netters netted a 50 point win over the 14-2 Great Plains Lutheran Panthers in volleyball action played Tuesday in Watertown.

The first set was tied at the first five points. Then leading, 8-7, Groton Area scored five straight points to get the upper hand. Groton Area had a 10-point lead at 22-12, but the Panthers came back to within five, 22-17 and 23-18, but the Tigers went on for the 25-18 win. Jaedyn Penning had seven kills and two ace serves in the first set while Chesney Weber had two kills and three assisted blocks, Rylee Dunker had four assisted blocks and two kills, Taryn Traphagen had three kills and one assisted block and Laila Roberts had one ace serve and one kill.

Groton Area jumped out to a 3-0 lead in the second set and never trailed. Groton Area held a 23-15 lead and the Panthers closed to within four, 23-19, before Groton Area called time out. Groton Area scored the last two points and went on for the 25-19 win. In that set, Rylee Dunker had five kills, Taryn Traphagen had two kills and a block, Faith Traphagen had two kills,



Rylee Dunker
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Elizabeth Flihs
(Photo by Paul Kosel)

Jaedyn Penning and Chesney Weber each had one kill and Laila Roberts and Elizabeth Flihs each had an ace serve.

The Panthers scored first in the third set, but Groton Area jumped ahead, 7-4. Great Plains Lutheran tied the set at seven, but Groton Area took command and held a 15-10 lead when the Panthers called time out. Great Plains Lutheran closed to within two, 21-19, at the end of the set, but the Tigers went on for the 25-20 win. Chesney Weber led the Tigers in the third set with five kills and two ace serves while Rylee Dunker and Taryn Traphagen each had three kills, Elizabeth Flihs and Laila Roberts each had one kill and Jaedyn Penning had one kill and one ace serve.

For the match, Rylee Dunker was 22 of 26 in attacks with 11 kills and she had three assisted blocks; Taryn Traphagen was 12 of 13 in attacks with eight kills and had two assisted blocks; Jaedyn Penning was 26 of 31 in attacks with eight kills, plus she had three ace serves

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 5 of 79

and 15 digs; Chesney Weber had eight kills, two ace serves, four assisted blocks, 17 assists and 14 digs; Faith Traphagen had four kills, Laila Roberts had two kills, two ace serves and 17 digs; Elizabeth Flihs had one kill, one ace serve and 18 assists.

Kate Holmen led the Panthers with seven kills while Abby Kjenstad had six kills and one block, Kaylee Carlson had four kills and one block, Jolie Lien had three ace serves, Madeline Prahl had one block and one kill, Addison Walkins had one kill, and Esta Cameron, who was injured in the first set with a knee injury, had two kills in the first set.



Jaedyn Penning
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Chesney Weber
(Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Area, now 11-5, will travel to Mobridge on Monday. Great Plains Lutheran is now 14-3 on the season.

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

Groton Area won the junior varsity match, 2-1. The Panthers won the first set, 25-15. In the second set, the Tigers scored seven straight points under the serving of Talli Wright and went on for the 25-15 win. In the third set, the Tigers scored 10 points under the serving of Liby Althoff and went on for the 15-8 win.

Emerlee Jones had eight kills; Makenna Krause had six kills and one ace serve; Liby Althoff had five ace serves, four kills and one block; McKenna Tietz had five kills and one ace serve; Kella Tracy had two kills; Talli Wright had one kill and Ryelle Gilbert had one ace serve.

Katelin Richter led the Panthers with three kills.

The junior varsity match on GDILIVE.COM was sponsored by Adam and Nicole Wright.

Groton Area won the C match, 25-23 and 25-16.

- Paul Kosel

Summer recreation topic at City Council meeting; gate approved by Elizabeth Varin

The Groton swimming pool earned less revenue in 2024 and had higher operating expenses, according to a report at Tuesday's City Council meeting.

Despite the financial changes, pool co-managers Kami Lipp and Tricia Keith also highlighted the pool's critical role in the community, with more than 225 swimming lessons, hundreds of pool passes and 14 private parties. There were even two life-saving incidents reported, both involving the actions of one of the swimming pool lifeguards.

Kami Lipp went through numbers from this past summer.

- 179 regular swimming lessons
- 48 private swim lessons
- 110 family passes
- 51 youth passes
- Four lap passes
- 26 aerobic passes
- Six combined lap and aerobic passes
- Seven senior passes
- One vacation pass
- Five adult passes

Lipp and Keith discussed items needed for 2025, including some peeling on the slide, maintenance needed on the pool floor, a new umbrella and new speakers.

"Overall it was a great season," Keith said, adding there were some concerns from the lifeguards.

One concern was toilet paper holders causing issues. "The second one is they just feel like they should have more pay for the certifications that they have," Keith said.

The managers mentioned polling area swimming pools about their pay rates and raises, and plan to bring that information back to the council before it approves the 2025 budget.

Concession improvements, new uniforms discussed

In other summer recreation news, the council reviewed an update about baseball and softball.

Groton Baseball/Softball Foundation members Jarod Flihs and Jessica Kroll discussed an updated timeline on replacing the concession stand at the city's baseball and softball complex.

Basically, every room in the current building is too small, Flihs said. The design for the new building would be 40 percent bigger.

Cost estimates from April 2023 amounted to \$202,000 for the building, he said. That cost will probably total about \$250,000 when the foundation hopes to begin construction in August 2025.

The foundation is willing to commit \$150,000 for the project, about 60 percent of the total cost, Flihs said. The city has put in \$35,000 this year, and has discussed another \$35,000 next year. The foundation is hoping for another \$30,000 commitment for 2026.

The city would need to decide, though, what to do with the current structure, he added.

Mayor Scott Hanlon said the city will need to go out to bid sooner, rather than later.

"If we're going to do this, we better get some bids out because things like this don't just happen," he said.

The foundation has put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into the complex and the proposed concession stand, said Councilman Jason Wambach.

"I think we should all be pretty grateful for what you do out there for the kids," he told the foundation representatives. "...It's just awesome to see people give back to the community and not get anything back."

Baseball and softball games and tournaments really benefit the community as a whole, said foundation member Jessica Kroll. Many people come to town for those events and visit local businesses.

"We're proud of our field," she said. "And this is the last piece."

The council also reviewed a few other requests for recreation baseball and softball, including possibly

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 7 of 79

purchasing a used small bus, low fees and new uniforms for U12 and possibly U10 teams.

- The council approved a \$7,000 bid for four swinging gates by the soccer field. Two gates will be at the corner of North Lincoln Street and West Third Avenue, and two other gates will be at the corner of Garfield Street and West Third Avenue. The gates will be used to close off a portion of West Third Avenue during soccer games.

- The council approved renewing seven liquor and wine licenses for 2025. The Jungle license is for package off-sale liquor and retail on-sale liquor. The American Legion Post #39 license is for package off-sale liquor and retail on-sale liquor. The Ken's Food Fair license is for package off-sale liquor. The Red Horse Inn license is for retail on-sale liquor. The Olive Grove Golf Course license is for retail on-sale liquor. The Dollar General license is for retail on-off sale wine and cider. The MJ's Sinclair license is for package off-sale liquor.

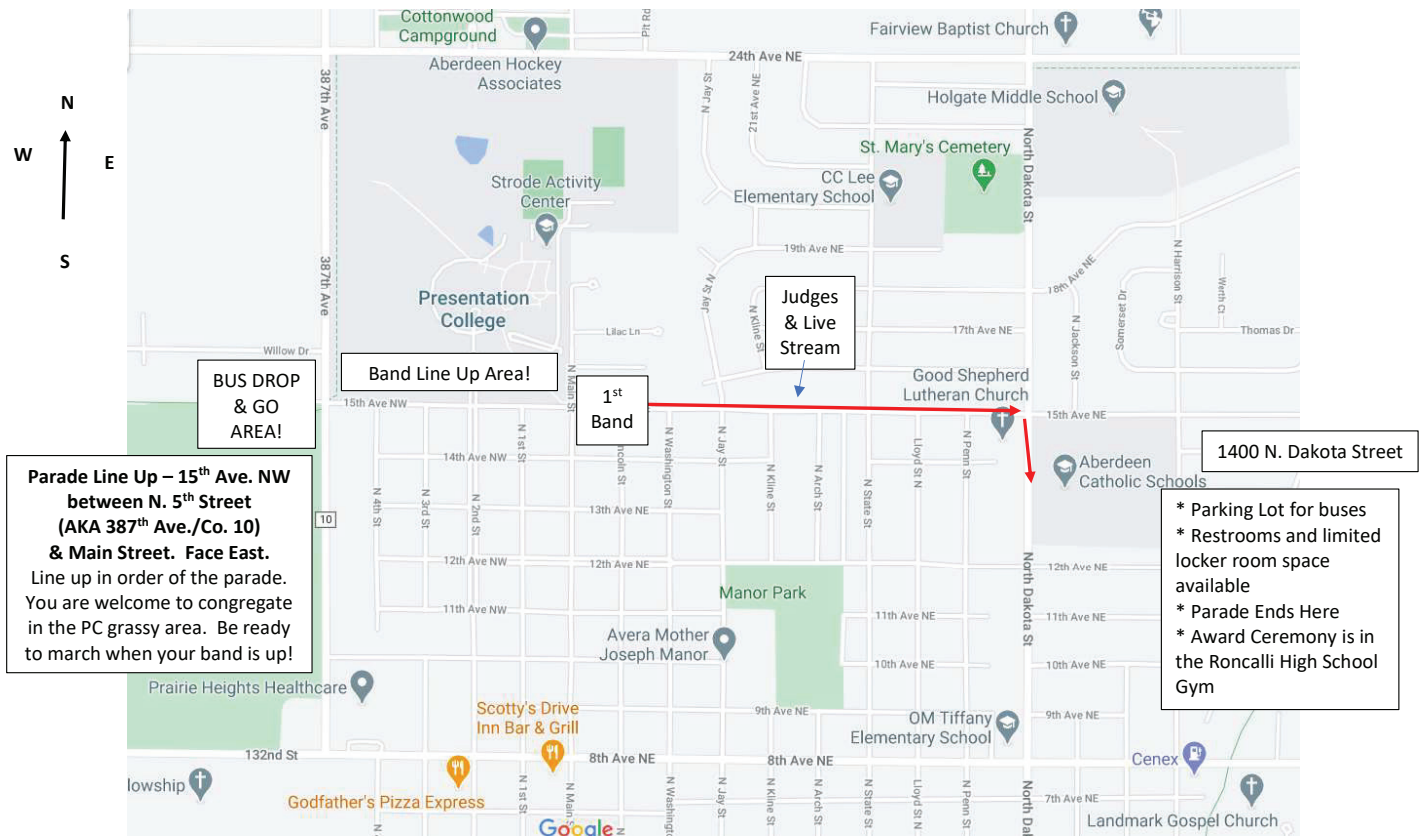
Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 8 of 79

2024 RONCALLI MARCHING BAND FESTIVAL

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2024 – 9:30AM EVENT

**** PARADE ROUTE (in red) ** BAND LINE UP INFO IN THE BOX!!**



Dear Band Director,

We are excited that you are joining us at the 6th Annual Roncalli Marching Band Festival. This street-only marching event is on Wednesday, October 2, 2024, beginning at 9:30AM. If you have not already sent your \$40 registration fee, please bring the fee with you to the event or mail it to Aberdeen Roncalli, Attn. Derek Larson, 1400 N. Dakota St., Aberdeen, SD 57401.

The parade route will start on 15th Ave. NE at Main Street. This is on the southeast side of the former Presentation College's campus. A parade map as well as a map for bus drivers are in this information packet.

Details for the 2024 Roncalli Marching Band Festival:

- Parade line up will be at 9:15AM. Prior to that time, you may bring your band to Roncalli High School, 1400 N. Dakota Street. Because there is limited restroom and locker room space available, please arrive in partial uniform, allowing most students to finish changing on/near the bus. If you have a time restraint, you may simply head to the parade line up area.

- If you enter Roncalli High School, use the gym doors (the double doors on the front, left side of the building). There is an EXIT ONLY sign above them, but these doors will be unlocked. The restrooms are through the doors and to your left. Please limit the time in the restrooms. To access the visitor locker rooms, continue down the hallway past the gym and take a left at the double doors. The boys' locker room is first on the right side; the girls' locker room is past the coaches' offices also on the right side of the hallway.

- We will live stream the parade near the judges as well as the awards at the RHS gym. The link: <https://portal.stretchinternet.com/hubcityroncalli/> Please share this link with others who may not be able to attend.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 9 of 79

- The parade line-up will be on 15th Ave. NW facing east. See the map for a visual. If your band is one of the later bands in the parade, you may choose to have your band watch the parade.
- We have permission for bands to congregate on the former Presentation College's green space.
- We want to ensure continuous parade progress. Please be ready to line up immediately after the band prior to you steps off. I will be at the beginning of the parade and will direct you as to when you should step off.
- It is recommended that buses drop off students and equipment on N. 5th Street (AKA 387th Ave./Co. 10). Please make this a "DROP AND GO" unloading process. The buses will all return to Roncalli High School when unloading is finished. (See the Bus Information Map.) We recommend taking instruments from cases in the Roncalli parking lot and any other preparations specific to your band, so students can exit the buses at this drop-off point and the buses can quickly leave.
- As indicated on the map, the judges are spaced about halfway into the route, allowing bands to play their tune before performing for the judges. There will be two orange cones on either side of the street to indicate when bands enter the judging zone. They are set one block before the judges so the song should begin shortly after the cones.
- Take Note: The City of Aberdeen has limited the amount of time we are allowed to block the streets. Because we respect that decision, all bands must maintain forward progress at all times to ensure the continual flow of the parade. If a band's forward progress stops, a 100 point penalty will be applied and the band will not be eligible to win the "Best" Awards.
- The Exception to the Previous Rule: Because of where the judges are located, the 2nd band will step off prior to the 1st band completing their performance by the judges. Therefore, please be attentive to spacing. If you notice your group is quickly approaching the band in front of you, please mark time to increase the distance between you and the band in front of you to avoid the blending of sound between groups. Please DO NOT stop to respace your rows.
- The 2024 Parade Order and approximate step-off times are:
 1. 9:30 – Holgate-Simmons Combined Middle School Marching Band
 2. 9:37 – Webster Middle School Marching Band
 3. 9:44 – Warner Middle School Marching Band
 4. 9:51 – Aberdeen Christian Marching Knights
 5. 9:58 – Redfield High School Marching Band
 6. 10:05 – Castlewood High School Warrior Marching Band
 7. 10:12 – Langford Area Marching Lions
 8. 10:19 – Groton Area Marching Band
 9. 10:26 – Northwestern Area Marching Wildcats
 10. 10:33 – Ipswich Tigers Marching Band
 11. 10:40 – Aberdeen Roncalli Marching Cavaliers
 12. 10:47 – Webster High School Marching Band
 13. 10:54 – Warner High School Marching Band
 14. 11:01 – Northern State University Marching Wolves
- You may choose to halt your band on Dakota Street or immediately turn into the parking lot. You may also choose to play one last time in this area because band members who have already finished the parade may be spectating.
- The South Dakota Army National Guard will be joining us at Roncalli and will be providing bottles of water for the participants.
- After the parade is finished, the festivities will continue with the awards ceremony in the Roncalli High School gym. Our feature band this year is the Northern State University Marching Wolves. They will perform on the court prior to the announcement of the awards.
- Awards:
 - High School & Combined Groups: Awards will be presented for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, & 5th places as well

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 10 of 79

as for best percussion, best flag corps, best winds, and best drum major. ▪ In the event of a tie:

- Rankings: The band with the highest Music Execution score is the winner.
- "Best" Categories: The three judges together will determine the winner.
- Middle School Bands: The judges will award bronze (0-449 points), silver (450-649 points) or gold (650-885 points). The points for drum major & flag corps have been eliminated. Note that the middle school updated adjudication forms indicate that change.

- Recorded judges' comments will be emailed to you following the parade. This year's judges are Jerry Letcher, Dale Fiedler, and Terry Beckler.

Aberdeen Roncalli is grateful for the opportunity to host this event, and the Aberdeen community looks forward to seeing all of you and your bands perform. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Derek Larson, Roncalli Activities Director

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 11 of 79



Sydney Holmes and Logan Clocksene prior to the combined girls and boys Junior Varsity XC race. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)



Sydney Holmes races in the combined Junior Varsity race. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)



The 6th grade XC runners L-R Andi Iverson, Blake Malsom, Grady Zeck, and Landon Thornton. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 12 of 79



Grady Zeck finishing a strong second in the Junior High race. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)



Kason Oswald in the Boys Varsity XC race. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 13 of 79



JD Schwan closes in on a Roncalli runner in the Boys Varsity XC race. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)



A strong start for Faith Traphagen in the Girl Varsity Cross Country race held at the Groton Tiger home XC meet at the Olive Grove Golf Course. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 14 of 79

Groton Area - Junior Varsity - Tigers Football Stats

September 30, 2024

Questions call Tom Woods – Groton Volunteer Stat Guy 605-397-7565

Location: Groton, SD

| | <u>Quarter Scores</u> | | | <u>OT</u> | <u>Final</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---|---|-----------|--------------|
| Groton Area | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 - 0 |
| Clark / Willow Lake | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 - 8 |

Groton Area Tigers

Clark / Willow Lake Cyclones

First Downs: 7

First Downs: 7

Rushing: Team Carries - 29
Team Yards - 93

Rushing: Team Carries - 19
Team Yards - 68

Individual Rushing Leaders

| Player | Carries | Yards |
|---------------|---------|-------|
| Ryder Schelle | 19 | - 57 |
| Skyler Godel | 11 | - 36 |

Individual Rushing Leaders

| Player | Carries | Yards |
|----------------|---------|-------|
| Talen Huber | 7 | - 45 |
| Jackson Stormo | 1 | - 15 |
| Kaden Wookey | 7 | - 5 |
| Cade Gaikowski | 3 | - 5 |
| Gio Ramirez | 1 | - -2 |

Team Passing:

Completed 5 of 16 for 26 yards 0 TD 0 Int

Team Passing:

Completed 8 of 18 for 73 yards 1 TD 0 Ints

Individual:

Bradyn Small - all

Individual:

Kaden Wookey - all

Receiving:

Ben Hoeft - 2 catches for 16 yds
Skyler Godel - 2 catches for 9 yds
Ryder Schelle - 1 catch for 1 yd

Receiving:

Chris Bevers - 3 catches for 40 yds
Bo Begeman - 2 catches for 12 yds
Talen Huber - 2 catches for 3 yds
Chris Bevers - 1 catch for 10 yds
Cade Gaikowski - 1 catch for 8 yds

Fumbles: Had 1 Lost 0

Penalties: 1 for 15 Yards Lost

Fumbles: Had 0 Lost 0

Penalties: 8 for 60 Yards Lost

Defensive Leaders: (tackles, sacks, fumbles recovered, Int's)

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Ben Hoeft | 7 tackles (1 sack -1) |
| Lincoln Krause | 5 tackles |
| Blake Lord | 4 tackles |
| Alex Abeln | 3 tackles (1 for -2) |
| Isaiah Scepaniak | 3 tackles |
| Braeden Flieds | 2 tackles |
| Gunner Hardy | 2 tackles (1 sack -3) |
| Skyler Godel | 2 tackles (1 for -2) |
| TC Schuster | 2 tackles |
| Gavin Kroll | 2 tackles |
| Brysen Sandness | 1 tackle |
| Brody Lord | 1 tackle (1 sack -5) |

Defensive Leaders: (tackles, sacks, fumbles recovered, Int's)

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Logan Foster | 8 tackles |
| Wyatt Schlagel | 8 tackles |
| Cade Gaikowski | 8 tackles |
| Talen Huber | 5 tackles |
| Chris Bevers | 3 tackles |
| Westen Olson | 3 tackles |
| Trigg Felberg | 2 tackles |
| Miles Olson | 2 tackles |
| Kaden Wookey | 2 tackles |

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 15 of 79

SCORING: Groton Area 0 vs 8 Clark / Willow Lake

September 30, 2024 – at Groton

Junior Varsity Football

FIRST QUARTER

| Time | Points | Play |
|------|--------|------|
|------|--------|------|

SECOND QUARTER

| Time | Points | Play |
|------|--------|------|
|------|--------|------|

THIRD QUARTER

| Time | Points | Play |
|------|--------|------|
|------|--------|------|

FOURTH QUARTER

| Time | Points | Play |
|------|--------|------|
|------|--------|------|

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| :00 | 0 | Groton Area- Joao Nunes 25 yard field goal into a 20 mph wind – - short, no good |
|-----|---|---|

Over Time

| Time | Points | Play |
|------|--------|------|
|------|--------|------|

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| --- | 8 | Clark / WL Miles Olson 18 yard pass from Kaden Wookey Chris Bevers 2 pt catch from Kaden Wookey – Good |
|-----|---|---|

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| --- | 0 | Groton Area Stopped on downs on 3 yard line |
|-----|---|---|

Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 16 of 79

59th Annual Buffalo Roundup Sets New Record in Attendance

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks announced today that a new Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup attendance record has been set.

The park had 24,178 visitors attend the 59th annual Governor's Buffalo Roundup, surpassing the previous record of 22,690 visitors set in 2023.

"The weather may have been warm, but the event was deemed a success across the board," said Lydia Austin, Custer State Park Visitor Services Supervisor. "We had a large variety of news coverage from international and local outlets, and once again, SDPB hosted the event online."

The animals' condition is excellent overall, and park staff plan on working the animals through the corral system the week of October 10. The park rounded up approximately 1,485 animals, including the 488 calves born in 2024. The park will sell approximately 474 animals at its annual auction on Nov. 2, 2024, and plans to overwinter 975 bison.

In addition to the Buffalo Roundup, the Custer State Park Arts Festival, held September 26 – 28, 2024, was a resounding benefit. This annual event featured over 140 vendors and showcased the region's vibrant arts scene amidst the park's breathtaking natural beauty, drawing 19,225 attendees.

Live music performances, demonstrations, and interactive activities added to the festival's dynamic atmosphere, while food and beverage vendors offered a taste of local flavors. The festival's unique blend of natural splendor and creative expression made it an unforgettable experience during the annual Buffalo Roundup.

Buffer Strip Property Tax Incentive Deadline is Approaching

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Revenue reminds landowners that applications for the riparian buffer strip property tax incentive must be submitted by October 15, 2024.

Eligible riparian buffer strips can receive a reduction in the assessed value for property tax purposes. Only land within 120 feet of a listed lake, river or stream may be classified as a riparian buffer strip and grazing is prohibited from May through September.

Landowners approved for the riparian buffer strip program may receive an increased reduction in property value. In addition, there is no longer an annual application. Once approved, the new assessed value of the eligible property will be approved for 10 years or until the property changes use. Lastly, land impacted by center pivot irrigation can now be harvested or mowed starting June 25.

Applicants may view a web map to help determine which waters qualify under the program. The interactive map can be accessed at <https://danr.sd.gov/Press/DataAndMapping.aspx>.

Applications must be submitted to the director of equalization in the county where the property is located. To learn more about the property tax incentive or access the application, visit <https://dor.sd.gov/individuals/taxes/property-tax/#buffer>. We would like to remind landowners that to be eligible for the 2025 assessment for taxes payable in 2026, applications for the riparian buffer strip property tax incentive must be submitted by October 15, 2024.

Northern State University Rises in 2025 U.S. News Best Colleges Rankings

ABERDEEN, S.D. – Northern State University is ranked 25th in U.S. News & World Report 2025 Best Colleges Rankings among public universities in the Midwest including the states of South Dakota, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

"Northern has been a transformative experience for me and many others. The close-knit classes and personalized engagement with professors have not only shaped my academic growth but also strengthened my personal development as a student of life. I've received consistent support throughout my success, and the applied, real-world opportunities here have equipped me with the knowledge, vision, and practical skills I need to approach my future with confidence and vigor," said Samuel Brumfield, NSU student body president, senior community assistant, Northern State basketball player, and junior double majoring in biochemistry and communication studies.

The U.S. News rankings are based on several factors, including academic reputation, faculty resources, graduation rates, and student outcomes. Northern's consistent improvement shows its commitment to providing transformational and accessible education for all students.

Northern also ranked No. 82 among all Midwest universities, public and private, continuing a steady rise from ranking No. 103 in 2017.

"These rankings reflect on the dedication and hard work of the entire Northern community," said Dr. Neal Schnoor, president of Northern State University. "In addition to delivering quality education with a focus on experiential learning, our student-centered retention efforts have increased first-year retention significantly from 68.8% in 2021 to 77% this fall."

The U.S. News rankings, released on Sept. 24, 2024, offer valuable guidance to prospective students and families as they explore college options.

"Northern's position in these rankings highlights the university's commitment to high expectations and support for students. Faculty and staff work closely with students to help them succeed both academically and personally," said Dr. Mike Wanous, provost of Northern State University.

SDDOT Reminds of October 1 Deadline for Hay Removal from Highway Ditches

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) would like to remind farmers and ranchers to remove any hay that has been processed in the ditches along state highways. State regulations require that hay be removed from the rights-of-way with 30 days of being processed, but no later than October 1 each year.

"We're beginning our preparations for winter operations," stated Craig Smith, SDDOT Director of Operations. "We're asking for cooperation from anyone who had processed hay to remove it over the next week."

Removing hay from the highway right-of-way is an important safety consideration for motorists. Hay can be a safety hazard for vehicles forced to leave the road and, in some cases, can restrict a driver's sight distance. When left in the road ditches late in the year, hay can also cause snowdrifts across the highway.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

State defends decision to double-charge cannabis company In SD Supreme Court, Puffy's argues Department of Health broke its own rules by holding back license

BY: JOHN HULT - OCTOBER 1, 2024 3:43 PM

VERMILLION – A Rapid City medical marijuana dispensary wants help from the state Supreme Court in obtaining a license for another location.

The state Department of Health wants the business to pay another \$5,000 fee and complete another application. The department also says the business should have taken the dispute to an administrative hearing before making its case in a courtroom.

The state's high court heard arguments on the issue Tuesday in Vermillion at the University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law.

The health department appealed a circuit court's ruling in favor of Puffy's, which operates two dispensaries in Rapid City but would like to open six more. Puffy's also has a dispensary in Sturgis.

Rapid City's medical pot rules allow for 15 dispensaries. But the city got 47 applications for those slots in 2021.

The health department stepped in to help the city decide which business would get licenses through a lottery system. That's the framework written into state law for situations when dispensary applications exceed the number of dispensaries a local government allows.

That happened in three jurisdictions in 2021: Yankton, North Sioux City and Rapid City.

Puffy's got seven of the 15 Rapid City licenses under the lottery.

According to the department's rules on the lottery system, businesses that get licenses are required to launch within a year. If they don't, the license goes to the next business in line.

In the case that ultimately led to Tuesday's hearing in Vermillion, the 15th Rapid City license went to a company called Greenlight Dispensary, which didn't use it within a year.

One of Puffy's applications was number 16.



A Puffy's Dispensary location is pictured on Oct. 1, 2024, on West Main Street in Rapid City. (Seth Tupper/South Dakota Searchlight)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 19 of 79

But instead of handing Puffy's another license at that point – more than a year after the lottery – the health department told the company it was free to re-apply.

The owners didn't appreciate that. Applicants are required to pay a \$5,310 non-refundable fee and comply with the state's medical cannabis regulations to be a part of the lottery. The department not only wanted Puffy's to recertify that it complies with state law, but wanted another \$5,310, which was the fee for each license in 2021.

The company took the state to court, asking that a judge force the state to hand over the license without the application and extra fee. The company won; the state appealed.

Health department: We need flexibility

Howard Pallotta was one of two lawyers representing the health department on Tuesday. He said Puffy's failed to "exhaust administrative remedies" before filing its lawsuit last year.

Pallotta said Puffy's should have paid the application fee and completed the paperwork a second time, and should have challenged the fairness of the department's decision during an administrative hearing.

Such hearings are conducted by lawyers who make decisions in disputes over administrative rules. The losing party in such disputes can sue to reverse the decisions.

Justice Patricia DeVaney was among the justices to push Pallotta on that point: Don't the state's rules say the next business in line gets the licenses in these situations?

"They should've just submitted the application in protest and preserved their right to make the argument later?" DeVaney asked.

That would have been proper, Pallotta said. By the time Puffy's filed its suit to demand the licenses, Pallotta said, 19 months had passed. Since licenses are good for a year, he said, it was "logical and reasonable" to expect Puffy's to pay the fee and recertify that it complied with state law.

Businesses with licenses are required to pay the fee again every year, Pallotta said, and a lot of things "could have changed in 19 months."

But the justices questioned that logic, given that the Puffy's wasn't renewing a license. It never had a license for the location in question.

"What's your legal authority to say 'pay us \$5,000 for us to consider this?'" Chief Justice Steven Jensen asked.

During her rebuttal, Tamara Lee, an attorney for the state, said the fee is annual and there's no guarantee to any business participating in a lottery. But Justice Mark Salter returned to Jensen's question: How can you charge an annual fee to a business to renew a license it never had?

"You don't have any free-standing authority that says you can ask them to pay a fee, yes or no?" Salter asked.

Lee conceded that the department doesn't have that, but she argued that the authority is implied by the "totality" of the state's cannabis laws and the importance of regulation.

"We're talking about a schedule I controlled substance," Lee said, referring to the federal category of drugs to which cannabis belongs.

Schedule I controlled substances are those with no medical use and a high chance of addiction. The federal government is currently considering a schedule change for cannabis. South Dakota voters authorized medical cannabis in their state in 2020, and a measure that would legalize recreational marijuana is on this year's Nov. 5 ballot.

Puffy's: If rule is valid, enforce it

Ryan Cwach, representing Puffy's, faced down his own set of rapid-fire questioning from the justices.

That's in part because of what's happened with the company's other pot licenses. Like Greenlight Dispensary, Puffy's was not able to open all of its locations within a year of winning the licenses in the lottery.

Greenlight asked for an extension, was denied, and didn't appeal that denial. Puffy's also asked for an extension on its unused licenses, and also was denied, but it filed a lawsuit about it.

In that case, Puffy's argued that the rules were unconstitutional because they treat businesses differently based on their location. A dispensary operating in a city with limits on the number of dispensaries must contend with a lottery; one operating in a city without limits does not.

In that case, Puffy's had asked for a "writ of prohibition," in which a court order stops an agency from enforcing a rule. But the judge dismissed that case without touching the constitutionality issue. Instead, he ordered Puffy's to take its case for an extension to an administrative hearing. That hearing is pending.

The lawsuit that led to Tuesday's hearing in Vermillion was filed separately. In it, Puffy's asked for and received a "writ of mandamus," which is a court order demanding that an agency enforce a rule — in this case, a rule saying the next business in line gets a license. Puffy's asked for that even as it continued to argue that the rules are unconstitutional.

The justices homed in on that disconnect during Tuesday's hearing at the law school. Why would you ask us to enforce a rule if you think that rule is unconstitutional?

The high court ought to make the call on constitutionality, Cwach said, because it needs to be answered and the Supreme Court has the authority to make the call.

If the justices decide that the rules are constitutional, he said, they ought to make the health department follow them.

But why, the justices asked, wouldn't Puffy's just pay the fee, resubmit the application and argue in an administrative hearing about whether the department broke its own rules?

"I think it's unfair, because it's essentially asking my client to pay \$10,620 for their initial license when everyone else had to pay \$5,350," Cwach said.

The justices will issue an opinion at a later date.

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

South Dakota teachers' real wages have fallen recently, report says

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - OCTOBER 1, 2024 10:34 AM

The typical South Dakota teacher's pay fell by 7.6% over the past six years when adjusted for inflation, according to a new report from a nonprofit economic research and analysis organization.

The Dakota Institute says average teacher pay increased 13.8% from 2017 to 2023, while inflation was 21.4%. The average teacher therefore ended up with a 7.6% decline in "real wages," or purchasing power. That was more severe than the decline in purchasing power suffered by the typical household in South Dakota over the same time, which was 5%.

Yet, as the report notes, "Many claims can be made about teachers' salaries in South Dakota, but few of them should be taken at face value or without context."

Some of that context is included in the report. Only three states — Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas — are more affordable places to live than South Dakota, according to U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis data cited in the report. And, as the report says, "these same states typically trade the title of lowest teachers' salaries."

Actual rankings from the National Education Association currently

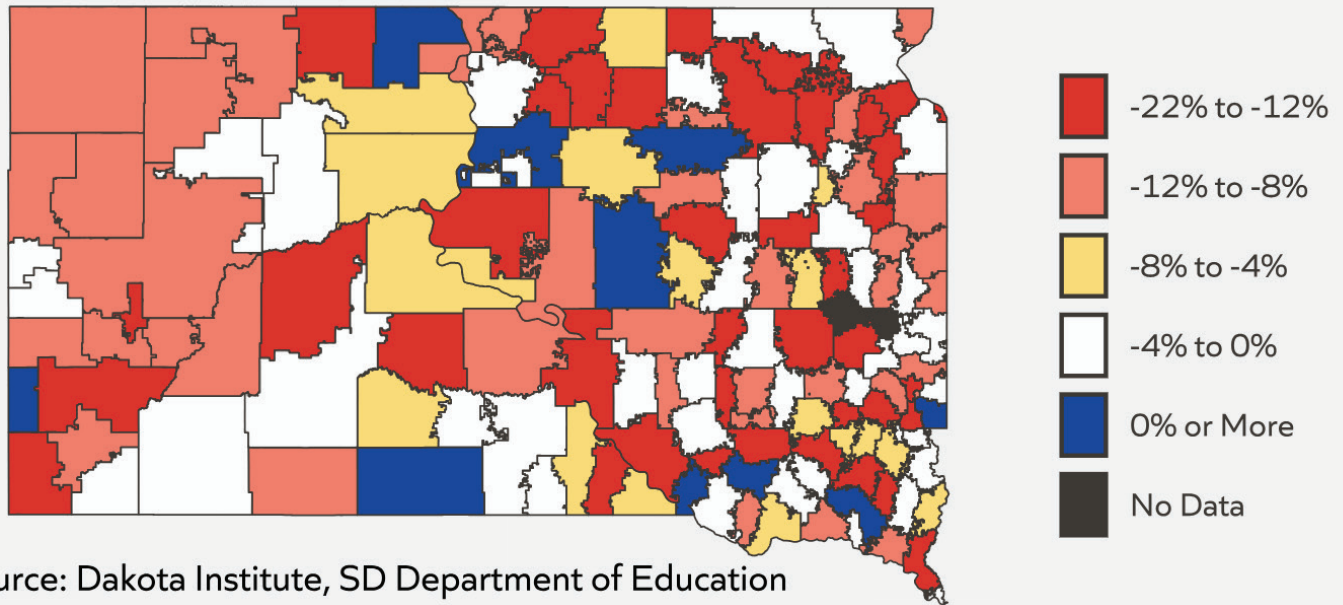


A new report says South Dakota teacher pay declined by 7.6% over the past six years when adjusted for inflation. (Getty Images)

list South Dakota as 49th in average teacher pay. Alabama is 31st, Mississippi is 48th and Arkansas is 45th. Those rankings say South Dakota's average teacher pay during the 2022-23 school year was \$53,153. The national average was \$69,544.

Fig 8: Inflation-Adjusted Change in Teacher Pay

2017 to 2023 – Total Compensation



Housing: Where do Trump and Harris stand?

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA - OCTOBER 1, 2024 3:33 PM

WASHINGTON — As the cost and supply of housing remain top issues for voters, both presidential candidates have put forth plans to tackle the crisis, in hopes of courting voters ahead of the Nov. 5 election.

The coronavirus pandemic that began in 2020 exacerbated problems in the housing market, with supply chain disruptions, record-low interest rates and increased demand contributing to a rise in housing prices, according to a study by the Journal of Housing Economics.

While housing is typically handled on the local level, the housing supply is tight and rents continue to skyrocket, putting increased pressure on the federal government to help. Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump agree that it's an issue that needs to be solved, but their solutions diverge.

The Harris and Trump campaigns did not respond to States Newsroom's requests for details on the general housing proposals the nominees have discussed.

Promise: millions of new homes

Harris' plan calls for the construction of 3 million homes in four years.

The United States has a shortage of about 3.8 million homes for sale and rent, according to 2021 estimates from Freddie Mac that are still relied upon.

Additionally, homelessness has hit a record-high of 653,100 people since January of last year, and a "record-high 22.4 million renter households spent more than 30 percent of their income on rent and utilities," up from 2 million households since 2019, according to a study by the Joint Center for Housing Studies

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 22 of 79

of Harvard University.

"This is obviously a multi-prong approach, because the factors contributing to high rents and housing affordability are many, and my plan is to attempt to address many of them at once, so we can actually have the net effect of bringing down the cost and making homeownership, renting more affordable," Harris said during a September interview with Wisconsin Public Radio.

Promise: single-family zoning

Trump has long opposed building multi-family housing and has instead thrown his support behind single-family zoning, which would exclude other types of housing. Such land-use regulation is conducted by local government bodies, not the federal government, though the federal government could influence it.

"There will be no low-income housing developments built in areas that are right next to your house," Trump said during an August rally in Montana. "I'm gonna keep criminals out of your neighborhood."



As the cost and supply of housing remain top issues for voters, both presidential candidates have put forth plans to tackle the crisis

Promise: getting Congress to agree

Election forecasters have predicted that Democrats will regain control of the U.S. House, but Republicans are poised to win the Senate, meaning any housing proposals will have to be overwhelmingly bipartisan.

"How much money is going to really be available without substantial increases in revenue to be able to do all these things that both Trump and Harris are proposing?" Ted Tozer, a non-resident fellow at the Urban Institute's Housing Finance Policy Center, said in an interview with States Newsroom. "All the money comes from Congress."

Many of Harris' policies rely on cooperation from Congress, as historically the federal government has limited tools to address housing shortages.

"On the Democratic side, there's a hunger for more action, for more direct government intervention in the housing market than we've seen in a long time," said Francis Torres, the associate director of housing and infrastructure at the Bipartisan Policy Center.

Nearly all proposals that Harris has put forth would require Congress to pass legislation and appropriate funds. The first is S.2224, introduced by Sen. Sherrod Brown, Democrat of Ohio, which would amend U.S. tax code to bar private equity firms from buying homes in bulk by denying "interest and depreciation deductions for taxpayers owning 50 or more single family properties," according to the bill.

The second bill, S. 3692, introduced by Sen. Ron Wyden, Democrat of Oregon and chair of the Senate Finance Committee, would bar using algorithms to artificially inflate the cost of rents.

Both bills would need to reach the 60-vote threshold in order to advance in the Senate, whichever party is in control.

Promise: \$25,000 down payment assistance

Harris has pledged to support first-time homebuyers, but Congress would need to appropriate funds for the \$25,000 down payment assistance program she has proposed that would benefit an estimated 4 million first-time homebuyers over four years.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 23 of 79

It's a proposal that's been met with skepticism.

"I'm really concerned that down payment assistance will actually put more pressure on home prices, because basically, you're giving people additional cash to pay more for the house that they're going to bid on," Tozer said. "So by definition, they get in a bidding war, they're going to spend more."

Harris has also proposed a \$40 billion innovation fund for local governments to build and create solutions for housing, which would also need congressional approval.

Promise: opening up federal lands

Both candidates support opening some federal lands for housing, which would mean selling the land for construction purposes with the commitment for a certain percentage of the units to be kept for affordable housing.

The federal government owns about 650 million acres of land, or roughly 30% of all land.

Neither candidate has gone into detail on this proposal.

"I think it's a sign that at least the Harris campaign and the people in her orbit are thinking about addressing this housing affordability problem really through stronger government action than has happened in several decades," Torres said.

Promise: expand tax credits

The biggest tool the federal government has used to address housing is through the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, known as LIHTC. Harris has promised to expand this tax credit, but has not gone into detail about how much she wants it expanded.

This program awards tax credits to offset construction costs in exchange for a certain number of rent-restricted units for low-income households. But the restriction is temporary, lasting about 30 years.

There is no similar program for housing meant to be owned.

"It's an interesting moment, because then on the other side, on the Trump side, even though they diagnosed a lot of the similar problems, there's not as much of a desire to leverage the strength of the federal government to ensure affordability," Torres said.

Trump's record on housing

The Trump campaign does not have a housing proposal, but various interviews, rallies and a review of Trump's first four years in office provide a roadmap.

During Trump's first administration, many of his HUD budget proposals were not approved by Congress.

In all four of his presidential budget requests, he laid out proposals that would increase rent by 40% for about 4 million low-income households using rental vouchers or for those who lived in public housing, according to an analysis by the left-leaning think tank the Brookings Institution.

All four of Trump's budgets also called for the elimination of housing programs such as the Community Development Block Grant, which directs funding to local and state governments to rehabilitate and build affordable housing. Trump's budgets also would have slashed the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, known as LIHEAP, which is a home energy assistance program for low-income families.

Additionally, Trump's Opportunity Zones authorized through the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which are tax incentives to businesses and real estate to invest in low-income communities, have had mixed results.

Promise: cut regulations and add tariffs

In an interview with Bloomberg, Trump said he wanted to focus on reducing regulations in the permitting process.

"Your permits, your permitting process. Your zoning, if — and I went through years of zoning. Zoning is like... it's a killer," he said. "But we'll be doing that, and we'll be bringing the price of housing down."

During campaign rallies, Trump has often said he would impose a 10% tariff across the board on all goods entering the U.S. He's also proposed 60% tariffs on China.

Trump said at a rally in Georgia that tariff is “one of the most beautiful words I’ve ever heard.” Tozer said adding trade policies, such as tariffs on construction materials like lumber, would drive up the cost of homes.

Promise: deport immigrants

Trump has argued that his plan for mass deportations will help free up the supply of housing. Karoline Leavitt, the Trump national press secretary, told the New York Times that deporting immigrants would lower the cost of housing because migration “is driving up housing costs.”

The former president has made a core campaign promise to deport millions of immigrants.

Tozer said housing and immigration are tied, because the ability to build houses comes down to workers, and roughly 30% of construction workers are immigrants.

“By shutting down the border, you’re possibly shutting down your capacity to build these houses,” he said, adding that all those policies are intertwined.

Ariana covers the nation’s capital for States Newsroom. Her areas of coverage include politics and policy, lobbying, elections and campaign finance.

North Carolina candidate’s inclusion in Sioux Falls event divides SD Republican Party

Mark Robinson delivers video message at political fundraiser

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - OCTOBER 1, 2024 11:49 PM



Toby Doeden speaks during Dakota First Action’s Victory Gala on Oct. 1, 2024, in Sioux Falls. (Joshua Haiar/South Dakota Searchlight)

SIOUX FALLS – A political fundraiser featuring a video message from a controversial Republican candidate for governor of North Carolina further divided the factions within the South Dakota Republican Party on Tuesday night.

The message came from North Carolina Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson. CNN recently reported that Robinson made racist and sexually explicit remarks more than a decade ago on a pornographic website’s message board. The report said Robinson, who has a recent history of anti-transgender rhetoric, said he enjoyed watching transgender pornography, referred to himself as a “black Nazi,” expressed support for reinstating slavery and praised Adolf Hitler.

Robinson’s video speech occurred during the Dakota First Action political action committee’s

Victory Gala. Toby Doeden, an Aberdeen businessman and founder of Dakota First Action, said his fellow Republicans who are condemning Robinson are hurting the party.

“CNN has no substantive proof,” Doeden said. “Republicans will eat their own. If he were on the left,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 25 of 79

not a single Democrat would have called for him to step down.”

Other Republicans react

South Dakota House Majority Leader Will Mortenson, R-Fort Pierre, condemned the event and called those hosting it non-Republicans.

“I spoke out against Nazis when they came to the Capitol this summer,” Mortenson said in a statement, referencing a June march in Pierre by a neo-Nazi group, “and don’t like them any better when they are in Sioux Falls. When you’re throwing a rally featuring a self-described Nazi, you’re not a Republican. You belong to a different party. There’s no room for Nazi sympathy in our party or in our state.”

Doeden considered but ultimately decided against challenging U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-South Dakota, in the June primary election. Doeden said he organized Tuesday’s event to celebrate the “America First conservatives” who won their June legislative primary elections, and to rally support for their general election campaigns.

Current state Republican leaders “aren’t conservatives,” Doeden alleged.

“They’re liberals that register as Republicans because they can’t get elected as Democrats,” he said. “These people are hacks. They’re clowns. They’re disgusting. I started my PAC to eradicate hacks like that from serving in the Legislature – period.”

Republican former state representative Casey Murschel called Robinson’s inclusion in the Sioux Falls event “an insult to every Republican in our state.”

“It is embarrassing and offensive to have a Republican group, Dakota First Action, celebrating Republican primary election victories by inviting an anti-woman misogynist to South Dakota,” Murschel said in a statement.

She was referring to Robinson’s abortion rhetoric and his support for an abortion ban. Murschel currently serves as chair of Republicans for Freedom Amendment G. That’s the Nov. 5 ballot measure that would re-establish abortion rights in South Dakota.

Robinson’s abortion comments have included saying, “Abortion in this country is not about protecting the lives of mothers, it’s about killing the child because you were not responsible enough to keep your skirt down.”

About 150 people attended the Sioux Falls event, including some Republican state lawmakers and legislative candidates. Robinson was originally billed as an in-person speaker, but ended up appearing by video as North Carolina recovers from severe damage caused by Hurricane Helene.

In his brief speech, Robinson criticized Democrats as people wanting to turn the country into a “socialist hellhole.”

“We’re no longer dealing with JFK, we’re no longer even dealing with Bill Clinton, we’re now dealing with confirmed socialists, confirmed communists,” Robinson said.

Ticket prices ranged from \$250 for general admission to \$20,000 for a “Chairman’s Sponsorship.” Doeden did not say how much money was raised, but said proceeds would go toward Dakota First Action’s mission. The next campaign finance reporting deadline in South Dakota is Oct. 21.

Doeden said inviting Robinson to speak was an obvious choice.

“He’s the top public speaker in the nation right now. We’re having a gala. You want the speaker to amp up the crowd,” Doeden said. “And he’s running for governor of North Carolina as an America First warrior.”

NAACP conducts protest

Robinson’s involvement was met with a protest organized by the Sioux Falls chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Julian Beaudion, a Sioux Falls NAACP member, said Robinson’s rhetoric is harmful to marginalized communities.

“We can debate about the posts that were reported by CNN,” Beaudion said. “Or we point to the words that come directly from his mouth on stage. Those are the things we cannot dispute. Calling the civil rights

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 26 of 79

movement a farce, saying Martin Luther King was weak – there's clear hatred that's been spewed by him." HuffPost reported in January that its review of Robinson's past Facebook posts found descriptions of King as a "communist" and the 1960s civil rights movement as "crap."

Doeden's own controversial comments

Doeden has a history of controversy himself.

While he was publicly considering a challenge to Johnson, reporters called attention to some of Doeden's social media posts. He encouraged the shooting of immigrants in gangs, used a profane insult to describe President Joe Biden, and labeled statistics about hatred of Jewish Americans as "fake."

Doeden stood by the comments. But after the comments were reported, he opted against a run for Congress and switched to targeting what he calls "fake Republicans" in the state Legislature. His political action committee seeks to replace them with candidates who align with the "America First" agenda popularized by former President Donald Trump.

Doeden's Dakota First Action PAC has faced scrutiny due to a \$100,000 contribution from Doeden himself. Following concerns raised about state campaign finance laws — particularly the \$10,000 limit on individual contributions to PACs — Doeden amended the report, stating that the money was a loan rather than a donation.

During the leadup to the June primary election, Doeden's PAC spent about \$25,000 on data acquisition and \$15,000 supporting candidates. His efforts contributed to 14 losses by incumbent Republican legislators.

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

Tim Walz and J.D. Vance tangle in wonky, largely cordial vice presidential debate

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY AND JENNIFER SHUTT - OCTOBER 2, 2024 12:41 AM

Democratic Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz and Republican Ohio U.S. Sen. J.D. Vance squared off Tuesday night in a vice presidential debate that marked the last scheduled in-person meeting for the campaigns as Americans decide the country's next chapter.

Meeting for the first time, Walz and Vance engaged in a policy-heavy, nearly two-hour back-and-forth hosted by CBS News at its studios in New York City. The debate was moderated by Norah O'Donnell, host of the "CBS Evening News," and Margaret Brennan, who anchors the network's Sunday political show "Face the Nation."

The vice presidential candidates emphasized their modest upbringings and laid out their visions to lower high living costs, address charged issues like reproductive rights, immigration and gun violence, and navigate a quickly worsening conflict in the Middle East.

And, with the presidential contest marking the first since the violent aftermath of the 2020 election, and Trump's continued false claims that he won, the moderators pressed the men on whether voters would see a peaceful transfer of power, no matter the winner. Vance would not provide a direct answer whether he would have certified the 2020 vote.

Walz is a second-term governor who previously served six terms in the U.S. House. Prior to his election, Walz worked as a public school teacher and football coach while also enlisted in the Minnesota Army National Guard for 24 years.

Vance served in the U.S. Marines for four years before earning his Yale law degree and becoming a venture capitalist and bestselling memoirist. He was first elected to public office in late 2022 to serve as

Groton Daily Independent

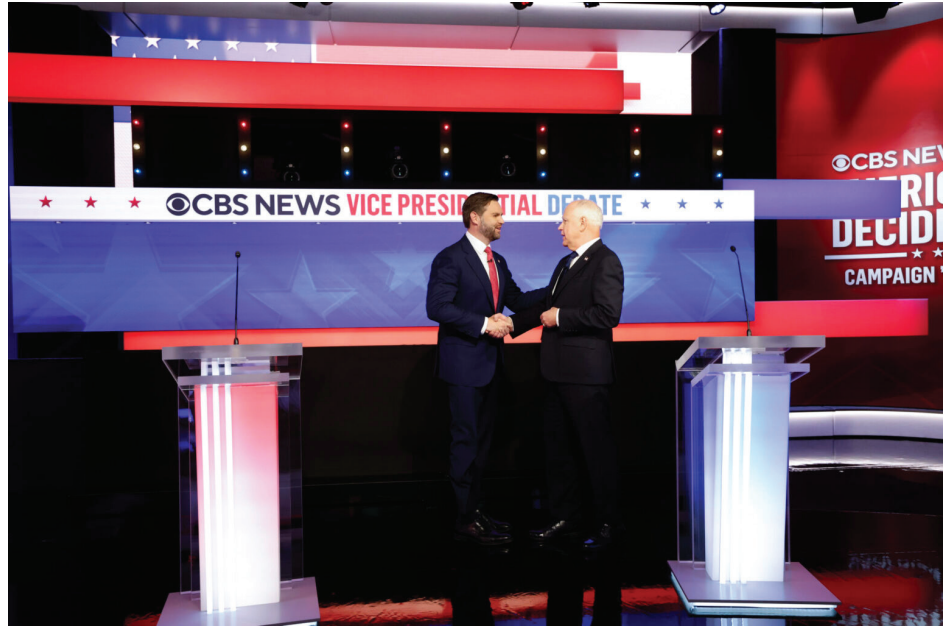
Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 27 of 79

Ohio's junior U.S. senator.

The mostly amicable debate, with some moments of tension, was a noticeable departure from the bitter polarization on display daily during the presidential campaign. Walz and Vance shook hands and lingered onstage afterward chatting and introducing each other to their wives.

The presidential nominees, former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris, met on the debate stage last month in a more acrimonious exchange during which the former president falsely claimed immigrants were eating pets in Ohio and Harris ripped into him for his remarks on race and abortion.

Trump has refused to debate again. Following the Vance-Walz exchange, the Harris campaign renewed its offer for another presidential meetup offered by CNN in Atlanta later this month.



Republican vice presidential candidate, Sen. J.D. Vance of Ohio, and Democratic vice presidential candidate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, participate in a debate at the CBS Broadcast Center on Oct. 1, 2024, in New York City. (Chip

Somodevilla/Getty Images)

Growing Middle East conflict

Answering the first question from the moderators Tuesday night, Walz and Vance sparred over which administration, if elected, would best quell signs of a widening war in the Middle East.

Tensions in the region escalated earlier Tuesday when Iran fired nearly 200 ballistic missiles at Israel, according to the Pentagon.

Walz accused Trump of being "fickle" on foreign policy and said the world is worse off since Trump pulled the United States out of the Iran nuclear deal. Walz argued for "steady leadership."

"You saw it experienced today where, along with our Israeli partners and our coalition, (we were) able to stop the incoming attack," Walz said.

"It's clear, and the world saw it on that debate stage a few weeks ago, a nearly 80-year-old Donald Trump talking about crowd sizes is not what we need in this moment," the governor continued.

Vance maintained that Trump headed off heated global conflict by invoking fear.

"We have to remember that as much as Governor Waltz just accused Donald Trump of being an agent of chaos, Donald Trump actually delivered stability in the world, and he did it by establishing effective deterrence," Vance said. "People were afraid of stepping out of line."

The barrage in the Middle East followed Israel's ground incursion into Southern Lebanon and its recent assassination in Beirut of Hassan Nasrallah, leader of the Iranian proxy militant group Hezbollah.

While Israel intercepted the majority of the rockets Tuesday, U.S. Navy destroyers in the Middle East fired roughly a dozen interceptors at incoming Iranian missiles, Pentagon spokesman Maj. Gen. Patrick Ryder said.

The Biden administration promised "severe consequences," though it has not provided details. Harris said late Tuesday that Iran poses a "destabilizing, dangerous force in the Middle East" and her commitment to Israel is "unwavering."

Despite a visit to Washington less than a week ago from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 28 of 79

CBS moderators did not ask about the ongoing war in Ukraine, and neither candidate brought up the costly and ongoing fight against Russia's continued invasion.

2020 election

Vance and Walz sparred over how Trump handled his loss in the 2020 presidential election and his actions leading up to Jan. 6, 2021, when a mob of his supporters attacked the U.S. Capitol following a rally that Trump hosted.

Walz said while he and Vance found some areas of common ground at other points during the debate, the two were "miles apart" on Trump's actions following the 2020 election.

"This was a threat to our democracy in a way that we had not seen, and it manifested itself because of Donald Trump's inability to say – he is still saying he didn't lose the election," Walz said.

Vance didn't directly answer whether he would have certified the electoral count for President Joe Biden had he been a member of Congress at the time, to Walz's dismay.

"I'm pretty shocked by this," Walz said. "He lost the election. This is not a debate."

Walz said he was concerned that Vance wouldn't follow the example set by former Vice President Mike Pence, who refused to go along with a scheme to recognize fake slates of electors and deny Biden the presidency.

Vance tried to pivot to Harris' actions following the COVID-19 pandemic and whether she "censored Americans from speaking their mind" before saying that both he and Trump "think that there were problems in 2020."

There was no evidence of widespread voter fraud during the last presidential election, during which Trump lost both the popular vote and the Electoral College.

Walz also criticized Trump and Vance for using the same narrative ahead of this November's elections, saying they were "already laying the groundwork for people not accepting" the results should Trump lose.

Taxes and tariffs

Both Harris and Trump have released economic plans that would add trillions to the national deficit — though analysis after analysis shows Trump's proposals outpacing Harris' by at least a few trillion.

Harris and Walz are running on an "opportunity economy" theme that would permanently expand the Child Tax Credit, including giving \$6,000 to new parents, and provide tax credits and deductions to first-time homebuyers and entrepreneurs.

Harris, following Biden's earlier budget proposal, has said she would impose a minimum tax on high-wealth individuals, but vowed steeper levies on long-term capital gains.

Trump has promised to fund the Treasury's coffers with money raised by taxing imported goods. Largely he wants to extend his signature 2017 tax law and permanently lower the corporate tax rate.

When asked by the moderators how the candidates could accomplish those goals without ballooning the national debt, both Vance and Walz sidestepped directly answering the question. Rather they touted Trump and Biden administration policies and then went on the attack.

"Donald Trump made a promise, and I'll give you this: He kept it. He took folks to Mar-a-Lago (and) said, 'You're rich as hell. I'm gonna give you a tax cut,'" Walz said, adding that Trump's tariff plan would be "destabilizing" for the economy.

Economists warn that Trump's plan to slap tariffs on imports across the board — as high as 60% on Chinese imports and 100% to 200% on cars and John Deere tractors manufactured in Mexico — could cause consumer prices to increase and invite retaliation.

But Vance said he wanted to "defend my running mate" on the issue.

"We're going to be taking in a lot of money by penalizing companies for shipping jobs overseas and penalizing countries who employ slave laborers and then ship their products back into our country and undercut the wages of American workers. It's the heart of the Donald Trump economic plan," the senator said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 29 of 79

High costs and housing

Both candidates spent significant time addressing housing and child care costs.

Walz touted Harris' "bold forward plan" that calls for construction of 3 million new homes and "down payment assistance on the front end to get you in a house."

"A house is much more than just an asset to be traded somewhere. It's foundational to where you're at," Walz said.

Vance said some of Walz's ideas on housing were "halfway decent."

One of the central pillars of Trump and Vance's housing plans is to turn over federal lands to private hands for development.

"We have a lot of federal lands that aren't being used for anything. They're not being used for national parks. They're not being used, and they could be places where we build a lot of housing," Vance said.

On child care, Walz pledged a paid federal family and medical leave mandate as a priority for the Harris campaign, and advocated a parallel workforce development program for the care professions.

"We have to make it easier for folks to be able to get into that business, and then to make sure that folks are able to pay for that," Walz said.

The dual goals, he said, "will enhance our workforce, enhance our families, and make it easier to have the children that you want."

Vance said he sees an opportunity for a "bipartisan solution" to the high cost of child care, though he stopped short of agreeing with a federal paid leave law.

Instead he proposed expanding the potential recipients for federal child care grants.

"These programs only go to one kind of child care model. Let's say you'd like your church maybe to help you out with child care. Maybe you live in a rural area or an urban area, and you'd like to get together with families in your neighborhood to provide child care and the way that makes the most sense. You don't get access to any of these federal monies," Vance said.

Immigration, again

Vance also repeatedly connected the housing shortage and high costs to immigration — the central issue for Trump's campaign and a common answer from him for several of the nation's woes.

The Ohio senator said housing is "totally unaffordable because we brought in millions of illegal immigrants to compete with Americans for scarce homes."

"The people that I'm most worried about in Springfield, Ohio, are the American citizens who have had their lives destroyed by Kamala Harris' open border," Vance said, referring to the town where he and Trump falsely claimed over and over that Haitian migrants were stealing and eating pets.

Debate moderator Brennan pressed Vance on his claim: "Senator on that point, I'd like for you to clarify. There are many contributing factors to high housing costs. What evidence do you have that migrants are part of this problem?"

Vance said he would share on social media following the debate a Federal Reserve study that supported his claim.

Reproductive rights

Access to abortion and fertility treatments was one of the more contentious areas of disagreement, though neither candidate trod new ground for their party.

Vance maintained the Trump stance that abortion laws should be set by voters or state lawmakers, while Walz said women and their doctors are best suited to make those decisions.

Vance told a story about a woman he grew up with having an abortion, then telling him a few years ago that "she felt like if she hadn't had that abortion, that it would have destroyed her life because she was in an abusive relationship."

"And I think that what I take from that, as a Republican who proudly wants to protect innocent life in this country, who proudly wants to protect the vulnerable, is that my party, we've got to do so much bet-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 30 of 79

ter of a job at earning the American people's trust back on this issue, where they frankly, just don't trust us," Vance said. "And I think that's one of the things that Donald Trump, and I are endeavoring to do."

Walz rejected Vance's position that state lawmakers should determine women's access to the full slate of reproductive decisions, including fertility treatments.

Walz referenced some of the stories women have told in the last two years about being denied medical care for miscarriages or other dangerous pregnancy complications because of vaguely written state laws that banned or significantly restricted access to abortion.

"This is a very simple proposition: These are women's decisions to make about their health care," Walz said, later adding that people should "just mind their own business on this."

Gun violence

The two vice presidential candidates had one of the more genuine exchanges of the debate after the moderators asked them about solutions for gun violence.

Vance conceded that he and Walz both want to reduce the number of people killed by guns every year, but said the solution should center around addressing illegal guns, including those used in drug trafficking, and through changing how schools are designed.

"Unfortunately, I think that we have to increase security in our schools. We have to make the doors lock better. We have to make the door stronger. We've got to make the windows stronger," Vance said. "And of course, we've got to increase school resource officers, because the idea that we can magically wave a wand and take guns out of the hands of bad guys, it just doesn't fit with recent experience."

Walz said school shootings are every parent's "worst nightmare" before telling a story about how his son witnessed a shooting at a community center while playing volleyball.

"Those things don't leave you," Walz said, before talking about meeting with parents of the children killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, when he was a member of Congress.

"We understand that the Second Amendment is there, but our first responsibility is to our kids to figure this out," Walz said. "In Minnesota, we've enacted enhanced red flag laws, enhanced background checks."

Walz said he absolutely believes Vance hates it when children die from gun violence, but added that's "not far enough when we know they're things that work."

"No one's trying to scaremonger and say, 'We're taking your guns,'" Walz said. "But I ask all of you out there, 'Do you want your schools hardened to look like a fort?' ... when we know there's countries around the world that their children aren't practicing these types of drills."

Vance expressed sympathy that Walz's son had witnessed a shooting and thanked him for bringing up Finland as an example of a country with a high rate of gun ownership that doesn't have school shootings.

"I do think it illustrates some of the, frankly, weird differences between our own country's gun violence problem and Finland," Vance said, before mentioning higher rates of substance abuse and mental health issues within the United States.

"I don't think it's the whole reason why we have such a bad gun violence problem, but I do think it's a big piece of it," Vance said.

Hurricane Helene response, climate change

The two candidates expressed dismay about the destruction stemming from Hurricane Helene in states in the Southeast, but disagreed about how best to address climate change.

Vance said "a lot of people are justifiably worried about all these crazy weather patterns," before criticizing how Democrats have drafted climate change laws.

"This idea that carbon emissions drive all the climate change; well let's just say that's true, just for the sake of arguments," Vance said. "Well, if you believe that, what would you want to do? The answer is that you'd want to restore as much American manufacturing as possible, and you'd want to produce as much energy as possible in the United States of America, because we're the cleanest economy in the entire world."

Walz said that Biden and Harris have worked with Congress to enact legislation addressing climate change

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 31 of 79

that also created jobs.

"We are producing more natural gas and more oil at any time than we ever have. We're also producing more clean energy," Walz said. "Reducing our impact is absolutely critical, but this is not a false choice. You can do that at the same time you're creating the jobs that we're seeing all across the country."

Walz also said that farmers in Minnesota know climate change is real because some years they experience significant drought and other years they're inundated with too much rain for their crops to handle.

"They've seen 500-year droughts, 500-year floods back-to-back," Walz said. "But what they're doing is adapting, and this has allowed them to tell me, 'Look, I harvest corn, I harvest soybeans, and I harvest wind.'"

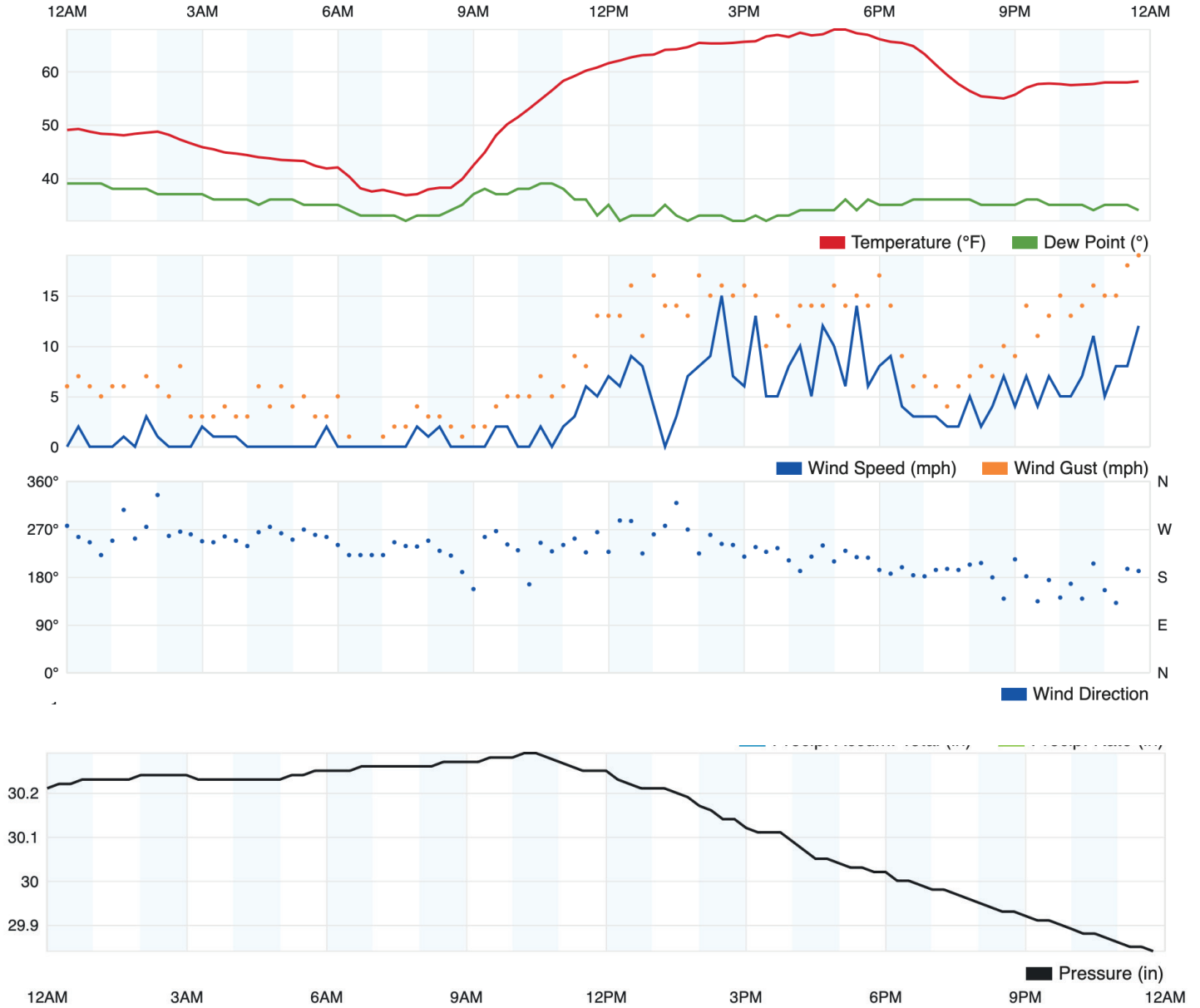
Ashley Murray covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 32 of 79

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 33 of 79

Today



High: 83 °F

Sunny then
Sunny and
Breezy

Tonight



Low: 43 °F

Increasing
Clouds

Thursday



High: 64 °F

Partly Sunny

Thursday
Night



Low: 35 °F

Mostly Clear

Friday



High: 70 °F

Sunny

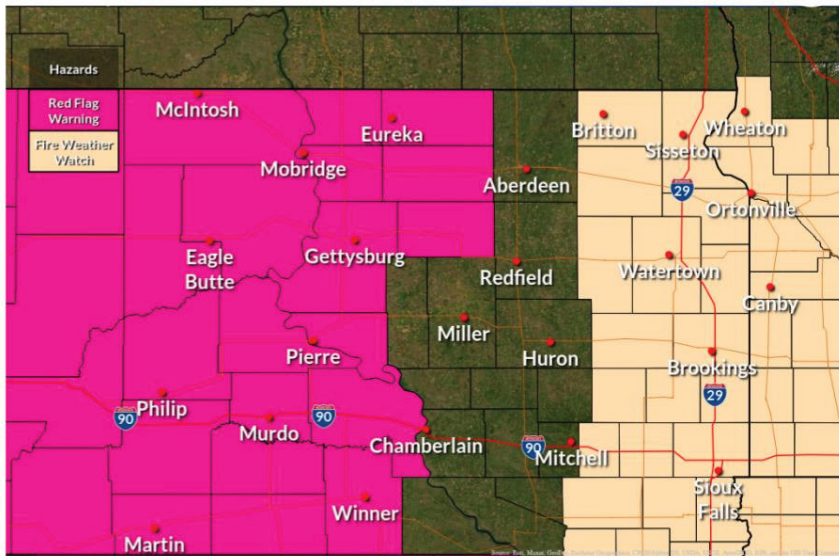


Fire Weather Headlines

October 2, 2024
4:27 AM

In Effect for Wednesday, October 2nd

Maximum Wind Gusts through 7 PM Wednesday



Key Messages

- ★ A Red Flag Warning is now in effect through 7PM Wednesday.
- ★ The Red Flag Warning is in effect for Central and Western South Dakota, where winds are the highest
- ★ A Fire Weather Watch is in effect for eastern SD and southwestern MN, where there is another area of strong winds.
- ★ Sustained wind speeds will be 10-25 mph with gusts between 25-35 mph.
- ★ Minimum Relative Humidity Values will be 15-20%.
- ★ Fires that start may spread rapidly and will be difficult to keep contained.



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

The Red Flag Warning that is in effect till 7pm Wednesday has been expanded to cover McPherson, Edmunds, and Faulk Counties. Additionally, the Fire Weather Watch for eastern SD and southwestern MN continues to be in effect. Strong winds and low relative humidity mean any fires that ignite will spread rapidly and become difficult to control or suppress.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 34 of 79



September 2024 Climate Summary

October 1, 2024

8:10 AM

Much Above Normal Temperatures & Much Below Normal Precipitation



| | Aberdeen (since 1893) | Pierre (since 1933) | Mobridge (since 1911) | Watertown (since 1898) | Sisseton (since 1932) |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Avg Temp | 67.7° (2nd Warmest) | 71.2° (2nd Warmest) | 70.8° <i>(RECORD)</i> | 66.1° (3rd Warmest) | 67.9° <i>(RECORD)</i> |
| Departure | +6.8° | +7.6° | +7.6° | +6.0° | +7.1° |
| Warmest of '24 | 92° (9/28) | 98° (9/29) | 99° (9/26) | 88° (9/15) | 91° (9/29) |
| Coldest of '24 | 36° (9/22) | 45° (9/6) | 38° (9/22) | 40° (9/22) | 40° (9/22) |
| Rainfall | 0.42" (19th Driest) | 1.13" (58th Driest) | 0.01" <i>(RECORD)</i> | 0.25" (6th Driest) | 0.09" (3rd Driest) |
| Departure | -1.57" | -0.61" | -1.51" | -2.20" | -2.36" |



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

September 2024 will go down as one of the warmest and driest on record. The average temperature was the warmest on record for Mobridge and Sisseton, and a close second for Aberdeen and Pierre. Mobridge only received 0.01 inches of moisture for the month as well. Also listed are the individual daily record highs and warm low temperatures for the month. We also witnessed a record number of days with temperatures at or warmer than 80 degrees for almost all of our climate sites this month.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 35 of 79

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 68 °F at 5:10 PM

Low Temp: 36 °F at 7:38 AM

Wind: 18 mph at 3:17 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 11 hours, 40 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 91 in 1897

Record Low: 17 in 1974

Average High: 67

Average Low: 40

Average Precip in Oct.: .16

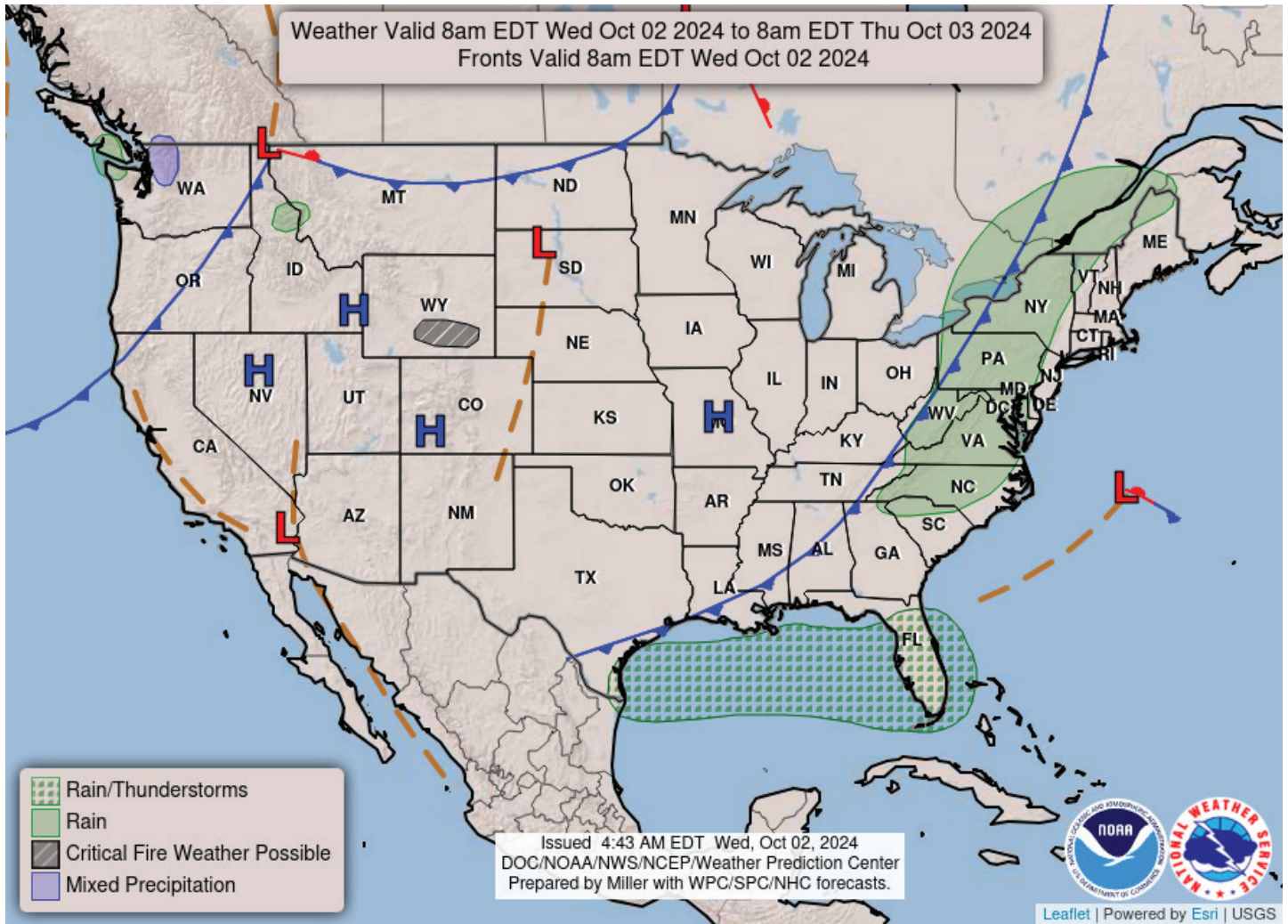
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 18.49

Precip Year to Date: 19.75

Sunset Tonight: 7:11:33 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:32:40 am



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 36 of 79

Today in Weather History

October 2, 1971: Heavy wet snow of over a foot fell in the northern Black Hills. The heavy snow was accompanied by high winds which caused extensive damage to trees and utility lines. The power company said it was one of the worst storms they had experienced.

1858: The only hurricane to impact California struck San Diego on this day. Two researchers with NOAA Michael Chenoweth and Christopher Landsea reconstructed the path of the storm using accounts from newspapers of the high winds. They estimated that if a similar storm were to have hit in 2004, it would have caused around \$500 million in damage.

1882 - An early season windstorm over Oregon and northern California blew down thousands of trees and caused great crop damage in the Sacramento Valley. (David Ludlum)

1898: A Category 4 hurricane made landfall in Georgia on this day. This is the most recent major (Cat 3 or stronger) hurricane to make landfall in Georgia.

1894: A tornado passed over the Little Rock, Arkansas Weather Bureau office on this day.

1959 - A tornado struck the town of Ivy, VA (located near Charlottesville). Eleven persons were killed, including ten from one family. (The Weather Channel)

1980 - The temperature at Blue Canyon, CA, soared to 88 degrees, an October record for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1981 - Severe thunderstorms raked Phoenix, AZ, with heavy rain, high winds, and hail up to an inch and a half in diameter, for the second day in a row. Thunderstorms on the 1st deluged Phoenix with .68 inch of rain in five minutes, equalling their all-time record. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A fast moving cold front produced snow flurries from Minnesota to the Appalachian Mountains, and gale force winds behind the front ushered cold air into the Great Lakes Region. Valentine NE reported a record low of 25 degrees. Temperatures recovered rapidly in the Northern High Plains Region, reaching the lower 80s by afternoon. Jackson, WY, warmed from a morning low of 21 degrees to an afternoon high of 76 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Early morning thunderstorms in Georgia produced three inches of rain at Canton and Woodstock. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Flooding due to thunderstorm rains in the southeastern U.S. on the last day of September and the first day of October caused the Etowah River to rise seven feet above flood stage at Canton GA. Thunderstorms produced up to ten inches of rain in northeastern Georgia, with six inches reported at Athens GA in 24 hours. One man was killed, and another man was injured, when sucked by floodwaters into drainage lines. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



SEARCHING EVERYWHERE

The phone rang and a small child answered it softly. "Hello," he said barely above a whisper.

"Hello," came the response. "Is your mother home?"

"Yes," came the reply, "but she's busy."

"Well," wondered the caller, "is your father home?"

"Yes," he said, "but he's busy, too."

"Are they both busy? What are they doing?" asked the salesman.

"They're looking for me. They think I'm lost," he whispered.

What a picture of our Savior! He said, "I, the Son of Man, have come to seek and save the lost!"

This verse comes at the end of the story of Zacchaeus. Sometimes we focus on the different facts in the story: he was very short, the son of Abraham, he was a very influential man, and he was an unpopular tax collector. None of these facts actually mattered to Jesus.

What did matter to Jesus, then and now, is that a person is not saved because of his family, his wealth, his influence in the community, his appearance or his previous way of life. It is only through faith in the Son of God that the lost can be forgiven and made new.

In one verse Jesus summarized His entire mission: to seek and to save the lost. Wherever or whoever they are, whatever they have done, Jesus continues to seek the lost.

Prayer: Lord, we may have much, but You ask little – only that we, in faith, accept You as our Savior. Help us to understand that all we need to do is to accept You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. Luke 19:10

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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 38 of 79

The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

- Black & White \$48.99/year
- Colored \$79.88/year
- Colored \$42.60/6 months
- E-Weekly* \$31.95/year

* The E-Weekly is a PDF file emailed to you each week. It does not grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Mail Completed Form to:

Groton Independent

P.O. Box 34

Groton, SD 57445-0034

or scan and email to paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Groton Daily Independent www.397news.com Subscription Form

This option will grant you access to the GDI/Video Archives.

- 1 Month \$15.98
- 3 Months \$26.63
- 6 Months \$31.95
- 9 Months \$42.60
- 12 Months \$53.25

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail _____

Password _____

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

paypal.me/paperpaul

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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 39 of 79



WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.01.24

27 35 47 50 66 25

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$108,000,000

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 11
DRAW: Mins 33 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.30.24

24 28 29 30 51 10

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$10,290,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 26 Mins
DRAW: 33 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
10.01.24

5 13 22 31 48 18

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 41 Mins
DRAW: 33 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.28.24

5 12 15 22 26

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$46,000

NEXT 15 Hrs 41 Mins
DRAW: 33 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.30.24

17 32 39 43 53 2

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 10 Mins
DRAW: 34 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.30.24

9 11 30 43 69 20

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$275,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 10 Mins
DRAW: 34 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 40 of 79

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 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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 41 of 79

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Christian def. Wilmot, 25-9, 25-20, 25-9
Burke def. Tripp-Delmont-Armour, 25-10, 25-11, 25-13
Canistota def. Tri-Valley, 25-19, 25-21, 25-20
Canton def. West Central, 25-16, 25-19, 25-15
Chester def. Deubrook, 25-16, 25-15, 25-11
Clark-Willow Lake def. DeSmet, 25-20, 25-21, 25-21
Custer def. Belle Fourche, 25-13, 25-18, 16-25, 25-20
Dell Rapids def. McCook Central-Montrose, 25-11, 25-13, 25-17
Edgemont def. Oelrichs, 25-4, 25-7, 25-5
Edgemont def. Takini, 25-3, 25-4, 25-5
Ethan def. Bridgewater-Emery, 14-25, 25-20, 19-25, 25-20, 15-9
Faulkton def. Langford, 25-22, 26-24, 25-12
Garretson def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-11, 25-12, 26-24
Gregory def. Bon Homme, 25-20, 17-25, 18-25, 27-25, 15-9
Groton def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-18, 25-19, 25-20
Hamlin def. Castlewood, 25-14, 25-27, 25-20, 25-22
Hanson def. Wagner, 25-15, 25-20, 23-25, 25-22
Harding County def. Dupree, 25-22, 25-18, 25-14
Harrisburg def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-14, 25-13, 31-29
Hitchcock-Tulare def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-9, 25-6, 25-6
Jones County def. Wall, 25-19, 20-25, 25-21, 25-23
Kadoka def. Bennett County, 25-18, 27-25, 25-15
Lemmon High School def. Bison, 25-12, 25-11, 25-9
Lennox def. Beresford, 25-19, 25-18, 25-14
Lyman def. Lower Brule, 25-22, 25-11, 25-10
Madison def. Parker, 25-9, 25-22, 26-24
Mahpiya Luta Red Cloud def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-20, 19-25, 27-25, 25-27, 18-16
Menno def. Irene-Wakonda, 26-24, 25-13, 25-17
Miller def. Chamberlain, 25-11, 25-9, 25-12
Mobridge-Pollock def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-13, 25-16, 25-13
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Platte-Geddes, 25-16, 25-18, 25-21
Newell def. McIntosh High School, 25-23, 25-21, 22-25, 22-25, 15-13
North Central def. Leola-Frederick High School, 18-25, 25-13, 23-25, 25-14, 15-9
Northwestern def. Redfield, 25-12, 25-9, 25-12
Potter County def. Sully Buttes, 25-17, 25-12, 20-25, 25-17
Sanborn Central-Woonsocket def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-13, 25-19, 25-14
Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Yankton, 25-18, 21-25, 25-6, 25-20
Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Mitchell, 25-19, 25-10, 25-23
Sioux Falls Lutheran def. Estelline-Hendricks, 24-26, 25-14, 25-17, 25-19
Sioux Falls Washington def. Huron, 25-19, 25-21, 25-18
Sisseton def. Britton-Hecla, 15-25, 31-29, 25-22, 25-23
Spearfish def. St Thomas More, 25-21, 25-17, 25-19
Sturgis Brown High School def. Hot Springs, 25-23, 25-20, 25-18

Viborg-Hurley def. Scotland, 27-25, 25-23, 25-16

Warner def. Aberdeen Roncalli, 25-15, 25-9, 25-13

Watertown def. Brookings, 25-27, 21-25, 25-19, 25-20, 15-8

Webster def. Milbank, 21-25, 25-22, 37-35, 25-15

Western Christian, Iowa def. Sioux Falls Christian, 25-23, 18-25, 25-19, 25-19

Winner def. Todd County, 25-11, 25-15, 25-11

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

In music and dance, Sudanese performers transport refugee audiences back home

BY FATMA KHALED Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — As the performers took the stage and the traditional drum beat gained momentum, Sudanese refugees sitting in the audience were moved to tears. Hadia Moussa said the melody reminded her of the country's Nuba Mountains, her family's ancestral home.

"Performances like this help people mentally affected by the war. It reminds us of the Sudanese folklore and our culture," she said.

Sudan has been engulfed by violence since April 2023, when war between the Sudanese military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces broke out across the country. The conflict has turned the capital, Khartoum, into an urban battlefield and displaced 4.6 million people, according to the U.N. migration agency, including more than 419,000 people who fled to Egypt.

A band with 12 Sudanese members now lives with thousands of refugees in Egypt. The troupe, called "Camirata," includes researchers, singers and poets who are determined to preserve the knowledge of traditional Sudanese folk music and dance to keep it from being lost in the ruinous war.

Founded in 1997, the band rose to popularity in Khartoum before it began traveling to different states, enlisting diverse musicians, dancers and styles. They sing in 25 different Sudanese languages. Founder Dafallah el-Hag said the band's members started relocating to Egypt in recently, as Sudan struggled through a difficult economic and political transition after a 2019 popular uprising unseated longtime ruler Omar al-Bashir. Others followed after the violence began. El-Hag arrived late last year.

The band uses a variety of local musical instruments on stage. El-Hag says audiences are often surprised to see instruments such as the tanbour, a stringed instrument, being played with the nuggara drums, combined with tunes of the banimbo, a wooden xylophone.

"This combination of musical instruments helped promote some sort of forgiveness and togetherness among the Sudanese people," el-Hag said, adding that he is eager to revive a museum in Khartoum that housed historic instruments and was reportedly looted and damaged.

Fatma Farid, 21, a singer and dancer from Kordofan, moved to Egypt in 2021. Her aunt was killed in 2023 when an explosive fell on their house in al-Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan.

"The way I see art has changed a lot since the war began," she said. "You think of what you present as an artist. You can deliver a message," she said.

Kawthar Osman, a native of Madani city who has been singing with the band since 1997, feels nostalgic when she sings about the Nile River, which forms in Sudan from two upper branches, the Blue and White Nile.

"It reminds me of what makes Sudan the way it is," she said, adding that the war only "pushed the band to sing more for peace."

Over 2 million Sudanese fled the country, mostly to neighboring Egypt and Chad, where the Global Hunger Index has reported a "serious" level of hunger in Chad. Over half a million forcibly displaced Sudanese have sought refuge in Chad, mostly women and children.

Living conditions for those who stayed in Sudan have worsened as the war spread beyond Khartoum. Many made hard decisions early in the war either to flee across frontlines or risk being caught in the

middle of fighting. In Darfur, the war turned particularly brutal and created famine conditions, with militias attacking entire villages and burning them to the ground.

Armed robberies, lootings and the seizure of homes for bases were some of the challenges faced by Sudanese who stayed in the country's urban areas. Others struggled to secure food and water, find sources for electricity and obtain medical treatment since hospitals have been raided by fighters or hit by airstrikes. Communications networks are often barely functional.

The performers say they struggle to speak with family and friends still in the country, much less think about returning.

"We don't know if we'll return to Sudan again or will see Sudan again or walk in the same streets," Farid said.

Under fire and using old equipment, Lebanon's rescuers struggle to respond to Israeli offensive

By SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — When Israel bombed buildings outside the southern Lebanese city of Sidon, Mohamed Arkadan and his team rushed to an emergency unlike anything they had ever seen.

About a dozen apartments had collapsed onto the hillside they once overlooked, burying more than 100 people. Even after 17 years with the civil defense forces of one of the world's most war-torn nations, Arkadan was shocked at the destruction. By Monday afternoon — about 24 hours after the bombing — his team had pulled more than 40 bodies, including children's, from the rubble, along with 60 survivors.

The children's bodies broke his heart, said Arkadan, 38, but his team of over 30 first responders' inability to help further pained him more. Firetrucks and ambulances haven't been replaced in years. Rescue tools and equipment are in short supply. His team has to buy their uniforms out of pocket.

An economic crisis that began in 2019 and a massive 2020 port explosion have left Lebanon struggling to provide basic services such as electricity and medical care. Political divisions have left the country of 6 million without a president or functioning government for more than two years, deepening a national sense of abandonment reaching down to the people the country depends on in emergencies.

"We have zero capabilities, zero logistics," Arkadan said. "We have no gloves, no personal protection gear."

War has upended Lebanon again

Israel's intensified air campaign against Hezbollah has upended the country. Over 1,000 people have been killed in Israeli strikes since Sept. 17, nearly a quarter of them women and children, according to the Health Ministry. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled their homes, sleeping on beaches and streets.

The World Health Organization said over 30 primary health care centers around Lebanon's affected areas have been closed.

On Tuesday, Israel said it began a limited ground operation against Hezbollah and warned people to evacuate several southern communities, promising further escalation.

Lebanon is "grappling with multiple crises, which have overwhelmed the country's capacity to cope," said Imran Riza, the U.N.'s humanitarian coordinator for Lebanon, who said the U.N. had allocated \$24 million in emergency funding for people affected by the fighting.

Exhausted medical staff are struggling to cope with the daily influx of new patients. Under government emergency plans, hospitals and medical workers have halted non-urgent operations.

Government shelters are full

In the southern province of Tyre, many doctors have fled along with residents. In Nabatiyeh, the largest province in southern Lebanon, first responders say they have been working around the clock since last week to reach hundreds of people wounded in bombings that hit dozens of villages and towns, often many on the same day.

After the bombing in Sidon nearly 250 first responders joined Arkadan's team, including a specialized search-and-rescue unit from Beirut, some 45 kilometers (28 miles) to the north. His team didn't have the modern equipment needed to pull people from a disaster.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 44 of 79

"We used traditional tools, like scissors, cables, shovels," Arkadan said.

"Anyone here?" rescuers shouted through the gaps in mounds of rubble, searching for survivors buried deeper underground. One excavator removed the debris slowly, to avoid shaking the heaps of bricks and mangled steel.

Many sought refuge in the ancient city of Tyre, 20 kilometers (12 miles) north of the border with Israel, thinking it was likely to be spared bombardment. More than 8,000 people arrived, said Hassan Dbouk, the head of its disaster management unit.

He said that there were no pre-positioned supplies, such as food parcels, hygiene kits and mattresses, and moving trucks now is fraught with danger. Farmers have been denied access to their land because of the bombings and the municipality is struggling to pay salaries.

The humanitarian situation is catastrophic

Meanwhile, garbage is piling up on the streets. The number of municipal workers has shrunk from 160 to 10.

"The humanitarian situation is catastrophic," Dbouk said.

Wissam Ghazal, the health ministry official in Tyre, said in one hospital, only five of 35 doctors have remained. In Tyre province, eight medics, including three with a medical organization affiliated with Hezbollah, were killed over two days, he said.

Over the weekend, the city itself became a focus of attacks.

Israeli warplanes struck near the port city's famed ruins, along its beaches and in residential and commercial areas, forcing thousands of residents to flee. At least 15 civilians were killed Saturday and Sunday, including two municipal workers, a soldier and several children, all but one from two families.

It took rescuers two days to comb through the rubble of a home in the Kharab neighborhood in the city's center, where a bomb had killed nine members of the al-Samra family.

Six premature babies in incubators around the city were moved to Beirut. The city's only doctor, who looked after them, couldn't move between hospitals under fire, Ghazal said.

One of the district's four hospitals shut after sustaining damage from a strike that affected its electricity supply and damaged the operations room. In two other hospitals, glass windows were broken. For now, the city's hospitals are receiving more killed than wounded.

"But you don't know what will happen when the intensity of attacks increases. We will definitely need more."

Making do with what they have

Hosein Faqih, head of civil defense in the Nabatiyeh province, said that "we are working in very difficult and critical circumstances because the strikes are random. We have no protection. We have no shields, no helmets, no extra hoses. The newest vehicle is 25 years old. We are still working despite all that."

At least three of his firefighters' team were killed in early September. Ten have been injured since then. Of 45 vehicles, six were hit and are now out of service.

Faqih said he is limiting his team's search-and-rescue missions to residential areas, keeping them away from forests or open areas where they used to put out fires.

"These days, there is something difficult every day. Body parts are everywhere, children, civilians and bodies under rubble," Faqih said. Still, he said, he considers his job to be the safety net for the people.

"We serve the people, and we will work with what we have."

Palestinian officials say 51 killed in Israeli operation on southern Gaza

By WAFAA SHURAFI and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israel launched ground operations and carried out airstrikes in a hard-hit city in southern Gaza overnight, killing at least 51 people, including women and children, Palestinian medical officials said Wednesday.

Israel has continued to strike what it says are militant targets across Gaza nearly a year after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack ignited the war in the Palestinian territory, and even as attention has shifted to Lebanon and

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 45 of 79

Iran. Israeli ground troops have carried out incursions into Lebanon against Hezbollah, and Tehran fired a barrage of ballistic missiles on Israel late Tuesday.

Hezbollah said its fighters clashed with Israeli troops in the Lebanese border town of Odaisseh, forcing the troops to retreat.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military or independent confirmation of the fighting, which would mark the first ground combat since Israeli troops crossed the border this week. Israeli media reported infantry and tank units operating in southern Lebanon after the military sent thousands of additional troops and artillery to the border.

The military has warned people in around 50 villages and towns to evacuate. Hundreds of thousands have already fled their homes as the conflict has intensified.

The ground operations in Lebanon have raised fears of a wider war in the Middle East that could draw in Iran and the United States, which has rushed military assets to the region in support of Israel. Hezbollah, widely seen as the most powerful armed group in the region, and Hamas are both backed by Tehran.

Israel also lashed out at the United Nations on Wednesday, declaring Secretary-General António Guterres persona non grata, or banned from entering the country. Foreign Minister Israel Katz accused him of failing to unequivocally condemn the Iranian attack.

Guterres had released a brief statement after the barrage that read: "I condemn the broadening of the Middle East conflict, with escalation after escalation. This must stop. We absolutely need a cease-fire."

Palestinians describe massive raid in Gaza

The Health Ministry in Gaza said at least 51 people were killed and 82 wounded in the operation in Khan Younis that began early Wednesday. Records at the European Hospital show that seven women and 12 children, as young as 22 months old, were among those killed.

Another 23 people, including two children, were killed in separate strikes across Gaza, according to local hospitals.

The Israeli military did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Residents said Israel had carried out heavy airstrikes as its ground forces staged an incursion into three neighborhoods in Khan Younis. Mahmoud al-Razd, a resident who said four relatives were killed in the raids, described heavy destruction and said first responders had struggled to reach destroyed homes.

"The explosions and shelling were massive," he told The Associated Press. "Many people are thought to be under the rubble, and no one can retrieve them."

Israel carried out a weeklong offensive earlier this year in Khan Younis that left much of Gaza's second largest city in ruins. Over the course of the war, Israeli forces have repeatedly returned to areas of Gaza as militants have regrouped.

On Oct. 7, Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took around 250 hostage. Some 100 have not yet been released, around 65 of whom are believed to be alive.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 41,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities, who do not say how many were fighters but say a little more than half were women and children. The military says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence.

Iran fires missiles to avenge attacks on militant allies

Iran launched at least 180 missiles into Israel on Tuesday in what it said was retaliation for a series of devastating blows Israel has landed in recent weeks against Hezbollah, which has been firing rockets into Israel since the war in Gaza began in solidarity with Hamas.

Israelis scrambled for bomb shelters as air raid sirens sounded and the orange glow of missiles streaked across the night sky.

The Israeli military said it intercepted many of the incoming Iranian missiles, though some landed in central and southern Israel and two people were lightly wounded by shrapnel.

Several missiles landed in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where one of them killed a Palestinian worker from Gaza who had been stranded in the territory since the war broke out.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to retaliate, saying Iran "made a big mistake tonight

and it will pay for it.”

U.S. President Joe Biden said his administration is “fully supportive” of Israel and that he’s in “active discussion” with aides about what the appropriate response should be.

Iran said it would respond to any violation of its sovereignty with even heavier strikes on Israeli infrastructure.

Iran said it fired Tuesday’s missiles as retaliation for attacks that killed leaders of Hezbollah, Hamas and the Iranian military. It referenced Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and Revolutionary Guard Gen. Abbas Nilforushan, both killed in an Israeli airstrike last week in Beirut. It also mentioned Ismail Haniyeh, a top leader in Hamas who was assassinated in Tehran in a suspected Israeli attack in July.

The U.N. Security Council scheduled an emergency meeting for Wednesday morning to address the escalating situation in the Middle East.

Israel says its forces are operating in Lebanon

Israel is meanwhile carrying out what it says are limited ground incursions into southern Lebanon. Israeli airstrikes and artillery have been pounding southern Lebanon as Hezbollah fires dozens of rockets, missiles and drones into Israel, where there have been few casualties.

Israel has said it will continue to strike Hezbollah until it is safe for tens of thousands of its citizens displaced from homes near the Lebanon border to return. Hezbollah has vowed to keep firing rockets into Israel until there is a cease-fire in Gaza with Hamas.

Israel has warned people in southern Lebanon to evacuate to the north of the Awali River, some 60 kilometers (36 miles) from the border and much farther than the Litani River, which marks the northern edge of a U.N.-declared zone intended to serve as a buffer between Israel and Hezbollah after their 2006 war. The border region has largely emptied out over the past year as the two sides have traded fire.

Israeli strikes have killed over 1,000 people in Lebanon over the past two weeks, nearly a quarter of them women and children, according to the Health Ministry.

Ukraine’s military will pull out of Vuhledar in the east after 2 years of intense fighting

By HANNA ARHIROVA and SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian forces are withdrawing from the front-line town of Vuhledar, perched atop a tactically significant hill in eastern Ukraine, after more than two years of grinding battle, military officials said Wednesday.

Vuhledar, a town Ukrainian forces fought tooth and nail to keep, is the latest urban settlement to fall to the Russians as the war stretches deep into its third year and the Ukrainian army is gradually being pushed backward in the eastern Donetsk province.

It follows a vicious summer campaign along the eastern front that saw Kyiv cede several thousand square kilometers (square miles) of territory as the Russian army hacks its way westward, obliterating towns and villages with missiles, glide bombs, artillery and drones.

Ukraine’s Khortytsia ground forces formation, which commands eastern regions including Donetsk, said in a statement posted on Telegram it was withdrawing troops from Vuhledar to “protect military personnel and equipment.”

“In an attempt to take control of the city at any cost, (Russian) reserves were directed to carry out flanking attacks, which exhausted the defense of the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. As a result of the enemy’s actions, there arose a threat of encircling the city,” the statement said.

The tactical significance of the town, situated at the confluence of two major roads, is two-fold. Dominant heights and proximity to railway lines offer Moscow greater protection for their own logistics routes, and a better vantage point for attacks against Ukrainian forces and supply lines feeding the south.

Its capture is another notch in Moscow’s belt, bringing it closer to the key logistics hub of Pokrovsk.

Thai police seek negligence charges for a school bus fire that killed 23

By JINTAMAS SAKSORNCHAI Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Thai police on Wednesday said they were investigating whether the school bus fire that killed 23 young students and teachers in suburban Bangkok was caused by negligence after filing initial charges against the driver.

The fire on the bus carrying six teachers and 39 elementary and junior high school students on Tuesday spread so quickly many were unable to escape.

The driver, Saman Chanput, was arrested several hours later and charged with reckless driving causing deaths and injuries, failing to stop to help others and failing to report the accident, police said.

Authorities were investigating if the fire might be caused by negligence from both the driver and the bus company, and will press charges against all parties responsible, acting police chief Kitrat Phanphet told a news conference.

While an initial investigation suggested that the driver was not speeding, police found 11 natural gas canisters inside the bus that had a permit to install only six, Kitrat said.

Police have not officially concluded the cause of the fire, but they said the driver told investigators he was driving normally until the bus lost balance at its front tire, hit another car and scraped a concrete highway barrier. The sparks from the friction might have caught on the highly flammable gas canisters and ignited the blaze, police said.

Kitrat said the fact that the driver did not immediately stop after feeling the bus was losing balance could be grounds for negligence.

The inspection of the bus found that its emergency exit could be opened, but it wasn't clear if it worked properly, said chief of police forensics Trairong Phiwpan. He also said they did not find any window breakers.

In an interview with public broadcaster Thai PBS, bus company owner Songwit Chinnaboot said the vehicle was inspected for safety twice a year as required and that the gas cylinders had passed safety standards.

The families of the victims were driven from Uthai Thani, the northern province where the bus departed from on a school trip, to Bangkok to provide DNA samples for the identification process.

Three students were hospitalized, two of them in serious condition. A 7-year-old girl suffered burns on her face, and a surgeon said doctors were trying to save her eyesight.

Thailand's Department of Land Transport said it was implementing urgent inspections of all natural gas-fueled buses. The department also will upgrade its safety guidelines to require crisis management training for drivers and safety inspection every time such vehicles are to be commissioned by schools, said Seksom Akraphand, the agency's deputy director-general.

He added that the department had suspended licenses for both the bus company and the driver.

Helene death toll now at least 166 as Biden plans to visit ravaged Carolinas

By ERIK VERDUZCO, JEFF AMY and KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

SWANNANOVA, N.C. (AP) — President Joe Biden will survey the devastation in North and South Carolina on Wednesday as rescuers continue their search for anyone still unaccounted for after Hurricane Helene caused catastrophic damage across the Southeast and killed at least 166 people.

Many residents in both states were still without running water, cellular service and electricity as floodwaters receded and revealed more of the death and destruction left in Helene's path.

"We have to jump start this recovery process," Biden said Tuesday, estimating it will cost billions. "People are scared to death. This is urgent."

While Biden is in the Carolinas, Vice President Kamala Harris will be in neighboring Georgia.

Helene, one of the deadliest storms in recent U.S. history, knocked out power and cellular service for millions. More than 1.2 million customers still were in the dark early Wednesday in the Carolinas and Georgia. Some residents cooked food on charcoal grills or hiked to high ground in the hopes of finding a signal to let loved ones know they are alive.

On Tuesday, cadaver dogs and search crews trudged through knee-deep muck and debris in the mountains

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 48 of 79

of western North Carolina looking for more victims. At least 57 people were killed in Buncombe County alone, home to city of Asheville, a tourism haven known for its art galleries, breweries and outdoor activities.

In Swannanoa, a small community outside Asheville, receding floodwaters revealed cars stacked on top of others and trailer homes that had floated away during the storm. Roads were caked with mud and debris and pockmarked by sinkholes.

Cliff Stewart survived two feet of water that poured into his home, topping the wheels on his wheelchair and sending his medicine bottles floating from room to room. Left without electricity and reliant on food drop-offs from friends, he has refused offers to help him leave.

"Where am I going to go?" the Marine Corps veteran said. "This is all I've got. I just don't want to give it up, because what am I going to do? Be homeless? I'd rather die right here than live homeless."

"Communities were wiped off the map," North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said at a news conference.

Across the border in East Tennessee, a caravan including Gov. Bill Lee surveying damage outside the town of Erwin drove by a crew pulling two bodies from the wreckage, a grim reminder that the rescue and recovery operations are still very much ongoing and the death toll is likely to rise.

In Augusta, Georgia, Sherry Brown was converting power from the alternator of her car to keep her refrigerator running. She has been taking "bird baths" with water collected in coolers. In another part of the city, people waited in line more than three hours to get water from one of five centers set up to serve more than 200,000 people.

What is being done to help?

Exhausted emergency crews worked around the clock to clear roads, restore power and phone service, and reach those still stranded by the storm, which killed at least 166 people in six states, including many who were hit by falling trees or trapped in flooded cars and homes. Nearly half of the deaths were in North Carolina, while dozens of others were in South Carolina and Georgia.

More than 150,000 households have registered for assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and that number is expected to rise rapidly in the coming days, said Frank Matranga, an agency representative.

Nearly 2 million ready-to-eat meals and more than a million liters of water have been sent to the hardest-hit areas, he said.

The storm unleashed the worst flooding in a century in North Carolina, dumping more than 2 feet (61 centimeters) of rain in places.

Cooper's administration said Tuesday that more than two dozen water plants remained closed. Active-duty U.S. military units may be needed to assist the long-term recovery, he said, adding that Biden had given "the green light" to mobilizing military assets soon.

A section of one of the region's main arteries, Interstate 40, reopened Tuesday after a mudslide was cleared, but a collapsed stretch near North Carolina's border with Tennessee remained closed.

How some of the hardest-hit areas are coping

Residents and business owners wore masks and gloves while clearing debris Tuesday in Hot Springs, North Carolina, where almost every building along the tiny town's main street was heavily damaged.

Sarah Calloway, who owns the deli and gourmet grocery Vaste Riviere Provisions, said the storm arrived in town frighteningly quickly. She helped fill sandbags the day the night before, but they turned out to be useless. The water rose so rapidly that even though she and others were in an apartment on an upper floor, she feared they would not be safe. They called to request a rescue from a swift water team.

"They tried to get to us, and at that point they couldn't," she said. "Luckily, that was when the water started to recede."

"It was really challenging to watch how quickly it rose up and then just to watch whole buildings floating down the river. It was something I can't even describe," she said.

In the Black Mountain Mobile Home Park in Swannanoa on Tuesday, Carina Ramos and Ezekiel Bianchi were overwhelmed by the damage. The couple, their children and dog fled in the predawn darkness on Friday as the Swannanoa River's rapidly rising waters began flooding the bottom end of the park.

By then, trees were blocking the roads and the couple abandoned their three vehicles, all of which flooded.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 49 of 79

"We left everything because we were panicking," Ramos said.

Their children were staying with Ramos' parents and did not want to even see the devastated trailer.

"My daughter was crying, panicking," Ramos said. "She says she doesn't want to see her room full of toys, all thrown everywhere."

Mobile service knocked out

The widespread damage and outages affecting communications infrastructure left many people without stable access to the internet and cellular service.

Mayor Zeb Smathers of Canton, North Carolina, expressed frustration Tuesday that so many of his constituents were still without cell service and given no clear timetable for when it would be restored.

"People are walking the streets of Canton with their phones up in the air trying to catch a cellphone signal like it's a butterfly," he told The Associated Press. "Every single aspect of this response has been extremely crippled by lack of cellphone communication. The one time we absolutely needed our cellphones to work they failed."

Teams from Verizon were working to repair downed cell towers, damaged fiber cables and provide alternative forms of connectivity across the region, the company said in a statement.

AT&T, meanwhile, said it launched "one of the largest mobilizations of our disaster recovery assets for emergency connectivity support."

The efforts to restore service was made more challenging by the region's terrain and spread-out population, said David Zumwalt, president and CEO of the Association for Broadband Without Boundaries.

Destruction from Florida to Virginia

Helene blew ashore in Florida late Thursday as a Category 4 hurricane and upended life throughout the Southeast, where deaths were also reported in Florida, Tennessee and Virginia.

Across Georgia, Helene's inland path knocked out power and shattered lives from Valdosta to Augusta, where a line of cars waiting to get water Tuesday stretched at least a half-mile (0.8 kilometers) down the road.

"It's been rough," said Kristie Nelson, who had no idea when her electricity would be restored. "I'm just dying for a hot shower."

With at least 36 killed in South Carolina, Helene passed the 35 people who were killed in the state after Hurricane Hugo made landfall north of Charleston in 1989.

When Tennessee Gov. Lee flew to the eastern part of the state to survey damage on Tuesday, residents said the governor and his entourage were the first help they had seen since the storm hit.

"Where has everyone been?" one frustrated local asked. "We have been here alone."

Palestinians in West Bank risk crossing Israel's separation barrier to flee failing economy

By JACK JEFFERY Associated Press

YATTA, West Bank (AP) — At dawn in mid-May, Sayyed Ayyed and dozens of other unemployed Palestinian men gathered at the foot of the towering wall of concrete and barbed wire dividing the occupied West Bank from Israel.

A smuggler was there with a ladder and ropes. Each man handed over the equivalent of \$100. Ayyed waited his turn as others clambered over.

The 30-year-old father of two young daughters hadn't found work for a year. Debts were mounting. Rent had to be paid. On the Israeli side, there was the lure of work on a construction site. He just had to get over the wall.

"When we reach the point where you see that your children do not have food," he said, "the barrier of fear is broken."

A year of war in Gaza has reverberated across the West Bank, where the World Bank warns the economy is at risk of collapse because of Israeli restrictions barring Palestinian laborers from entering the country

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 50 of 79

for work, and the biggest wave of violence in decades.

Unemployment has skyrocketed, reaching 30% from around 12% before the war. The past year, some 300,000 Palestinians in the West Bank, many of whom worked in Israel, have lost their jobs, the Palestinian Economy Ministry says. Over the first quarter of 2024, the territory's economy contracted by 25%, according to the World Bank.

Desperate for jobs, some Palestinians are resorting to smuggling themselves at great personal risk through the guarded barrier and into Israel.

When they find them, Israeli security forces arrest them — or at times open fire. There are no official figures from Palestinian authorities about workers killed or injured by Israeli gunfire trying to cross the barrier. The Associated Press spoke to families of three Palestinians who said their relatives were killed trying to sneak across.

"These people are being shot at trying to go to work," said Assaf Adiv, director of MAAN, a worker's association that focuses on Palestinian labor rights.

Wedding debt cost one Palestinian his life

Before the war, some 150,000 Palestinians from the West Bank were crossing legally every day into Israel to work, mainly in construction, manufacturing and agriculture.

After Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, Israeli authorities barred entry to most Palestinians, saying it was necessary for security. Tens of thousands of Palestinians became jobless overnight.

Eyad al-Najjar, a 47-year-old laborer from a village near the West Bank town of Yatta, slipped into Israel through a barbed-wire section of the barrier in July, earning the equivalent of \$650 for a week's work, his family said.

Then his son got married. The wedding set the family back \$8,000. So al-Najjar tried his luck again.

He approached a hole in the barrier Aug. 26, three days after the wedding. Israeli troops spotted al-Najjar and opened fire, killing him with a shot to the head, his relatives said.

"His children will have to work to close this debt in the future," relative Jawadat al-Najjar said. "No one helps in these difficult days."

The Israeli military told the AP it couldn't comment on the shooting without specific coordinates of where relatives said it happened.

"The IDF forces work to prevent illegal infiltrations and to maintain the security of the barrier and the safety of residents," it said in a statement. "The forces conduct proactive ambushes along the barrier, arresting infiltrators and infiltrator smugglers and operate both overtly and covertly to protect the barrier area."

Labor rights experts say infiltrations happen daily, often involving dozens of Palestinians at a time.

Under restrictions, livelihoods have dried up

Many Palestinians found their livelihoods gutted by the restrictions. Some sold possessions. On West Bank roadsides, children hawk tissues, bottled water and air fresheners. Some men have tried their hand at selling sandwiches at makeshift street stalls.

It isn't just the cutoff from jobs in Israel. The military also tightened its grip in the West Bank, implementing a network of new military checkpoints that have hampered the movement of commerce and workers.

Vehicles can wait for hours as soldiers inspect everyone, unlike before the war, when many were waved through. Other roads are shut off completely. In one case, the army closed a road linking 12 villages to the southern town of Dura, said local activist Badawi Jawaed. Many workers couldn't reach their jobs and were laid off, he said.

Violence has surged, with increased Israeli raids targeting armed groups. More than 700 West Bank Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire, the Palestinian Health Ministry says. Many were shot dead in armed clashes, others for throwing stones at troops. But some appear to have posed no apparent threat.

In Israel, Palestinians can earn double or triple a West Bank salary. Standing in their way is Israel's barrier, running some 700 kilometers (400 miles) long and peaking at 7-meters (23-feet) tall.

Construction of the barrier began in 2002 after Palestinians from the territory carried out scores of suicide bombings and other attacks that killed Israeli civilians at the height of the second intifada.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 51 of 79

Late Tuesday, two Palestinian men from the West Bank city of Hebron opened fire on a boulevard in the Jaffa neighborhood in Tel Aviv killing at least seven people, Israeli police said. It remains unclear how they crossed into Israel.

Many climb the barrier with ladders and ropes. Others hide in trucks that pass through checkpoints. Some slip through holes in fencing, workers and experts said.

Ayyed once worked for an Israeli construction company that paid 7,000 shekels (\$1,850) monthly. Cut off from the job since the war began, he searched for work in his home city of Jenin, in the northern West Bank.

Ayyed said he tried grocery stores and restaurants, but no one was hiring.

To get by, he borrowed money from friends, racking up around \$1,600 in debt. He cut back on water and electricity. By spring, he had no one left to borrow from and a \$500 monthly rent bill to pay.

So he decided to risk it.

As he scaled the wall, the ladder slipped. Ayyed fell to the ground on the West Bank side, breaking his leg. He limped home penniless.

Smuggling rings run by gangs

Palestinian smugglers or middlemen linked to gangs on both sides of the barrier arrange the crossings. They provide ladders and rope, as well as vehicles on the Israeli side to whisk workers away from the patrolled barrier.

They charge 300 to 1,000 shekels (\$79 to \$260), said Arafat Amro, a Palestinian labor rights expert.

Once through, work isn't hard to find, due to a labor shortage across Israel, mostly in construction and agriculture, Palestinian workers and Amro said.

To evade Israeli authorities, Palestinian workers are "sleeping in the fields, they sleep in the farms, they sleep under the trees, at the construction sites," Amro said.

Raouf Adra, a laborer from Yatta, said he found two week's work on a construction site in the southern Israeli town of Dimona that would have paid 350 shekels (\$65) daily. After climbing the barrier and reaching the site, he was told he was forbidden to leave after his shifts, to prevent discovery.

The next day, Israeli police stormed the site, arresting Adra and several other Palestinians. The Israeli site manager was nowhere to be seen.

"He ran away," Adra said.

Adra was handed a 40-day prison sentence and fined 1,500 shekels (\$390). Once released, he was transported back to the West Bank and banned from entering Israel for three years.

Desperate for work, this Palestinian would do it again

Unable to walk after his fall in May, Ayyed said he had to sell the gold his family gave his wife as a wedding present and then his car.

"I know people who sold their furniture," he said.

Four months later, his broken leg is almost completely healed.

Asked if he would try again, he replied: "If the situation remains the same, I will consider it."

Sex workers find themselves at the center of Congo's mpox outbreak

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

KAMITUGA, Congo (AP) — It's been four months since Sifa Kunguja recovered from mpox, but as a sex worker, she said, she's still struggling to regain clients, with fear and stigma driving away people who've heard she had the virus.

"It's risky work," Kunguja, 40, said from her small home in eastern Congo. "But if I don't work, I won't have money for my children."

Sex workers are among those hardest-hit by the mpox outbreak in Kamituga, where some 40,000 of them are estimated to reside — many single mothers driven by poverty to this mineral-rich commercial hub where gold miners comprise the majority of the clientele. Doctors estimate 80% of cases here have been contracted sexually, though the virus also spreads through other kinds of skin-to-skin contact.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 52 of 79

Sex workers say the situation threatens their health and livelihoods. Health officials warn that more must be done to stem the spread — with a focus on sex workers — or mpox will creep deeper through eastern Congo and the region.

Mpox causes mostly mild symptoms such as fever and body aches, but serious cases can mean prominent, painful blisters on the face, hands, chest and genitals.

Kunguja and other sex workers insist that despite risks of reinfection or spreading the virus, they have no choice but to keep working. Sex work isn't illegal in Congo, though related activities such as solicitation are. Rights groups say possible legal consequences and fear of retribution — sex workers are subject to high rates of violence including rape and abuse — prevent women from seeking medical care. That can be especially detrimental during a public health emergency, according to experts.

Health officials in Kamituga are advocating for the government to shutter nightclubs and mines and compensate sex workers for lost business.

Not everyone agrees. Local officials say they don't have resources to do more than care for those who are sick, and insist it's sex workers' responsibility to protect themselves.

Kamituga Mayor Alexandre Bundya M'pila told The Associated Press that the government is creating awareness campaigns but lacks money to reach everyone. He also said sex workers should look for other jobs, without providing examples of what might be available.

Sex work is a big part of the economy

Miners stream into Kamituga by the tens of thousands. The economy is centered on the mines: Buyers line streets, traders travel to sell gold, small businesses and individuals provide food and lodging, and the sex industry flourishes.

Nearly a dozen sex workers spoke to AP. They said well over half their clients are miners.

The industry is well organized, according to the Kenyan-based African Sex Workers Alliance, composed of sex worker-led groups. The alliance estimates that 13% of Kamituga's 300,000 residents are sex workers.

The town has 18 sex-worker committees, the alliance said, with a leadership that tries to work with government officials, protect and support colleagues, and advocate for their rights.

But sex work in Congo is dangerous. Women face systematic violence that's tolerated by society, according to a report by UMANDE, a local sex-worker rights group.

Many women are forced into the industry because of poverty or because, like Kunguja, they're single parents and must support their families.

Getting mpox can put sex workers out of business

The sex workers who spoke to AP described mpox as an added burden. Many are terrified of getting the virus — it means time away from work, lost income and perhaps losing business altogether.

Those who recover are stigmatized, they said. Kamituga is a small place, where most everyone knows one another. Neighbors whisper and tell clients when someone is sick — people talk and point.

Since contracting mpox in May, Kunguja said she's gone from about 20 clients daily to five. When she was sick, the lesions on her genitals were so painful she could hardly walk, hunched over and wobbling to get around. Her 9-year-old son caught it from her, she said — he's out of the hospital but still has lesions.

She's been supporting her 11 children through sex work for nearly a decade, but said she now can't afford to send them to school. To compensate, she's selling alcohol by day, but it's not enough.

She said she wants the government to subsidize her income so she doesn't have to put herself or others at risk.

Experts say information and awareness are key

Disease experts say a lack of vaccines and information makes stemming the spread difficult.

Some 250,000 vaccines have arrived in Congo, but it's unclear when any will get to Kamituga. Sex workers and miners are among those slated to receive them first.

Community leaders and aid groups are trying to teach sex workers about protecting themselves and their clients via awareness sessions where they discuss signs and symptoms. They also press condom use, which they say isn't widespread enough in the industry.

Sex workers told AP that they insist on using condoms when they have them, but that they simply don't

have enough.

Kamituga's general hospital gives them boxes of about 140 condoms every few months. Some sex workers see up to 60 clients a day — for less than \$1 a person. Condoms run out, and workers say they can't afford more.

Dr. Guy Mukari, an epidemiologist working with the National Institute of Biomedical Research in Congo, noted that the variant running rampant in Kamituga seems more susceptible to transmission via sex, making for a double whammy with the sex industry.

Even health experts admit the lack of information about the virus makes it unclear how effective condoms are. Lesions are usually found around the base of the penis, an area that condoms don't cover, they note.

Some women resort to flimsy plastic bags when they can't find condoms, sex worker Irene Mabwidi said. As a leader in her local sex industry group, she said she tries to advise women on other protection measures, such as inspecting clients' bodies for lesions, though that's far from foolproof.

Erin Kilbride of Human Rights Watch said it's crucial that sex workers are in the room when the government designs outreach programs.

"The government should proactively reach out to sex worker organizations, at the local and national level, who are experts in what their communities need," Kilbride said.

Mines also lack safety measures

Health experts say miners are also key to containing the virus. While mpox is spread mainly through close contact, it can also occasionally spread from the environment via objects or surfaces touched by an infected person, according to the World Health Organization.

There's little awareness of that in mines, where conditions are often unsanitary. Mines have few, if any, handwashing stations, and sometimes miners don't shower for days. Infected miners might urinate or openly defecate in mines and contaminate water sources, health officials say.

Miners told AP more information and advocacy is needed in mines. Debus Bulambo said he got mpox in February, but sees most fellow miners failing to take the virus seriously. People want to spend cash on sex, even during an epidemic, sometimes paying five times more to go without a condom, he noted. And miners earn a lot — up to about \$120 a month, more than double the country's average annual income.

Bulambo said he occasionally paid for sex in the past but stopped, though he realizes he's the exception. "People aren't afraid," he said bluntly. "I don't understand."

Vance and Walz keep it civil in a policy-heavy discussion: VP debate takeaways

By BILL BARROW, ZEKE MILLER and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice presidential hopefuls Tim Walz and JD Vance focused their criticism on the top of the ticket on Tuesday as they engaged in a policy-heavy discussion that may be the last debate of the 2024 presidential campaign.

It was the first encounter between Minnesota's Democratic governor and Ohio's Republican senator, following last month's debate between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump. It comes just five weeks before Election Day and as millions of voters are now able to cast early ballots.

Tuesday's confrontation played out as the stakes of the contest rose again after Iran fired missiles into Israel, while a devastating hurricane and potentially debilitating port strike roiled the country at home. Over and over, Walz and Vance outlined the policy and character differences between their running mates, while trying to introduce themselves to the country.

Here are some takeaways from Tuesday's debate.

With Mideast in turmoil, Walz promises 'steady leadership' and Vance offers 'peace through strength'

Iran's ballistic missile attack on Israel on Tuesday elicited a contrast between the Democratic and Republican tickets on foreign policy: Walz promised "steady leadership" under Harris while Vance pledged a return to "peace through strength" if Trump is returned to the White House.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 54 of 79

The differing visions of what American leadership should look like overshadowed the sharp policy differences between the two tickets.

The Iranian threat to the region and U.S. interests around the world opened the debate, with Walz pivoting the topic to criticism of Trump.

"What's fundamental here is that steady leadership is going to matter," Walz said, then referenced the "nearly 80-year-old Donald Trump talking about crowd sizes" and responding to global crises by tweet.

Vance, for his part, promised a return to "effective deterrence" under Trump against Iran, brushing back on Walz's criticism of Trump by attacking Harris and her role in the Biden administration.

"Who has been the vice president for the last three and a half years and the answer is your running mate, not mine," he said. He pointedly noted that the Hamas attacks on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, happened "during the administration of Kamala Harris."

Vance and Walz punch up rather than at each other

Vance and Walz trained the bulk of their attacks not on their onstage rivals, but on the running mates who weren't in the room.

Both vice presidential nominees sought to convey a genial mien as they lobbed criticism at Harris and Trump, respectively.

It was a reflection of the fact that most voters don't cast a ballot based on the vice president, and on a vice presidential nominee's historic role in serving as the attack dog for their running mates.

Walz pointedly attacked Trump for failing to meet his pledge of building a physical barrier across the entire U.S.-Mexico border at the country's southern neighbor's expense.

"Less than 2% of that wall got built and Mexico didn't pay a dime," Walz said.

Underscoring the focus on the top of the ticket, during a back-and-forth about immigration, Vance said to his opponent, "I think that you want to solve this problem, but I don't think that Kamala Harris does."

It was a wonky policy debate, with talk of risk pools, housing regulations and energy policy

In an age of world-class disses optimized for social media, Tuesday's debate was a detour into substance. Both candidates took a low-key approach and both enthusiastically delved into the minutiae.

Walz dug into the drafting of the Affordable Care Act when he was in the House in 2009, and pushed Vance on the senator's claim that Trump, who tried to eliminate the law, actually helped preserve it. Vance, defending his claim that illegal immigration pushes up housing prices, cited a Federal Reserve study to back himself up. Walz talked about how Minneapolis tinkered with local regulations to boost the housing supply. Both men talked about the overlap between energy policy, trade and climate change.

It was a very different style than often seen in presidential debates over the past several election cycles.

Vance stays on the defensive on abortion

Walz pounced on Vance repeatedly over abortion access and reproductive rights as the Ohio senator tried to argue that a state-by-state matrix of abortion laws is the ideal approach for the United States. Walz countered that a "basic right" for a woman should not be determined "by geography."

"This is a very simple proposition: These are women's decisions," Walz said. "We trust women. We trust doctors."

Walz sought to personalize the issue by referencing the death of Amber Thurman, who waited more than 20 hours at the hospital for a routine medical procedure known as a D&C to clear out remaining tissue after taking abortion pills. She developed sepsis and died.

Rather than sidestep the reference, Vance at one point agreed with Walz that "Amber Thurman should still be alive."

Vance steered the conversation to the GOP ticket's proposals he said would help women and children economically, thus avoiding the need for terminating pregnancies. But Walz retorted that such policies — tax credits, expanded childcare aid, a more even economy — can be pursued while still allowing women to make their own decisions about abortion.

Both candidates put a domestic spin on climate change

In the wake of the devastation of Hurricane Helene, Vance took a question about climate change and

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 55 of 79

gave an answer about jobs and manufacturing, taking a detour around Trump's past claims that global warming is a "hoax."

Vance contended that the best way to fight climate change was to move more manufacturing to the United States, because the country has the world's cleanest energy economy. It was a distinctly domestic spin on a global crisis, especially after Trump pulled the U.S. out of the international Paris climate accords during his administration.

Walz also kept the climate change focus domestic, touting the Biden administration's renewable energy investments as well as record levels of oil and natural gas production. "You can see us becoming an energy superpower in the future," Walz said.

It was a decidedly optimistic take on a pervasive and grim global problem.

Walz, Vance each blame opposing presidential candidate for immigration stalemate

The two running mates agreed that the number of migrants in the U.S. illegally is a problem. But each laid the blame on the opposing presidential nominee.

Vance echoed Trump by repeatedly calling Harris the "border czar" and suggested that she, as vice president, single-handedly rolled back the immigration restrictions Trump had imposed as president. The result, in Vance's telling, is an unchecked flow of fentanyl, strain on state and local resources and increased housing prices around the country.

Harris was never asked to be the "border czar" and she was never specifically given the responsibility for security on the border. She was tasked by Biden in March 2021 with tackling the "root causes" of migration from the Central American countries of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador and pushing leaders there and in Mexico to enforce immigration laws. Harris was not empowered to set U.S. immigration policy — only the president can sign executive orders and Harris was not empowered as Biden's proxy in negotiations with Congress on immigration law.

Walz advanced Democrats' arguments that Trump single-handedly killed a bipartisan Senate deal to tighten border security and boost the processing system for immigrants and asylum seekers. Republicans backed off the deal, Walz noted, only after Trump said it wasn't good enough.

Both candidates leaned on tried-and-true debate tactics — including not answering tough questions

Asked directly whether Trump's promise to deport millions of illegal immigrants would remove parents of U.S.-born children, Vance never answered the question. Instead, the senator tried to put his best spin on Trump's plan to use the military to help with deportations and pivot to attacking Harris for a porous border. Asked to respond to Trump's having called climate change a "hoax," Vance also avoided a response.

The debate kicked off with Walz being asked if he'd support a preemptive strike by Israel against Iran. Walz praised Harris' foreign policy leadership but never answered that question, either.

And at the end of the debate, Vance would not answer Walz's direct question of whether Trump indeed lost the 2020 election.

Walz has stumbles and lands punches in uneven night

Walz had several verbal stumbles on a night in which he admitted to "misspeaking" often. In the debate's opening moments, he confused Iran and Israel when discussing the Middle East.

At one point he said he had "become friends with school shooters," and he stumbled through an explanation of inaccurate remarks about whether he was in Hong Kong during the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. (He was not.)

But the governor noticeably put Vance on the defensive over abortion and, near the end of the debate, with a pointed question about whether Trump won the 2020 election.

Vance stays on a limb on Jan. 6 insurrection

The candidates went out of their way to be polite to each other until the very end, when Vance refused to back down from his statements that he wouldn't have certified Trump's 2020 election loss.

Vance tried to turn the issue to claims that the "much bigger threat to democracy" was Democrats trying to censor people on social media. But Walz wouldn't let go.

"This one is troubling to me," said Walz, noting that he'd just been praising some of Vance's answers. He rattled off the ways Trump tried to overturn his 2020 loss and noted that the candidate still insists he

won that contest. Then Walz asked Vance if Trump actually lost the election.

Vance responded by asking if Harris censored people.

"That is a damning non-answer," said Walz, noting that Trump's former vice president, Mike Pence, wasn't on the debate stage because he stood up to Trump on Jan. 6, 2021, and presided over Congress' certification of the former president's loss.

"America," Walz concluded, "I think you've got a really clear choice on this election of who's going to honor that democracy and who's going to honor Donald Trump."

US 'Welcome Corps' helps resettle LGBTQ+ refugees fleeing crackdowns against gay people

By MICHAEL CASEY and TERRY CHEA Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Cabrel Ngounou's life in Cameroon quickly unraveled after neighbors caught the teenager with his boyfriend.

A crowd surrounded his boyfriend's house and beat him. Ngounou's family learned of the relationship and kicked him out. So Ngounou fled — alone and with little money — on a dangerous, four-year journey through at least five countries. He was sexually assaulted in a Libyan prison, harassed in Tunisia and tried unsuccessfully to take a boat to Europe.

"The worst thing was that they caught us. So it was not easy for my family," Ngounou said. "My sisters told me I need to get out of the house because my place is not there. So that's what really pushed me to leave my country."

Ngounou's troubles drew attention after he joined a protest outside the U.N. refugee agency's Tunisia office. Eventually, he arrived in the United States, landing in San Francisco in March.

Ngounou joined a growing number of LGBTQ+ people accepted into the Welcome Corps, which launched last year and pairs groups of Americans with newly arrived refugees. So far, the resettlement program has connected 3,500 sponsors with 1,800 refugees, and many more want to help: 100,000 people have applied to become sponsors.

President Joe Biden has sought to rebuild the refugee programs Donald Trump largely dismantled as president, working to streamline the process of screening and placing people in America. New refugee resettlement sites have opened across the country, and on Tuesday, the Biden Administration announced that it resettled 100,000 refugees in fiscal year 2024, the largest number in more than three decades.

In contrast, Trump has pledged to bar refugees from Gaza, reinstate his Muslim ban and impose "ideological screening" for all immigrants if he regains the presidency. He and running mate JD Vance are laying groundwork for their goal of deporting millions of illegal immigrants by amplifying false claims, such as the accusation that Haitians given temporary protected status to remain in the U.S. legally are eating pets in Ohio.

Under Biden, meanwhile, two human rights officials in the State Department were tasked last year with identifying refugees who face persecution either due to their sexual orientation or human rights advocacy.

"LGBTQ refugees are forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence, not unlike other people," said Jeremy Haldeman, deputy executive director of the Community Sponsorship Hub, which implements the Welcome Corps on behalf of the State Department. But they are particularly vulnerable because they're coming from places "where their identities are criminalized and they are at risk of imprisonment or even death."

More than 60 countries have passed anti-LGBTQ laws and thousands of people have fled the Middle East and Africa seeking asylum in Europe. In April, Uganda's constitutional court on Wednesday upheld an anti-gay law that allows the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality."

"There are just a lot of people who are really at risk and are not safe in their country, and they're usually not safe in the neighboring or regional countries either," Kathryn Hampton, senior adviser for U.S. Strategy at Rainbow Railroad, which helps LGBTQI+ people facing persecution.

The demand far outstrips capacity: Of more than 15,000 requests for help in 2023, the nonprofit helped

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 57 of 79

resettle 23 refugees through the Welcome Corps program in cities as large as Houston and towns as small as Arlington, Vermont. It has a goal of resettling 50 this year.

"So, we have a lot of urgency as an organization to find and create new pathways that LGBTQI+ people can access to find safety," Hampton said.

Another refugee in the program, Julieth Luna Garcia, is a transgender woman from El Salvador who settled in Chicago.

Speaking through a translator, the 31-year-old Garcia said she suffered abuse from her family because of her trans identity and couldn't legally access gender-affirming care until she arrived in the United States.

"I lived with constant fear, even more so at night. I didn't like to go out. I was really scared that somebody would find me alone and do something," Garcia said. Since arriving in February, Garcia has found a place to live and a job as a home health aide and hopes to study to become a lawyer. "Here, I'm not scared to say who I am. I'm not scared to tell anyone," she said.

Maybe the biggest change was starting hormone treatments, she said: "To see yourself in the mirror and see these changes, I can't really explain it, but it's really big. It's an emotional and exciting thing and something I thought I would never experience."

Welcome Corps sponsors are expected to help refugees adjust for at least three months after they arrive. Garcia said the five volunteers helped her "adapt to a new life with a little less difficulty," by accessing benefits, getting a work permit and enrolling in English classes.

Ngounou recalled how his sponsors, a team of seven that included a lesbian couple, Anne Raeff and Lori Ostlund, hosted him and connected him with LGBTQ resources and a work training program. They also served as his tour guides to gay life, taking him to the historically gay Castro district, where Ngounou got his first glimpse of the huge rainbow Pride flag and stopped to read every plaque honoring famous gay people.

"Cabrel was just very, very moved by that. Just kind of started crying. We all did," Raeff recalled.

"I know that feeling like when we were young, when you'd go into a gay bar and you'd feel like this sense of kind of freedom, like this community," she said. "That was the only place where you could go and actually be open. And that ... this is this community of people and we all have this in common."

Now the 19-year-old Ngounou works in a coffee shop and takes college courses, with the goal of becoming a social worker. He hopes the boyfriend he met in Tunisia can visit him in San Francisco — and he still finds it hard to believe that they can share their love openly.

"Here I'm really me ... I feel free," he said with a laugh. "I feel free to have my boyfriend and walk with him in the street. I feel free, you know, to enjoy myself with him wherever we want to enjoy ourselves. But in Tunisia or anywhere else, in Cameroon, you have to hide such things."

Iran fires at least 180 missiles into Israel as regionwide conflict grows

By MELANIE LIDMAN, AAMER MADHANI, and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Iran launched at least 180 missiles into Israel on Tuesday, the latest in a series of rapidly escalating attacks between Israel and Iran and its Arab allies that threatens to push the Middle East closer to a regionwide war.

Iran said the barrage was retaliation for a series of devastating blows Israel has landed in recent weeks against the Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah in Lebanon, which has been firing rockets into Israel since the war in Gaza began. Earlier Tuesday, Israel launched what it said is a limited ground incursion in southern Lebanon.

Israelis scrambled for bomb shelters as air raid sirens sounded and the orange glow of missiles streaked across the night sky.

Israeli military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said the country's air defenses intercepted many of the incoming Iranian missiles, though some landed in central and southern Israel. Israel's national rescue service said two people were lightly wounded by shrapnel. In the West Bank, Palestinian officials said a Palestinian man was killed by a missile that fell near the town of Jericho, though it wasn't clear where the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 58 of 79

attack originated.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed late Tuesday to retaliate against Iran, which he said "made a big mistake tonight and it will pay for it."

Iran's armed forces joint chief of staff Gen. Mohammad Bagheri warned that Iran would respond to action against its territory with strikes on Israel's entire infrastructure with "multiplied intensity."

Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire pounded southern Lebanese villages on Tuesday, and Hezbollah responded with a barrage of rockets into Israel. There was no immediate word on casualties.

Moments before Iran launched its missiles, a shooting attack in Tel Aviv left at least six people dead, police said, adding that the two suspects who had opened fire on a boulevard in the Jaffa neighborhood had also been killed.

Fears of a broader conflict

Hezbollah and Hamas are close allies backed by Iran, and each escalation has raised fears of a wider war in the Middle East that could draw in Iran and the United States, which has rushed military assets to the region in support of Israel.

Israel and Iran have fought a shadow war for years, but rarely have they come into direct conflict.

The U.N. Security Council scheduled an emergency meeting for Wednesday morning to address the escalating situation in the Middle East.

Iran launched another direct attack on Israel in April, but few of its projectiles reached their targets. Many were shot down by a U.S.-led coalition, while others apparently failed at launch or crashed in flight.

White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan called Iran's missile attack a "significant escalation," although he said it was ultimately "defeated and ineffective," in part because of assistance from the U.S. military in shooting down some of the inbound missiles. President Joe Biden said his administration is "fully supportive" of Israel and that he's in "active discussion" with aides about what the appropriate response should be to Tehran.

Iran said it fired Tuesday's missiles as retaliation for attacks that killed leaders of Hezbollah, Hamas and the Iranian military. It referenced Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and Revolutionary Guard Gen. Abbas Nilforushan, both killed in an Israeli airstrike last week in Beirut. It also mentioned Ismail Haniyeh, a top leader in Hamas who was assassinated in Tehran in a suspected Israeli attack in July.

Israel has said it will continue to strike Hezbollah until it is safe for citizens displaced from homes near the Lebanon border to return. Hezbollah has vowed to keep firing rockets into Israel until there is a cease-fire in Gaza with Hamas, which is also supported by Iran.

Questions raised over whether Israeli forces entered

While Hezbollah denied Israeli troops had entered Lebanon, the Israeli army announced it had also carried out dozens of covert ground raids into southern Lebanon going back nearly a year.

If true, it would be another humiliating blow for Hezbollah, the most powerful armed group in the Middle East. Hezbollah has been reeling from weeks of targeted strikes that killed Nasrallah and several of his top commanders.

On Tuesday morning, Israel warned people in southern Lebanon to evacuate to the north of the Awali River, some 60 kilometers (36 miles) from the border and much farther than the Litani River, which marks the northern edge of a U.N.-declared zone intended to serve as a buffer between Israel and Hezbollah after their 2006 war.

The border region has largely emptied out over the past year as the two sides have traded fire.

An Associated Press reporter saw Israeli troops operating near the border in armored trucks, with helicopters circling overhead, but could not confirm ground forces had crossed into Lebanon.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Tuesday the U.N. peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon has seen sporadic incursions by Israeli military forces, but "they have not witnessed a full-scale invasion."

Ahead of the Israeli announcement of an incursion, U.S. officials on Monday said Israel had described launching small raids inside Lebanon as it prepared for a wider operation.

Hagari, the Israeli army spokesman, said Israel had carried out dozens of small raids inside Lebanon since Oct. 8, when Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel after the outbreak of the war in Gaza. He said

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 59 of 79

Israeli forces had crossed the border to collect information and destroy Hezbollah infrastructure, including tunnels and weapons. Israel has said Hezbollah was preparing its own Oct. 7-style attack into Israel. It was not immediately possible to confirm those claims.

Hagari said Israel's aims for its current ground offensive in Lebanon were limited. "We're not going to Beirut," he said.

The Israeli military was accused of lying to the media in 2021 when it released a statement implying ground troops had entered Gaza. The military played down the incident as a misunderstanding, but well-sourced military commentators in Israel said it was part of a ruse to lure Hamas into battle.

Israel strikes more targets and Hezbollah fires rockets

The Israeli military said Hezbollah had launched rockets at central Israel on Tuesday, setting off air raid sirens and wounding a man. Hezbollah said it fired salvos of a new kind of medium-range missile at the headquarters of two Israeli intelligence agencies near Tel Aviv. Hezbollah also launched projectiles at Israeli communities near the border, targeting soldiers without wounding anyone.

Israel's statements indicated it might focus its ground operation on the narrow strip along the border, rather than launching a larger invasion aimed at destroying Hezbollah, as it has attempted in Gaza against Hamas.

Israeli strikes have killed over 1,000 people in Lebanon over the past two weeks, nearly a quarter of them women and children, according to the Health Ministry. Hundreds of thousands have fled their homes.

Israel declared war against the Hamas militant group in the Gaza Strip after Hamas' cross-border attack on Oct. 7, 2023, which killed 1,200 Israelis and took 250 others hostage. More than 41,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, and just over half the dead have been women and children, according to local health officials.

Hezbollah is a well-trained militia, believed to have tens of thousands of fighters and an arsenal of 150,000 rockets and missiles. The last round of fighting in 2006 ended in a stalemate, and both sides have spent the past two decades preparing for their next showdown.

The group's acting leader, Naim Kassem, said Monday that Hezbollah commanders killed in recent weeks have already been replaced.

As the fighting intensifies, European countries have begun pulling their diplomats and citizens out of Lebanon.

Walz and Vance go in depth on policy while attacking each other's running mates in VP debate

By MICHELLE L. PRICE, CHRIS MEGERIAN, WILL WEISSERT and JILL COLVIN Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — In a debate that evoked a calmer era in American politics, Tim Walz and JD Vance on Tuesday went after each other's running mates and sought to shore up their campaigns' vulnerabilities at a time of renewed fears of a regional war in the Middle East and sadness over devastation from Hurricane Helene.

Walz, the Democratic governor of Minnesota, and Vance, a Republican senator from Ohio, focused many of their criticisms on the top of the ticket, as is traditional for vice presidential debates. They each pointed to the crises of the day as reasons for voters to choose Vice President Kamala Harris or former President Donald Trump.

The debate unfolded in the final weeks of a campaign that has been defined by harsh, personal attacks and historic convulsions, including a candidate dropping out and another facing two attempted assassinations. Polls have shown Harris and Trump locked in a close contest as early voting begins across the country, giving added weight to anything that can sway voters on the margins, including the impression left by the vice presidential candidates.

Despite the milder tone of the debate, there were still glimpses of the political fractures that threaten American democracy. Vance papered over the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol and echoed Trump's election denial by refusing to acknowledge that President Joe Biden won the race in 2020.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 60 of 79

But throughout much of the rest of the night, two Midwesterners struck a noticeably friendlier tone than the matchup between Trump and Harris — or, earlier this year, the showdown between Trump and Biden before he dropped out of the race following a disastrous performance.

In one raw moment when Walz said his teenage son had witnessed a shooting at a community center, Vance expressed empathy.

"I'm sorry about that. Christ have mercy," Vance said.

"I appreciate that," Walz said.

In other parts of the debate, Vance tried to soften his image, ratcheting down his typically forceful and aggressive delivery and acknowledging that people watching might not agree with him or Trump. He discussed Trump's ideas with polish while avoiding being pinned down on the more controversial parts of the former president's record. His performance immediately delighted the Trump campaign and many of its allies.

Walz depicted Trump as wrong on the issues and a chaotic leader. He occasionally stumbled over his words, even saying "I've become friends with school shooters" when he was talking about meeting with survivors. He did deliver several points sure to please Democrats, including on abortion rights and democracy — even if he never used the word "weird," the branding he attached to Trump and Vance that brought him to national prominence.

The debate began with a discussion of the Middle East, where Israeli forces are fighting Hezbollah in Lebanon and Iran has fired missiles at Israel. In Gaza, Israeli forces continue to fight Hamas after the Oct. 7 attack.

"What's fundamental here is that steady leadership is going to matter," said Walz. "And the world saw it on that debate stage a few weeks ago, a nearly 80-year-old Donald Trump talking about crowd sizes is not what we need in this moment."

Vance, in his reply, argued that Trump is an intimidating figure whose presence on the international stage is its own deterrent.

"Gov. Walz can criticize Donald Trump's tweets, but effective, smart diplomacy and peace through strength is how you bring stability back to a very broken world," he said.

A sharper turn on immigration

The debate in New York hosted by CBS News opened with a sober tone that reflected growing domestic and international concerns about safety and security. But it gave way to sharper attacks from both Walz and Vance — and a moment in which the moderators stopped the discussion by cutting the two men's mics.

Walz accused Vance and Trump of villainizing legal immigrants in Vance's home state. He pointed to the fact that Republican Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine had to send in extra law enforcement to provide security to the city's schools after Vance tweeted about and Trump amplified false claims about Haitians eating pets.

"This is what happens when you don't want to solve it, you demonize it," Walz said, saying not doing so would allow people to "come together."

Vance said the 15,000 Haitians in the city had caused housing, economic and other issues that the Biden-Harris administration was ignoring.

When the debate moderators pointed out that the Haitians living there had legal status, Vance protested that CBS News had said its moderators would not be fact-checking, leaving the onus to the candidates. As Vance continued and the moderators tried to move on, his microphone was cut and neither man could be heard.

A heavier focus on policy

The senator and the governor, both picked for their ability to communicate their party's points, seemed to spend more time talking policy than the presidential candidates have in their matchups.

On abortion, both men shared personal stories of women. Walz talked about Amanda Zurawski, a Texas woman who was denied an abortion despite developing a life-threatening infection, and Hadley Duvall, who was a 12-year-old girl when she was raped and impregnated by her stepfather.

Vance spoke of a close friend who, he said, "told me something a couple of years ago that she felt

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 61 of 79

like if she hadn't had that abortion, that it would have destroyed her life because she was in an abusive relationship."

The senator also said he never supported a national ban when running for the Senate in 2022 even though he had suggested as much, saying instead that he wanted a "minimum national standard." Trump, meanwhile, posted on his social media site during the debate that he would veto a national abortion ban, though he has also taken credit for the Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* and clearing the way for conservative-led states to ban or restrict the procedure.

Walz and Vance also talked about housing policy, the economy and climate change in the wake of Hurricane Helene, which devastated several states and caused at least 160 deaths.

"I'm sure Gov. Walz joins me in saying our hearts go out to those innocent people. Our prayers go out to them," Vance said, giving a far different answer than his running mate, who has accused Biden and Harris of politicizing the hurricane response. "And we want as robust and aggressive as a federal response as we can get to save as many lives as possible."

The debate ran longer than the allotted 90 minutes, but there were still some key topics left unaddressed by the moderators and the candidates. Vance was not asked about Ukraine, although he's among the Republican Party's leading opponents of U.S. aid to the besieged country. No one talked about Trump's criminal cases, including his conviction in a New York case related to hush money payments.

Vance downplays Jan. 6

Vance downplayed Trump's assault on the 2020 election, saying Trump had told people to "peacefully" march on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6. The subsequent violence by Trump's supporters disrupted the certification of Joe Biden's election victory.

The real threat to democracy, Vance claimed, was censorship of the opposition.

"We ought to debate our differences. We ought to argue about them. Kamala Harris is engaged in censorship on an industrial scale," Vance said.

Walz said Vance was helping to deny "the first time in American history that a president or anyone tried to overturn a fair election and the peaceful transfer of power."

He also asked Vance if Trump won the election in 2020.

"I'm focused on the future," Vance responded.

"That is a damning non-answer," Walz said.

Both men acknowledged past missteps

The role of a presidential running mate is typically to serve as an attack dog for the person at the top of the ticket, arguing against the opposing presidential candidate and their proxy on stage. Both Vance and Walz have embraced that role.

But in a political era where apologies are rare, Walz and Vance each admitted missteps and vulnerabilities Tuesday.

Vance was asked to address his past biting criticisms of the former president, including once suggesting Trump would be "America's Hitler."

"When you get something wrong and you change your mind, you ought to be honest with the American people," he said Tuesday.

Walz, meanwhile, was pressed on his misleading claim, which was investigated this week by Minnesota Public Radio and other outlets, that he was in Hong Kong during the turbulence surrounding the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, part of a broader pattern of inaccuracies that Republicans hope to exploit.

Confronted with his misstatements about his travels to China years ago, Walz defended himself by saying, "I've not been perfect." In fact, he said, "I'm a knucklehead at times." Eventually, he acknowledged he misspoke about his history.

Aside from the contentious exchange surrounding the attack on the Capitol, the debate featured more moments of good feeling than might have been expected. Walz said he'd "enjoyed tonight's debate, and I think there was a lot of commonality here" before noting that he's "sympathetic to misspeaking on things and I think I might have with the senator."

"Me too, man," Vance responded.

Republicans are more likely than Democrats to see Israel as a US ally: AP-NORC poll

By AMELIA THOMSON-DEVEAUX Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a year of war between Israel and Hamas, U.S. public opinion on the conflict remains polarized, a new survey by the Pearson Institute and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds, with Democrats more likely to be critical of Israel, while Republicans remain more supportive.

There are a few points of relative consensus — about half of U.S. adults, for example, say Hamas bears “a lot” of responsibility for the continuation of the war, while about one quarter says it has “some” responsibility and about 2 in 10 say it has “not much” responsibility or “none at all.”

But U.S. adults remain divided on the extent to which the Israeli government is responsible for the conflict continuing. And the findings indicate that the past year of war hasn’t done much to widen or narrow the partisan gulf that existed early in the conflict.

Democrats remain more sympathetic toward the Palestinians than Republicans and more critical of Israel, while Republicans are more likely to sympathize with the Israelis and view Israel as a U.S. ally that shares the United States’ values and interests.

However, it’s unclear from this survey if public opinion will shift as the war in the Middle East expands beyond Gaza. It was conducted from Sept. 12 to 16, before Israel’s military significantly escalated its operations against Hezbollah in Lebanon and before Iran launched missiles at Israel on Tuesday. Hamas, based in Gaza, and Hezbollah, based in Lebanon, are militant groups allied with Iran.

Americans largely don’t blame the US government

President Joe Biden has maintained crucial U.S. military support to Israel throughout the Gaza war, while repeatedly trying — and failing — to broker a cease-fire. Americans are most likely to place “a lot” of blame on Hamas for the continuation of the war between Israel and the militant group, followed by the Israeli government, and the Iranian government and groups backed by Iran.

They place much less responsibility on their own country. Only about 1 in 10 Americans say the U.S. government bears “a lot” of responsibility for the continuation of the war between Israel and Hamas, while about 4 in 10 say it bears “some” responsibility, and 45% say the U.S. bears “not much” or no responsibility at all.

Democrats are slightly more likely than Republicans to say the U.S. has “some” responsibility, but overall the partisan differences on this question are small.

Brian Grider, a 48-year-old Republican from Moscow, Ohio, isn’t sure how the U.S. could defuse the conflict.

“I don’t know if there’s anything we can do,” he said. “It would be nice if we could and we might want to try, but is it going to work? Probably not.”

Republicans more likely than Democrats to see Israel as an ally

The year of fighting appears to have calcified the partisan divide on the war and the U.S. relationship with Israel.

About half of Republicans view Israel as an ally of the U.S. that shares its values and interests, while about half of Democrats think Israel is a partner that the U.S. should cooperate with but that doesn’t share American values and interests.

More than half of Democrats also say the Israeli government bears “a lot” of responsibility for the continuation of the war, compared to about 4 in 10 Republicans.

Brian Becker, a 49-year-old Democrat in Colorado, says his views of the war shifted after hearing more on social media about Palestinians and Palestinian Americans who were harmed by the war.

“I didn’t feel like that was fair for them,” Becker said. “So that did start to change my mind a little bit, started to give that waver of support to Palestine,” he said. “Where before I probably would have been just, ‘Yeah, go Israel.’”

On the other hand, about half of Republicans say they sympathize more with the Israelis than the Palestinians, while Democrats are more likely to say they sympathize with both groups equally.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 63 of 79

Grider, the Ohio Republican, thinks Israel responded appropriately to the Oct. 7 attack, comparing it to the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in the U.S.

"I definitely don't think Israel is doing too much in response to what happened to them," he said.

Overall views of the war remain stable

Views of the Israel-Hamas conflict, and the U.S. role in mediating it, haven't shifted much over the course of the year.

Support for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state rose slightly, from around 2 in 10 in August 2023 to about 3 in 10 now. (About half of Americans currently say they neither favor nor oppose an independent Palestinian state, and about 2 in 10 are opposed.) There was also a slight uptick in the share of Americans who think the U.S. is too supportive of Israel.

But about 4 in 10 U.S. adults continue to say the U.S. is spending "too much" on military aid to Israel in the war, while a similar share say the U.S. is spending "the right amount." About 1 in 10 say the U.S. is spending "too little," which is in line with an AP-NORC poll conducted in early 2024.

The mix of U.S. opinions on the Gaza war reflects the complexity of a conflict where Americans may see bad actors and innocent victims on both sides, according to Paul Poast, a political scientist at the University of Chicago and a research affiliate of the Pearson Institute.

"This leads to people having very strong views on both sides, which, of course, we've seen," Poast said. And it doesn't, he added, make for "a consistent narrative of, 'We've got to support Israel,' or 'We've got to support the Palestinians.'"

Hamas killed about 1,200 people in Israel on Oct. 7 and took hostages, some of whom are still being held in Gaza. Israel's military campaign in Gaza has killed more than 41,000 Palestinians. Gaza health officials do not distinguish between civilians and combatants in their death toll but say many of those killed are women and children.

Charles Jolivette, a 42-year-old Democrat in New Orleans who developed concerns about Israel's offensive through discussions with friends and colleagues who have Palestinian heritage, has observed a kind of echo-chamber effect, where people on the different sides of the issue seem to only hear views that reflect their own beliefs.

"But I would love to have some more," Jolivette said, referring to exchanges of view with people who see the conflict differently. And for "not only mainstream media, but the mainstream American populace, to have that ability to have these real conversations."

Walz misleadingly claims to have been in Hong Kong during period tied to Tiananmen Square massacre

By JOSH BOAK and DIDI TANG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Multiple news reports indicate that Democratic vice presidential nominee Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz misleadingly claimed he was in Hong Kong during the turbulence surrounding the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, part of a broader pattern of inaccuracies that Republicans hope to exploit.

At Tuesday night's vice presidential debate, Walz was asked about misleading people and he ultimately when pressed said he "misspoke." But Walz said that he can "get caught up in rhetoric" and that "I've tried to do the best I can, but I've not been perfect. And I'm a knucklehead at times." He then added that former President Donald Trump should have come on one of his trips to China, and if he had done so, then the Republican nominee would know better than to compliment Chinese President Xi Jinping on his handling of the 2020 pandemic.

On Tuesday, CNN posted a 2019 radio interview in which Walz stated he was in Hong Kong on the day of the massacre, when publicly available evidence suggests he was not.

After a seven-week demonstration in Beijing led by pro-democracy students, China's military fired heavily on the group on June 4, 1989, and left at least 500 people dead.

Minnesota Public Radio reported Monday that publicly available accounts contradict a 2014 statement made by Walz, then a member of the U.S. House, during a hearing that commemorated the 25th an-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 64 of 79

niversary of the massacre. Walz suggested that he was in the then-British colony of Hong Kong in May 1989, but he appears to have been in Nebraska. Public records suggest he left for Hong Kong and China in August of that year.

The Associated Press found a 2009 congressional transcript about Tiananmen Square in which Walz seemed to insinuate that he was in Hong Kong during the day of the massacre.

The vice presidential candidate also has made statements in which he misrepresented the type of infertility treatment received by his family, and there have been conflicting accounts of his 1995 arrest for drunk driving and misleading information about his rank in the National Guard. Walz and his campaign have also given different versions of the story of his 1995 arrest for drunken driving.

Walz has also claimed that he has traveled to China more than 30 times, but his campaign said that the actual number was "closer to 15."

Minnesota Public Radio on Monday revealed that a photo published on May 16, 1989, showed that Walz was working in the National Guard Armory in Alliance, Neb., at the time and that an August 1989 story said Walz was to leave for China.

During the 2014 hearing on Tiananmen Square, Walz testified: "As a young man I was just going to teach high school in Foshan in Guangdong province and was in Hong Kong in May 1989. As the events were unfolding, several of us went in. I still remember the train station in Hong Kong. There was a large number of people — especially Europeans, I think — very angry that we would still go after what had happened."

"But it was my belief at that time," Walz continued, "that the diplomacy was going to happen on many levels, certainly people to people, and the opportunity to be in a Chinese high school at that critical time seemed to me to be really important."

Minnesota Public Radio said the evidence shows that Walz, then a 25-year-old teacher, was still in Nebraska in May 1989. He went to China that year through WorldTeach, a small nonprofit based at Harvard University.

The news organization found a newspaper photograph published on May 16, 1989, of Walz working at a National Guard Armory. A separate story from a Nebraska newspaper on August 11 of that year said Walz would "leave Sunday en route to China" and that he had nearly "given up" participating in the program after student revolts that summer in China.

Some Republicans have criticized Walz for his longstanding interest in China. Besides teaching there, he went back for his honeymoon and several times after with American exchange students.

Kyle Jaros, an associate professor of global affairs at the University of Notre Dame, told The Associated Press that it's become "a well-worn tactic to attack opponents simply for having a China line in their resumes."

Search crews with cadaver dogs wade through muck of communities 'wiped off the map' by Helene

By ERIK VERDUZCO, JEFF AMY and KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

SWANNANOVA, N.C. (AP) — Cadaver dogs and search crews trudged through knee-deep muck and debris in the mountains of western North Carolina on Tuesday looking for more victims of Hurricane Helene days after the storm carved a deadly and destructive path through the Southeast.

Meanwhile, across the border in east Tennessee, a caravan including Gov. Bill Lee that was surveying damage outside the town of Erwin drove by a crew pulling two bodies from the wreckage, a grim reminder that the rescue and recovery operations are still very much ongoing and the death toll — already surpassing 160 — is likely to rise.

The storm, which was one of the deadliest in U.S. history, knocked out power and cellular service in some towns and cities, leaving many people frustrated, hot and increasingly worried days into the ordeal. Some cooked food on charcoal grills or hiked to high ground in the hopes of finding a signal to let loved ones know they are alive.

In Augusta, Georgia, Sherry Brown was converting power from the alternator of her car to keep her

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 65 of 79

refrigerator running and taking "bird baths" with water she collected in coolers. In another part of the city, people waited in line more than three hours to try to get water from one of five centers set up to serve more than 200,000 people.

The devastation was especially bad in the Blue Ridge Mountains, where at least 57 people died in and around Asheville, North Carolina, a tourism haven known for its art galleries, breweries and outdoor activities.

"Communities were wiped off the map," North Carolina's governor, Roy Cooper, said at a news conference Tuesday.

In Swannanoa, a small community outside Asheville, receding floodwaters revealed cars stacked on top of others and trailer homes that had floated away during the storm. Roads were caked with mud and debris and pockmarked by sinkholes.

Cliff Stewart survived two feet of water that poured into his home, topping the wheels on his wheelchair and sending his medicine bottles floating from room to room. Left without electricity and reliant on food drop-offs from friends, he has refused offers to help him leave.

"Where am I going to go?" the Marine Corps veteran said Tuesday. "This is all I've got. I just don't want to give it up, because what am I going to do? Be homeless? I'd rather die right here than live homeless."

What is being done to help?

Exhausted emergency crews worked around the clock to clear roads, restore power and phone service, and reach those still stranded by the storm, which killed at least 166 people in six states, including many who were hit by falling trees or trapped in flooded cars and homes. Nearly half of the deaths were in North Carolina, while dozens of others were in South Carolina and Georgia.

President Joe Biden, who is set to survey the devastation in North and South Carolina Wednesday, estimated the recovery could cost billions.

"We have to jump start this recovery process," he said Tuesday. "People are scared to death. This is urgent."

More than 150,000 households have registered for assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and that number is expected to rise rapidly in the coming days, said Frank Matranga, an agency representative.

Nearly 2 million ready-to-eat meals and more than a million liters of water have been sent to the hardest-hit areas, he said.

The storm unleashed the worst flooding in a century in North Carolina, dumping more than an estimated 2 feet (61 centimeters) of rain in places.

Cooper's administration said Tuesday that more than two dozen water plants remained closed and were not producing water.

Active-duty U.S. military units may be needed to assist the long-term recovery, he said, adding that Biden had given "the green light" to mobilizing military assets in the near future.

A section of one of the region's main arteries, Interstate 40, reopened Tuesday after a mudslide was cleared, but a collapsed stretch near North Carolina's border with Tennessee remained closed.

How some of the hardest-hit areas are coping

Residents and business owners wore masks and gloves while clearing debris Tuesday in Hot Springs, North Carolina, where almost every building along the tiny town's main street was heavily damaged.

Sarah Calloway, who owns the deli and gourmet grocery Vaste Riviere Provisions, said the storm arrived in town frighteningly quickly. She helped fill sandbags the day the night before, but they turned out to be useless. The water rose so rapidly that even though she and others were in an apartment on an upper floor, she feared they would not be safe. They called to request a rescue from a swift water team.

"They tried to get to us, and at that point they couldn't," she said. "Luckily, that was when the water started to recede."

"It was really challenging to watch how quickly it rose up and then just to watch whole buildings floating down the river. It was something I can't even describe," she said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 66 of 79

In the Black Mountain Mobile Home Park in Swannanoa on Tuesday, Carina Ramos and Ezekiel Bianchi were overwhelmed by the damage. The couple, their children and dog fled in the predawn darkness on Friday as the Swannanoa River's rapidly rising waters began flooding the bottom end of the mobile home park. By then, trees were blocking the roads and the couple abandoned their three vehicles, all of which flooded.

"We left everything because we were panicking," Ramos said.

Their children were staying with Ramos' parents and did not want to even see the devastated trailer.

"My daughter was crying, panicking," Ramos said. "She says she doesn't want to see her room full of toys, all thrown everywhere."

Mobile service knocked out

The widespread damage and outages affecting key communications infrastructure left many people without stable access to the internet and cellular service, the Federal Communications Commission said.

Mayor Zeb Smathers of Canton, North Carolina, expressed frustration Tuesday that so many of his constituents were still without cellphone service with no clear timetable for when it would be restored.

"People are walking the streets of Canton with their phones up in the air trying to catch a cellphone signal like it's a butterfly," he told The Associated Press. "Every single aspect of this response has been extremely crippled by lack of cellphone communication. The one time we absolutely needed our cellphones to work they failed."

Teams from Verizon were working to repair downed cell towers, damaged fiber cables and provide alternative forms of connectivity across the region, the company said in a statement.

AT&T, meanwhile, said it launched "one of the largest mobilizations of our disaster recovery assets for emergency connectivity support."

The efforts to restore service was made more challenging by the region's terrain and spread-out population, said David Zumwalt, president and CEO of the Association for Broadband Without Boundaries.

Destruction from Florida to Virginia

Helene blew ashore in Florida late Thursday as a Category 4 hurricane and upended life throughout the Southeast, where deaths were also reported in Florida, Tennessee and Virginia.

Across Georgia, Helene's inland path knocked out power and shattered lives from Valdosta to Augusta, where a line of cars waiting to get water Tuesday stretched at least a half-mile (0.8 kilometers) down the road.

"It's been rough," said Kristie Nelson, who had no idea when her electricity would be restored. "I'm just dying for a hot shower."

With at least 36 killed in South Carolina, Helene passed the 35 people who were killed in the state after Hurricane Hugo made landfall north of Charleston in 1989.

When Tennessee Gov. Lee flew to the eastern part of the state to survey damage on Tuesday, residents said the governor and his entourage were the first help they had seen since the storm hit.

"Where has everyone been?" one frustrated local asked. "We have been here alone."

Jimmy Carter and his hometown of Plains celebrate the 39th president's 100th birthday

By CHARLOTTE KRAMON and BILL BARROW Associated Press

PLAINS, Ga. (AP) — Longtime friends, family and fans of Jimmy Carter milled around his hometown of Plains to celebrate his 100th birthday on Tuesday, the first time an American president has lived a full century and the latest milestone in a life that took the Depression-era farmer's son to the White House and across the world as a Nobel Peace Prize-winning humanitarian and advocate for democracy.

Living the last 19 months in home hospice care, the 39th president keeps defying expectations, just as he did through a remarkable rise from his family peanut farming and warehouse business to the world stage. The Democrat served one presidential term from 1977 to 1981 and then for four decades led The Carter Center, which he and his wife Rosalynn co-founded in 1982 to "wage peace, fight disease, and build hope."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 67 of 79

"Not everybody gets 100 years on this earth, and when somebody does, and when they use that time to do so much good for so many people, it's worth celebrating," his grandson Jason Carter, chair of The Carter Center governing board, said in an interview.

"These last few months, 19 months, now that he's been in hospice, it's been a chance for our family to reflect," he continued, "and then for the rest of the country and the world to really reflect on him. That's been a really gratifying time."

James Earl Carter Jr. was born Oct. 1, 1924 in Plains, where he lives in the same one-story home he and Rosalynn built in the early 1960s, before his first election to the Georgia state Senate. The former first lady, also from Plains, died last November at 96.

About 25 family members filled his home Tuesday, enjoying cupcakes on the front lawn while antique World War II planes flew over in his honor. At night, they planned to gather around the TV to watch the vice-presidential debate.

Chip Carter said his father's next goal is to make it to Election Day.

"He's plugged in," Carter said in an interview. "I asked him two months ago if he was trying to live to be 100, and he said, No, I'm trying to live to vote for Kamala Harris."

Chip Carter sat in the front row of a naturalization ceremony held annually on his father's birthday for 100 new citizens at Plains High School, which his father attended. The building is now a museum.

Jill Stuckey, superintendent of the Jimmy Carter National Historic Park, recalled that a teacher once told Carter's class that one of the students would be president someday. She said Carter "took it to heart."

"One thing I've learned is to never underestimate Jimmy Carter, because if you do, he will prove you wrong," Stuckey said.

President Joe Biden, the first sitting senator to endorse Carter's 1976 campaign, praised his longtime friend for an "unwavering belief in the power of human goodness."

"You've always been a moral force for our nation and the world (and) a beloved friend to Jill and me and our family," the 81-year-old president said in a tribute video, recorded in front of Carter's White House portrait. Carter asked Biden to eulogize him at his state funeral when the time comes.

But even on Carter's 100th birthday, Donald Trump could not pass up repeating his longstanding jab at the Georgia Democrat. Trump labeled Biden "the worst president," and said Carter is "the happiest man because Carter is considered a brilliant president by comparison." It was hollow praise for the one-term president who was defeated by Ronald Reagan in 1980 but went on to become a respected world figure.

Georgia's Republican Gov. Brian Kemp, for his part, declared Tuesday "Jimmy Carter Day" to recognize his legacy as the state's 76th governor. Other birthday events have included a musical gala in Atlanta with dozens of artists, airing Tuesday evening on Georgia Public Broadcasting, that has raised more than \$1.2 million for The Carter Center. Townspeople in Plains planned another concert Tuesday evening.

And Habitat for Humanity volunteers are devoting this week to build 30 houses in his honor in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Carters served as ambassadors for the organization, hosted annual building projects into their 90s.

Minister Barbara Green and Deacon William Le Green of Americus came to Main Street in Plains to honor Carter, who helped build their Habitat for Humanity home in the early 2000s. Le Green recalled how Carter gave the couple hammers to keep, along with their keys.

"He didn't mind getting his hands dirty, or anything of the kind," Le Green said.

Jimmy Carter was last seen publicly nearly a year ago, visibly diminished and silent as he used a reclining wheelchair to attend his wife's two funeral services. Jason Carter said the family hadn't expected to enjoy his 100th birthday after she died. The former president's hospital bed had been set up so he could see and talk to his wife of 77 years in her final days and hours.

"We frankly didn't think he was going to go on much longer," Jason Carter said. "He's really given himself over to what he feels is God's plan. He knows he's not in charge. But in these last few months, especially, he has gotten a lot more engaged in world events, a lot more engaged in politics, a lot more, just engaged, emotionally, with all of us."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 68 of 79

He said the centenarian president, born four years after women were granted the constitutional right to vote and four decades before Black women won ballot access, is eager to cast his 2024 presidential ballot for the Democrat who would be first woman, second Black person and first person of south Asian descent to reach the Oval Office.

"He, like a lot of us, was incredibly gratified by his friend Joe Biden's courageous choice to pass the torch," the younger Carter said. "You know, my grandfather and The Carter Center have observed more than 100 elections in 40 other countries, right? So, he knows how rare it is for somebody who's a sitting president to give up power in any context."

Early voting in Georgia begins Oct. 15, two weeks into Carter's 101st year.

Trump won't participate in interview for '60 Minutes' election special

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — CBS News said Tuesday that Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has declined to participate in an interview with "60 Minutes" for its election special, which will go forward next Monday with Democratic opponent Kamala Harris alone.

Television's top-rated news program regularly invites the two presidential contenders for separate interviews that air back-to-back on a show near the election. This year, it is scheduled for Monday instead of its usual Sunday time slot.

Asked for comment, the former president's campaign spokesman Steven Cheung said, "Fake news," adding that there were discussions but nothing was ever locked in.

"60 Minutes" said Trump's campaign had initially agreed to an interview before telling CBS that the former president would not appear. The network said its invitation to sit for an interview still stands, and correspondent Scott Pelley will explain Trump's absence to viewers.

Vice President Harris will appear in a pretaped interview with Bill Whitaker.

There are currently no other scheduled opportunities for voters to compare the two candidates together. Harris and Trump previously debated on Sept. 10. Although Harris has accepted an invitation from CNN for a second debate later this month, Trump has not accepted.

The interview special is scheduled to air Monday instead of the usual "60 Minutes" time slot because CBS is showing the American Music Awards on Sunday.

Cheung said "60 Minutes" insisted upon doing live fact-checking for the interview, "which is unprecedented." CBS had no immediate comment on his claim.

Trump's interview with "60 Minutes" correspondent Lesley Stahl prior to the 2020 election proved contentious, with the former president ending the session early and his campaign posting an unedited transcript of the session.

CBS News was hosting Tuesday's vice presidential debate between Republican Ohio Sen. JD Vance and Tim Walz, Minnesota's Democratic governor.

NYC mayor deflects questions about bribery charges as a potential witness speaks outside City Hall

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City Mayor Eric Adams delivered his most thorough public defense to date since his indictment on federal bribery charges, insisting the case was a "test" that would not distract him from governing as he deflected specific questions about the investigation for more than an hour Tuesday.

Yet even as the mayor began to address reporters alone beneath the City Hall rotunda, a potential witness in one of the sprawling investigations was wrapping up his his own news briefing steps away, complaining he had been the victim of a corrupt "shakedown."

The whiplash-inducing morning at City Hall reflected the deepening tumult that has gripped the Democrat's administration in recent weeks, raising questions about whether Adams can continue managing the nation's

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 69 of 79

largest city while shuttling between court appearances and contending with an exodus of top deputies. As he stepped to the podium, a smiling Adams began his comments with a favorite quip: "This is going in my book."

But if he was seeking to convey his signature swagger, the mayor also appeared evasive and isolated. Adams typically enters his Tuesday briefings accompanied by triumphant walk-on music and a phalanx of deputies, including his chief legal counsel. But his top lawyer recently resigned. On Monday night, one of his closest advisors also stepped down. Another was served with a federal subpoena on Friday.

This time he was alone. While Adams spoke extensively to reporters, he declined to answer questions about the laws he is accused of breaking, whether his security clearance has been downgraded as a result of the criminal case and if he really believes — as he has repeatedly suggested — that the investigation is politically motivated.

Instead, the mayor framed himself as a battle-tested executive, confident in his ability to overcome the "obstacles."

"As the case unfolds, some people are going to say, 'You know what, we have jumped the gun on Eric Adams,'" he said. "This is a test for folks who automatically just come with their hearts in one way. The information is going to continue to show that I do not break laws."

Federal prosecutors have accused Adams of soliciting and accepting illegal campaign contributions and more than \$100,000 in luxury travel perks from Turkish officials and other foreign nationals seeking to buy his influence.

In exchange, they say he performed official favors that benefited Turkey, including pushing through the opening of a consulate building in Manhattan over the objections of fire safety officials who said it was unsafe to occupy.

The charges against Adams come as federal investigators conduct multiple probes linked to several top officials in his administration, including the brother of his former police commissioner; a consulting firm run by another brother of his schools chancellor and deputy mayor for public safety; and one of his top advisors and closest confidantes, Tim Pearson.

Pearson resigned Monday night, weeks after the police commissioner, Edward Caban, and schools chancellor, David Banks, announced they were stepping down. All have denied wrongdoing.

Outside City Hall, the owner of a Brooklyn juice bar and nightspot, Shamel Kelly, held his own news conference Tuesday saying he had been the victim of a corrupt scheme involving a mayoral aide and the police department.

Seeking help with a raft of noise complaints, Kelly said he was connected by a City Hall staffer to the owner of a nightlife security business, who told him he could make the complaints go away for a price. Kelly said he later learned the security company was run by James Caban, the twin brother of the former police commissioner.

"I felt like I was being extorted," Kelly told reporters. He provided a video showing dozens of officers just outside the door of his Coney Island business for one of the alleged noise complaints, which Kelly's attorneys said had been provided to federal prosecutors.

A lawyer for James Caban, Sean Hecker, has said his client "unequivocally denies any wrongdoing."

Adams said he was unaware of the allegations, which were first reported weeks ago, but that "no one should treat a business owner unfairly in any way."

Surrounded by signs detailing his policy accomplishments, Adams then ticked through his own experience of adversity, invoking his troubled childhood in working-class Queens and his struggles with dyslexia and diabetes that nearly left him blind.

"I've been dealing with difficult moments throughout my entire life, and in spite of all those difficult moments, I'm called the mayor of the city of New York," he said.

Later in the evening, Adams joined a group of Black clergy leaders for a prayer circle outside City Hall, accompanied by his top advisor, Ingrid Lewis-Martin, whose home was also searched by investigators Friday.

"You don't give up during hard times, you step up during hard times," Adams said, as his allies chanted

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 70 of 79

"four more years" and showered the mayor with "hallelujahs."

Gov. Kathy Hochul, who has the ability to remove the mayor from office, said this week that she is giving Adams a chance to show he can continue to run the city as his criminal case plays out.

As Adams sought to make his political case, his attorneys were busy ramping up their legal defense.

In a court filing Tuesday, lawyers for Adams asked a judge to investigate leaks to the media from prosecutors and, if confirmed, to levy appropriate remedies, including dismissal of the indictment.

That filing came one day after his attorney requested a judge toss the bribery charge — one of five counts he faces — arguing the details of the alleged conduct don't meet the threshold of a quid pro quo.

A spokesperson for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan declined comment.

Adams is due back in court on Wednesday morning.

John Amos, patriarch on 'Good Times' and an Emmy nominee for the blockbuster 'Roots,' dies at 84

By BETH HARRIS Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — John Amos, who starred as the family patriarch on the hit 1970s sitcom "Good Times" and earned an Emmy nomination for his role in the seminal 1977 miniseries "Roots," has died. He was 84.

He died Aug. 21 of natural causes in Los Angeles. Amos' publicist, Belinda Foster, confirmed the news of his death Tuesday.

He played James Evans Sr. on "Good Times," which featured one of television's first Black two-parent families. Produced by Norman Lear and co-created by actor Mike Evans, who co-starred on "All in the Family" and "The Jeffersons," it ran from 1974-79 on CBS.

"That show was the closest depiction in reality to life as an African American family living in those circumstances as it could be," Amos told Time magazine in 2021.

Among Amos' film credits were "Let's Do It Again" with Bill Cosby and Sidney Poitier, "Coming to America" with Eddie Murphy and its 2021 sequel, "Die Hard 2," "Madea's Witness Protection" and "Uncut Gems" with Adam Sandler. He was in Ice Cube and Dr. Dre's 1994 video "Natural Born Killaz."

Amos' "Good Times" character, along with wife Florida, played by Esther Rolle, originated on another Lear show, "Maude." James Evans often worked two manual labor jobs to support his family that included three children, with Jimmie Walker becoming a breakout star as oldest son J.J.

Such was the show's impact that Alicia Keys, Rick Ross, the Wu-Tang Clan are among the musicians who name-checked Amos or his character in their lyrics.

"Many fans consider him their TV father," his son Kelly Christopher Amos said in a statement. "He lived a good life. His legacy will live on in his outstanding works in television and film as an actor. My father loved working as an actor throughout his entire life. He was my dad, my best friend, and my hero."

The elder Amos and Rolle were eager to portray a positive image of a Black family, struggling against the odds in a public housing project in Chicago. But they grew frustrated at seeing Walker's character being made foolish and his role expanded.

"The fact is that Esther's criticism, and also that of John and others — some of it very pointed and personal — seriously damaged my appeal in the Black community," Walker wrote in his 2012 memoir "Dyn-O-Mite! Good Times, Bad Times, Our Times."

After three seasons of critical acclaim and high ratings, Amos was fired. He had become critical of the show's white writing staff creating storylines that he felt were inauthentic to the Black characters.

"There were several examples where I said, 'No, you don't do these things. It's anathema to Black society. I'll be the expert on that, if you don't mind,'" he told Time magazine. "And it got confrontational and heated enough that ultimately my being killed off the show was the best solution for everybody concerned, myself included."

Amos' character was killed in a car accident. Walker lamented the situation. "If the decision had been up to me, I would have preferred that John stay and the show remain more of an ensemble," he wrote in

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 71 of 79

his memoir. "Nobody wanted me up front all the time, including me."

Amos and Lear later reconciled and they shared a hug at a "Good Times" live TV reunion special in 2019.

Amos quickly bounced back, landing the role of an adult Kunta Kinte, the centerpiece of "Roots," based on Alex Haley's novel set during and after the era of slavery in the U.S. The miniseries was a critical and ratings blockbuster, and Amos earned one of its 37 Emmy nominations.

"I knew that it was a life-changing role for me, as an actor and just from a humanistic standpoint," he told Time magazine. "It was the culmination of all of the misconceptions and stereotypical roles that I had lived and seen being offered to me. It was like a reward for having suffered those indignities."

Born John Allen Amos Jr. on Dec. 27, 1939, in Newark, New Jersey, he was the son of an auto mechanic. He graduated from Colorado State University with a sociology degree and played on the school's football team.

Before pursuing acting, he moved to New York and was a social worker at the Vera Institute of Justice, working with defendants at the Brooklyn House of Detention.

He had a brief professional football career, playing in various minor leagues. He signed a free-agent contract in 1967 with the Kansas City Chiefs, but coach Hank Stram encouraged Amos to pursue his interest in writing instead. He had jobs as an advertising and comedy writer before moving in front of the camera.

Amos' first major TV role was as Gordy Howard, the weatherman on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," from 1970-73. As the show's only Black character, he played straight man to bombastic anchor Ted Baxter.

He was a frequent guest star on "The West Wing," and his other TV appearances included "Hunter," "The District," "Men in Trees," "All About the Andersons," "Two and a Half Men," and "The Ranch."

In 2020, Amos was inducted into the New Jersey Hall of Fame. He served in the New Jersey National Guard.

He is survived by daughter Shannon, a former entertainment executive, and Kelly Christopher, a Grammy-nominated video music director and editor. They were from his first marriage to Noel Mickelson, whom he met in college. His second marriage to actor Lillian Lehman also ended in divorce.

Sean 'Diddy' Combs accused of sexual misconduct by 120 people, attorney says

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — An attorney said Tuesday he is representing 120 accusers who have come forward with sexual misconduct allegations against Sean "Diddy" Combs, the hip-hop mogul who is awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges.

Houston attorney Tony Buzbee said he expects lawsuits to be filed within the next month, with most expected to be filed in New York and Los Angeles. Buzbee described the victims as 60 males and 60 females, and that 25 were minors at the time of the alleged misconduct. One individual alleged he was 9 years old when he was abused, Buzbee said. The allegations cover a period from 1991 to this year.

"This type of sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation should never happen in the United States or anywhere else. This should have never been allowed to go on for so long. This conduct has created a mass of individuals who are injured, scared and scarred," Buzbee said at a news conference.

Following the announcement of the accusations in Texas, an attorney for Combs said the performer "cannot address every meritless allegation in what has become a reckless media circus."

"That said, Mr. Combs emphatically and categorically denies as false and defamatory any claim that he sexually abused anyone, including minors," attorney Erica Wolff said in a statement. "He looks forward to proving his innocence and vindicating himself in court, where the truth will be established based on evidence, not speculation."

Buzbee said more than 3,280 individuals contacted his firm and alleged they were victimized by Combs and that after vetting the allegations, his firm decided to represent 120 people. Other cases are still being reviewed. He said some of his clients have spoken with the FBI.

The individuals that Buzbee's firm is representing are from more than 25 states, with the majority from

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 72 of 79

California, New York, Georgia and Florida.

The abuse that's being alleged took place mostly at parties held in New York, California and Florida where individuals were given drinks that were laced with drugs, Buzbee said.

Some of the alleged conduct took place at auditions where "many times, especially young people, people wanting to break into the industry were coerced into this type of conduct in the promise of being made a star," Buzbee said.

Combs, 54, has been locked up at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn since pleading not guilty Sept. 17 to federal charges that he used his "power and prestige" to induce female victims into drugged-up, elaborately produced sexual performances with male sex workers in events dubbed "Freak Offs."

Other alleged victims have already filed lawsuits against Combs that include allegations of sexual assault.

Combs has pleaded not guilty to racketeering conspiracy and sex trafficking. His attorney said he is innocent and will fight to clear his name.

Combs is one of the best-known music executives, producers and performers across hip-hop, having won three Grammys and worked with artists such as Notorious B.I.G., Mary J. Blige, Usher, Lil Kim, Faith Evans and 112. He founded Bad Boy Records in 1993, the influential fashion line Sean John, a vodka brand and the Revolt TV network. He sold off his stake in the latter company in June of this year.

Buzbee has also represented women who accused NFL quarterback Deshaun Watson of sexual assault and misconduct.

Dockworkers may have the negotiating advantage in their strike against US ports

By TOM KRISHER, WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS and TASSANEE VEJPONGSA Associated Press
PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The 45,000 dockworkers who went on strike Tuesday for the first time in decades at 36 U.S. ports from Maine to Texas may wield the upper hand in their standoff with port operators over wages and the use of automation.

Organized labor enjoys rising public support and has had a string of recent victories in other industries, in addition to the backing of the pro-union administration of President Joe Biden. The dockworkers' negotiating stand is likely further strengthened by the nation's supply chain of goods being under pressure in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, which has coincided with the peak shipping season for holiday goods.

The union is also pointing to shipping companies' record profits, which have come in part because of shortages resulting from the pandemic, and to a more generous contract that West Coast dockworkers achieved last year. The longshoremen's workloads also have increased, and the effects of inflation have eroded their pay in recent years.

In addition, commerce into and out of the United States has been growing, playing to the union's advantage. Further enhancing its leverage is a still-tight job market, with workers in some industries demanding, and in some cases receiving, a larger share of companies' outside profits.

"I think this work group has a lot of bargaining power," said Harry Katz, a professor of collective bargaining at Cornell University. "They're essential workers that can't be replaced, and also the ports are doing well."

The dockworkers' strike, their first since 1977, could snarl supply chains and cause shortages and higher prices if it stretches on for more than a few weeks. Beginning after midnight, the workers walked picket lines Tuesday and carried signs calling for more money and a ban on automation that could cost workers their jobs.

Experts say consumers won't likely notice shortages for at least a few weeks, if the strike lasts that long, though some perishable items such as bananas could disappear from grocery stores — although at this time of year, most other fruits and vegetables are domestically grown and not processed at ports, according to Alan Siger, president of the Produce Distributors Association.

In anticipation of a strike, most major retailers also stocked up on goods, moving ahead shipments of holiday gift items.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 73 of 79

The strike, coming weeks before a tight presidential election, could also become a factor in the race if shortages begin to affect many voters. Pressure could eventually grow for the Biden administration to intervene to try to force a temporary suspension of the strike.

Little progress was reported in the talks until just hours before the strike began at 12:01 a.m. The U.S. Maritime Alliance, the group negotiating for the ports, said both sides did budge from their initial positions. The alliance offered 50% raises over the six-year life of the contract. Comments from the union's leadership had briefly suggested a move to 61.5%, but the union has since signaled that it's sticking with its initial demand for a 77% pay increase over six years.

"We have demonstrated a commitment to doing our part to end the completely avoidable ILA strike," the alliance said Tuesday. The ports' pay offer is more than every other recent union settlement, the group said.

"We look forward to hearing from the Union about how we can return to the table and actually bargain, which is the only way to reach a resolution," the statement said.

In early picketing, workers outside the Port of Philadelphia walked in a circle and chanted, "No work without a fair contract." The union posted message boards on the side of a truck reading: "Automation Hurts Families: ILA Stands For Job Protection."

Boise Butler, president of the union local, asserted that the workers want a contract that doesn't allow for the automation of their jobs. The shipping companies, he argued, made billions during the pandemic by charging high prices.

"Now," Butler said, "we want them to pay back. They're going to pay back."

And in New Orleans, Henry Glover Jr., a fourth-generation dockworker who is president of the union local, said he can recall the days when longshoremen unloaded 150-pound sacks of sugar by hand. He acknowledges that machinery has made the job easier, but he worries that the ports need fewer people to handle the equipment.

"Automation could be good, but they're using it to kill jobs," Glover said. "We don't want them to implement anything that would take our jobs out."

William Brucher, an assistant professor of labor studies and employment relations at Rutgers University, noted that "this is a very opportune time" for striking workers.

The contract agreement reached last year with West Coast dockworkers, who are represented by a different union, shows that "higher wages are definitely possible" for the longshoremen and has enhanced their bargaining power, Brucher said.

Under the Taft-Hartley Act, Biden could seek a court order for an 80-day cooling-off period that would end the strike at least temporarily, but he has told reporters that he wouldn't take that step. The administration could risk losing union support if it exercised such power, which experts say could be particularly detrimental for Democrats ahead of next month's election.

On Tuesday, the White House continued to ask the alliance to negotiate a fair contract that reflects the longshoremen's contribution to the economy.

"As our nation climbs out of the aftermath of Hurricane Helene," Biden said in a statement, "dockworkers will play an essential role in getting communities the resources they need. Now is not the time for ocean carriers to refuse to negotiate a fair wage for these essential workers while raking in record profits."

Ben Nolan, a transportation analyst with Stifel, said the administration isn't likely to intervene until consumers start to see empty shelves or can't find critical goods like medicines.

"Medications and other things come in on containers," Nolan said. "I think if the administration wanted to have a reason to get involved, it's stuff like that."

Key swing state election faces 'daunting' level of uncertainty after storm ravages multiple counties

By ALI SWENSON, CHRISTINE FERNANDO and JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina election officials say they will do everything in their power to ensure that voters in the crucial presidential swing state will be able to cast their ballots despite the devastation of Hurricane Helene and the destruction of basic infrastructure only about a month before the November election.

Karen Brinson Bell, the executive director of the state's election board, said Tuesday that 12 county election offices in the hard-hit western part of the state remain closed after the storm unleashed "unprecedented" damage. Absentee ballots, some of which already have been mailed to voters who requested them, also face obstacles, from U.S. Postal Service delays to road and residential damage that could render them undeliverable. The viability of early and Election Day voting sites remains unknown, she said.

She described the storm as causing a "daunting" level of uncertainty, with early in-person voting scheduled to start in just over two weeks on Oct. 17. Still, she said the state is prepared to help voters navigate the emergency.

"We've battled through hurricanes and tropical storms and still held safe and secure elections, and we will do everything in our power to do so again," Brinson Bell told reporters during a media call. "Mountain people are strong, and the election people who serve them are resilient and tough."

Helene, which battered large swaths of the Southeast late last week with torrential rain and strong winds and massive storm surges along the Gulf Coast, caused devastation "beyond belief" in the popular mountain city of Asheville and other parts of western North Carolina, Gov. Roy Cooper said during a media briefing Tuesday.

"This disaster is unlike anything our state has ever experienced," he said.

The level of destruction could have far-reaching implications beyond the immediate damage to the flooded communities, especially if it has any impact on voting. North Carolina is among seven swing states being hotly contested by Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee, and former President Donald Trump, the Republican nominee. Trump barely defeated Democrat Joe Biden in the state four years ago, winning by about 74,500 votes out of 5.5 million cast.

Asheville is the most populous city in the 25-county region under a disaster declaration and sits in the one county — Buncombe — where registered Democrats outnumber Republicans. Michael Bitzer, a politics professor at Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina, said the disaster area includes "significant blue dots in a very red sea," making it difficult to predict how the storm might affect voter turnout and election results.

On Tuesday, emergency workers were still engaged in rescue efforts across the broad swath of the Southeastern U.S. that bore the brunt of the storm. Election officials in Florida, Tennessee and the presidential battleground of Georgia were assessing the damage and the potential impacts to mail balloting, early voting and Election Day operations.

Georgia election workers have returned to work even as some offices face power outages, limited internet and infrastructure damage. Absentee ballots are scheduled to go out on Oct. 7 as planned, said Robert Sinners, communications director for Georgia's secretary of state. In Tennessee, two county election offices had water damage and at least six polling locations in the northeastern part of the state have been damaged or are inaccessible, said Doug Kufner, spokesman for the secretary of state's office.

North Carolina officials said they are considering moving or combining voting locations if some are unusable or inaccessible.

More urgently, state officials are offering guidance and some special accommodations for absentee voters, who may not receive their ballots because of evacuations, suspended Postal Service operations or residential mailboxes swept away in the storm.

Paul Cox, general counsel for the North Carolina State Board of Elections, said displaced voters can contact their county election office to request that their absentee ballot be spoiled and sent to a different location.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 75 of 79

Those voters also have the option of waiting to cast a ballot in person, either during the early voting period of Oct. 17 to Nov. 2 or on Election Day, Nov. 5, Cox said. State law requires all voters to show voter ID, but those who are from a county under a disaster declaration and have lost their ID can fill out an exception form so they can cast a ballot.

Officials are still weighing whether to take further steps to accommodate voters, such as extending the absentee ballot deadline or allowing more people to cast ballots through an online portal already used by military, overseas and visually impaired voters, Brinson Bell said.

Fewer residents casting mail ballots or voting early will "put more stress on Election Day," said Chris Cooper, a political science professor at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina. He also worries about college students' ability to vote if universities temporarily go online, as well as the disproportionate impact on lower-income voters who will be especially hard-hit by the storm.

Kelly Godfrey, who has lived in Asheville for over three years, is one of the few voters who returned their absentee ballot before the storm hit. In Buncombe County, which includes Asheville, nearly 9,990 voters had requested absentee ballots as of Tuesday — 85% of them Democrats or voters who are not affiliated with any party, according to Associated Press election research. Only about 170 had been returned.

Godfrey said she hopes rules and procedures will be adjusted to make it easier for voters who were displaced by the storm. But she also worries that any changes could lead to misinformation and false claims of voter fraud after the election.

"It's going to be spun a lot of different ways," she said.

For now, though, voting feels "so far out in the distance," Godfrey said. "Right now, people are thinking food and water."

It's not just voters being affected. In Buncombe County, some election staffers were evacuated after their homes sustained extensive damage and the office's staff has been unable to contact poll workers for training that normally would be taking place now, said Corinne Duncan, director of the county's election services.

The full impact of the storm on election operations is not yet fully known, she said, and damage assessments on polling sites are continuing.

Brinson Bell said officials were not aware of any physical damage to election offices or the voting equipment or ballots stored inside them, but they are in close communication with tabulation machine vendors should any machines need to be repaired or replaced.

Some of the county boards whose offices remain closed or are dealing with outages have been given special emergency kits from the state, which were initially intended for use in case of a ransomware attack, she said. The kits are equipped with laptops, cellphones, Wi-Fi hotspots and other essentials to allow election operations to continue even without power, phone or internet service.

Will anyone hit 74 homers? Even Aaron Judge thinks MLB season record is 'a little untouchable'

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

What used to be one of baseball's most magical numbers — 61 home runs — now sits buried, eight lines deep, in the Major League Baseball record book.

The number now at the top of that record book — 73 home runs — is steeped in a steroid-addled purgatory, but it remains there nonetheless. These days, breaking that record is more of a wild-eyed aspiration than a realistic goal in a game that has largely been cleaned up and transformed.

"It's good to dream, good to hope and always good to shoot for those goals, but I think that one's a little untouchable," said Aaron Judge, the Yankees slugger whose 62 homers in 2022 represent the closest anyone has come to breaking the record since the so-called "steroid era" ended in the early 2000s.

Baseball's popularity these days has little to do with home run chases

Baseball has returned to being more relevant on the sports landscape in 2024 but it has little to do with

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 76 of 79

what brought eyeballs to the game a generation ago — notably, home run chases that placed Barry Bonds, Sammy Sosa and Mark McGwire in the headlines almost daily in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Since baseball began the long, not-so-direct path toward ridding performance enhancers from its club-houses — an effort that started meekly in 2002, a year after Bonds set the record — only Judge has eclipsed Roger Maris' once-hallowed record of 61 home runs in a season.

Even with his impressive season, Judge sits at only seventh on the list of single-season home run hitters, one spot ahead of Maris, whose record stood from 1961 until 1998, the year Sosa and McGwire took hacks during a wild chase to break the record. McGwire got there first and finished with 70 dingers. Sosa ended up with 66.

Judge saw Bonds as the 'greatest to ever play'

Bonds surpassed them all in 2001. When Judge speaks of the former Giants slugger, he speaks not of steroids, but of the raw talent it takes to hit that many homers when all pitchers are trying to avoid you.

"He'd get one pitch to hit (in) a series and he'd hit it out of the ballpark," Judge said. "That takes so much discipline, such a great eye. He's just so consistent. I've been through this for eight, nine seasons now. It's not that easy. He made it look a lot easier than it is, and that's why he's the greatest to ever play."

Total homers trend up but individual totals have steadily decreased

The year 2008 was something of a tipping point for baseball. It was three seasons after MLB enacted much harsher penalties for using performance enhancers and only months after the release of the revelatory and damning Mitchell Report, which tarnished the reputation of dozens of players and bluntly assessed that illegal drug use "raises questions about the validity of baseball records."

In the 10 years before 2008, six of baseball's single-season home run leaders hit 55 or more. In all the years since, that number has been eclipsed only twice — by Judge and Giancarlo Stanton, who hit 59 in 2017. Reaching 74 has never been in the conversation.

"It's possible but I just think the pitching is so good, and the specialty of pitching today," said Rockies manager Bud Black, who pitched in the 1980s and '90s. "And what it takes for the hitter, the durability, the stamina, and getting those number of at-bats, going to the plate that many times to potentially hit a homer, it's hard."

While it's clear to see what the steroid era did to home runs — the top six single-season performances came between 1998-2001 — overall home run trends do not run in straight lines, in large part due to quirks of the game.

For instance, there were only an average of 11 more total home runs per season from 1998-2007 than in all the years since 2008 (not counting the COVID-shortened 2020 season).

Though the earlier period was viewed as a home-run hitter's heyday — Bonds hit 73 and Sosa cracked 60 three times — factors such as early-season weather, bringing in fences at some ballparks, manufacturing quirks with the baseball and even the use of humidors in Denver and elsewhere have played a role in the overall numbers.

Home runs have been up recently. From 2010-15, the number of total homers in a full season never exceeded 5,000, but since 2016, it has not been below 5,200. That includes 2019, when a record 6,776 homers were hit.

One factor in that surge is believed to be the baseballs themselves. Although there's no evidence MLB intentionally juiced its baseballs, the league did acknowledge in 2019 that balls were briefly flying further because they had less drag.

The recent uptick also follows an analytical push placing more value on lifting the ball and trying to hit home runs. Those changes to the baseballs and in hitter behavior haven't produced a 70-home run threat, but they are a reminder how quickly the sport can evolve.

Judge (58) and Shohei Ohtani (54) battled for the 2024 home run title, though in a sign of what's driving the game's popularity these days, Ohtani becoming the first player to hit 50 homers and steal 50 bases made much bigger headlines than their home run chase.

To hit 74, Ohtani or Judge would need to have a once-in-a-lifetime year

Could a race to 74 by Ohtani, Judge or someone else someday be a September headline maker again

in baseball?

Not everyone is giving up on the thought:

—“You never say never,” Blue Jays manager John Schneider said.

—“I think if it’s been done before I think it could be done again,” Royals pitcher Michael Wacha said.

— Judge’s manager, Aaron Boone, would like to think no record is unbreakable.

“It’s an astronomical huge number but I wouldn’t put it past anyone as talented as Aaron or Shohei,” Boone said.

Many in baseball agree it would take a once-in-a-generation talent having a once-in-a-lifetime season to even think about approaching a record that, frankly, nobody much thinks about these days.

“I’d like to think no record’s untouchable, but I feel like the top home-run hitters in the world are still maybe 20 homers from that,” said Diamondbacks first baseman Christian Walker, who hit 36 homers in 2023. “That’s crazy to think about. I’d like to think someday it will be tapped into, but it’s one of those things that’s hard to predict. It’s such an anomaly and outlier.”

US sanctions extremist West Bank settler group for violence against Palestinians

By FATIMA HUSSEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. on Tuesday imposed sanctions on Hilltop Youth, a group of extremist settlers in the Israeli -occupied West Bank who attack Palestinians and their property.

In addition, the State Department placed diplomatic sanctions on two men—Israeli settler Eitan Yardeni, for his connection to violence targeting West Bank civilians and Avichai Suissa, the leader of Hashomer Yesh, a sanctioned group that brings young volunteers to settler farms across the territory, including small farming outposts that rights groups say are the primary drivers of settler violence across the territory.

The sanctions, which expose people to asset freezes and travel and visa bans, come as violence against Palestinians in the West Bank has exploded since the start of the Israel-Hamas war, following the deadly terrorist attacks of October 7th.

Palestinians report verbal and physical harassment, restriction of movement, and face intimidation by settlers circling their properties on motorbikes, cars or horses and spying via drones.

The Treasury Department said Hilltop Youth has carried out killings and mass arson, while rights groups and Palestinians say the group is behind “price tag” attacks – attacks on Palestinian villages in retaliation for perceived efforts to hamper settlement construction.

The group may prove difficult to effectively sanction, as it is loosely organized and decentralized. In addition, Israel’s finance minister has previously vowed to intervene on sanctioned settlers’ behalf.

In the past, sanctioned settlers have told the AP that the measures have had little impact on their finances. Hilltop Youth has already faced sanctions from the EU and UK.

The Biden administration has been criticized for imposing relatively few sanctions on Israeli extremists. According to the Office of Foreign Assets Control, 27 extremists and entities have been sanctioned by the U.S. under President Joe Biden’s February 2024 Executive Order related to maintaining West Bank stability.

The Treasury’s Acting Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Bradley T. Smith said that the U.S. “will continue to hold accountable the individuals, groups, and organizations that facilitate these hateful and destabilizing acts.”

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said “the actions of these individuals have contributed to creating an environment where violence and instability thrive. Their actions, collectively and individually, undermine peace, security, and stability in the West Bank.”

More than 20 are feared dead after a school bus catches fire in suburban Bangkok

By JINTAMAS SAKSORNCHAI Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — A bus carrying young students and their teachers on a school trip caught fire in suburban Bangkok on Tuesday, leaving more than 20 feared dead, officials and rescuers said.

The bus with 45 passengers — six teachers and 39 elementary and junior high school students — was traveling from the central Uthai Thani province when it caught fire in Pathum Thani province, a northern suburb of Thailand's capital, acting police commissioner Kitrat Phanphet said.

The fire was first reported around noon and was put out less than an hour later, but rescuers said they could not get on board for hours as the heat inside the natural gas-fueled vehicle could have caused more explosions.

Police were still working to identify the dead but three teachers and 20 students remain unaccounted for, Kitrat said.

The cause of the blaze was not immediately known. Kitrat said the initial investigation indicates a tire had exploded and caused sparks, which ignited a blaze that spread through the bus. He did not elaborate.

No other vehicles were involved, he said.

There were discrepancies in reports on the number of the people aboard the bus. Rescuers cited teachers who survived as saying there were three buses from the school for this trip and that along the way, some students had moved to different buses than the ones they were initially on.

Videos posted on social media showed the entire bus engulfed in a fire with black smoke pouring out of the bus on the side of a road.

Piyalak Thinkaew, a rescuer from the Ruam Katanyu Foundation, told reporters that most of the bodies were found in the middle and back seats, leading them to assume the victims had moved back and that the fire had started at the front of the bus.

The police were looking for the driver who appeared to have fled the scene, Kitrat said, adding that the bus company and individuals involved may be charged if they are found responsible.

"Such an incident causes a great sorrow and grief," he told reporters at a news conference.

"There is no way we will distort the fact or help anyone" escape justice, Kitrat said and added that 16 students were treated for minor injuries and been sent home while three others were hospitalized.

The nearby patRangsit Hospital said three girls were initially treated there, one with burns to the face, mouth and eyes. Surgeon Anocha Takham said the doctors would do their best to save the girl, who is around 7, from losing her sight.

The girls were later moved to other hospitals for further treatment.

Kitrat said a teacher who survived told police the fire had spread so quickly she didn't even have the time to grab her mobile phone. Some on board managed to escape through the door while others jumped out through the windows.

Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra offered her condolences in a post on the social media platform X, promising the government would cover the medical expenses and help the victims' families. She later visited the injured in hospital.

When reporters asked her about the fire at the Government House, Paetongtarn was overcome by emotion and burst into tears. She became prime minister in August and is the mother of two children.

The accident prompted criticisms over the safety of children traveling long hours across provinces on roads notorious for high rate of traffic accidents and deaths.

The World Health Organization estimates that every year, 20,000 people are killed and a million are injured in road accidents in Thailand.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 099 ~ 79 of 79

Today in History: October 2, Marshall joins Supreme Court

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 2, the 276th day of 2024. There are 90 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Oct. 2, 1967, Thurgood Marshall joined the U.S. Supreme Court at its first African American justice; he would serve on the bench for 24 years until his retirement in 1991.

Also on this date:

In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson had a serious stroke at the White House that left him paralyzed on his left side.

In 1944, German troops crushed the 2-month-old Warsaw Uprising, during which a quarter of a million people were killed.

In 1970, one of two chartered twin-engine planes flying the Wichita State University football team to Utah crashed into a mountain near Silver Plume, Colorado, killing 31 of the 40 people on board.

In 2006, an armed milk truck driver took a group of girls hostage in an Amish schoolhouse in Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, killing five of them and wounding five others before taking his own life.

In 2016, Hall of Fame baseball broadcaster Vin Scully signed off for the last time, ending 67 years behind the mic for the Dodgers as he called a 7-1 loss to the Giants in San Francisco.

In 2018, journalist Jamal Khashoggi was killed by Saudi Arabian officials at the Saudi Embassy in Istanbul, Turkey.

In 2020, stricken by COVID-19, President Donald Trump was injected with an experimental drug combination at the White House before being flown to a military hospital, where he was given Remdesivir, an antiviral drug.

Today's Birthdays: Film critic Rex Reed is 86. Singer-songwriter Don McLean is 79. Fashion designer Donna Karan (KA'-ruhn) is 76. Actor Avery Brooks is 76. Photographer Annie Leibovitz is 75. Singer-actor Sting is 73. Actor Lorraine Bracco is 70. R&B singer Freddie Jackson is 68. Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Ressa is 61. Singer-songwriter Gillian Welch is 57. Actor-talk show host Kelly Ripa is 54. Actor Efrén Ramírez is 51. Musician Brittany Howard (Alabama Shakes) is 36.